



A SACRED DUTY.

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CONTENTS OF VOLUME XLV.

A GRAPE FROM A THORN. By James Payn.

	PAGE
Chapter LIII. Bad News	1
„ LIV. Mushroom Picking	7
„ LV. Creek Cottage	12

LOVE THE DEBT.

Chapter XXXVIII. Lord Charlecote	106
„ XXXIX. Love strong as Death	113
„ XL. Changed Relations	117
„ XLI. Three Confessions	122
„ XLII. Bob as a Reformer	236
„ XLIII. Bob as an Orator	242
„ XLIV. Two more Proposals	249
„ XLV. Pushed from his Stool	257
„ XLVI. "The Brattle"	264
„ XLVII. Fenton Graveyard	272

DAMOCLES. By the Author of "For Percival."

Chapter I. Portraits	129
„ II. Miss Conway is perplexed	145
„ III. Shadows and a Ghost	351
„ IV. An Afternoon in Redlands Park	362
„ V. On the Cliff	493
„ VI. Miss Whitney	513
„ VII. Charley's Expectations	524
„ VIII. Goodbye	736
„ IX. Alone	749

THE MERRY MEN.

Chapter I. Eilean Aros	676
„ II. What the Wreck had brought to Aros	680
„ III. Lad and Leo in Sandag Bay	688

NO NEW THING.

Chapter I. Friendship	385
„ II. Mrs. Stanniforth's Neighbours	400
„ III. Distrust	610

NO NEW THING.

	PAGE
Chapter IV. The Rising and the Setting Sun	620
" V. The Young Generation	631
" VI. The Wanderer's Return	641
" VII. Colonel Kenyon looks on	651
<hr/>	
A Bit of Loot.....	94
A French Assize	662
A Gondolier's Wedding	80
A Modern Solitary	156
A Port of the Past	474
An English Weed. By Grant Allen	542
An Epilogue on Vivisection. By Edmund Gurney	191
Brittany, Recollections of a Tour in	722
Casters and Chesters	419
Cheap Places to live in.....	555
Flowers, the Colours of. By Grant Allen.....	19
Hebrides, the Social State of the, two Centuries ago	200
How the Stars got their Names	35
Iar-Connaught: a Sketch	319
"Let Nobody Pass": a Guardsman's Story	171
Lines to a Lady who was robbed of her Jewels. By Sir Francis Hastings Doyle	235
Living Death-Germs.....	303
Machine, the Sun as a Perpetual	585
Millet, the early Life of J. E.....	289
Morgante Maggiore	696
Names of Flowers.....	710
Names, how the Stars got their	35
Oddities of Personal Nomenclature	213
Past, a Port of the	474
Peppiniello. Twenty-four Hours with a Neapolitan Street-Boy	435
"Poor White Trash"	579
Rambles among Books. No. IV.—The State Trials	455
Recollections of a Tour in Brittany	722
Senior Wranglers	225
Sleeper, the. By James Thomson	348

	PAGE
Talk and Talkers	410
The Boke of St. Albans	68
The Church by the Sea. By Edmund W. Gosse	491
The Colours of Flowers. By Grant Allen	19
The Convent of Monte Oliveto, near Siena	567
The early Life of J. F. Millet	289
The Foreigner at Home	534
The Man with the Red Hair	45
The Sleeper. By James Thomson	348
The Social State of the Hebrides two Centuries ago.....	200
The Sun as a Perpetual Machine	585
The World's End. By R. A. Proctor	481
Upstairs and Downstairs.....	334
Vivisection, an Epilogue on. By Edmund Gurney	191
Wagner's "Nibelung" and the Siegfried Tale. By Karl Blind.....	594
Wedding, a Gondolier's	80
Weed, an English. By Grant Allen	542
Wranglers, Senior.....	225
Zoophily. By Frances Power Cobbe.....	279

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

TO FACE PAGE

A SACRED DUTY	1
LORD CHARLECOTE THOUGHT YOU WERE WALKING IN YOUR SLEEP	106
CHARLEY DROPPED INTO A CHAIR BY HER SIDE	129
"IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT, DEAR, IF YOU CAN'T CARE FOR HIM"	236
"THERE IS NO FINER EPITAPH IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY"	257
HE STOOPED TO GATHER THEM	351
"DO LET THE CHILDREN EAT THEIR DINNER"	385
SHE DREW OFF HER LONG GLOVES SLOWLY	493
"I CAN'T GO AND CRY ABOUT THE OLD WOMAN," HE SAID	513
"HEY, NOT IN BED YET!"	610
PHILIP WAS AUDACIOUSLY MIMICKING MRS. WINNINGTON TO HER FACE.....	641
"GO NOW, PLEASE"	736

620
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THE
CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

JANUARY, 1882.

A Grape from a Thorn.

By JAMES PAYN.

CHAPTER LIII.

BAD NEWS.



A FEW days afterwards, as they were sitting at breakfast, Mr. Wallace, who received as few written communications perhaps as any grown person within the range of the British postal delivery, exclaimed suddenly, on opening the letter bag, 'Why, who's this writing to me?'

"Not a lady, I hope," said Ella slily; "though that's Mrs. Wallace's affair and not mine."

"It's got 'Private' on it," cried the yeoman with a laugh, as though privacy in connection

with epistolary correspondence was a joke indeed.

"Oh, come, I must see to that!" exclaimed his wife. "Give it to me, John;" and she made a feint of gaining possession of it.

"No, you don't!" cried her husband, who in the mean time had just glanced at the contents. "Perhaps I'll tell you something about it after breakfast—— No; I won't take a rasher this morning, thank you; nor yet any pigeon pie. I'm rather off my feed."

"Lor, John, what *is* the matter?" exclaimed Mrs. Wallace, to whom this statement was indeed a portent of evil.

"I am afraid there is bad news from Wallington," murmured Ella, with a white face.

"Well, that is just it, Miss Ella," said the farmer in embarrassed tones; "only I was particularly not to tell you all of a sudden like. That's why they wrote to me instead of the Missis. I was to 'break it' to you, Mr. Felspar says; but since you've guessed it——" and Mr. Wallace scratched his head, and looked oppressed with the burthen of an honour to which he was not born. Nobody had ever entrusted him with a secret before in all his life.

"Pray tell me all," cried Ella imploringly; "I can bear anything except suspense."

"He says I am to break it—I suppose he means in little bits," said Mr. Wallace doubtfully.

But by this time his wife had possessed herself of the communication, which she at once proceeded to read aloud.

"Wallington Bay.

"MY DEAR WALLACE,—I write these lines under cover to you, that you may communicate the sad news they convey to your wife in private, and especially that she and you may break them cautiously to Miss Josceline. A dreadful catastrophe has happened here. In my last letter I expressed my fears that Mr. Aird's coming to this place might be fraught with some danger; and I deeply regret to say that they have been realised. As soon as Dr. Cooper saw him he expressed to me the gravest anxiety about his state of mind. There was only one thing, as I told you, which betrayed this—when the least allusion was made to little Davey he was not himself. But after he came down here he could talk of nothing else. We thought it better he should be at Clover Cottage with ourselves and not at the hotel, which, as it turns out, was perhaps so far fortunate. Yesterday morning, when, as we thought, he was in his room, the doctor called and had a talk with us about him.

"'It is my duty to tell you,' he said in conclusion, 'that Mr. Aird must never be left alone—that one of you two must be always with him. But of course such a state of things cannot last for ever.'

"At this moment in walked Mr. Aird.

"'Of course it can't,' he said gravely. 'They have had trouble enough about me—these two—already.'

"It seems he had been listening at the door—a proceeding, I need not say, utterly foreign to his nature. Dr. Cooper has since told me

that it was to him a convincing proof of his insanity—an example of the madman's cunning."

"Poor soul, think of that!" ejaculated Mrs. Wallace.

"Well, we explained matters as well as we could to him; assured him that our time was his for the next month or two at all events; that he gave us no trouble whatever, &c. &c.; and he seemed satisfied.

"I must tell you that since your time—the old happy times, alas! at Wallington—the steamer between Meresley and Northport has called here once a week, touching at the Bay the same day, on its return from Northport. Yesterday was, with us, very tempestuous for the time of year—not a wet day, but very windy—the sea mountains high, and we hardly expected that the steamer could put in. It did so, however, and nothing I could say would dissuade Mr. Aird from going on it; he said he thought the 'blow' from Northport and back would do him good.

"Quite right," said Vernon in his quiet way; "I think it will do me good too."

"Pooh, pooh!" said Mr. Aird; "you are well enough as it is; why should *you* go?"

"The steamer is a public conveyance," returned Vernon, laughing, "and it is a free country."

"You know how difficult it is to be angry with Vernon; and, though Mr. Aird evidently resented his determination, he said nothing more. They two were the only passengers, and very astonished the captain was to see them come aboard. As if to mark his sense of annoyance, Mr. Aird sat apart from Vernon the whole of the way to Northport, where they touched but did not stop. On the way back the sea abated a little; but even then it was not possible to move about without holding on to something. When they were nearing home, Vernon, who never took his eyes off Mr. Aird, saw him suddenly climb upon the paddle-box, and leap into the sea. 'Man overboard!' he shouted to the captain on the bridge, and the next moment jumped in after him. He did not even wait to kick his shoes off."

"Oh, that dear Mr. Vernon!" sobbed Mrs. Wallace.

"A good fellow," observed the farmer hoarsely; "a real good fellow."

Ella said nothing, only moved her lips. Her face was as white as the breakfast-cloth—and the linen at Foracre farm was like the driven snow.

"The captain says that Mr. Aird had literally no time to sink; that Vernon was down on him like a sea-bird on a fish; but by the time the steamer could be stopped and a boat lowered, it was well nigh all over with both of them. It must have been so if Mr. Aird had clutched him; but, though the old man could not swim, he made no attempt to do this, whether from a noble unselfishness, or the absence of even the instinctive love of life, can never be known."

"He is dead, then!" exclaimed Mrs. Wallace, aghast with horror.

"Read on," said Ella earnestly.

"Even in such a sea, Vernon, being so strong a swimmer, would have had no difficulty in bearing the other up; but the fact is, though there is no need to talk of it, poor Mr. Aird, with that 'madman's cunning,' of which the doctor spoke, had filled his pockets full of pebbles, which of course he took with him from Wallington. Conceive the poor man's thoughts upon that voyage and back again; seeking for the opportunity when the captain's back was turned, or perhaps making up his mind—or what remained of it, poor soul!—for the fatal plunge. What, I think, testifies to Vernon's presence of mind, as convincingly as his heroic act itself (for it was nothing less), was that while in the boat, and before they were taken on board, he contrived to remove the pebbles, so that the whole affair might wear the appearance of an accident. Mr. Aird appeared quite lifeless; but before the steamer reached Wallington he had revived a little, and was carried here in a very prostrate condition, but, as I have good reason to believe, quite conscious. He died, however, 'from the shock and exhaustion,' says Dr. Cooper, within the hour. When we have laid him in his grave, in that churchyard at Barton which we all know so well, either Vernon or myself will run down to Foracre Farm. It was his own wish that we should do so, for the purpose, for one thing, of conveying to Miss Josceline a last memento of him, or rather of one that he loved dearer than himself—sweet little Davey. You will keep what I have written concerning the nature of his end secret among yourselves; it was his desire—a very strange one you will say—that you should know it; and, though with great reluctance, I have therefore described things exactly as they happened. Of course he was not responsible for the act in any way. His mind had broken down under its weight of trouble. Just at first it wandered a little, and he said something about Vernon—though with a very sweet smile—that we could make nothing of; but before his end came he was quite himself, which Dr. Cooper says is not unusual in such cases. 'I die happy,' were his last words, spoken with inexpressible tenderness; 'think of me to-night with my own Davey.'

"I am afraid," concluded Felspar, "I shall have been the involuntary cause of throwing a deep shadow (where there is wont to be such sunshine) in your happy home. I add, therefore, that among other things our poor friend whispered to us on his deathbed, was this: 'Let none who love me grieve for me; let not my death, which is happiness to me, be the cause of sorrow to any human being.' There were other things he said of which Vernon or myself, whichever comes, will inform you; just at present I have a good deal to do, as you may imagine when I tell you Mr. Aird has made me his sole executor, so you must excuse my writing at greater length. With our kindest regards to your wife and to Miss Ella,

"I am, your faithful friend,

"MICHAEL FELSPAR."

In spite of poor Mr. Aird's last injunctions, his death, or rather, it would be more correct to say, the manner of his end, was the cause of much sorrow at Foracre Farm. That death had been a happy release to the weary and forlorn old man himself, there could be no doubt; and, after the first shock of the news had worn away, this was the view the little party at the Farm took of it. Without a friend (save those we wot of) or a relative in the world, and with every reminiscence a pang, how could they have wished him to live on! In a few days they began to speak of the matter calmly, and (so closely does humour tread on the heels of tragedy) on one occasion it was even the cause of a smile.

"It is very odd, John," observed Mrs. Wallace—who, with all her tenderness of heart, often took the most matter-of-fact view of affairs, and, again, sometimes said things which, if she had turned them over in her mind first, she would certainly have left unsaid—"it is very odd how that unfortunate remark of mine at the *table d'hôte* at Wallington has come true; there's not only little Davey dead, you see, but his poor father."

"Not to mention the Hon. Emilius Josceline," remarked her husband drily.

"Lor bless me! If I hadn't clean forgotten him!" exclaimed Mrs. Wallace; "how thankful I am, John, Ella was not here. How stupid and unfeeling I am!"

"Well, I don't know as to that, little woman. Mr. Josceline was a very clever gentleman, but I doubt if any eye dropped a tear for him, save his daughter's. I don't know that you had any particular call to remember him. How curious it is," continued the yeoman musingly, "that with cattle and such like a good breed or a bad makes such a difference; with human beings it aint at all so. Here's Miss Ella, for example, all unselfishness and simplicity."

"Perhaps she got it from her mother," hazarded Mrs. Wallace. "She has spoken to me about her once or twice as having been a perfect angel."

"Perhaps so. She was an angel, however, before her daughter knew her, so could scarcely have had much hand in forming her character; and even with the cattle, something beyond breed is required. The best Alderney wouldn't thrive in Shetland, I'll be bound. No; I think there is such a thing as sheer natural goodness, though, of course, as in Miss Ella's case, it grows and grows by use. It would be a thousand pities if such a girl should never marry. What a good wife she would make; and what a mother!"

"No doubt," said Mrs. Wallace with a sigh, for she, too, would have given much to have had children about her knees. "Let us hope it will be so."

"If Mr. Felspar is made sole executor," remarked her husband significantly, "it is probable that the old man has left him a good bit of money."

"I hope so. But you are quite on the wrong tack, John, in supposing that would affect Ella's future. If Mr. Felspar was rolling in wealth she would never have him."

"Well; he comes down here next week, it seems, and then we shall see. Now I'll lay my best cow against the white donkey that takes your milk about, that this time next month Ella is engaged to be married."

"I never made a bet in my life that I know of," said Mrs. Wallace confidently; "but I'll take this one. I shall win that cow."

"If you do, it shall be 'for your separate use and maintainance,' as Lawyer Fell used to call it; but I rather think you will lose your white donkey, and I will ride to market on it instead of Dobbin."

At this picture—for the farmer weighed something, and the donkey was small—the worthy pair, who were easily tickled, were much moved to mirth.

"By-the-bye," said Mr. Wallace presently, "why shouldn't Mr. Aird leave Miss Ella something for herself? He was very fond of her (as was only natural), and think how kind she was to his boy!"

"I have thought of that, of course, John. But there is something that tells me that won't be. Ella is very peculiar about money matters; she wouldn't take Mr. Aird's thousand pounds, you remember, when she wanted it a deal more than she does now, and I doubt if she would take his money even now."

"What! not if it was left to her? Well, I never!"

"Nor anybody else, John; but still that is my belief. Did it never strike you that perhaps Mr. Josceline had old Mr. Aird in his eye for a son-in-law?"

"It certainly never did. Why, the poor man was old enough for her grandfather."

"Well; he must have married young for that, John; but of course there was a great disparity. However, my conviction is that some such idea as that was put into Ella's mind by her father, and that that's why she refused Mr. Aird's assistance. It set her against him like—that is, in the way of accepting anything from his hands, and it will set her against it now."

"Well, certainly, you women do get strange things into your heads, such as we men never do, yet I can't believe that of Ella."

"You must admit, however, she did refuse the money."

"Yes, she did; and I think Dr. Cooper (or anybody else) would say it was a much greater proof of madness than listening at doors. Cattle I understand, but not women—women are kittle cattle;" and the yeoman smiled complacently as a man has a right to do over his own joke, when he makes but one in a twelvemonth.

CHAPTER LIV.

MUSHROOM PICKING.

ONE of the few amusements of the Foracre folks—for pastimes were not in their way; time never hung heavy enough on hand to need *them*—was mushroom gathering. In due season they could be gathered by the basketful in the meadows about the farm, and Mrs. Wallace and Ella would often require the services of the white donkey to bring home their spoil. The goodman of the house delighted in these dainties, and sometimes Ella would go forth in the early morning and forage for them for his breakfast.

One morning she was engaged in this occupation a few fields from home, and had been fortunate beyond her expectations; having stooped for her last mushroom, she was returning with much spoil, when she suddenly saw some one getting over a stile in the next field, at the sight of whom she suddenly dropped her basket and turned pale, as though he had been a mad bull. Yet the field was a public one, and a path ran through it from the little railway station, so that the sight of a stranger could hardly have been so very unexpected. And, moreover, he was not a stranger. He was a young man of very respectable appearance—indeed, he was in deep mourning—who took off his hat to her with marked respect, though with a certain nervousness of manner which fortunately she was not near enough to him to observe. He had a bronzed face on which, in spite of his efforts to make it grave, there was a tender smile.

"I'm afraid I frightened you, Miss Ella, by my premature appearance," he said as he came up and took her hand; "visitors have no right to come at such hours, but the fact is I travelled by the night mail."

"I am very glad to see you, Mr. Vernon, very," she said, "and so, I am sure, will Mr. and Mrs. Wallace be; but we didn't expect—that is——"

"You expected Felspar, of course, instead of me," he said, "which no doubt is a disappointment."

"I did not say that, Mr. Vernon, though Mr. Felspar is a great favourite with all of us."

"And so he ought to be, for he deserves it. He is, I believe, one of the best of men, as I am sure he is the best of friends. But the fact is his hands are just now too full of affairs—business matters—to admit of his coming down."

"Matters connected with poor Mr. Aird, of course. Oh, Mr. Vernon, how that shocked us all!"

"I was afraid it would, but we thought it better to tell you the whole truth." And then they fell to talking about their dead friend.

From what Vernon told her of the matter she soon lost that feeling

of horror concerning his end which the idea of suicide (once so heroic, now so reprobated) always inspires. Upon one point, on which he shipwrecked, Mr. Aird had been undoubtedly insane, and was therefore blameless; on all others he had shown himself to the last the kindly, generous, and (beneath the rugged surface) tender-hearted man that he really was.

"He loved you, Ella," said Vernon, "as though he had been your own father."

Ella trembled, partly because this speech awakened certain memories, partly because her companion in his earnestness and fervour had called her for the first time by her Christian name. He had done so unconsciously no doubt, but the sound of the more familiar title from Vernon's lips had a strange attraction for her. His voice, indeed, was very sweet and low, and, from the nature of the subject, confidential. They walked together side by side; he had picked up her mushrooms for her, and was carrying her basket in one hand, but the other somehow had sought her own.

"That he should have been attached to you, Ella," he continued, "can surprise no one; but his last words also expressed a great regard for a much less worthy object—myself."

"How could it have been otherwise?—that is, I mean——" said Ella, repenting of the enthusiasm her tone had involuntarily displayed; "did you not risk your life for him, Mr. Vernon?"

"My name is Walter," returned the young man very gently; "would you mind calling me Walter?"

As Ella did not reply to this question, it must be taken for granted that she did not mind.

"As Mr. Aird was so fond of you, and had a regard for me," Vernon went on, "it was only natural that he should associate us together in his mind, or perhaps he guessed something—a secret I had assuredly never told him, since I had not dared to tell it even to you."

They walked on in silence, but very slowly; there was a singing in her ears, yet Ella could hear their feet moving through the fresh grass; the low of the cows in the homestead; the song of a distant thrush.

"It was because he guessed my secret and wished me to tell it to you (for which I had not hitherto had the courage), that he sent me hither as the bearer of his last farewell. He said to me, 'Give my dear love to her, Vernon, and if, as I think, you love one another, kiss her for me.'"

And here Walter kissed her. That, of course, was a sacred duty. Having performed it, you would think, perhaps, that there was an end of the affair; but that was not the case. He followed up the caress by proxy, by kissing his fair companion upon his own account. And somehow or another, though Ella was by no means resolute in her resistance, those unfortunate mushrooms fell out of the basket during the process.

"I have loved you, darling, from the first instant I set eyes on you," whispered this impulsive young man. And (though I am too much of a gentleman, I hope, to repeat a lady's exact words, uttered in a moment of confidence), I may say that Ella murmured something that had a similar tendency.

At this particular spot the hedgerow between them and the Farm happened to be exceptionally thick, and neither of them for some moments evinced any disposition to proceed where the veil of greenery was thinner. Indeed, they might have stopped there much longer, but for a summons from the garden from the mistress of the house herself.

"El—la! El—la! breakfast, breakfast!" she shouted in her cheerful tones.

They were close by, though she could not see them; and it was really rather embarrassing for them to come out as it were of ambush, and show themselves. However, they had to do it.

"What, Mr. Vernon! Good gracious! Is it really you?"

"I believe so, ma'am," said the young gentleman modestly, though indeed he was in such a tumult of happiness that he might well have been doubtful of his own identity. "We have ventured to bring you a little present of mushrooms."

"But where *are* the mushrooms?"

In his confusion, the too happy young man had not perceived that his basket was empty. Its late contents lay where the hedge was thickest, yet not more out of sight than out of mind.

"Oh, never mind the mushrooms!" exclaimed Mrs. Wallace delightedly; "pray walk in, Mr. Vernon; and Ella, do you go upstairs and change your boots immediately, because the grass is so wet."

Being a woman, she, of course, took in the situation at a glance, and offered this way of escape to the blushing Ella.

Mr. Vernon had a great deal to talk about at breakfast that morning, and it was certainly natural that he should be the chief speaker, but even Mr. Wallace couldn't help noticing how silent Ella was; on the other hand, she was a most excellent listener—so good a one that she might, to some minds, have suggested a parallel to Desdemona hanging on the accents of Othello.

Vernon had brought for her the portrait of little Davey which Mr. Aird had confided to his keeping; and when Ella left the room to put this precious gift away, Mrs. Wallace could not restrain her feminine curiosity to know "what poor Mr. Aird had done with all his money."

"He has left some of it to Felspar," said Vernon, blushing even more than he had done over the empty mushroom basket; "but the bulk of it has gone elsewhere."

This was not very satisfactory; and, what was worse, it was plain that Mr. Vernon did not wish to be put to the question on that point;

yet Mrs. Wallace could not restrain herself from saying, "Then do you mean to say that, except the picture of little Davey, he has left Ella nothing?"

"He has left her nothing but the picture."

"I am sorry for that," said Mrs. Wallace rather drily.

She afterwards observed to her husband, when alone with him, that though Mr. Vernon had looked grave enough when he gave them this information, he had not looked particularly sorry.

"Perhaps he's got the money himself," suggested the farmer. "In that case you can hardly expect him to be in tears about the disposal of it."

"How hard you are, John!" said his wife reprovingly. "Though, indeed, even if Mr. Vernon has got it——"

"Well, what?"

"Well, I would tell you a secret if I thought you could keep it. It is my firm impression that Mr. Vernon has come in for Mr. Aird's estate. It was only his poverty that made him hesitate so long about asking Ella to marry him, and now that he feels he can offer her a fitting home, and an establishment——"

"No," interrupted the farmer emphatically; "our Miss Ella is not of that sort. She is not one of those fine young ladies who care about an establishment."

"I did not say she was, John. Really if you go on like this about Miss Ella, you'll make some one else jealous."

"You jealous? No, my little woman; you've too much sense for that."

Here, to the farmer's great astonishment, his wife began to laugh. "I was not referring to myself at all, you silly old creature. Where was I when you broke in with your 'our Miss Ella?' Yes; I was saying that now Mr. Vernon has the means he will marry her; indeed, he has told me almost as much this very morning. Now what do you think of that?"

Mr. Wallace scratched his head in amazement; if he had known that all Vernon had said was, "We have ventured to bring you a little present of mushrooms," he would not have felt perhaps the same conviction on the matter as his wife did. As it was, he observed, "Nay, but that was quick work, lass."

"I suppose he was making up for lost time," observed Mrs. Wallace, who was in great spirits. It was a high testimony to her unselfishness that she was so, since the stroke of fortune which would make her favourite such a happy woman, would of necessity take her away from Foracre Farm, where she had won the hearts of both host and hostess, and was as a daughter of their own.

Perhaps the farmer imagined that his wife had forgotten this dark side of the picture, for he observed gravely, "If things are as you say, little woman, I am afraid you will feel parting with the lass. She has found the same place in your heart that poor Gerty used to hold, I reckon."

"Yes," sighed Mrs. Wallace. "Heaven forbid, however, I should grudge the dear girl to the man she loves. Besides, marriage is not like death; we don't lose her, but only lend her."

"And by-the-bye," remarked the yeoman slyly, "you have lost something else remember, by this love affair. I've won your white donkey."

"Not a bit of it," said his wife. "On the contrary, you have reminded me that I have won your cow."

"My words were," replied her husband with a seriousness that it was easy for one of his sedateness to affect, "I'll lay my best cow against your white donkey that this time next month Miss Ella is engaged to be married."

"Yes; but you meant to Mr. Felspar."

"Now, it's a most extraordinary thing," observed the farmer, "that whenever a woman makes a bet and loses it she always tries to make out she won it."

"You know very well I've won it, John."

"Very well; we'll just refer it to a third person. Here's Mr. Vernon and Ella, who count as one, and indeed look like it—dear me! he had his arm round her waist, though he has just whipped it away—now I'll appeal to them. Mr. Vernon" (raising his voice), "my wife has bet——"

"Be quiet, John, how dare you!" exclaimed his spouse, putting her hand up to his mouth to stop him.

"Has bet her white donkey to my best cow——"

"For shame, John, for shame!"

"That you and Miss Ella"——here, what-with laughter and the gag his consort had contrived for him, the good-natured yeoman stood in peril of suffocation. "Well, if you'll give in, little woman, I'll not say another word," he sputtered. "Otherwise—her bet was, Mr. Vernon——"

"The donkey is yours, John," cried poor Mrs. Wallace *in extremis*; "but I think you are very mean."

I don't suppose the yeoman took possession of his prize or meant to take it, but never over any bargain at fair or market had he grinned and chuckled as he did over the winning of that white donkey. The circumstances, however, evoked from Ella (who, I fancy, for all her innocent looks, guessed what that bet had been about) a full confession to her friend and hostess, compressed however (*à la* Liebig) into half a dozen words. "I am just the happiest girl in all the world, dear Mrs. Wallace."

In answer to the latter's eager inquiries, however, it seemed she had no details to communicate, and yet she had been talking to her Walter all the morning.

"But am I not right in supposing that Mr. Aird has left Mr. Vernon a fortune, Ella?"

"I am sure I don't know, she answered." Stay, "yes I do; he can't have done that, for I remember now that Walter said I must not mind marrying a very poor man."

CHAPTER LV.

CREEK COTTAGE.

"THE wishes of the departed are above all things to be respected," is a well-known and most respectable dogma. And no one could have shown himself more piously inclined in this way than Walter Vernon. Mr. Aird, it seems, had not confined himself to the expression of a general hope that his demise should not be the cause of sorrow to others, but had urged a speedy union between his two young friends. Arrangements for their marriage, in short, were made almost immediately. The wedding which, upon all accounts, was a very quiet one, of course took place at Foracre Farm; the good yeoman giving the bride away, though, as he frankly told the bridegroom, "very unwillingly." For Mr. and Mrs. Wallace it was indeed like losing the light of their house for a second time; albeit the bridegroom promised that it should shine again there once every year at the very least. Invitations were issued to Miss Burt and Mr. Felspar; but, strange to say, were accepted by the former only. The painter had suddenly been sent for (he wrote) on important business to Rome, and was unable to be present.

"I am very, very sorry," said Ella with tears of vexation in her eyes, as she read his letter. "He has been such a good friend to me, dear Mrs. Wallace, you cannot think. I should have liked to have told him so with my own lips."

Mrs. Wallace looked very grave. "I think, my darling, things are better, perhaps, as they are."

"What! better that dear Mr. Felspar should not come to my wedding? You can't mean that?"

"Yes, I do; just that. I think it would have been a great trial to him. It is not only John and I who have to make up our minds to part with you to Mr. Vernon, my darling."

Then Ella began to sob and tremble as she had never done in her life. "I never dreamt of such a thing," she said.

"Of course not. He was too careful and unselfish for that."

"And he always praised dear Walter so," murmured Ella faintly.

"He acted like a loyal friend and a true gentleman, my darling; but it cost him something, you may be very sure."

"Do you think Walter knows about it?" she faltered.

"I am sure he doesn't, my darling; he would not be so happy if he did, even though he has won you. You must never tell him; only keep a corner of your honest heart for the loser, for he deserves it."

The day before the wedding there arrived a marriage gift from Mr. Felspar which (read by this new light) deepened Ella's sorrow for him, while it touched the unconscious Vernon to the core.

"Just look what the dear fellow writes," he said, putting Felspar's letter into her hand.

"I send you, my dear Walter, that which of all my possessions you will prize the most—your wife's portrait, painted from the sketch I took at Wallington on the very day (do you remember?) when you first confided to me your love for her. We are such old friends that nothing I can say in the way of affection will be new to you. When I write that you are worthy of her there remains, indeed, in the way of eulogy, nothing to be said."

"Now I call that most charming and touching," exclaimed Walter. "And from what I know of the regard he bears to you, I am sure he has sent me the most precious thing in his possession."

"God bless him!" said Ella earnestly; and she said no more.

It happened, curiously enough, that another of their wedding gifts was a picture, and painted, too, by the same hand. Miss Burt had brought with her in addition to her own present (an exquisite lace collar and cuffs of her own working) a cadeau from his Highness which curiously reflected the kindness and egotism of the donor. It was a paintbox of solid silver and wondrous workmanship, under the lid of which was a reduced copy of his own portrait by Mr. Felspar, and beneath it the autograph, "Charles Edward," in hereditary handwriting.

"Mr. Heyton desired to be most respectfully remembered to you, my dear," said Miss Burt, with a mimetic movement of her hand to her heart. "I don't think he would like Mr. Vernon one bit better than he liked Mr. Felspar," she added with a droll significance, which convinced her niece that she was aware the secretary had been a rejected suitor. The old lady's delight at hearing that the young couple, after a brief visit to London, were to pass their honeymoon, and perhaps some time beyond it, at the *Ultramarine*, was charming to witness.

On the very morning of the wedding there arrived a beautiful portfolio for holding drawings, of such a gigantic size that, since Ella's modest luggage included no ark of the fashionable kind, it could be packed nowhere, but had to travel, on the seat beside them, like a third passenger. It was labelled, "A trifle from Wallington" (as if it had been a sixpenny mug), and was supposed (and rightly) to have come from Dr. Cooper.

A week afterwards Ella found herself on the same noble road on which, but two years ago, we were first introduced to her under very different circumstances. Above the trees upon her right stood up the towers of Barton Castle, with the flag flying from its summit, about which her then companion had inquired with such unaccustomed curiosity. By her side was now her husband. She was quite happy, but her happiness was tinged with a certain tender gravity not common with brides. In yonder churchyard lay the father, who, with all his faults, had loved her dearly; the old friend, who would have showed himself friendly in a hundred ways, if she would have permitted him to do so; and the little child snatched so prematurely from his loving arms. All lay together there at rest.

What experiences, too, had she herself undergone, in those few fateful months! She had tried dependence, and might have tried independence (for her earnings with her pencil were now quite sufficient to have maintained her) but that her good friends at Foracre Farm had forbidden the experiment, and now, again, she was no longer her own, but her husband's. They would both have to work hard; but labour was sweet to both of them, and to live frugally a necessity which had no terrors for them.

"I am afraid, Walter," said she presently, "that we shall find living at the *Ultramarine* a little expensive. I hope that you will not prolong your stay there upon my account. Could we not move in a day or two to your old lodgings at Clover Cottage?"

"My darling," said Walter admiringly, "there is this delightful peculiarity about you, which alone would render you the most charming woman in the world, if you had not a thousand other attractions; you always say exactly the right thing in the right place. My desire, of course, is to please you; and, as it struck me that you might possibly prefer lodgings to the hotel, I have actually bespoken them."

"What, at Clover Cottage?"

"Well, no, because Felspar is in occupation of it. That is another surprise I had for you. He wrote yesterday to say that feeling he 'had behaved in a most selfish and unfriendly way' (that is how he talks of having obeyed an urgent necessity) 'in not having been present at your wedding, he means to be at Wallington to welcome you.' I wrote to him in your name to say how delighted you would be to see his friendly face again."

"And so I am, Walter."

"I knew you would be. Well, Clover Cottage being full, it doesn't seem to strike you that there are no other lodgings in Wallington. But it so happens, that since your time—indeed, a few months after you went to Barton—rather a pretty little cottage was built at Abbot's Creek (the very place where our dear friend Mr. Aird lost his locket, if you remember), and I have taken that for a month or two."

The carriage, indeed, turned southward as he spoke, so as to leave Wallington on the right, and presently drove up in front of the house in question. It was new, of course; but being picturesquely built of stone, with creepers trained over it, and being placed in a lovely garden, it was neither crude nor staring. Through the open windows the sitting-room looked very pretty and charmingly furnished.

"What a naughty, extravagant boy you are, Walter!" she whispered, so that the maid who stood to welcome them at the door should not hear her; "the rent of such a palace as this will ruin us in a month."

He laughed in his light way, and said, "Not quite."

Ella stepped into the little drawing-room while Walter was "settling" for the carriage, and the servants were taking the luggage upstairs, and looked about her. The windows opened on the sequestered cove which

she so well remembered, and within everything was tasteful and pretty, and, above all, reminded her of a husband's care. Her picture, sent on direct from Devonshire, already hung upon the wall, and on the table were her favourite books. Among them was Fortescue's *Ballads from English History*. She noticed, however, it was not her own copy, and in the fly-leaf read these words in Walter's handwriting: "Illustrated by his beloved wife."

He found her sitting over it, as Mrs. Wallace afterwards described her relations to the little volume, "like a hen with one chick."

"That is another surprise which you have discovered for yourself," said Walter smiling.

"How could you, could you, deceive me so?" cried Ella pitifully. "Suppose I hadn't liked the poems?"

"Well, then I should never have told you about them. But didn't you guess the truth, when Felspar used to run them down, and protest they were not half good enough for the illustrations?"

"No, I never guessed. I only admired them very much."

"Oh, you flatterer!" Here ensued what ancient writers term "a love passage."

"And did Mr. Felspar know about it all along? When he was at Barton, for instance?"

"No; I could not trust him with such a secret. He learnt it, however, soon afterwards."

"Then you were my first patron, Mr. Fortescue?"

"Nay; I had only the happiness of convincing Messrs. Pater and Son of your genius."

"Oh, you flatterer!" Here ensued again what ancient writers, " &c."

"This is all too delightful to last," sighed Ella, referring, of course, to the situation generally. "As I said before, we shall be ruined by the mere rent of such a paradise as this."

"But we don't pay any rent. The fact is, my dear, though it is true I am as poor as Job, I have married an heiress."

"What do you mean, Walter?"

"Come, there is one surprise I am glad to see that you have not found out for yourself. But hadn't you better take off your bonnet? Very good. You are consumed with curiosity, I see, to know the whole story. When your poor father lay on his death-bed, Ella, he extracted a promise from me. It was very wise and right of him from his point of view, and indeed, as things have turned out, from all points. He had no other object in his mind but the comfort and happiness of his child, and she must never think otherwise. You understand that."

She was trembling very much, and it was easy for her to nod her head, but she could not trust herself to speak. What promise could that have been which her Walter made—and kept, of that she felt certain—at that dreadful far-back time, which just now, however, recurred to her as if it were yesterday?

"I promised your poor father that I would never ask you to marry me unless I had a thousand a year of my own. It was wrong, of course—wrong of me, that is—(for he had felt her start and shudder), since I ought to have known my own incompetence to earn such a sum. I ought to have pleaded with him against the very love that strove to shield you from poverty and discomfort. But I did not do so. I gave my promise. What it cost me to keep it there is no need to talk about. I have been repaid a hundred times for all; and, as I have said, he who imposed it had nothing but your happiness in view. Soon afterwards, thanks to Felspar, who has been our good genius all along, Mr. Aird became aware of—of—what I have just told you. You know how tenderly attached he was to you, and how he strove to show it in his lifetime, though for reasons of your own you would never permit it. That reason, with which he was made acquainted by Felspar, guided his conduct afterwards. When poor little Davey died, for whom of course he had designed his fortune, he made a will which, but for that reason, would without doubt have been in your favour. As it was, he left the bulk of his property, 25,000*l.*, to me, in trust (for so he intended it, though it was not so mentioned) to yourself. Being convinced of our mutual affection, he in fact endowed me with the means of marrying you while still keeping my promise. When I came down with him to Wallington I had, of course, no suspicion of his kind intentions; the first hint of them I received from his own lips, as he lay dying at Clover Cottage, after being brought ashore from the steamer. He whispered to me as I sat beside his bed, 'You are the last man in all the world, Walter, who should have tried to save my worthless life; yet if you had known all you would have done it just the same.' And then he smiled, oh, so tenderly! and bade me kiss you for him when he should be laid with Davey."

There were tears in the eyes of both husband and wife when Walter had got thus far.

"There is no more to tell, my darling," he continued, after a long silence, "except that, of course, I made over the money to you as soon as lawyers could do it; they are not very quick about it, you know, and I couldn't wait, or else perhaps I ought to have told you that you were an heiress before asking you to be my wife. That might have made all the difference, might it not? It was gaining your consent under false pretences. But again, I was obliged to ask you, while I nominally had the money, in order to keep my promise. You see I was in a very awkward position."

At all events he had now exchanged it for a very pleasant one, for there had once more ensued what ancient writers, "*&c. &c.*" It must be remembered that it was but the first week of their honeymoon.

The only guests at the *Ultramarine*, who had been there in the old time were the once suspected bride and her husband; but curiously enough, on the very morning after Ella's arrival at her new home, she received a letter from Mrs. Armytage, written from abroad, and for-

warded to her from Foracre Farm. It was very evident from the contents that she had heard nothing of her marriage or of her engagement to Walter. It appeared to have been written *à propos* of some pictures of Ella's in an illustrated paper which the writer had come across. She complimented her upon them very highly, and held out hopes that on her return from the Continent she might give her a commission. The whole communication was in quite her own manner of patronage and condescension. It, however, contained some news of certain old acquaintances. "You have heard, I suppose, of that idiotic old Mrs. Jennynge's second marriage to the Count Maraschino. She picked him up at Venice, where he represented himself to her as one of its ancient nobility. I hear that he was a pastrycook at Naples. Her money, however, fortunately for her daughter—I have no patience with the woman herself—was settled upon her very tightly. They say he beats her. I hear you have taken up your abode with the Wallaces. They are no doubt worthy people; but Refinement is hardly to be expected at a farm, and you must find it a sad change from your old life. However, as soon as you make money by your profession, which I hear you are in a fair way to do, you will, of course, leave them. I was sorry to learn how shamefully Mr. Aird—or rather Mr. Vernon—had behaved to you. The idea of his coming round that poor old man in his dotage and getting all his money! I think, considering all things, he might have remembered *you*. Mr. Felspar, too, seems by all accounts to have feathered his own nest, which from what I heard of him from Mrs. Jennynge—he behaved most graspingly about a picture—I am not the least surprised at; but of Mr. Vernon I thought better; though indeed what can one expect of a man who has to live by his wits?"

There was a good deal more of it, which made Ella exceedingly angry and Walter absolutely scream with laughter.

After all, however, what does it matter, as she soon persuaded herself, what such people think of one, or even of one's husband. The good opinion of others is worth having only if they themselves are worthy.

At Wallington this happy young couple were surrounded by those who loved them. Mr. Felspar was a constant guest at the Creek. Dr. Cooper used to declare that if he were asked so often to partake of their hospitality, he should be obliged, in justice to his patients, to charge as for a professional visit. Miss Burt had leave from his Highness to see her niece whenever she pleased, and always came laden with grapes and peaches, or the flowers "so beloved by my ancestor, Cardinal York."

Mr. and Mrs. Wallace had a room at Creek Cottage always reserved for them, called the Foracre Room. The good yeoman's wife and Miss Burt struck up a close friendship together, and were never tired of talking of their common darling Ella.

They were speculating one day on what would have happened in case good Mr. Aird had not made things so easy for the young couple.

"Heaven only knows," said Mrs. Wallace; "but I think, somehow,

what *has* happened must have happened sooner or later. Walter and she were made for one another."

"But not ready made," urged Miss Burt, looking up from her lace-work. "The barrier between them, Mr. Vernon has told me, was insurmountable by his own efforts. If I had never believed in a special Providence, the drowning of that dear Mr. Aird would have convinced me of its existence."

Mrs. Wallace, with tears in her eyes for his sad fate, nodded lugubrious assent.

"My belief is, however," continued Miss Burt, "that both Walter and Ella would have found consolation, if not happiness, in another way. He works so hard—even now, when there is no occasion—and loves his work so, that he could never have been a miserable man. His life, as Mr. Felspar told Dr. Cooper, would have been a bright example of what talent—though without positive genius—assiduity and the love of duty can effect, had not this dreadful legacy fallen in and crushed it."

"Then Mr. Felspar ought to be ashamed of himself, and I am very much astonished at him!" exclaimed Mrs. Wallace indignantly.

"Well, I am not sure that Mr. Felspar spoke quite seriously," observed Miss Burt apologetically; "that is, as to the legacy. And he's a dear, good man, and, I believe, would sacrifice everything for his friend and Ella."

"I am quite sure of it," said Mrs. Wallace gravely. Then, after a pause, she continued: "You have spoken of what Walter would have done if things had turned out less fortunately for him; but how do you think Ella would have borne it?"

"Bravely. She would have suffered, for she loved him from the first; but I don't think she would have pined away like some young women. I never met with one so diligent, so patient, and yet with such a proper spirit. She would have said to cruel Fate, 'You may do your worst, but I will do my best.'"

"That is quite my view," said Mrs. Wallace with enthusiasm. "And yet she was not brought up with those ideas, was she?"

"Brought up with *them!*" exclaimed Miss Burt, laying down her lacework, and looking very unlike her ordinary self. "She was not indeed; she is 'A Grape from a Thorn.'"

THE END.

The Colours of Flowers.

BEFORE me, as I write, stands a small specimen vase, containing a little Scotch bluebell, picked upon a bleak open moorside, yet wonderfully delicate and fragile in stem, and leaf, and bud, and blossom. For the bluebells of Scotland, the bluebells of Walter Scott and of all the old ballad poetry, are not our stiff, thick-stemmed English wild hyacinths, but the same dainty, drooping flowers which we in the south call harebells. The word ought really to be heather-bell; but the corruption is quite in accordance with a common law of English phonology, which has similarly degraded several other early words by dropping out the *th* between two vowels. Harebell or heather-bell or bluebell, the flower is one of our prettiest and most graceful native forms; and the exquisite depth of its colour has always made it a prime favourite with our poets and our children alike. How it first got that beautiful colour is the problem which I wish, if possible, to settle to-day.

I am not going to inquire at present why the harebell is coloured at all. That question I suppose everybody has now heard answered a dozen times over at least. We all know nowadays that the colours of flowers are useful to them in attracting the insects which fertilise their embryo seeds; and that only those flowers possess bright hues which thus depend upon insects for the impregnation of their ovules. Wind-fertilised blossoms, in which the pollen of one head is carried by chance breezes to the stigma of another, are always small, green, and comparatively inconspicuous. It is only those plants which are indebted to bees or butterflies for the due setting of their seeds that ever advertise their store of honey by bright-hued petals. All this, as I say, we have each of us heard long ago. So the specific question which I wish to attack to-day is not why the harebell is coloured, but why it is coloured blue. And, in getting at the answer to this one test-question, I hope incidentally to answer the wider question why any given flower whatsoever should be blue, let us say, or red, or lilac, rather than orange, yellow, white, or any other possible colour in nature except the one which it actually happens to be.

Briefly put, the general conclusion at which I have arrived is this: all flowers were in their earliest form yellow; then, some of them became white; after that, a few of them grew to be red or purple; and finally a comparatively small number acquired various shades of lilac, mauve, violet, or blue. So that, if this principle be true, the harebell will repre-

sent one of the most highly-developed lines of descent ; and its ancestors will have passed successively through all the intermediate stages. Let us see what grounds can be given for such a belief.

In the first place, it is well to observe that when we speak of the colours of flowers we generally mean the colour of the petals alone. For in most cases the stamens and other central organs, which form, botanically speaking, the really important part of the blossom, are yellow, or at least yellowish ; while the petals may be blue, red, pink, orange, lilac, or even green. But as the central organs are comparatively small, whereas the petals are large and conspicuous, we naturally speak of flowers in everyday talk as having the colour of their petals, which form by far the greater and most noticeable part of their whole surface. Our question, then, narrows itself down to this—Why are the petals in any particular blossom of one colour rather than another ?

Now petals, as I have more than once already explained to the readers of this magazine, are in all probability originally enlarged and flattened stamens, which have been set apart for the special work of attracting insects. It seems likely that all flowers at first consisted of the central organs alone—that is to say, the pistil, which contains the ovary with its embryo seeds ; and the stamens, which produce the pollen, whose co-operation is necessary in order to fertilise these same embryo ovules and to make the pistil mature into the ripe fruit. But in those plants which took to fertilisation by means of insects—or, one ought rather to say, in those plants which insects took to visiting for the sake of their honey or pollen, and so unconsciously fertilising—the flowers soon began to produce an outer row of barren and specialised stamens, adapted by their size and colour for attracting the fertilising insects ; and these barren and specialised stamens are what we commonly call petals. Any flowers which thus presented brilliant masses of colour to allure the eyes of the beetles, the bees, and the butterflies would naturally receive the greatest number of visits from their insect friends, and would therefore stand the best chance of setting their seeds, as well as of producing healthy and vigorous offspring as the result of a proper cross. In this way, they would gain an advantage in the struggle for life over their less fortunate compeers, and would hand down their own peculiarities to their descendants after them.

But as the stamens of almost all flowers, certainly of all the oldest and simplest flowers, are yellow, it would naturally follow that the earliest petals would be yellow too. When the stamens of the outer row were flattened and broadened into petals, there would be no particular reason why they should change their colour ; and, in the absence of any good reason, they doubtless retained it as before. Indeed, I shall try to show, a little later on, that the earliest and simplest types of existing flowers are almost always yellow, seldom white, and never blue ; and this in itself would be a sufficient ground for believing that yellow was

the original colour of all petals.* But as I am personally somewhat heretical in believing, contrary to the general run of existing scientific opinion, that petals are derived from flattened stamens, not from simplified and attenuated leaves, I shall venture to detail here the reasons for this belief; because it seems to me of capital importance in connection with our present subject. For if the petals were originally a row of stamens set apart for the function of attracting insects, it would be natural and obvious why they should begin by being yellow; but if they were originally a set of leaves, which became thinner and more brightly coloured for the same purpose, it would be difficult to see why they should first have assumed any one colour rather than another.

The accepted doctrine as to the nature of petals is that discovered by Wolff and afterwards rediscovered by Goethe, after whose name it is usually called; for of course, as in all such cases, the greater man's fame has swallowed up the fame of the lesser. Goethe held that all the parts of the flower were really modified leaves, and that a gradual transition could be traced between them, from the ordinary leaf through the stem-leaf and the bract to the sepal (or division of the calyx), the petal, the stamen, and the ovary or carpel. Now, if we look at most modern flowers, such a transition can undoubtedly be observed; and sometimes it is very delicately graduated, so that you can hardly say where each sort of leaf merges into the next. But, unfortunately for the truth of the theory as ordinarily understood, we now know that in the earliest flowers there were no petals or sepals, but that primitive flowering plants had simply leaves on the one hand, and stamens and ovules on the other. The oldest types of flowers at present surviving, those of the pine tribe and of the tropical cycads (such as the well-known *zamia*s of our conservatories), have still only these simple elements. But, if petals and sepals are later in origin (as we know them to be) than stamens and carpels, we cannot say, it seems to me, that they mark the transition from one form to the other, any more than we can say that Gothic architecture marks

* In a part of this article I shall have to go over ground already considered in a valuable paper read by Sir John Lubbock before the British Association at York last August, and I shall take part of my examples from his interesting collection of facts as reported in *Nature*. But, at the same time, I should like at the outset to point out that I venture to differ on two points from his great authority. In the first place, I do not think all flowers were originally green, because I believe petals were first derived from altered stamens, not from altered sepals or bracts, and that modern green flowers are degraded types, not survivals, of early forms. And in the second place, I think yellow petals preceded white petals in the order of time, and not *vice versa*. I may also perhaps be excused for adding that I had already arrived at most of the substantive conclusions set forth in this article before the appearance of Sir John Lubbock's paper, and had incidentally put forward the greater part of them, though dogmatically and without fully stating my reasons, in an article on the "*Daisy's Pedigree*," published in the *Cornhill Magazine*, and in another on the *Rose Family*, published in *Belgravia*, both for August, 1881. At the same time, I must express my indebtedness for many new details to Sir John Lubbock's admirable paper. Of course this note is only appended for the behoof of scientific readers.

the transition from the Egyptian style to the classical Greek. I do not mean to deny that the stamen and the ovary are themselves by origin modified leaves—that part of the Wolfian theory is absolutely irrefutable—but what I do mean to say is this, that, with the light shed upon the subject by the modern doctrine of evolution, we can no longer regard petals and sepals as intermediate stages between the two. The earliest flowering plants had true leaves on the one hand, and specialised pollen-bearing or ovule-bearing leaves on the other hand, which latter are what we call stamens and carpels; but they had no petals at all, and the petals of modern flowers have been produced at some later period. I believe, also, they have been produced by a modification of certain external stamens, not by a modification of true leaves. Instead of being leaves arrested on their way towards becoming stamens, they are stamens which have partially reverted towards the condition of leaves. They differ from true leaves, however, in their thin, spongy texture, and in the bright pigments with which they are adorned.

All stamens show a great tendency easily to become petaloid, as the technical botanists call it; that is to say, to flatten out their filament or stalk, and finally to lose their pollen-bearing sacs or anthers. In the waterlilies—which are one of the oldest and simplest types of flowers we now possess, still preserving many antique points of structure unchanged—we can trace a regular gradation from the perfect stamen to the perfect petal. In the centre of the flower, we find stamens of the ordinary sort, with rounded stalks or filaments, and long yellow anthers full of pollen at the end of each; then, as we move outward, we find the filaments growing flatter and broader, and the pollen-sacs less and less perfect; next, we find a few stamens which look exactly like petals, only that they have two abortive anthers stuck awkwardly on to their summits; and, finally, we find true petals, broad and flat, yellow or white as the case may be, and without any trace of the anthers at all. Here in this very ancient flower we have stereotyped for us, as it were, the mode in which stamens first developed into petals, under stress of insect selection.

“But how do you know,” some one may ask, “that the transition was not in the opposite direction? How do you know that the waterlily had not petals alone to start with, and that these did not afterwards develop, as the Wolfian hypothesis would have us believe, into stamens?” Well, for a very simple reason. The theory of Wolff and Goethe is quite incompatible with the doctrine of development, at least if accepted as a historical explanation (which Wolff and Goethe of course never meant it to be). Flowers can and do exist without petals, which are no essential part of the organism, but a mere set of attractive coloured advertisements for alluring insects; but no flower can possibly exist without stamens, which are one of the two essential reproductive organs in the plant. Without pollen, no flower can set its seeds. A parallel from the animal world will make this immediately obvious. Hive-bees consist of three kinds—the queens or fertile females, the drones or males,

and the workers or neuters. Now it would be absurd to ask whether the queens were developed from an original class of neuters, or the neuters from an original class of fertile females. Neuters left to themselves would die out in a single generation: they are really sterilised females, set apart for a special function on behalf of the hive. It is just the same with petals: they are sterilised stamens, set apart for the special function of attracting insects on behalf of the entire flower. But to ask which came first, the petals or the stamens, is as absurd as to ask which came first, the male and female bees or the neuters.*

In many other cases besides the waterlily, we know that stamens often turn into petals. Thus the numerous coloured rays of the mesembryanthemums or ice-plant family are acknowledged to be flattened stamens. In double roses and almost all other double flowers the extra petals are produced from the stamens of the interior. In short, stamens generally can be readily converted into petals, especially in rich and fertile soils or under cultivation. Even where stamens always retain their pollen-sacs, they have often broad, flattened petaloid filaments, as in the star of Bethlehem and many other flowers. Looking at the question as a whole, we can see how petals might easily have taken their origin from stamens, while it is difficult to understand how they could have taken their origin from ordinary leaves—a process of which, if it ever took place, no hint now remains to us. We shall see hereafter that the manner in which certain outer florets in the compound flower-heads of the daisy or the aster have been sterilised and specialised for the work of attraction affords an exact analogy to the manner in which it is here suggested that certain stamens may at an earlier date have been sterilised and specialised for the same purpose, thus giving rise to what we know as petals.

We may take it for granted, then (to return from this long but needful digression), that the earliest petals were derived from flattened stamens, and were therefore probably yellow in colour, like the stamens from which they took their origin. The question next arises—How did some of them afterwards come to be orange, red, purple, or blue?

A few years ago, when the problem of the connection between flowers and insects still remained much in the state where Sprengel left it at the end of the last century, it would have seemed quite impossible to answer this question. But nowadays after the full researches of Darwin, Wallace, Lubbock, and Hermann Müller into the subject, we can give a very satisfactory solution indeed. We now know, not only that the colours of flowers as a whole are intended to attract insects in general, but that certain colours are definitely intended to attract certain special kinds of insects. Thus, to take a few examples only out of hundreds that might be cited, the flowers which lay themselves out for fertilisation by miscellaneous

* I must add that I do not in the least doubt the truth of Wolff's great generalisation in the way in which he meant it—the existence of a homology between the leaf and all the floral organs: I only mean that the conception requires to be modified a little by the light of later evolutionary discoveries.

small flies are almost always white ; those which depend upon the beetles are generally yellow ; while those which bid for the favour of bees and butterflies are usually red, purple, lilac, or blue. Certain insects always visit one species of flower alone ; and others pass from blossom to blossom of one kind only on a single day, though they may vary a little from kind to kind as the season advances, and one species replaces another. Müller, the most statistical of naturalists, has noticed that while bees form seventy-five per cent. of the insects visiting the very developed composites, they form only fourteen per cent. of those visiting umbelliferous plants, which have, as a rule, open but by no means showy white flowers. Certain blossoms which lay themselves out to attract wasps are, as he quaintly puts it, "obviously adapted to a less æsthetically cultivated circle of visitors." And some livid red flowers actually resemble in their colour and odour decaying raw meat, thus inducing bluebottle flies to visit them and so carry their pollen from head to head.

Down to the minutest distinctions between species, this correlation of flowers to the tastes of their particular guests seems to hold good. Hermann Müller notes that the common galium of our heaths and hedges is white, and therefore visited by small flies ; while the lady's bedstraw, its near relative, is yellow, and owes its fertilisation to little beetles. Mr. H. O. Forbes counted on one occasion the visits he saw paid to the flowers on a single bank ; and he found that a particular bumble-bee sucked the honey of thirty purple dead-nettles in succession, passing over without notice all the other plants in the neighbourhood ; two other species of bumble-bee and a cabbage-butterfly also patronised the same dead-nettles exclusively. Fritz Müller noticed a lantana in South America which changes colour as its flowering advances ; and he observed that each kind of butterfly which visited it stuck rigidly to its own favourite colour, waiting to pay its addresses until that colour appeared. Mr. Darwin cut off the petals of a lobelia and found that the hive-bees never went near it, though they were very busy with the surrounding flowers. But perhaps Sir John Lubbock's latest experiments on bees are the most conclusive of all. He had long ago convinced himself, by trials with honey placed on slips of glass above yellow, pink, or blue paper, that bees could discriminate the different colours ; and he has now shown in the same way that they display a marked preference for blue over all others. The fact is, blue flowers are, as a rule, specialised for fertilisation by bees, and bees therefore prefer this colour ; while conversely the flowers have at the same time become blue because that was the colour which the bees prefer. As in most other cases, the adaptation must have gone on *pari passu* on both sides. As the bee-flowers grew bluer, the bees must have grown fonder and fonder of blue ; and as they grew fonder of blue, they must have more and more constantly preferred the bluest flowers.

We thus see how the special tastes of insects may have become the selective agency for developing white, pink, red, purple, and blue petals

from the original yellow ones. But before they could exercise such a selective action, the petals must themselves have shown some tendency to vary in certain fixed directions. How could such an original tendency arise? For, of course, if the insects never saw any pink, purple, or blue petals, they could not specially favour and select them; so that we are as yet hardly nearer the solution of the problem than ever.

Here Mr. Sorby, who has chemically studied the colouring matter of leaves and flowers far more deeply than any other investigator, supplies us with a useful hint. He tells us that the various pigments of bright petals are already contained in the ordinary tissues of the plant, whose juices only need to be slightly modified in chemical constitution in order to make them into the blues, pinks, and purples with which we are so familiar. "The coloured substances in the petals," he says, "are in many cases exactly the same as those in the foliage from which chlorophyll has disappeared; so that the petals are often exactly like leaves which have turned yellow and red in autumn, or the very yellow or red leaves of early spring." "The colour of many crimson, pink, and red flowers is due to the development of substances belonging to the erythrophyll group, and not unfrequently to exactly the same kind as that so often found in leaves. The facts seem to indicate that these various substances may be due to an alteration of the normal constituents of leaves. So far as I have been able to ascertain, their development seems as if related to extra oxidation, modified by light and other varying conditions not yet understood."

The different hues assumed by petals are all thus, as it were, laid up beforehand in the tissues of the plant, ready to be brought out at a moment's notice. And all flowers, as we know, easily sport a little in colour. But the question is, do their changes tend to follow any regular and definite order? Is there any reason to believe that the modification runs from yellow through red to blue, rather than *vice versa*? I believe there is; and we get hints of it in the following fashion.

One of our common little English forget-me-nots, by name *Myosotis versicolor* (may I be pardoned for using a few scientific names just this once?) is pale yellow when it first opens; but as it grows older, it becomes faintly pinkish, and ends by being blue like the others of its race. Now, this sort of colour-change is by no means uncommon; and in all the cases that I know of it is always in the same direction, from yellow or white, through pink, orange, or red, to purple or blue. For example, one of the wall-flower tribe, *Cheiranthus chamaeleo*, has at first a whitish flower, then a citron-yellow, and finally emerges into red or violet. The petals of *Stylidium fruticosum* are pale yellow to begin with, and afterwards become light rose-coloured. An evening primrose, *Oenothera tetraptera*, has white flowers in its first stage and red ones at a later period of development. *Cobaea scandens* goes from white to violet; *Hibiscus mutabilis* from white through flesh-coloured to red. Fritz Müller's lantana is yellow on its first day, orange on the second, and purple on

the third. The whole tribe of borages begin by being pink and end with being blue. The garden convulvulus opens a blushing white and passes into full purple. In all these and many other cases the general direction of the changes is the same. They are usually set down as due to oxidation of the pigmentary matter.

If this be so, there is a good reason why bees should be specially fond of blue, and why blue flowers should be specially adapted for fertilisation by their aid. For Mr. A. R. Wallace has shown that colour is most apt to appear or to vary in those parts of plants or animals which have undergone the highest amount of modification. The markings of the peacock and the argus pheasant come out upon their immensely developed secondary tail-feathers or wing-plumes; the metallic hues of sun-birds and humming-birds show themselves upon their highly-specialised crests, gorgets, or lappets. It is the same with the hackles of fowls, the head-ornaments of fruit-pigeons, and the bills of toucans. The most exquisite colours in the insect world are those which are developed on the greatly expanded and delicately-feathered wings of butterflies; and the eye-spots which adorn a few species are usually found on their very highly modified swallow-tail appendages. So, too, with flowers; those which have undergone most modification have their colours most profoundly altered. In this way, we may put it down as a general rule (to be tested hereafter) that the least developed flowers are usually yellow or white; those which have undergone a little more modification are usually pink or red; and those which have been most highly specialised of any are usually purple, lilac, or blue. Absolute deep ultramarine, like that of this harebell, probably marks the highest level of all.

On the other hand, Mr. Wallace's principle also explains why the bees and butterflies should prefer these specialised colours to all others, and should therefore select the flowers which display them by preference over any less developed types. For bees and butterflies are the most highly adapted of all insects to honey-seeking and flower-feeding. They have themselves on their side undergone the largest amount of specialisation for that particular function. And if the more specialised and modified flowers, which gradually fitted their forms and the position of their honey-glands to the forms of the bees or butterflies, showed a natural tendency to pass from yellow through pink and red to purple and blue, it would follow that the insects which were being evolved side by side with them, and which were aiding at the same time in their evolution, would grow to recognise these developed colours as the visible symbols of those flowers from which they could obtain the largest amount of honey with the least possible trouble. Thus it would finally result that the ordinary unspecialised flowers, which depended upon small insect riff-raff, would be mostly left yellow or white; those which appealed to rather higher insects would become pink or red; and those which laid themselves out for bees and butterflies, the aristocrats of the arthropodous world, would grow for the most part to be purple or blue.

Now, this is very much what we actually find to be the case in nature. The simplest and earliest flowers are those with regular, symmetrical, open cups, which can be visited by any insects whatsoever; and these are in large part yellow or white. A little higher are the flowers with more or less closed cups, whose honey can only be reached by more specialised insects; and these are oftener pink or reddish. More profoundly modified are those irregular one-sided flowers, which have assumed special shapes to accommodate bees or other specific honey-seekers; and these are often purple and not infrequently blue. Highly specialised in another way are the flowers whose petals have all coalesced into a tubular corolla; and these might almost be said to be usually purple or blue. And, finally, highest of all are the flowers whose tubular corolla has been turned to one side, thus combining the united petals with the irregular shape; and these are almost invariably purple or blue. I shall proceed in the sequel to give examples.

One may say that the most profoundly modified of all existing flowers are the families of the composites, the labiates, the snapdragons, and the orchids. Now these are exactly the families in which blue and purple flowers are commonest; while in all of them, except the composites, white flowers are rare, and unmixed yellow flowers almost unknown. But perhaps the best way to test the principle will be to look at one or two families in detail, remembering of course that we can only expect approximate results, owing to the natural complexity of the conditions. Not to overburden the subject with unfamiliar names I shall seldom go beyond the limits of our own native English flora.

The roses form a most instructive family to begin with. As a whole they are not very highly developed, since all of them have simple, open, symmetrical flowers, generally with five distinct petals. But of all the rose tribe, as I have endeavoured to show elsewhere, the potentilla group, including our common English cinquefoils and silver-weed, seem to make up the most central, simple, and primitive members. They are chiefly low, creeping weeds, and their flowers are of the earliest pattern, without any specialisation of form, or any peculiar adaptation to insect visitors. Now among the potentilla group, nearly all the blossoms are yellow, as are also those of the other early allied forms such as agrimony and herb-bennet. Almost the only white potentillas in England are the barren strawberry and the true strawberry, which have diverged more than any other species from the norma of the race. Water-avens, however, a close relative of herb-bennet, has a dusky purplish tinge; and Sir John Lubbock notes that it secretes honey, and is far oftener visited by insects than its kinsman. The bramble tribe, including the blackberry, raspberry, and dewberry, have much larger flowers than the potentillas, and are very greatly frequented by winged visitors. Their petals are pure white, often with a pinky tinge, especially on big, well-grown blossoms. But there is one low, little-developed member of the blackberry group, the stone-bramble, with narrow, inconspicuous petals of a greenish-

yellow, merging into dirty white; and this humble form seems to preserve for us the transitional stage from the yellow potentilla to the true white brambles. One step higher, the cherries, apples, and pears have very large and expanded petals, white toward the centre, but blushing at the edges into rosy pink or bright red. Finally, the true roses, whose flowers are the most developed of all, have usually extremely broad pink petals (like those of our own dog-rose), which in some still bigger exotic species become crimson or damask of the deepest dye. They are more sought after by insects than any others of their family.

At the same time, the roses as a whole, being a relatively simple family, with regular symmetrical flowers of the separate type, have never risen to the stage of producing blue petals. That is why our florists cannot turn out a blue rose. It is easy enough to make roses or any other blossoms vary within their own natural limits, revert to any earlier form or colour through which they have previously passed; but it is difficult or impossible to make them take a step which they have never yet naturally taken. Hence florists generally find the most developed flowers are also the most variable and plastic in colour; and hence, too, we can get red, pink, white, straw-coloured, or yellow roses, but not blue ones. This, I believe, is the historical truth underlying De Candolle's division of flowers into a xanthic and a cyanic series.

Still more interesting, because covering a wider range of colour, are the buttercup family, whose petals vary from yellow to every shade of crimson, purple, and blue. Here, the simplest and least differentiated members of the group are the common meadow buttercups, which, as everybody knows, have five open petals of a brilliant golden hue. Nowhere else is the exact accordance in colour between stamens and petals more noticeable than in these flowers. There are two kinds of buttercup in England, however, which show us the transition from yellow to white actually taking place under our very eyes. These are the water-crowfoot and its close ally the ivy-leaved crowfoot, whose petals are still faintly yellow toward the centre, but fade away into primrose and white as they approach the edge. The clematis and anemone, which are more highly developed, have white sepals (for the petals here are suppressed), even in our English species; and exotic kinds varying from pink to purple are cultivated in our flower-gardens. Columbines are very specialised forms of the buttercup type, both sepals and petals being brightly coloured, while the former organs are produced above into long, bow-shaped spurs, each of which secretes a drop of honey; and various columbines accordingly range from red to purple and dark blue. Even the columbine, however, though so highly specialised, is not bilaterally but circularly symmetrical. This last and highest mode of adaptation to insect visits is found in larkspur, and still more developed in the curious monkshood. Now larkspur is usually blue, though white or red blossoms sometimes occur by reversion; while monkshood is one of the deepest blue flowers we possess. Sir John Lubbock has shown that a

particular bumble-bee (*Bombus hortorum*) is the only North European insect capable of fertilising the larkspur.

The violets are a whole family of bilateral flowers, highly adapted to fertilisation by insects, and as a rule they are blue. Here, too, however, white varieties easily arise by reversion; while one member of the group, the common pansy, is perhaps the most variable flower in all nature.

Pinks do not display so wide a range in either direction. They begin as high up as white, and never get any higher than red or carnation. The small, undeveloped field species, such as the chickweeds, stitchworts, and cornspuries, have open flowers of very primitive character, and almost all of them are white. They are fertilised by miscellaneous small flies. But the campions and true pinks have a tubular calyx, and the petals are raised on long claws, while most of them also display special adaptations for a better class of insect fertilisation in the way of fringes or crowns on the petals. These higher kinds are generally pink or red. Our own beautiful purple English corn-cockle is a highly developed campion, so specialised that only butterflies can reach its honey with their long tongues, as the nectaries are situated at the bottom of the tube. Two other species of campion, however, show us interestingly the way in which variations of colour may occur in a retrograde direction even among highly evolved forms. One of them, the day lychnis, has red, scentless flowers, opening in the morning, and it is chiefly fertilised by diurnal butterflies. But its descendant, the night lychnis, has taken to fertilisation by means of moths; and as moths can only see white flowers, it has become white, and has acquired a faint perfume as an extra attraction. Still, the change has not yet become fully organised in the species, for one may often find a night lychnis at the present time which is only pale pink, instead of being pure white.

The only other family of flowers with separate petals which I shall consider here is that of the pea-blossoms. These are all bilateral in shape, as everybody knows; but the lower and smaller species, such as the medick, lotus, and lady's fingers, are usually yellow. So also are broom and gorse. Among the more specialised clovers, some of which are fertilised by bees alone, white, red, and purple predominate. Even with the smaller and earlier types, the most developed species, like lucerne, are likewise purple. But in the largest and most advanced types, the peas, beans, vetches, and scarlet runners, we get much brighter and deeper colours, often with more or less tinge of blue. In the sweet-peas and many others, the standard frequently differs in hue from the keel or the wings—a still further advance in heterogeneity of colouration. Lupines, sainfoin, everlasting pea, and wistaria are highly-evolved members of the same family, in which purple, lilac, mauve, or blue tints become distinctly pronounced.

When we pass on, however, to the flowers in which (as in this hare-bell) the petals have all coalesced into a tubular or campanulate corolla,

we get even more striking results. Here, where the very shape at once betokens high modification, yellow is a comparatively rare colour (especially as a ground-tone, though it often comes out in spots or patches), while purple and blue, so rare elsewhere, become almost the rule. For example, in the great family of the heaths, which is highly adapted to insect fertilisation, more particularly by bees, purple and blue are the prevailing tints, so much so that, as we all have noticed a hundred times over, they often colour whole tracts of hillside together. So far as I know, there are no really yellow heaths at all. The bell-shaped blossoms mark at once the position of the heaths with reference to insects; and the order, according to Mr. Bentham, supplies us with more ornamental plants than any other in the whole world.

It is the same with the families allied to my harebell here. They are, in fact, for the most part larger and handsomer blossoms of the same type as the heaths; and the greater number of them, like the harebell itself and the Canterbury bell, are deep blue. Rampion and sheep's bit, also blue, are clustered heads of similar blossoms. The little blue lobelia of our borders, which is bilateral as well as tubular, belongs to a closely related tribe. Not far from them are the lilac scabious, the blue devil's bit, and the mauve teasel. Amongst all these very highly-evolved groups blue distinctly forms the prevalent colour.

The composites, to which belong the daisies and dandelions, also give us some extremely striking evidence. Each flower-head here consists of a number of small florets, crowded together so as to resemble a single blossom. So far as our present purpose is concerned, they fall naturally into three groups. The first is that of the dandelions and hawkweeds, with open florets, fertilised, as a rule, by very small insects; and these are generally yellow, with only a very few divergent species. The second is that of the thistle-heads, visited by an immense number of insects, including the bees; and these are almost all purple, while some highly-evolved species, like the corn-flower or bluebottle and the true artichoke, are bright blue. The third is that of the daisies and asters, with tubular central florets and long, flattened outer rays; and these demand a closer examination here.

The central florets of the daisy tribe, as a rule, are bright golden; a fact which shows pretty certainly that they are descended from a common ancestor who was also yellow. Moreover, these yellow florets are bell-shaped, and each contain a pistil and five stamens, like any other perfect flower. But the outer florets are generally sterile; and instead of being bell-shaped they are split down one side and unrolled, so as to form a long ray; while their corolla is at the same time much larger than that of the central blossoms. In short, they are sterilised members of the compound flower-head, specially set apart for the work of display; and thus they stand to the entire flower-head in the same relation as petals do to the simple original flower. The analogy between the two is complete. Just as the petal is a specialised and sterilised stamen told off

to do duty as an allurer of insects for the benefit of the whole flower, so the ray-floret is a specialised and sterilised blossom told off to do the self-same duty for the benefit of the group of tiny flowers which make up the composite flower-head.

Now, the earliest ray-florets would naturally be bright yellow, like the tubular blossoms of the central disk from which they sprang. And to this day the ray-florets of the simplest daisy types, such as the corn-marigold, the sunflower, and the ragwort, are yellow like the central flowers. In the camomile, however, the ox-eye daisy, and the may-weed, the rays have become white; and this, I think, fairly establishes the fact that white is a higher development of colour than yellow; for the change must have been made in order to attract special insects. Certainly, such a differentiation of the flowers in a single head cannot be without a good purpose. In the true daisy, again, the white rays become tipped with pink, which sometimes rises almost to rose-colour; and this stage is exactly analogous to that of apple-blossom, which similarly halts on the way from white petals to red. In the asters and Michaelmas daisies we get a further advance to purple, lilac, and mauve, while both in these and in the chrysanthemums true shades of blue not infrequently appear. The cinerarias of our gardeners are similar forms of highly-developed groundsels from the Canary Islands.

I must pass over the blue tubular gentians and periwinkles, with many other like cases, for I can only find room for two more families. One of these, the borage kind, has highly-modified flowers, with a tube below and spreading lobes above; in addition to which most of the species possess remarkable and strongly-developed appendages to the corolla, in the way of teeth, crowns, hairs, scales, parapets, or valves. Of the common British species alone, the forget-me-nots are clear sky-blue with a yellow eye; the viper's bugloss is at first reddish-purple, and afterwards a deep blue; the lungwort is also dark blue; and so are the two alkanets, the true bugloss, the madwort, and the familiar borage of our claret-cup, though all of them by reversion occasionally produce purple or white flowers. Houndstongue is purple-red, and most of the other species vary between purple and blue; indeed throughout the family most flowers are red at first and blue as they mature. Of these, borage at least is habitually fertilised by bees, and I believe the same to be partially true of many of the other species. The second highly-evolved family to which I wish to draw attention is that of the labiates—perhaps the most specialised of any so far as regards insect fertilisation. Not only are they tubular, but they are very bilateral and irregular indeed, displaying more modification of form than any other flowers except the orchids. Almost all of them are purple or blue. Among the best known English species are thyme, mint, marjoram, sage, and basil, which I need hardly say are great favourites with bees. Ground-ivy is bright blue; catmint, pale blue; prunella, violet-purple; and common bugle, blue or

flesh-colour. Many of the others are purple or purplish.* It must be added that in both these families the flowers are very liable to vary within the limit of the same species; and red, white, or purple specimens are common in all the normally blue kinds.

Sometimes, indeed, we may say that the new colour has not yet begun to fix itself in the species, but that the hue still varies under our very eyes. Of this the little milkwort (a plant of the type with separate petals) affords an excellent example, for it is occasionally white, usually pink, and not infrequently blue; so that in all probability it is now actually in course of acquiring a new colour. Much the same thing happens with the common pimpernel. Its ancestral form is probably the woodland loosestrife, which is yellow; but pimpernel itself is usually orange-red, while a blue variety is frequent on the Continent, and sometimes appears in England as well. Every botanist can add half a dozen equally good instances from his own memory.

So far I have spoken only of what the ladies would call self-colour, as though every flower were of one unvaried hue throughout. I must now add a few words on the subject of the spots and lines which so often variegate the petals in certain species. On this subject, again, Mr. Wallace's hint is full of meaning. Everywhere in nature, he points out, spots and eyes of colour appear on the most highly-modified parts, and this rule applies most noticeably to the case of petals. Simple regular flowers, like the buttercups and roses, hardly ever have any spots or lines; but in very modified forms like the labiates and the orchids they are extremely common. The scrophularineous family, to which the snapdragon belongs, is one most specially adapted to insects, and even more irregular than that of the labiates; and here we find the most singular effects produced by dappling and mixture of colours. The simple yellow mullein, it is true, has no such spots or lines, nor have even many of the much higher blue veronicas; but in the snapdragons, the foxglove, the toadflax, the ivy-linaria, the eyebright, and the calceolarias, the intimate mixture of colours is very noticeable. In the allied tropical bignonias and gloxinias we see much the same distribution of hues. Many of the family are cultivated in gardens on account of their bizarre and fantastic shapes and colours. As to the orchids, I need hardly say anything about their wonderfully spotted and variegated flowers. Even in our small English kinds the dappling is extremely marked, especially upon the expanded and profoundly modified lower lip; but in the larger tropical varieties the patterns are often quaint and even startling in their extraordinary richness of fancy and apparent capriciousness of design. Mr. Darwin has shown that their adaptations to insects are more intimate and more marvellous than those of any other flowers whatsoever.

Structurally speaking, the spots and lines on petals seem to be the

* Our English archangels and a few others are yellow. Such cases of reversion are not uncommon, and are doubtless due to special insect selection in a retrograde direction.

direct result of high modification ; but functionally, as Sprengel long ago pointed out, they act as honey-guides, and for this purpose they have no doubt undergone special selection by the proper insects. Lines are comparatively rare on regular flowers, but they tend to appear as soon as the flower becomes even slightly bilateral, and they point directly towards the nectaries. The geranium family affords an excellent illustration of this law. The regular forms are mostly uniform in hue ; but many of the South African pelargoniums, cultivated in gardens and hot-houses, are slightly bilateral, the two upper petals standing off from the three lower ones ; and these two become at once marked with dark lines, which are in some cases scarcely visible, and in others fairly pronounced. From this simple beginning one can trace a gradual progress in heterogeneity of colouring, till at last the most developed bilateral forms have the two upper petals of quite a different hue from the three lower ones, besides being deeply marked with belts and spots of dappled colour. In the allied *tropæolum* or Indian cress (the so-called nasturtium of old-fashioned gardens—though the plant is really no more related to the water-cress and other true nasturtiums than we ourselves are to the great kangaroo) this tendency is carried still further. Here, the calyx is prolonged into a deep spur, containing the honey, inaccessible to any but a few large insects ; and towards this spur all the lines on the petals converge. Sir John Lubbock observes that without such conventional marks to guide them, bees would waste a great deal of time in bungling about the mouths of flowers ; for they are helpless, blundering things at an emergency, and never know their way twice to the same place if any change has been made in the disposition of the familiar surroundings.

Finally, there remains the question—why have some flowers green petals ? This is a difficult problem to attack at the end of a long paper ; and indeed it is one of little interest for ninety-nine people out of a hundred ; since the flowers with green petals are mostly so small and inconspicuous that nobody but a professional botanist ever troubles his head about them. The larger part of the world is somewhat surprised to learn that there are such things as green flowers at all ; though really they are far commoner than the showy coloured ones. Nevertheless, lest I should seem to be shirking a difficulty altogether, I shall add that I believe green petals to be in almost every case degraded representatives of earlier yellow or white ones. This belief is clean contrary to the accepted view, which represents the green wind-fertilised blossoms as older in order of time than their coloured insect-fertilised allies. Nevertheless, I think all botanists will allow that such green or greenish flowers as the hellebores, the plantains, the lady's mantle, the salad-burnet, the moschatel, the twayblade, and the parsley-piert are certainly descended from bright-hued ancestors, and have lost their colours or their petals through acquiring the habit of wind-fertilisation or self-fertilisation. Starting from these, I can draw no line as I go downward in the scale

through such flowers as knawel, goosefoot, dog's mercury, nettle, and arrowgrass, till I get to absolutely degraded blossoms like glasswort, callitriche, and pondweed, whose real nature nobody but a botanist would ever suspect. Whether the catkins, the grasses, and the sedges were ever provided with petals I do not venture to guess ; but certainly wherever we find the merest rudiment of a perianth I am compelled to believe that the plant has descended from bright-coloured ancestors, however remotely. And when we look at the very degraded blossoms of the sparges, which we know by the existence of intermediate links to be derived from perianth-bearing forefathers, the possibility at least of this being also true of catkins and grasses cannot be denied. So far as I can see, the conifers and cycads are the only flowering plants which we can be quite sure never possessed coloured and attractive petals. But this digression is once more only intended for the scientifically-minded reader.

If the general principle here put forward is true, the special colours of different flowers are due to no mere spontaneous accident, nay, even to no meaningless caprice of the fertilising insects. They are due in their inception to a regular law of progressive modification ; and they have been fixed and stereotyped in each species by the selective action of the proper beetles, bees, moths, or butterflies. Not only can we say why such a colour, once happening to appear, has been favoured in the struggle for existence, but also why that colour should ever make its appearance in the first place, which is a condition precedent to its being favoured or selected at all. For example, blue pigments are often found in the most highly-developed flowers, because blue pigments are a natural product of high modification—a simple chemical outcome of certain extremely complex biological changes. On the other hand, bees show a marked taste for blue, because blue is the colour of the most advanced flowers ; and by always selecting such where possible, they both keep up and sharpen their own taste, and at the same time give additional opportunities to the blue flowers, which thus ensure proper fertilisation. I believe it ought always to be the object of naturalists in this manner to show not only why such and such a “spontaneous” variation should have been favoured whenever it occurred, but also to show why and how it could ever have occurred at all.

GRANT ALLEN.

How the Stars got their Names.

ARTEMUS WARD used to say that, while there were many things in the science of astronomy hard to be understood, there was one fact which entirely puzzled him. He could partly perceive how we "weigh the sun," and ascertain the component elements of the heavenly bodies, by the aid of *spectrum* analysis. "But what beats me about the stars," he observed plaintively, "is how we come to know their names." This question, or rather the somewhat similar question, "How did the constellations come by their very peculiar names?" has puzzled Professor Pritchard and other astronomers more serious than Artemus Ward. Why is a group of stars called the *Bear*, or the *Swan*, or the *Twins*, or named after the *Pleiades*, the fair daughters of the Giant Atlas? These are difficulties that meet even children, when they examine a "celestial globe." There they find the figure of a bear, traced out with lines in the intervals between the stars of the constellations, while a very imposing giant is so drawn that Orion's belt just fits his waist. But when he comes to look at the heavens, the infant speculator sees no sort of likeness to a bear in the stars, nor anything at all resembling a giant in the neighbourhood of Orion. The most eccentric modern fancy which can detect what shapes it will in clouds, is unable to find any likeness to human or animal forms in the stars, and yet we call a great many of the stars by the names of men, and beasts, and gods. Some resemblance to terrestrial things, it is true, every one can behold in the heavens. *Corona*, for example, is like a crown, or, as the Australian black fellows know, it is like a boomerang, and we can understand why they give it the name of that curious curved missile. The *Milky Way*, again, does resemble a path in the sky; our English ancestors called it *Watling Street*—the path of the Watlings, mythical giants—and Bushmen in Africa and Red Men in North America name it the "ashen path." The ashes of the path, of course, are supposed to be hot and glowing, not dead and black, like the ash-paths of modern running grounds. Other and more recent names for certain constellations are also intelligible. In Homer's time the Greeks had two names for the *Great Bear*; they called it the *Bear*, or the *Wain*; and a certain fanciful likeness to a wain may be made out, though no resemblance to a bear is manifest. In the United States the same constellation is popularly styled the *Dipper*, and every one may observe the likeness to a dipper, or toddy-ladle. But these resemblances take us only a little way towards

learning how the constellations obtained their human and animal appellations. We know that we derive many of the names straight from the Greek, but whence did the Greeks get them? On this subject Goguet, the author of *L'Origine des Lois*, a rather learned but too speculative work of the last century, makes the following characteristic remarks: "The Greeks received their astronomy from Prometheus. This prince, as far as history teaches us, made his observations on Mount Caucasus." That was the eighteenth century's method of interpreting mythology. The myth preserved in *Prometheus Bound* of Æschylus, tells us that Zeus crucified the Titan on Mount Caucasus. The French philosopher, rejecting the supernatural elements of the tale, makes up his mind that Prometheus was a prince of a scientific bent, and that he established his observatory on the frosty Caucasus. But, even admitting this, why did Prometheus give the stars animal names? Our author easily explains this by a hypothetical account of the manners of primitive men. "The earliest peoples," he says, "must have used writing for purposes of astronomical science. They would be content to design the constellations of which they wished to speak by the hieroglyphical symbols of their names; hence the constellations have insensibly taken the names of the chief symbols." Thus, a drawing of a bear or a swan was the hieroglyphic of the name of a star, or group of stars. But whence came the name which was represented by the hieroglyphic? That is precisely what our author forgets to tell us. But he easily goes on to remark that the meaning of the hieroglyphic came to be forgotten, and "the symbols gave rise to all the ridiculous tales about the heavenly signs." This explanation is attained by the process of reasoning in a vicious circle, from hypothetical premises ascertained to be false. All the known savages of the world, even those which have scarcely the elements of picture-writing, call the constellations by the names of men and animals, and all tell "ridiculous tales" to account for the names.

As the star-stories told by the Greeks, the ancient Egyptians, and other civilised people of the old world, exactly correspond in character, and sometimes even in incident, with the star-stories of modern savages, we have the choice of two hypotheses to explain this curious coincidence. Perhaps the star-stories, about nymphs changed into bears, and bears changed into stars, were invented by the civilised races of old, and gradually found their way amongst people like the Esquimaux, and the Australians, and Bushmen. Or it may be insisted that the ancestors of Australians, Esquimaux, and Bushmen were once civilised, like the Greeks and Egyptians, and invented star-stories, still remembered by their degenerate descendants. These are the two forms of the explanation which will be advanced by persons who believe that the star-stories were originally the fruit of the civilised imagination. The other theory would be, that the "ridiculous tales" about the stars were originally the work of the savage imagination, and that the Greeks and Egyptians, when they became civilised, retained the old myths that their

ancestors had invented when they were savages. In favour of this theory it may be said, briefly, that there is no proof that the fathers of Australians, Esquimaux, and Bushmen had ever been civilised, while there is a great deal of evidence to suggest that the fathers of the Greeks had once been savages. And, if we incline to the theory that the star-myths are the creation of savage fancy, we at once learn why they are, in all parts of the world, so much alike. Just as the flint and bone weapons of rude races resemble each other much more than they resemble the metal weapons and the artillery of advanced peoples, so the mental products, the fairy-tales, and myths of rude races have everywhere a strong family resemblance. They are produced by men in similar mental conditions of ignorance, curiosity, and credulous fancy, and they are intended to supply the same needs, partly of amusing narrative, partly of crude explanation of familiar phenomena.

Now it is time to prove the truth of our assertion that the star-stories of savage and of civilised races closely resemble each other. Let us begin with that well-known group, the *Pleiades*. The peculiarity of the *Pleiades* is that the group consists of seven stars, of which one is so dim that it seems entirely to disappear, and many persons can only detect its presence through a telescope. The Greeks had a myth to account for the vanishing of the lost Pleiad. The tale is given in the *Katasterismoi* (stories of metamorphoses into stars) attributed to Eratosthenes. This work was probably written after our era; but the author derived his information from older treatises now lost. According to the Greek myth, then, the seven stars of the Pleiad were seven maidens, daughters of the Giant Atlas. Six of them had gods for lovers; Posidon admired two of them, Zeus three, and Ares one; but the seventh had only an earthly wooer, and when all of them were changed into stars, the maiden with the mortal lover hid her light for shame. Now let us compare the Australian story. According to Mr. Dawson (*Australian Aborigines*), a writer who knows the natives well, "their knowledge of the heavenly bodies greatly exceeds that of most white people," and "is taught by men selected for their intelligence and information. The knowledge is important to the aborigines on their night journeys;" so we may be sure that the natives are careful observers of the heavens, and are likely to be conservative of these astronomical myths. The "Lost Pleiad" has not escaped them, and this is how they account for her disappearance. The *Pirt Kopan noot* tribe have a tradition that the *Pleiades* were a queen and her six attendants. Long ago the *Crow* (our *Canopus*) fell in love with the queen, who refused to be his wife. The *Crow* found that the queen and her six maidens, like other Australian *gins*, were in the habit of hunting for white edible grubs in the bark of trees. The *Crow* at once changed himself into a grub (just as Jupiter and Indra used to change into swans, horses, ants, or what not) and hid in the bark of a tree. The six maidens sought to pick him out with their wooden hooks, but he broke the points of all the hooks. Then came the

queen, with her pretty bone hook ; he let himself be drawn out, took the shape of a giant, and ran away with her. Ever since there have only been six stars, the six maidens, in the *Pleiad*. This story is well known, by the strictest inquiry, to be current among the blacks of the West District, and in South Australia.

Mr. Tylor, whose opinion is entitled to the highest respect, thinks that this may be a European myth, told by some settler to a black in the Greek form, and then spread about among the natives. He complains that the story of the loss of the *brightest* star does not fit the facts of the case.

We do not know, and how can the Australians know, that the lost star was once the brightest ? It appears to me that the Australians, remarking the disappearances of a star, might very naturally suppose that the *Crow* had selected for his wife that one which had been the most brilliant of the cluster. Besides, the wide distribution of the tale among the natives, and the very great change in the nature of the incidents, seem to point to a native origin. Though the main conception—the loss of one out of seven maidens—is identical in Greek and in *Murri*, the manner of the disappearance is eminently Hellenic in the one case, eminently savage in the other. However this may be, nothing of course is proved by a single example. Let us next examine the stars *Castor* and *Pollux*. Both in Greece and in Australia these are said once to have been two young men. In the *Katasterismoi*, already spoken of, we read : “The *Twins*, or *Dioscouroi*.—They were nurtured in Lacedæmon, and were famous for their brotherly love, wherefore Zeus, desiring to make their memory immortal, placed them both among the stars.” In Australia, according to Mr. Brough Smyth (*Aborigines of Victoria*), *Turree* (*Castor*) and *Wanjel* (*Pollux*), are two young men who pursue *Purra* and kill him at the commencement of the great heat. *Coonar toorung* (the mirage) is the smoke of the fire by which they roast him. In Greece it was not *Castor* and *Pollux* but *Orion* who was the great hunter set among the stars. Among the Bushmen of South Africa *Castor* and *Pollux* are not young men, but young women, the wives of the Eland, the great native antelope. In Greek star-stories the *Great Bear* keeps watch, Homer says, on the hunter *Orion* for fear of a sudden attack. But how did the *Bear* get its name in Greece ? According to Hesiod, the oldest Greek poet after Homer, the *Bear* was once a lady, daughter of *Lycaon*, King of *Arcadia*. She was a nymph of the train of chaste *Artemis*, but yielded to the love of *Zeus* and became the ancestress of all the *Arcadians* (that is, *Bear-folk*). In her bestial form she was just about to be slain by her own son when *Zeus* rescued her by raising her to the stars. Here we must notice first, that the *Arcadians*, like *Australians*, *Red Indians*, *Bushmen*, and many other wild races, and like the *Bedouins*, believed themselves to be descended from an animal. That the early *Egyptians* did the same is not improbable ; for names of animals are found among

the ancestors in the very oldest genealogical papyrus,* as in the genealogies of the old English kings. Next the Arcadians transferred the ancestral bear to the heavens, and, in doing this, they resembled the Peruvians, of whom Acosta says: "They adored the star *Urchuchilly*, feigning it to be a *Ram*, and worshipped two others, and say that one of them is a *sheep*, and the other a *lamb* . . . others worshipped the star called the *Tiger*. *They were of opinion that there was not any beast or bird upon the earth, whose shape or image did not shine in the heavens.*"

But to return to our bears. The Australians have, properly speaking, no bears, though the animal called the native bear is looked up to by the aborigines with superstitious regard. But among the North American Indians, as the old missionaries Lafitau and Charlevoix observed, "the four stars in front of our constellation are a bear; those in the tail are hunters who pursue him; the small star apart is the pot in which they mean to cook him."

It may be held that the Red Men derived their bear from the European settlers. But, as we have seen, an exact knowledge of the stars has always been useful if not essential to savages; and we venture to doubt whether they would confuse their nomenclature and sacred traditions by borrowing terms from trappers and squatters. But, if this is improbable, it seems almost impossible that all savage races should have borrowed their whole conception of the heavenly bodies from the myths of Greece. It is thus that Egede, a missionary of the last century, describes the Esquimaux philosophy of the stars: "The notions that the Greenlanders have as to the origin of the heavenly lights—as sun, moon, and stars—are very nonsensical; in that they pretend they have formerly been as many of their own ancestors, who, on different accounts, were lighted up to heaven, and became such glorious celestial bodies." Again, he writes: "Their notions about the stars are that some of them have been men, and others different sorts of animals and fishes." But every reader of Ovid knows that this was the very mythical theory of the Greeks and Romans. The Egyptians, again, worshipped Osiris, Isis, and the rest as *ancestors*, and there are even modern scholars who hold Osiris to have been originally a real historical person. But the Egyptian priests who showed Plutarch the grave of Osiris, showed him, too, the stars into which Osiris, Isis, and Horus had been metamorphosed. Here, then, we have Greeks, Egyptians, and Esquimaux, all agreed about the origin of the heavenly lights, all of opinion that "they have formerly been as many of their own ancestors."

The Australian general theory is: "Of the good men and women, after the deluge, Pundjel (a kind of Zeus, or rather a sort of Prometheus of Australian mythology) made stars. Sorcerers (*Biraark*) can tell which stars were once good men and women." Here the sorcerers have the same knowledge as the Egyptian priests. Again, just as among the Arcadians

* Brugsch, *History of Egypt*, i. 32.

"the progenitors of the existing tribes, whether birds, or beasts, or men, were set in the sky, and made to shine as stars."*

We have already given some Australian examples in the stories of the *Pleiades*, and of *Castor* and *Pollux*. We may add the case of the *Eagle*. In Greece the *Eagle* was the bird of Zeus, who carried off Gany-mede to be the cup-bearer of Olympus. Among the Australians this same constellation is called *Totyarguil*; he was a man who, when bathing, was killed by a fabulous animal, a kind of kelpie; as Orion, in Greece, was killed by the *Scorpion*. Like Orion, he was placed among the stars. The Australians have a constellation named *Eagle*, but he is our *Sirius*, or *Dog-star*.

The Bushmen, almost the lowest tribe of South Africa, have the same star-lore and much the same myths as the Greeks, Australians, Egyptians, and Esquimaux. According to Dr. Bleek, "stars, and even the sun and moon, were once mortals on earth, or even animals or inorganic substances, which happened to get translated to the skies. The sun was once a man, whose arm-pit radiated a limited amount of light round his house. Some children threw him into the sky, and there he shines." The Homeric hymn to Helios, in the same way, as Mr. Max Müller observes, "looks on the sun as a half god, almost a hero, who had once lived on earth." The pointers of the Southern Cross were "two men who were lions," just as Callisto, in Arcadia, was a woman who was a bear. It is not at all rare in those queer philosophies, as in that of the Scandinavians, to find that the sun or moon has been a man or woman. In Australian fable the moon was a man, the sun a woman of indifferent character, who appears at dawn in a coat of red kangaroo skins, the present of an admirer. In an old Mexican text the moon was a man, across whose face a god threw a rabbit, thus making the marks in the moon. Among the Esquimaux the moon is a girl who always flees from the cruel brother, the sun, because he disfigured her face. Among the New Zealanders and North American Indians the sun is a great beast, whom the hunters trapped and thrashed with cudgels. His blood is used in some New Zealand incantations. The Red Indians, as Schoolcraft says, "hold many of the planets to be transformed adventurers." The Iowas "believed stars to be a sort of living creatures." One of them came down and talked to a hunter, and showed him where to find game. The Gallineros of Central California, according to Mr. Bancroft, believe that the sun and moon were made and lighted up by the Hawk and the Coyote, who one day flew into each other's faces in the dark, and were determined to prevent such accidents in future. But the very oddest example of the survival of the notion that the stars are men or women, is found in the *Pax* of Aristophanes. Trygæus in that comedy has just made an expedition to heaven. A slave meets him and asks him, "Is not the story true, then, that we become stars when we die?" The answer is

* Brough Smyth, *Aborigines of Victoria*.

"Certainly;" and Trygæus points out the star into which Ios of Chios has just been metamorphosed. Aristophanes is making fun of some popular Greek superstition. But that very superstition meets us in New Zealand. "Heroes," says Mr. Taylor, "were thought to become stars of greater or less brightness, according to the number of their victims slain in fight."

It would be easy to multiply examples of this stage of thought, and to show that star-stories existed on the banks of the Amazon as well as on the borders of the lake of Anahuac. But we have probably brought forward enough for our purpose, and have expressly chosen instances from the most widely separated peoples. These instances, it will perhaps be admitted, suggest, if they do not prove, that the Greeks had received from tradition precisely the same sort of legends about the heavenly bodies as are current among Esquimaux and Bushmen, New Zealanders and Iowas. As much, indeed, might be inferred from our own astronomical nomenclature. We now give to newly discovered stars names derived from distinguished people, as *Georgium Sidus*, or *Herschel*; or, again, merely technical appellatives, as *Alpha*, *Beta*, and the rest. We should never think when "some new planet swims into our ken" of calling it *Kangaroo*, or *Rabbit*, or after the name of some hero of romance, as *Rob Roy*, or *Count Fosco*. But the names of stars which we inherit from Greek mythology—the *Bear*, the *Pleiads*, *Castor* and *Pollux*, and so forth—are such as no people in our mental condition would originally think of bestowing. When Callimachus and the courtly astronomers of Alexandria pretended that the golden locks of Berenice were raised to the heavens, that was a mere piece of flattery constructed on the inherited model of legends about the crown (*Corona*) of Ariadne. It seems evident enough that the older Greek names of stars are derived from a time when the ancestors of the Greeks were in the mental and imaginative condition of Iowas, Kanekas, Bushmen, Murri, and New Zealanders. All these, and all other savage peoples, believe in a kind of equality and intercommunion among all things animate and inanimate. Stones are supposed in the Pacific Islands to be male and female and to propagate their species. Animals are believed to have human or super-human intelligence, and speech if they choose to exercise the gift. Stars are just on the same footing, and their movements are explained by the same ready system of universal anthropomorphism. Stars, fishes, gods, heroes, men, trees, clouds, and animals, all play their equal part in the confused dramas of savage thought and savage mythology. Even in practical life the change of a sorcerer into an animal is accepted as a familiar phenomenon, and the power of soaring among the stars is one on which the Australian Biraark, or the Esquimaux Shaman, most plumes himself. It is not wonderful that things which are held possible in daily practice should be frequent features of mythology. Hence the ready invention and belief of star-legends, which in their turn fix the names of the heavenly bodies. Nothing more, except the extreme

tenacity of tradition and the inconvenience of changing a widely accepted name, is needed to account for the human and animal names of the stars. The Greeks received from the dateless past of savage intellect the myths, and the names of the constellations, and we have taken them, without inquiry, from the Greeks. Thus it happens that our celestial globes are just as queer menageries as any globes could be that were illustrated by Australians or American Indians, by Bushmen or Peruvian aborigines, or Esquimaux. It was savages, we may be tolerably certain, who first handed to science the names of the constellations, and provided Greece with the raw material of her astronomical myths—as Bacon prettily says, that we listen to the harsh ideas of earlier peoples as they come to us “blown softly through the flutes of the Grecians.” The first moment in astronomical science arrives when the savage, looking at a star, says, like the child in the nursery poem, “How I wonder what you are !” The next moment comes when the savage has made his first rough practical observations of the movements of the heavenly body. His next step is to explain these to himself. Now science cannot advance any but a fanciful explanation beyond the sphere of experience. The experience of the savage is limited to the narrow world of his tribe, and of the beasts, birds, and fishes of his district. His philosophy, therefore, accounts for all phenomena on the supposition that the laws of the animate nature he observes are working everywhere. But his observations, misguided by his crude magical superstitions, have led him to believe in a state of equality and kinship between men and animals, and even inorganic things. He often worships the very beasts he slays ; he addresses them as if they understood him ; he believes himself to be descended from the animals, and of their kindred. These confused ideas he applies to the stars, and recognises in them men like himself, or beasts like those with which he conceives himself to be in such close human relations. There is scarcely a bird or beast but the Red Indian or the Australian will explain its peculiarities by a myth, like a page from Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*. It was once a man or a woman, and has been changed to bird or beast by a god or a magician. Men, again, have originally been beasts, in his philosophy, and are descended from wolves, frogs or serpents, or monkeys. The heavenly bodies are traced to precisely the same sort of origin ; and hence, we conclude, come their strange animal names, and the strange myths about them which appear in all ancient poetry. These names, in turn, have curiously affected human beliefs. Astrology is based on the opinion that a man’s character and fate are determined by the stars under which he is born. And the nature of these stars is deduced from their names, so that the bear should have been found in the horoscope of Dr. Johnson. When Giordano Bruno wrote his satire against religion, the famous *Spaccio della bestia trionfante*, he proposed to banish not only the gods but the beasts from heaven. He would call the stars not the *Bear*, or the *Swan*, or the *Pleiads*, but Truth, Mercy, Justice, and so forth, that men might

be born, not under bestial, but moral influences. But the beasts have had too long possession of the stars to be easily dislodged, and the tenure of the *Bear* and the *Swan* will probably last as long as there is a science of Astronomy. Their names are not likely again to delude a philosopher into the opinion of Aristotle that the stars are animated.

This argument had been worked out to the writer's satisfaction when he chanced to light on Mr. Max Müller's explanation of the name of the *Great Bear*. We have explained that name as only one out of countless similar appellations which men of every race give to the stars. These names, again, we have accounted for as the result of savage philosophy, which takes no great distinction between man and the things in the world, and looks on stars, beasts, birds, fishes, flowers, and trees as men and women in disguise. M. Müller's theory is based on philological considerations. He thinks that the name of the *Great Bear* is the result of a mistake as to the meaning of words. There was in Sanskrit, he says (*Lectures on Language*, pp. 359, 362), a root *ark*, or *arch*, meaning to be bright. The stars are called *riksha*, that is, bright ones, in the Veda. "The constellations here called the Rikshas, in the sense of 'the bright ones,' would be homonymous in Sanskrit with the Bears. Remember also that, apparently without rhyme or reason, the same constellation is called by Greeks and Romans the Bear. . . . There is not the shadow of a likeness with a bear. You will now perceive the influence of words on thought, or the spontaneous growth of mythology. The name *Riksha* was applied to the bear in the sense of the bright fuscous animal, and in that sense it became most popular in the later Sanskrit, and in Greek and Latin. The same name, 'in the sense of the bright ones,' had been applied by the Vedic poets to the stars in general, and more particularly to that constellation which in the northern parts of India was the most prominent. The etymological meaning, 'the bright stars,' was forgotten; the popular meaning of Riksha (bear) was known to every one. And thus it happened that, when the Greeks had left their central home and settled in Europe, they retained the name of *Arktos* for the same unchanging stars; but, not knowing why those stars had originally received that name, they ceased to speak of them as *arktoi*, or many bears, and spoke of them as the Bears."

This is a very good example of the philological way of explaining a myth. If once we admit that *ark*, or *arch*, in the sense of "bright" and of "bear," existed, not only in Sanskrit, but in the undivided Aryan tongue, and that the name Riksha, bear, "became in that sense most popular in Greek and Latin," this theory seems more than plausible. There is a difficulty, however, in finding Riksha either in Latin or Greek. But the explanation does not look so well if we examine, not only the Aryan, but all the known myths and names of the Bear and the other stars. Professor Sayce, a distinguished philologist, says we may not compare non-Aryan with Aryan myths. We have ventured to do so, however, in this paper, and have shown that the most widely

severed races give the stars animal names, of which the *Bear* is one example. Now, if the philologists wish to persuade us that it was decaying and half-forgotten language which caused men to give the names of animals to the stars, they must prove their case on an immense collection of instances—on Iowa, Kanekn, Murri, Maori, Brazilian, Peruvian, Mexican, Egyptian, Esquimaux instances. Does the philological explanation account for the enormous majority of these phenomena? If it fails, we may at least doubt whether it solves the one isolated case of the Great Bear among the Greeks and Romans. It must be observed that the philological explanation of M. Müller does not clear up the Arcadian story of their own descent from a she-bear who is now a star. Yet similar stories of the descent of tribes from animals are so widespread, that it would be difficult to name the race, or the quarter of the globe, where they are not found. And these considerations appear to be a strong argument for comparing not only Aryan, but all attainable myths. We shall often find, if we take a wide view, that the philological explanation which seemed plausible in a single case, is hopelessly narrow when applied to a large collection of parallel cases in languages of various families.

A. L.

The Man with the Red Hair.

I.

ABOUT a score of us—men, women, and children—were eating our breakfast at Toogood's place down in Suffolk, one September morning, when Toogood, who had been reading his letters, looked up, rubbing his bald head and frowning, as he does in moments of distress, and called out across the table to his wife, "I say, mother, Percival's coming to-morrow."

"Percival? Percival?" repeated Mrs. Toogood vaguely. "Oh, do you mean the man with the red hair? I am so sorry!"

The Toogoods are such extremely hospitable people that it is hardly possible to conceive such a thing as that either of them should feel sorry at the prospect of receiving an additional guest in their capacious house, and Florry Neville only made herself the spokeswoman of the entire company by asking in a tone of astonishment, "Why? Because he has red hair?"

"Well, yes; partly because of that," answered Mrs. Toogood with a sigh.

"Now mind, children," said Toogood in a loud voice; "not a word about red hair so long as Mr. Percival is here."

I don't know how many children Toogood has—I have never attempted to count them—but I do know that, if there was anything which I particularly wished to prevent them from alluding to, the very last course that I should adopt would be to tell them of it.

"The first child," continued Toogood resolutely, "who mentions the subject of red hair during Mr. Percival's visit will be whopped, or confined to the nursery, or made to learn the first six propositions of Euclid by heart according to age and sex. So now you know."

"And how about adults?" Miss Neville inquired. "What is to be done to them if they hurt your carrotty friend's feelings?"

"Oh, *he'll* look after the adults," answered Toogood rather gloomily; "I believe he half killed a man at Oxford, years ago, for calling him Carrots. I don't know what he'd do in the case of a lady, I'm sure; but I wouldn't try chaffing him, Miss Neville, if I were you—I wouldn't really."

Now that, again, is not the sort of thing that I should have said with a view to making sure of Florry's behaving herself; but dear old Toogood is always saying things that he ought not to say.

"Percival isn't a bad fellow," he continued pensively, "so long as

you don't rub him the wrong way ; only, unfortunately, it takes very little to rub him the wrong way ; and when he gets into one of his tempers—well, it's uncommonly disagreeable for everybody."

After that I suppose we all felt an increased curiosity to behold the man with the red hair ; and I can answer for one of us who was not without hope that he might be attacked by some extraordinary fit of fury before he went away. I must confess that I take a great delight in seeing things broken (of course I don't mean my own things) ; and sincerely as I should have deplored the annihilation of Mrs. Toogood's best dessert-service, still, if such a calamity was bound to take place, I should certainly have wished to be there to look on at it. I imagined the redoubtable Percival as a brawny giant with a flaming mane and beard, and after breakfast I found in one of the children's picture-books a representation of an ogre which seemed so exactly like what he ought to be that I pointed it out to Florry Neville, who was so kind as to say that she would take an early opportunity of showing it to him and telling him that I had supposed it to be his portrait.

However, when he did come, he turned out, like so many things that one has looked forward to, to be a disappointment—at all events so far as appearances went. He was not in the least like the ogre in the picture-book, nor like any ogre at all, but was a tall and well-made fellow of six or seven and twenty, whom nine people out of ten would have pronounced decidedly good-looking. Certainly his hair was red ; but it was cut so short that its colour hardly attracted attention, and he wore neither beard nor moustache. It was just before dinner that we had our first view of him, and I scrutinised him then and throughout the evening rather narrowly without discovering anything about him different from the rest of the world, except that his eyes were a little restless, and that he spoke with a certain hurried excitability when he was interested in his subject. If he had been a horse, you would have said that he was a high-couraged animal, nothing more. At dessert the children stared at him with round eyes, and I could see that my feeling of disappointment was shared by them ; but they made no dreadful remarks, nor was the harmony of the evening in any way disturbed. As for his manners, nothing could have been more pleasant. His voice was rather loud, but not disagreeable ; he talked a good deal—chiefly about sport—and was very cheery and unaffected and ready to make friends with everybody.

After dinner Florry Neville took him away into a corner and began to flirt with him outrageously ; but that I had known beforehand that she would do. I may mention that Florry is my cousin, and that I have been acquainted with her little ways for many years. Rufus appeared to be much taken with her. I don't know whether she chaffed him or not ; but, if she did, her chaff must have been of a very mild order, for

no one could have looked more complacent than he did when the ladies went upstairs and we adjourned to the smoking-room.

The next day he came out shooting with us, and shot uncommonly well; and in the evening we played pool, and although he was fluked twice and sold once, he did not break the lamps. After he had been three days in the house he had made himself quite a popular person, having spoken no uncivil word to anybody, nor offended against a single law of good breeding, unless it were in his attentions to Florry, which were perhaps just a shade too conspicuous, and which seemed to cause Mrs. Toogood some anxiety. But on the fourth day something happened which was quite certain to happen sooner or later. Florry grew tired of her red-haired admirer and took up with a more recent arrival. As soon as dinner was over, I saw Percival make for the sofa upon which she was sitting with his supplanter; I saw her look up at him over her fan with that air of innocent surprise and inquiry which she knows so well how to assume when it suits her purpose; and then, after saying a few words to her, he suddenly whisked round upon his heels and came striding towards the fireplace with a scowl upon his face which boded no good to the Dresden shepherdesses on the mantelpiece. Evidently the desire to break something was strong upon him; but he spared the china. All he did was to snatch up the poker and begin hammering at the coals with a violence which sent some red-hot cinders flying out on to the hearth-rug. This was certainly a breach of good manners; and when I mildly asked him whether anything was the matter, he inquired savagely what the devil I meant by that—which was worse. However, he begged my pardon presently, and I said it was of no consequence.

On the following morning we went out after the partridges again, and I don't think I ever in all my days saw a man shoot so wildly as Percival did. He had started in a bad temper, and the worse he shot the more angry he became. Everybody who spoke to him got sworn at for his pains, and he ended by pulling up in the middle of a turnip-field, pitching his gun half-a-dozen yards away, and marching off, with his hands in his pockets, growling and muttering to himself.

"Dear me!" said Toogood, rubbing his head, as he gazed after his retreating guest, "how ridiculous it is, to be sure! Fancy a man of his age behaving like a spoilt child in that way!"

"Ah," said Moreton, "I told you how it would be. Now you'll see. He'll go back to the house and kill the first person he meets."

"I suppose I ought to go after him," sighed Toogood ruefully.

But I said I would go; and my offer was accepted with alacrity.

"Do, like a good fellow, Oliver," answered Toogood; "I believe you can quiet him down better than anybody."

The truth is that our irascible friend had taken rather a fancy to me. Far be it from me to suggest that my own personal attractions were not

amply sufficient to account for this ; still, I have observed that, when I happen to be staying in the same house with Florry Neville, men often do take a fancy to me. I don't know why they should imagine that because she is my cousin it is worth their while to worm themselves into my good graces ; but the fact remains that they do.

I overtook Percival in the adjoining field, where he had stopped short and waited for me, after having been shouted at three or four times.

"Well," he said, looking anything but amiable, "what's the row ? What do you want ?"

"I have brought you your gun," said I ; "you may want it again perhaps. I'm not quite up to the mark myself to-day, so I thought I might as well walk home with you."

This soft answer seemed to have the effect of turning away his wrath. He laughed and clapped me rather heavily upon the shoulder, saying, "Upon my word, Oliver, you're an awfully good little chap !"

That is what one gets by being good-natured. I may be quite as sensitive about my diminutive stature as some other people are about their red hair ; but because I don't fly into tantrums a man thinks nothing of calling me "a good little chap ;" whereas if I had said, for instance, "You aren't a bad sort of a red-headed duffer, Percival, after all," I suppose he would simply have torn me to pieces.

"The fact of the matter is," he went on confidentially, "that I have a devil of a temper."

He looked as if he expected me to express some surprise ; so I said, "Have you really ?"

"Yes. I can control it pretty well generally ; but every now and then it gets the upper hand of me. And it is irritating to go out for a morning's shooting and not to be able to touch a feather, isn't it ?"

I said there was no doubt of that.

"Besides which, I have had other things to annoy me—annoy me most confoundedly," he went on, frowning and clenching his fists in a manner which I afterwards found was habitual to him. "What do you think of Miss Neville ?" he asked abruptly.

"What do I think of her ? Perhaps you don't know she is my cousin," I answered.

"Oh, yes, I do : that's why I ask. You ought to know something about her. Is she a humbug ? Is she the sort of girl to lead a man on and then throw him over ? That's what I mean."

And then, to my amazement, he proceeded to state that he had made up his mind to marry Miss Neville ; that she had given him to understand that his attentions were not disagreeable to her ; and that he wanted to know whether she was the girl he had taken her for, or nothing but a flirt. "Because," he concluded, "I do hate a flirt."

I always try to say pleasant things both of and to people, when I

can. I gave Florry a rather better character than she deserved, at the same time pointing out to my companion that he was really jumping to conclusions in a rather too impetuous way.

"Oh," said he, "I'm not impetuous. I don't for a moment suppose that she would take me to-morrow, if I asked her; and I don't mean to ask her then, nor for a long time to come. I tell *you*, because you are a friend of mine" (he had known me just four days), "and because I don't see the use of keeping secrets from one's friends; but of course it's quite another thing with her. I only asked you to tell me the truth about her so that I might have the chance of pulling myself up before it was too late."

I began to wish with all my heart that Red-head had kept his confidences to himself. The plain, unvarnished truth was that Florry was about the most irreclaimable flirt of my acquaintance; but it seemed a pity to say this: for she was not well off, and I had found out that Percival was a man of considerable property.

On the other hand, if I allowed him to infer that she was all his fancy had painted her, he would probably ere long have an unpleasant shock; in which case the chances were that he would murder us both. I therefore took up a high tone. I said that in matters of this kind a man must use his own powers of observation and choose for himself; I really could not accept the responsibility which he sought to impose upon me. Furthermore, I didn't think it was quite the thing to give private information about a lady's disposition, as though she were a hunter put up for sale.

He made me rather ashamed of myself by grasping my hand warmly and saying that I was a good fellow. Did I think, now, that Mrs. and Miss Neville could be persuaded to pay him a visit at his place in November? And would I come too? Without vanity, he might say that he could promise me as good pheasant-shooting as there was to be had in the county. I said yes to that without much hesitation; for I reflected that, if Florry accepted him, there would probably be no flare-up until after the marriage, and that if she didn't, he couldn't blame me. And so we walked back to the house upon the best of terms with one another.

I suppose Percival had no great difficulty in making his peace with Florry. Her second string was still out shooting, and to quarrel with the only available man at hand would have seemed to her a wanton waste of opportunity. She allowed him to monopolise her for the rest of the afternoon and evening, and he was proportionately cheerful and gracious to those about him. But on the following day she thought, no doubt, that it would be only fair to give the other man a turn. At all events, she went out riding with the other man; and nothing more than that was required to convert Percival once more into the semblance of a wild beast. All day long he did his best to pick a quarrel with one of us, but was baffled by our obstinate politeness; and I dare say we should

have managed to get to bed without a row if poor old Toogood had not made a most unlucky slip of the tongue after dinner.

"I can't see anything to admire in her," said he, referring to a lady whose claims to beauty happened to be under discussion. "I never could admire a woman with r——"

He came to a dead stop, and turned a great deal redder than the locks which he couldn't admire. It is true that he recovered himself rather cleverly by saying "round shoulders" in a loud voice; but this emendation came a great deal too late to be of any use to him. Already the children had exploded, one after the other, and were rolling about on their respective chairs in agonies of merriment; the rest of us were preternaturally unconscious; Mrs. Toogood was fanning herself nervously; and Percival, with a white face and blazing eyes, was crushing biscuits to powder between his fingers. The awkward moment passed, however, as all moments, awkward and otherwise, do, and there was no reason why it should have been ever alluded to again. But poor, dear Toogood is one of those infatuated people who never make a false step without subsequent uncalled-for flounderings. No sooner had the ladies left the room than he actually began to apologise for his stupidity. "My dear fellow, I'm sure I beg your pardon most sincerely. Can't think how I can have been such an ass as to let it slip out. The fact is, that at the moment, I had quite forgotten that you were here."

I don't suppose that our amiable host was ever before in such imminent danger of having one of his own decanters hurled at his head. Percival was literally quivering from head to foot with passion, and it was evident that he went through a hard struggle before he would trust himself to answer. When he did speak, it was to say in a low voice, "If you think you are going to get a rise out of me, Mr. Toogood, you'll be disappointed. But I don't see that I am bound to put up with insults of this sort in any man's house, and I shall leave yours to-morrow morning."

Toogood is the most patient of men; but his patience was probably exhausted by this time. He didn't say "You may go to the devil," as I really think I should have done in his place; but he made no more apologies, nor did he beg his guest to remain on. He sat silent and rubbed his head.

Later in the evening Percival came into the smoking-room and offered a sort of apology; upon which, as a matter of course, he was urged to reconsider his decision about going away. But this he declined to do, alleging that he had other reasons for wishing to leave without loss of time; and, to tell the truth, he was not very much pressed to stay.

II.

Shortly afterwards I wrote to Percival, saying that I was sorry to say that I should not be able to avail myself of his hospitality. To this

he returned no answer, and I soon forgot all about him. My next meeting with him did not take place until some six months later, when he turned up unexpectedly at Cannes, whither I had betaken myself, after wintering in Egypt, in order to see the Nevilles, who were living in an hotel there.

I was half dozing in an arm-chair by the open window, one morning, when I was startled by a tremendous shindy going on in the court-yard of the hotel below me. I went downstairs at once; for I rather like a row (when I am not called upon to take part in it), and the first thing that I saw was my red-headed friend engaged in an angry altercation with the landlord, while a group of grinning waiters and porters stood around, keeping well beyond the reach of his umbrella, with which he was describing energetic circles in the air.

"You chattering idiot!" he was bawling out, "*si vous n'avez pas shomber, pourquoi diabel télégraphier to say that you had?*"

"Monsieur, je vous assure"—began the landlord deprecatingly.

"Je vous assure that I'm not going to stand here all day. Avez-vous shomber ou n'avez-vous pas? Oui ou non? Répondez!"

Here the hall porter interposed. "Very goot rooms on the second floor, sare; au premier it was impossibilité d'en avoir."

"Then pourquoi diabel didn't you say so before? Here, carry up the luggage, you beggars! Porty baggage—vite! Look sharp!"

The noisy little procession came clattering upstairs—first the landlord, relieving his feelings by calling Percival opprobrious names in an undertone; then the waiters; then the porters with the luggage; finally Percival himself, growling like a distant thunderstorm. On the first landing he became aware of me, and looked a good deal more surprised than pleased at seeing me.

"Hullo!" he said, "I didn't know *you* were here."

From the emphasis which he laid upon the pronoun I was led to conclude that he had known that the Nevilles were at Cannes; and this, it subsequently appeared, was the case. I had not long resumed my interrupted siesta when there came a thundering rap at the door, and immediately my friend stalked in "to tell me," as he said, "all about it." He dragged a chair up to the window, seated himself astride upon it, and began a rapid explanation, sometimes frowning and sometimes smiling at me over his folded arms while he talked. It seemed that he was as much bent as ever upon espousing Florry Neville. He had tried to forget her, but without success; "and when I saw that fellow's marriage in the paper the other day," he concluded, "I made up my mind to lose no more time, and started for Cannes at once."

"What fellow?" I asked, in some bewilderment.

"As if you didn't know!" he returned pettishly. "Why, that man whom she threw me over for down in Suffolk, of course. I knew there was no chance for me so long as he was in the way."

At the risk of being pitched neck and crop out of window, I could

not restrain a roar of laughter. "My dear fellow," I said, "it's ten to one that Miss Neville doesn't even remember the name of that individual. You must either be unwarrantably particular or very easily discouraged."

"I'm not easily discouraged," he answered. "As to my being particular, that's quite possible. I wouldn't give a fig for a man who was not particular where his wife was concerned."

"His wife! This is taking time by the forelock with a vengeance," I remarked.

"Oh, well," he said impatiently, "it's the same thing." And then—by way, no doubt, of showing me how particular he was—he requested to be informed what had brought *me* to Cannes. He was kind enough to say that he quite admitted my right to be his rival; only he was anxious that there should be no misunderstanding about it. He begged, therefore, that I would treat him as a friend and speak openly.

I hastened to assure him that he had nothing to fear from me; that I hoped to remain a bachelor for many years to come; and that, if ever I did marry, my cousin would assuredly not be the favoured lady who would be asked to share my joys and sorrows. But I believe he was only half convinced, and indeed, from then to the end of our acquaintance, he never ceased to regard me with a greater or less degree of suspicion. Percival was the sort of man who would have been jealous of his own grandfather rather than not have been jealous at all.

He found plenty of people to be jealous of at Cannes, where Florry's attractions were widely known and appreciated, and I felt quite sorry for the poor fellow when I saw how cruelly she treated him. For the first few days he had it all his own way. Florry seemed to be, and I dare say was, delighted to see him. She rode to a picnic with him, she allowed him to take her out for a sail on the bay, she sat with him in the garden in the evenings, and in short lifted him up into a seventh heaven of bliss. Then, of course, she abruptly kicked him out of it. There was a man named Lacy who was at that time among the most devoted of her slaves; and when Percival had had his little innings it was Lacy's turn to score. To do Florry justice, I must say that there is no sort of deception about her proceedings. She is very pretty, she is capital fun, and she is an adept at what I should call the hard-hearted style of flirtation; but, as her sole aim and object is to amuse herself, she does not make much pretence of caring about one man more than another, nor does she attempt to disguise her liking for variety. Her admirers, if they are sensible men, understand this, and regulate their conduct accordingly. Lacy, who was a quiet, easy-going fellow, understood it, I suppose, well enough; but poor Percival didn't understand it at all, and the agonies that he suffered when he was left out in the cold were pitiable to witness. He was at Cannes altogether about a fortnight, I think, and I am sure I don't exaggerate when I say that he must have lost a stone's weight in that time. His face grew quite haggard and lined, his eyes had an unnatural brightness as if he did not sleep well at

night, and—most portentous of all—his vile temper seemed to have been completely cast out of him. At dinner, one evening, a waiter upset a plate of soup over his shoulder, and he got up meekly and went off to change his coat without saying a word.

In common humanity I felt bound, at last, to direct Florry's attention to these symptoms, and to warn her that Percival was not as other men are.

"Poor dear old Carrots!" she said; "and so you really think he has grown thinner? How nice of him! It will be a long time before you will allow any woman to reduce *your* weight, Charley."

I said I humbly hoped it might be a very long time indeed.

"There is a great deal that is delightful and original about Carrots," she went on pensively. "Sometimes I am almost inclined to give him what he wants, and become Mrs. Carrots."

"And won't he lead you a life if you do!" thought I to myself; but I only said, "You'll have to make haste about it then; for if he goes on wasting at his present rate of progress, there'll be nothing left of him at the end of another month."

Perhaps Florry was alarmed at this prospect; for she now took Percival into favour again, and began snubbing Lacy, who didn't seem to care much. Lacy appeared to me to hold wise and philosophical views of life, and to accept the pleasures of dalliance for what they were worth. When Florry smiled upon him, he basked in her smiles with perfect contentment; when she frowned, he wrapped himself in his own virtue and took a hand at whist, while his lady-love and his rival wandered about the garden, enjoying the scent of the orange-blossoms and the balmy breezes of the Mediterranean, and the moonlight, and all the rest of it. Other things being equal, I know which of the two men I should have chosen for a husband, if I had been a young woman, and the choice had been offered me; and in this case other things were about equal; for Mrs. Neville informed me that Lacy was very well off, and had excellent prospects. She also confided to me that she was dreadfully frightened of Percival, and wished to goodness he would go away. "A red Othello!" she said; "I couldn't bear to think of my daughter's passing her life with him."

I don't know whether Florry was beginning to think seriously of passing her life with him; but it soon became evident that she did not intend to pass the whole of her time with him at present. After a day or two Lacy was whistled back; and others besides Lacy had their share of encouragement. Then, just as Percival was upon the point of despairing utterly, he, in his turn, was recalled; and so the game of see-saw went on. See-saw is as good a form of amusement as another, so long as you remember where you are, and have your feet ready to touch the ground when your end of the plank goes down. You then descend gently and rise again in a graceful and dignified manner; and this was what Lacy did. But if you imagine that your seat is a steady one, you are

apt to bump Mother Earth suddenly and heavily, and to be carried aloft again with ridiculous plunges and total loss of balance; and this was what happened to Percival. He took it all, as I have said, with wonderful submissiveness. I suspect that Florry must have given him a hint that, despite appearances, he was really the favoured suitor: at least, I cannot account in any other way for the fact that he never once proposed to punch Lacy's head.

But a rude awakening was in store for him. There was a good deal of gaiety of a mild order going on at Cannes, and the Nevilles were constantly dragging me off to balls given by one or the other of the English people who had villas in the place. I am not very passionately fond of dancing myself; so I generally contrived to slip out and smoke a quiet cigar in the garden while the others were scuffling about and making themselves hot indoors; and I was enjoying myself in this way, one evening, when Percival came out of the house and flung himself down upon the bench beside me.

I had had the privilege of seeing him dance once—his performance much resembled that of the proverbial bear upon a hot plate—and I at once conjectured that Florry had sent him about his business, and that he had sought me out with a view to pouring forth the pent-up bitterness of an overcharged spirit. But that, it seemed, had not been his intention. He was rather dejected, but not at all wrathful, and, although he talked about nothing but Florry, he did not mention her by name. He spoke, in a subdued and somewhat pathetic tone, of women generally, and laid down the proposition that their conduct was not to be judged by the standards which are supposed to govern the actions of men. A woman's love of admiration, for instance, was something outside our experience. We were too coarse and too matter-of-fact to enter into it; and he was persuaded that we often in our haste condemned girls as flirts who didn't at all deserve that name, but were merely indulging in a very natural and innocent pastime.

"You see, Oliver, a woman has precious few amusements, when you come to think of it, and I don't see why we should grudge her those that she can get. I shall never go in for being one of those selfish brutes of husbands who won't let their wives go into society, and who look black at them if they speak to another man. What I say is that, so long as I know that she loves me, I want nothing more; and what do I care if Tom, Dick, and Harry are fools enough to think they have made a conquest of her because she finds them useful as partners at a ball? That's the way I look at it; I don't know whether you agree with me."

I said I did most thoroughly, and that my wife, if ever I had one, should be allowed any amount of rope. It was no hard matter to guess where the poor fellow had got these precious maxims from, and it was also easy enough to see that they were very far from representing his personal views.

"It's an insult to your wife," he continued, "to treat her as though

you couldn't trust her out of your sight. Now my motto is, 'Trust me all in all, or——'"

The words died away upon his lips; for while he had been speaking a couple had stepped through one of the open French windows on to the gravel—which couple, coming forward in the bright moonlight, became clearly visible to us as Miss Neville and Lacy; and this was an *argumentum ad rem* for which my philosopher had perhaps hardly bargained.

I regret to say that Florry had clasped her hands round her partner's arm and was looking up into his face in a very reprehensible manner, while he bent over her till their noses almost touched. I made so bold as to give a loud "Ha-hum!" but the bench upon which we were sitting was in the shade and the music was in full blast indoors; so Florry didn't hear any danger-signal, I presume. She and Lacy advanced serenely; and, when they were nearly within speaking distance of us, what did that little wretch do but take a rose out of the front of her dress and hand it to her companion, who kissed it fervently before popping it into the pocket nearest to his heart. I shook in my shoes; for Heaven only knew what she might not do next; but Percival waited to see no more. He bounded off the bench like an india-rubber ball, and away he went into the darkness as if the devil was after him. I hesitated for a few minutes and then decided to follow him; but he went at such a pace that I only caught him up on the doorstep of the hotel. He was as white as chalk, and I could see that he was in a towering rage.

"Come now, Percival," I said soothingly, taking him by the arm, "don't make mountains out of molehills. Remember what you said yourself just now about the innocent pastimes of women."

He turned round and glared at me. "Shut up!" he roared, giving me a shove that sent me spinning to the other side of the hall; and presently I heard him mounting the staircase three steps at a time.

Rude; but perhaps not unpardonable. I forgave him, and went to bed, consoling myself with the reflection that, if murder or suicide came of this, I had at least done my little best to avert bloodshed.

III.

About six o'clock the next morning I was roughly awakened by Percival's coming into my room and pulling the pillow from under my head.

"What is the matter now?" I asked, sitting up and rubbing my eyes; and I dare say I added some strong expressions; for there is nothing in the wide world that I hate so much as being roused from my slumbers in the middle of the night.

Percival sat down on the bed. "Look here, Oliver," he said; "I must get out of this. After what you saw last night, I needn't tell you why. I'm not the first man who has been made a fool of by a woman; and I'm not going to break my heart about it—no fear!" Here he

pumped up a hollow laugh. "But it won't do for me to stop in this place," he went on. "I should be breaking somebody's neck if I did; and I'm off to the Pyrenees this morning to shoot bears and bouquetins. After a week or two of that I shall be able to pull myself together, I expect."

"Quite right," I said sleepily. "Best thing you can do."

"I don't want to go alone, though. Now, Oliver, will you do a fellow a good turn, and come with me? I left the tent and everything else that we shall want out there last year, and I've telegraphed to the natives to say I'm coming. It would do you all the good in the world to camp out in the mountains for a bit. Of course I pay all expenses, and I'll guarantee you some sport."

I hardly knew what answer to make. Life at Cannes was monotonous, to say the least of it; I had never seen a bear in my life, except at the Zoo, and I had never seen a bouquetin at all. On the other hand, life in the wilds with so uncertain-tempered a companion as Percival might not prove to be an unmixed delight. He watched me eagerly while I was balancing these considerations one against the other, and forestalled my reply by exclaiming, "For Heaven's sake, Oliver, don't say you are going to refuse! I don't mind telling the truth to you: I'm hard hit—I'm devilish hard hit."

His voice shook a little, and upon my word I believe there were tears in his eyes.

"I *daren't* go alone," he went on. "So long as I'm shooting, I'm all right, and I don't care a snap for any woman in the world; but I couldn't face the long evenings all by myself. Hang it, man! can't you understand? It's a case of something very like life or death, I can tell you."

I think I mentioned before that I am extremely good-natured. This piteous appeal of Percival's turned the scale, and I said I would see him through.

Florry's face, when we made our adieux to her and her mother before starting for the station, was a very amusing study, and if Percival noticed it, he must have felt himself fully entitled to score one. But I am not sure that he looked at her at all. He said in an off-hand way, "Good-bye, Miss Neville. Meet you again some day I hope," and plunged into the omnibus, head first, without waiting for her to make any reply.

I don't think Florry half liked it. Whether she had intended to marry Percival or not, I am very sure that she had never contemplated his bolting after so unceremonious a fashion; but of course it was too late to think of stopping him then. She took quite an affectionate farewell of me, begging me to be sure and let her know what sport we had, and asking what my address was to be.

"Poste Restante, Bagnères de Luchon," growled out Percival from the recesses of the omnibus. "We shan't be much in the way of getting letters for the next fortnight, though. Come along, Oliver; there's no time to lose."

Now will it be believed that, after all that had come and gone, that red-headed idiot sulked for a matter of four-and-twenty hours because my cousin had expressed her intention of writing to me? I couldn't make out what was wrong with him at first; but by degrees it transpired, and I had all the trouble in the world to persuade him that, putting my own blameless innocence out of the question, it was utterly illogical of him to be at the same jealous of Lacy and of me. Indeed, it was only by threatening to abandon him to his fate at Toulouse that I managed to bring him to his bearings. After that he became more reasonable, and both his spirits and his manners improved as soon as we had left civilisation behind us.

We spent ten days very pleasantly and successfully, upon the whole, in the wild Spanish valley where Percival had chosen to pitch our tent. No bears came our way, but we killed a lot of isards, and I was lucky enough to bring down the only bouquetin that I got a shot at. Percival shot two; which was just as well, for it would have been quite enough to upset his equanimity that the larger number should have fallen to my share. With his removal from the chastening influence of Florry's society, his queer, gusty temper had reasserted itself to some extent, and we had more than one absurd little scene with the guides and porters who accompanied us; but, taking him altogether, he was not a disagreeable companion. In point of fact we had so few opportunities for conversation that there was not much fear of our falling out. Our days were naturally given up entirely to sport; and when we returned to our encampment in the evening, dead beat and as hungry as hawks, neither of us wished for anything more than to partake of the savoury stew which the guides prepared for us, and to lie down afterwards with our feet to the blaze of the bonfire, listening to their long yarns or to the melancholy dirge-like songs that they sang, until we were overtaken by sleep. I don't think Florry's name was once mentioned, but Percival alluded to her indirectly every now and again, and from some hints which he let fall I gathered that he had not yet given up all hope. Very likely he had meant to renounce her for ever when he left Cannes; but upon more deliberate reflection he may have found that it was in his heart to forgive her, and may also have argued, from what he knew of her character, that she would be sure to want him back as soon as he was well out of reach.

We had more than a week of magnificent warm days and clear frosty nights; but then the weather suddenly changed, and the rain began to come down as it only knows how to come down in the mountains. Neither Percival nor I wanted to give the thing up without having fired a single shot at a bear; but we could not manage to keep the water out of our tent, and there was no other shelter within reach, except a wretched little hut about four feet high, used in summer by the Spanish shepherds, so we agreed to take advantage of this opportunity to cross over into France and get newspapers and letters.

We had a long, toilsome trudge across the snow, and did not reach Luchon until it was too late to think of anything but bed; but the next day we went to the post-office, where a large bundle of letters was delivered to each of us. Percival glanced hastily at his, and then flung them down with a muttered oath. Obviously he was disappointed for some reason or other; but it did not occur to me until afterwards that he might have cherished a wild hope of finding a communication from Florry among them. I was more favoured. My budget contained two letters bearing the Cannes post-mark, and the first of these I read aloud to Percival as we walked away—not on account of its intrinsic interest, which was small, but because I thought it as well to lose no occasion of convincing him that my relations with Florry were of a most correct and cousinly kind. But when I proceeded to open the second I was obliged to be seized with a terrific fit of coughing, for the very first words that caught my eye were, “You may congratulate me, if you like, on my engagement to Mr. Lacy.” Here was a nice piece of business! I stuffed the fatal missive into my pocket, and slipped away as soon as I could to finish it in private. There was no mistake about it. The horrid little woman had really gone and engaged herself to Lacy, and, with her usual want of consideration, had left me the agreeable task of announcing the news to Percival. “Love to Carrots,” she added in a postscript. “I hope he is enjoying himself, and that he won’t receive too warm a hug from one of his kindred bears.”

I haven’t the least doubt that when she wrote those words there was a malicious grin on her face, and that she flattered herself she had paid Carrots off that time. But if she imagined that I should carry this epistolary slap in the face to its destination, she was sadly mistaken in me. “No, indeed,” I thought; “I am not going to expose myself to the risk of being eaten up alive to please anybody;” and I determined that Percival’s sport should not be spoilt by any unwelcome communication from me.

The unlucky part of it was that I had aroused his suspicions by letting him hear the contents of the first letter, and stopping so suddenly upon the point of reading him the second; and all that day and the next, when we set out to return to our encampment, he went on bothering me about it. What had Miss Neville said in that other letter of hers? Why was I so confoundedly mysterious? Had she mentioned him?—and so forth. I could only return feeble and evasive replies, which of course did not satisfy him. He tried wheedling me and he tried bullying me, but he might just as well have talked to a stone wall. The secret, I resolved, should only be dragged from me with my life; and at last he gave it up and subsided into a state of silent and subdued ferocity which made me exceedingly uncomfortable.

But when we reached our camp there was good news for us; and Percival came out of the sulks on hearing that the tracks of a whole bear family—father, mother, and two cubs—had been seen on the freshly-

fallen snow not a couple of miles away. The guides had already arranged our plan of action for the morrow, and pretended, as those fellows always do, to be so intimately acquainted with the habits of bears in general as to know to a nicety what their programme would be too. Paterfamilias, we were informed, would start with break of day for the higher pastures above the village of El Plan, whither some Spanish shepherds were known to have taken their flocks. The mother and cubs would probably remain either among or above the pine woods which clothed the southern side of our valley. Now, if the south wind held, what we had to do was simple enough. We had only to mount the opposite slopes towards the spot where the tracks had been seen, and there was little danger of our mounting so high as to place ourselves between the wind and our game. It was further considered advisable that we should separate into two parties, one of which should have for its object the destruction of Mr. Bruin, while the other should account for Mrs. B. and the children. This arrangement was not agreed to without some discussion and alternative suggestions, for Percival always hated to do as he was told; but it was the one finally adopted; and when the morning broke soft and cloudy, with a light breeze blowing in our faces, Percival and his party set off to the westward in the direction of El Plan, I and mine heading for the pine woods immediately facing us.

"That ought to give you the best chance, Oliver," said my friend generously as we parted.

I don't know when I have passed a more thoroughly comfortless hour than that which we spent in clambering up through those dense woods. The mountain-side was very precipitous; we had to advance as gingerly as possible, so as to avoid making any noise, and whenever I slipped or trod on a dry twig, Jean-Pierre, the chasseur who was in command of me, turned round, making hideous faces and cursed me under his breath. Furthermore, I couldn't help thinking that if the bear chose to appear suddenly at this stage of the proceedings it would be an awkward business for all of us.

We encountered no bear in the woods; but when at length we rose above the region of trees and emerged upon a stretch of coarse grass, we were rewarded for our climb by discovering traces which there was no mistaking upon a patch of the fast-melting snow. Following these up hopefully, we soon found ourselves upon the edge of a tolerably extensive snow-field, across which the tracks were so distinct that Jean-Pierre declared that they were not an hour old. He further professed to be able to see that the beast had been moving upwards at a leisurely pace, having no suspicion of being pursued, and prophesied that we should catch him up on some cliffs to which he pointed, and which he calculated that it would take us something like an hour to reach.

I was very glad when we did reach them, for toiling up hill through soft snow is not my notion of enjoyment; but I was not particularly sanguine as to the chance of Bruin's having had the civility to wait for

us, and, once upon the bare rocks, we had no longer any clue to guide us to his whereabouts. Jean-Pierre, nevertheless, continued to be full of confidence. He went on ahead, skirting the face of the precipice, where there was just foothold and no more, and the rest of us followed. After a time he held up his hand to stop us, bent down and examined the rock where a slight sprinkling of snow had lodged, advanced a little way, came back again, and then, pointing to a deep cleft just in front of us, exclaimed, "Il est là!"

I was at once posted at the entrance of this fissure and warned—in order to steady my nerves, I suppose—that if I missed I was a dead man; after which a stone was thrown in. No result. A second and a larger one, however, elicited a deep gr-r-r, which put an end to all doubt.

"Attention, m'sieur, s'il vous plaît!" sung out Jean-Pierre, and he fired into the chasm.

Immediately a large dark mass hurled itself out through the smoke. I suppose I must have taken aim, though I can't say that I have any recollection of doing so, for the next instant a fine large bear lay stone-dead at my feet.

Well, I dare say we kicked up rather more row over it than we need have done (Percival declared afterwards that he could have heard us yelling ten miles away); but I think perhaps it might count as an extenuating circumstance that this was my first bear. As for the natives, of course they ought to have known better.

So far, everything had gone quite according to programme, except that it was the old he-bear, not his partner, that I had killed; but now came the question of whether we were to rest satisfied with what we had accomplished and return to camp, or whether we should push on and try to effect a junction with Percival. After some debate it was agreed that Jean-Pierre and I should adopt the latter course. I quite admit that this was all wrong; but I was flushed with success, and I thought, supposing that Percival should happen to miss, what a thousand pities it would be that there should not be somebody at hand to back him up. So we set our faces westwards and downwards, and in due course of time reached the outskirts of the woods where we supposed that our companions would be.

I don't think we had been five minutes off the snow when I heard something crashing among the trees beneath us. I caught a momentary glimpse of a great lumbering body, and directly afterwards I distinctly saw a half-grown cub dashing helter skelter after it. I fired almost at random, and I need hardly add that I missed. The crashing sound grew fainter and fainter, and then I looked at Jean-Pierre and Jean-Pierre looked at me, and then we both whistled.

Well might we whistle! I prefer to draw a veil over our meeting with Percival which speedily ensued. I could not say much. My behaviour had certainly been bad enough to provoke anybody, and "d——d

unsportsmanlike" was perhaps not too severe a description to give of it; still I don't think he would have been quite so infuriated had I not been compelled to acknowledge that I had not only robbed him of his share of the day's sport, but had previously been quite successful in securing my own. When he heard that, his indignation knew no bounds. He swore the whole thing had been done on purpose; he vowed he would never go out with me again so long as he lived; he stamped and danced about, and I must say made a great fool of himself. I am quite sure that if I had conducted myself after that fashion everybody present would simply have roared with laughter; but none of us laughed at Percival. The fact is that there was something rather terrible about the man, though I don't know that I could exactly say in what it consisted.

At length his fury spent itself, and we set off sadly and solemnly to return to the valley, Jean-Pierre and I hanging our heads like naughty boys, the rest of the Jeans and Pierres and Jean-Pierres slouching after us with somewhat scared faces, and Percival striding along by himself in deep dudgeon.

The day was not to end without another breeze. In the course of the afternoon it was suddenly discovered that we were out of everything. There was no tea left, no bread, and not a drop of wine. Why these deficiencies had not been mentioned to us before we set out for Luchon, where we could easily have laid in a fresh stock of provisions, I don't know; but Jean said he thought Pierre had told us, and Pierre thought Jean had spoken, and Jean-Pierre had not considered it his business to interfere; and so there was a good all-round wrangle, in the midst of which Percival worked himself up into one of his paroxysms. All that was necessary was that one man should be sent down to Venasque, the nearest Spanish town, to get what we required; but this would not satisfy him. He declared that every one of them should go, and that they should walk all night, so as to be back before our breakfast hour in the morning.

"Allez-vous-en, the whole lot of you!" he shouted. "Entendez-vous?—je veux être seul. Take yourselves off, you lazy, garlic-eating devils, and let's have a little peace for one night."

The whole troop marched away without much protestation. I dare say they were not sorry to escape from this raving Englishman. Afterwards I wondered whether Percival had had a deliberate design in his mind when he dismissed them; but, looking back upon it all, I am inclined to think that he had not, and that what followed was the result of mere accident and opportunity.

He was quiet enough, though portentously gloomy, until the time came for us to partake of our evening meal. We had to collect the wood for our bonfire ourselves, and we had to cook our soup ourselves, and a nice mess we made of it. All this was sufficiently uncomfortable, and did not serve to improve my friend's temper; but the worst was to come. Being without wine, we were obliged to fall back upon brandy-and-water

for our drink, and I noticed with some uneasiness that Percival was making no use of the water at all. At last I rather foolishly ventured upon a gentle remonstrance, whereupon he promptly filled his glass with raw brandy, and tossed it off at a draught.

"You're a devilish hard fellow to please, Oliver, I must say," he remarked. "One would have thought you'd have been satisfied with spoiling my sport, and not wanted to spoil my dinner into the bargain. Deuce take it all, man; you don't suppose I'm going to let you tell me what I'm to drink, do you?"

The upshot of it was that by the time that we turned in he was anything but sober, though he was able to keep his legs and to talk without knocking his words together.

"Got your revolver?" he called out, just as I was dropping off to sleep.

We thought it as well to have revolvers always handy, for we had heard no very good report of the sparse inhabitants of those valleys.

"Oh, yes; all right," I replied. "Good-night." And I rolled over on my side.

But I had hardly closed my eyes before he disturbed me again by asking suddenly: "I say, Oliver, did you ever fight a duel?"

"Fight a duel?" I repeated drowsily. "No, never; did you?"

"No," he answered in a cool, casual sort of tone; but I don't see why I shouldn't fight one now. I think I will."

That woke me up. "What are you talking about?" I exclaimed. "Who are you going to fight with here?"

"Why, with you, of course," said he. "I'm not afraid. Now then—mind yourself." And without more ado he suited the action to the word.

A flash, a loud report, and the whistling of a bullet past my ear brought me to a realising sense of the pleasant position that I was in. I was out of that tent and behind the biggest rock that I could find before you could have said "Knife!" My nimbleness astonished myself. Mercifully there was no moon, and the red glare of our camp fire only served to make the shadows blacker.

Percival blundered out after me, cursing and swearing. "Stand up, you skulking devil!" he roared. "Why don't you stand up and fight like a man?" And bang went another barrel.

"Now this time," said he with tipsy solemnity, "I'm going to take a careful aim and hit you. Oh, I see you, you beggar!—don't you flatter yourself that you're invisible."

The worst of it was that I was by no means sure that he didn't see me. He advanced with slow, unsteady steps, and began prowling round my rock, while I, crouching upon all fours, dodged him by a succession of noiseless hops, like a huge toad. Bang! bang! went two more barrels. "That makes four," thinks I. Whether he saw me or not, I saw him plainly enough, and I had my own loaded revolver in my hand all the time. I don't think I ever felt more tempted to shoot a man in

my life. Fortunately he let off his last two barrels before the temptation became too strong for me. One of the bullets passed over my head, and I heard the other strike the ground beside me. Then I rose erect, feeling myself master of the situation.

"Now, Percival," I said, "I could shoot you six times over, if I chose; but of course I shall do nothing of the kind. Go and lie down. You're very drunk, you know, and——"

"That's a lie!" he interrupted.

"Very well. Lie down and go to sleep, anyhow. Perhaps you'll have the grace to beg my pardon to-morrow morning."

He growled and blustered a good deal; but eventually he did return to the tent and threw himself down. I then proceeded to take certain precautionary measures; after which I, too, stretched myself on the ground. But no sooner had I done so than up the brute jumped again.

"No good trying to sleep," he said; "slow work sleeping. Let's have another duel. Where's the cartridges?"

"Every single cartridge that we possess is safe at the bottom of the stream," answered I, with a chuckle; for I had just had time to anticipate that danger. I cared very little for his curses and threats, knowing that, if the worst came to the worst, I had it in my power to disable him; and I suppose he was sober enough to understand that too, for he desisted after a time, and apparently went off to sleep at last. I don't think I was many minutes in following his example. I wonder now at my temerity; but the fact was I was so dead tired that it was as much as I could do to hold my eyes open until he began to snore; and, besides, I didn't see that he could do me any harm, now that I was possessed of the one effective fire-arm that remained to us.

That only shows what an ass I was. The next thing of which I was conscious was that Percival was standing over me in the grey light of the dawn with my revolver in his hand. "And now, Master Oliver," said he, "I think I've pretty well turned the tables upon you."

Indeed he had! I gave myself up for lost, and I hope I may never again feel as frightened as I did at that moment. But Percival burst out laughing.

"You stupid old fool!" he said quite amiably; "do you take me for a murderer? It was all a joke, my firing at you last night. I only wanted to scare you, and I was no more drunk than you are."

I didn't in the least believe him; but it seemed more politic to pretend to do so.

"Come along up the hills and see the sunrise," he went on. "A breath of fresh air will do us both good."

I demurred to this proposition, alleging, what was perfectly true, that I hadn't had half my fair share of sleep; but I added politely that I hoped he wouldn't let me prevent him from climbing to any height that he pleased.

"Confound you!" he exclaimed angrily, "I believe you're in a funk

of me. Look here, then." He caught me by the arm, dragged me rather roughly out of the tent, and, flinging my revolver into the torrent, "Will that satisfy you?" he asked.

It was a pretty cool way of disposing of my property; but then, to be sure, I had drowned his cartridges. The end of it was that I had to go with him. Anything for peace, I thought; and I reflected with comfort that the guides would be back in the course of a few hours, after which my final farewell to this red-haired ruffian should very soon be spoken.

Percival led the way across to the northern side of our narrow valley, and we were soon scrambling up over boulders and slippery shale at a great pace, he whistling and singing, apparently in the highest spirits, and I silent, sulky, and out of breath. From time to time I suggested that we had mounted high enough; but he always replied briskly, "Oh, dear, no! we shall have to do another five hundred feet at least before we can get anything of a view, and there's heaps of time." And then he went on sniggering to himself, as though at some first-rate joke.

It was horridly unpleasant. I was beginning to have a very strong suspicion that the man was off his head. Drunk he was not; for he never made a false step, and we had already passed some places which demanded a steady head; but his manner was decidedly odd, and, when he turned to speak to me, I saw a light in his eyes which I didn't like. I suppose it must have taken us the best part of two hours to reach the edge of the glacier which sloped upwards towards the summit of the ridge that separated us from France. By that time the sun had caught the higher peaks and the fleecy clouds around and below them; and I dare say the spectacle was a very exquisite one. Some people, I know, go into raptures over a sunrise; but I am not one of those people. I always loathe everything until I have had my breakfast; and the circumstances of this particular occasion were such that the snow and the sky might have clothed themselves in all the colours of the rainbow, with a hundred and fifty intermediate tints to boot, and have left me perfectly unmoved.

One thing I was quite determined about: I didn't mean to skip over hidden crevasses at the heels of a maniac; and, to show how determined I was, I sat me down doggedly on a rock, and observed: "That's enough for me. Not a step further do I go."

"Just as you like," answered Percival, with more suavity than I had expected of him. "Oliver, old chap," he continued, seating himself close beside me, and assuming an extremely friendly and confidential tone, "I want you to tell me something. It's of no great consequence; but I've a fancy to know. What did Miss Neville say to you in that last letter of hers?"

Perhaps it would have been wiser to tell him the truth, or a part of the truth; but I was cold and hungry and cross, and to have this tiresome subject reopened just when I was beginning to hope that the moment of my release was at hand was too much for me.

"Oh, bother!" I exclaimed. "I can't tell you all she said, and if I could, I wouldn't. I never show my letters."

"You read me her first one," retorted Percival.

"Yes; and a precious fool I was to do it. If you want to hear about her, you had better write to her yourself; I can't undertake the duties of a go-between."

Percival began to frown and glare. "Now, I'll tell you what it is, Oliver," he said; "I mean to have this out of you by fair means or foul. You had better make up your mind to that."

Nobody can say that, in all my previous wrangles with Percival, I had not been forbearance itself; but there is a point at which, like the traditional worm, I turn; and that point he had now reached. I refused point-blank to give him the information he asked for, and couched my refusal in forcible terms.

The next minute I was lying upon my face, and Percival, kneeling on the small of my back, was tying my arms tightly behind me with a silk handkerchief. The fellow was as strong as Samson, and I, as I have said before, am but a wee man. Successful resistance was hopeless; but I let out with my feet to the best of my ability, and had the pleasure of catching him one on the shin which I don't think he could have liked. He made no complaint, however, but quietly finished his operation, picked me up under his arm like a feather, and carried me, struggling and helpless, upwards. "You'd better keep still, unless you want to kill us both," was all that he said; and indeed I thought it as well to take his advice. How on earth he managed to scramble up the face of those rocks with a man under his arm is more than I can explain; but he did it (not without bumping and scraping me considerably, though); and after a bit we came to a narrow ledge. There he deposited me, and, descending rapidly some ten or twelve feet, contemplated me with a sigh of satisfaction.

"Now, my boy," said he, "you stay there till you have answered my question."

"Then I shall stay here for the rest of my life," I returned.

I suppose no man was ever placed in a more ridiculous position. To give in would have been too humiliating; to descend from my perch without the use of my hands was out of the question, and to get my hands free seemed scarcely less so. Of course, however, I made a vigorous attempt. I tugged, I strained, I twisted and contorted myself in every possible way, while he stood below and laughed at me; but it was all in vain, and the only result of my writhing was that a lot of things rolled out of my pocket, among which was the very letter over which we had been fighting. Percival put his foot upon it just in time to save it from fluttering away before the wind.

"It strikes me that I can find out as much as I want now without your help," said he, holding up his prize triumphantly.

"Very well," I said. "Come here and untie me, then."

But he shook his empty head sagaciously. "Not so fast, my good friend. I suspect you of treachery. Either you are engaged to your cousin, or you have been telling her things about me which you don't want me to know of. We'll just see about that before we release you."

Percival was a gentleman by birth and bringing-up, and perhaps, when it came to the point, he did not altogether enjoy the sensation of looking at a letter addressed to another man. He stood for some few minutes with his back turned towards me, gazing abstractedly at the sunny mountain-tops opposite, and tapping his chin with the envelope. At length he turned round, and called out—

"I'll give you another chance. For the last time, will you tell me what is in this letter?"

"No," I shouted back resolutely, "I won't! Read it, if you don't mind behaving like a cad; and when you have quite done, perhaps you will be so good as to step up here and unloose me."

He made no reply, but stood thoughtfully tapping his chin with the letter, as before, and finally moved slowly away downhill. For a minute or two I heard the sound of his footsteps; then, every now and again, the clatter of dislodged stones, which showed me that he was still descending; then came profound silence. Uncomfortable as my position was, I was by no means impatient for his return. It was quite on the cards that, in the first access of frenzy which a perusal of Florry's cruel postscript might be expected to arouse, he might come tearing back and let off steam by flinging me over the precipice; and the longer he took to think about it the better, I felt, would be my chance of escaping with a whole skin and unbroken bones. But when a very long time had elapsed, and the sun had risen high into the heavens, and there was neither sound nor sign of Percival, I began to grow seriously uneasy. Could it be possible that the miscreant had meant to leave me there to perish miserably? Eventually I put my pride in my pocket, and shouted. The only answer that came to me was a succession of mocking echoes of my own voice—ahoy!—hoy!—hoy!—fainter and fainter, as the cliffs tossed it to and fro. Then I made more desperate and vain efforts to free myself. Then I peered over the brink of my ledge, and convinced myself that it would be madness to attempt to scramble down. Then I tried to fray through the silk handkerchief that bound me by rubbing it against the rock; but I was too tightly secured to move my arms to any purpose, and my muscles were so strained that every movement was an agony.

I don't know how long I fretted and fumed on that narrow shelf, parched with thirst, in considerable pain, and—I frankly confess—in a mortal fright; but I afterwards calculated that I must have been there quite three hours before I resolved in despair to take my chance of scrambling down without assistance. I wriggled over the edge, got one foot firm into a crevice, cautiously lowered the other, and then, as might have been expected, down I went, head over heels into

space. There was a tremendous crash, and that is all that I remember about it.

When I came to myself, I was lying on a grassy slope, with Jean-Pierre pouring brandy down my throat, and an assemblage of white-faced Pierres and Jeans kneeling round me. I was pretty well knocked about; but I was not broken anywhere, and Jean-Pierre began to praise the saints loudly when I sat up and asked for some water.

"You gave us a fine fright, monsieur," he said. "A pretty thing it would have been for us if we had had to go back to France and say that both our gentlemen were killed!"

"*Both!*" I ejaculated. "You don't mean to say that Mr. Percival is dead!"

"*Mon Dieu!* monsieur," returned Jean-Pierre in a tone of gentle remonstrance, "how would you have a man drop down a sheer three hundred feet upon his head, and live?"

Whether it was accident or design that brought about poor Percival's death, I cannot, of course, say. That he was not accountable for his actions on that last morning of his life I am quite convinced. I had to give some explanation to the guides of the circumstance that I had been found with my arms tied behind me, and I did so by telling them that my unfortunate friend had gone out of his mind before treating me in that way. This I firmly believe to have been the truth; and they agreed with me that he had for some time past been more mad than sane. They further concurred in my opinion that it could do no possible good, and would probably only cause troublesome complications, to make all the facts known to the authorities. Luckily for us, the authorities were less troublesome than an English coroner's jury would have been, and it was neither supposed nor suggested that my own fall had been due to any other causes than the inexperience and foolhardiness which, as I was told, had proved fatal to my companion.

When I next saw Mrs. Lacy—which was rather more than a year afterwards—she expressed a great deal of concern at the fate of the hapless man with the red hair, and was eager for fuller particulars than she had as yet been able to obtain. I gratified her curiosity as well as I could, and dwelt a good deal upon Percival's recklessness; but I did not think it necessary to say anything about the letter which we had no small difficulty in forcing out of his stiffened fingers when his body was carried back to camp.

W. E. N.

The Boke of St. Albans.

THERE is a cycle in the favourite quotations which do duty at political meetings or in the House of Commons, according to which certain lines of poetry recur after a lapse of, it may be, a few years, it may be a generation. Such a couplet, for instance, as

Princes and lords may flourish, or may fade ;
A breath can make them as a breath has made,

appears about once in ten years ; and it needs not the memory of a Macaulay to assign it to its speaker, and even to name the debate which it illustrated. Other quotations, however, are universally in favour, especially with the Conservative county member who has not forgotten all that Eton and "Smalls" taught him. We could almost predict the exact point in any county meeting when the caution of some rustic Nestor will clothe its sentiments in the trite words "Timeo Danaos," &c., or its equally well-known brother, "Rusticus expectat." An article might easily be written on this phenomenon, and on the political complexion assumed by the stock quotations of the reviews and of Parliament. But our purpose is rather to point out an analogy to this curious fact in the singular law of mental association by which some book becomes especially dear to an age or a brotherhood of literature. Thus, Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy* fell in with the predominant literary taste of the latter part of last century and the beginning of this, and it has since gone out of favour till our own time. In Sir W. Scott's and Mr. Scrope's days, numerous references were made in popular writings to the *Boke of St. Albans*. Many books, however, are oftener talked about than known, and the *Boke* is certainly one of these. Indeed, until the last few months, it was not always easy even for the student to acquire any knowledge of this celebrated volume. The originals of the first edition yet in existence might probably be counted on the fingers of one hand, while the later ones are themselves scarce and costly. Haslewood's reproduction, in the year 1812, soon became practically unattainable, and the same hateful fate in the eyes of book-buyers overtook Pickering's charming reprint of the "Fysshynge with an Angle" of the date 1827. In the last few months an admirable reproduction of the *Boke* has been issued by an enterprising London publisher, so that for the time being the quaint black-letter pages and sententious wisdom of Dame Juliana Berners are within the reach of all book-lovers. We say for the present, advisedly, as the edition will certainly be speedily exhausted, the present being peculiarly the age of such reproductions of old books.

The originals of any celebrated or scarce work can now be bought in most cases only by the wealthy. Every sale shows this more decisively than the last, though the prices obtained for rarities at the late Mr. Laing's sale cannot, it may be thought, be well exceeded in this generation. But such books may now be regarded not only as the natural prey of the bibliomaniac, but as being a valuable investment. Should the very improbable contingency ever occur of their price falling in our country, America, with its eager legion of book-lovers, their purses well filled with gold, will only too gladly purchase them; while Australia, New Zealand, and several other vigorous young colonies are waiting to take their part in the competition for old books before many years have elapsed. The demand for reproductions, therefore, may be considered as yet to be only in its infancy. Leaving the great publishing clubs—such as the Camden, Surtees, and the like—out of the question, the lover of scarce books owes much gratitude to the two *præsentes divi*, Mr. Arber and Mr. E. Stock, for their reproductions of rare books and editions. Impecunious book-hunters gladly cherish, as second only to the originals, such books as the copy of the first edition of Walton's *Compleat Angler*, the reprint of Elyot's the *Governour*, and by no means least, the reproduction of the *Boke of St. Albans* by an indelible photographic process.

It would have been of little use last year to have written an account of the *Boke*. Now that it is generally accessible, however, no apology is needed for a survey of a volume so celebrated and yet so little known, round which a halo of romance hangs in regard to its supposed writer, which has so greatly contributed to form the conception of sports held in honour ever since its publication by English gentlemen, and which possesses many other points of interest to every student of his own language. The manners and tone of thought of the higher classes at the close of the Wars of the Roses are clearly reflected in it. A sharp line yet divides the aristocrat and "gentilman" from the "ungentill men." The "artycles of gentilnes," the pride of old and high lineage, and bearing of coat armour are strongly insisted upon throughout the book; common men, hinds, and "rascal" are scarcely named. Their very existence is alien to the theory of royal and high-bred sport which is here expounded. It needed many a doughty conflict, both in argument at Westminster and in blows, which have often proved superior to argument, on English ground, before the middle class was able to assert not merely its liberties but its corporate existence; and before still humbler men, by fighting side by side with their lords, engendered that sense of brotherhood which only died out in the chilling apathy of last century. It is seldom, however, that a nobler and better book has been written from a distinctly aristocratical standpoint than this of which it is our purpose to treat.

About a quarter of a mile south-east of the abbey of St. Alban, not far from the little river Ver, in which Dame Juliana Berners may have fished, and which is yet renowned for its trout, lie the scanty ruins of

Sopwell nunnery. The ancient well from which the name was derived is yet in existence—situated nearly in the line between St. Albans and the Daughter House—and is indicated by a protecting arch of brickwork, and a tree planted hard by it. Of this nunnery the authoress of the *Boke* was certainly an inmate, and most probably, as tradition has handed down, its prioress. Her name, indeed, does not appear in the list of the prioresses of Sopwell; but there is a gap in their enumeration between 1430 and 1480, in which upholders of the time-honoured belief may legitimately insert the Dame, if they will. The nunnery itself had been founded, under the rule of St. Benedict, about 1140, and was subject to the abbot of St. Albans. Its rule of life was very strict, and at first the nuns had been enclosed under lock and key, made additionally secure by the seal of the abbot for the time being upon the door; * but gradually the discipline was relaxed, and, without accusing the inmates of Sopwell of the license and ill-living which has earned an evil notoriety for many religious houses prior to the Reformation, † it is quite conceivable that the prioress of this house and her favoured dames might have allowed themselves a decent liberty during which the sports of the field alternated with the holier exercises of devotion. At the dissolution of St. Albans abbey in 1540, when one Richard Boreman (or Stevynnacke) was abbot, the monastic buildings and all connected with them were granted to Sir Richard Lee, and he at once commenced demolishing the whole. Sopwell escaped this fate for the time, and was even repaired from the ruins of the Mother House, but itself fell into decay in the reign of Charles II. ‡ A legend mentioned by Camden relates that Henry VIII. had married Anna Boleyn in the nunnery of Sopwell, but Shakespeare follows a different account. Many celebrated historic scenes surround it, without having recourse to doubtful glories. Lord Bacon's name is imperishably connected with St. Albans. Battle-fields, where the best blood of England was spilt in civil strife, environ it. Ostorius has left his name upon a hill hard by; while Hatfield House may be seen in the distance, where Elizabeth, as the story runs, heard, while sitting under an oak tree, of the death of her sister Mary. If we are most impressed by the size and architecture of St. Albans abbey, the prioress of Sopwell may perhaps have found in the well-watered, well-wooded neighbourhood where her lot was cast, an incentive to follow the field sports which are so characteristically connected in the *Boke* with her memory. The well-known character of Mary, Queen of Scots, shows the passionate enthusiasm with which, a century after Dame Juliana's time, high-born ladies devoted themselves to hunting and hawking.

It would be unfair to the reader not to tell him that Dame Juliana Berners is a somewhat legendary personage, and that a keen literary

* See Chauncy, quoted by Mr. Blades (Preface to *Boke of St. Albans*, page 13).

† See, however, Abp. Morton's letter to the Abbot of St. Albans in 1489 (Froude's *History of England*, Vol. II. cabt. edit., p. 307).

‡ Dr. Nicholson's *Guide to the Abbey of St. Alban*, pages 36 and 86.

battle has been fought over her life. The usual belief is that mentioned above, which relates that having been a Dame of the House (that is, a sister able to pay for her maintenance, and so placed on a higher footing in the establishment than the ordinary nuns who performed the menial tasks of the little community), she was at length chosen prioress. Chauncy and Haslewood assign her a distinguished lineage, drawing out her pedigree from Sir John Berners, of Berners Roding, county Essex, who died in 1347. His son, Sir James, was beheaded on Tower Hill in 1388. The family branched out into Sir Humphrey Bourchier, who was slain at Barnet, fighting for Edward IV., and was a son of one Margery Berners. His son is the translator of Froissart. Thence it stretches to Jane, who was mother of Sir Thomas Knyvet, whose great-great-grandson left a sole heir, Katharine. She married Richard Bokenham, Esq.; to whom the barony of Berners was adjudged in 1720. The Dame herself is supposed to have been the daughter of Sir James Berners. The legend continues that she probably spent her youth at the court, and shared in the woodland sports then fashionable, thus acquiring a sound knowledge of hunting, hawking, and fishing. Having withdrawn from the world, and finding plenty of leisure time in the cloister, it is next believed that she committed to writing her memories of these fascinating sports. Indeed, if she were an active prioress, the exigencies of fast days would demand that she should busy herself in the supply of fish required for the sisterhood; so that it is quite possible that, like all other observant anglers, she grew old daily learning more of that craft whereof she treats more fully and in a clearer order than the other subjects of the *Boke* are handled. Be this as it may, no enthusiastic disciple of angling need disabuse himself of his time-honoured belief that Dame Juliana was a patroness of his sport; while if any will be a sceptic and apply the destructive criticism which is so fashionable in our times to these details of the Dame's life, he, too, is at perfect liberty so to please himself. Facts are of the scantiest for both alike. Let us hope, however, that few will carry their disbelief to the same point as does Mr. Blades: "What is really known of the Dame is almost nothing, and may be summed up in the following few words. She probably lived at the beginning of the fifteenth century, and she possibly compiled from existing MSS. some rhymes on hunting." It is quite possible to indulge a spirit of destructive criticism beyond the limits of good sense. The treatise of hunting in the *Boke* ends: "Explicit Dam Julyans Barnes in her boke of huntyng;" while the extremes of practical acumen and rampant agnosticism meet amusingly enough in his further dictum: "Had the Dame Julyans Barnes of the fifteenth century lived now, she would have been just 'Mrs. Barnes.'"* But, in any case, we may picture the Dame solacing herself with her treatises among the ruthless battles, treasons, and executions which marked the Wars of the Roses, from which her own kith and kin had not escaped scot-free. And as the fairer vision of an Eng-

* See Mr. Blades's *Introduction* to Mr. Stock's *Reproduction*.

land united as of old under the rule of Henry VII. rose before her eyes, it is easy to fancy her resolving that her precepts shall be set before gentlemen by the marvellous art which Caxton had been introducing into England at his Westminster press, "the almonry, at the red pale." On a sudden she finds another of these wonder-working printers settled at her own doors, and at once makes over to him her manuscripts, much to the delectation of posterity.

Another literary puzzle is connected with the printer of the *Boke* at St. Albans. He is only known from Wynken de Worde's reprint of *St. Albans Chronicle*, the colophon of which states: "Here endith this present chronicle, compiled in a book and also enprinted by our sometime schoolmaster of St. Alban." Whoever he was, he plied his press from 1480 to 1486, and issued eight works, the first six of which are in Latin. Towards the end of his life he seems to have grasped the fact that great distinction waited for him who should give to the English books in their own tongues; accordingly his last two folios, the *Boke* and *St. Albans Chronicle* (the latter consisting of Caxton's *Chronicles of England*, with a few additions on ecclesiastical events and Papal chronology), were printed in the vernacular. It is curious that without any further connection, as it seems, with the Westminster press, the schoolmaster printer obtained (and himself used for printing) an old and worn fount of type which had been discarded by Caxton. And after the stoppage of the St. Albans press this same fount returned to Westminster, and was actually used by Wynken de Worde in his reprint (1496-97) of the two English books which had been issued by the press of that place. Cardinal Wolsey is supposed to have put a stop to all printing at St. Albans during his abbacy. He had certainly expressed his dislike of the art in a convocation held in St. Paul's Chapter House, when he told his clergy that if they did not in time suppress printing, it would prove fatal to the Church. In point of workmanship, Mr. Blades deems that the St. Albans printer, especially in his English books, is much inferior to the contemporary issues of the Westminster press; the types being worse, as well as the arrangement and presswork, while the ink is often very bad. Much, therefore, of the *Boke* is not very easy reading, especially if the student be unfamiliar with the early black-letter books.

As if to match all these uncertainties, even the bibliography of the *Boke* is beset with more than ordinary difficulties. The subjects on which it treats were in special favour with the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, so that probably more editions of it than of any other profane book were then put forth, each differing either in printer's name or in the selection of the subjects of the *Boke*. Thus Wynken de Worde, before the fifteenth century closed, published two editions of it. In the next century Mr. Blades (who does not, however, profess to have exhausted the subject) enumerates sixteen more. W. Powell, in his edition of 1550, only reprinted the "Haukynge, huntynge, and fishyng." This last treatise was often printed separately. The celebrated Gervase Markham, in

1598, "reduced into a better method" the whole *Boke*; just as in 1614 a certain "S. T." reprinted it as *A Jewell for Gentry*. During the eighteenth century the rage for hawking and for heraldry had greatly died out; so that we only find one edition, namely, the *Boke of Cote Armour*, in 1793, reprinted by J. Dallaway. Were not the *Boke* celebrated from its own contents, it would be famous in the eyes of all bibliomaniacs from its rarity in any form, whether in black-letter or as a reprint. America possesses a reprint of the "Treatyse on Fysshynge," edited by Mr. Van Siclen, and published at New York in 1875. In his *Enemies of Books* Mr. Blades tells a story of an original black-letter copy of the *Boke* being sold no later than 1844 for literally a few pence, which causes a book-lover's mouth to water. A pedlar purchased it amongst other waste-paper from a poor widow at Blyton, in Lincolnshire, for ninepence, i.e. at the rate of one penny per pound! Sir C. Anderson soon afterwards offered the man five pounds for the *Boke*; but Mr. Stark, the well-known bookseller, eventually bought it for seven guineas, and sold it immediately on his return to London to the Right Hon. Thomas Grenville for seventy pounds or guineas. The book had been weeded out of the library at Thonock Hall, probably in ignorance of its nature and value. But such a chance as fell to this pedlar's lot does not often occur to the book-lover. He may sigh with Virgil's hero:—

Si nunc se nobis ille aureus
Ostendat!

Alas! the wish does not forthwith fulfil itself as in the case of Æneas.

To turn to the contents of the *Boke*, differences are found from the very beginning. Thus the first edition (1486), containing the chief "plesures belongyng to gentill men hauyng delite therein," at that period is made up of four separate treatises on "Hawking," "Hunting," the "Lynage of Coote Armiris," and the "Blasyng of Armyes;" although a great deal of intercalated matter is interspersed, having as little connection with any of these treatises, or with each other, as the subjects usually found at the end of modern almanacs. The celebrated treatise on "Fishing" is added in the second edition. In 1586 (just a hundred years from its first publication) the work appears as the *Boke of St. Alban, Hawking, Hunting, Fishing, with the True Measures of Blowing*. The quaint and celebrated woodcuts are inserted in the second edition. These are three in number. The first consists of a group of men going hawking, while a hawk flies over them, and two dogs, like our Italian greyhounds, run at their side. The costume of the sportsmen is as noticeable as the character of their dogs. In the second appears a "bevy" or "sege" of fowls—we are uncertain which the Dame would have it called—some of which are flying, others swimming, and others, again, standing on the banks of a stream like Homer's fowls on the Cayster; a lion is seizing one of these, which looks like a bittern. The attitudes and drawing of the birds are delightfully

varied, and would prove invaluable for a reproduction of mediæval tapestry. The spirited woodcut in the "Treatyse on Fysshynge" is probably better known than the two just mentioned. The servant (perhaps intended for the portrait of a lay brother or one attached to Sopwell priory) is engaged with rueful face in capturing fish. His rod and line are extremely primitive, and he would have no chance of catching anything with them in the present day, when fish are supposed to be so highly "educated," owing to the constant persecution with bait and fly to which they are subjected. An open tub lies at his side, in which he is intended to place his captives, and keep them alive until they could be deposited in the "stew."

It is time, however, now that we have hawk on wrist and dog under the arm—as Harold is represented on the Bayeux tapestry when starting for Normandy—to give some notion of the *Boke*. In the first edition the treatise on "Falconry" has the first place, inasmuch as that sport was the most cherished recreation of all gentlemen and fair women at the time when the Dame was writing. To see the absorbing character of its pursuit, it is only needful to reflect how much of the terminology connected with it still lingers in the English language. A reference to Shakespeare will answer the same end. He is indebted to hawking for numerous scattered expressions, and for imagery which occasionally runs through a whole speech. Mr. Harting, in his *Ornithology of Shakespeare*, has carefully collected together all these references in the poet's works, and commented lucidly upon them from a practical acquaintance with the noble art of falconry. Without any such modern inventions as preface, or even title page, the Dame begins at once:—

In so moch that gentill men and honest persones haue greete delite in haukyng, and desire to haue the maner to take haukys; and also how and in waat wyse they shulde gyde theym ordynateli; and to know the gentill termys in communynge of theyr haukys; and to understonde theyr sekeneses and enfirmities; and also to knowe medicines for theym accordyng, and mony notabull termys that ben used in haukyng both of their haukys and of the fowles that their haukys shall fley. Therefore thys booke fowlowyng in a dew forme shewys veri knowlege of suche plesure to gentill men and þsonys disposed to se itt.

Then succeeds a series of directions as to the correct terms to use in speaking of hawks at their different ages, together with an account of the mode in which they are to be reclaimed and dieted. Hawks appear to be subject to manifold diseases, the very names of which sound strange to the present generation, which too often strains every energy to kill hawks as pestilent vermin. The "ry," "frounce," "cray," and "aggre-steyne" are samples; while more familiar sufferings seem to have been their lot in podagra, which is more particularly described as gout in the head, throat, and reins respectively. Appropriate remedies are given for these and many more complaints, some of which receipts sound worse than any sufferings with which hawks can ever have been afflicted. Here is a comparatively mild "medecyne for the ry." "Take dayeses

leeuys and stampe hem in a mortar, and wrynge owt the juse, and with a pinne put it in the hawkis nares [nostrils] ones or twyes when the hawke is smalle goorged, and anon after let hir tyre, and she shall be hoole as a fysh." A list of the proper terms to use in naming the different parts of the hawk comes next—his claws, feathers, legs, and the like. The "beam feathers" are described. The mode of flying them by putting up a partridge, and the way in which the victorious hawk is afterwards to be rewarded, is enlarged upon. The "creaunce" and "jesses" (which latter term has been rendered immortal by Shakspeare) are next explained, together with the mode in which "to dispose and ordain your mewe." The fifty-three pages of the treatise conclude with directions respecting the bells which hawks are to wear (and which are still used by modern falconers in order to know the exact spot where the hawk may be crouching over her quarry in long grass or rushes); they are not to be too heavy, and the like. It is worth while transcribing some of these injunctions :—

Looke also that thay be sonowre and well sowndyng and shril, and not both of oon sowne, but that oon be a semitoyn under a noder, and that thay be hoole and not brokyn, and specialli in the sowndyng place; for and thay be brokyn thay wyll sowne full dulli.

Of spare hawke bellis ther is chooce and lyttill of charge of thaym, for ther beeth plenty.

Bot for goshawkes somtyme bellis of Melen [Milan] were calde the best, and thay be full goode, for thay comunely be sownden with silver and solde ther after. Bot ther be now used of Duchelande bellis of a towne calde durdright [Dordrecht], and thay be passing goode, for thay be well sortid, well sownded, sonowre of ryngyng in shrilnes, and passing well lastyng.

The commencement of the next subject is sufficiently quaint. This is supposed to have been prefixed by the "scolemaster" to the manuscript of the Dame, which begins forthwith in rude verse. In these verses she probably gives her own transcript of numerous rhymes current in her day, and forming, as it were, a catechism of sport. Thus the reader will note that the "dear child" is duly taught by one "Tristram." Sir Tristram was the Knight of the Round Table, most skilled in woodcraft, "Sir Tristram of the Woods," and to the magic of his name was assigned in the Dame's time the responsible duty of teaching the young noble and gentleman the needful terms of woodcraft. Here, however, are the preface and the verses, which latter, with all respect to the Dame, we fear can only be styled doggrel :—

Lyke wise as in the booke of hawkyng aforesayd are writyn and noted the termis of plesure belongyng to gentill men hauyng delite therin. In thes same maner thys booke folowyng shewith to such gentill personys the maner of huntynge for all maner of beestys, wether thay be beestys of venery, or of chace, or rascall. And also it shewith all the termys conveyent as well to the howndys as to the beestys aforesayd. And in certayn ther be many dyuerse of thaym, as it is declared in the booke folowyng.

BESTYS OF VENERY.

Wheresoeuere ye fare by fryth or by fell,
 My dere chylde take hede how Tristram dooth you tell
 How many maner beestys of venery ther bere ;
 Lystyn to yowre dame and she shall you lere,
 Foure maner beestys of venery there are :
 The first of theym is the hert, the secunde is the hare,
 The boore is oon of tho, the wolff and not oon moo.

The capricious spelling and northern dialect of these verses is very noticeable. There was as yet no standard for orthography. The Lincolnshire labourer still uses the forms "yowre" and "yow" for "your" and "you," and "oon" for "one" is not unknown to him. Indeed, much of this treatise betrays the writer to have been of the north country.

There is no more attempt at arrangement of subjects in this than in the previous treatise. Thus how to describe the head of a hart succeeds in which the term "royal" may be noted—

When he hath auntelere without any lett,

or when his horns have twelve tines, each distinct enough to hang a watch on, as modern Scotch venery describes it. The hunting, dressing, and breaking up of the roedeer comes next. It is described as "belling" (*i.e.* bellowing), a term which Sir W. Scott also applies to red deer. Then ensue the chase of the boar and the hare, with another account of a buck's horns. The different reasons for hunting different animals are prescribed in very indifferent verse; the reader is also taught how to "break up" a hart. This is at once followed by the only reference in the whole *Boke* to the authoress. The orthography of her name should be remarked—

Explicit Dam Julyans
 Barnes in her boke of huntynge.

Some more leaves remaining, the printer seems to have filled them with the most incongruous list of subjects; the names of the varieties of hounds, the properties of a good greyhound, concerning which we are told, "when he is commyn to the ninth yere, haue hym to the tanner." The points of a good horse, moral maxims—some in prose, some in verse, often of the rudest—succeed, as, for instance—

Fer from thy kynnysmen heste the,
 Wrath not thy neighborys next the,
 In a goode corne cuntre threste the,
 And sitte downe, Robyn, and rest the.

A more amusing list of the proper terms to use in describing various fowls, beasts, and classes of mankind is next given. These are correct expressions the modern reader may like to know—a herd of swans, "a nye (nide?) of ffesaunttys, a sege of herons, a muster of peacocks, an exalting of larks, a charm of goldfinches, a clatering of choughs, a pride of lions, a bevy of conies, a gaggle of geese" (this term is still used by wild fowlers), "a prudence of vicars, a school of clerks," and so

on, through some two hundred more. How fowls are to be described when served at table follows, and is succeeded by the same recondite wisdom on fishes; thus, a "tench sauced," and "eel trousoned," and a "trout gobetted," are *en règle*. Yet there was room; and in despair the printer appended a list of the shires and bishoprics of England, so that the exalted style and sonorous, if not fanciful, verse at the beginning of the treatise concludes like a child's geography—

Desinit in piscem mulier formosa superne.

The third treatise, on coat armour, is divided into two parts: the first treating of its "lynage," and "how gentylmen shall be known from ungentylmen;" the second more technically entering into the "blasynge" of arms. This treatise must have been of intense interest in the Middle Ages, when pride in ancient lineage and the science of heraldry held such a firm grasp over men's minds. It is now replete for us, with curious illustrations of the fabulous antiquity assigned by heralds to their favourite subject and its terms of art. Many quaint beliefs with which the Scriptures were supplemented by tradition are also apparent in it, and it throws much light upon allusions found in the poets of the Elizabethan era. Although these were familiar enough to readers of that time, they now require explanation. In short, it forms a useful book of reference for the heraldry of the fifteenth century, and contains literary associations and modes of thought which every student of its literature and customs must prize. In many respects it is the most curious of the three treatises, and will, perhaps, best repay the scholar. It begins—

Here in thys booke folowyng is determyned the lynage of Cote armiris, and how gentilmen shall be knowyn from ungentillmen, and how bondage began first in aungell and after succeeded in man kynde, as it is shewede in processe boothe in the childer of Adam and also of Noe, and how Noe deuyded the worlde in iii partis to his iii sonnys. Also ther be shewyd the ix colowris in armys figured by the ix orderis of aungelis; and it is shewyd by the forsayd colowris wych ben worthy and wych ben royall, and of rigaliteis wiche ben noble and wiche ben excellent. And ther ben here the vertuys of chivalry and many other notable and famowse thyngys to the plesure of noble personys shall be shewyd as the werkys folowyng witteneses who so ever likyth to se thaym and rede thaym wych were to longe now to rehers. And after theys notable thyngys afresayd folowyth the blasynge of all maner armys in latyn, freych, and English.

The Dame begins in very early days with Lucifer and his millions of angels, so arriving at "the grand old gardener and his wife," Adam and Eve. Adam's arms consisted of a spade. Cain, who slew his brother, was the first churl. From Noah Cham became a churl for his "ungentilness; but of the offspring of the gentilman Jafeth that gentilman Jhesus was born very god and man, after his manhode kyng of the londe of Jude and of Jues, gentilman by is modre mary, prynce of Cote armure." The precious stones and colours of the science succeed; the virtues of chivalry, the divisions of gentlemen (spiritual and temporal), and that the king is the fountain of honour, are shown at length, followed by the technicalities of the science of arms and their elucidation.

The second part of the treatise is illustrated with charges of arms and scutcheons, giving a complete conspectus of heraldry as it was developed and practised in the fifteenth century. With much earnestness does the Dame explain these mystic terms which have long been consigned to Lethe, save with a few antiquarian heralds. We cannot but grieve at the degeneracy of our age when an aspiring Smith or ambitious Brown can obtain arms, pedigrees, mottoes, and supporters to any extent by applying to those obliging persons who advertise their readiness to assist gentlemen in want of ancestry. The Dame religiously begins her treatise with the Cross "in the wich thys nobull and myghtie prynce Kyng Arthure hadde grete trust so that he lefte his armys that he bare of iv dragonys and on that an other sheelde of iii crownys, and toke to his armys a crosse of silver in a feelde of verte, and on the right side an ymage of oure blessid Lady with hir sone in hir arme, and with that sign of the Cross he dyd mony maruells after as hit is writyn in the bookis of cronyclis of his dedys." It is needless to enter into the terms of art, which the Dame explains at considerable length.

Inasmuch as Dame Juliana Berners is perhaps most identified in popular estimation with the "Treatyse on Fysshynge with an Angle" (although, as said above, this treatise only appears in the second edition of the *Boke* in 1496), a few words may be added on this "lytyll plaunflet," as the authoress terms it, by way of conclusion. The black-letter fount is that belonging to Wynken de Worde at Westminster, and is much clearer and easier to read than the St. Alban typography. In other respects—size, paragraphs, orthography, and the like—this treatise matches the *Boke*. It is much better arranged, however, subject following subject in lucid arrangement as in a modern book, instead of the chaotic system on which the first edition proceeds. The "Treatyse" is undoubtedly the first English printed book on fishing. At Antwerp, indeed, an earlier tract on the same theme had been printed at the press of Van der Goes, probably in 1492, as Mr. Denison thinks, who is fortunate enough to possess a copy. The Dame treats in consecutive order of the "harness" necessary for the angler, giving full directions how it is to be made, and of the different kinds of fish and the baits proper for them. An eloquent preface shows how superior in all real enjoyment the practice of angling is to the sports of hunting, hawking, and fowling:—

The angler may haue no colde, nor no dysease nor angre, but yf he be causer hymself. For he maye not lese at the moost but a lyne or an hoke; of whyche he may haue store plentee of his own makynge as this symple treatyse shall teche hym. So thenne his losse is not greuouse and other greyffes may he not haue, sauynge but yf ony fisshe breke away after that he is take on the hoke, or elles that he catche nought, whyche ben not greuouse. For yf he faylle of one he maye not faylle of a nother yf he dooth as this treatyse techyth; but yf there be nought in the water. And yet atte the leest he hath his holsum walke and mery at his ease, a swete ayre of the swete sauoure of the meede floures: that makyth hym hungry. He hereth the melodyous armony of foules. He seeth the younge swannes; heeronys; duckes: cotes, and many other foules wyth theyr brodes; whyche me semyth better than alle the noyse of houndys: the blaste of hornys, and the serye of foulis that hunters, fawkeners, and

foulers can make. And yf the angler take fysshe: surely thenne is there noo man merier than he is in his spyryte.

The reader will probably remember much in Walton which shows how indebted was the patriarch of fishermen to the Dame's words, while Burton deliberately inserts the whole of this passage, without acknowledging his indebtedness, in the *Anatomy of Melancholy*. This preface strikes the key-note of the whole treatise; and it is noticeable that thus early in the history of English fishing the angler is painted of that simple, guileless, contented disposition which he is generally supposed to owe to Walton's panegyrics of the art. The Dame views fishing as no easy means of filling the larder (though every word of her book proves that with the post she filled in the little priory of Sopwell she was by no means indifferent to this aspect of the craft), but as a wholesome discipline of spirit during recreation, a mode of attaining perfection, a religious exercise, a walking at peace with a man's neighbour and his God. All fishermen may be grateful to their patron for the high type of character which she sets before them as the disposition of the ideal angler. As in many similar cases, the Dame's words have probably conduced to multitudes of gentle anglers realising the higher and nobler side of their craft. The fact that it admits of such a lofty moral standard must with many prove the only justification for angling considered as the recreation of the gentleman, the scholar, and the divine. Thoreau, in one of his essays, feelingly laments his inability, with all his love for it, to go fishing as the years pass over him. Had he been a fly-fisher instead of a worm-angler (from which branch of the craft, *pace* its devotees, cruelty both to bait and fish is inseparable), and had he been able to enter into the devotional disposition of the Dame, which from the constitution of his mind he could not, he need never have made so touching a confession. The fly-fisher, as regards his quarry, the marvellous life-histories of the flies which he cunningly imitates in silk and feathers, and the varied aspects of nature among which he passes with a poet's eye, never finds his art pall upon him. Like Socrates, he grows old learning, and the wisdom which he imbibes is of the truest.

From our own commendation of fly-fishing, however, we would fain recall the reader to the conclusion of Dame Juliana's panegyric. No words more touching, more true, more genuine were ever written on the highest pleasures of the fisherman. They shall not be quoted here, in order that they may hold out an additional incentive for the angler who knows them not, to seek them in the original. Having endeavoured to set forth the many attractions which the *Boke of St. Albans* possesses for the sportsman, the antiquarian, and the philologist, we shall now take our leave of the reader, wishing for him, if he follows the admirable advice of the Dame—advice never more needed than in the present times—that her devout and closing words may be his:—"All those that done after this rule shall haue the blessynge of god and saynt Petyr, whyche he theym graunte that wyth his precyous blood vs boughte."

A Gondolier's Wedding.

THE night before the wedding we had a supper-party in my rooms. We were twelve in all. My friend Eustace brought his gondolier Antonio with fair-haired, dark-eyed wife, and little Attilio, their eldest child. My old gondolier, Francesco, came with his wife and two children. Then there was the handsome, languid Luigi, who, in his best clothes, looks fit for any drawing-room. Two other gondoliers, in dark blue shirts, completed the list of guests, if we exclude the maid Catina, who came and went about the table, laughing and joining in the songs, and sitting down at intervals to take her share of wine. The big room looking across the garden to the Grand Canal had been prepared for supper; and the company were to be received in the smaller, which has a fine open space in front of it to southwards. But as the guests arrived, they seemed to find the kitchen, and the cooking that was going on, quite irresistible. Catina, it seems, had lost her head with so many cuttle-fishes, *orai*, cakes, and fowls, and cutlets to reduce to order. There was, therefore, a great bustle below stairs; and I could hear plainly that all my guests were lending their making, or their marring, hands to the preparation of the supper. That the company should cook their own food on the way to the dining-room seemed a quite novel arrangement, but one that promised well for their contentment with the banquet. Nobody could be dissatisfied with what was everybody's affair.

When seven o'clock struck, Eustace and I, who had been entertaining the children in their mothers' absence, heard the sound of steps upon the stairs. The guests arrived, bringing their own *risotto* with them. Welcome was short, if hearty. We sat down in carefully appointed order, and fell into such conversation as the quarter of San Vio and our several interests supplied. From time to time one of the matrons left the table and descended to the kitchen, when a finishing stroke was needed for roast pullet or stewed veal. The excuses they made their host for supposed failure in the dishes, lent a certain grace and comic charm to the commonplaces of festivity. The entertainment was theirs as much as mine; and they all seemed to enjoy what took the form by degrees of curiously complicated hospitality. I do not think a well-ordered supper at any *trattoria*, such as at first suggested itself to my imagination, would have given any of us an equal pleasure or an equal sense of freedom. The three children had become the guests of the whole party. Little Attilio, propped upon an air-cushion, which puzzled him exceedingly, ate through his supper and drank his wine with solid satisfaction, open-

ing the large brown eyes beneath those tufts of clustering fair hair which promise much beauty for him in his manhood. Francesco's boy, who is older and begins to know the world, sat with a semi-suppressed grin upon his face, as though the humour of the situation was not wholly hidden from him. Little Teresa too was happy, except when her mother, a severe Pomona, with enormous earrings and splendid fazzoletto of crimson and orange dyes, pounced down upon her for some supposed infraction of good manners—*creanza*, as they vividly express it here. Only Luigi looked a trifle bored. But Luigi has been a soldier, and has now attained the supercilious superiority of young manhood, which smokes its cigar of an evening in the piazza and knows the merits of the different cafés.

The great business of the evening began when the eating was over, and the decanters filled with new wine of Mirano circulated freely. The four best singers of the party drew together; and the rest prepared themselves to make suggestions, hum tunes, and join with fitful effect in choruses. Antonio, who is a powerful young fellow, with bronzed cheeks and a perfect tempest of coal-black hair in flakes upon his forehead, has a most extraordinary soprano—sound as a bell, strong as a trumpet, well-trained, and true to the least shade in intonation. Piero, whose rugged Neptunian features, sea-wrinkled, tell of a rough water-life, boasts a bass of resonant, almost pathetic, quality. Francesco has a *mezza voce*, which might, by a stretch of politeness, be called baritone. Piero's comrade, whose name concerns us not, has another of these nondescript voices. They sat together with their glasses and cigars before them, sketching part-songs in outline, striking the key-note—now higher and now lower—till they saw their subject well in view. Then they burst into full singing, Antonio leading with a metal note that thrilled one's ears, but still was musical. Complicated contrapuntal pieces, such as we should call madrigals, with ever-reviving refrains of "*Venezia, gemma Triatica, sposa del mar,*" descending probably from ancient days, followed each other in quick succession. Barcaroles, serenades, love-songs, and invitations to the water, were interwoven for relief. One of these romantic pieces had a beautiful burden: "*Dormi, o bella, o fingi di dormir,*" of which the melody was fully worthy. But the most successful of all the tunes were two with a sad motive. The one repeated incessantly "*Ohimè! Mia madre morì;*" the other was a girl's love lament: "*Perchè tradirmi, perchè lasciarmi! prima d'amarmi non eri così!*" Even the children joined in these; and Catina, who took the solo part in the second, was inspired to a great dramatic effort. All these were purely popular songs. The people of Venice, however, are passionate for operas. Therefore, we had duets and solos from "*Ernani,*" the "*Ballo in Maschera,*" and the "*Forza del Destino,*" and one comic chorus from "*Boccaccio,*" which seemed to make them wild with pleasure. To my mind, the best of these more formal pieces was a duet between Attila and Italia from some opera unknown to me, which

Antonio and Piero performed with incomparable spirit. It was noticeable how, descending to the people, sung by them for love at sea, or on excursions to the villages round Mestre, these operatic reminiscences had lost something of their theatrical formality, and assumed instead the serious gravity, the quaint movement, and marked emphasis which belong to popular music in northern and central Italy. An antique character was communicated even to the recitative of Verdi by slight, almost indefinable, changes of rhythm and accent. There was no end to the singing. "Siamo appassionati per il canto," frequently repeated, was proved true by the profusion and variety of songs produced from inexhaustible memories, lightly tried over, brilliantly performed, rapidly succeeding each other. Nor were gestures wanting—lifted arms, hands stretched to hands, flashing eyes, hair tossed from the forehead—unconscious and appropriate action—which showed how the spirit of the music and words alike possessed the men. One by one, the children fell asleep. Little Attilio and Teresa were tucked up beneath my Scotch shawl at two ends of a great sofa; and not even his father's clarion voice, in the character of Italia defying Attila to harm "le mie superbe città," could wake the little boy up. The night wore on. It was past one. Eustace and I had promised to be in the church of the Gesuati at six next morning. We, therefore, gave the guests a gentle hint, which they as gently took. With exquisite, because perfectly unaffected, breeding they sank for a few moments into common conservation, then wrapped the children up, and took their leave. It was an uncomfortable, warm, wet night of sullen Scirocco.

The next day, which was Sunday, Francesco called me at five. There was no visible sunrise that cheerless damp October morning. Gray dawn stole somehow imperceptibly between the veil of clouds and leaden waters, as my friend and I, well-sheltered by our *felze*, passed into the Giudecca, and took our station before the church of the Gesuati. A few women from the neighbouring streets and courts crossed the bridges in draggled petticoats, on their way to first mass. A few men, shouldering their jackets, lounged along the *Zattere*, opened the great green doors, and entered. Then suddenly Antonio cried out that the bridal party was on its way, not as we had expected, in boats, but on foot. We left our gondola, and fell into the ranks, after shaking hands with Francesco, who is the elder brother of the bride. There was nothing very noticeable in her appearance, except her large dark eyes. Otherwise, both face and figure were of a common type; and her bridal dress of sprigged grey silk, large veil and orange blossoms, reduced her to the level of a *bourgeoise*. It was much the same with the bridegroom. His features, indeed, proved him a true Venetian gondolier; for the skin was strained over the cheekbones, and the muscles of the throat beneath the jaws stood out like cords, and the bright blue eyes were deep-set beneath a spare brown forehead. But he had provided a complete suit of black for the occasion, and wore a shirt of worked cambric, which disguised what is

really splendid in the physique of these oarsmen, at once slender and sinewy. Both bride and bridegroom looked uncomfortable in their clothes. The light that fell upon them in the church was dull and leaden. The ceremony, which was very hurriedly performed by an untutored priest, did not appear to impress either of them. Nobody in the bridal party, crowding together on both sides of the altar, looked as though the service was of the slightest interest and moment. Indeed, this was hardly to be wondered at: for the priest, so far as I could understand his gabble, took the larger portion for read, after muttering the first words of the rubric. A little carven image of an acolyte—a weird boy who seemed to move by springs, whose hair had all the semblance of painted wood, and whose complexion was white and red like a clown's—did not make matters more intelligible by spasmodically clattering responses.

After the ceremony we heard mass, and contributed to three distinct offertories. Considering how much account even two *soldi* are to these poor people, I was really angry when I heard the copper shower. Every member of the party had his or her pennies ready, and dropped them into the boxes. Whether it was the effect of the bad morning, or the ugliness of a very ill-designed *barocco* building, or the fault of the fat oily priest, I know not. But the *sposalizio* struck me as tame and cheerless, the mass as irreverent and vulgarly conducted. At the same time there is something too impressive in the mass for any perfunctory performance to divest its symbolism of sublimity. A Protestant Communion Service lends itself more easily to degradation by unworthiness in the minister.

We walked down the church in double file, led by the bride and bridegroom, who had knelt during the ceremony with the best man—*compare*, as he is called—at a narrow *prie-dieu* before the altar. The *compare* is a person of distinction at these weddings. He has to present the bride with a great pyramid of artificial flowers, which is placed before her at the marriage-feast, a packet of candles, and a box of bonbons. The comfits, when the box is opened, are found to include two magnificent sugar babies lying in their cradles. I was told that a *compare*, who does the thing handsomely, must be prepared to spend about 100 francs upon these presents, in addition to the wine and cigars with which he treats his friends. On this occasion the women were agreed that he had done his duty well. He was a fat, wealthy little man, who lived by letting market-boats for hire on the Rialto.

From the church to the bride's house was a walk of some three minutes. On the way, we were introduced to the father of the bride—a very magnificent personage, with points of strong resemblance to Vittorio Emanuele. He wore an enormous broad-brimmed hat and emerald green earrings, and looked considerably younger than his eldest son, Francesco. Throughout the *nozze*, he took the lead in a grand imperious fashion of his own. Wherever he went, he seemed to fill the place, and

was fully aware of his own importance. In Florence I think he would have got the nickname of *Tacchin*, or turkey-cock. Here at Venice the sons and daughters call their parent briefly *Vecchio*. I heard him so addressed with a certain amount of awe, expecting an explosion of bubbly-jock displeasure. But he took it, as though it was natural, without disturbance. The other *Vecchio*, father of the bridegroom, struck me as more sympathetic. He was a gentle old man, proud of his many prosperous, laborious sons. They, like the rest of the gentlemen, were gondoliers. Both the *Vecchi*, indeed, continue to ply their trade, day and night, at the *traghetto*.

Traghetti are stations for gondolas at different points of the canals. As their name implies, it is the first duty of the gondoliers upon them to ferry people across. This they do for the fixed fee of five centimes. The *traghetto* are in fact Venetian cab-stands. And, of course, like London cabs, the gondolas may be taken off them for trips. The municipality, however, makes it a condition, under penalty of fine to the *traghetto*, that each station should always be provided with two boats for the service of the ferry. When vacancies occur on the *traghetto*, a gondolier who owns or hires a boat makes application to the municipality, receives a number, and is inscribed as plying at a certain station. He has now entered a sort of guild, which is presided over by a *Capo-traghetto*, elected by the rest for the protection of their interests, the settlement of disputes, and the management of their common funds. In the old acts of Venice this functionary is styled *Gastaldo di traghetto*. The members have to contribute something yearly to the guild. This payment varies upon different stations, according to the greater or less amount of the tax levied by the municipality on the *traghetto*. The highest subscription I have heard of is twenty-five francs; the lowest, seven. There is one *traghetto*, known by the name of *Madonna del Giglio* or *Zobenigo*, which possesses near its *pergola* of vines a nice old brown Venetian picture. Some stranger offered a considerable sum for this. But the guild refused to part with it.

As may be imagined, the *traghetto* vary greatly in the amount and quality of their custom. By far the best are those in the neighbourhood of the hotels upon the Grand Canal. At any one of these a gondolier during the season is sure of picking up some foreigner or other who will pay him handsomely for comparatively light service. A *traghetto* on the *Giudecca*, on the contrary, depends upon Venetian traffic. The work is more monotonous, and the pay is reduced to its tariffed minimum. So far as I can gather, an industrious gondolier, with a good boat, belonging to a good *traghetto*, may make as much as ten or fifteen francs in a single day. But this cannot be relied on. They therefore prefer a fixed appointment with a private family, for which they receive by tariff five francs a day, or by arrangement for long periods perhaps four francs a day, with certain perquisites and small advantages. It is great luck to get such an engagement for the winter. The heaviest anxieties which beset a gon-

dolier are then disposed of. Having entered private service, they are not allowed to ply their trade on the *traghetto*, except by stipulation with their masters. Then they may take their place one night out of every six in the rank and file. The gondoliers have two proverbs, which show how desirable it is, while taking a fixed engagement, to keep their hold on the *traghetto*. One is to this effect: *il traghetto è un buon padrone*. The other satirizes the meanness of the poverty-stricken Venetian nobility: *pompa di servitù, misera insegna*. When they combine the *traghetto* with private service, the municipality insists on their retaining the number painted on their gondola; and against this their employers frequently object. It is, therefore, a great point for a gondolier to make such an arrangement with his master as will leave him free to show his number. The reason for this regulation is obvious. Gondoliers are known more by their numbers and their *traghetti* than their names. They tell me that though there are upwards of a thousand registered in Venice, each man of the trade knows the whole confraternity by face and number. Taking all things into consideration, I think four francs a day the whole year round are very good earnings for a gondolier. On this he will marry and rear a family, and put a little money by. A young unmarried man, working at two and a half or three francs a day, is proportionately well-to-do. If he is economical, he ought upon these wages to save enough in two years to buy himself a gondola. A boy from fifteen to nineteen is called a *mezz' uomo*, and gets about one franc a day. A new gondola with all its fittings is worth about a thousand francs. It does not last in good condition more than six or seven years. At the end of that time the hull will fetch eighty francs. A new hull can be had for three hundred francs. The old fittings—brass sea-horses or *cavalli*, steel prow or *ferro*, covered cabin or *felze*, cushions and leather-covered back-board or *stramazetto*, may be transferred to it. When a man wants to start a gondola, he will begin by buying one already half past service—a *gondola da traghetto* or *di mezza età*. This should cost him something over two hundred francs. Little by little, he accumulates the needful fittings; and when his first purchase is worn out, he hopes to set up with a well-appointed equipage. He thus gradually works his way from the rough trade which involves hard work and poor earnings to that more profitable industry which cannot be carried on without a smart boat. The gondola is a source of continual expense for repairs. Its oars have to be replaced. It has to be washed with sponges, blacked, and varnished. Its bottom needs frequent cleaning. Weeds adhere to it in the warm brackish water, growing rapidly through the summer months, and demanding to be scrubbed off once in every four weeks. The gondolier has no place where he can do this for himself. He therefore takes his boat to a wharf, or *squero*, as the place is called. At these *squeri* gondolas are built as well as cleaned. The fee for a thorough setting to rights of the boat is five francs. It must be done upon a fine day. Thus in addition to the cost, the owner loses a good day's work.

These details will serve to give some notion of the sort of people with whom Eustace and I spent our day. The bride's house is in an excellent position on an open canal leading from the Canalozzo to the Giudecca. She had arrived before us, and received her friends in the middle of the room. Each of us in turn kissed her cheek and murmured our congratulations. We found the large living-room of the house arranged with chairs all round the walls, and the company were marshalled in some order of precedence, my friend and I taking place near the bride. On either hand airy bedrooms opened out, and two large doors, wide open, gave a view from where we sat of a good-sized kitchen. This arrangement of the house was not only comfortable, but pretty; for the bright copper pans and pipkins ranged on shelves along the kitchen walls had a very cheerful effect. The walls were whitewashed, but literally covered with all sorts of pictures. A great plaster cast from some antique, an Atys, Adonis, or Paris, looked down from a bracket placed between the windows. There was enough furniture, solid and well kept, in all the rooms. Among the pictures were full-length portraits in oils of two celebrated gondoliers—one in antique costume, the other painted a few years since. The original of the latter soon came and stood before it. He had won regatta prizes; and the flags of four discordant colours were painted round him by the artist, who had evidently cared more to commemorate the triumphs of his sitter and to strike a likeness than to secure the tone of his own picture. This champion turned out a fine fellow—Corradini—with one of the brightest little gondoliers of thirteen for his son.

After the company were seated, lemonade and cakes were handed round amid a hubbub of chattering women. Then followed cups of black coffee and more cakes. Then a glass of Cyprus and more cakes. Then a glass of curaçoa and more cakes. Finally, a glass of noyau and still more cakes. It was only a little after seven in the morning. Yet politeness compelled us to consume these delicacies. I tried to shirk my duty; but this discretion was taken by my hosts for well-bred modesty; and instead of being let off, I had the richest piece of pastry and the largest maccaroon available pressed so kindly on me that, had they been poisoned, I would not have refused to eat them. The conversation grew more and more animated, the women gathering together in their dresses of bright blue and scarlet, the men lighting cigars and puffing out a few quiet words. It struck me as a drawback that these picturesque people had put on Sunday clothes, to look as much like shopkeepers as possible. But they did not all of them succeed. Two handsome women, who handed the cups round—one a brunette, the other a blonde—wore skirts of brilliant blue, with a sort of white jacket and white kerchief folded heavily about their shoulders. The brunette had a great string of coral, the blonde of amber, round her throat. Gold earrings and the long gold chains Venetian women wear, of all patterns and degrees of value, abounded. Nobody appeared without them; but I could not see any of

an antique make. The men seemed to be contented with rings—huge, heavy rings of solid gold, worked with a rough flower pattern. One young fellow had three upon his fingers. This circumstance led me to speculate whether a certain portion at least of this display of jewellery around me had not been borrowed for the occasion.

Eustace and I were treated quite like friends. They called us *I Signori*. But this was only, I think, because our English names are quite unmanageable. The women fluttered about us and kept asking whether we really liked it all, whether we should come to the *pranzo*, whether it was true we danced. It seemed to give them unaffected pleasure to be kind to us; and when we rose to go away, the whole company crowded round, shaking hands and saying: "*Si divertirà bene stasera!*" Nobody resented our presence; what was better, no one put himself out for us. "*Vogliono veder il nostro costume,*" I heard one woman say.

We got home soon after eight, and, as our ancestors would have said, settled our stomachs with a dish of tea. It makes me shudder now to think of the mixed liquids and miscellaneous cakes we had consumed at that unwonted hour.

At half-past three, Eustace and I again prepared ourselves for action. His gondola was in attendance, covered with the *felze*, to take us to the house of the *sposa*. We found the canal crowded with poor people of the quarter—men, women, and children lining the walls along its side, and clustering like bees upon the bridges. The water itself was almost choked with gondolas. Evidently the folk of San Vio thought our wedding procession would be a most exciting pageant. We entered the house, and were again greeted by the bride and bridegroom, who consigned each of us to the control of a fair tyrant. This is the most fitting way of describing our introduction to our partners of the evening; for we were no sooner presented, than the ladies swooped upon us like their prey, placing their shawls upon our left arms, while they seized and clung to what was left available of us for locomotion. There was considerable giggling and tittering throughout the company when Signora Fenzo, the young and comely wife of a gondolier, thus took possession of Eustace, and Signora dell' Acqua, the widow of another gondolier, appropriated me. The affair had been arranged beforehand, and their friends had probably chaffed them with the difficulty of managing two mad Englishmen. However, they proved equal to the occasion, and the difficulties were entirely on our side. Signora Fenzo was a handsome brunette, quiet in her manners, who meant business. I envied Eustace his subjection to such a reasonable being. Signora dell' Acqua, though a widow, was by no means disconsolate; and I soon perceived that it would require all the address and diplomacy I possessed to make anything out of her society. She laughed incessantly; darted in the most diverse directions, dragging me along with her; exhibited me in triumph to her cronies; made eyes at me over a fan; repeated my clumsiest

remarks, as though they gave her indescribable amusement; and all the while jabbered Venetian at express rate, without the slightest regard for my incapacity to follow her vagaries. The *Vecchio* marshalled us in order. First went the *Sposa* and *Comare* with the mothers of bride and bridegroom. Then followed the *Sposo* and the bridesmaid. After them I was made to lead my fair tormentor. As we descended the staircase there arose a hubbub of excitement from the crowd on the canals. The gondolas moved turbidly upon the face of the waters. The bridegroom kept muttering to himself, "How we shall be criticised! They will tell each other who was decently dressed, and who stepped awkwardly into the boats, and what the price of my boots was!" Such exclamations, murmured at intervals, and followed by chest-drawn sighs, expressed a deep preoccupation. With regard to his boots he need have had no anxiety. They were of the shiniest patent leather, much too tight, and without a speck of dust upon them. But his nervousness infected me with a cruel dread. All those eyes were going to watch how we comported ourselves in jumping from the landing-steps into the boat! If this operation, upon a ceremonious occasion, has terrors even for a gondolier, how formidable it ought to be to me! And here is the Signora dell' Acqua's white cachemire shawl dangling on one arm, and the Signora herself languishingly clinging to the other; and the gondolas are fretting in a fury of excitement, like corks, upon the churned green water! The moment was terrible. The *Sposa* and her three companions had been safely stowed away beneath their *felze*. The *Sposo* had successfully handed the bridesmaid into the second gondola. I had to perform the same office for my partner. Off she went, like a bird, from the bank. I seized a happy moment, followed, bowed, and found myself to my contentment gracefully ensconced in a corner opposite the widow. Seven more gondolas were packed. The procession moved. We glided down the little channel, broke away into the Grand Canal, crossed it, and dived into a labyrinth from which we finally emerged before our destination, the Trattoria di San Gallo. The perils of the landing were soon over; and, with the rest of the guests, my mercurial companion and I slowly ascended a long flight of stairs leading to a vast upper chamber. Here we were to dine.

It had been the gallery of some palazzo [in old days, was above one hundred feet in length, fairly broad, with a roof of wooden rafters and large windows opening on a courtyard garden. I could see the tops of three cypress trees cutting the grey sky upon a level with us. A long table occupied the centre of this room. It had been laid for upwards of forty persons, and we filled it. There was plenty of light from great glass lustres blazing with gas. When the ladies had arranged their dresses, and the gentlemen had exchanged a few polite remarks, we all sat down to dinner—I next my inexorable widow, Eustace beside his calm and comely partner. The first impression was one of disappointment. It looked so like a public dinner of

middle-class people. There was no local character in costume or customs. Men and women sat politely bored, expectant, trifling with their napkins, yawning, muttering nothings about the weather or their neighbours. The frozen commonplaceness of the scene was made for me still more oppressive by Signora dell' Acqua. She was evidently satirical, and could not be happy unless continually laughing at or with somebody. "What a stick the woman will think me!" I kept saying to myself. "How shall I ever invent jokes in this strange land? I cannot even flirt with her in Venetian! And here I have condemned myself—and her too, poor thing—to sit through at least three hours of mortal dulness!" Yet the widow was by no means unattractive. Dressed in black, she had contrived by an artful arrangement of lace and jewellery to give an air of lightness to her costume. She had a pretty little pale face, a *minois chiffonné*, with slightly turned-up nose, large laughing brown eyes, a dazzling set of teeth, and a tempestuously frizzled mop of powdered hair. When I managed to get a side-look at her quietly, without being giggled at or driven half mad by unintelligible incitements to a jocularity I could not feel, it struck me that, if we once found a common term of communication we should become good friends. But for the moment that *modus vivendi* seemed unattainable. She had not recovered from the first excitement of her capture of me. She was still showing me off and trying to stir me up. The arrival of the soup gave me a momentary relief; and soon the serious business of the afternoon began. I may add that before dinner was over, the Signora dell' Acqua and I were fast friends. I had discovered the way of making jokes, and she had become intelligible. I found her a very nice, though flighty, little woman; and I believe she thought me gifted with the faculty of uttering eccentric epigrams in a grotesque tongue. Some of my remarks were flung about the table, and had the same success as uncouth Lombard carvings have with connoisseurs in *naïvetés* of art. By that time we had come to be *Compare* and *Comare* to each other—the sequel of some clumsy piece of jocularity.

It was a heavy entertainment, copious in quantity, excellent in quality, plainly but well cooked. I remarked there was no fish. The widow replied that everybody present ate fish to satiety at home. They did not join a marriage feast at the San Gallo, and pay their nine francs, for that! It should be observed that each guest paid for his own entertainment. This appears to be the custom. Therefore attendance is complimentary, and the married couple are not at ruinous charges for the banquet. A curious feature in the whole proceeding had its origin in this custom. I noticed that before each cover lay an empty plate, and that my partner began with the first course to heap upon it what she had not eaten. She also took large helpings, and kept advising me to do the same. I said: "No; I only take what I want to eat; if I fill that plate in front of me as you are doing, it will be great waste." This remark elicited shrieks of laughter from all who heard it; and when the hubbub had subsided, I perceived an apparently official personage bearing

down upon Eustace, who was in the same perplexity. It was then circumstantially explained to us that the empty plates were put there in order that we might lay aside what we could not conveniently eat, and take it home with us. At the end of the dinner the widow (whom I must now call my *Comare*) had accumulated two whole chickens, half a turkey, and a large assortment of mixed eatables. I performed my duty and won her regard by placing delicacies at her disposition.

Grudely stated, this proceeding moves disgust. But that is only because one has not thought the matter out. In the performance there was nothing coarse or nasty. These good folk had made a contract at so much a head—so many fowls, so many pounds of beef, etc., to be supplied; and what they had fairly bought, they clearly had a right to. No one, so far as I could notice, tried to take more than his proper share; except, indeed, Eustace and myself. In our first eagerness to conform to custom, we both overshot the mark, and grabbed at disproportionate helpings. The waiters politely observed that we were taking what was meant for two; and as the courses followed in interminable sequence, we soon acquired the tact of what was due to us.

Meanwhile the room grew warm. The gentlemen threw off their coats—a pleasant liberty of which I availed myself, and was immediately more at ease. The ladies divested themselves of their shoes (strange to relate!) and sat in comfort with their stockinged feet upon the *scagliola* pavement. I observed that some cavaliers by special permission were allowed to remove their partners' slippers. This was not my lucky fate. My *comare* had not advanced to that point of intimacy. Healths began to be drunk. The conversation took a lively turn; and women went fluttering round the table, visiting their friends, to sip out of their glass, and ask each other how they were getting on. It was not long before the stiff veneer of *bourgeoisie* which bored me had worn off. The people emerged in their true selves: natural, gentle, sparkling with enjoyment, playful. Playful is, I think, the best word to describe them. They played with infinite grace and innocence, like kittens, from the old men of sixty to the little boys of thirteen. Very little wine was drunk. Each guest had a litre placed before him. Many did not finish theirs; and for very few was it replenished. When at last the dessert arrived, and the bride's comfits had been handed round, they began to sing. It was very pretty to see a party of three or four friends gathering round some popular beauty, and paying her compliments in verse—they grouped behind her chair, she sitting back in it and laughing up to them, and joining in the chorus. The words, "*Brunetta mia simpatica, ti amo sempre più,*" sung after this fashion to Eustace's handsome partner, who puffed delicate whiffs from a Russian cigarette, and smiled her thanks, had a peculiar appropriateness. All the ladies, it may be observed in passing, had by this time lit their cigarettes. The men were smoking *Toscani*, *Sella*, or *Cavours*, and the little boys were dancing round the table breathing smoke from their pert nostrils.

The dinner, in fact, was over. Other relatives of the guests arrived, and then we saw how some of the reserved dishes were to be bestowed. A side table was spread at the end of the gallery, and these late-comers were regaled with plenty by their friends. Meanwhile, the big table at which we had dined was taken to pieces and removed. The *scagliola* floor was swept by the waiters. Musicians came streaming in and took their places. The ladies resumed their shoes. Everyone prepared to dance.

My friend and I were now at liberty to chat with the men. He knew some of them by sight, and claimed acquaintance with others. There was plenty of talk about different boats, gondolas, and sandolos and topos, remarks upon the past season, and inquiries as to chances of engagements in the future. One young fellow told us how he had been drawn for the army, and should be obliged to give up his trade just when he had begun to make it answer. He had got a new gondola, and this would have to be hung up during the years of his service. The warehousing of a boat in these circumstances costs nearly one hundred francs a year, which is a serious tax upon the pockets of a private in the line. Many questions were put in turn to us, but all of the same tenor. "Had we really enjoyed the *pranzo*? Now, really, were we amusing ourselves? And did we think the custom of the wedding *un bel costume*?" We could give an unequivocally hearty response to all these interrogations. The men seemed pleased. Their interest in our enjoyment was unaffected. It is noticeable how often the word *divertimento* is heard upon the lips of the Italians. They have a notion that it is the function in life of the *signori* to amuse themselves.

The ball opened, and now we were much besought by the ladies. I had to deny myself with a whole series of comical excuses. Eustace performed his duty after a stiff English fashion—once with his pretty partner of the *pranzo*, and once again with a fat gondolier. The band played waltzes and polkas, chiefly upon patriotic airs—the Marcia Reale, Garibaldi's Hymn, &c. Men danced with men, women with women, little boys and girls together. The gallery whirled with a laughing crowd. There was plenty of excitement and enjoyment—not an unseemly or extravagant word or gesture. My *Comare* careered about with a light mænadic impetuosity, which made me regret my inability to accept her pressing invitations. She pursued me into every corner of the room, but when at last I dropped excuses and told her that my real reason for not dancing was that it would hurt my health, she waived her claims at once with an *Ah, poverino!*

Some time after midnight we felt that we had had enough of *divertimento*. Francesco helped us to slip out unobserved. With many silent good wishes we left the innocent, playful people who had been so kind to us. The stars were shining from a watery sky as we passed into the piazza beneath the Campanile and the pinnacles of S. Mark. The Riva was almost empty, and the little waves fretted the boats moored to the *piazzetta*, as a warm moist breeze went fluttering by. We smoked a last

cigar, crossed our *traghetto*, and were soon sound asleep at the end of a long, pleasant day. The ball, we heard next morning, finished about four.

Since that evening I have had plenty of opportunities for seeing my friends the gondoliers, both in their own homes and in my apartment. Several have entertained me at their midday meal of fried fish and amber-coloured polenta. These repasts were always cooked with scrupulous cleanliness, and served upon a table covered with coarse linen. The polenta is turned out upon a wooden platter, and cut with a string called *lassa*. You take a large slice of it on the palm of the left hand, and break it with the fingers of the right. Wholesome red wine of the Paduan district and good white bread were never wanting. The rooms in which we met to eat, looked out on narrow lanes or over pergolas of yellowing vines. Their whitewashed walls were hung with photographs of friends and foreigners, many of them souvenirs from English or American employers. The men, in broad black hats and lilac shirts, sat round the table, girt with the red waist-wrapper, or *fascia*, which marks the ancient faction of the Castellani. The other faction, called Nicolotti, are distinguished by black *assisa*. The quarters of the town are divided unequally and irregularly into these two parties. What formidable rivalry between two sections of the Venetian populace still survives in challenges to trials of strength and skill upon the water. The women, in their many-coloured kerchiefs, stirred polenta at the smoke-blackened chimney, whose huge pent-house roof projects two feet or more across the hearth. When they had served the table they took their seat on low stools, knitted stockings, or drank out of glasses handed across the shoulder to them by their lords. Some of these women were clearly notable housewives, and I have no reason to suppose that they do not take their full share of the house-work. Boys and girls came in and out, and got a portion of the dinner to consume where they thought best. Children went tottering about upon the red-brick floor, the playthings of those hulking fellows, who handled them very gently and spoke kindly in a sort of confidential whisper to their ears. These little ears were mostly pierced for earrings, and the light blue eyes of the urchins peeped maliciously beneath shocks of yellow hair. A dog was often of the party. He ate fish like his masters, and was made to beg for it by sitting up and bowing with his paws. *Voga, Azzò, voga!* The Anzolo who talked thus to his little brown Spitz-dog has the hoarse voice of a Triton, and the movement of an animated sea-wave. Azzò performed his trick, swallowed the fish-bones, and the fiery Anzolo looked round approving.

On all these occasions I have found these gondoliers the same sympathetic, industrious, cheery, affectionate folk. They live in many respects a hard and precarious life. The winter in particular is a time of anxiety and sometimes of privation, even to the well-to-do among them. Work then is scarce, and what there is, is rendered disagreeable to them by the

cold. Yet they take their chance with facile temper, and are not soured by hardships. The amenities of the Venetian sea and air, the healthiness of the lagoons, the cheerful bustle of the poorer quarters, the brilliancy of this southern sunlight, and the beauty which is everywhere apparent, must be reckoned as important factors in the formation of their character. And of that character, as I have said, the final note is playfulness. In spite of difficulties, their life has never been stern enough to sadden them. Bare necessities are marvellously cheap, and the pinch of real bad weather—such frost as locked the lagoons in ice two years ago, or such south-western gales as flooded the basement floors of all the houses on the Zattere—is rare and does not last long. On the other hand, their life has never been so lazy as to reduce them to the savagery of the traditional Neapolitan lazzaroni. They have had to work daily for small earnings, but under favourable conditions, and their labour has been lightened by much good fellowship among themselves, by the amusements of their *feste* and their singing clubs.

Of course it is not easy for a stranger in a very different social position to feel that he has been admitted to their confidence. Italians have an ineradicable habit of making themselves externally agreeable, of bending in all indifferent matters to the whims and wishes of superiors, and of saying what they think Signori like. This habit, while it smoothes the surface of existence, raises up a barrier of compliment and partial insincerity, against which the more downright natures of us northern folk break in vain efforts. Our advances are met with an imperceptible but impermeable resistance by the very people who are bent on making the world pleasant to us. It is the very reverse of that dour opposition which a Lowland Scot or a North English peasant offers to familiarity; but it is hardly less insurmountable. The treatment, again, which Venetians of the lower class have received through centuries from their own nobility, make attempts at fraternisation on the part of gentlemen unintelligible to them. The best way, here and elsewhere, of overcoming these obstacles is to have some bond of work or interest in common—of service on the one side rendered, and goodwill on the other honestly displayed. The men of whom I have been speaking will, I am convinced, not shirk their share of duty or make unreasonable claims upon the generosity of their employers.

J. A. S.

A Bit of Loot.

THE word *loot* has now become naturalised in the English language, and needs no explanation.

I went to Delhi in the month of November 1857, on a visit to a military friend who was then quartered there. It will be remembered that we had re-captured the rebellious city, after a siege of several months, in the month of September. As we had attacked the city from one side only, most of the inhabitants had fled from it before we took it. They had got out as we came in. For a great fear was upon them. We had then expelled almost all that remained behind on military grounds. We had to occupy the whole city, and garrison it with a very small force. The city had been declared confiscated also.

It was most strange to ride through the now silent streets and deserted squares of the great city. You seemed to be going over a modern Pompeii. There did not come over you the strange ghastly feeling of unreality that steals over you in Pompeii. You were not carried into a strange new world of sight and thought and feeling. You were not weighed upon by bye-gone ages, oppressed by Time. Time like space is a most oppressive thought to the human mind. And any of the great monuments of the past, such as Pompeii, which mark off some portion of its boundlessness carry with them some of its weight and mystery. But it was the contrary of these things with the similar silentness and desolation that weighed upon you. Here was all the reality of recent life ; of yesterday, of to-day. But still, somehow, there was here the feeling of a bye-gone age. The city could not have been alive yesterday, that was so silent now. It seemed somehow a thing of the past. The tide of war had not flowed through this retired street. There had been richer quarters to ransack. Everything stood here as it had been left. Here stood the houses, with their furniture, poor, but all the people had ; here were the shops with their little stock of goods still on the counter. But there was no human being in the houses, or in the shops, or in the street. There was no going in and out ; no standing up and sitting down ; no sound of voices. Dead silence reigned over all. If it is impressive in Pompeii to see in the streets the marks of the wheels that rolled a thousand years ago, to find the loaves that were baked but not eaten then, it was also impressive here to find the cooking pot on the fireplace ; the bread in the dish ; the bed laid out to sleep on ; the cart that had been left standing at the door. If in Pompeii it is resurrection, here it was sudden death. If in Pompeii you look on a ghost, here you looked on a dead body from which the warmth of life had hardly fled.

Strangest of all was it to pass through the Chandnee Chouk, the "Moonlight" or "Silver Square," the central market-place, and find it, too, void and silent. For it had been so full of life and sound and movement but a short time before as it is again to-day. For the Chandnee Chouk was and is the Regent Street and Pall Mall combined of Delhi. And Delhi was the great imperial city of the East. More than Granada, more than Cordova, more even than Constantinople, Delhi has been the great city of the Mahomedan conquest. To the followers of the Prophet the fondest and proudest memories hung about it. It was the capital of the greatest empire over which the crescent had shone and held sway. It marked their proudest conquest.

Here the triumphs of the faith had culminated. Here stood the proudest monuments of their art. Here they had erected a great palace-fortification; built lovely chambers and halls; raised the loftiest and most beautiful shrines. To the Mahomedan of India the lines inscribed on the walls of one of those chambers—"If there be a heaven upon earth it is here," applied to the whole city. It was his favourite dwelling-place. It was the seat of government; the centre of trade and commerce and the industrial arts; the seat of learning and religious instruction; of good manners and polite speech; the centre of pleasure. To it came the courtier, the student, the devotee, the trader, and the man of pleasure. Even now, when there is no longer here the court of the Great Mogul, it is the favourite dwelling-place of the Mahomedan nobles, even of the Hindoo princes, of that part of India. You find Mussulman orientalism in full perfection in three cities only—in Damascus, in Cairo, and in Delhi.

But a few months before the Chandnee Chouk at midday had been one of the most bright, gay, glittering, bustling, picturesque places that you could see. The whole place shone and sparkled. In the dresses of the people were to be seen all the colours of the rainbow, as bright as you see them in the sky. Twenty different kinds of robe and head-dress went by you in a few minutes. For here came together people from all parts, not only of India, but of Asia. The shops on either side were filled with glistening goods. The two driving roads on either side of the broad street were thronged with vehicles. Here went by the English-made barouche with its pair of horses, and the canopied "Ruth," looking like a pagoda on wheels, drawn by a tall and lordly pair of bullocks. Here went by the elephants with gaudy housings, whisking their trunks and looking about them with their little eyes. They looked like little mountains which had walked away with the castles on their tops. The men, and even the women, from neighbouring Rajpootana went by on their high-bred camels. The young dandies of the place rode about on their capering, curvetting horses, with coloured legs and tail and plaited mane. The central walk, with its avenue of trees and the canal down its middle, was thronged with people on foot. The place was full of the voices of the people and the cries of the itinerant vendors. "Melons,

sweet melons!"—"Here are roses and sweet jessamine!"—"Cakes fresh and hot!"—"Sugar-cane and water nuts!"—"Whey, sweet whey!" The beggars were calling "Take thought of the poor."—"Remember the needy."—"Feed the hungry in Allah's name." And everywhere was the tinkling of the little brass cups of the water-carriers, and their musical cry of "Water for the thirsty, water!" For no voice is so harsh that it could make the word for water other than musical and sweet sounding.

Most strange was it, then, to ride through this street and find it quite silent, empty, and deserted; with no sound in it but the echoes, far reaching through the void, of the horse's hoofs.

For the first three or four days after the capture of the city, our troops had been allowed the privilege of individual plunder in the city, but not in the palace. They could hardly have been restrained from this, in fact. Being allowed this, they submitted without murmur to the subsequent stoppage; which, in fact, was for their own advantage. For all the contents of the town had been declared confiscated, and the prize of the victorious army. Then came the more systematic gathering together of the spoil. A committee of military officers was appointed to do this, to act as prize agents. Leaving aside the customs of war, this confiscation was not held an undue exercise of the right of conquest even by the people themselves, for they had looked for sack and massacre, and the razing of the city to the ground; not for resistance to a foreign power, but for cruelty and treachery, and the murder of innocent women and children. Being a walled-in city, the gathering together of the valuables in it could be gone on with leisurely, for nothing was allowed in or out of the gates without a pass or scrutiny. By the middle of November, which was the time I went there, what with the first putting in of the hand of the troops, and the subsequent labours of the prize agents, most of the things of any value in the town had been carried away or gathered in the store-rooms of the agents. But to bury money and jewels and precious stones in the ground has always been a custom in the East. A hole in the earth is the favourite bank. And in so large a city, with its labyrinth of streets, its smaller squares inside bigger squares, and courtyards within these, there were many nooks and corners which had not been searched thoroughly, some not even visited. So all search, especially for hidden and buried things, had not been given up. The prize agents gave permission to others besides their own staff of men to search, on condition of the articles found being delivered up to them, they paying a certain percentage on the estimated value. Of course, if a man found a very large pearl or emerald or diamond, whether he put it into his waistcoat pocket, or took it to the prize agents, had to be left to his honour and conscience. But the prize agents gave the permission only to men they thought would bring them. They had taken possession of all the places where there was likely to be any great store of silver and gold and jewels and valuable property; such as the palace of

the king, the houses of the princes and chief noblemen and bankers. And they had reaped the more open fields so closely that they thought they had not left very much for the gleaners.

The friend with whom I was staying had peculiar facilities for the search for hidden treasure. From the nature of his duties and his official position, he could go where he liked, enter any house, dig in any spot, without let or hindrance. I accompanied him one day on one of his rounds. He meant to penetrate into one of the remoter quarters of the town. As we approached it the chill silence became almost oppressive. The dead stillness was not a thing of nought, but had a dreary weight, an actual presence. It hung about you, clung round you. On the populous city had come the loneliness and desolation of the desert. There seemed a strange uselessness about the paved streets and the tall houses and warehouses. In the dwelling-places was no longer heard the sound of the millstones, or seen the light of the candle. It was the cold, still, ghastly face of a corpse: eye-gate, ear-gate, mouth-gate closed. These feelings deepened as we got into the narrower streets, some only ten or twelve feet broad, with the houses rising to great heights on either side, and presenting for long distances only a blank bare surface of wall to the street. The air was dank and chill. The eye saw from one end of the long narrow street to the other as when you look down an empty corridor. The sound of our footsteps made strange echoes down it. The sound of each footfall was sharply repeated; floated away; lived and lasted for long distances; re-echoed in distant squares and courtyards; made a faint current of sound down the corridors by their side, and ruffled the pools of silence in distant chambers. It was a relief to have to make a *détour* through a more open street, where there was some movement, and the signs of the recent conflict took off one's thoughts from the brooding silence. There had been a sharp fight in this street; in some places the sides of the houses were scored with lines like a sheet of music paper, showing the heavy volleys that had been fired down it.

The cats glared at you from the tops of walls like young tigers. They had grown to a monstrous size. They looked to the full as fierce and cruel and bloodthirsty as tigers, for they had been revelling on human flesh.

In these remote parts of the town you encountered to the full as many "well defined and several stinks" as have been credited to the city of Cologne. My friend had become quite learned in distinguishing these.

"Hum!" he said, as we passed one corner, "that is a horse." "Phew!" he cried, as we turned another, "that is a camel." And, sure enough, after a time we came on the carcasses of the animals he had mentioned.

We once more turned into the quarter into whose depths we meant to penetrate. This single excursion gave me a better idea of the plan of

a native town than I should otherwise ever have obtained. For English people, unless taken by official duties, very rarely go into the native towns by whose sides they live. An Englishman may have been six or seven years at Agra or Allahabad, and never have entered the native town, or have driven only once or twice down the main street.

Security and privacy are the two main objects the native aims at in the location as well as the plan of his house. He does not mind the vicinity of a mass of poor houses; he welcomes a network of narrow winding lanes and streets. Nothing is more striking than the contrast between the wide, open, defenceless English station, with its straw-roofed bungalows, and the close-built native town by its side. The conquerors hold the land in villas, and the conquered dwell in the fenced-in cities. In early ages houses were built primarily for defence, for every man's house had then literally to be his castle. In the East the plan of all houses above the mere hut or shed is the same—that of a square with a courtyard in the centre, access to which is obtained by means of a single doorway or gateway. When the gates are closed the house is a small fort, with the household for garrison. Then again the quarters in which dwell the men of the same caste, trade, or profession, form separate blocks in the town, access to which is obtained through one or two gateways only. Take, for instance, the plan of the Mohulla, or quarter into which we were now making our way. Between two of the main streets of the town, about a quarter of a mile apart, ran a narrow connecting street at right angles to them. On either side of this narrow street lay the Mohulla, with its narrow lanes and internal squares. The only way to enter the quarter was from either end of the central street, and the ingress was guarded at those points by lofty gateways and massive gates. In times of danger those would be the first points guarded by the inhabitants of the quarter. If they were forced, then would come the separate defence of each of the better-class houses. If the owner of one of these was a resolute man, had a large number of well-armed retainers, and had laid in a stock of food enough, he could make a stubborn and lengthy defence. The well in the courtyard would furnish the small garrison with water.

As we penetrated into this quarter the chill, due to the long shut-up houses, the absence of fires, the want of movement, became greater; the silence deepened, and we seemed to have passed away from the outer world, though surrounded by the habitations of men.

It was strange to pass through the wicket of a lofty gateway, and find yourself alone in a silent courtyard surrounded by empty rooms. In one of these the beauty of the buildings, the long arcades with their horse-shoe arches resting on slender pillars of stone, the balconies resting on brackets each one of which was a fine piece of sculpture, and the beautifully pierced panels of stone, showed that it had belonged to some rich Mohamedan nobleman or Hindoo banker.

"There should be something here," said my practical friend. The

upper rooms on that side, with their lace-like marble lattices, signs of jealous privacy, had been the dwelling-place of the women, the Zenana. Those lower rooms had been thronged with servants. But where was now the pleasant bustle of domestic and social life, the coming and going, the cheerful voices, and the light-hearted laughter? War is not a pleasant thing. It is hard that its evils should fall on women and children, and not be confined to the strong men. The humble bedsteads, the earthenware cooking pots of the servants, stood as they had been left. The head-stalls and heel-ropes marked where the horses had stood. The water-pot stood by the side of the well. The solitary palm-tree in a corner of the courtyard looked sad and lonely, and its leaves rustled with a mournful sound. To us the bareness of the rooms did not add to the feeling of desolation as it would have to those who were not acquainted, like ourselves, with the usual want of what we call furnishing in the houses of the natives. Bedsteads, and rough chests in which to keep clothes, often form the only "articles of furniture" in the house of a well-to-do native, unless we bring under that category the clothes and carpets, the cooking pots, and the brass vessels to eat and drink out of.

To one fresh from England, the complete absence of chairs, tables, sofas, bookshelves, sideboards, wardrobes, and all the other articles in an English home, would make the Indian dwelling-place look very empty. I once went to visit a Hindoo Rajah who lived in a castle which his father had held against us for some time. Setting aside his wife's apartments, which he only visited, he lived in one room. This room was carpeted, and one side of it, before some open windows, was occupied by a large wooden daïs raised above the ground. This daïs was also covered with a handsome carpet, and had on it many large silk-covered pillows and bolsters. This daïs was really the old man's dwelling-place. This was his bedroom, dining-room, drawing-room. Here he sat or reclined during the greater part of the day, and here he slept at night; here he took his meals out of the one or two dishes that sufficed to hold them; here he did his work; here he received his friends and visitors; here his bed was spread for him at night. The marks of wealth and position and superior comfort were in the large uncut emeralds that hung in his ears, in the fineness of the muslin that he wore; the richness of the shawls about him, the silver legs that upheld the daïs, its rich covering, the silken or brocaded bolsters; in the crowd of retainers who waited without; in all that he ate being raised and cooked by Brahmins; in his eating out of a silver dish, and drinking out of a silver cup. The rich man in India spends his money on the architecture of his house, in rich carpets and bed covers, in valuable shawls, in rich dresses for his wives and children (on the latter he will put solid anklets and armlets of silver and of gold), in horses or fast-trotting bullocks, and in many vehicles; in a host of servants and armed retainers, in great feasts on the occasion of a marriage.

But to return to the courtyard we had entered. It was strange to

find oneself in possession of another man's house, to be able to go where one liked, and do what one liked in it. It was strange to find oneself breaking open another man's strong box, and rifling it of its contents. There is a pleasurable excitement in it; it is a new sensation. The odd thing in battle must be to find yourself authorised to kill anyone you can. It was strange to find oneself an authorised burglar, a permitted thief. Allowing fully the great and noble difference, yet in war time one does go through some of the processes of murder, burglary, and theft.

The quick eye of my friend detected signs of habitation in a small side room in one corner of the courtyard. "There is someone in there," he said.

A flight of steps led up to it. We went up these cautiously. The door at the top of them, leading into the chamber, was partially hidden by a heap of brambles, apparently put there to impede the way. Removing these, he found the door closed. It resisted all his efforts to open it, though it seemed fragile enough.

"There is someone behind it," said my friend; "I hear his breathing." He called loudly through the chinks, and told the man to open the door, and that no harm would be done him. There was no answer to his repeated calls. At last he said—

"Open the door and trust to us; we will not harm you; if you do not, I will bring some soldiers, and they will not spare you."

The door was slowly opened, and an old man peered out at us. The wild, frightened, hungry look in his eyes startled us. His long white hair and long white beard showed that he was a very old man. But the hollow cheeks and hollow stomach, the protruding ribs, the wrinkled skin, were not due to old age alone. His long lean fingers, his fleshless arms and legs, were like those of a skeleton. He was a very tall man, and as he stood on his long lean shanks, his hip-bones stood sharply out, and the bend in his body made the hollow in his stomach still more dreadful. The poor wretch shivered and trembled from weakness, from hunger, and from fear. He looked as if he was at the last extremity of starvation. When at length we got him to tell us his story in trembling accents, it appeared that he had somehow been left behind when the rest of the household had left the place. He was a feeble man, and could not move fast. Afterwards he had been afraid to venture out into the streets by himself. The people had sent all their property and valuables away long before the time of our assault—the old man dwelt very much on this point—and so at the time of the assault they had been able to move rapidly away. They had left the flour they had laid in for ordinary domestic use behind, however, and this he had brought up into this lonely chamber, and cooked himself some cakes once or twice a week, for he was afraid lest the fire should betray him. It had only just sufficed to keep him alive. The constant fear of discovery had been every hour of each day a torment to him, he said. He slept but little at night. He had always been a well-wisher of the British Government.

He was now sick unto death, and a poor feeble old man. If he did not get some nourishment soon, he should die. My friend had his orderly with him, and told him to take the old man to his quarters, and get him some food at once. But the old man fell at his feet and clasped his knees, and begged him not to send him with the Sikh sepoy. He was sure he would kill him on the way. Let the merciful Sahibs come with him. There was nothing in that place to search for—nothing. But my friend told him he must go with the orderly, and so he went off, weeping and trembling.

We then went over the house. We broke open one or two chests we found in some of the rooms, but there was nothing in them but quilts and coverlets and the ordinary clothing of the people. I appropriated a rather prettily embroidered skull-cap, and a pair of slippers gaily decked with tinsel. I also found, lying on the floor of one of the rooms, a copy of the poems of Hafiz, very handsomely bound, and of exquisite penmanship, which also I determined to carry away, to convey. In one room was a great heap of brass and copper vessels. These it was not worth our while, of course, to take away; and some of them, those most valuable from the metal in them—were too bulky to be moved.

"I am rather surprised to find so little of any value here," said my friend. "The people who lived here must have been wealthy. I suppose they removed all their valuables early in the siege, as the old man said."

As I have said before, the plan of the buildings was the usual one, that of a hollow square; the courtyard in the middle being a large one. The lower story of the side of the square in which the gateway was—the buildings were two-storied—had a long open corridor, used for stabling the bullocks and horses. The lower story of the opposite side of the square was closed in and used, like the story above it, for a dwelling-place; here being, in fact, the Zenana. The lower stories of the other two sides of the square consisted simply of open arcades with Moorish arches resting on slender pillars. At the end of one of these verandahs, on a rude bedstead, lay the dead body of a Sepoy, still clothed in the full uniform of the East India Company, in which, it may be, the man had fought many a battle for the Company, and now had fought this one against it. He had no doubt been wounded in the fight in the street not far off, and had crept into this quiet place to die. His bayonet lay on the floor by the side of the bedstead.

The gateway leading into the courtyard was not in the middle of that side of the square, but very near one end of it, which also brought it very near the end of one of the adjoining sides. It was, therefore, very near the end of one of these open arcades, the one in which the dead Sepoy lay. The sight of the dead man had kept us in this verandah for some time. To my friend it was a more familiar and accustomed sight than it was to me, and it did not rivet his attention as it did mine. He had been looking about him with his keen eyes,

while I had my gaze fixed on the man who had lain down on the bedstead for a longer and deeper sleep than he had ever experienced in one before.

"Excuse me for a minute," said my friend, as he crossed over to the opposite arcade; and I saw him pacing down it with measured step. When he came back he did the same with the one in which I stood.

"These two verandahs should be the same length," he said to me.

"Yes," I said, "they occupy the two sides of a square. Even in a parallelogram the opposite sides are equal."

"Precisely so; but by the measurements I have just made, this verandah is fifteen feet shorter than the other one. Just wait here a second,"—and he walked to the gateway and then through it into the street. When he came back, he walked up to the end of the arcade next the gateway and examined it closely.

"This end has been walled up," he said; "come and look at the space there is between this inside wall and the wall outside in the street. They would never have a solid wall of that thickness. There would be no object in it here. I am sure that there was an arch like those along the outside of the verandah across this end of it, and that it has been bricked up, and the joining of the wall and arch carefully concealed. It would be at the level of the other ones. If you will give me a back, I will soon find out."

I leaned against the wall as we used to do when we played "Buck! buck! how many fingers do I hold up" at school, and my friend mounted up and began to scrape away the plaster with his pocket-knife.

"Just as I thought," he exclaimed, as he slipped down again. "There is no doubt about it. Do you mind doing a bit of digging?"

"No," I said, "but what are we to dig with?"

"This *is* provoking!" he cried; "the orderly has taken away the pickaxe with him. If we leave this place for an hour, some one else may discover it; and now that I have scraped the plaster away, the bricking up is easily seen. And if anyone else begins the digging, we cannot interrupt them in it. It would then be their claim, as they call it in the gold fields."

"There is the sepoy's bayonet," I said; "we could dig a hole in a wall with that."

"Of course we could;" and he got it and we set to work. At first the work was slow and difficult. We could do no more than pick out the mortar, which luckily had scarcely set, from the joints between the bricks. But at last we managed to get out a brick. The work became more rapid then. At last the bayonet gave a sudden slip, showing that it had pierced through the wall. And now the hollow sound of the mortar and brickbats falling on the other side of the wall showed that there was a chamber behind it. There must be something worth hiding there, and now we went to work with coats off. At the end of an hour's work we had made a good-sized hole. "Will you go in and

see what there is," said my friend, I being slight and slender and he a portly man. I did so; and crawled out again, sick and dizzy from the foul air within. "We must make the hole bigger," said my friend, "and you had better go out into the open air for a few minutes."

When the hole or opening had been made as large as a small casement window, we waited for some time longer to let the foul air come out and the fresh air enter, and then we went in together. There were two or three large and roughly-made chests, or rather cases, for they were evidently made simply to hold their contents, and not secure them. We soon had the covers off these, and found them full of handsome shawls, and scarves, and pieces of silk, and kincob. There were beautiful suits of women's clothes—the full trousers, and the little bodice, and the long flowing sheet to throw over the head—of very fine silk, thickly embroidered with gold and silver. The collection of articles was a very miscellaneous one, for in one chest were several very handsome richly embroidered sword-belts and horse trappings. While we were hard at work we heard a chuckle at the opening in the wall, and looking up saw the glitter of a pair of eyes and the gleam of a long row of teeth. My friend immediately jumped out, with the bayonet in his hand. The inlooker was probably one of our own followers; but in times like those you could not very much trust anyone, and the sight of plunder might lead to our being disposed of, if taken at disadvantage, in such a lonely place. The man turned out to be one of our Sikh soldiers; good fighters but keen plunderers. Love of military employment, a desire to pay off old scores against the sepoys who had helped to break their power and conquer their country, had been the chief reasons that had led to their flocking to our standard at that time: but the hope of loot had been an equally strong one. They had looked forward to the plunder of Delhi, and had not been disappointed in their expectations. It was they, of all the soldiery, who had made the best use of the first few days of permitted plunder. This man was a very fine specimen of the race; tall, lean, lithe, keen-eyed, with a hooked nose and a peaked beard. His eyes glistened as he looked at the hole, and his lips kept parted with a smile or grin. Here was a scene he loved; here was congenial work.

"We must get rid of this fellow," said my friend; "give me out that shawl and that sword-belt."

I handed these out to him, and he gave them to the Sikh. The man's face beamed as he took the sword-belt: it was very handsome, and no doubt valuable, too, from the amount of bullion on it: it was just what he wanted. He made a salute and walked away.

"I was very anxious to get rid of the man," said my companion, as he entered the chamber again, "because I do not think, as he did I could see, that these shawls and things are all that are in here. I am sure that they must have had some valuable things in this house, from the look of it."

So he took one of the silver-covered maces, of which there were several in one corner, and began to sound the floor carefully and systematically. In one corner it sounded hollow. He stooped down and scraped away the mud, and lo! there presented itself to us a large circular stone, with an iron ring at the top. To me—a young lad then—the breaking into the chamber had been exciting enough, a great adventure. Now my excitement rose to fever point. Here was probably the entrance to long underground galleries, such as those which Aladdin got into in the *Arabian Nights*, in which stood the trees on whose branches hung rubies and emeralds, and pearls and diamonds, and great sapphires. Visions rose before me of a house of my own, in England; perhaps a deer-park; horses and hunters, and a moor in Scotland. But when we got the stone up, after some exertion of strength and trouble, it showed no winding staircase leading down to an underground treasure-house.

There was nothing but a small circular pit, about three feet deep, lined and paved with masonry. But in this were several wooden boxes, and small copper boxes with pierced sides and top, in which was a large quantity of jewelry, rolled up in little pieces of cloth, or put away in cotton.

Here were thick bangles of solid gold and solid silver; here were rings for the fingers and rings for the toes; ear-rings and nose-rings; gold and silver chains for the neck; silver chains to wear round the waist; necklaces of many kinds, some to wear close round the neck and some that hung far down on the breast. But alas! even here was disappointment. Very few of the precious stones that had ornamented the jewelry had been left behind. They had been picked out and carried away! Here were heaps of rings tied together in bunches with silk-thread, but all the most valuable stones had been removed from them. It was sad to see the great holes in the solid gold hoops, and think that they had held big emeralds and diamonds which might have been ours. However, we poured all the jewelry into a small silk scarf, and made a bundle of it. We also made a bundle of the best shawls and other articles, and then we departed with our loot.

"We will take these to the prize agents at once," said my friend; "we will then come back with some of their men and take away all the other things."

Just as we were passing out under the gateway my friend exclaimed suddenly—"I see it all! the cunning old fox! He was not forgotten at all. He was left behind on purpose to guard the treasure. They knew that it was not likely that anyone would hurt so old and feeble a man; that hiding himself was all humbug. How well he acted—the cunning old fox! Did you hear what happened in another place like this? I went into it too. There was a grave in the middle of the courtyard, covered with a velvet pall and flowers, and with lights burning at the head—after the usual Mahomedan fashion, you know. A young woman sat by

the side of the grave, weeping and wailing. She was the dead man's wife. We might ransack the house, and take all that was in it, but she begged that she might be left to watch by the grave of her beloved husband until permission could be got to remove his body to the graveyard without the walls. He had died suddenly during the days of the assault, and they had been afraid to carry out the body then, and had laid it in this grave in the courtyard. And the poor young thing wept piteously under her veil. We could not see her face, of course, but from the figure and the voice we knew that she must be a very young girl. She begged to be left there with the venerable old man, an aged retainer, a very counterpart of this other old scoundrel, who had remained behind with her. And she cried as if her heart would break. Of course we said that she might remain; and in fact, being interested in her, said that we would get the permission of the commanding officer for the relations to come and remove the body as soon as they could. They seemed very anxious to do this, for they came the very next day and carried away the beloved one's dust. Then it came out that no one had died or been buried there at all. The whole thing was a ruse. And there at our very feet, in the hole by the side of which the poor widow lay weeping, had been lying hidden a mass of precious stones and valuable jewels, worth thousands of pounds."

We got the whole of our discovered treasure down to the offices of the prize agents. Though we had not made as great a haul as we at one moment expected, yet it was not a bad morning's work; it was not a bad bit of loot.

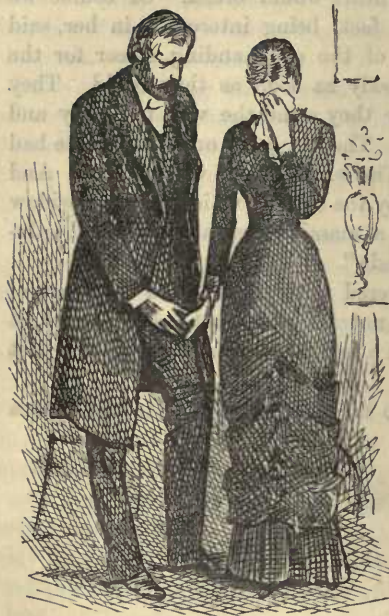
This story really is a true one, so far as anything that is related can be true.

R. E. F.

Love the Debt.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

LORD CHARLECOTE.



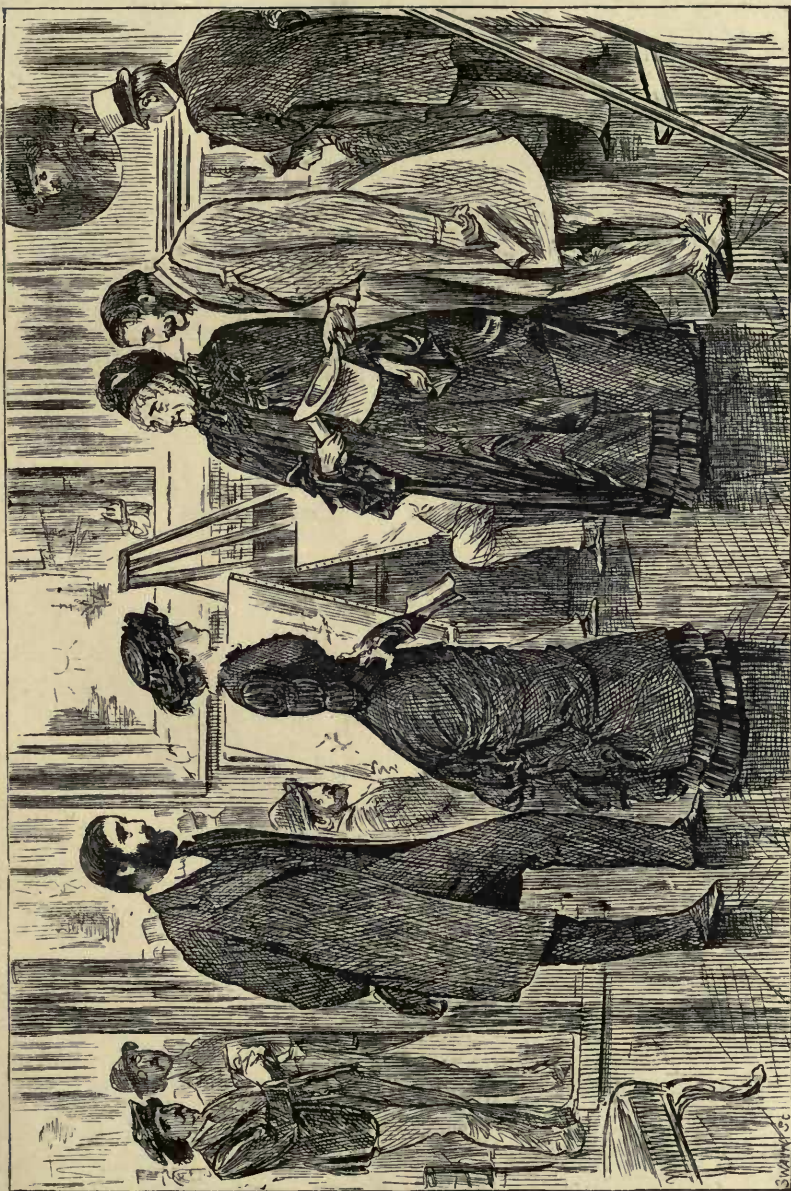
LADY SADDLETHWAITE of course did not expect that the match she planned for the far future would be directly advanced during their continental tour. She would be the last person to credit any girl with such callous inconstancy, Mabel least of all. But she did think, and had every right to think, that a heart so harrowed as hers, like a soil in which every green thing has been torn up by the plough, was in the best state for the sowing of the seed of future love. It could not remain for ever in bare, black and bleak desolation, and the first seed sown now in this cleared, softened, and impressionable soil, would have the best chance of ripening hereafter. Nor, again, did she think it to Lawley's dis-

advantage that he should be associated inseparably with George in the mind of Mabel; with his death as well as with his life. It is true that—

The first bringer of unwelcome news
Hath but a losing office, and his tongue
Sounds ever after as a sullen bell,
Remembered tolling a departed friend—

that is, when this unwelcome news is our sole association with its herald. But when the herald shares the sorrow he announces, and helps by sympathy to heal the wound he makes, his image is more likely to be associated with love than grief.

On the whole, we think Lady Saddlethwaite showed some knowledge of human nature, and of woman's nature, in considering that when



"LORD CHARLECOTE THOUGHT YOU WERE WALKING IN YOUR SLEEP."

Mabel's "heart in the midst of her body was even like melting wax," it was in the fittest state for a fresh impression.

On the other hand, it must be said that neither Mabel nor her love was of an ordinary type. Both her character and bringing up, her reserved nature and her lonely childhood, disposed her to love altogether and intensely where she loved at all. She had so loved George. When he was taken so suddenly and terribly from her, her heart was not merely as a bed from which a plant has been wrenched up by the roots, and which lies torn and tossed and in wild confusion, but as a bed from which, not the plant only, but the soil itself in which it grew, has been taken. She seemed to have no heart left to love with. There was hardly a day in which she did not take herself to task for the ungrateful apathy with which she met Lady Saddlethwaite's kindness and Lawley's devotion. When Lady Saddlethwaite pressed this continental trip upon her, urged it, forced it upon her, she seemed to have the spirit neither to decline nor accept it whole-heartedly. She simply submitted to be petted with the listless languor of a spoiled child in the first stage of convalescence. But this ungracious apathy was most unnatural to her, and at times she woke from it overpowered with self-reproach, and would pain Lady Saddlethwaite by the depth of her penitence. For Lady Saddlethwaite understood her, and loved and admired her more in her bereavement than ever. No vain beauty could delight more in the reflection of her loveliness in the glass than Lady Saddlethwaite delighted to see her kindness reflected in smiles from every face about her; but she made allowance for the glass in Mabel's case being dimmed with tears, and set herself to do all she could to bring back something of its old brightness.

As for Lawley, he looked for no acknowledgment. He was content to be allowed to devote himself to her without hope or thought of a return—at least in these first days of her trouble. She had, as it were, taken the veil of sorrow, and her vestal dedication to it was to be respected. So Lawley fancied his feeling towards her was best expressed in lines of his favourite Shelley he was ever repeating to himself—

The worship the heart lifts above,
And the heavens reject not;
The desire of the moth for the star,
Of the night for the morrow;
The devotion to something afar
From the sphere of our sorrow.

But, in truth, he was wildly, passionately, hopelessly in love, and little likely to be reconciled for long to this cold comfort—

In her bright radiance and collateral light
Must I be comforted, not in her sphere.

For the present, however, in the first few months of her sorrow, it was the utmost he did or could look for. As for Mabel, she soon fell into the way of looking to him and relying on him always and for everything, except conversing with the natives. Lawley either couldn't or wouldn't

speak French. He acknowledged to being able to read it, but speak it he wouldn't. Lady Saddlethwaite couldn't. Mabel, therefore, had a chance of turning Miss Murdoch's lessons to advantage.

"But I only know words with a 'U' in them," said Mabel, with a flash of her old fun, as they stepped off the steamer at Calais. "My aunt, who taught me, discovered that the great secret of the French language was the pronunciation of the vowel 'U'; so she picked out of the dictionary all the words with a 'U' in them, and made me string them together in sentences. 'U,' she said, was everything in French."

"In England 'I' is the all-important vowel, which accounts for the difference in the manners of the two countries," said Lawley.

"I hope there's a 'U' in soda-water," said Lady Saddlethwaite, who, though the sea had been as glass, felt slightly qualmish.

"Oh, here they all speak English—of a sort. I think they must have been taught it by their aunts, for they only know words with a 'V' in them. 'Vee vill 'ave soda-vater' will fetch them."

"Not from their aunts. Their aunts would not have taught them such a Cockney pronunciation, Mr. Lawley."

"Then they must have learned it from the exclamation on landing of the qualmish passengers, 'O de V!'"

This certainly was a wild joke, but Lawley was in wild spirits at finding that the bustle and strangeness and excitement were rousing Mabel out of her listlessness. It was, indeed, for this reason he insisted on her being interpreter, as it was something for her to do, and for them to laugh at. Not that her French was bad—it was singularly, though rather pedantically, good. Nor that her accent was detestable—as, though it truly was, they didn't know it—but that she *would* speak every syllable with staccato distinctness, as if she were shouting through an ear-trumpet.

This joke, mild as it was, was a joy for ever, as Mabel was almost incorrigible through her childish association of French with deaf Miss Murdoch; while there was, of course, besides, the natural tendency to shout to a foreigner through confounding unconsciously dulness of intelligence with dulness of hearing.

During their tour nothing so pleased Lady Saddlethwaite—not cities, scenery, statues, paintings—so much as the sensation Mabel created wherever she appeared. In Weston and its neighbourhood Mabel was admired, but not enthusiastically admired; not so much admired as Miss Smithers, who might have won a prize at a cattle-show. The taste of the people in beauty, like their taste in everything else, was coarse. They liked it as they liked their wine, "full bodied." But in Rome, the foster-mother of the art of the world, Mabel distracted the attention of the artists in the Pinacotheca of the Vatican, and in the galleries of the Pamfili-Doria palace and of the Capitol. It was not so much the beauty of her face which attracted them, as its expression, madonna-like in its sad sweetness, and in its utter lack of self-consciousness.

Mabel was never given to self-consciousness, and her sorrow had taken her out of herself more than ever, and she walked through the galleries as unconscious of admiration as the pictures and statues themselves.

Lady Saddlethwaite cared very little for pictures and statues, and yet she endured them for the pure pleasure of watching the admiration Mabel excited. All eyes seemed to follow her as sunflowers the sun. Lady Saddlethwaite felt something of the pride and pleasure of a virtuoso who exhumes a gem by an old master from the rubbish of a garret, and exhibits his discovery to appreciative connoisseurs. She was especially pleased when these connoisseurs happened to be English (for foreigners are but foreigners at best), most of all when they were unexceptionable English of her own sacred set. For no grocer or college don could have a more superstitious veneration for blue blood than some in whose veins it flows. As for Lady Saddlethwaite, she believed in the immaculate conception of the well-born, and in the papal infallibility of their opinions on social subjects—when they agreed with her. Lord Charlecote, for instance, whom she chanced upon in a corridor of the Vatican—a young gentleman much given to the turf, who canted cynicism in opposition to his companion Clifford's cant of sentiment—was consecrated as an oracle because of his enthusiastic admiration of Mabel.

"Lady Saddlethwaite! *You* here? Everyone's here, I think," with a slight querulousness. "But, I say, who's that girl that goes walking in her sleep—do you know? There, looking at that old saint with a crick in his neck, with the grey thingamyjig on."

"You'd better mind what you say of her, my lord; she's in my charge."

"Is she, though?" with a new interest in Lady Saddlethwaite.

"No harm in saying she's the loveliest girl in Rome, bar none, eh? Who is she?"

"She's a Miss Masters. Shall I wake her and introduce you?"

"If you would. But, I say, Lady Saddlethwaite, can she talk? I can't make the running with these things, you know," pointing to the pictures. "Does she hunt, or that?"

"Oh, she can talk on any subject when she's awake. Mabel!"

Lady Saddlethwaite was as proud of Mabel's conversational powers as of her beauty, and seized every opportunity to show them off. Mabel came at call, and was introduced to Lord Charlecote.

"Lord Charlecote thought you were walking in your sleep, Mabel, and wished me to wake you before you fell downstairs," said Lady Saddlethwaite mischievously, and not in the best taste; but she wished to rouse Mabel, that she might show to advantage in the eyes of a person of Lord Charlecote's exquisite discrimination.

"Oh, I say, you know, Lady Saddlethwaite, I meant that Miss Masters was like *La Sonambula*," said his lordship, with great presence of mind. "Patti, you know."

"But it is like a dream to me being here," said Mabel.

"Like a nightmare, by George; there's no end to it. I thought I was through, but there's all this yet," looking ruefully at his catalogue.

"I think, if I were you, my lord, I should go by Murray. He skips most of it," said Mabel.

"Happy thought! This beastly thing skips nothing. It expects you to do the ceilings, even," with a bitter remembrance of the Sistine Chapel.

"Lady Saddlethwaite has a Murray with two leaves missed out in the binding. It has been a great comfort to her," said Mabel, with perfect truth.

"I'll borrow it, by George!"

"But I'm afraid those are the leaves you have done if you've got to here."

Lord Charlecote groaned. Dare we to confess that our heroine to some extent sympathised with him? She could appreciate about one-tenth of all the wonders she had shown her, but her appreciation even of it was blunted by the weariness of having gone through the other nine-tenths.

"I have a lot of old masters and that sort of thing at home, and the public are admitted to do them on certain days; but when I get back I'll put a stop to it. I never thought it was like this," said Lord Charlecote, remorsefully. It was the remorse of Lear exposed to the pelting of the pitiless storm, and so reminded of the houseless heads of the poor—

O, I have ta'en

Too little care of this! Take physic, pomp;

Expose thyself to feel what wretches feel.

Mabel laughed at this instance of sympathy learned through suffering, and turned to tell it to Lady Saddlethwaite and Lawley, who were walking behind them.

"Let us give it up for to-day," cried Lady Saddlethwaite eagerly.

"For ever and a day—unless *you* are coming again," said Lord Charlecote, speaking to Lady Saddlethwaite, but looking at Mabel.

Mabel was looking at Lawley, to whom she had already confessed her Philistinism, but of whose judgment she stood in awe. Alas for Lawley! he had no judgment in her presence, no thought, no taste, no eyes, no admiration but for her only—only her. The fierce fire of love consumed him utterly, burning now with the green flame of jealousy. Lord Charlecote's admiration was clear, and that he should win even a laugh from Mabel was bitter. It is natural that "love strong as death" should be joined in the same verse with "jealousy cruel as the grave."

"Let's go to the circus."

"The what?"

"The Coliseum," replied his lordship unabashed. "It's the best value in the place. Clifford tells me there used to be races there, but I can't for the life of me see how they managed it. It's a grand stand anyhow."

Accordingly it was agreed that they should drive to the Coliseum, for his lordship to look a little more into this mystery.

"It's a mouldy old place, isn't it?" he said to Mabel as they drove through Rome. "It always reminds me of an old cemetery; all chapels, statues, monuments, broken pillars half buried in clay. It gives me the shivers, by George! I'd have gone a week ago but for Clifford. He hasn't my feeling about it at all. I tell him he's no imagination."

Mabel was quick enough to gather from his manner that Mr. Clifford was, or fancied himself, a very imaginative person, who probably took his friend's facetious irony seriously and ill.

"Rome is a dangerous place for anyone with a quick imagination. It runs away with one so soon."

"To Naples? that's where mine would have taken me. Glad it didn't though, or I should have missed you, Lady Saddlethwaite."

His lordship's compliment was, of course, meant for Mabel, whom, because she understood his wit, he began to think witty. A little wit goes a long way from the lips of either rank or beauty, probably for the reason mentioned by Barrow in his definition of wit: "It procureth delight as monsters do, not for their beauty, but for their rarity." Mabel, though she indulged sometimes in the luxury of silence and sorrow in Lawley's or Lady Saddlethwaite's company, always exerted herself when with strangers; and to-day the whole burden of entertaining Lord Charlecote seemed to fall upon her. Lawley was gloomily silent, while Lady Saddlethwaite was tired and half asleep.

"Here's the circus!" Mabel exclaimed, as they drew near the Coliseum. "Your imagination doesn't always take a gloomy flight, my lord. Girls on piebald horses leaping through hoops is a cheerful exchange for the dying gladiator and the Christian martyrs," said Mabel with a smile, to show she saw through his affectation of Philistinism.

"Why, what-you-call-him, Byron, calls it a circus, doesn't he?"

Such was the bloody circus' genial laws.

But the gladiator's bloody circus stands

A noble wreck in ruinous perfection.

Not but that you may be quite right, you know, Miss Masters," he hastened to say with a face of perfect seriousness. "Dare say Byron was thinking of girls in spangles on piebald horses leaping through hoops when he called it a circus."

Certainly Mabel had caught a Tartar in this sleepy-looking young nobleman.

"When he called it a *gladiator's* circus he was probably thinking of gladiators, not of a grand stand," said Mabel archly.

"Well, but it is a grand stand for looking down at the race of ideas, religions, empires, &c. Will that do?"

Lord Charlecote was amazed to meet a beauty with brains, who was neither *gauche* nor *blasée*, and could say something besides "Yes,"

"No," "awfully," "nice," "tiresome." He paid her the compliment, as they walked together within the Coliseum, in front of Lady Saddlethwaite and Lawley, of unmasking the really strong, if not deep, feeling that underlay his assumed cynicism.

In truth, his lordship was a most poetic and impressionable person, and "protested too much" through his assumption of cynicism. Mabel also became confidential, and confessed to her imagination being overpowered and oppressed by all that was suggested to her, and to her feeling, as she had often felt in trying to master the full meaning of a grand poem or piece of music, wearied and confused.

"You've been doing too much. It's a fit of mental dyspepsia. No mind could digest all that you've been trying to digest in a week. You should have taken a month to it."

"But I hadn't a month to take."

"What on earth have you to do? I never knew a young lady have anything to do."

"You never knew a young lady who was a national schoolmistress, then, my lord."

"A national—— What in the name of fortune made you take up that craze?"

"Necessity. I couldn't help myself."

He was silent for a second or two from sheer surprise, but soon recovering himself, he showed the truest tact in continuing, instead of turning, the conversation.

"Don't you find it very dreary, Miss Masters?"

"Oh, I find everything dreary sometimes," with a dreary sigh, "even the old masters," pulling her wandering thoughts together again with a smile.

Lord Charlecote, as we have said, was a most poetic and impressionable person, and had his original admiration for Mabel immensely increased by this discovery of her fallen fortunes. That the fall had been extraordinary he had no doubt at all, as Mabel had the bearing of a princess. When he had returned with them to their hotel, he found an opportunity to rave about her to Lady Saddlethwaite.

"Well, do you know what she is, my lord?"

"She told me—she wasn't bragging of it, you know. It came out casually."

"Bragging of it!"

"Any other girl would either hide it or brag of it."

"I think I'd better warn you that there's no use falling in love with her, my lord."

"Engaged to the parson?"

"No, but she was engaged to another of the cloth, who was murdered in Australia."

"Murdered! That was the sleep-walking look. Poor girl! she's had it hard."

"Yes, she has had it hard, and yet she's of good family." Perplex-

ing paradox to Lady Saddlethwaite. "At least her father has good blood in his veins. He's a Colonel Masters, and lost all in that Caledonian Bank. The shock struck him down with paralysis, and she had to take to teaching to support herself and him. Then came this other trouble, poor child!"

"She might get over it in time," said his lordship, with a meaning Lady Saddleworth read and answered.

"My dear Lord Charlecote, by the time she has got over it you will have been in and out of love with twenty others."

Lord Charlecote laughed. It was a true bill. He was as impressionable and as unstable as water, and was in and out of love once a month on an average.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

LOVE STRONG AS DEATH.

LORD CHARLECOTE was devoted in his attentions to Mabel, not only for the few remaining days of her stay in Rome, but also throughout her tour. He deserted his friend Clifford, the warmth of whose æsthetic enthusiasm had soured him to cynicism, and had become at last too oppressive, and begged Lady Saddlethwaite's permission to join her party. Lady Saddlethwaite could not, of course, have done otherwise than have conceded the permission, even if the concession had been distasteful. But it was not distasteful. Lord Charlecote was a personage of very considerable importance in her mind and world, and his admiration of Mabel was admiration of Lady Saddlethwaite's taste. As for Lawley's chagrin at the arrangement, it, too, was a good thing. Love, like light, was doubled by reflection, and Lawley's worship, like all worship, would be quickened by being shared. It was shared. Lord Charlecote fell, as far as he could fall, in love with Mabel. He did not mean to do so, of course, at first, but "in the matter of love," says the Spanish proverb, "you begin when you like and leave off when you can." It was not, to tell the truth, a very brilliant conquest of Mabel's. In the first place, his lordship was always in love with some one or other; in the second place he felt safe with Mabel for the ignoble reason that Lady Saddlethwaite had guaranteed her to be love-proof, and there was therefore no fear of a serious entanglement; and in the third place his love, such as it was, was due less to Mabel's being lovely and lovable than to this very fact, that she was love-proof. For we may say that what is true generally of all the children of men, is universally true of all spoiled children—upgrown or other—a thing needs but to be beyond their reach to be longed for. Lord Charlecote had been a spoiled child from his birth, and had learned what it was to be happy in everything but happiness—

Happy thou art not;

For what thou hast not, still thou strivest to get,

And what thou hast, forget'st.

And this he found true specially in affairs of love. Here, too, he was a spoiled child, and had grown from being petted to being as pettish as the sex he pursued—

Ubi velis nolunt; ubi nolis volunt ultro;
Concessa pudet ire viâ—

as Lucan has it; or, as it is put prettily in French, “Une femme est comme votre ombre, courez après, elle vous fuit, fuyez-la, elle court après vous.” His lordship’s success with the sex had made him wayward as they in this, and Mabel’s absolute indifference to him became her chief charm in his eyes. Her conquest, then, was not very brilliant.

May we say here, that if we seem to make all men fall in love with our heroine, it is because we have to do only with those who did fall in love with her. There were a vast number of golden youth in Weston and its neighbourhood who saw nothing in her; but just for that reason we have not to do with them. “See,” said some one to Diogenes, pointing in Neptune’s temple to the pictures of those who had escaped shipwreck; “see the wonderful power of the god!” “But where are they painted who were drowned?” asked the cynic. So we paint only those who attest the power of our goddess; the multitude who did not attest her power are for that reason unrepresented. What really needs explanation is the fewness of her suitors, and this is explicable only by her living all her life in Weston. As a rule, indeed, we believe that girls have more choice of suitors than we men imagine. We know of those who have proposed and been accepted, but of those who have proposed and been refused we never hear, and so we get to speak, and perhaps think, as if most girls took, or would take, the first man that offered. It is only fair to us to say, however, that for this vulgarity of thought and speech match-makers and women generally are chiefly responsible. “Why don’t you marry so and so?” they’ll say, speaking to the meanest of our sex of the fairest of theirs. And, indeed, women owe it all to their own valuation of themselves that men think less of them than they deserve. A misogynist might say of them what Johnson said of the Irish. “The Irish are not in a conspiracy to cheat the world by false representations of the merits of their countrymen. No, sir, the Irish are a *fair* people,—they never speak well of one another.”

Mabel then, as we said, won Lord Charlecote’s facile and fickle affections, but won them quite unconsciously. She was in no mood to be on the look-out for such a conquest; while besides, Lady Saddlethwaite had more than once alluded casually to his lordship’s multitudinous attachments. Mabel, therefore, took his devotion as due, in part, to his gallantry, but in chief to his compassion; because the deference of his manner had evidently deepened since he came to know of her position in life. She felt very grateful to him on this account, and exerted herself to entertain him—an exertion which did herself as much good as the excitement of ever changing scenes—for she was thereby roused out of herself, and

could not indulge in those long lapses of silence and sorrow she sometimes gave way to when with Lady Saddlethwaite and Lawley.

"What shall we do to-day?" asked Lord Charlecote on the second morning after their arrival in Genoa.

"Oh, nothing," sighed Lady Saddlethwaite wearily; "it's the only thing we haven't done, except the Palazzo Doria."

"And it should be done as being a great Italian work of art, *dolce far niente*," said Mabel.

"Let's do it on the sea, then," said Lord Charlecote. "There's no seeing Genoa in Genoa. One cannot see the wood for the trees, the streets are so narrow."

Lady Saddlethwaite felt qualmish at the mere mention of the sea. "The very sight of the sea makes me dizzy," she said.

"Why, it's like glass."

"It's like Genoa—looks best in the distance," with a shake of the head. "But you'll all go. I shall be glad to be rid of you to get an hour or two's rest."

"I shall stay with you, Lady Saddlethwaite, if you'll allow me."

"You shall do no such thing, child. I'm going to bed. If that's the only way to see the place, you must see it in that way. I can't pay the price. It isn't 'see Genoa and *die*,' you know, and I'm not called to martyr myself."

Lady Saddlethwaite's old-fashioned notion of the propriety of chaperoning Mabel always and everywhere got worn out as she got worn out herself; and, indeed, even a more particular chaperone would have felt there was something almost ludicrous in safeguarding such a girl as Mabel.

Mabel went to get ready, and soon returned looking her loveliest, as Lady Saddlethwaite thought, and as Lord Charlecote thought, and as, most of all, Lawley thought, and the three set out together for the port. They chartered a boat—not over clean, but the cleanest procurable—provided with a pair of oars and a light sail which they could rig up if there was a breath of wind outside the harbour. But there wasn't; so they pulled and rested at intervals, chatting the while. There are few more superb views than that of Genoa from the sea, as even Lord Charlecote—who still affected cynicism in general conversation—was forced to admit.

"But the place looks in pawn while you're in it," he said, "with such frowsy tenants in its palaces—like jewels in the hands of a Jew pawnbroker."

"They may be redeemed one day," said Lawley dreamily.

"Not they," said Lord Charlecote decidedly; "commerce, like the sea it sails on, floods one coast and leaves another high and dry."

"Everything goes," said Mabel, with a sadness born of her own trouble.

"*Ça ira*! It's the tune time marches to," said Lord Charlecote, hum-

ming it. "It's a provision of nature for Englishmen; for you see, if there were no ruins there would be no picturesqueness, and if there were no picturesqueness there would be no Cook's personally-conducted tours."

"I wonder why ruin makes everything picturesque," said Mabel.

"Its associations with death, I think," said Lawley. "The shadow of death, like night, makes the most commonplace thing impressive. Every ruin is a shadow of the coming event, and it's the presentiment that unconsciously fascinates us."

This was rather a dreary topic, and Lord Charlecote changed it. "I don't think it was ever much of a place to live in, or that they were ever much of a people," he said cynically, referring to Genoa la Superba. "The view you get from history is like the view you get from here—a distant view. You see only what was splendid, as we see from here only palaces and churches. What was sordid and narrow and frowsy is out of sight. They were a commercial people," he added contemptuously, "and commerce is always mean. It's the dry rot of a nation. 'Honour sinks where commerce long prevails.'"

"Isn't it Bacon who says that in the infancy of states arms flourish, in their middle age arts, and in their declining years commerce? Under its other name of avarice, it is the usual characteristic of old age.

That meanest rage

And latest folly of man's sinking age,
Which rarely venturing in the van of life,
While nobler passions wage their heated strife,
Comes skulking last, with selfishness and fear,
And dies, collecting lumber in the rear.

Both gentlemen were thinking of another people than the Genoese, Lawley with good reason, having lived so long in the West Riding. It was rather a stiff conversation for a sultry day, when any kind of effort, physical or mental, was exhausting, but they drifted into the subject, and were stimulated by the presence of Mabel to talk their best upon it. They sang as the thrushes sing in spring—in rivalry. The languor of the day, however, had the effect of making their talk discursive. It passed from Genoa and its siege in 1799, when 20,000 of its inhabitants perished by famine, on to deaths of different kinds, and to that by drowning as the easiest. Lord Charlecote quoted a great London doctor, who told him of two men he had attended at different times in hospital, both of whom had been all but drowned, while both, upon their recovery, described their latest sensations before absolute unconsciousness as delicious. Lawley, by a double association, was reminded of his favourite Shelley, drowned in this sea, and quoted one of the stanzas, 'Written in dejection near Naples':—

Yet now despair itself is mild,
Even as the winds and waters are;
I could lie down like a tired child,
And weep away the life of care
Which I have borne, and yet must bear,

Till death like sleep might steal on me,
 And I might feel in the warm air
 My cheek grow cold, and hear the sea
 Breathe o'er my dying brain its last monotony.

Mabel, looking down through the still clear water at

The deep's untrampled floor,
 With green and purple seaweeds strown,

felt that the lines Lawley quoted exquisitely expressed her own deepest longing. Suddenly the glass through which she looked became dim and broken. A breeze had sprung up and ruffled the still surface.

"A breeze at last!" cried Lord Charlecote; "let us hoist the sail."

While they stepped the mast, the boat swung round broadside to the rising waves, which though not very formidable, tossed the cockleshell of a craft up and down like a shuttlecock. The mast being fixed, Lord Charlecote stood on the seat for a moment to secure the tackle of the sail above; Lawley, standing also, unfurled it below. While the crazy little craft was thus top-heavy, with the weight so much to leeward as to bring her gunwale level with the water, a sudden gust and a strong wave sent her over. She went down like lead. Such was the intensity of Lawley's love that his first thought, when he could think, was of Mabel. As he struggled up to the surface, it was of her life he was thinking, not of his own. They rose almost together; he swam towards her and caught her just as she was about to sink the second time. She clutched his coat convulsively, but he slipped out of it, left it in her hands, and swam shorewards, pushing her before him. He was a strong swimmer, but it was a long swim. He had not struggled through half the distance before his strength began to give out. Mabel, who had now recovered consciousness and comparative calmness, felt it was giving out.

"Let me go!" she cried, trying to disengage herself.

Lawley silently held firm, with an effort that cost him much of his fast-going strength.

"You could have saved yourself. It is too late now!" she cried again despairingly.

Yes, it was too late now. Even if Lawley had let her go, he could not have struggled on very much further.

"Mabel!" he gasped, "I love you—one kiss!"

Even at that awful moment the revelation came with a kind of shock to her. She turned her face to his; their lips met, ere they sank together with a cry to the mercy of God.

CHAPTER XL.

CHANGED RELATIONS.

THE wave that helped to swamp the boat was itself helped by the swell of a large steamer, which was much nearer Lawley, if he had known it, than the shore. But he did not know it. Mabel rose between him

and the shore, and he swam towards her with the steamer behind him. Lord Charlecote, however, rose with his face to the steamer, and made for it with no thought at the moment of anyone but himself. He had been taught all his life to think only of himself, and it was not to be expected that he should forget the lesson when life itself was at stake. He, too, was a good swimmer, even better than Lawley, had only himself to save, and only a short distance to cover, since a boat from the steamer put out to meet him. Safe in the boat he had thought to spare to Mabel and Lawley. He directed the men to pull towards where the boat went down, while he himself looked anxiously in all directions for any appearance of his companions. At last he saw them together making for the shore. He felt a twinge of shame, remorse, and jealousy at the sight of Mabel being saved by his rival. He pointed to where they were, pulled out his purse, poured a heap of sovereigns into his hand, and by these signs stimulated the men (who spoke only Italian, of which he did not know a word) to the utmost exertions. While, however, they were still a good way off, Mabel and Lawley disappeared. Lord Charlecote shouted, pointed, urged the men by excited gestures till they pulled as if their own lives were in the balance. As they shot over the spot where the two had disappeared, Mabel and Lawley, still clinging together, rose for the second time to the surface, and before they could sink again Lord Charlecote had leaped out, swam to them, and supported them until the boat put back and took them in. Mabel was still alive, but Lawley was to all appearance dead.

The boat then made for the harbour, to which the steamer had already preceded them. It was the nearest refuge where they were sure to find a doctor. Lord Charlecote's assumed impassiveness was submerged beneath a wave of impulsive feeling. He felt Mabel's faint pulse, chafed her hands, rose and sat down again a dozen times in extreme excitement, gesticulating unintelligible directions to the men, and bending forward over the bulwarks as if that would hasten by a handbreadth her speed. At last they rounded the harbour pier, and passed ship after ship, whose crews looked down over the bulwarks on their ghastly burden. They hailed each as they passed, asking if there were a doctor on board? No. Lord Charlecote, in a frenzy of passionate impatience at each vain stoppage, was trying to intimate to the men that they must go straight to shore without slackening to ask again this hopeless question, when a small boat with an Englishman in it, making for the harbour mouth, pulled up alongside.

"You ask for a doctor?" asked the Englishman in execrable Italian.

"Are you a doctor?" asked Lord Charlecote simultaneously.

The stranger made the sole reply of stepping into the boat and altering at once the posture of the two bodies, which he saw only when he came alongside. He then gave directions to both the men in his own boat and to those with Lord Charlecote, and turned again to examine the lifeless bodies.

"She's not dead?" cried Lord Charlecote eagerly.

"No, she's not dead," replied the doctor after an intolerably deliberate delay; "she'll be all right in a few days, I should say."

"And he?"

The doctor took some time before he answered by shaking his head. "How long has he been under water?"

"Not five minutes."

"Five minutes!"

"But he had a long swim first, holding her up."

"He must have been nearly dead before he sank." Which indeed was true, as Lawley had a spirit much stronger than his strength.

"He's dead then?"

The doctor again proceeded to examine Lawley carefully and exhaustively, trying the while to stimulate artificial respiration, but was interrupted by the boat's touching the landing place. The doctor's boat, being much the lighter and swifter, had beaten them by time enough to have a conveyance in waiting, and in a few minutes he and his patients and Lord Charlecote were in the nearest hotel. Lord Charlecote waited to be assured that Mabel was restored and out of danger, before he hurried off to be the first to tell Lady Saddlethwaite of the accident.

When he appeared before her, drenched and dripping, alone and with trouble in his face, Lady Saddlethwaite realised her love for Mabel.

"Where's —where's Mabel?" she asked in a tone of great agitation.

"She's all right, thank God. We had an upset, but we were picked up, and she has been some time coming to. The doctor says she'll be all right in a day or so."

"But where is she?" still anxiously.

"She's at some hotel near the harbour. I forgot to ask its name; but I've kept the cab."

"I shall not be a minute," said Lady Saddlethwaite, hurrying towards the door, but pausing as she reached it to turn and ask, "And Mr. Lawley?"

Lord Charlecote shook his head.

"Drowned!"

"The doctor says there's no hope, but he's doing all he can to restore him."

Lady Saddlethwaite stood transfixed at the door.

"He has lost his life—if he has lost it—in trying to save Miss Masters," continued Lord Charlecote, finding a relief in giving expression to his self-reproach. "I took care of myself, but he held her up to his last breath. The doctor says he must have been all but dead before they sank."

Lady Saddlethwaite was much moved. "Is there no hope?"

Lord Charlecote again shook his head. Lady Saddlethwaite hurried off to get ready, and having given some confusing instructions to Parker about following her—where and with what she did not say—she entered

the cab—without waiting for Lord Charlecote, who had to change his soaking clothes—and was soon by Mabel's bedside.

Mabel was restored and conscious, but weak and confused. She recognised Lady Saddlethwaite, who stooped to kiss her with a mother's tenderness, and smiled faintly in acknowledgment of the caress.

"Where's George?" she asked in a voice barely audible. George and Lawley had got confused together in her drowning delirium, and she had not yet come to distinguish them.

"Who, dear?"

Mabel felt she had used the wrong name, but could not think of the right one. She lay silent for a little, trying to collect and concentrate her scattered thoughts.

"You mustn't trouble yourself about anything but getting better, dear. Try to go asleep."

"He's drowned!" with a kind of terror in her wide and wistful eyes.

"He's nothing of the sort. You're only dreaming, and you had much better dream asleep. There, be a good child and go asleep when you're told," patting her pale cheek.

Mabel smiled again faintly and closed her eyes.

Lady Saddlethwaite could say with a safe conscience that Lawley wasn't drowned, but it was all she could say, or the doctor either. The flame of life flickered faintly in his breast, but there was no fuel for it to feed on, and it threatened every moment to go out altogether. In fact Lawley was like to die of exhaustion. He found, however, what he needed most in Dr. Pardoe, not a very brilliant, but an extremely painstaking physician, who not only doctored but nursed him. He was very much interested, not in the man but in the patient; and death, when he seemed to have it all his own way, found he had the battle to fight all over again with a plucky and tough antagonist. Dr. Pardoe had that blind and dogged English courage of which the French prince in *Henry V.* complained—"If the English had any apprehension, they would run away." He would, perhaps, have despaired if he had seen clearly the desperation of the case. But he didn't, and he fought death to the death with stolid and stubborn hardihood. It was a long and doubtful battle. When Mabel was quite well, as she was in a few days, Lawley lay still in the shadow of death—in a twilight, whether of life's dawn or setting no one could say. Mabel, if she could, would freely have given her life for his. It was all she had to give, for her love was buried in George's grave. The girl was utterly miserable. If Lawley died, his death was at her door; if he lived, at her door, too, would be his unhappiness. For she knew enough of him to feel that his love would be life-long and life-absorbing. Here was the greatest of all the debts she owed him—his love—greater even than the debt of her life, and she could make him no return for it. For such love as she could give was as different from that he gave and that he asked as moonlight is from sunlight—different not in degree only, but in kind. She was most miserable.

Lady Saddlethwaite put her extreme dejection down to her despair of a life which was given for her own, and was doubly rejoiced to be at least able to say, on the authority of the exasperatingly cautious doctor, that Lawley was out of danger. A great weight was lifted off Mabel's heart, but a trouble almost as deep remained. Lady Saddlethwaite was perplexed to find she had given so much less relief than she expected.

"Why, you're as miserable as ever, child!"

"It's a great debt to owe," said Mabel, thinking as much of Lawley's love as of his life.

"That's not like you, Mabel. I thought you were generous enough to forgive a debt you couldn't pay. You should think what a happiness it is to him to have done you this service. It's a debt that pays itself."

"All my debts have to pay themselves," said Mabel drearily. "You don't know what it is, Lady Saddlethwaite, to owe what you never can pay. You are always doing kindnesses that can never be repaid."

"Tut, my dear. I know there's no greater pleasure than doing *you* a kindness, and I know that Mr. Lawley thinks so too. It was *you* he asked after the moment he became conscious."

Lady Saddlethwaite began to suspect that Mabel had at last discerned Lawley's love, and shot this arrow at a venture. It was a palpable hit. Mabel coloured and looked distressed, and Lady Saddlethwaite, perfectly satisfied, turned the embarrassing conversation.

Meantime, the accident which revealed Lawley's love to Mabel, revealed Lord Charlecote's love to himself, not directly so much as indirectly. He got a long letter from his mother, asking for an immediate, explicit, and positive contradiction of a scandalous paragraph in the *Times*, which had been copied from *Galignani*. In this paragraph the accident was reported at some length, and with many new and interesting particulars. It seems the boat was Lord Charlecote's private yacht, Mabel was his *fiancée*, and Lawley was Mabel's guardian, and that Lord Charlecote, by the most heroic and all but impossible exertions, swam to the steamer, holding up Mabel with one hand and Lawley with the other. Upon the text of this paragraph the Dowager Lady Charlecote held forth—very furiously after her manner. Some gases liquefy under tremendous pressure, and Lord Charlecote's love, which was of a volatile and gaseous nature, needed some such opposing pressure to condense it to anything substantial. Mabel's indifference and Lawley's rivalry did something in this direction, but his mother's furious letter did much more. Like many another woman this good lady seemed to think that a match was best kept from lighting by friction. The result of her intervention was that Lord Charlecote not only did what he could to overtake and suppress this absurd newspaper report, but also did what he could to make that part of it true which connected his name with Mabel's.

The accident also affected indirectly the relation of George to Mabel. The original version of it was copied into a Melbourne paper, and there

caught George's eye more than a year after the accident it referred to occurred. He read it on a scrap of waste paper which contained specimens of wheat that had lain aside for months in a drawer.

CHAPTER XLI.

THREE CONFESSIONS.

THE first meeting of Mabel and Lawley after their farewell kiss was a sad one. Lawley was miserable in the thought that his secret should have been wrung from him even in the agony of death, and in the thought that its untimely disclosure destroyed what little chance he had of her hand. He could make her but one reparation, to renounce what had become the happiness of his life—her society. If he had done her no service he might—notwithstanding his dying declaration—have allowed himself this happiness; but now he would seem to her, when they met, not only an unwelcome suitor, but a suitor who sued, not *in forma pauperis*, but as a sordid creditor. For he knew she would take an exaggerated view of his effort to save her. Yes; he must do her now the infinitely harder service of the sacrifice of his happiness to hers.

On the other hand Mabel certainly did feel overwhelmed with her debt to Lawley, but it was the debt of his love, not of her life, which weighed most upon her. It was not, we need hardly say, that she thought little of his saving her, but that she thought so much of his loving her. She thought Lawley utterly despised her sex; and perhaps, woman fashion, she respected him the more for his contempt; the compliment of his love, therefore, was all the greater and more surprising and more distressing. For what could she do? Like Bassanio, she would give him anything in all the world but the worthless thing he asked.

"Mr. Lawley is coming down to-day, Mabel," said Lady Saddlethwaite. They had all migrated to the hotel to which Mabel and Lawley had been carried. "I've just looked in at him and said something about your anxiety to see and thank him, and all that, and he seemed quite distressed. He begged me most earnestly to ask you to think and say nothing about it, and I promised you wouldn't. I think proud people never like being thanked. They prefer to keep everyone in their debt, perhaps."

"I don't think Mr. Lawley is proud," said Mabel, thinking with a deep blush of his love for her. Lady Saddlethwaite put a most favourable interpretation upon the blush, and began to be more hopeful than ever about her matchmaking scheme. Not that she imagined for a moment that Mabel had any heart yet to give away. But she would have in time, and it was enough now for her to know, as she plainly did, that Lawley loved her. Lady Saddlethwaite was not in the least driven to speculate as to how Mabel came by her knowledge of Lawley's feelings

towards her, since the only wonder was that she hadn't divined them long since.

When, however, Lawley entered the room, Lady Saddlethwaite saw in a moment from their mutual embarrassment that something definite must have passed between them. Mabel rose and advanced to meet him with the pained and wistful expression of one who had done him some deep wrong and deeply repented of it; while Lawley also, on his side, looked more conscious of having embittered than of having preserved her life.

"You're better?" asked Mabel, as their hands met, in a voice she couldn't quite steady.

"Oh, I'm all right again, thank you," he replied, with his last words and the kiss which sealed them vividly in his thoughts and in his eyes. What a bathos was this conventional meeting as a sequel to that scene!

"You look all right!" exclaimed Lady Saddlethwaite, who saw that she must create a diversion; "you're as white as a ghost. You must lie down on the sofa here, and submit to be nursed and made much of." Mabel stepped to the sofa and arranged the pillows with the deftness of a skilled nurse—as she was. Lawley, who was about to scorn the sofa, became suddenly glad of it.

"I've just been telling Mabel," said Lady Saddlethwaite, thinking it better to have this business of Mabel's thanks 'sided' and settled; "I've just been telling Mabel that you won't hear of being thanked for saving her life, Mr. Lawley."

"One doesn't like being thanked for what one didn't do, Lady Saddlethwaite. 'Praise undeserved,' you know. In fact, it was Lord Charlecote saved us both."

"Mabel would have been drowned many times over if she'd had the politeness to wait for Lord Charlecote to save her. But, as I was saying to her before you came in, proud people never like being thanked."

"Then I must forego my thanks to you, Lady Saddlethwaite, for all your kindness. I meant to have made you a long speech of acknowledgment before we parted to-morrow."

"To-morrow?"

"Yes; I find I must get home sooner than I expected."

"But we, too, must get back before the twelfth. We may as well keep together. It will make only two days' difference. Besides, you are certainly not strong enough to undertake such a journey at once and alone."

"But I wasn't thinking of returning by rail. Dr. Pardoe says a sea voyage would set me up."

"By sea; ugh! I didn't know Dr. Pardoe was a homœopathist. I should have thought you'd had enough of the sea."

"I hope to have only a homœopathic dose of it this time. I should not have taken the prescription, Lady Saddlethwaite, if you'd not had Lord Charlecote to take care of you."

"To take care of us! Who's to take care of *you*?"

"Why, I shall have nothing to do but lie on deck all day and smoke."

"Well, it's a very ungracious way of thanking you for your escort, Mr. Lawley, to get into a pet about your leaving us, but we couldn't pay you a higher compliment, you know. We may as well leave to-morrow, too, Mabel, if it suits Lord Charlecote. What do you say, dear?"

Mabel assented absently. She knew perfectly well that Lawley was leaving them for another reason than that of health, as, indeed, did Lady Saddlethwaite. That kindly old lady was distressed by their estrangement, and began to think they would come to a better understanding if left to themselves. Accordingly she rose in the most natural way in the world and left the room to see Parker about packing. Then there was silence that might be felt for half a minute, broken at last and desperately by Mabel.

"I haven't thanked you because I couldn't thank you, Mr. Lawley," speaking hurriedly and tremulously.

"I ask you only to forgive me," Lawley answered in a low voice.

"Forgive you! It was not of my life only I was thinking when I said I couldn't thank you." Here she paused for a moment, and then went on as if with a brave effort, "I was thinking of another and dearer debt which is worth more than my life, and which I value more, but which I cannot pay—I've nothing to pay with," with a kind of piteous appeal in her voice.

"I never thought I was anything to you. I never hoped it. How could I hope it?" exclaimed Lawley, rising impetuously, standing before her and looking down upon her. "But it sweetened death to me to speak."

"You are more to me than anyone left to me, than anyone ever can be to me again; but no one can ever be to me again what—what you wish. And now I've lost you, too!" she added, following her thoughts more closely than her words, and looking up at Lawley with the deepest, sweetest distress in her face. It was impossible for any man, even for Lawley, not to gather some hope from these hopeless words and joy from this set sad face. Mabel was as certain of her constancy as of her life, and expected others to be as convinced of it; but even Lawley was little likely to think it absolutely proof against time, or to despair upon being told with the simplest and sweetest sincerity, "You are more to me than anyone left to me—than anyone ever can be to me again." At the same time this ingenuous assurance, of course, only confirmed his resolve to spare her the embarrassment of his presence in these first months of her bereavement. Lover-like, he was more depressed by the imminent separation than cheered by the hope her words conveyed. For love is well painted a boy and blind, that is, impatient and improvident. He was still standing before her as she looked up at him with such sweet and simple sadness in her face. As he looked down upon it he would have—

Given all earthly bliss,
And all his worldly worth for this,
To waste his whole heart in a kiss
Upon her perfect lips.

The yearning so expressed itself through his dark eyes that Mabel blushed under their gaze, and thereby brought him back to himself. He took her hand in his. "Mabel, I loved you so that I should never have told my love if death had not wrung the secret from me. Now I can only help you to forget it and me."

"But you will forget it, and we shall be again as we were."

"As we were? I have always loved you, I think, from the first day I saw you, and I always shall, always—always." He repeated the word with ineffable tenderness, and its plaintive echo lingered in Mabel's memory, and long afterwards recalled the whole scene daily, and often many times a day, and pleaded for him piteously and powerfully. There was a moment's silence, during which he still held her hand, while she looked up helplessly at him with eyes now larger and brighter through tears. This was an effective way to make her forget him and his love!

"I thought our last good-bye was the very last," he said, "but there is this one more." Mabel could not speak just then, but the trembling tears welled over and spoke for her.

"Good-bye!" he said. Did he expect her once again to bid him a lover's good-bye with speechless lips? He did not know what he expected. He was delirious with love. Mabel still could answer only with her now fast-falling tears. He stooped and pressed a passionate kiss on her quivering lips and was gone.

He was wise enough and strong enough to keep to his resolve that this should be their good-bye. He kept his room till the hour came next day for him to embark, having in the meantime made a clean breast of the whole business to Lady Saddlethwaite. It was as well he did so, for otherwise the kind old lady might have taken ill Mabel's persistent keeping of a secret which was not her own, while Mabel would not have had the inexpressible relief of her sympathy. Lawley himself, however, was the chief gainer by his confession.

"While you were drowning!" exclaimed Lady Saddlethwaite in answer to Lawley's rather bald account of the business. He had said nothing, and could not bring himself to say anything, of the clinging kiss which was their last farewell, but of this, too, Lady Saddlethwaite heard later from the lips that suffered it.

"While you were drowning! I never heard anything so romantic. What did she say?"

"We weren't sitting together in a drawing-room, you know, Lady Saddlethwaite," answered Lawley with a short laugh. "It was hardly to be expected that she should blush and hesitate and hang down her head, or that she should draw herself up to her full height and cry 'Unhand

me, sirrah.' She said nothing. It's not easy to say anything when you're drowning,"

"Yet you managed to do it to some purpose," said Lady Saddlethwaite, laughing also. "But you've been sitting together in a drawing-room since. Was it 'Unhand me, sirrah,' this morning?"

"In a mild form: She said 'I was more to her than anyone could ever be to her again, but no one could be to her again what I asked to be.'"

"A very mild form! With any other girl in the world but Mabel that would be an acceptance: but she meant it."

"Yes, she meant it," despondently.

"She meant it, but how long will she mean it? My dear Mr. Lawley, you don't suppose a young girl barely out of her teens can be crushed for life under any blow? In spring a rose can stand any storm and raise its head after it and smell all the sweeter for it; it's only in autumn there's no recovery," said Lady Saddlethwaite sadly, thinking, as she thought daily, of her dead daughter.

"Recovery will be very slow with her."

"Of course it will be slow with her. Would you have it quick? What would you think of a girl who could listen to the suit of a second lover three months after she had heard of the murder of the first? And Mabel of all girls!"

"I didn't think we had a minute to live," he said apologetically, thinking Lady Saddlethwaite was echoing his own self-reproach for the avowal of love which death had surprised him out of.

"Why, you don't think I blame you, or she blames you?" exclaimed Lady Saddlethwaite, expressing her surprise by articulating each word with staccato distinctness. "To think of her in death, to forget death in the thought of her! It was magnificent!"

"But not war?" added Lawley smiling, highly gratified at his honourable acquittal by so competent a judge as Lady Saddlethwaite.

"Yes, and war too. You've won her heart by it—at least the reversion of her heart. But you must wait. Such a girl is worth ten years' siege."

"She's worth a life's siege!" he cried enthusiastically; "but a month without her is ten years," he added with a sigh.

"You must make your mind up to be many months without her. Your absence and its cause will plead for you better than anything else in the world. You are quite right to leave us at once. She will think of you more, and think more of you, than if she saw you every day. You must make the most of your last interview with her."

"It's over," he said with something like a groan.

"Over! Was it? No; it's too sacred to talk about," with a kind and approving smile. She understood and honoured Lawley's reticence on a subject that really was sacred to him, and she knew besides that she would now hear from Mabel—as of her own sex—what Lawley could not have brought himself to confide to her. She rose and left him

with the promise that she would do all she could for him, and would write from time to time to him letters of which Mabel would be the burden.

Notwithstanding the comfort and encouragement Lady Saddlethwaite gave him, Lawley relapsed into depression—due in part to his weakness—and after a sleepless night was in such a state that his cautious Scotch doctor declined to answer for his life if he embarked—which gave him, of course, a gloomy satisfaction in embarking. Dr. Pardoe was very much annoyed. He would have regarded Lawley's death as vexatious. It would have been to him as the loss of a forty-pound salmon to an angler who had played him for hours with consummate skill and patience, and saw him break away on the brink of being landed. Lawley, however, did not "go off the hooks," and the doctor was appeased.

Meantime he had Mabel again on hands. The girl was completely prostrated after the distressing scene with Lawley. Her worst fears as to his love were realised. It was the love of a strong man, which is as his strength, and would last and mar his life. That he would ever cease to love her was unlikely, that she should ever come to love him was impossible. She had no heart to give him or anyone, and never would have if she lived to old age. Of this Mabel was as certain as any girl of her age in her circumstances would be, and with much more reason than most. She was hardly less certain of Lawley's constancy. He would not forget her. Would she have had him forget her? Well, not forget her, but—but—No; she could not sincerely wish that he should cease to love her! She could not love him, yet she could not resign his love. It was as a caged bird which she prized so dearly that she could not bear to free it from the restless misery of its imprisonment. The most she could sincerely wish was expressed in an exquisite poem she knew by heart before she had reason to take to heart its last sigh, or sob rather, of farewell:

Should my shadow cross thy thoughts
Too sadly for their peace, remand it thou
For calmer hours to memory's darkest hold,
If not to be forgotten—not at once—
Not all forgotten.

But if Mabel could not bring herself to wish that Lawley should forget her, or even that he should altogether cease to love her, she took herself cruelly to task for her selfishness; and was, perhaps, the more wretched of the two. For while Lawley had some hope, and at times good hope, inspired by Lady Saddlethwaite, of Mabel's coming at last to love him, Mabel, of course, believed her love could no more be brought back to life than her murdered lover. She was, then, intensely wretched, and her wretchedness told on her strength, not yet re-established, and returned her, as we have said, upon the doctor's hands.

The doctor did and could do little for her, but Lady Saddlethwaite did much. She told Mabel of Mr. Lawley's parting confidence, and so set free the floodgates of her heart. It was a profound relief to Mabel to

pour out self-reproaches and praises of Lawley mingled rather incoherently.

"He'll get over it, my dear," said Lady Saddlethwaite cheerily. She was using, so to speak, a stethoscope, to hear how Mabel's heart beat.

"Do you think he will?" asked Mabel, not as happily as might be expected.

"Of course he will. Men always do."

"But I think Mr. Lawley is different."

"He's a man like the rest. Men don't hold by one anchor, my dear, as we do. They've so many more things to think of."

"If I was sure he would forget me," said Mabel, speaking very slowly, "I should——"

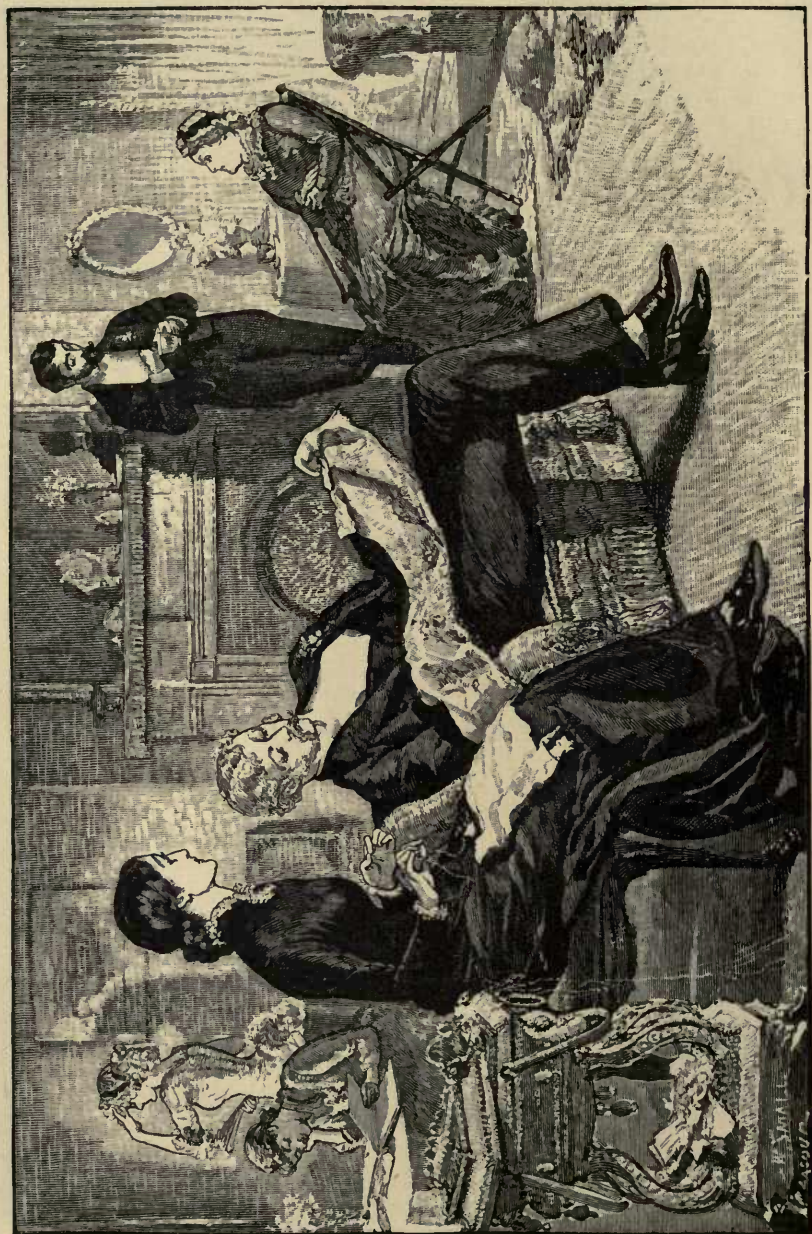
"Be very much disappointed? Of course you would."

"Yes, I should. I couldn't bear that he should forget me altogether," she confessed honestly with a wan smile. "He has been so much to me, Lady Saddlethwaite. But if he would only come to like me as I like him!"

"I've no doubt, dear, in time you will come to have the same kind of feeling for each other."

"Do you think so?" cried Mabel eagerly, not for a moment suspecting Lady Saddlethwaite's *double-entente*. Indeed, Lady Saddlethwaite would not have risked it if she had not been perfectly certain of Mabel's being above such a suspicion.

"I've no doubt at all about it," replied her ladyship decidedly. And she hadn't. She felt as certain that Mabel would come in time to return Lawley's love as that she didn't and couldn't return it now. Well; time will tell if she was right, and we shall leave our heroine to its influence for a year before we return to her. Meantime by a change of scene we hope to help our readers' imagination over the interval. It may, perhaps, have occurred to some of them to wonder where all this time was Mabel's faithful factotum, Mr. Robert Sagar. Mabel didn't know. No one knew. It was a great mystery. We shall proceed now to unravel it. Mr. Sagar had fled a second time in a panic from Weston, not now, like St. Kevin, shunning the shafts of "eyes of most unholy blue," but a more insidious and pertinacious foe even than Miss Masters or any of her sex.



CHARLEY DROPPED INTO A CHAIR BY HER SIDE.

THE
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FEBRUARY, 1882.

Damocles.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "FOR PERCIVAL."

CHAPTER I.

PORTRAITS.

"Fleur de pastel, gentille morte,
Ombre en habit de bal masqué!"



THE rain was falling softly, but steadily, and the roofs and gardens of the little village of Redlands were shining with wet. The eaves dripped monotonously, and every bush and tree held a shower. The houses, many of which were overgrown with creepers, wore a dismal aspect, and their windows gleamed like deep-set mournful eyes under bushy brows.

Near the church stood a low red brick house, thickly covered with ivy and wistaria, and shadowed by trees which

almost brushed its window panes with their swaying boughs. A girl was standing in the green twilight of the porch, with a cluster of rain-washed

leaves in her hand. The door behind her was open, and sounds of sweet shrill singing came from within. She stood, drawing long breaths of the soft air, while her eyes wandered from the black earth of the little walled garden to the grey clouds between the elm branches.

She might be one or two and twenty. She had a beautiful face, but it was sad; like the scene around her, it needed a warmer glow. It was not gloomy or querulous, but though it brightened readily, even eagerly, its brightness was like sunlight glancing on deep waters, and left an underlying melancholy untouched. There was something very noble in the tall slight figure, yet Rachel Conway had an air of youthful shyness which made her troubled expression more pathetic, as if she had divined more of the world's sadness than she could have experienced, or had any right to know. The singing ceased, and the voice within called, "Rachel! Rachel!"

"Here," said Rachel, without moving. "In the porch. Have you finished your practising, Effie?"

Effie came out and leaned against the door, a pretty little dainty discontented maiden. "I've finished everything!" she said, emphatically. "And I call this weather perfectly disgusting. What are you doing out here?"

"Looking about. I was a little tired of being indoors."

"So am I—not a little. Mother is having a nice afternoon's letter-writing. What are those leaves for?"

"I don't know. I picked them because they looked pretty. Perhaps that might have been a reason for letting them alone," said Rachel, considering them.

Effie leaned out a little and pulled at a spray of clematis. It gave way suddenly, dislodging a small deluge and two or three earwigs. She threw it down, and shook the raindrops from her hand and wrist.

"I *wish* Charley would come back!" she said. "I daresay he'd do nothing but grumble if he did, though; so perhaps he's just as well away. (Oh! here's one of these nasty things gone up my sleeve! Oh! kill it, Rachel; there it goes, just by your foot!) But I do think it's nicer when plenty of people can grumble together, than having to do it all alone."

"Well, I'll do my best," said Miss Conway. "And perhaps he will come soon. Is it far to the Hall—you call it the Hall, don't you?"

"Yes, Redlands Hall. No, it isn't very far. You ought to see the house and park some day."

"And what did you say was the name of the man who lives there? Is he a great friend of your brother's?"

"Oh, pretty well, he's older than Charley, you know, Mr. Lauriston."

"Lauriston," Rachel repeated, "Lauriston. I like that name—don't you."

"I don't care much about it. Do you like it better than Conway, or Eastwood?"

"I don't know," said Rachel. "Yes, I think I do."

"Don't let Charley hear you say that!"

"Why not?" But she blushed a little. "What's in a name?"

"Oh, come, now!" Effie exclaimed, "the gardener's name is Gideon Grubb."

At the same time a conversation was going on about a mile and a half away.

"So that is it, is it? Well, and what is she like this time?"

"*This* time?"

"Yes. You told me about the other time, you know."

"But there never was any other time!"

"No? I hope there's nothing amiss with my brain. I must consult somebody when I go to town. So Miss Laura—no, what was it? Miss Louisa Clifton was a creature of my own imagination!"

"Louisa Clifton! Why, that was nothing—it was years ago!"

"Years? Yes, so it was. Two. I must keep my memory in better order, I see. But now, to come back to the present, what is she like?"

"How am I to tell you if you go taking up things like that? You'd better wait till to-morrow, Mr. Lauriston, and then you can judge for yourself. Louisa Clifton, indeed!" the speaker repeated after a pause, with genuine surprise in his voice, and a slightly aggrieved expression on his handsome, good-humoured face. He made some mental calculations with his eyes fixed on the floor. Yes, Mr. Lauriston was perfectly correct, and it was not three years since they had talked of Miss Clifton, incredible as it seemed. If it were possible that one or two lesser flirtations had run their course in the interval, it might explain why Charles Eastwood was so deeply impressed by the lapse of time.

"This is serious, then?" said Mr. Lauriston. "You are engaged to Miss Conway?"

"No, we are not engaged," said Eastwood. "I didn't mean that." He smiled, however, as he said it. "Only she's an awfully nice girl—the nicest girl I ever met—though she's queer now and then; sometimes I can't quite make her out." He uttered the last words in a puzzled undertone. "And she promised ever so long ago that she'd come here with us in the summer. It isn't so slow with her there. I'm not sure I should have come if she hadn't."

"Ah!" said Mr. Lauriston drily. "And so Miss Conway is queer sometimes, is she?"

"Why, no; I don't mean exactly queer," Eastwood replied, evidently groping for a word. "She isn't quite like other girls, somehow. Perhaps it's being an orphan, and never having had anybody, you know. She sits and looks as if she were thinking whole worlds of things, sometimes, and then just a word or a look will make her fire up, all at once"——

"What—lose her temper?" Mr. Lauriston inquired.

"No, no; why *won't* you understand? Get excited—pleased; you should see her eyes shine, when she is pleased!—or sorry. Sometimes

I can't see what there is to make a fuss about—girls have such fancies. But I like it somehow, though it's queer, you know."

Mr. Lauriston was looking at him with slightly increased attention. "It amuses you, I suppose?" he said.

"Oh! I don't know. I like a girl to have ways and ideas of her own. Rachel has got about ten times as many ideas as I have—I know that well enough," said Eastwood, with his good-humoured smile. "I don't want a girl to be just like everybody else—if she doesn't go too far, of course."

"Of course," the other assented. "And she is pretty, no doubt?"

"I think she is pretty—very pretty. Some of them say she isn't exactly pretty, but it comes to the same thing—they all admire her, you know." He was feeling in his pockets. "I've got a photograph of her, somewhere."

"What, she gave you her photograph?"

"Well, no. She would have, if I'd asked her, but Effie left one lying about. That's not it—what have I done with it?"

"You can't see in this half light." And Mr. Lauriston got up and rang the bell.

The room they were in had a northern aspect, and the narrow windows were heavily hung with dark curtains. The tall grey spaces looked like ghosts of departed days. It was an evening in May, but the sky was dull, and the light was fading. There was a pause while Eastwood looked for the photograph, and Mr. Lauriston, with his hands behind his back, paced slowly to the further end of the library. Suddenly, faint but unmistakable, a child's complaining cry came through the silence of the house. "Bring the lamp," said Mr. Lauriston, when the servant came; "and there is a door open somewhere."

Eastwood was looking up with newly-awakened interest. "By Jove!" he said to himself, "Of course there was a boy! I forgot." His companion, however, made no further remark, but continued his walk, and the far-off sound ceased with a closing door. The man came back with the lamp, and set it down at Eastwood's elbow, a golden globe in the pale twilight. Mr. Lauriston came out of the shadows. "Well," he said, "what are you looking at?"

The light revealed Mr. Lauriston himself. He was eight or ten years older than his visitor, a small, slight man with dark hair and bright eyes. The gloomy room with its dim ranges of books made an appropriate background for his pale face, and Eastwood by his side looked big, florid, and unfinished. Everything about Mr. Lauriston suggested the perfection of a miniature. Perhaps the upper part of his face was the most striking. His forehead was wide and low, his brows were like delicate unfaltering lines drawn by a master hand, where nothing was blurred and nothing retouched, and they finely emphasised the meaning of the watchful eyes beneath them. His mouth was less noticeable, thin-lipped and small, but it was not without its peculiarity. The lips moved very slightly in

speaking, so that all the variations of expression were very swift and subtle. A mere flicker of firelight on Mr. Lauriston's face might leave a doubt whether a smile had not come and gone.

"Well," he said, halting by Eastwood, "what are you looking at? Oh! I see."

The young man had not been struck by the effect of lamplight on his companion's features. They were, in truth, sufficiently familiar to him. He was looking fixedly above the chimney-piece, at a picture which had been indistinct and unnoticed in the twilight.

"You had not seen that before? My wife," said Mr. Lauriston in his quiet voice. Eastwood looked round with a startled and rather dismayed glance, which he tried to subdue into a proper expression of sympathy with the widower. "It was at the Academy two years ago," the latter continued, in the same level tone, which might or might not mask feeling too deep to be shown. "You did not see it? 'Phyllida' it was called in the catalogue. She had a fancy to be taken in that Arcadian shepherdess style—it was a dress she wore at a fancy ball."

"It is beautiful," said the young man, almost in a whisper.

Mr. Lauriston stood for a moment looking at his wife's picture. "It suited her admirably—it is a wonderful likeness," he said, as if pursuing his own train of thought.

"It is beautiful," Eastwood repeated. Mr. Lauriston turned and surveyed the young man's face, which was upturned in admiration and wonder. "Is that the photograph?" he asked, recalling his companion from Arcadia.

Eastwood gave it carelessly, almost slightly, while he reluctantly withdrew his eyes from the painting. The men's hands touched as the bit of cardboard passed from one to the other. One was a common hand enough, fairly well shaped and coloured, the other slim and long, and like old ivory. There was a pause; the clock ticked in monotonous haste, and the shadows seemed to gather in the far-off corners of the room, while Mr. Lauriston held the photograph near the lamp, and scrutinised Rachel Conway's face. Eastwood stole another glance at the beautiful Arcadian shepherdess, who smiled at him from her place on the wall, before he turned with half guilty readiness to answer his companion's question.

"So this is Miss Conway? Do you call it a good likeness?"

"It isn't bad. She does her hair rather differently now, but I've seen her look just like that. Only she changes so all in a minute"——

"Oh! of course these rapid mechanical portraits must not be judged like pictures," said Mr. Lauriston. "One must take what one can get, and guess the rest—do the artist's work, in fact, with inferior materials and opportunities."

"Yes, just so," said Eastwood, with that wideness of assent which would escape scrutiny by promptitude.

"If these things are self-conscious they are disgusting," Mr. Lauriston went on. He stood with his hand pressed on the crimson tablecloth, and there was a ring with a black stone in it on one of his slim fingers. "If they are truthful they aim at recording the appearance and expression of the human race generally, when confronted with a photographer. There is a great deal of variety, no doubt, but I am not sure whether it is the moment you would choose to preserve in your friend's life. Miss Conway was not self-conscious at any rate."

"Oh! no, she isn't that. I think you'd like her, Mr. Lauriston; I think you'd get on, you two." Mr. Lauriston's smile was gone before Eastwood perceived it, and he went on, "I told her so this afternoon, when we heard you were here."

"You told Miss Conway so? I'm afraid your descriptive powers must have been severely taxed with the pair of us."

"No," said Charley. And as he had only said, "He isn't a bad sort of fellow—Lauriston—should think you'd like him," it was probably true.

Mr. Lauriston took up the photograph again. He was interested, for he found Rachel Conway's an uncommon face. In her likeness, and in Charles Eastwood's clumsy description, he suspected a nature, lying in its heights and depths a little out of the beaten track. It occurred to him to wonder whether this girl had in any way divined him, as it seemed to him that he had divined her; but the idle fancy, caressed for a moment, became utterly absurd when he thought of Eastwood as the connecting link between them. The mind of man could conceive no more prosaic introduction. And, by the way, if she cared for Eastwood! . . . He handed the card to its owner again.

"But you haven't told me now what you think of her," said the young man as he took it.

"You want my opinion? Well, judging from that likeness, and from what you say of her—especially from your conviction that she and I should get on together—I should say, Charley, that Miss Conway was decidedly too good for you."

Eastwood laughed. "Ah! but suppose Miss Conway doesn't think so?"

"In that case I won't presume to differ. I shall take it for granted that Miss Conway is right."

"She is pretty, isn't she?" said Eastwood, glancing at the photograph as he slipped it into its envelope again.

"Perhaps I shall say with your friends, 'not exactly pretty.' Though, as you remarked, it comes to much the same thing—or to something better. But how are you getting on, Charley? Are you in a fair way to make Miss Conway Lady Mayoress?"

"Hm—if she waits for me to play Dick Whittington, I'm afraid she may have to put up with the cat for company for the rest of her life. But, as it happens, she has a little money of her own."

"Ah!" said Lauriston.

"And I'm doing pretty well too, so perhaps we needn't put it off quite so long. However, there's time enough."

There was a pause, and then Eastwood stood up. "You will come to-morrow then, won't you, Mr. Lauriston? My mother sent all manner of apologies for the shortness of the invitation, but we literally hadn't an idea you were here till this afternoon."

"No, this is quite a flying visit of mine. I wanted to settle things a little, and then I think I shall have seen the last of Redlands for some time to come. Tell Mrs. Eastwood I shall be very pleased to come and renew my acquaintance with her, and with my friend Effie. I suppose she is quite grown up by now?"

"She thinks so at any rate," said Eastwood, as he took his departure, with a final glance at the beautiful woman, smiling a changeless smile, in a changeless little Arcadian world.

It was something of a relief to him to pass from the stately silence of the manor house into the fresh May evening, and he drew a long breath as he felt the soft wind on his face and heard the great door shut behind him. A few late raindrops pattered on the leaves, but the weather was clearing, the grey curtain of cloud was drifting away, and the light was brighter than it had been half-an-hour before. Turning into a footpath across the park, Eastwood came face to face with the dying splendour of sunset, and was startled into notice of its beauty, and a sudden wish for Rachel. The wide expanse of grass sloped away to the west, and the lingering glory was with him through all the windings of his road. Trees, nobly grouped, stood darkly out against bands of glowing light. Masses of rainy cloud, richly laden with colour, floated in the far-off sky. Charley cast frequent glances westward as he went his way, whistling in clear true notes the music-hall melody which happened to be just then in vogue. At the gate he bade farewell to the splendour, for the narrow road was shadowed by the wall of the park he had just left. A few minutes more brought him into the village, exactly opposite the low red-brick house, overgrown with creepers. Still whistling, he marched in, and threw open the door of the sitting-room.

"What! all in the dark?" he said.

"Well, it is rather blind man's holiday, isn't it?" said Mrs. Eastwood from her easy chair. "I almost think I was asleep."

He laughed. "That I'll be bound you were."

"What does he say, Charley? Is he coming?" cried a clear voice through the shadows.

"Oh, there you are, Effie! What do you think now? Wouldn't you like to know?" Charley demanded, coming towards the window. Rachel Conway sat near it in a low chair, and Effie was on a footstool beside her, with her curly head in her friend's lap. She raised it a little, and nodded impatiently.

"Tell us directly," she said; "we are dying to know, Rachel and I."

"Oh, I like that! *You* are dying to know, I daresay."

"Yes, and so am I," said Rachel. "Effie describes him much better than you did. She says she remembers him very well; he is a little dark man, with bright eyes, and a pocket-full of presents. *Is* he coming? Tell us directly, please; I am dying to know, too."

"And so am I," said Mrs. Eastwood. "I want to settle about his dinner, if he is coming."

"Oh, he's coming sure enough—6.30 sharp. And I'll tell you something else, Effie; he asked after you. Now then!"

"No—did he really?"

"Of course he did."

"And did you notice his pockets?" said Miss Conway. "I shall expect to see them bulging in all directions when he comes to-morrow."

"I don't think I ever had so much to do with his pockets as Effie had—worse luck!" said Eastwood. "They are pretty well lined. I wouldn't complain if he'd go halves with me."

"But tell me what he said about me," said Effie from the ground.

"Now I won't have you setting your cap at the squire—a chit like you. Little girls should be seen and not heard."

"But I *can't* be seen by this light," said Effie, sitting up. And indeed only a silhouette of a little head, with disordered rings and ends of hair sticking out in all directions, became visible against the glimmering window.

"No great loss," said Charley. "All the same we'll have a candle to-morrow when Lauriston comes. I don't know why you didn't have one this evening. What have you been doing with yourselves?"

"Not much, I'm afraid," said Miss Conway, leaning forward to arrange the ribbon round Effie's neck. "We've been talking——"

"And yawning," Effie exclaimed. "Oh, how we have yawned!"

"I'm sorry I stayed away so long," said young Eastwood.

"Oh, it wasn't you—it was the weather. I hate being indoors all day, and so does Rachel—don't you, dear?"

"Yes, but it can't be helped sometimes. Better luck to-morrow, I hope." She threw herself back in her chair, clasped her hands behind her head, and looked up at Charley, who towered beside her in the twilight. "Do you know," she said, "I think Redlands is rather a damp place. This is the third day it has rained."

"More or less," he allowed.

"More or less," Miss Conway repeated lazily. "Yes, but generally so very much more."

"Well, it doesn't rain now. There was a splendid sunset as I came across the park—splendid. And the moon is getting up, and it is as warm as if it were June. Look here, why shouldn't you come out for a bit? It would freshen you up. Why shouldn't you, really?"

"Really?"

"Yes, you and Effie. I suppose Fanny is lying down with her headache still? Do come; this room is as stuffy as possible."

"If you do go," said Mrs. Eastwood, "you must wrap up well, and put your thick boots on, Effie. And you too, my dear."

"Oh, yes, Mrs. Eastwood, we will," said Rachel, while Effie scrambled to her feet with a brief "All right."

"And if you do go," Mrs. Eastwood continued, "you might just as well walk to Mrs. Pattenden's, and see if she can let me have some cream for to-morrow."

"Oh, I say!" protested Charley, "I can't go carrying cream about the country!"

"Then I will!" said Miss Conway. "Mr. Lauriston shan't have to drink his tea without any cream in it, if I can help it. We'll go and fetch it for him, won't we, Effie?"

"But you won't get it to-night," said Mrs. Eastwood; "you've only got to order it."

"Oh, all right, then—I don't mind going, if that's all. I thought you wanted me to bring it home, like the milkman. It's that place at the bottom of Bucksmill Hill, isn't it? Make haste and get ready, you two." And ten minutes later the young people were on their way to Mrs. Pattenden's, and Rachel was mildly expostulating. "I've said that Redlands was a pretty place twice already, Mr. Eastwood, and I've assured you four times that it was a good idea of yours to fetch us out,—and so it was, very good—and we've both of us said that it is a lovely evening——"

"Don't you be down on a fellow like that," said Charley. "And you know this is much nicer than spending the evening cooped up in that close room. Now, isn't it?"

They had left the village behind them, and their road, grown more open and treeless, sloped gently upward. "There's Mrs. Pattenden's," said Effie suddenly, as they came to a slight turning. Rachel uttered an exclamation of delight. The moon had risen behind the old-fashioned, steeply-roofed house, and the clustered stacks, the rambling farm-buildings, and the poplars by the water-side, stood out against the pale brightness. "Isn't it like a picture?" she said, as they went towards the yard. The whole place lay as if spellbound in a dream of sharp shadows and silvery light. The trees in the orchard, gnarled with many a long year's growth, leaned over the mossy wall, and stretched grotesque and unexpected arms into the moonlight, looking as if they might offer strange fruit, fit for Goblin Market. As they passed through the gate, the big dog heard them and broke the silence with hideous clamour.

Effie went to the door to give her mother's message, while the others waited outside. Charley amused himself by threatening the chained dog with his stick, and Rachel watched him with perplexed brows. "Why do you make him so angry?" she said at last.

"Why not? I like to see him in a temper, tugging at that old chain of his."

"Suppose it broke?"

"Oh, I say!" He shrugged his shoulders and laughed. "Wouldn't there be the devil to pay if it did!" he said, half under his breath. "It won't, of course, but I suppose it's just that ghost of a chance which makes it amusing. Hi! old boy!" and he renewed his demonstrations of hostility.

"Don't!" said Rachel. "Don't, please."

He turned quickly towards her, startled by her tone. "You don't like it? You are frightened?" he said. "I'm very sorry; you know I didn't mean—But it won't break, really, and if it did, he'd come at me, you know."

"That would make it all right, of course," she answered, with a slight smile, and an upward glance at him. "But I don't think I am afraid exactly. It is only that I cannot bear to see a creature in such a frenzy of passion. Look," she said, as the brute, quivering with rage, tore vainly at his chain, "he is beside himself with fury at his helplessness, and we stand safely out of reach and laugh!"

Eastwood put his stick behind him. "*I* laughed," he said; "the blame is none of yours. There! there! Down, old fellow, down! down!" This gentle remonstrance had no effect. He tilted his hat a little more over his eyes, and stood surveying the dog, whose hoarse barking was fiercer than ever. "My voice doesn't seem to be very soothing," he said. "What would you recommend? Would you like me to

Sit on a stile
And continue to smile?"

"Well, you might try it. There's the gate behind you—how would that do?"

"All right," said Charley. "It's rather a long way off, perhaps, but we'll hope there may be light enough for him to see my expressive features, when he finds time to look at them fairly. He's a little prejudiced just now, don't you think?"

"I'm afraid he is. Here comes Effie; so perhaps we had better leave him to the soothing influence of time. Well, Effie, is the cream all right?"

"Yes, it's coming to-morrow. How that dog does bark!" said Effie as they went through the gate. "Where are we going now, Charley—not home yet?"

"Oh no!" He turned to Rachel. "You're not tired, are you? What should you like to do?"

"If you want to know what I should like to do," she answered, "I should like to walk miles and miles. I don't feel as if I could be tired this evening."

"All right, then; here's Bucksmill Hill handy; let's see how that will suit us. It's a fine place for a view, too, so we can make believe we went up for that."

"Don't you care for a good view?" Miss Conway inquired, as they turned into a rough lane which led directly up the hill.

"Oh, yes, when it comes in my way—as I like other good things," Eastwood replied, snatching bits of leaf from the hedge as he walked. "I'm not going hunting about after views, and talking trash about them. I daresay I could if I tried, as well as other people; a man can't want much in the way of brains to set up in that line. But I won't try. Only when I'm enjoying myself, as I am just now," he looked brightly at his companion, "if I come across a good view, so much the better."

"I'm glad you'll go so far," she answered.

"Yes, but mind you," Charley insisted, "just because I'm happy I don't really care. I can do well enough without it. Upon my word," he said, "it seems to me sometimes as if it were enough to be alive and well and out in the fresh air. You are horrified, eh?"

"No," Miss Conway answered, looking up at him, "I like it. It sounds healthy and brave. Most people seem as if they spoiled happiness by thinking about it.

We look before and after,
And pine for what is not."

"More fools we," said Eastwood. "What's the good of it, except to make poetry about? I suppose you want it for that."

"Well, there's some poetry that is more like what you were saying just now." And she quoted—

"How good is man's life, the mere living! how fit to employ
All the heart, and the soul, and the senses, for ever in joy!"

"That's better," said Charley. "But I say, this is getting steep; how do you like poetry and up-hill together? You'll be out of breath. Here's Effie out of breath already, or she wouldn't be so quiet."

"I'm not," Effie replied, "I was only thinking. One can't be always talking."

"Can't one? I can't, I know, but I thought you could."

"Not if I've only you to talk to," was the quick answer. "And Rachel and I said all we'd got to say this afternoon, and more too."

By this time they had left the hedges behind them, and their lane had become a mere cart-track, steep and rough enough to hinder any connected conversation. At last Rachel said, "Why do people drive carts to the top of this hill?"

"They don't," said Charley, briefly.

"Then why a cart-track?"

"This doesn't go to the top. We shall have to leave it directly; it goes across the moor. We turn off to the right." And almost as he spoke they reached the spot where they quitted the road, and caught their first glimpse of a wild dusky expanse. "Don't stop to look," said Eastwood; "it is better when we get to the top; it isn't far now. Are you tired?"

"No," she said, and turned obediently to the last steep slope, refusing his offer of help. As he had said, it was not far, and in five minutes he was cheerfully announcing, "Here we are!"

Miss Conway looked eagerly round, and was silent.

"I say, it's a glorious evening," said Charley at her elbow; "don't you think so? Wasn't it worth while coming up here?"

"Indeed it was!" Her eyes wandered to the far-away horizon.

"Oh, Charley!" said Effie, "isn't the moon glorious?"

Great poets praise the moon, and it casts its peculiar charm across their verse. But, at the same time, may it not be asserted that admiration of the moon is, as it were, the very A B C of appreciation of natural beauty, and a moonlight effect the first we learn to notice? It is something more definite than the fleeting glories of sunrise and sunset, those glowing accidents of colour, which die and fade into dim memories. In the moon's unchanging changes there is all the delight of recognition, mixed with a certain novelty. The noisy familiar scenes of everyday life are revealed to us in unwonted stillness, and a less familiar light, and we perceive that they are beautiful. Other impressions strive against each other; we cannot appeal to them; my supreme sunset is not yours, and to-morrow may throw them both into the shadow; but here is an acknowledged queen, we know where to look for her, and a school-girl, exclaiming "Isn't it lovely?" has no doubt that she sees the moon of painters and poets of all time. There is sure to be moonlight in the songs she practises with her singing mistress, or in her drawing master's sketches, or at the theatre where she goes for a treat in the holidays. Thus the moon may be worshipped safely enough in a large congregation and the best of company. Effie Eastwood had at any rate learned her A B C, though she might not be destined to go much further. So, as she stood on the top of Bucksmill Hill, with her little hands thrust into her jacket pockets, and the soft breeze ruffling her curly light hair, she exclaimed rapturously, "Oh, Charley, isn't it glorious!"

Eastwood himself, having all the poetry that was in him called forth by the fact that Rachel was at his side, perhaps saw more than Effie. On the other hand he was more absorbed in recognising the features of the landscape.

But Rachel's delight was different. She looked down at the red-roofed farm which they had left, and saw it lying in the quiet light, with its poplars and apple-trees standing round it, and the little river catching a pale glimmer on its surface as it went its gentle way. What words could utter the poetry, the tranquil content, of that little picture? In truth, the farmer, under the tiled roof, was smoking his pipe over the county paper, while his wife was scolding the servant about a broken dish. Charles Eastwood could have guessed the inner life of the farmhouse better than Rachel, for old Pattenden was strictly conservative in his ways, and Mrs. Pattenden's temper was notorious. But was Rachel therefore wrong, when from her height she saw it as a glimpse of peace, of rest after daylight hours of life and labour? Further away the lights of Redlands were like scattered sparks upon a wooded slope, and further yet rose dusky hills in a long undulating line.

"Look here," said Eastwood. He was breaking a bit of dry stick in his restless fingers, and he jerked a morsel in the direction of a distant hollow where were masses of shadowy trees, and a great block of buildings. "That's the Hall—Lauriston's place, you know."

Miss Conway looked, not without interest. Mr. Lauriston's name had come up so often in the course of that day's conversation, an ever recurring name with no sufficient description of the man himself attached to it, that he had become something of a riddle to her, something to be thought over, guessed at, and finally found out. Any definite fact concerning him which could be pointed out, even though it were only his house standing far away in the moonlight, might help in the solution, and was welcome. And in truth the mere sight of Redlands Hall showed her that Mr. Lauriston was, socially, a greater man than she had suspected. Her curiosity was soon satisfied, however, and she turned her back on the Hall and gazed silently over the moor.

Close at hand it was desolate enough, uneven and rough, and raggedly tufted with grass. But further away it was softened in the evening light into a dim and wonderful land, fading away in purples and greys to the clear horizon, where a pale green light yet lingered. The sight of this shadowy expanse, with no boundary but the arching sky, gave Rachel a vague sense of freedom and calm. It was like words spoken in an unknown tongue, with tender cadences, and glances from earnest eyes, so that one cannot doubt that it is deeply-moved and deeply-moving speech, though it may not be translated into any familiar language.

Eastwood was looking too. "Lots of that belongs to Lauriston," he said.

"Does it?" Miss Conway answered. It seemed like an impertinence, an absurdity, to talk of lots of that purple dreamland belonging to anybody. But after a moment she smiled to herself—what did it matter, since it was no creature of ordinary flesh and blood who owned it, but only that perplexing shadowy Mr. Lauriston? And looking at it again, with the thought of him in her mind, the dusky range of moor seemed somehow strangely connected with the bright-eyed, dark, little man, of whom she heard so much, and yet so little. She saw the track by which they had come, and traced it on its onward course as far as the evening light permitted. And instead of picturing Mr. Lauriston as safely housed in Redlands Hall (which was the prosaic truth), she looked at the road as if she half expected to see him coming along it from some unknown world, a shadowy presence with brilliant eyes.

"But he's got a lot of land about the Hall, too, hasn't he?" Effie was saying.

"Why, yes, of course," Charley answered, and added, with a nod towards the purple expanse, "I don't suppose that is worth much. But he owns pretty well all Redlands, and some out Brookfield way."

"Isn't he rich!" Effie exclaimed with a little sigh. "Is he like what he used to be, Charley?"

"Oh yes; I don't think he's a bit altered. But I saw him two years ago, you remember, just a little while before he married. He isn't changed since then, certainly."

"It's years since I saw him," said Effie thoughtfully, as if she were gazing into a remote past. "Did he really ask about me, Charley? You weren't laughing at me, were you?"

"Oh! he asked after you, sure enough. But it won't do, Effie, I'm afraid. Don't set your affections on Redlands Hall, unless you're quite sure they are transferable."

"What do you mean?" said Effie, as haughtily as she could. The little moonlit figure was quaintly balancing itself on a stone, by way of securing additional height. "I don't like such stupid nonsense."

"Shouldn't I like to see him come courting!" Charley went on. "How do you think he would do it, Effie? 'Curly-locks, Curly-locks, wilt thou be mine?' I should say, now, that would be neat and appropriate."

"I should say," Effie replied from her insecure eminence, for there was very little space on the top of the stone, "I should say that Mr. Lauriston would not want to repeat silly nursery rhymes."

"Very likely not," said Charley, calmly. "It would be a very good way, all the same. He's going on the Continent soon; he told me so to-day—didn't I envy him? That would do nicely for the honeymoon trip, eh, Effie?"

"Very nicely," said Effie. "And you could stay quietly at home, and mind your own business, for we certainly shouldn't want you."

"Oh! wouldn't you, though! I tell you what, my dear child, if you had, say, a week of Lauriston, you'd be precious glad to see me again."

Rachel had been effectually called out of her dreamland. "That doesn't seem as if you liked Mr. Lauriston much," she said.

"Oh! I like him well enough," said Charley. "He's a queer fellow, but I can get on with him all right. But Lauriston and Effie! Why, she wouldn't know what to make of him—they'd bore each other to death! No, no, Effie, take my advice, and don't think of the Squire."

"Who said I was thinking of him? I'm sure I didn't," Effie replied loftily. But the stone was so sharp-edged, and her demeanour was so exceedingly scornful, that she was obliged to step down backwards in a hurry. "Charley, you're a wretch, and I hate you!" she exclaimed, as she found herself on level ground again.

"Do you? Oh! you'll get over it," he said, in a soothing tone, as he pulled out his watch. "I say, you young people, you are under my charge, you know, and I beg to observe that 'Time flies.' The remark isn't original, but it's unpleasantly true."

"Must we go home?" said Effie.

"Well, yes, I think we must, unless you want an exploring party sent out to find us. Are you ready?" he said, turning to Rachel. "We haven't let you enjoy the view in peace, I'm afraid."

"Oh! but I have enjoyed it very much," she answered.

"But you would have liked it better if we had been further with our chatter? Wouldn't you now?"

"No," said Rachel. "Indeed I shouldn't."

"But when I said I didn't care for views—didn't you wish me further then?"

"I liked what you said, Mr. Eastwood. I have a sort of idea that I told you so before."

"I think you did," said Charley. "I feel as if I shouldn't mind if you told me so again."

"But I won't," smiled Rachel. "Look! Effie is starting off. I'm afraid you don't believe me, if you want so many assurances."

"Indeed I do—why should I like to hear you say it if I didn't? Rachel," he said, "I hope we shall see many more views together—you and I."

She uttered a hurried "Yes," as Effie called in her clear little voice, "Come, you two! I'm half way down the hill! Such a fuss as you made about starting! Charley! shall I say you're coming?"

Miss Conway obeyed the summons with one backward look over her shoulder. Her glance fell on the track which led into the purple dusk, and she carried with her a little picture of the bit of road, lying distinct and lonely in the moonlight, as if it were waiting for Mr. Lauriston.

It was two hours later. The young people had had their walk, and had come back with freshened cheeks, and happy eyes, bringing something of the cool sweetness of the evening air into the candlelight of Mrs. Eastwood's sitting-room. Supper had followed, and the girls had just gone off to bed. Charley stood leaning against the chimney-piece, while his mother, happy in the consciousness that the cream was ordered, and the dinner settled, went round the room putting things a little in order.

"I'm glad he's coming to-morrow," she said. "I don't want you to lose sight of him, Charley. He's a good friend for you to have."

"Oh! he's well enough," young Eastwood answered with an assumption of indifference. "We get on all right. Not that I think he'll ever be much help to me."

"I don't know that," said Mrs. Eastwood. "There's Rachel's little needlecase she was looking for, on the ground, just by the fender. He might do something for you, if he liked. He's rich enough."

"Yes, he's rich enough; I don't deny that."

"And he's not mean, either," Mrs. Eastwood went on, as she smoothed an anti-macassar. "When he used to notice Effie, I'm sure the things he gave the child"—

"Effie! O yes, but that was different." Charley had just succeeded in getting Rachel's little case to open, and was unfolding one of the papers. "A man may give things to a child like that"—

"He always was very fond of her," said Mrs. Eastwood. "And he talked about her to-day, did he? He hasn't forgotten her, then."

"Now, mother, don't *you* begin that!" said Charley, with an impatient laugh. "Oh! confound this thing!" A little cascade of Rachel's needles slipped through his finger to the floor. "You might as well think of the Man in the Moon for Effie, while you're about it."

"I didn't say I was thinking of anything," Mrs. Eastwood answered, a little nettled. "And more unlikely things *have* happened, if it comes to that."

"More unlikely things have happened, I daresay, but this won't happen. I think I know Lauriston well enough to say that. Effie at the Hall—the idea's absurd! I saw his wife's picture to day," said Charley, with a change of tone. "It hangs over the fire-place in the library. You should just see her; they said she was good-looking, but I didn't know she was anything like that!"

"So pretty? Poor thing! It was very sad—not a twelvemonth after they were married! I wonder where the child is now. I suppose you didn't see him?"

"Heard him," said Charley briefly. Then, after a pause, "Why, he must be more than a year old by now. No, I didn't see him; Lauriston never said a word about him."

"I daresay not. I don't suppose he is very fond of talking of him; the poor child is deformed, you know. I don't exactly know how bad it is, but I am sure they said he must always be lame."

"I remember now," said Charley. "I fancied there was something queer when I came to think about it, but I'd almost forgotten his existence till I heard him. Lauriston seemed just the same as ever—a little quieter perhaps."

"He is sure to marry again," said Mrs. Eastwood, "but what a pity that that crippled child should have Redlands Hall! I must mind that Mary dusts this room properly to-morrow; you might write your name on that card-table!"

Charley was silent, gazing thoughtfully at the floor. He hated the thought of that wretched little lame boy crying through the stillness of the great shadowy house. The child spoiled the image of the beautiful mother. It was as if a creeping shadow of disease and death had blotted the dainty brightness of Arcadia. The radiant shepherdess had been in her grave a year and more, not even laid below the flowery turf of her eternal springtime, but thrust into the Lauristons' grim family vault, waiting in the darkness till Adam Lauriston should join her. And of all her arch, laughing, beautiful life, nothing remained but that blighted little baby boy in some corner of Redlands Hall. Eastwood had only a faint impression of this sadness, the merest passing chill from the cold grave. But there was a lingering touch of regret in his voice when he spoke. "You *should* see that picture, mother; she must have been lovely. It was at the Academy two years ago"——

"Was it really? Dear me!" said Mrs. Eastwood; "I wonder if I saw it."

"And he stands and looks at it as quietly as if it were at the Academy still—No. 500, or whatever it might happen to be. 'My wife,' he says, as coolly as you please. But you should just see it before you talk of Effie," Charley went on, dropping into his usual tone. "Our Effie under that picture! Our Effie—why she would look like—like—like a little buttercup!" And, whistling his favourite tune, the young fellow went off to bed.

CHAPTER II.

MISS CONWAY IS PERPLEXED.

ADAM LAURISTON was sixteen when he inherited Redlands Hall from an uncle. Till then he had lived with his mother and his three half-sisters. It was not exactly a happy home, for Mrs. Lauriston and her step-daughters thought differently on most subjects, and cultivated that spirit of unmitigated candour which finds its best opportunities in the society of near relations. As soon as circumstances permitted, the ill-assorted household broke up, the sisters remaining at Aldermere, while Adam and his mother went down to the Hall.

At that time the Rev. John Eastwood was Vicar of Redlands. He was a kindly, absent-minded man, who asked nothing better than to spend his life in his study and his flower-garden, with an occasional stroll round his parish for a change. His wife was careful to bring him all the scandal of the neighbourhood, but nothing could persuade Mr. Eastwood that his fellow-creatures were not very tolerable people on the whole. If his attention were called to the newspaper report of any startlingly horrible crime, (for really his happy trustfulness was enough to irritate anybody) and if he could not evade passing judgment by suggesting that the criminal was probably insane, he would answer, very sadly, that it grieved him more than he could say—which was no figure of speech—and that he feared he might have himself committed crimes as great, or perhaps much greater, had he been similarly tempted. It was believed that Mr. Eastwood had in this fashion pleaded guilty to a wide range of offences, from murdering his father and cutting up the body into small pieces, to stealing a blind widow's last halfpenny at the early age of nine years.

Young Lauriston took a fancy to Mr. Eastwood. His mother seldom went beyond the park gates; her health was failing, and she disliked society, so that, having few friends in the neighbourhood, he often went to the vicarage. Charley, a rosy little urchin in a pinafore, used to stand at the door, gazing in silent admiration at Mr. Lauriston, and Mr. Lauriston's horse. Even at that age the child understood that Mr. Lauriston was not to be romped with, that he hated dirty hands and sticky mouths, and that his hat, gloves, and whip, lying on the hall-table, were sacred things. Later the schoolboy regarded the young squire with a mixture of wonder and envy, as a man rich enough to keep any number

of dogs and horses, and the owner of that earthly paradise, the Redlands woods. But he did not despise him for making so little use of his marvellous opportunities. The force of habit, and something in Lauriston's manner, subdued any such inclination, and Charley considered him a being of a different order, who by some mysterious dispensation was gifted with profound tastes, and not created with any view to hunting, shooting, fishing, or cricket.

It was after Mrs. Lauriston's death, when Adam was four or five and twenty, that he took notice of Effie, then a quaint, pretty child, with a fearless simplicity of manner. He gave her presents, and perceived that she liked him very much indeed, as a giver of presents. She watched for his coming, always begged to have her prettiest frock put on in his honour, sat on his knee, and called him "my Mr. Lauriston" in her clear little childish voice. Had she been more disinterested he might not have liked it as well. He was not fond of children as a rule, and an affection which demanded affection in return might in time have become a burden. But an affection which merely demanded presents was easily satisfied.

This pleasant time of gifts and kisses passed away, however, and it was years, as the grown-up Effie said, since she had even seen her wealthy admirer. The Eastwoods left Redlands after Mr. Eastwood's death, and though from time to time they came back to visit their former home and took lodgings in the old house on the Green, Mr. Lauriston was so seldom at the Hall that they saw nothing of him. They heard of him occasionally, for he kept up a kind of friendship with Charley for his father's sake, and invariably took some notice of the young fellow when he was in town.

It was not unnatural, therefore, that on the day when they expected Mr. Lauriston to dinner, his name should be continually mentioned. Rachel Conway began to feel as if the very birds in the air were singing about him, and the hawthorn hedge putting on its best blossoms in honour of his coming. The preparations within the house might be a little more prosaic, yet even they seemed to have acquired a novel depth of meaning. Mrs. Eastwood, who had not much confidence in the servant, was very anxious that the furniture should be scrupulously dusted, and when she was satisfied on this point, she and Fanny proceeded to adorn it profusely with white antimacassars, as solemnly as if they were performing a mysterious rite, to propitiate Mr. Adam Lauriston. Rachel's assistance did not appear to be required at this stage of the proceedings. But, though she strolled into the garden, the absorbing interest drew her to the window, and compelled her to look in. "Is he very fond of antimacassars?" she said to Charley, who was leaning against the wall close by.

"Fond of antimacassars?" Young Eastwood was perplexed for a moment. Then with an effort he uprooted himself, looked in, and smiled. "Well—may as well have them clean, you know," he said.

"Yes," said Rachel, lifting her eyes to the sunlight from under her shady hat. "I'm glad we've had three days' rain to wash the sky nice and blue for Mr. Lauriston. I hope he likes a nice blue sky."

"I'm afraid he doesn't care, he's rather an indoors sort of man," said Charley, to whom variations of colour were not much, if the state of the weather did not interfere with his amusements.

Rachel inspected the room once more. "Do you think he'll sit in that arm-chair—that farther one by the fireplace? I dusted that."

"Did you really? Then I shall go and sit in it," Charley replied, biting a blade of grass as he spoke. "Thank you for your kind attention."

"Pray don't trouble yourself to thank me. You may leave that for Mr. Lauriston to do."

"Oh, very well," said Eastwood, "so I will. And I daresay the chair is only half dusted after all."

Miss Conway turned and surveyed him with a lofty serenity of manner. "Now that is spiteful, and betrays a small and envious mind. I am deeply grieved—good gracious, why is your mother looking at the back of it like that? Come away directly!" And she fled in haste, while Mrs. Eastwood's voice was heard within, "Where is that duster, Fanny? Do give it me for a moment."

Rachel was obliged to own later that she certainly was not happy in her attempts to prepare for Mr. Lauriston. Effie had suggested that, since they had no green-houses and hot-houses like those at the Hall, they should have just a simple arrangement of wild flowers on the dinner table. "So much nicer than *common* garden ones," she said. Mrs. Eastwood and Fanny were not sorry to get rid of the three idlers, so they pronounced it a happy thought, and despatched them on their quest. Considered as a walk it was eminently successful, but as they came home, a little tired, through the hot sunshine, they grew silent, and cast doubtful glances at their spoils. Charley looked thoughtfully at Miss Conway's bunch, and discovered that she was furtively inspecting his. Effie turned hers round as she walked, to see what it was like on the other side. "I hope they'll like our flowers," she said.

"O yes, they surely will. They thought it was such a pretty idea of yours, Effie."

"Yes," said Effie, doubtfully.

There was a pause and they walked steadily on. It certainly was very hot under the mid-day sun. Rachel broke the silence. "How cool and fresh these yellow flags looked growing in that marshy place. One hardly wants a garden when flowers like that grow wild."

"No," said Effie. "They will do nicely in that big bowl, won't they?"

"Yes, I should think they would," said Miss Conway, calling up a picture of the tall sword-like leaves and stately blossoms before her mind's eye as she walked. "That was a pretty thing, too, you fished out of that pond," she went on, looking at Charley. "Only I thought you

were going to drown yourself. What did you call it? Water violet, wasn't it?"

"Yes. You thought I was going to drown myself? I think I could about drink that pond, I'm awfully thirsty," said Charley.

"It's ever so much past lunch time," said Effie; "but we haven't more than half-a-mile to do. How far have we been, Charley?"

"O, I don't know. Say something over six miles by the time you get home and you'll be quite safe."

"I never saw that water violet before," said Miss Conway. "It's very pretty with that crown of pale blossoms, isn't it?" She began to look among the flowers she held in her hand. "This isn't it, surely—Oh, yes, it is, here's the blossom."

Eastwood cast a sidelong glance at it. "I hope I'm not conceited, but if I *had* drowned myself I think that thing would have been dear at the price."

"Poor thing! it is thirsty too, I'm afraid," said Miss Conway.

"I'm awfully fond of wild flowers," exclaimed Effie suddenly, "and I do think they are very pretty, but I wish they wouldn't grow with so much green about them. Leaves do fade so."

"Perhaps they'll be all right when they are in water." Rachel's consolation had a doubtful ring about it.

Eastwood shifted his bunch from one hand to the other, and eyed it discontentedly. "I say, I hope we shan't meet a lot of people as we go through the village. Don't we all look as if we kept rabbits?"

They were not greeted with enthusiasm when they arrived at home. Fanny met them with an armful of papers and books which she was carrying away. "Doesn't the drawing room look nice?" she said. "The cream has come from Mrs. Pattenden's. Oh! what is all that stuff? *Pray* don't put it down here." Charley had showed an inclination to get rid of his load without delay.

"Here, take it, Effie," he said. "And do come and get something to eat directly; don't wait for anything; you can see about all that afterwards. Come!" he said, turning to Rachel with a mixture of entreaty and command, "you are tired, I know."

They went and had their luncheon, but the thought of the withering heap of rubbish was heavy on their minds. When they could no longer delay, they adjourned to the hall and looked doubtfully at it where it lay on the table.

"I say, do you think you'll be able to do much with that?" said Fanny as she went by. "I've put some lilies of the valley in the drawing room, and I think some white lilac would look well in the china bowl if——"

"Oh, you dear Fanny!" said Effie. "It will look lovely, I know, and you do arrange things so nicely."

"So ends Effie's attempt at a poetical simplicity," said Charley, with a laugh. "Well, we've wasted the morning; let's go into the garden and rest."

It was five-and-twenty minutes past six, and the girls came hurrying into the drawing room, where Mrs. Eastwood was already awaiting them. Fanny, with a quick glance round, set a candlestick straight on the chimneypiece. "I hope Charley won't be late," she said. "He would not see about the wine till just the last minute."

"He always is so stupid about putting things off," Mrs. Eastwood replied. "Effie, you are pushing the corner of the rug up with your chair." Effie jumped up impatiently and walked to the window.

Rachel took the *Waverley Album* from the table, and tried to read it, but without much success. Perhaps it would be unfair to say on that account that the *Waverley Album* is an uninteresting work. She was angry with herself that she could not help this absurd curiosity about Mr. Lauriston—why did they all make such a fuss about him?—angry that, before any one else spoke, she had distinctly heard a far-off sound of wheels and felt an answering thrill of excitement.

"He is coming," said Effie, "I hear the carriage."

As she spoke Charley came in. Rachel cast a quick, pleased glance at the tall, bright-looking young fellow, so happily satisfied with himself and the rest of the world. "Just in time," he said with a laugh, as the carriage stopped, and the bell jangled suddenly through Miss Conway's strained suspense. The page of the *Waverley Album* became an absolute blank when Mary opened the door, and announced "Mr. Lauriston."

There was a brief confusion of greeting, and then the introduction. Miss Conway did well to be angry, for the anger flushed her cheek, and suited her to perfection. That, and the foolish excitement which she had vainly tried to subdue, gave a touch of brilliant defiance to her beauty, and even Charley (who had had a momentary misgiving about the soft black dress, with old-fashioned lace at throat and wrists) perceived a triumph and was proud of her.

In that brief moment Rachel saw Mr. Lauriston's eyes and nothing more. Then he was saying something politely commonplace to Effie about their former friendship, and Effie, laughing and blushing, was trying to find something to say in reply. Mrs. Eastwood came to the rescue, with flattering recollections of Mr. Lauriston's goodness.

"I'm afraid that's a long while ago," he said, looking at Effie. "It doesn't matter to you—you can afford to make light of a few years, but to me——"

Effie laughed again, not quite seeing her way to keeping up a conversation with Mr. Lauriston. It was a pity that she could not sit on his knee, and call his attention to her new frock.

"Perhaps it is just as well that it was a long while ago," said Mrs. Eastwood, with a beaming smile. "I think I might have had my little girl quite spoiled if it had gone on. What do you say, Effie?"

"Oh, I don't know. I like to be spoiled," said Effie.

"That means that you like people to try to do it," said Mr. Lauriston, and Effie laughed again, no other answer suggesting itself.

"Well, is he like what you expected?" Charley inquired, in a discreet voice, as they went into the dining room.

"I don't know what I did expect," Miss Conway replied in tones still more subdued, for she had a vague impression that Mr. Lauriston would hear every word she uttered.

"And we've been talking about him off and on for two days. I won't try to describe anybody to you any more."

Rachel's place at the table was by Charley, and Mr. Lauriston sat on the opposite side next his hostess. The business of carving being over, Mrs. Eastwood was heard saying, "I really do hope the weather is going to be more settled; it has been charming for walking to-day."

"You have been introducing Miss Conway to the neighbourhood, I suppose. We have some pretty walks about Redlands, haven't we?"

"We went up Bucksmill Hill yesterday evening," said Effie.

"Ah, you needn't look at me, Mr. Lauriston; I wasn't of the party," said Mrs. Eastwood. "Bucksmill Hill by moonlight is all very well for the young people, but I can't walk as I used to do. It's enough for me to go into the village and look up some of my old friends now and then."

"But you were one of the walkers?" Mr. Lauriston said to Effie.

"Yes, Charley, and Rachel, and I. And the moon was lovely."

"You made Miss Conway break the tenth commandment," said Eastwood from the foot of the table. "She fell in love with Bucksmill Heath and envied you for owning it."

"It isn't quite all mine, you know. Did you really covet it, Miss Conway? I'm afraid you would find yourself queen of rather a barren domain."

"No, I don't think I coveted it," she said. "I think I was more inclined to rebel against your authority over it. It seemed to me as if it ought not to belong to anybody."

"A common possession like sea and sky? I hardly know. That arrangement works very well with anything that *can't* be divided, no doubt," said Mr. Lauriston. "I'm a Communist myself, as far as clouds and waves are concerned. But when it comes to a small thing which might easily be spoiled—don't you think it is better to own it oneself?"

Rachel smiled. "Perhaps it is best that some one who appreciates it should have it and take care of it. But I don't think I want it myself."

"Why not?" said Charley. "You'd appreciate it, and take care of it, and talk poetry over it, as well as anybody—or better."

"Thank you," she said with a bright little nod. Then she looked across the table, "But I would rather not think about its being mine or not mine. If it isn't all yours, Mr. Lauriston, don't you recollect where yours ends when you look at it?"

"That only proves that I ought to have the whole. No, I know what you mean, Miss Conway, the idea of any boundary spoils the enjoyment you are thinking of. It is quite true."

"You had better buy the rest," said Fanny.

"I'm afraid I haven't money enough," Mr. Lauriston replied. "The

world is a big place. And then there would be the moon, which certainly ought to belong to it."

"The world!" said Fanny, looking a little perplexed. "I meant the rest of Bucksmill Heath."

"Ah yes, the rest of Bucksmill Heath. Perhaps I might manage that. I wonder whether the other man wants to sell."

"Who is he?" Charley inquired.

"Young Philip Allen of Brookfield Hall."

"Philip Allen!" said Eastwood scornfully. "He wouldn't trouble you much. Why, you could buy up every acre he owns and never feel it."

Mr. Lauriston slightly shrugged his shoulders, as if he would disclaim any idea of doing his boasting by deputy. "After all," he said, "Allen's is not a very important part. And if it turned out an Ahab and Naboth affair, Miss Conway would never forgive me."

"Never!" said Rachel.

"No, we'll let well alone—things are better as they are. Miss Conway merely wants the heath held by some one for the general good till the Commune is established. I see no objection to that, provided that I am the some one. So we need not quarrel, I hope."

"I should think not," said Mrs. Eastwood; "I am sure you may be trusted with it."

"Oh, I'm like other men," he answered lightly, "perfectly trustworthy up to temptation point. And, to be honest, I've never had the smallest temptation in this case."

"I'm glad to hear it," said Miss Conway, "I feel safer so."

"You are quite right. Of course I can't tell what I might do if on the loneliest part of the heath, I should chance to meet a certain personage, with a prospectus in his hand, suggesting a Company (Limited) which would improve the scenery in the eyes of all really sensible people, benefit mankind, and treble the value of my property. But at present nobody wants to build, nobody wants to dig, and I am not tried."

When they went into the drawing room Effie executed a little dance, expressive of the delight she felt at taking off her company manners for awhile. Rachel stood by, laughing as the quaint little figure waltzed in and out between the chairs. "Well," said Effie, as she came to a halt, "Charley says he's just the same, but I don't think he is. I don't believe he used to use such long words when he talked."

"Don't you like him as well as you did?" Fanny inquired.

"That depends—I should like him if he would give some nice parties at the Hall," was the prompt reply. "But I don't seem to know what to say to him now."

"Well, I really think Mary managed very well altogether," said Mrs. Eastwood. "I had to give her a hint once; she forgot the bread-sauce, did you notice? But altogether she did not do amiss. We must have a little music when they come in."

Miss Conway took up a bit of embroidery and stitched with silent

industry, while her thoughts were busy with Mr. Lauriston. She had met no such man in her narrow life; he looked as if he had stepped out of a picture, as if he might have a story; he attracted her, and yet she doubted whether she liked him. More than once during dinner he had drawn her into the conversation. Unlike Effie, she thought that it would not be difficult to talk to him; perhaps she had almost to suppress the consciousness of an unwonted sense of ease and freedom with which she had spoken. When he came into the room again she could not help watching him, as he stood by Mrs. Eastwood, with his cup in his hand, and his head slightly bent, listening to the even flow of her confidential talk. (Rachel had not the least idea what it was that Mrs. Eastwood was saying.) Charley came and dropped into a low chair by her side, took the end of her work in his strong fingers, and unrolled it curiously. Did he always speak in such blunt, unfinished sentences? He was good-looking, she knew, but why had it never struck her before that his features expressed only a few simple emotions, such as pleasure, ill-humour, (the latter with no great intensity, for Charley was a kind-hearted fellow) impatience, good-will, and an easy style of fondness? Miss Conway was not anxious to dwell on these questions by attempting to answer them, and she diverted her thoughts as quickly as she could, by pointing out to Mr. Eastwood that he would certainly spoil her scissors, and that he was sitting on one of the new antimacassars.

His mother, meanwhile, was telling Mr. Lauriston what a happiness it was to see Charley getting on so well with his uncle, and how pleased she should be to have him settled in a home of his own before very long. "He is young, of course, but where there is a little money"—Mrs. Eastwood glanced meaningly at Rachel, who was just attempting to rescue her scissors, "for I should be the last person to advocate anything imprudent—I must say it would be a comfort to me, especially with any one the girls are so fond of. However I wish my dear boy to think well about it."—"Of course," said Mr. Lauriston.—"And I should like—I must say I should like my brother to be consulted. He is so much more likely to do something for Charley if his advice is asked before it is all settled." Mr. Lauriston sipped his tea, agreed with her that it would be a pity to be hasty, and could hardly refrain from laughing aloud at the stupendous folly of the whole affair. That that girl should think of marrying Charles Eastwood, that Charles Eastwood should play the lukewarm, hesitating lover, and that the old lady's one anxiety should be lest her dear boy should pledge himself without due consideration—all these things were not incredible, only because no absurdity was incredible. It was no business of his, but what could Miss Conway's motive be?

Something was said about some music, and Mr. Lauriston set his cup down, and crossed the room to the young people. His feelings were not hinted in any outward expression, and yet, when Rachel looked up and saw him coming, she became suddenly conscious, and defiantly

uneasy in her consciousness, that Charley's flushed, boyish face was very near her, as he lounged on the low chair by her side, with his head thrown carelessly back. He smiled, sat up, and drew in his long legs when Mr. Lauriston approached, but Rachel would not stir. Effie came to fetch her brother to sing a duet with her, and there was a little debate at the piano as to which it should be, out of two that she had chosen.

Mr. Lauriston took a chair close by, not the one which Charley had vacated, but one that placed him more on a level with Rachel, and in such a position that his eyes met hers without an effort. "So you went hunting for wild flowers to-day?" he began, saying the first thing that came into his head.

"Yes," she answered with a smile. "There was one place where the yellow iris grew beautifully."

"Why didn't Eastwood take you into the park? You would have found plenty there without tiring yourselves."

"Into your park, do you mean, Mr. Lauriston?"

He inclined his head slightly, but added almost immediately, "*My* park is *the* park here, Miss Conway; Redlands people recognise no other."

"I beg your pardon. I'm not one of the Redlands people, you see, and I didn't understand."

"I'm afraid it is the other way, and that you understand too much of the outside world to be properly impressed by the importance of Redlands."

"But I know your house is very important, Mr. Lauriston, and I have seen it. Mr. Eastwood pointed it out to me from the top of the hill yesterday evening."

"Do you call that seeing my house? How can you expect it to be impressive when you look down on it from such a distance? There is a county handbook—it was published forty or fifty years ago—in which Redlands Hall occupies quite a distinguished place."

"And what does the county handbook say?"

"I think I can recollect the precise words," said Mr. Lauriston, after a moment's consideration. "It says, 'This mansion is an elegant modern building, occupying a pleasant and elevated site, and surrounded by grounds beautifully diversified by irregular swells, and judiciously embellished with plantations of forest trees.' Now, Miss Conway? There is some more, but surely that must be enough."

"Quite enough—what can I say, Mr. Lauriston? May I congratulate you on possessing this elegant place?"

"The handbook adds, Miss Conway, that it well repays a visit. And you climb a hill ever so far away, and consider that you have seen it at a glance! I won't say anything about the irregular swells; they have a slightly ambiguous sound now-a-days, I admit. But don't you take any interest in judiciously-planted forest trees?"

He stopped abruptly, and looked across at the piano as Effie began to sing. Rachel, leaning back, with her hands lying idly in her lap,

glanced at him once or twice from beneath her drooping eyelids, and wondered what he thought of song and singers. He rose when it was over, and thanked them. "You used to sing to me a long while ago," he said to Effie. "I remember once, when you came to see me, we had 'Little Bo-peep.'"

"Oh, I remember that! And you picked me some flowers, Mr. Lauriston."

"That's very touching," he said; "I remember the song, and you remember the bouquet with which I applauded it. I'm sorry the flowers are not quite so close at hand to-night."

"But you used to sing too, and play—I recollect your playing," said Mrs. Eastwood.

"I very seldom sing," he answered. "I play a little now and then."

"Play something to us now," Effie exclaimed.

He sat down without a word, glanced quickly round the room, and began. Mrs. Eastwood took up her knitting, Fanny turned the leaves of the nearest book, and Effie, catching a glimpse of herself in a mirror, gazed at the pretty little figure in a pale blue dress, while her hand stole softly upward to push the straying rings of hair from her forehead. Miss Conway, heeding nothing but the music, turned towards Mr. Lauriston with brightening eyes, and lips half parted in a smile. He was playing a quaint, light, old-fashioned tune, which seemed to call again to shadowy life the courtly beaux and belles of some forgotten ball-room. To Rachel's ear there were thin, faint notes of sadness in it, because the dancers had so long ago grown weary, and the sprightly measure had a lonely sound, having wandered onward into these later years where their feet could not follow it. They were all dead and gone, and their music was sounding still, under Mr. Lauriston's slim fingers. To some such tune as this might his young wife have danced, masquerading as an Arcadian shepherdess, as Charley saw her in her picture. Rachel's thoughts turned vaguely to that beautiful woman who was now only a shadow lingering on the outskirts of Mr. Lauriston's life. Did he love her passionately two years before?—had his leisurely speech been quickened to eager earnestness for her?—did she know the meaning of those doubtful smiles and glances which puzzled Rachel? The music came back again and yet again, as if it mocked her questions with an ever-recurring answer which she could not understand, and Mr. Lauriston turned his head and looked at her for a moment as he played. Her eyes fell before his, and followed the white hands passing deftly over the keys, while the candle-light flashed on his ring. It seemed to her as if she lost all reckoning of the time during which those busy fingers moved, insisting clearly on the silvery notes which marked the pulses of the dance. But all at once they slackened, glided through some lingering cadences, paused, and Mr. Lauriston rose from the piano. "Where did you pick that jolly old thing up? It is old, isn't it?" said Eastwood, breaking through the polite chorus of "Thank you!" which came as readily as a response in church.

"Yes, it's old—I have known it a long while," Mr. Lauriston replied. Miss Conway would have liked to ask him whether he had danced to it a century or so before, and learned its meaning so.

"I like it!" said Charley energetically. "It's quite new to me."

"Very pretty," Mrs. Eastwood chimed in, looking up from her knitting. "So lively and sparkling, and, if I may say so, Mr. Lauriston, very beautifully played."

He acknowledged the compliment with a smile and a little bow, and crossed over to where she sat, remaining there during a song of Miss Conway's. But after a few minutes, when the others were at the piano again, he came back, and, pausing by Rachel's side, said softly, "Mrs. Eastwood has been promising and vowing in your name."

"In mine?"

"Yours was included. I shall be out to-morrow morning, I have to see some of my tenants, and I leave Redlands on Friday, so that I have very little time. But Mrs. Eastwood has been kind enough to promise for you all, that you will come and dine with me to-morrow evening. I hope you consider yourself bound?"

"Certainly," she answered with a smile. "I shall like to be introduced to the elegant modern mansion. And then," she hesitated a little, "then I hope you will play to us again, Mr. Lauriston. I liked that very much."

"Ah!" he said, "I thought I had been fortunate enough to choose something that pleased you. Miss Conway, if I may ask the question, how came you to know these good friends of ours?"

"We were at school together. Of course I was a big girl when Effie was one of the little ones."

"A school-girl friendship—I see," he said. Both words and tone were harmless enough, and yet Miss Conway suspected something of contempt underlying them. She had an uneasy feeling that Mr. Lauriston *must* look down on the Eastwoods, and was defiantly inclined to identify herself with them. "It began with a school-girl friendship," she said.

"And has gone on to something more. Eastwood has a good voice, hasn't he?" Mr. Lauriston remarked after a pause. Rachel assented warmly, though she had never been so keenly aware of every defect in Charley's performance.

That night, as the girls went up to bed, they talked of their visitor. "Effie," said Rachel doubtfully, "tell me, when you were little, were you really fond of Mr. Lauriston?"

"Why, yes, of course I was," said Effie. "He used to take me on his knee, and he was always giving me things, you know. And he never took any notice of Fanny."

Rachel smiled. Effie's feelings, though truthfully expressed, threw very little light upon her own.

A Modern Solitary.

SENANCOUR, the author of *Obermann*, was born in Paris in the year 1770. His parents were in comfortable circumstances and able to give him a good education. He showed considerable precocity in his studies. When only seven years of age, he is said to have astonished his friends by his knowledge of geography and works of travel. This habit of study was connected with the want of bodily vigour which precluded him from the active employments of youth. He seems to have suffered from muscular weakness in the arms. In an interesting passage in *Obermann*, which may be pretty safely taken as autobiographical, he lets us see himself at this time. When fourteen he was taken by his parents to Fontainebleau. "After a childhood," he writes, "passed in the house, inactive and tedious, if I felt myself a man in certain respects I was a child in many others. Embarrassed, uncertain, glimpsing every possibility, yet knowing nothing; a stranger to that which surrounded me, I had no decided characteristic beside that of being restless and unhappy." On this visit he felt the attractions of the vast forest, and he recalls the impression that it was the only place he had ever wished to revisit. The following year he did revisit it, and now the far-reaching mysterious vistas of his forest-world drew him irresistibly. "I eagerly traversed these solitudes; I purposely went astray in them, content when I had lost every trace of my course, and could not perceive any frequented path. When I reached the outskirts of the forest, I saw with pain those vast naked plains and those steeples in the distance. I returned at once, I dived into the thickest part of the wood; and when I found a region bare of trees and shut in on all sides, where I could see nothing but sand and juniper trees, I had a feeling of peace, of liberty, of wild joy—the power of nature felt for the first time in the age which is easily made happy. Nevertheless, I was not gay; though almost happy, I only had the agitation of well-being. I fatigued myself while enjoying, and I always returned sad."

Such a nature was a soil well fitted for the seed of Rousseau's visionary ideas of a return to primitive life, and when only a lad he ardently entered into Rousseau's dream. When nineteen years old, he declined to go to the Séminaire de Saint Sulpice, where his father wished him to carry on his studies, and resolved, apparently with the connivance of his mother, to leave Paris for some quiet retreat in Switzerland. By a curious coincidence this synchronised with the time at which René, another disciple of Rousseau, exchanged society for solitude.

During the first part of his stay in Switzerland, he busied himself with painting, and did not attempt to write. He went to live with a family in Fribourg, and managed at the unripe age of twenty to get entangled in a marriage with the daughter of the house. He tells us in some notes about himself, which Sainte-Beuve has discovered, that his physical helplessness was the cause of his marrying. If, as Sainte-Beuve thinks, his experience is shadowed forth in that of Fonsalbe, narrated towards the end of *Obermann*, we may take it that the union was entered on in haste and repented at leisure. Troubles now fell thickly on our young wanderer. The Revolution pronounced him *suspect*, and in consequence of this he lost the fortune to which he was heir. The Swiss Government, moreover, deprived him of the property which should have come to him through his wife. Two children were born to him. Then his wife succumbed to a long illness and died; and finally he appears to have been deprived of the custody of his children.

After a youth which, as he tells us, was full of trouble, Senancour took to writing. His first work, *Rêveries sur la Nature primitive de l'homme*, was published in 1799. It is clearly the work of a youthful rebel against society. It inveighs eloquently against the evils of social institutions, and grows bitter in its denunciations of Christianity, and religion in general. It betrays, too, a youthful confidence in prescribing remedies for social disease, exhorting men to carry out the teachings of the Stoics and of Rousseau combined, and so to rid themselves of the burden of modern existence. Owing to the din of the Revolution, this pagan gospel found no ears capable of listening; yet the young teacher went on undaunted. In 1804, there appeared his best-known work, *Obermann*, of which more will be said presently. Here it is enough to mention that it shows a softening of young rebelliousness, and a toning down of young assurance. The writer no longer prescribes for society with the old self-confidence. He appears less as a teacher of others and a social reformer than as an observer of his own nature and experience, and as an alleviator of the evils of his individual life.

We need not follow the author very closely through the rest of his life. At the Restoration (1814) he returned to Paris, and mixed in journalism. Among other publications which come from his pen, the most noteworthy is *Libres Méditations d'un solitaire inconnu*, which shows little of the early spirit of revolt against society, and is marked by a calm and more conciliatory tone. He died in 1846 after a long and painful illness.

Obermann is in appearance a number of letters addressed by a solitary, who is most of his time in Switzerland, to an unnamed friend. The dates and references give an air of reality to the correspondence. It is known, moreover, that there is a general agreement between the events narrated and the facts of Senancour's life. Yet the agreement fails in certain respects, the author seeming to have wished to conceal his personality. This fact, together with the absence of all knowledge

respecting the recipient of the letters, and an allusion or two to a public, seems to shut us up to the conclusion that the solitary chose the form of letter as the most appropriate for his purpose. And we may at once recognise this appropriateness. It serves as the natural prose vehicle for the outpourings of personal feeling, the confession of personal experience, which make up the chief part of the subject-matter. It is possible, indeed, that the writer was able to realise at the moment of writing that he was addressing some individual friend. At least, this idea naturally occurs to one when reading passages like the following: "If I were absolutely alone, these moments of restlessness would be intolerable; but I write, and it seems as if the task of expressing to you what I experience were a distraction which lightens the sense of it. To whom could I open myself up then? What other would bear the wearisome chatterings of a gloomy madman, of so futile a sensitiveness? It is my one pleasure to tell you what I can only tell to you, what I would not say to any other, what others would not understand."

It may be added that the epistolary form very well suits the intellect and habits of the writer. His is not a logical intellect, braced to follow out ideas to their remote conclusions. Thought with him is apt to be wandering and desultory, being ever swayed by changing currents of emotion. And this light discursive kind of reflection is just what we look for in the composition of a letter. *Obermann* gives us, then, just what the letters of a recluse to a sympathetic friend might be expected to give. They present in broad outline the few external incidents of the quietly flowing life; they paint its natural surroundings; they afford glimpses of its daily round of occupations; and lastly they record its strange inner experience, the mixed feelings, the yearnings, the dreamy musings which make up the chief part of the solitary's life.

It is not difficult to account for the fascination which the book has exercised on the few. There is a tone of sincerity in this long personal disclosure which arrests the attention. We feel that the writer is laying bare his very soul to our gaze. And what a soul is here laid bare! What a strange spiritual experience, this succession of momentary upheavings of aspiration and long swoonings of despair downwards to its deepest depths! Under all the wondrous pictures of nature, the vivid descriptions of mountain heights with their awful stillness and vastness of outlook, under all the reflections on man and the previsions of a happier destiny awaiting him afar off, there betrays itself the sensitive stricken soul of the writer with its fugitive flush of warm life, and its abiding cold pallor:—

Yet through the hum of torrent lone,
And brooding mountain-bee,
There sobs I know not what ground-tone
Of human agony!

Such a revelation, while fitted to hold spell-bound the few, is not exactly

what the many run after. For, as is well said by the writer from whom I have just borrowed,—

Some secrets may the poet tell,
For the world loves new ways;
To tell too deep ones is not well—
It knows not what it says.

The characteristic charm of *Obermann* belongs to it as a whole. There is hardly any prose work of which it would be more difficult to give an impression by description and quotation. To enjoy the book, it is necessary to steep the mind awhile in the “air of languor, cold, and death” which brooded over the writer’s soul. One must enter by an effort of imaginative sympathy into this unfamiliar remote type of experience. Not only so, the very form of the composition is essential to the delight. The reader must listen to the wandering melody of the writer’s story, with its long quest of the repose of harmony through a tangle of dissonance; its unexpected yet never violent change of theme and of key; its many gradations of force from those occasional notes of bitter despair which have something of the violence of passion to those soft passages which express a perfect subsidence of emotion and a drowsy languor which seem like the oncoming of a spiritual stupor. This being so, I cannot hope to do more here than excite in the reader’s mind a measure of curiosity with respect to a book which is still comparatively unknown.

Obermann’s burden is that of despair. He looks out over the world and recognises that it is a world in which he has no part, or, to use his own words, that he does not really live but merely “looks at life.” He looks into his own heart and detects the source of this incapacity to live.

This regretting of life, this sad renunciation of the world, may spring from different causes. The actual conflict with things may have been too painful owing to a weak organisation, as in Leopardi’s case; or to the presence of some insuperable obstacle to the gratification of a ruling passion, as in Werther’s; or to a slow and painful process of disillusion, as in that of Wordsworth’s *Solitary*. Or the despair may be the outcome not of positive pain and disappointment, but of a sense of want or of negation. And here we may follow George Sand and distinguish the suffering of René, which has its roots in a consciousness of high faculty unsupported by effective purpose, from that of Obermann, which arises from a distinct sense of incompleteness of power. Obermann abandons himself to grief because he is keenly conscious of wanting the most essential personal and spiritual conditions of life, power to effect something, purpose to attempt something, and even desire to possess something.

This consciousness of the want of desire is the characteristic note of Obermann’s mood. One may almost say that he makes desire the object of desire. His recurring complaint is *ennui*. Schopenhauer says that there are two poles of misery between which our life oscillates—that of positive disappointment, which follows desire and effort; and that of the

burdensome sense of life, or *ennui*, which remains with us when we no longer desire. If Manfred represents one of the pessimist extremes, Obermann represents the other. "Without desires," he says in one place, "what are we to make of life? Stupidly vegetate." He is a prey to the fatigue which attends the possession of life without its effective impulses. The futility, the nothingness of such a vegetative existence continually forces itself on his mind. "Why," he cries, "vegetate a long time yet, useless to the world and fatiguing to myself? To satisfy the futile instinct of life! in order to breathe and advance in years! to awake bitterly when everything rests, and seek darkness when the earth is blooming! to have nothing but the want of desire, and to know only the dream of existence! to remain displaced, isolated on the scene of human affliction, when no one is happy through me, when I have only the idea of the rôle of a man! to cling to a dead life, a spiritless slave whom life repulses and who attaches himself to its shadow, greedy of existence, as if real life were left him, and wishing to exist miserably for want of the courage to exist no longer!"

Obermann is far from that stage of perfect quietism in which the allurements of life have faded away from the vision. He is consciously tearing himself away from the world: he suffers through a long wrench from the beguilements of life:—

A wounded human spirit turns
Here on its bed of pain.

And this suffering is connected with his richly-endowed poetic nature. He possessed in a high degree those passive sensibilities which seem to promise fulness and multiformity of enjoyment. Sights, sounds, and odours were charged for his mind with profoundest meanings, and stimulated his imagination to fashion ravishing forms of beauty and happiness. The charm of equal companionship, the warm solaces of a quiet, well-ordered home still appear to his vision in the misty distance. Yet, though he gazes on the lovely phantoms, he cannot approach and seize them, but is chained to the spot as by a moral paralysis.

Obermann's lament is thus a regret; his monody is an elegy in which images of delight recur mingling their sweetness with the bitterness of loss. The sad dirge-like movement becomes now and again for a moment more rapid and more joyous as life beckons to him with her rosy fingers, wooing him back to her arms. Yet it is but for a moment, and then the spirit sinks again in a swoon-like movement downwards to its accustomed depth of despair:—

"Soft climates, beautiful nights, the sky at night, certain sounds, old recollections; the time, the occasion; nature beautiful and expressive, gentleness, affection, all has passed before me; all calls me, and all abandons me. I am alone; the forces of my heart do not expand, they are in suspense. I am in the world, wandering, solitary in the midst of the crowd which is nothing to me; as a man long since struck with deafness whose eager eye fixes itself on all those dumb beings who pass before him,

He sees everything, and everything is refused him ; he divines the sounds which he loves, he seeks them and does not hear them ; he suffers the silence of all things in the midst of the noise of the world."

Among the allurements which life still holds out to him love seems to be the one which Obermann can least easily put away. He lingers fondly on the picture of married life sustained by mutual sympathy and graced by delicate courtesies. "The pleasures of confidence and intimacy are great among friends ; but animated and multiplied by all the details which are caused by the feeling of the difference of sex, these delicate pleasures have no longer any limits." "Do you believe," he says elsewhere, "that a man who ends his life without having loved, has truly entered into the mysteries of life, that his heart is well known to him, and that the extent of his existence is unveiled to him ? It seems to me that he has remained in something like a state of suspense, and that he has only seen from afar what the world might have been for him."

He looks on this as his own case. The author's marriage, as we have seen, brought him little of the happiness which he here extols. A nearer approach to an experience of love seems to be recorded in the reminiscences of an incipient attachment to a Madame Del—— which recur in the Letters. When he accidentally meets her, or when he is reminded of her by her brother Fonsalbe, who shares his retreat towards the end, his thoughts linger tenderly about her image. Yet he soon dismisses the pleasing phantom from his brain, and tries to persuade himself that his sentiment comes far short of love. Here, again, the far-off gleam of happiness finds a way into the darkness of night.

"This recollection was not love, since I did not find any consolation in it, or any nourishment ; it left me in the void, and it seemed to hold me there ; it gave me nothing, and it seemed to prevent my possessing anything. I remained thus without possessing either the happy intoxication which love sustains, or that better and pleasurable melancholy with which our hearts like to consume themselves when still filled with an unhappy love."

Obermann is deeply convinced that there is no escape from his condition of lassitude and sad regret. It is not the present only that is darkened with the shadow of despair ; the whole of his past shows the same gloomy hue. The references to his youth, its want of the customary joys, its freedom from the usual illusory hopes, are full of pathos. In going back to his early youth, he tells us, he still finds the "fancy of a melancholy heart which has never had a real childhood, and which attached itself to strong emotions and extraordinary things before it had decided whether it would like games or not." And again : "Here is my twenty-seventh year : the beautiful days have passed, and I have not even seen them. Unhappy during the years of happiness, what shall I expect from other years ? I have spent in emptiness and *ennui* the happy season of confidence and hope. Everywhere repressed, suffering, the heart empty and broken, I reached, when still young, the regrets of old age."

And in looking onwards he is certain that his suffering will not diminish. He meets the proffered consolations of his imaginary friend, as Job met those of his acquaintance. "Wait, I shall be told; moral evil exhausts itself even by its duration: wait, times will change, and you will be satisfied; or if they remain as they are you yourself will be changed. In using the present, such as it is, you will have dulled the too impetuous presentiment of a better future; and when you have tolerated life, it will become good to your more tranquil heart—a passion ceases, a loss is forgotten, a misfortune is repaired: I have no passions, I deplore neither loss nor misfortune, nothing which can cease, which can be forgotten, which can be repaired. A new passion may divert from another which is growing old; but where shall I find nourishment for my heart, when it shall have lost the thirst which consumes it? It desires everything, it wishes everything, it contains everything. What shall I put in the place of that infinite which my thought requires? Regrets are forgotten, other possessions efface them; but what possessions can cheat universal regrets?" And again: "During the storm hope maintains itself, and you stand up against the danger because it may have an end; but if the calm itself fatigues you, what do you hope for then?"

Life is to him an unreal phantom, the shadow of a reality, a thing without aim or reason which must disappear like other futilities in the great shadow-spectacle which we call the world. I quote a passage in the original in which this falling away of the soul from things as unreal, this conscious lapse into nothingness, seems to be expressed in the very drowsy rhythm of the language.

"Que nous restera-t-il dans cet abandon de la vie, seule destinée qui nous soit commune? Quand tout échappe jusqu'aux rêves de nos désirs; quand le songe de l'aimable et de l'honnête vieillit lui-même dans notre pensée incertaine; quand l'harmonie, dans sa grâce idéale, descend des lieux célestes, s'approche de la terre, et se trouve enveloppée de brumes, de ténèbres; quand rien ne subsiste de nos affections, de nos espérances; quand nous passons nous-mêmes avec la fuite invariable de choses, et dans l'inévitable instabilité du monde! mes amis, mes seuls amis, elle que j'ai perdue, vous qui vivez loin de moi, vous qui seuls me donnez encore le sentiment de la vie! que nous restera-t-il, et que sommes-nous?"

Yet while the burden of Obermann's song is thus a sad one, he is by no means disposed to exaggerate his misery. On the contrary, with what looks like a touch of unconscious inconsistency, he is concerned to make out that his state must be distinguished from unhappiness. It is a negative rather than a positive condition. "Others," he says, "are much more unhappy than I, but I doubt if there were ever a man less happy." Not only so; in other places he teaches that his state of moral indifference, in which the impulses of will slumber, and no eager longing brings conflict into the soul, is one of which the writer is in a measure proud. He speaks of it after the manner of Schopenhauer as something

which it is much to have reached,* as something the consciousness of which brings even a *positive* satisfaction. At other times again, with more palpable inconsistency, he talks of the sweet pleasure of his suffering condition. "Whence," he exclaims, "comes to man the most lasting of the enjoyments of his heart? that pleasure of melancholy, this charm full of secrets, which makes him live on his griefs, and love himself still in the consciousness of his ruin?" He enjoys, he says elsewhere, without being happy; for enjoyment is not the same thing as happiness, just as suffering is different from unhappiness. There is a deep sincerity about Obermann which marks him off from the ordinary pessimist. He does not want to pose as the martyr of martyrs, nor does he even claim to be a martyr pure and simple. His honesty shows itself, no doubt, at the expense of his consistency, but we ought not to look for consistency in a writer who openly confesses to be the subject of the passing mood, and who has expressly warned us against expecting logical connectedness in his writings.

Obermann's nature retains a sound and healthy core beneath all its surface disease. His suffering never extinguishes the deeply rooted instincts of man. In the very act of putting away happiness as a phantom, a kind of will-o'-the-wisp, which can never be grasped, he seeks to fill up his life with quiet solaces. In his lonesome retreat he finds his interests—natural objects to contemplate, homely plans to make and carry out, a rough but sincere type of human nature to understand and aid, and many a difficult problem to ponder.

Our author is a curious illustration of the combination of qualities which make up the Solitary. On the one hand, he is, as we have seen, bound by a kind of moral lethargy. He sees the allurements of life, but without actively desiring them. Yet he lets us see plainly that he has energy enough when a sufficient stimulus presents itself. He needed to be roused to exert himself by some pressing external difficulty or obstacle. In his seventh Letter he describes an ascent of the Dent du Midi, which he made alone, having sent his guide back, and relieved himself of watch, money, and most of his clothes. And he tells us that he felt his "being expand, delivered thus alone to obstacles and dangers of a difficult nature." And in another place (Letter xcl.) he narrates an adventure of still greater hazard, and thus winds up: "The two hours of my life when I was the most animated, the least discontented with myself, the least removed from the intoxication of happiness, were those in which, penetrated with cold, worn out with efforts, consumed with want, thrust sometimes from precipice to precipice before perceiving them, and only escaping alive with surprise, I kept ever saying to myself, and I spoke simply in my pride without witness, 'For this one minute more I will that which I ought, and I do that which I will.'"

* In two passages, pp. 205, 272, he shows that this calm is occasionally disturbed by sudden unexpected revivals of impulse.

A measure of this surprising energy, called forth by a critical position among precipices and torrents, was evoked by the daily necessities of the solitary condition. Obermann displays something of the industry, practical insight, and inventive resource of Robinson Crusoe, in arranging the details of his simple life. Although he is renouncing the world in a sense, he means to make the most of what he retains. It is by no means a matter of indifference to him where he lives. He chooses a valley for his seclusion where his own language is spoken, which, moreover, "offers a pasturage isolated, but easily accessible, is of a somewhat mild climate, well situated, traversed by a stream, and from which one may hear either the fall of a torrent, or the waves of a lake." He shows the same thoughtfulness in constructing his house, in laying out his grounds, in selecting the kinds of produce to be cultivated in them. Thus he will not have vines planted because they demand painful labour, and he likes to see men occupied, but not swelking and moiling, and because their produce is too uncertain, too irregular for one "who likes to know what he has and what he can do." All this arrangement evidently gives him a good deal of quiet enjoyment *à son insu*. He describes his hermitage, just as Crusoe describes his hut, with a certain complacency. His keen sense of order, which makes itself felt throughout the work, lends a special interest to all this planning and arranging. He has the satisfaction of surrounding himself by an orderliness of his own invention.

The passages of the Letters in which he describes the construction of his dwelling, the quiet activities of his life, his simple habits with respect to eating, drinking, sleeping, &c., are a pleasant relief to the ear, after the long strains of lamentation. The reader feels that a man who is interested in all the little details of his house and garden, to whom it is a matter of importance to regulate his habits of tea and wine-drinking with a view to sound sleeping, has preserved something of the common instincts of his species. He has, it is plain, not completely narcotised the "will to live." Indeed, one can hardly help being gently amused at the idea of a Solitary who imagines himself to have renounced happiness, taking so much trouble to make the place in which the renunciation is to be carried out, comfortable, and even delightful, with its pleasant outlook, and its tinkling fountain set against the deep roar of the distant cataract.

A still more valuable element of relief in Obermann's monody is the presence of so much fine description of Nature. If he did not, like Shelley's Alastor, go into seclusion for the express purpose of contemplating the universe, this contemplation served very materially to solace him in his retirement.* He looked on the scenery about him with the eye of an artist and with the imagination of a poet. He appears to have had no special interest in her living forms except as beautiful or poetically suggestive; and he was, in general, destitute of scientific

* There is a curious passage in which he rejects the idea of travel. He does not want to see many places, but only to have seen them.

curiosity. Thus throughout his Letters the problem how these stupendous Alpine forms arose, never presents itself to him. *En revanche*, his artistic and poetic insight was keen and true; and his Letters preserve a singularly clear impression of the effect of Alpine scenery on a refined sensibility.

Obermann selected Switzerland as a resort because it was "the single country in Europe in which, with a tolerably favourable climate, are to be found the severe beauties of natural sites." There seems, moreover, to have been a peculiar affinity between his mind and mountain scenery. The wide plain fatigued him with its monotony. The scenery of valley, lake, and towering peak offered more stimulus to his eye and imagination. A slight change of altitude alters the world in these places, hiding, revealing, and transforming. And then "the changes, more sudden and grand than in the plains," due to passing storms, to the progress of the seasons, were grateful to his mind. "An irregular, stormy, and uncertain climate becomes necessary to our unrest." To this must be added that our Solitary, like Manfred and his other brethren, was keenly susceptible of that effect of perfect solitude which is only obtained at a great elevation; where one seems to be transported into mid-space, and where the lifeless and dreary character of the surroundings, void of the note of bird, void of the passing bee or butterfly, void even of the lower life of shrub and grass, strikes home on the heart a chill yet bracing sense of being cut off from the living world.

The value of nature to the wounded heart of man is, that it takes the thoughts away from the consuming grief, absorbing the spirit in the sense of a larger impersonal existence. Obermann feels this salutary effect, but not always. Sometimes, indeed, so far from distracting his thoughts, the objects about him seem directly to image and express them. Such an image he finds in "the fir placed by chance on the border of the marsh. It lifted itself, wild, strong, and proud, as the tree of the thick forests: energy too vain! The roots are soaked in a foul water, they plunge into the unclean mud; the trunk grows weak and fatigued; the summit, bent by the damp winds, bows down despondingly; the fruits, sparse and poor, fall into the mire, and are lost there, useless. Languishing, ill-shapen, yellowed, grown old before the time, and already leaning towards the swamp, it seems to crave for the storm which is to overturn it: its life has ceased long before its fall."

Even when his own suffering condition is not thus distinctly symbolised by some object in nature, it is now and again brought to his mind by the more indirect path of contrast. The sense of the want of permanence in human things, the frequent use of the word *permanent*, which Sainte-Beuve regards as one of his characteristics, is without doubt closely related to the fact that he was habitually confronted with the enduring work of Nature's hands. On the other hand, the activity, life, and progress of nature bring home to him his own arrested animation, his living death. "Spring comes for Nature, it comes not for me. The days of life woke all creatures: their uncontrollable fires

wearied me without reviving me : I became a stranger in the world of happiness. . . . The snows melt on the summits ; the stormy clouds rise in the valley : unhappy that I am. The sky glows, the earth ripens ; the barren winter has remained in me. Soft glimmerings of the fading western glow ! great shadows of the abiding snows ! and that man should have only bitter pleasures when the torrent rolls afar in the universal silence, when the chalets are shut for the peace of night, when the moon climbs above Velan !”

Sometimes, again, the very force of the beauty around him, instead of drawing him out of himself, drives him back to his old regrets. On one occasion, at midnight, seated near the lake amid the rustle of the pines, the murmur of the waves, and the rare note of the nightingale, nature appeared to him to be too beautiful. “ The peaceful harmony of things was too severe to my agitated heart. I thought of the spring, of the perishable world, and of the spring of my life. I saw these years which are passing dreary and barren.”

Yet in general nature is quieting and soothing to our Solitary. The mountain world, with its vastnesses, its silences, its mysterious movements of light and shadow, acted as a sort of narcotic on his wounded heart. The impression of this world answered to his mood sufficiently to insinuate itself into his mind and take captive his sense without any feeling of shock. His feelings, when on the summit of the Dent du Midi, illustrate this. “ I could not give you a just conception of this new world, nor express the permanence of the mountains in a language belonging to the plains. The hours seemed to me at once more tranquil and more fruitful ; and, as if the rolling of the stars had been retarded in the universal calm, I found in the tardiness and the energy of my thoughts a succession which nothing precipitated, and which nevertheless outstripped its usual course. When I wished to estimate its duration I saw that the sun had not followed it ; and I judged that the sum of existence was really more weighty and more barren in the commotion of inhabited countries. I saw that, in spite of the slowness of the visible movements, it is in the mountains, on their peaceful summits, that thought, less hurried, is truly active. . . . Before I was aware of it, mists rose from the glaciers and formed clouds under my feet. The glitter of the snow no longer tired my eyes, and the sky grew still gloomier and deeper. A fog covered the Alps ; an isolated peak or two rose out of this ocean of vapours ; fillets of shining snow, caught in the crevices of their uneven surface, made the granite blacker and more severe. The snowy dome of Mont Blanc lifted its immovable mass above this grey and mobile sea, these accumulated mists which the wind hollowed out and raised into immense billows. A black point appeared in their gulfs ; it rose rapidly, it came straight to me ; it was the mighty eagle of the Alps ; his wings were damp, and his eye fierce. He sought his prey, but at the sight of a man he took to flight with a weird cry. He disappeared, plunging into the clouds. This cry was repeated twenty times, but in sounds which were

sharp, without any duration, like to so many solitary cries in the universal silence. Then all returned to an absolute stillness, as if sound itself had ceased to be, and the property of sonorous bodies had been effaced from the universe. Never can silence be known in the noisy valleys; only on the cold mountain peaks does there reign that motionlessness, that solemn permanence, which no tongue will ever express, nor imagination ever reach unto."

A still closer approximation to self-absorption in the repose of nature is seen in the following passage, which gives us a picture that reminds one of *Salvator Rosa* or *Claude* :—

"Imagine a plain of clear and white water. It is vast, but bounded; its form, oblong and somewhat round, stretches towards the winter sunset. Lofty summits, majestic chains enclose it on three sides. You are seated on the slope of the mountain above the northern strand, which the waves are ever leaving and re-covering. Behind yon perpendicular rocks, they reach to the region of the clouds; the dreary north wind has never blown on this happy shore. To your left the mountains part; a quiet valley stretches into their depths; a torrent descends from the snowy peaks which enclose it, and when the morning sun appears among the frozen peaks or the mists, where the mountain rivers point out the chalets above the meadows which are still in shadow, it is the dream of a primitive earth—it is a monument of our ignored destinies.

"The first moments of night are at hand, the hour of repose and sublime sadness. The valley is reeking; it begins to disappear in the darkness. Towards the south the lake is in the night; the rocks which enclose it are a dark belt under the frozen dome which surrounds them, and which seems to hold in its rime the light of day. Its last fires yellow the numerous chestnuts on the wild rocks; they pass in long rays under the lofty spires of the Alpine fir; they embrown the mountains; they light up the snows; they kindle the air; and the water, waveless, brilliant with light and blending with the sky, has grown boundless like this, and still more pure, more ethereal, more beautiful. Its calm astonishes, its clearness deceives; the aerial splendour which it repeats seems to penetrate its depths; and beneath the mountains, separated from the globe and as it were suspended in the air, you find at your feet the void of the heavens, and the immensity of the world. This is a moment of enthrallment and of oblivion. You no longer know where the sky is, where the mountains are, nor on what you are yourself borne; you no longer find any level, any horizon; the ideas are changed, the sensations unfamiliar; you have left the familiar life. And when the shades have covered this valley of water—when the eye discerns no longer objects or distances—when the evening breeze has lifted the waves—then towards the west the end of the lake alone remains lit up with a pale glimmer, while the rest of it that is surrounded by mountains is only an indistinguishable abyss; and in the midst of the darkness and the silence you hear, a thousand feet beneath you, the movement of the ever renewed waves,

which pass and cease not, which quiver on the sand in equal intervals, which are lost among the rocks, which break on the shore, and of which the sounds seem to echo in a long murmur in the invisible abyss."

One is tempted to linger over these strange dream-pictures, these nocturnes in which every feature contributes to the mood of melancholy calm which they induce. But I must pass on and say a word or two, in conclusion, respecting the mass of reflection which the letters contain. Obermann's thoughts on human nature and life are, on the whole, much less interesting than his record of personal experience and his portrayals of the nature he had studied so well. They have something of the vagueness which belongs to the man's mind, and do not show a firm grasp of tangible realities.

Much of this reflection is, of course, tinged with the pessimistic mood of the writer. There is a good deal of vague outcry against human life as a miserable sham and burlesque. And in these denunciations the evil appears to be regarded as inevitable, as a proof of the aimlessness of Nature, or even of some sinister intention on her part. "You do not see," he writes, "that this state of things in which an incident ruins the moral life, in which a single whim removes a thousand rules, and which you call the social edifice, is nothing but a mass of masqued miseries and illusory errors, and that you are children who fancy they have toys which cost a great deal because they are covered with gilded paper. You say quietly it is thus that the world is made. No doubt; and is not this a proof that we are nothing in the universe but burlesque figures which a charlatan moves, confronts one with another, walks about . . . makes laugh, fight, weep, leap, in order to amuse—whom? I do not know."

All appearance of happiness, he elsewhere tells us with something of the grimness of Schopenhauer, is a make-believe. It is a mask put on before strangers:—

"If all secrets were known, if we could see in the recesses of the heart the bitterness which is eating it away, all these contented men, these pleasant houses, these frivolous gatherings, would be no more than a crowd of unfortunates gnawing at the bit which chafes them, and eating the thick dregs of that cup of sorrows of which they will not see the bottom. They hide all their pains, they parade their false joys, they move about in order to make them flash before the jealous eyes which are always directed to others. They so place themselves that the tear which remains in their eye may give it an apparent lustre, and be envied from afar as the expression of pleasure." Nature, too, presents itself to him as a blunder. The presence of general laws does not convince him of any beneficent purpose. And even were it made out to him that the totality of living things is well provided for, this would be but a poor comfort for the individuals who are excluded from the providence. "These laws of the whole, this care for species, this contempt of individuals, this march of beings, is very hard for us who are the individuals."

Yet amid these bitter, despairing tones there are heard more cheerful strains. Obermann shows in many passages of his Letters an unexpected capability of rising out of his own individual experience. He recognises that his case is a peculiar one, having a certain morbid character and even a ludicrous aspect. He does not make his own experience the measure of the common life, but surveys this with tranquil eye, seeing it as it is, and no longer as it appears through the coloured spectacles of the surveyor's pessimistic mood. Add to this that he displays at these moments something of that shrewd practical sense which stands him in such good stead in carving out alone the framework of his own life.

In this calmer contemplative mood our author no longer ridicules the idea of happiness, but seriously discusses its conditions, and, oddly enough, is not at all disposed to be exacting as to these. In one place he specifies four conditions of contentment—"much reason, health, some fortune, and a little of the good luck which consists in having fate on our side." In another place he says that "he would need only two things—a fixed climate, and truthful men." He sets a high value on wealth, combating again and again the stoical underestimate of its importance. In one place he throws himself so cordially into the common ways of men that he quite seriously discusses the advantages of town and country, and concludes that Paris, although he has turned his back on the city, is "the capital which combines the advantages of towns in the highest degree."

Our author not only displays an unexpected practical shrewdness in considering the external conditions of comfort and contentment; he manifests a keen and subtle insight into the internal or psychological conditions of pleasure. One might almost imagine that in some of the passages referred to it was an experienced Epicurean rather than a poor famishing Solitary who was speaking. "I said to myself that pure pleasures are in a manner pleasures that one only makes trial of; that economy in enjoyments is the industry of happiness; that it is not sufficient that a pleasure be without regret or even without mixture of pain in order to be a pure pleasure; that it is desirable, further, that one only take so much of it as is necessary for recognising its quality, for cherishing the hope of it, and that one should know how to reserve for other times its most seductive promises." On the other hand, he sees the risks of over-calculation in enjoyment. "It is of the nature of pleasure that it should be possessed with a kind of *abandon* and plenitude."

Of useful practical suggestion for the bettering of life Obermann has little to offer. He is still too fully possessed with the Rousseau fancy for primitive life to apply his mind seriously to the problems of social amelioration. The only approach to such practical counsel is to be found in his observations on marriage, a subject about which he has a good deal to say. His estimate of woman is a lofty one. He looks on marriage as it is, as tending to stunt her growth and to debase her. And in the ideal pictures of married life to which reference has been made, he

goes as far as the most advanced defender of woman's rights to-day in claiming for her equality of position and liberty.

"Is there," he asks, "a domestic custom more delightful than to be good and just in the eyes of a beloved woman; to do everything for her, and to exact nothing from her; to expect from her that which is natural and fair, and to make no exclusive claim on her; to render her estimable and to leave her to herself; to sustain her, to advise her, to protect her, without governing her, without subjecting her, to make of her a friend who conceals nothing and who has nothing to conceal?" At the same time he sees that women themselves are often answerable for the failure of conjugal relations, and he puts his finger on the weak spots in their mental training, their want of that "width of view which produces less egoism, less obstinacy of opinion, more good faith, an obliging delicacy, and a hundred means of conciliation." Thus in every way he anticipates the latest ideas respecting woman's function and destiny.

These fragmentary thoughts, which never aspire to become carefully elaborated reasonings, are chiefly valuable as showing how, in spite of his anxiety to prove his complete severance from the aggregate human life, Obermann is still attached to it by hidden ligaments. Although he writes in one place in open revolt against society, claiming the perfect right of suicide, if ever this last resort of the wretched becomes necessary, he cherishes in his heart a remote interest in the large collective life from which he has shut himself out. The reader's assurance of this attachment grows much stronger towards the close of the Letters, where the whole tone becomes more cheerful, approaching in some places a playful gaiety, and where the common human impulses of friendship, love, conviviality seem to be struggling into life again through the thick crust of apathy under which they have so long lain.*

It is the sense of this distant attachment to the great human family which completes the reader's interest in Obermann. In his far-off mountain hermitage his thoughts are still occupied with ourselves, our aims and our cares. We feel that the recluse is leaning tenderly towards us out of his mysterious dream-world, and we instinctively respond to the movement by straining the ear to catch his soft and unfamiliar tones, and to seize the clue to his mazy musings.

J. S.

* The companionship of Fonsalbe, who joins him in his retreat, may be said perhaps to prepare the way for his return to society.

“Let Nobody Pass.”

A GUARDSMAN'S STORY.

I.

WHAT construction is an officer to put on the order “Let nobody pass?”

To Lieutenant Archie McEwen, of the Guards, the order seemed plain enough. His Colonel had set him at the head of a staircase which was barred at top and bottom with silken ropes, and had said “*Nobody must pass here.*” This was at Dublin Castle, and the Lord Lieutenant was giving a ball that night. Ireland was no quieter at the time than it usually is, and there had lately been rumours of plots and explosions. Officers were consequently on the strictest alert as to their duties, and it did not occur to Archie McEwen that there could be a twofold interpretation of his Colonel's order. “*Nobody must pass*” obviously meant that a passage must be allowed to nobody.

So the handsome young Guardsman stood on the landing, where, being alone, in full view of the guests who were sweeping through the vestibule below to a broader staircase on his left, he cut a gallant figure. He wore his bearskin, his gold sash and belt; and he held his drawn sword with its beautiful damasquined blade carelessly in hand. Behind him were some folding doors wide open, which gave access to a large room brilliantly lit, intended, he supposed, as a resting chamber for his Excellency's more distinguished guests. As he mounted his guard McEwen received many nods and smiles from ladies of his acquaintance passing below, and some pointing with their fans to the staircase, arched their eyebrows, and inquired by this pantomime whether they could ascend and shorten their distance to the ball-room. But McEwen had to shake his head laughing. At last the stately Countess of Bellair appeared, with those lovely girls of hers, the Lady Flora and the Lady Amabel. Archie had often danced with the Lady Amabel, and there had been some little flirtations between them which had not left the Guardsman quite heart-whole. Her young ladyship now gave him a pretty nod, which he was going to return, when, to his confusion, he saw Lady Bellair coolly duck under the silk rope at the foot of the staircase and beckon her daughters to follow her.

Lady Bellair was a sister of the Lord Lieutenant's wife and it was evident that she must rank among the most privileged guests. What was McEwen to do?

"I am afraid, Lady Bellair, there is no admittance this way," he said very deferentially, and standing aside, so as not even to seem as though he barred her progress.

"Oh, the order does not apply to me, Mr. McEwen," answered her ladyship good-naturedly. "It was only given so as to prevent the mob of people from crushing through the private rooms," and so saying Lady Bellair quietly unhooked the rope at the top of the staircase and swept on with her daughters.

"What a dragon you are!" whispered Lady Amabel in the Guardsman's ear as she passed by.

Unhappy young Scot! The ladies had scarcely gone when he perceived the awkward position in which they had placed him. Many people had seen them pass. Somebody unhooked the rope downstairs, and a whole throng now ascended the steps, having at their head a gentleman in Windsor uniform, attended by another in Court dress.

"Confound it, that's the Chief Secretary," muttered Archie to himself; but this time he stood his ground, whilst he said politely, "I am sorry I cannot admit you this way."

"But Lady Bellair has just passed," answered the statesman astonished.

"Her ladyship was an exception."

"I should think I ought to be an exception, too?" suggested the Chief Secretary with a shy smile; but Mr. McEwen remained firm; and this displeased the right honourable gentleman. He was a Parliamentary politician who knew little of military ways; and having lately risen to office had an exaggerated estimate of his own dignity. Turning round he saw one of the Lord Lieutenant's A. D. C.'s at the foot of the staircase and signed to him to come up. The A. D. C. hastened, and told McEwen that he could let the Chief Secretary pass. But the young Scot, excitable after the manner of his countrymen, reminded him rather bluntly that he had no business to give orders.

"Get me a written order from my Colonel, or else let the Colonel come and relieve me," he answered. "Otherwise, you know I can let nobody pass. You, as a brother officer, ought to uphold me in this."

The better disposed persons had already turned their backs to go down; but one of those ill-bred fools who creep in everywhere and who are always anxious to signalise themselves by misbehaviour, thought to "show off" before some ladies who were with him by leading a rush who should force their way past the Guardsman. He was a florid barrister with big whiskers, and cried facetiously, "Up Guards, and at 'em;" while he threw down the rope, and charged across the landing with a girl on his arm. But in one bound McEwen had reached the door, and barred it by stretching out his sword.

The sight of the glittering steel had its effect on the snob, who stopped, but cried out, "Come, sir, I don't suppose you've received orders to cut down his Excellency's guests with your sabre."

"I am ashamed of you, sir," replied McEwen, who had flushed scarlet. "You know I am but a soldier executing my orders. I request you to go downstairs this instant."

After that the staircase was promptly cleared, many ladies declaring, as they went, that, after all, the young Guardsman had been placed in a very trying position and had behaved remarkably well. But soon afterwards the rumour of what had occurred, amplified and distorted by the blatherings of the man with the whiskers, reached the ears of McEwen's Colonel, and that worthy hurried to give his lieutenant a setting down.

This Colonel was not a good soldier, nor a good fellow. He was a time-serving courtier, a well-connected, stupid person, very conceited and vexatious in authority. He had never seen service, and would have been sure to blunder if sent into action. All his militaryism consisted in pipe-clay; and in a pompous, half-screeching tone, which he used in addressing his subordinates, he now asked McEwen why the d—l the latter had been making an ass of himself?

"An ass of myself?" echoed Archie, colouring to the roots of his hair. "I had your orders to let nobody pass, sir."

"And you allowed Lady Bellair to go by. Since you disobeyed me to please yourself, you might have had the sense to conclude that my orders did not apply to the Chief Secretary."

"Lady Bellair is the Lord Lieutenant's sister-in-law," replied McEwen; "but I admit, sir, that I was wrong to let her pass. As for the Chief Secretary ——."

"Well, what about the Chief Secretary? Don't bandy words with me, sir. You have made yourself ridiculous, and me too. I relieve you of your duty. Go and dance—that's all you're fit for. I'll put a sergeant here who will understand my orders better than you."

McEwen bowed without a word as he sheathed his sword; but he was not the man to stomach such a lecture from a Colonel whom he little respected. This affair of the guard was a slight matter in itself, but it formed the commencement of a hopeless misunderstanding between the pair. McEwen treated his Colonel thenceforth with all the coldness compatible with subordination; and the Colonel, who discharged his duties too ill to brook the presence of a subaltern alive to his faults, began to worry the Scotchman with petty annoyances. In consequence Archie McEwen soon applied for an exchange. It should have been granted as a matter of course, but the Colonel, pursuing his spite, contrived to raise obstacles, and thereupon the young Guardsman threw up his commission in disgust.

He was a younger son, however, and not over-rich, so that he did not know what to do with himself when he had left the service. Animated with the adventurous spirit of Scotchmen, he loved soldiering, and nothing but the unmannerly conduct of his Colonel could have made him forsake a profession in which he would have been pretty sure to acquire honour. But before long chance threw into his way an un-

expected chance of buckling on the sword again. At a party in London McEwen met a Russian General, who knew his story and drew him on to talk about his wrongs. "Why don't you enter the Russian service?" asked this foreigner. "Our two countries are not at war, and I trust never will be. But in any case you would never be required to bear arms against England."

"But should I be admitted into the Russian army?" asked McEwen, recollecting that some of his ancestors had served in the Scottish Guard of the Kings of France.

"Oh, I think there would be no difficulty about it," replied the General. "We have many Germans amongst our officers, and a few French. A Scotchman would be welcome coming from the Queen of England's Guards. Let me see; you held brevet rank as captain, did you not? and you are of noble blood?"

"My grandfather was an earl," responded McEwen.

"And if your laws of succession were the same as ours you would be an earl too. All the sons of a count are with us counts. You will be gazetted as Count McEwen. Let me manage the matter for you."

II.

Archie McEwen did not say Yes to the Russian General's proposal, but he did not say No. He gave the matter a few days' thought and consulted his relatives. They advised him that it would be better he should spend the next ten years of his life, at least, in some profitable occupation than loitering as an idle man about town. They hinted that he might marry a wealthy Russian princess, which would be more sensible than dangling after Lady Amabel, who would never give her hand to a younger son. At the same time McEwen's relations used all their interest in his favour, so that his passage into the Russian army might be effected under the most honourable conditions possible. Thus it happened that the valorous young Scot one day found himself enrolled as Captain Count Makuine, in the Grand-Duchess Paulina's Cuirassier Guards, one of the finest regiments in the Russian service, and one which was always quartered near Court residences.

It was about a year after he had received his commission—a year spent very agreeably—that Archie McEwen was one night told off on just such a service as he had had to perform at Dublin Castle. By this time he had perfected himself in French, and, by dint of daily lessons, had come to speak Russian tolerably well. There was a ball at the Winter Palace, and McEwen was posted in a passage leading to the Emperor's private apartments, with orders to let nobody pass on any account.

Remembering the trouble that had befallen him in Ireland about an order of this kind, the young Captain asked his Colonel (who was a thorough soldier and gentleman) whether this order was to be construed literally.

"Well, of course, if a member of the Imperial family presents himself, you must let him go by," answered the Colonel; "but I do not think that is likely. The order is absolute, except for their Imperial Highnesses."

Accordingly, McEwen stood with the confidence of a man who has explicit instructions. He was habited in a white tunic, with gold epaulets and aiglets, white breeches, with knee boots and gold spurs, a silver breastplate with a double-headed golden eagle encrusted, and a silver helmet, with a gilt eagle perched with spread wings on the crest. Thus brilliantly accoutred, with a troop of men in the vestibule below to obey his behests, and with a lieutenant and cornet standing beside him in the corridor to give him support, our young Scotchman was in braver circumstance than when he had withstood the Chief Secretary for Ireland in the Lord Lieutenant's palace. And yet, though his stay in Russia had been a pleasant one, though his Muscovite comrades had treated him with that kindness and consideration which Russians can render extraordinarily charming when they please, Archie McEwen looked back with a passing regret on the days when he wore a red coat, and when his highest ambition was to win a smile from Lady Bellair's sweet daughter Amabel.

He was immersed in his recollections of "auld lang syne" when suddenly a tall officer, wearing a helmet, and muffled in an ample cloak, climbed the staircase two steps at a time and stood before him.

"You cannot pass, sir," said McEwen in the peremptory tone more usual in Continental armies than in our own.

"What, Captain! do you not know the Grand-Duke Nicholas?" and the officer, throwing back his cloak, revealed a dark whiskered face, and a breast covered with decorations.

"I beg your Imperial Highness's pardon," said McEwen, lowering the point of his sword; and he suffered the Grand-Duke to pass.

Half an hour elapsed; then the Grand-Duke reappeared, hurriedly answered the salute of the three officers, and ran downstairs. Scarcely had he gone when a tall form darkened the doorway at the end of the passage, and McEwen raised his hand to his helmet-peak on recognising the Emperor.

"Captain," said his Majesty, in a voice which trembled from excitement, "did you not receive orders to let nobody pass?"

"I did, sire; but I thought the Grand-Duke Nicholas——"

"That was not the Grand-Duke," replied the Czar, with undiminished agitation. "It is General Strenko, a half-mad fellow, who bears some resemblance to his Imperial Highness, and who thrusts his company on me for the purpose of giving me annoyance with his crazy advice. How came you to make such a mistake?"

"I am profoundly sorry, your Imperial Majesty," replied Archie McEwen, who truly felt ashamed, contrite, and sorrowful.

"I absolve you from all bad intention," said the Emperor, in a

gentler tone; "but I am ill guarded in my own palace if my guards do not know the men who should be forbidden to approach me."

Archie McEwen thrilled all over as he heard these words. The consequences of his mistake might have been so awful, that, as soon as he was relieved from duty that night, he sat down, conscience stricken, and wrote out his resignation. Next day, his Colonel, who had heard an account of the matter from the Emperor's own lips, good-naturedly told him that his Majesty had forgiven his indiscretion, as he was inclined to lay the blame on the officers who were on guard in the vestibule, and who ought not to have allowed the crazy General to get so far as the staircase. The Colonel added that it was the Czar's desire to hush up the matter, for General Strenko was a man whom the Court wished to humour, while keeping him at a distance.

But neither the kindness of his Colonel, nor the supplications of his brother officers, nor the graciously expressed wishes of the Emperor himself, wrought any effect on the young Scotchman. He persisted in his purpose of resigning; and of course his application had at length to be acceded to.

As soon, however, as he had received the intimation that he was out of commission, Count Makuine, as he was called, made immediate use of his liberty to don civilian attire and to pay a visit to his former Colonel, of whom he asked a favour.

"Colonel," he said, "I would beg you to carry a challenge from me to General Strenko. So long as I was in the service I could not fight him, for he was my superior; but now I am a civilian I can send to him to say that he lied foully in telling me that he was the Grand-Duke Nicholas. He is either a madman or a rascal."

"I am afraid he is only a fool," demurred the Colonel.

"Fools are as dangerous as rogues," retorted McEwen. "I had a fool of a Colonel to deal with in England, who would have been all the wiser if duelling had existed amongst us to teach him caution."

"Well, I don't think you will do General Strenko any harm by reading him a lesson in veracity," laughed the Colonel. "I will take a friend with me and bear your challenge, my dear Count."

General Strenko could not refuse Count Makuine's challenge. He protested at first; tried, with the fawning grace of a Russian, to explain that a lie was under certain circumstances not a lie; that he was labouring for his country's good, and that in politics subterfuge was sometimes a necessity; but finally he was obliged to accept the young Scot's cartel.

The two men met at early morning, the weapons chosen being swords. Before the duel commenced, General Strenko made a last effort to convince his puzzle-headed antagonist that a fib might sometimes be a laudable thing.

"I have proved my courage often enough to say this without appearing to falter," he remarked, sword in hand. "I wished to see my Sovereign, and I availed myself of the only means at my disposal."

"You told an infernal lie, and you left me to bear the consequences,"

replied the contemptuous Scot. "I am unversed in your casuistry. We are here to fight, not to palaver."

The General ground his teeth, and the pair of antagonists set to. The science was all on Strenko's side; the ardour on McEwen's. The latter quickly got a cut which laid his arm open and drenched his shirt with blood; but he retaliated with a lightning stroke, which, breaking through the General's guard, fell upon his cheek and clove his head like an apple. The wretched man dropped senseless, and was dead before he could be removed from the ground.

"That will teach others not to trifle with soldiers on guard," remarked McEwen, as the surgeon was binding up his arm. "If that man had not been my superior I might have remained in the army to derive some profit from the lesson I have taught."

It was understood then that McEwen had resigned his commission solely that he might wreak his vengeance on General Strenko. The news of the latter's death was received not without pleasure at Court, and the stubborn spirit which Count Makuine had shown in the affair commended him to the authorities as an officer who ought not to be allowed to leave the service too hastily. It was conveniently discovered that there had been some informality in the Captain's resignation, and he was asked whether it would please him to withdraw it. He gratefully accepted the proposal, and was reinstated, with promotion as Major, and with the cross of the order of St. George.

From that time, Count Makuine was often ordered for palace duty on important occasions, and the saying "*Let nobody pass when Makuine is on guard*" became a jesting proverb amongst his messmates. The Scottish officer's troubles were not yet ended, however; for in proportion as a man is trusted so do occasions arise for putting his presence of mind to the proof.

One summer night, while the Court was at Tsarskoe-Selo (the Russian Windsor or Versailles), Count Makuine being there also in command of a squadron of cuirassiers, it fell to the turn of one of his troops to furnish the outer guard of the palace. The guard consisted of a lieutenant, two non-commissioned officers, a trumpeter, and twenty-four troopers; and their duty was to keep two mounted sentries stationed at each of the four entrances to the palace grounds. Makuine, as Major, was not on guard himself; but he had to inspect the guards in and out of the palace twice in the day. He had just finished his evening inspection, towards nine o'clock, and was walking across the park in one of those soft June twilights which are so beautifully clear in Russia, when he heard his name called, and, turning round, saw a young captain of the Briskatstartine Hussars, Prince Wildotski, walking towards him with no very steady steps.

"*Makuine, mon cher, je suis gris*" (I am tipsy), said this young man, with an apologetic smile, and drawing a hand across his forehead as if his head swam.

"And you are on guard at the Grand-Duchess Paulina's apartments?" rejoined the Scotchman, holding out his arm for the hussar to lean upon.

"Yes, that's the mischief of it," faltered the captain, leaning upon Makuine with all his weight. "I was on guard all this hot afternoon without touching so much as a glass of lemonade; but at seven her Imperial Highness's *maître d'hôtel* brought me dinner, with such a bottle of champagne as I have never tasted before. By St. Ivan of Kiew, I believe it was effervescing brandy! and I had no idea of its strength until I had emptied it."

"Well, there is not much harm done if nobody save myself has seen you," replied Makuine, with a laugh. "I suppose you want me to take your guard for you?"

"Yes, please do, for—for—a couple of hours," hiccupped Wildotski. "I'll just go and put my head in cold water. As soon as I am fresh I will return."

For obvious reasons Archie McEwen never missed an opportunity of doing anything that could oblige one of his brother officers. In this instance he good-naturedly overlooked the fact that a subaltern officer had committed a serious offence, both in getting tipsy on duty and in quitting his post without leave. He had learned to his cost that the heady champagne bottled in France for the Russian market was not a thing to be trifled with, and he could not help laughing at the lamentable plight into which Wildotski had put himself from not having dealt cautiously with this beverage.

He escorted the young man to a summer house, and advised him to remain seated there till a soldier could be sent to him with some water; and then he turned towards the palace. As he went, Wildotski cried after him:

"Of course you know the words for the night? *Neuchâtel* is the password, and *Nesselrode* the counterpass."*

III.

The Grand-Duchess Paulina and her suite occupied nearly a whole wing of the palace. Her Imperial Highness was a good-natured widowed princess, about forty years old, who had many children, and kept a Court of her own, which was renowned for its easy intercourse and gaiety. Her Highness—a handsome woman of majestic stature and mien—was very fond of the society of artists, authors, and wits, and almost every evening there was a gathering of such persons in her hospitable apartments.

On this particular night, however, no company was expected; and Archie McEwen had nothing to do but to sit in a nicely-furnished saloon, which was set apart for the officers on guard, and which, by the

* The password is always the name of a city; the counterpass that of a man. Both words must begin with the same letter.

thoughtful princess's orders, was always liberally stocked with pictorial albums and French novels. It was no business of his to prevent visitors from coming in or going out, unless summoned to do so by the major-domo, who of course had his own instructions as to what visitors were to be admitted. This confidential servant informed McEwen that her Imperial Highness was not at present indoors, having gone out with some of her ladies for a stroll in the park.

Seated near the open window of the guard-room, with his helmet, sword, and gauntlets on (for he could not, while on guard, lay these aside for a minute), McEwen presently saw a party of ladies—among whom he thought he recognised the Grand-Duchess—cross the lawn and make for the principal entrance of the palace wing. He went forth at once to call out the guard and receive her Highness with due honours; but when they were at about a hundred yards from the door the party of ladies branched away to the left, and made for the main building of the palace, where the Czar's apartments were. McEwen remained standing under the portico to enjoy the evening air, and in a few minutes three ladies, coming from another direction than that whither the first party had gone, approached the entrance. The lady in the middle was closely muffled in a cloak with a hood, and held a handkerchief before her mouth.

"It is the Grand-Duchess," said the major-domo, bustling forward.

"Impossible; I just saw her Imperial Highness go towards the main building," rejoined the Major.

"No; pardon me. It was the Grand-Duchess Anne whom you saw. And see, Major, you need not call out the guard. One of the ladies has waved her handkerchief, which is always a sign that her Imperial Highness wishes to enter unnoticed."

There was an anxiety about the major-domo's manner which made McEwen eye him closely. He had not seemed pleased when, an hour before, the cuirassier officer had come to relieve the tipsy hussar; and now he was over-desirous to pack off the Major to his guard-room. McEwen remembered how General Strenko had fooled him by pretending to be the Grand-Duke Nicholas, and a suspicion flashed upon his mind that the lady now advancing was not the Grand-Duchess Paulina. Considering the political condition of Russia, such a suspicion, once formed, had to be acted upon promptly.

"Please, Monsieur le Comte, stand aside!" exclaimed the major-domo, in agitation. "Her Imperial Highness does not wish military honours to be paid her."

"My post is here," answered McEwen, in a tone which struck the old servant dumb with dismay; and, flashing out his sword, he made the military salute as the three ladies entered.

The lady who was said to be the Grand-Duchess acknowledged the courtesy by a bend of the head. But this did not satisfy McEwen. A true Grand-Duchess, thought he, would have shown her face, if only for

an instant, to return the salute of an officer of her own guards. There was no reason for her keeping her features so closely muffled in summer time, unless, indeed, she had a toothache.

While these reflections passed rapidly through the soldier's brain, he remarked that the step of the suspicious lady was less assured and more quick than became her position. She tried to glide by with her face turned away; but McEwen, striding to the foot of the staircase, boldly confronted the three, though he lowered his sword's point and made a low bow as he did so.

"Pardon me, Madam," he said, addressing the lady to the right, whose beautiful young face was unfamiliar to him. "Will you tell me whom it is that you are conducting to her Imperial Highness's presence?"

"Why, do you not know the Grand-Duchess herself?" exclaimed the young lady, her pretty features becoming pink with confusion.

"What is the password, Madam?" asked McEwen, convinced now that if he were really in presence of the Grand-Duchess, she would put an end to this scene immediately.

"I forget . . . isn't it the name of some cheese?" stammered the young lady, whose distress was now painful. "Roquefort, Brie, Gruyère. . . ."

"Make another guess," said the Scotchman ironically.

"Neuchâtel," whispered the lady in the middle to her attendant, but as she bent her head to do this McEwen whisked away the handkerchief she had been holding to her mouth, and lo! the moustached face of a man was laid bare before him!

"Soho, sir, who are you that come masquerading about palaces in this fashion?" cried McEwen, seizing the intruder by the wrist; and he was about to call for the guard, when the young lady hastily placing one of her small hands on his mouth implored him to be silent. Her looks had such a wild expression of entreaty in them that no soldier could have resisted it. At the same time the old major-domo, who was rushing about like an old hen frightened by the screech of a hawk, kept on cackling:

"For pity's sake, sir, have patience and all shall be explained. Let us come into the officers' room where we shall be out of earshot. Everything shall be explained."

"You had better explain things," cried McEwen, turning all his wrath upon the major-domo as a convenient scapegoat. "You were party to the whole affair: I read it in your eyes. March on in front, my man, I am not going to lose sight of you."

The old servant, trembling as if he had the ague, shambled on in front; the gentleman in female attire, followed, muttering some not very ladylike oaths; but of the two attendant ladies, the younger and prettier one suddenly darted away and ran up the stairs as hard as she could go, without once looking round. On reaching the landing, she

darted through the door leading to the Grand-Duchess's private apartments like one who knows her way.

Archie McEwen twirled his moustache in perplexity, as he watched the fair fugitive escape him, but the other attendant, who was a middle-age person of lowlier station, touched his arm and said to him in Russian: "You need not feel uneasy, my lord. Mdle. de Cypri has gone to fetch her Imperial Highness in person."

McEwen thereupon walked into the guard-room, where he immediately obtained proof that the adventure which he had nipped in the bud had no such serious complexion as he had at first feared. The gentleman in lady's clothes had thrown off his cloak, and an elaborate blonde wig, and showed McEwen the good-looking face of a young nobleman who was well known to him.

Addressing him in a tone wherein mortification and some amusement were blended with vexation, this young man said: "There, Makuine, do you recognise me—the Marquis de Cypri of the Preobajentski Guards?"

"Certainly I do," answered the Scottish officer, who was too much astonished to laugh. "But why on earth did you come here in such a disguise?"

"That is no business of yours."

"I will leave your good sense to judge that. If you had been on guard and I had come here masquerading as the Grand-Duchess, what should you have done?"

The young man (who was a nobleman of French descent, though naturalised in Russia) made no direct answer; but a moment later, breaking into an awkward laugh, he said: "Am I to consider myself your prisoner?"

"Certainly not, now I know who you are," replied McEwen. "If you will send up your name to her Impérial Highness and she likes to receive you, the matter will not concern me. It was only that blundering old fool" (pointing to the shivering major-domo) "who made me stop you by saying you were the Grand-Duchess. If he had named you as any other lady I should have had no right or desire to pry into your face."

"I think, though, you might have guessed that any one coming here with my sister, who is a maid of honour to the Grand-Duchess, had a right to pass unquestioned," remarked the Marquis de Cypri, with French testiness.

"Is that young lady" (he was going to say "that beautiful young lady") "your sister?" inquired McEwen. "I was not aware that she belonged to her Highness's household."

"It is true she was only appointed a fortnight ago," answered the Marquis. "But anyhow, Monsieur le Comte, this is a pretty kettle of fish which you have set stirring. We have not heard the last of it."

McEwen guessed as much, and wished himself a hundred miles away.

He was afraid that he had unwillingly discovered the secret of some gallant *liaison* of the Grand-Duchess, about which a loyal subject would have preferred to know nothing, and he muttered silent anathemas upon Wildotski, whose tipsiness had brought him to this predicament.

It was too late, however, for regrets. Suddenly the door opened, and the Grand-Duchess Paulina herself entered the room, followed by Mdle. de Cypri. Her Highness had a commanding figure, and now bore her head with an imperial air rendered the more significant by a flush of anger that suffused her cheeks. Her countenance fell, however, when she beheld Makuine: "I thought young Wildotski was on guard," she said, her blush fading away into pallor.

"So he was, but he is unwell, and Makuine took his place," answered Cypri, who looked sulky and ashamed in his feminine clothes, and remained seated in the Grand-Duchess's presence.

"Ah! Malouieff, leave the room," said her Highness, addressing the major-domo; and for a moment after the servant had retired there was silence in the room. The Grand-Duchess was agitated, and cast two or three inquiring glances at Makuine before she ventured to speak. She was trying to observe on his countenance what effect the scene had produced upon him; but he stood in a respectful attitude, his expression quite composed.

"Count Makuine, you are a man of honour and can keep a secret," said the Grand-Duchess at last. "I cannot let you go away with any false impression about what has happened to-night. The Marquis de Cypri is my husband." Makuine bowed first to the Grand-Duchess, then to the Marquis, and tried to refrain from any look of astonishment. The princess proceeded with more calmness and dignity now that her secret was out. "The Marquis and I were privately married a month ago, but for many reasons we cannot yet disclose our union. The Czar disapproves our attachment, and last week my husband was ordered to go and reside for six months upon his estates. If it were known that he was here he would be arrested. That is why he was obliged to come to my house this night in disguise."

"You understand now the importance of holding your tongue about all this," remarked De Cypri, whose good-humour was returning, though he was still a little vexed, and cast disgusted glances at his petticoats.

"Not a soul shall hear the secret from me," promised the Scotchman, bending his looks rather towards the beautiful Mdle. de Cypri than towards the Grand-Duchess, as he spoke. That young lady reddened and turned her head away.

"It is well: I know our secret could not be in safer hands," declared the Grand-Duchess graciously, and a very sweet smile spread itself over her plump dimpled cheeks, that were like cream and roses. "Since you know the truth, however, Count Makuine, we must see whether we cannot make it turn to your advantage and to ours. Colonel Solojine, my aide-de-camp, is going to be promoted, and his place will become

vacant. If you will please to accept it you will gain a step and be able to render us some services."

"And you must promise me that I shall not share the fate of Strenko," laughed the Marquis as he held out his hand laughing to the Scotchman. "We have all heard the saying '*Let nobody pass when Makuine is on guard.*' It seems you are a terrible fellow with those who sail under false colours."

Here the interview ended, for when Makuine had kissed the Grand-Duchess's hand, her Highness retired with her husband, who disguised himself in his wig and cloak again to pass up the staircase unnoticed. Presently Prince Wildotski returned sober, with his hair damp from cold water ablutions, and a merry apology on his lips for the trouble which he had given his comrade. He learned nothing of what had occurred; and Makuine left the palace to return to his lodgings.

As may be imagined, he was not quite at his ease, for a man who has surprised a momentous Court secret experiences many of the qualms of one who is possessor of stolen property. It was no slight matter that a Grand-Duchess of immense wealth should have bestowed her widowed hand upon a Frenchman of broken fortune, fifteen years younger than herself. The Marquis de Cypri had a reputation as a gay gambler and libertine, and McEwen quite understood why the infatuated Grand-Duchess should desire to keep her espousals with him a secret. But what if she in her almost sovereign power should entertain fears about the Scottish officer's discretion? She might have him arrested on some trumped-up charge and spirited away to Siberia before he could raise a voice in his own defence. Archie McEwen was the reverse of a coward, but in going to bed that night he put a six-chamber revolver loaded under his pillow, and resolved to sell his liberty dearly if anyone should come to molest him.

The Grand-Duchess Paulina would have laughed at these apprehensions had she been aware of them, for she was a kindly princess, who had never used her power to hurt a human being. At heart she was rather glad—now the thing was done—that her secret was known to the Scottish officer, and this for two reasons: firstly, because her young husband, being somewhat feather-brained and independent in character, was likely to be on his good-behaviour now that his status was known to a brother officer so esteemed as Makuine; and secondly, because the Grand-Duchess reflected that an officer like this Scotchman, brave, cool, and chivalrous, was just the kind of man whom it would be useful to have about her person in order that her secret might be guarded against eyes less discreet than his own. So her Imperial Highness very quickly redeemed her promise of getting Count Makuine appointed to her household. To the great surprise of his comrades, who could not explain his unaccountably sudden rise in Court favour, Archie McEwen was in a few days promoted to the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel, and gazetted as Aide-de-Camp in ordinary to the Grand-Duchess. By virtue of his func-

tions he had apartments in the palace, and became practically, by reason of the confidence which his mistress placed in him, Marshal of her household.

He quickly perceived that, although not blind to her husband's faults, the Grand-Duchess was madly in love with the scapegrace Frenchman. The Marquis de Cypri was just such a person as women love not wisely but too well. Handsome, mirthful, overweeningly vain and self-confident, he was alternately wilful as a spoilt child and docile as a good-hearted one. There were moments when his fits of passion made his wife tremble and cry, and others when by humouring his weakness she could do with him as she pleased. He had run through a large fortune as a bachelor; and now his wife was engaged in privately paying his debts for him and relieving his estates from encumbrances. It was the Marquis's grandfather who had settled the family of De Cypri in Russia, at the time of the French Revolution, but Gaston de Cypri, the Grand-Duchess's husband, though born in Russia, had been educated in the country of his forefathers, and both looked and talked like a thorough Parisian. He was so extravagant that had it not been for his lucky marriage he must have been reduced to utter poverty: as it was, he had brilliant prospects, for his wife was intriguing to get him created a prince, hoping that when this had been done, and when De Cypri's estates had been reclaimed, she might publish her marriage with him without derogating. Meanwhile her Highness was also interesting herself about her husband's sister, Mdle. Berthe de Cypri, whom she thought of matching with young Prince Wildotski—not because the latter was a very respectable member of society, but because he was part owner of a silver mine, and belonged to one of the most powerful families of the Empire.

The last scheme of the good-natured princess was upset, however, by Berthe de Cypri and Archie McEwen contracting for each other an attachment that was not long in ripening into strong love. They saw each other daily, and the young Colonel, who was not bashful, promptly cut out the light-minded Wildotski, who felt as yet no decided vocation for matrimony. The Grand-Duchess discovered the courtship between her aide-de-camp and her maid of honour, when the young couple had already exchanged troths, and she was at first mortally angry, stamping her foot, as Imperial ladies will do when in a rage. For some days she would not speak either to Archie or to Berthe; and she even threatened to dismiss the former from his post, and to send Mdle. de Cypri back to her relations. But events shortly occurred which restored the loving couple to her Highness's favour, by putting her in need of their attendance and services.

The Marquis de Cypri was continually hankering after Paris; and, unknown to his wife, had applied to the Czar for permission to travel for six months in France instead of spending the term of his exile from Court upon his own estates. The truth is, he felt the danger of visiting his wife in disguise, and had an uneasy dread of being some night collared

and transported to Siberia. The petition he had forwarded was acceded to, and the confidential servant who brought him his passports from his country mansion to Tsarskoe-Selo advised him to hasten off at once, as he was in some fear that his master was suspected of not being in residence upon his estates. The Marquis thereupon made instant preparations for starting. He was in such a hurry to be gone, and so anxious to secure the friendly co-operation of Makuine to abet his flight, that he said to the latter, "You shall marry my sister if you like, Count; but for Heaven's sake, help me out of this hobble, and *try to prevail on my wife not to follow me.*"

The Grand-Duchess, however, on being apprised of the Marquis's intended journey, resolved to go to Paris too. She would not be separated from her husband. Perhaps she feared that sprightly young man's infidelity. At any rate, twenty-four hours after the Marquis had started, her Imperial Highness had set off in pursuit, taking only with her such attendants as knew her secret—that is, Makuine, Mdle. de Cypri, and two female servants, besides four men servants. The rest of her suite, some thirty persons in all, including her children, were ordered to follow, for a Russian Grand-Duchess on her travels is something like an army on the march, and drags a long train of camp-followers behind.

As might have been expected, the Grand-Duchess's precipitate departure excited the Czar's suspicions, and before her Highness had reached Paris the Russian ambassador in that capital had received instructions about her by telegraph. His Excellency waited on the princess as soon as she arrived at the Grand Hotel, and remained closeted with her for an hour. When he was gone Makuine was sent for, and found the Grand-Duchess drying her eyes with her handkerchief and looking quite overwhelmed with sorrow. Mdle. de Cypri was endeavouring to console her.

"What am I to do, Makuine?" asked her Highness dolefully. "The ambassador has told me that I am on no account to receive the Marquis de Cypri, as the Czar will never consent to our marriage!"

"Let me return to St. Petersburg and tell his Majesty the whole truth," replied Makuine fearlessly.

"Ah, that is a fine proposal enough; but you do not know what you are saying. Before you could reach the Czar your errand would be guessed, and you would be placed under arrest, so that you might not convey your message. You might remain in confinement for months before you could communicate with me."

"I am willing to run the risk, Madam," answered the Scotchman. "I think anything is better than secrecy in such an affair—especially transparent secrecy."

"It may be," replied the Grand-Duchess after a moment's reflection. "But I shall not consent to this. After all, I am free to marry whom I please, and shall not let myself be bullied. Makuine, can you execute with the utmost strictness an order I shall give you?"

"Your Imperial Highness's orders would be obeyed to the letter, of whatever sort they were."

"Then, you must *let nobody pass* to my presence till you receive further instructions."

"Nobody, Madam?"

"Nobody—not even the ambassador, *not even my husband*. You are to say I am ill and can receive no visitors. Indeed, I do feel unwell, and require to be quite alone for reflection. Can I rely on you?"

"Certainly, Madam. But the Marquis de Cypri will no doubt think it strange that I should deny him admittance to his wife's apartments."

"No matter what he thinks. Do as you are told and you will understand my purpose in due time. If you obey me faithfully, Berthe's hand shall be your reward."

Archie McEwen bowed to the Grand-Duchess, exchanged a glance with the blushing Berthe de Cypri, and left the room to mount his novel guard. He little thought how long and arduous a one it was to prove.

IV.

Once more he was on duty with that trying order "*Let nobody pass*" to execute. But this time he was not in uniform, and he did not hang about passages.

The Grand-Duchess occupied in the hotel a large suite of state-rooms, which was reserved for personages of her rank, and which had a private entrance. The servants of the hotel admitted nobody without referring to the Duchess's major-domo, Malouieff, and Malouieff had instructions to dismiss all the visitors of little importance himself, but to refer persons of high condition to her Highness's Aide-de-Camp and acting-Chamberlain, Count Makuine.

But this arrangement obliged Makuine to remain indoors all day and night. He did not dare to leave his apartments for an instant. On the morning after he had begun his guard the Russian ambassador arrived, and his Excellency evidently did not believe the story which he had heard from Malouieff about the Grand-Duchess's indisposition.

"I must ask you, Colonel, to use your influence with the Grand-Duchess to procure me an instant audience," he said confidentially. "The matter is very important."

"I have no influence with her Imperial Highness, your Excellency," replied Makuine coldly.

"But you are aware that, as ambassador, I represent the Czar?"

"Certainly, but even his Majesty might hesitate to penetrate to the Grand-Duchess's bedroom if he heard she was ill."

The diplomatist bit his lips. "Will you ring for one of her Imperial Highness's ladies?" he said.

Makuine touched a bell and one of the Grand-Duchess's maids ap-

peared. She was a Russian, in the national costume, with a light-blue kirtle, and a velvet headdress like a tiara. She was ordered to inquire if her mistress would receive the ambassador, and after five minutes' absence returned with a negative reply. Her Imperial Highness was resting after a sleepless night and could receive nobody.

The ambassador withdrew, looking ugly despatches as a soldier is said to look daggers. Soon afterwards the Marquis de Cypri came tripping up the stairs, gay as a lark, with a flower in his button-hole. He was not staying at the same hotel as his wife, and this was his first visit to her since her arrival. He pulled a very strange grimace when Makuine denied him admittance. "Why, why—what's the matter," he stammered. "Is she angry with me for not having called yesterday? Her arrival was only announced in the papers this morning."

"I think that the simple reason is that her Highness is ill—she can have no other reason for excluding *you*," answered Makuine.

"I say—you—you don't think she has heard of my having supped with actresses the night before last?" inquired the Marquis in a nervous and piteous tone.

"I am sure she has heard nothing to your damage," answered Makuine, who could not help laughing.

"And yet she gives orders to exclude me!" exclaimed the Marquis, whose temper rose. "Do you know, Count, that, as her husband, I have a right to force my way into her presence?"

"Hardly that, for you are not officially recognised as the Grand-Duchess's consort."

"And supposing I *did* force my way through?" asked the Marquis, scanning the Scotchman, who was a full head taller than himself.

"I am sure you would not put me in such an awkward position," replied Makuine gently. "You would only oblige me to give orders to the servants that you should not be admitted beyond the hall when you came again."

"Go to the devil," ejaculated the Marquis, and he went away muttering something about Jacks-in-office, and looking exceedingly uncomfortable under the fear that he had by some freak incurred his wife's displeasure.

He came again the next day, and the next; and so did the ambassador; but neither of them were admitted. Makuine was lost in wonder at the length of the Grand-Duchess's seclusion; but he could only obey the orders he received every morning from the Russian waiting-woman. The ambassador used to come with a very frigid expression, like an official who is prepared for an affront; but who only wants to be able to say, "This is the third—or fourth—time that I have had the door shut in my face." After the fourth day, however, his Excellency grew tired of this work, and began to send an attaché every morning in his stead. The attaché presented himself with a serious mien, asked *pro formâ* at what hour the Grand-Duchess would give

audience to the ambassador, and on being told that her Imperial Highness was still confined to her room, he would shake hands smiling with Makuine, and go away without arguing the point.

The Marquis came every day in a far less philosophical mood. He had discarded flowers from his button-hole; he was pale and unhappy. Sometimes he tried to shake Makuine by question and arguments; sometimes he lost all patience, spoke with offended dignity, and used menaces. These scenes were very trying to the A. D. C.; but luckily De Cypri did not attempt violence. He was withheld from this extreme partly by his sense of propriety, and possibly also by the recollection, as proved by the hapless Strenko's case, that the Scottish officer was a man to beware of. He confined himself to vowing that so long as he had a voice in the disposal of his sister's hand, he would never suffer her to become the wife of a man who seemed to take pleasure in flouting him.

Makuine took no such pleasure, as may be readily believed, for his tiresome guard was being prolonged beyond all reason. He had imagined in the beginning that it would last a day at most; but a whole week went by, and then another, and still he was not relieved. To make matters worse, at the end of the first week the Grand-Duchess's entire suite arrived from Russia—children, governesses, tutors, servants, in all thirty souls; and yet her Imperial Highness continued to be invisible. Every morning the children used to come in a row, with their tutors, governesses, and nurses, and ask the Colonel whether they would be allowed to pay their respects to their mamma, and Makuine had to inform them that their mamma was unwell, but without alarming them. He was beginning to feel alarmed, however. What if the Grand-Duchess should really be ill? If so, why was no doctor summoned? Makuine did not once see Berthe de Cypri, who might have told him the truth; but, on the whole, he was somewhat reassured by this, feeling sure that if anything serious had happened she would have come to tell him. For all this it was a weary, weary watch that the soldier kept. From his window he could see the bustle of the Paris boulevards; view the carriages going in the evening to the brilliantly lighted Grand Opera; and yet he durst not stir out. During the whole of his long guard he never once put on his hat; and withal his past experience did not afford him the comfort of feeling that a man who obeys orders with unrelenting strictness is always the better thanked for it.

It was on the seventeenth day of Makuine's vigil that a change at last occurred. He was taking exercise in one of the passages, in a state of mind approaching desperation, when he heard the Marquis de Cypri laughing in the hall below, as that gentleman had not laughed for a fortnight, and next minute he saw him ascending the stairs cheek by jowl with the Russian ambassador. This was news indeed, for hitherto the diplomatist and the Marquis had avoided each other like cat and dog. But now the Marquis waved his hat and cried to Makuine before he reached the landing—

"Well, you faithful guardian of empty coffers, I dare say you will be glad to be relieved from your watch?"

"Empty coffers?" echoed Makuine, without comprehending, for he saw a broad smile on the ambassador's face.

"Yes, my dear Colonel, you have been mounting guard for seventeen days over nothing," laughed the Marquis, deriving a keen, vindictive enjoyment from his friend's perplexity. "Why, the Grand Duchess is at present in Russia!"

"Is that so?" inquired the Scotchman, scarce knowing whether he ought to feel very angry or very foolish.

The two gentlemen passed chuckling into a sitting room, and there, when they had taken seats, the Marquis, who was in the highest spirits, continued his explanations. "Why, on the very day when she gave you the order to mount this guard, the Duchess returned to St. Petersburg. She started on the evening of the day when she arrived here, taking my sister with her, and they both travelled in such strict privacy that nothing was heard of their movements till they reached the Czar's palace. . . . Well, as you imagine, this mysterious journey was not undertaken for nothing. The Grand-Duchess, perceiving that it would be unwise to conceal the marriage to which everybody, including his Excellency here, was objecting [the ambassador smiled and made a deprecating gesture of the hand], thought she would do best to go and make a clean confession to the Czar—taking him by surprise before anyone could divine her intention and prejudice his Majesty's kind heart against her. The result has been that his Majesty, graciously yielding to my wife's solicitations, has created me Prince of Luiski, and has commanded that our marriage shall be publicly acknowledged. . . . Here read this. . . ."

He handed Makuine a letter, in which the Grand-Duchess in great glee related the complete success of her expedition. The Colonel, having glanced over it, returned it to his friend, saying, "Well, Prince, I am happy in being the second to congratulate you, for I suppose his Excellency was the first?"

The ambassador smiled again. Whatever he may have thought of the whole affair, he had the diplomatic tact to accept irremediable facts with the best grace possible. "You have read her Imperial Highness's postscript, in which she says that we may relieve you from your toilsome duty?" he asked good-humouredly.

"It certainly *was* very toilsome," answered Makuine; "but may I at least have the satisfaction of knowing that I was of use to her Imperial Highness?"

"Why, unquestionably you were, for you concealed her movements," replied De Cypri, "and you played your rôle uncommonly well, too. If his Excellency here had suspected the truth, he would have set the telegraph wires going, and my good wife's affectionate little plans would have been marred."

"I have not to mourn over lost time, then," exclaimed Makuine cheerfully. "And now I think I'll go for stroll on the Boulevards."

"Yes, we'll all go together, for I invite his Excellency and you to dine with me at the Café Anglais!" cried the new Prince in the elation of his blushing honours. "But, I say," added he with another laugh as the A. D. C. was taking up his hat, "you will get quite a renown for your experiences on guard, Makuine. I do believe if you were told to mount guard over yourself and not kiss your wife till further orders, you would obey without a murmur."

"We shall see when the time comes," rejoined the Colonel smiling. "Remember, I have not got a wife yet."

Archie McEwen did soon get a wife, however, for when the Grand-Duchess returned to Paris she was so overjoyed as to be in the humour for making everybody around her happy. She faithfully redeemed her promise of bestowing her maid of honour's hand on her faithful aide-de-camp; and on the occasion of the wedding, which was solemnised in Paris, she made the bride a magnificent present of jewels. It was not necessary that she should add a dower besides, for Mdle. de Cypri was passing rich, having a private fortune of her own, which her spendthrift brother had never been able to touch. So the Scottish officer in getting a beautiful wife obtained money enough also to support his rank as became him.

Here his story may end. Patronised by the Grand-Duchess, and recommended by his exploits and qualities to the highest Court favour as a trustworthy soldier, he rose from honour to honour in the Czar's service, and ended by becoming completely Russianised. A little time ago his former love, Lady Amabel, being at St. Petersburg with her husband, who was an attaché, saw a glorious being, all gold, fur and stars, riding behind the Czar in a pageant; and she fancied she recognised in his lineaments those of an old friend.

Somebody informed her that this gorgeous personage was the General of Cavalry, Prince Archibald Makuine, a Knight of St. Andrew and Governor of the Province of Tcheremiss.

"He is a Scotch gentleman, Lady, who is very brave and fortunate. It has become a saying amongst us that nobody passes Makuine as an enemy without rueing it."

"He does not look very savage, though," mused Lady Amabel as the General's eye falling upon her for an instant beamed with good-humoured recognition. Possibly she reflected that younger sons may carve out brilliant careers for themselves after all.

An Epilogue on Vivisection.

Few things are more trying, even to a disinterested spectator, than to see a cause suffering from its own advocates. Especially trying, in the case of an exciting and many-sided subject, is that false simplification which reduces the disputants to two violently antagonistic camps, each collectively responsible in the eyes of the other for every sin or folly of its worst or weakest members. And worst of all is it when this thoroughly unscientific procedure is adopted by the very camp whose express watchword is Science, the camp of the faithful few charged, like Gideon and his three hundred lamp-bearers, to confront with the light of truth the unscientific hosts of darkness, and *ipso facto*, one would think, to exhibit the virtues of fairness and accuracy which it would be unreasonable to expect from their opponents. Some thought of this kind must surely have suggested itself to many not wholly uninstructed persons while perusing the case for uncontrolled vivisection in the *Nineteenth Century* for last December. The papers contained, it is needless to say, much that was true and instructive; all the more ungrateful, though in the scientific interest all the more necessary, it is to point out certain defects in them, which are only too typical of the controversy, and likely in the present case to change what might have been weighty teaching into a new source of exacerbation.* The temper of Science has no doubt been sorely tried. Still professed enthusiasts for Truth, as revealed, *e.g.*, in the cerebral hemispheres of monkeys, might surely extend even to the inferior workings of their adversaries' brains some measure of just attention; and the benevolence which will face such disagreeable labours without a murmur might fairly find itself above the level of branding ignorance as insincerity.† But at the very least one might

* The following criticism has comparatively little application to Sir J. Paget's careful and temperate paper, except as regards *omissions*, and the single positive point noticed on the next page.

† Cf. Professor Owen's talk about 'pseudo-humanitarians' and 'hired scribes,' and Dr. Wilks's endorsement of Virchow's disastrous remark at the late Medical Congress that "the charge of cruelty was a *subterfuge*." Few blunders seem more wanton than this affectation of ignoring the obvious objection to torture as such, by identifying it with a general hostility to all scientific learning—a hostility which, according to Virchow's prophecy, will soon be preventing the practical study of anatomy. He even asserted that there exist in every country "all sorts of brotherhoods and associations which work energetically against scientific examination of corpses." If so, their energy in England must have been chiefly devoted to their own concealment. But he at any rate might convince himself in half an hour that his opponents

expect that those who are confessedly writing not for the convinced, but for the unconvinced—for those, that is, who have not taken a definite side—would scan their own words, as far as possible, with the eyes of the public they are addressing; and would thus be led to perceive the picture of two sides, one consisting wholly of able and blameless devotees to duty and philanthropy, the other as exclusively of persons who divide their time between telling lies, placarding the walls with demoralising pictures, and shrieking at the idea of a mouse being pricked with a needle, to be almost too dramatic and complete. That this method of treating all criticism and opposition in a lump is as unreasonable as it is obviously impolitic will, I think, in the present instance be doubly clear from an examination of the arguments which accompany it.

It is noticeable in the first place that (with a single unfortunate exception) no effort is made in these papers to obtain any deeper or more explicit *principle* of permissible inflictions than is involved in the licence which contemporary public opinion accords to inflictions in other directions, and in comparisons of degrees of pain and profit in the respective cases.* This treatment has the disadvantage of precluding any clear distinction between questions of principle and questions of fact—a distinction which the nature of the controversy renders specially desirable; since on the one hand the search after an ethical basis has been much confused, or often overlaid, by disputes about all sorts of practical and personal details; and on the other hand the evidence of facts, including much difficult matter not only of science but of human character, has been involved in all the heat of ethical controversy—the very worst atmosphere for the candid weighing of it. At the same time I think that one may dimly trace even in the two cruder contributions, what is tolerably clear in Sir J. Paget's, a sense that the true principle on which a stand must be taken is the right to inflict the lesser suffering for the

on vivisection would repudiate any such object; and to force even on the most fanatical of them the confusion between cutting a live body and cutting a dead one, merely suggests that the distinction is not a very essential one to Virchow himself.

* In the comparison of the pains of vivisection with those inflicted in sport and in farming operations, while fully holding with Sir J. Paget that the latter are on the whole far more severe, and of course infinitely more numerous, than vivisection as properly conducted would inflict, I cannot but think that he strangely under-estimates very much that the practice has included. For instance, he compares Paris vivisections, which have had a particularly bad name, with the shooting of lions in Algeria—a rapid death, entailing less suffering for the most part than the one which Nature would inevitably bring. He says, too, that he never saw anything in any experiment worse than Landseer's "Death of the Otter;" but the minute's death-struggle of an animal with free power to struggle and cry (a vent to the enormous importance of which human experience amply testifies) is surely quite incomparable—I need not say, with the sufferings of the bound victims in the prolonged demonstrations to which he has himself borne witness, or with the multiplied day-long horrors of the veterinary college at Alfort, or the month-long agony at the laboratory of Pavia (*Lancet*, No. 2482, p. 415), but with any at all formidable cutting operation performed, as so constantly abroad, without anæsthetics.

sake of averting the greater. I will not dwell here on this topic, having lately discussed it pretty fully elsewhere.* One remark only I will venture to repeat, as no suggestion of it is to be found in these papers; namely, that on the above principle we must face the difficulty or impossibility of balancing a single case of prolonged and extreme pain against a number of cases of far shorter or less extreme pain. I admit with regret that this reservation must throw into opposition (theoretically at all events) more than one eminent English physiologist, who, recognising no such distinction as I drew, and thinking that possible alleviation for the many might be set against certain torture for the one, have owned that there is no extreme of protracted agony which they would think it wrong to inflict if the object were "sufficient." The only sufficient object in my view would at any rate have some close reference to *degree*, and could not be settled by mere *numbers*: just as I would sooner that ten thousand hares should be coursed than that one should be nailed and crushed "with much love and patience" by Mantegazza, or that a million horses should be overdriven than that one should illustrate the ghastly traditions of Alfort. And I would stake a good deal on finding that of persons sufficiently interested to make a choice at all, ninety-nine out of every hundred would agree with me. But, leaving this difficulty, it is much to find the general principle even covertly acknowledged; and I believe that it is in the spirit of English physiology to recognise it more and more distinctly.

Nevertheless it is impossible quite to pass over the exception above referred to, where an explicit principle is laid down of a different and even opposite nature to the utilitarian one. It has figured much in the controversy, and here takes the form of a quotation from an eminent physician's address to the British Association:—"The only restriction which Christian morality imposes upon such practices is that no more pain shall be inflicted than is necessary for the object in view." It is really amazing that any one should fail to perceive this formula to be just as applicable to the elaborate Italian method of ensuring for hours or days the very maximum of torture without destruction of life, as to the momentary pricking of a baby's arm; "the object in view" in the former case being the observation that the animal's strength or temperature is appreciably affected by that amount of pain, which from the very meaning of the words, therefore, is no more than is "necessary" for the object. "I am seeking after truth," the experimenter here might perfectly plead in Dr. Wilks's own words, "and if I find it (which in this case I have done) I am satisfied." If Dr. Wilks is not equally satisfied, his instincts are better than his logic. Disagreeably in accordance too with this same formula are his remarks on scientific method, according to which "the rocks are broken and put in the crucible, the water is submitted to analysis, the plant is dissected;" and "in animal life the same method must be adopted to unlock the secrets of nature.

* In the *Fortnightly Review* for December 1881.

The question of the animal being sensitive cannot alter the mode of investigation.* Nor surely could the "question" of the animal being human. Had these remarks been published a month earlier, I could hardly have expressed myself as confidently as I did as to the practical repudiation by English physiology of the Continental view that a chance of knowledge, however remote from further benefit, may be bought at any price.

But I think it would be harsh to judge Dr. Wilks's ethical position wholly in the light of these unfortunate passages; and that, if his favourite method of analysis were fairly applied to his own and Professor Owen's principles, the result would turn out to their advantage. Even so, unfortunately, it would not go far to redeem their general mode of advocacy. Their argument will be found to contain one misstatement, one omission, and one fallacy, all of the gravest importance, and closely connected with one another. The misstatement is that the sole ground adduced or adducible for subjecting vivisection to control is its *inutility*; the omission is of any hint that the practice has ever been *abused*; from which two lapses is born the fallacy, that the practice itself, like the opposition to it, can be treated *in the lump*, and that it is enough to prove that benefits may be traced to it for the case against restriction to be triumphantly vindicated. Of course those who deny the benefits past or future *in toto*—like the baronet who wrote to the Commission that "medical science has arrived probably at its extreme limits," and can gain nothing from a practice which "goes hand in hand with atheism"—deserve any castigation they get. But is it worthy of the scientific cause to rely substantially on an argument which is only good against these hopeless fanatics? The misrepresentation is twofold. First, a very slight dip into anti-vivisectionist literature would reveal that its ablest contributors expressly take their stand *not* on the inutility, but on the independent iniquity, of the practice. The *prima facie* unreasonableness of this in cases of palpable benefit, and the ethical necessity for that fair balancing of the suffering inflicted and the suffering saved which these persons expressly disown, I have done my best elsewhere to show; which is surely on the whole a more judicious way of dealing with well-known opponents than to deny their existence. But, secondly, the strength of the opposition to vivisection lies, of course, in the notorious fact that an immense amount of the suffering it has caused *has* been absolutely useless; in the way partly of withholding anæsthetics, partly of reckless repetitions and so-called demonstrations, partly of experiments from which it was not even pretended that any possible benefit could arise. On the last head I do not forget that, though in many particular cases a mere chance of benefit, or a mere grain of know-

* Contrast with this Dr. Sharpey's and Dr. Acland's evidence before the Royal Commission. The latter expressly deplores that "so many persons have got to deal with these wonderful and beautiful organisms just as they deal with physical bodies that have no feeling and consciousness."

ledge, is set against the certainty of suffering, this goes for nothing if now and again the thousand chances throw up, or the thousand grains swell into, such a single result as will outweigh all the sufferings put together. But no one will for a moment pretend that this argument applies to some of the proceedings I have mentioned, or to others which, though we have the operators' own testimony for them, I will not risk the charge of sensationalism by recounting.

"These charges do not apply to England," Professor Owen and Dr. Wilks will reply. But then, surely, had they known the things that belong to their peace, that is the exact point they should have dwelt on, instead of attributing an agitation which sees these atrocities perpetrated in the name of Science to the pricking of mice with needles. On the topic of pain of course, no less than on that of utility, the ignorance and haste of adverse clamourers have bred most serious injustice; but they would have been comparatively powerless, had vivisection at all times and places kept within the bounds which the good sense and good feeling of our leading physiologists would mark out. "But that being so," these last may say, "why should our *apologia* be concerned with anything beyond ourselves?" The answer lies partly in the very nature of a practice open alike to persons of the most opposite characters; partly in the presumable oneness of the "scientific method." The appearances of sympathetic fellowship with their foreign brethren are of necessity quite sufficiently strong to charge our experts with the *onus* of defining its limits. None can know better than they the enormous difference between the English and the Continental practice* on all three of the heads I have mentioned; yet we may hunt through their writings and listen to their speeches without encountering a hint of this knowledge. "Scientific books and discourses," they may urge, "are not the places for moral discussions or judgments." But how can the same be said of professedly popular papers like those I am discussing, the very object of which should be to remove misapprehensions, and to make outsiders understand what true and humane science means by vivisection?† Is it not just here that one would count on finding this highest evidence of superior civilisation emphasised with pride, rather than kept out of sight like a stigma? Whatever their own purity of aim, however safe

* For a single instance, I may refer to Dr. Anthony's evidence before the Commission, Answer 2437. Or Mr. Darwin's answer, thoroughly representative of the English evidence throughout, as to the duty of using all possible means of mitigation, might be compared with the evidence of the single foreign witness—Answers 4672 and 3538—3544.

† Dr. Wilks complains that his opponents have selected the word "vivisection" with the intention of conjuring up the maximum of sensational horror. They can scarcely be blamed for their "selection" of the only word they found in use, even though its connotation be often regrettable and misleading. But the physiologists have not been very consistent in their objection to it. Is it wholly over-squeamishness which revolts when laudation of so great a man as Harvey can find no more succulent title for its hero than "arch-vivisector?" The infliction of suffering even to save other suffering is surely at the best a grim necessity, not a thing to smack one's lips over.

vivisection would be in their hands, those who publicly heap indiscriminate laudation on a practice widely associated with heartless abuses can hardly complain if the attack also is somewhat indiscriminate, and if their sensitiveness on the score of those abuses is not instantly taken for granted. What they treat in the lump and call beneficent, others will take the liberty of treating also in the lump and calling damnable; with equal reason and equal unreason in either case.

But there are things more damaging even than this reticence. What are we to say when, at this time of day, we find it seriously set forth in black and white that it is impossible for a clever and persevering man to fail in tender regard for others' feelings, and that the invention of an ingenious machine is a quite sufficient diploma of humanity? Clearly the bull of Phalaris and its mediæval equivalents are a fable; Magendie never lived; *La Fisiologia del Dolore* is a forgery, or its description of its author's patience and his instrument-maker's ingenuity a falsehood; and Sir J. Paget's, Dr. Sharpey's, and Dr. Anthony's printed evidence about foreign lecture-rooms was given in a dream. Why does Dr. Wilks compel a reference to topics so irrelevant to English science and its professors as these? Might not such defences at least be left to the rhetoric of scientific platforms, and kept out of the open arena of the *Nineteenth Century*, where their chief effect must be to suggest doubts as to the humanity that can need them? But even apart from this, the argument that the practice is not in danger of abuse because none but ferocious brutes would abuse it, is radically fallacious; the dangerous fact being just precisely that it is *not* in brutality and ferocity, but in defective imagination and the indifference of custom, that abuses find their normal and sufficient cause. Custom is powerful for good as well as for evil; and we may rejoice to know that in English laboratories needless repetition of an experiment involving pain, or omission to administer anæsthetics for the sake of saving time or trouble, would be regarded as a wanton outrage to scientific routine no less than to morality. But this happy and exceptional state of things is no contradiction of the general truth that even in the case of otherwise humane men, especially in youth, the prestige and fascination of research, and the weakening of separate responsibility in the atmosphere of a skilled and ambitious guild, may be serious enemies to creatures which (*pace* Dr. Wilks) are even more at an operator's mercy than "defenceless children." A natural tendency, implied in the repentance of such men as Haller and Reid, and freely acknowledged by some of our foremost experts, needs not to be indignantly repudiated, only carefully watched against.

And this brings me to a further topic. Both Professor Owen and Dr. Wilks treat any sort of restraint or supervision of vivisection not only as unnecessary in itself, but as a slur on an honourable class. The same two objections figured to some slight extent in the evidence before the Commission in 1875, though there the general disposition was very decidedly to welcome some kind of authoritative control. A third

objection, that State control would be unfairly restrictive, seems to have proved, under the present Act at least, only too well-founded; but the other two, which naturally go together, stand on a very different footing. As regards necessity, there was a tolerable consensus that if certain things were true which the Commissioners held were proved true, legislation must come; and it may be inferred that there would have been even more unanimity had the information of some of the witnesses been at the time within the knowledge of all. At any rate, evidence of plague-spots particularly likely to be kept out of sight, cannot be affected by the fact of their not having attracted wide attention. The Commission, after referring to grosser abuses (which they trusted were abnormal, though admitting here the almost insuperable obstacles to obtaining evidence), reported that there were other cases "in which carelessness and indifference prevail to an extent sufficient to form a ground for legislative interference." It is to be presumed that Professor Owen had not recently perused this page of the report when he wrote of "the failure of a Royal Commission to obtain evidence of the abuse of physiological vivisection in Great Britain." In the face of such evidence, to speak of interference as a *slur* would be to imply a bond of scientific *esprit de corps* with the clumsiest injurers of science. This sort of objection goes rather to show that the recognition of the rights of animals is still even in England rather instinct than principle: no one thinks it a slur in any business where there is danger of unwarranted injury to human frames that control should be exercised: no one takes umbrage at doctors' licences, or at the Anatomy or the Factory Acts. The sore point in the present case seems really to be the old subject of sport, whose unchartered freedom not unnaturally keeps up by comparison a perpetual sense of ill-usage. Valid reasons might, however, be found for postponing that subject to the other, though, in a Legislature which deserts business for Epsom, these are of course not the reasons for which it *is* postponed. For in the first place, the possible degree of suffering, as opposed to the mere number of sufferers, must again be remembered; and British abuses need not necessarily be less extreme than Continental because far rarer. And in the second place, abuses in sport and in the capture of wild animals may at least be expected to decrease (as they have actually done) by the natural development of humanity,—being due to stupidity and ignorance, and exposed to the full influence of public opinion; while any abuse of the other sort is necessarily a private, at the worst even a hole-and-corner business, far more demoralising in its deliberateness and secrecy; and the particular curiosity and power which join to produce the danger in the lowest stratum of the student-world are inherent in the particular education. Legislation here is more than a barrier: it is a nucleus round which nascent moral instinct may develop.

I should be sorry to seem to fail in sympathy with high-minded men who find a useful career checked for the moment by unreasonable restrictions, and themselves the objects of a clamour which on such a subject

is specially easy to invoke, and in which ignorance plays a large (though as we have seen not the only) part. But the opportunity of December was a peculiarly good one; no such widely-read defence of experimental physiology is likely to appear for years to come; and it is impossible not to regret that some of the space occupied with the rebutting of slurs, and with sarcasms about the follies of peers and prelates, was not devoted to more practical topics. The matter will be finally settled, not by names and authorities, but by instruction; and for this the state of the public mind gives ample scope.

For example, it is easy to trace a widely diffused impression that even in this country anaesthetics are seldom or imperfectly administered. When examined, the case here will be found to rest almost entirely on the shoulders of a single witness, whose words must now have been quoted many hundreds of times; his statement being that complete anaesthesia is seldom attempted, owing to the difficulty of producing it, and that if produced, it "only lasts for at most a minute or two." Would it not, then, be well worth while to point out in detail how little this can weigh against the evidence of expert after expert that complete anaesthesia is producible and habitually produced with perfect ease, and that it can be kept up for hours at a time, and was so kept up, *e.g.* in a long experiment, in which the adverse witness declared its use impossible? * The only difficulty has been sometimes to prevent its passing on into death; and this has been assumed to mean that it is not complete—an assumption of just enough plausibility to deserve the very few words which would show its groundlessness. Then again, so long as the distinction is kept clear between what is defended and what is indefensible—a condition as much of good faith as of good policy—there can be nothing but advantage in pointing out the true nature of certain experiments which, as ordinarily described, are calculated to strike the lay mind as quite other than they are. The pain of burning, for instance, known by all to be excruciating, is so through its destructive effect on the surface-tissues of the body. Now to produce this effect on the external tissues, the temperature must be very much higher than the maximum *internal* temperature compatible with life. This latter differs greatly for different animals, and is much lower, for example, for a frog than for a man. It follows that if a frog were kept in water which would be of quite bearable heat for a man, and its internal temperature thus raised, it would rapidly die; but to describe it as "boiled to death" would be wholly incorrect; since the phrase would suggest the well-known action of boiling water on the *surface*-tissues, which, together with the pain it entails, would in the supposed case have no existence. There would be no object now in making this experiment, but it serves as an illustration. Similar remarks apply to the "baking alive" of which a great deal has

* See Answers 2205, 3383-6, 4334-7 and 5737-9 in the Report of the Commission, and compare 5777-8 with 3454-7.

been made. The experiments in this case again were not such as need to be repeated; but the actual mode of death was certainly not exceptionally painful. The animals here being warm-blooded, and the surrounding medium not water but air, the temperature was much higher than in the above case of the frog; but it was considerably under the 260° Fahr. which men have endured for many minutes with perfect impunity, and not nearly sufficiently high to char or blister the surface-tissues. The stages of death were faintness and exhaustion, passing on into coma, and finally some convulsive movements. What this means, as compared with "baking alive," anyone can judge by imagining his own state of mind if, after he had been condemned to the one, his sentence were suddenly changed to the other. Again: knowledge once gained does not need to be re-established; and it may be said as a rule that the earlier and more salient facts of physiology are those requiring the roughest experimental methods. Even apart from the change of character wrought by anæsthetics, ample testimony has been given to the diminution of the need for the severer sorts of operations, parallel with the increasing organisation of facts; and it is hard even to imagine any object now for experiments at all comparable to Bell's on recurrent sensibility. The pain of toxicological experiments is almost invariably short; and the distress of induced diseases, not more painful than those by which we expect that the majority of ourselves will die, cannot weigh for a moment against the expected benefits both to men and animals, in the dawn of which Pasteur's contemporaries may be proud to live.

These examples may suggest the sort of facts which cannot be too often repeated, or too carefully explained, and which are ten times more convincing to a layman than the most imposing array of testimonials to character or of *ex cathedra* judgments. But I do not believe that even the best instructors can exercise their legitimate influence on popular opinion, or meet opposition in a really effective way, without paying more heed to the bearings of the various points before discussed—points which, obvious enough, and coming with no force at all from *me*, only need to be fully and fairly recognised by *them* to make the future of English physiology secure.

EDMUND GURNEY.

The Social State of the Hebrides Two Centuries Ago.

THE aim of this paper is to give a few sketches of the strange social state of the Highlands and Isles at the date of the Union. The sketches are taken from a somewhat searching study of material unearthed within the past few years at various spots along the western seaboard, and may be accepted as true or only too real.

The first thing that impresses the student of the state of society in the Isles at that period is the remarkable excess to which whisky-drinking was carried by nearly all classes. Mr. Martin, a native of Skye, and a staunch advocate of Highland virtues, made a tour through the Hebrides and out as far as St. Kilda shortly after the revolution. He found various kinds of whisky. There was the ordinary *Usquebaugh*, which the well-seasoned Hebrideans could drink in large quantities without much apparent harm; there was a very fiery spirit called *Freslerig*, or whisky three times distilled; and, much stronger than either, there was a third kind, known as *Usquebaugh baul*, of which two spoonfuls would stagger the most creditable toper. To an ordinary tippler a glass of this spirit meant instant death. In those days whisky was made from potatoes and heather as well as from barley. A great deal of it was manufactured at home; it was hot, coarse, and raw, and all who could afford it drank deeply. Sunday was the great day of riot and debauch, in spite of the most strenuous efforts of the Kirk and the Kirk Sessions. Nothing was more repugnant to the people than the long Presbyterian services introduced in the reign of Dutch William, and they evaded them in every possible way. To the minister and his office-bearers they pled all sorts of excuses, or they tried to baffle them in every conceivable way. The chief mode of spending Sunday was to congregate in little country public-houses, or wayside shebeens, of which there was a large number in nearly every parish, and there to riot and amuse themselves over the forbidden cup. In the records of several parishes I find that the authorities tried hard to check these disgraceful practices. Sometimes they went in couples through the clachan or hamlet, during the stated hours of service, taking note of all whom they found lurking in the drinking bothies; sometimes the beadle was deputed to watch the notorious drunkards; and when the people pled the distance from church and the means of grace, the elders were appointed to gather them into barns and read the Bible to them whilst the minister was preaching in the parish church. But, notwithstanding the vigilance of the beadle and the stern efforts of the elders to keep the Sabbath a day

of serious behaviour, the people, in spite of fines, mulcts, jugs, canvas sheets, and pointed reproofs from the pulpit, held by their wild drinking habits. Even great religious occasions or excitement—and in those days great wars of religious excitement or revival passed over the land—only stimulated the craving of the people for strong drink. In one of the local records I got an account of a great Communion season which sprang out of one of these revivals, and which lasted altogether five days. The messengers who went to the nearest town for the elements, *i.e.* the bread and wine, took two days in crossing a narrow ferry, and had to sleep away the effects of deep intoxication at both sides of it. On the Monday after the Communion two of the hearers were picked up dead drunk near the preaching tent, where they had fallen down on the previous Lord's day. No Highland parish is better known to the general reader than that now ruled over by the High Priest of Morven, around which the robust imagination of successive generations of gigantic McLeods has cast a veil of charming romance. I have before me an unpublished letter, written nearly two centuries ago, which gives rather a ghastly picture of the state of the parish—the poorly tilled soil, the squalid huts that had no walls, the lean features of the peasantry, and the drunken habits of the lairds. The writer was well educated, the head of one of the proudest families in the Western Isles, and one with the oldest and most genuine pedigree. He and his party started from Oban in a skiff to pay some visits in Morven and Mull. The first landing place was Kinlochalm, then a place of some note, for it had not yet become a cave of Adullam for the outcast of the neighbouring clans. As the party had mounted with the intention of riding up the country, they were greeted with tremendous bellowing from a neighbouring whisky-shop, out of which four gentlemen of good position in the district came gloriously full at one o'clock in the afternoon. The gentlemen were cursing and swearing at their hardest; they saluted their friends with great heartiness, and kicked a poor "Lazarus of a smith" on to the nearest refuse heap to show their native contempt for indoor artisans. A few days after they came to a laird's house, where a kind of house-heating was to take place, and where consequently extra hospitality was shown. They sat down at four o'clock in the afternoon, and drank on till three next morning, with the result that of the gentlemen three were barbarously drunk, three more in a tipsy maudlin state, and two, of whom the writer professed to be one, moderately sober. They were carried to sleep on the floor of the barn, and the ladies, more than half-a-dozen, slept upon the floor of the room where this heavy carousal had been going on for eleven hours on end.

I find traces of another singular drinking custom lingering after the Union. When leagues of friendship were formed between families or between neighbouring septs, the treaty was ratified by the contracting parties drinking a drop of each other's blood drawn from the little finger. To drink blood warm from the animal or after it had coagulated was not

considered nauseous. In times of famine the cattle, poor and lean as they were, were largely bled, and their blood made an article of food by the starving natives. Phlebotomy was considered a cure for all ailments, physical and mental. Man and beast were regularly bled on the Sundays at the little roadside shebeens. Even as late as the time of Pennant the Duke of Hamilton employed a doctor to go round the island of Arran and bleed the people of each *duchan* twice a year into pits dug in the ground.

Some of the Hebridean customs two centuries ago were very picturesque. Chief among these was the ceremony of marriage. Some of the proceedings that heralded the event cannot now be quoted. The wedding itself was a very great affair, as it always has been in mountainous countries. It was marked by a prodigality of expense, and was the occasion of much genuine joy. All the oldest ballads give a wedding feast of at least some days. All the relatives down to the fourteenth cousin, and the neighbours, with at least three hamlets or glens, were invited; the wild Highland dances, inspired by mirth and strong spirits, went round; all the pipers within reach assisted; the young couple were disposed of, and merrymaking went on until many of the festive party vanished in utter powerlessness. The oldest Session records abundantly prove that these festivals and days of rejoicing were frequently the occasion of various excesses. The marriage tie was not always held sacred, and purity of life was rather the exception. The old laws of divorce were singular enough. To the church of Kilkivan there is a tradition attached which illustrates a phase of the practice. The patron saint gave all ill-assorted couples yearly the chance of escaping blindfold from their bonds and getting a substitute. Whether or not this tradition represents a fact, it is certain that more absurd customs prevailed throughout the Isles.

Martin, when giving an account of the small outer isles belonging to McNeill of Barra, states that when a tenant's wife died, either on Barra or on any of the adjacent isles, the tenant addressed himself to the McNeill, representing his loss, and at the same time desiring that he would be pleased to recommend a wife to him to manage his affairs. The chief found a suitable partner for his clansman, and as soon as the widower got her name he proceeded to her residence, carrying a bottle of strong whisky with him, and the marriage was consummated without much further delay or ceremony. So, also, the disconsolate widow hurried to her chief, McNeill of Barra, and he speedily found a suitable successor to the departed. McNeill, however, was more than usually patriarchal, and appears to have done everything for everybody on his vast estates. Another incident related by Martin illustrates a very curious phase of social life. An islander, who was looking out for a wife, happened to receive a shilling, which he supposed was a coin of extraordinary value, from a shipwrecked seaman. He went straightway with his precious treasure to Mr. Morrison, the parish minister, and requested him on his

next visit to Lewis to buy a wife with the money, and bring her home to him. The idea of wife-purchase has long since died out amongst the Hebrideans, but that of the inferiority of woman still survives. She is still in several islands the ordinary beast of burden, and the general slave of her lord and master.

Captain Burt, who wrote in the blunt style of the English soldier, gives a picture of the state of Highland society that agrees in all essentials with the above sketches. According to him, in the inland parts of the North women did nearly all the hard work, and were the common carriers of the day. A person who was a gentleman by birth and descent—in other words, who could claim something like a fortieth cousinship with the chief of the clan—would not condescend to turn his hand to anything, or do any kind of manual labour. His idea of aristocratic life was total abstinence from toil. But all the while he allowed his wife and daughters to toil away like slaves, and felt their slaving to reflect no discredit upon himself. A French officer, travelling through Inverness-shire on a recruiting expedition, met one of these mighty gentlemen marching in a lordly manner, in a good pair of brogues, whilst his wife was trudging barefoot some distance behind him. The irate Frenchman, in his gallantry, leaped off his horse, and compelled the man of long descent to take off his brogues, and his wife to put them on.

The poverty was very great. Along with poverty there was much coarseness in living and rampant immorality, in spite of the persistent displeasure of the kirk. Children were fearfully neglected in all ranks of society from their birth upwards, and the law of the survival of the fittest was allowed to have full and free scope. When a small tenant's wife had twins in the Outer Hebrides, the laird took one of them to be brought up in his family, and I have found traces of as many as sixteen or twenty of these twins living under the same roof at the same time. Servant-girls slept in the byre with the cows. Some of them took off their clothes only when they went into rags, though frequently, as Burt significantly states, a change of dress occasionally would be a gain in the public interest. Plebeian girls of every grade, though in some respects thoroughly moral, rose in general esteem and in the public opinion of their social circle if they were fortunate enough in having attracted the illicit attentions of the laird or a gentleman, as that gave them a sort of relationship with the local aristocracy. Such was one of the distortions of custom. Even the lairds and their wives were so poor that frequently the latter had to go barefoot, and that the former, in spite of their lofty hereditary notions, had to make a very sorry appearance in public. Comfort was seldom studied. In some of the Isles it was customary to cook the mutton in the skin for want of a more suitable cooking vessel. Towards the end of spring, the season of direst hardship, when often the lean cattle were so weak that they could not rise or stand upright, the emaciated people were known to live upon a little oatmeal mixed with blood drawn from those exhausted beasts; and though there was plenty

of fish in the sea and trout in the lakes, the inhabitants were so poor and so thriftless that they had not proper tackle or sufficient energy to catch them. Potatoes were scarce. Crops of all kinds were thin and poor, and the landlords very often took their rents in kind because they could get it in no other way. Field labourers suffered most. Owing to the want of skill in husbandry, the poverty of the soil, or the coldness of the season, the crops frequently did not ripen, and the barley had to be cut down green and grainless. Sometimes money was refused by the starving poor because they could do nothing with it.

It is hard to say whether the picture given in books of travel or that taken from the local records was the more dreadful. The huts or dwellings of the common people were so small and so ill-built, that the worst Connemara cabins are palaces compared to them. Few of them had glass windows; and as a hole in the low roof was the only chimney, the smoke could not find egress. In winter, in the absence of amusements, the poorer cottiers crouched over the fire till their legs were scorched and they themselves were as black as sweeps. When a flock of bottle-nosed whales were driven ashore on one of the long sandy bays of Tiree, the peasantry took them and devoured them speedily. Famine and starvation thinned the population periodically. When fever or small-pox came over the islands, it swept away whole villages. The people, in their ignorance, were either in mortal dread of epidemics or indifferent. Hence out of sheer physical weakness, or in absolute despair, they took to drink whenever drink could be obtained. Their dwellings and the squalor of their surroundings depressed them. Burt, who had an English charger, when travelling on duty, frequently found [the stable-door too small to admit his steed; and then a part of the roof was removed and the animal put under shelter. At a little roadside inn he tried to make his quarters more comfortable by stuffing handfuls of straw in the holes to keep out the snow; but no sooner did the cows, which were taking shelter around the house, see the straw than they pulled it out and consumed it.

The state of the tillage was very primitive. It must be remembered that there were no roads and no bridges in the Isles at the period under review. A rough sledge, or a couple of reeds slung across the horse's back, was the most advanced kind of carriage; horse harness was made of straw, and the best ropes of heather or horse-hair; men did the ploughing, and the harrow, whenever used, was attached to the horse's tail. In fact, the ploughing, then done by a bent implement called the *las-crow*, which a man pushed with his foot, was a mere scratching of the surface of the field. The corn was dried on a homely kiln, and ground by an old woman generally between two stones called a *quern*.

A great part of the population in several parishes were virtually paupers; vagrants wandered over the land; and in the districts near the borderland there was a regular stream at certain times of the year going or returning from the rich begging-ground of the South. The

Kirk Sessions and the Presbyteries tried hard to stop this vagrancy and to encourage all the able-bodied to work, but with no great success. In the densely peopled parish of Kilmun and Dunoon the authorities found that, with a decreasing population and decreasing finances, the number of paupers on their hands was so large that they could not afford a coffin to each, on however cheap a scale the coffin was made. The church-door collections were very small, and the number of paupers that came upon the parish for burial was very great. Therefore the Session got a local carpenter to make a strong wooden coffin for the use of the parish, and in this the remains of many a wretch were sent to their last resting-place.

With such poverty overrunning the land, and amidst so great ignorance, we might expect that pestilence would periodically carry away multitudes of the people. The Isles in those days were practically beyond the sway of the Government; and it was only during last century that the Imperial Parliament went to the aid of the starving people. The fact is, that the country was over-peopled as well as under-tilled, and that misery of many kinds was chronic. Disease was often at the door, and the Hebrideans had a regular system of home-grown medical treatment. For small-pox, there a dreadful scourge, they had really no cure. The general treatment was blood-letting. For a troublesome *brochan*, a kind of thin gruel, taken in large quantities, and as hot as it could be rendered, was the common remedy. Roots of nettles, boiled down, gave a kind of medicine that was used as a tonic. If the uvula became enlarged, or fell down, they cut it dexterously with a horse-hair, which was twisted round it. For the jaundice, they had several remedies, of which one was this: the patient was made to lie flat on the ground, then the tongs or a bar of iron was made red-hot and gently applied upwards to the patient's back, till he got into a great fright and rushed furiously out of doors under the impression that he was being burnt. The shock often gave him the turn, it was supposed. A cure used for catarrh or inflammation of the lungs was perhaps more in the line of modern therapeutics. The patient was made to walk out into the sea up to his middle, with his clothes on, and immediately afterwards to go to bed without taking them off. Then, by putting the bedclothes over his head, he frequently succeeded in procuring copious perspiration, and the "distemper was cured." In the beautiful parish of Kilmartin, which contains the grave of many a nameless king and chief, there lived at the time of the Union a blacksmith, who had a wide reputation in his skill for curing every phase of faintness of spirits or nervous complaints. He was a man of singular muscular power and singular command over his arms. He placed the nervous patient on the anvil with his face uppermost; he then took his big hammer in both his hands and approached the sufferer with a ferocious aspect, as if to murder him with one blow; and the shock completely restored the shattered nervous system!

We can easily understand how a people crushed down for centuries, and facing perpetual poverty as the peasantry of the Hebrides were, would become the prey of all sorts of quacks, and would have to pay the penalty due to their credulity. Bone-setters were numerous amongst them, and appear to have had a good practice. Herbalists flourished, and were trusted. Many of them, no doubt, performed their cures, though they resorted to mysterious proceedings, through their superior knowledge of roots and herbs. Frequently, as in the case of the famous Neil Beaton, they were supposed to effect their cures through a compact with the Devil, rather than from the virtues of their samples, when in reality they derived their medical knowledge from their forefathers. Sometimes a knowledge of medicine was hereditary, like the gift of poesy or of second sight. But the people believed in the personality and power of the Devil notwithstanding, and when all lawful or recognised means failed, to the Devil they were prepared to go for cure, help, or deliverance. Hence all the oldest records reveal an extraordinary contest between the Kirk on the one hand and the various emissaries of Satan on the other. We are dealing with a period when belief in witchcraft was quite common, and when those suspected of trafficking with the Devil were put to death by burning on the ordinary Gallows-hill. Death, almost everywhere the King of Terrors, was made very horrid in the Hebrides through the extraordinary system of belief, worked up by the prophets of the second sight. In every parish there was at least one person who lived by performing cures by means of charming. Children who died unbaptized were supposed to be doomed to eternal torments; and evil spirits of various kinds were supposed to watch over helpless infancy to do it some harm. Some of the records swarm with curious cases of charming and trafficking with Satan. Those convicted of these crimes were severely punished. In some parishes the law was strong; offenders were put into the jugg and severely flogged at the church door every Sabbath till they left the locality; sometimes they were handed over to the civil magistrate to be fined; and in every case they were rebuked from the pulpit. But in the remote parishes there was little law and scarcely any authority except what centred in the laird, or chief, and he did not really care much for the new-fangled stringency of the Presbyterian clergy.

The professional bards are nowhere highly esteemed. Before the time of the Union they had come down very much in public opinion, if, indeed, they ever did hold a high place, through their insolence and overbearing pride, their laziness and lofty pretensions. The bard, in fact, was the laird's tutor or genealogist, who sang fulsome lyrics as an opiate to send the great man to sleep, or who was expected to keep up his credit through the exercise of liberal poetic licence, or even more reprehensible means. He claimed, and as a rule received, considerable attention and honour; but when insulted by his chief he could very well pocket his dignity, as happened once in the presence of Captain Burt, when the

man of song was requested by the chief to sit down below the salt amongst a parcel of dirty retainers over a cup of ale; and when, instead of resenting the insult, he sang readily several hoarse stanzas so favourable to his chief, that the latter exclaimed that there was nothing so good in Virgil or Homer.

However pressing the poverty around might have been, and however hard up the chiefs were, they liked to keep the semblance of power after the reality had passed away from their hands, and to make a great display both at home and abroad. Hence they kept an inordinate number of idle attendants, who were very insolent towards the poorer section of the peasantry. When the chief went a journey, he marched in ridiculous state, attended by such officers, as his henchmen, who fought his quarrels, and were always near him as a trusty support and guide; the bard, who sung his personal valour and the purity of his long descent; his spokesman, who expressed his sentiments, sometimes when they did not exist; his sword-bearer, his *Gillie-Casfluirie*, who carried him across streams and over marshes; the *Gillie-Coushaine*, who led his horse over rugged or dangerous ground; the piper, who was always a gentleman by birth, and who in his turn required a gillie to carry his pipes; as well as by a nondescript multitude of lazy rascals who somehow contrived to form part of the train, and to partake of the good cheer that awaited him wherever he paid visits. And as the chiefs and the leading men of the Isles were fond of paying each other visits, the poor resources of a country which prized hospitality above all the Hebrew commandments were pretty well eaten up; and the retainers, who always assumed the airs of spoiled menials, were seldom very welcome to the peasantry. The piper, especially, with his upright attitude, his tinsel pomp, his haughty airs, and his majestic step, was regarded as a most objectionable personage, far more difficult to please than the genuine head of the tribe. He looked upon himself as the most talented of musicians, and he was never very gracious to the claims of rivals or more youthful aspirants. This narrow conceit was not confined to the piper. An account of the country by one of its natives was, it is said, even then like a Gascon's picture of himself, strongly and highly coloured, but not historically accurate. In spite of the prevailing poverty, and the misery consequent on the semi-feudal system, which kept the poor down almost in slavery and neglected the resources of the land, all classes, and most of all the peasantry, paid blind obedience to the chiefs, who were treated as idols, and whose blood relations, of whatever degree and however depraved, were treated with peculiar respect. Then, as now, it was usual to puff Gaelic as the most expressive and the most copious of all languages, the sweetest and the most poetical, as well as unquestionably the oldest, to boast over length of pedigree and the unparalleled virtues of the race, which was seriously believed in the islands to be the first in the arts of peace and war. The chieftains had a ludicrous idea of their own grandeur and importance. Their followers

frequently magnified this, as when McDonald of Keppoch was thought to have become effeminate when he took a snowball for his pillow on a night when he could do very well without one.

Though the power of the chiefs was very great, a ninny or a fool had little chance of succeeding, even when the office had something of a hereditary character. For every heir was required to give proof of his valour before succeeding, or before he was allowed to lead the clan. This proof was generally given in a raid upon some hostile clan, or upon the Lowlands. Such a raid was never regarded as pure robbery. Indeed, at the date under review, several clans, as the Camerons and the MacDonalds and the MacGregors, lived by theft or by levying blackmail upon the Lowlands, whilst within their own borders the individual members of the clan were scrupulously honest. It is surprising how very slightly theft figures in the local parish records. Breaches of the seventh commandment bristle in every page, and offences of this class were severely punished. People are up before the sessions for fighting, brawling, cursing and swearing, speaking evil of dignities, rioting and drunkenness, idleness and vagrancy. The laws relating to Sabbath observances were so strict that in one parish in 1702, or five years before the Union, a poor woman was cited and punished for leading home one of her sheep, a man who gave a bundle of shorn hay to his cattle was heavily fined, a weaver who had inadvertently left out his work on the Sabbath was made to do penance publicly, a farmer was punished because he was overheard speaking of some secular business, and a number of boys were flogged because they were discovered "hawking a bushie byke," or digging up a bees' nest on the Sabbath. But of theft and the penalties attached to it we hear very little. The explanation is either that the inhabitants were remarkably honest, or that theft was regarded as scarcely worthy to be designated a punishable offence. In reality, according to the narrow and defective standard of the Isles and Highland glens in those days, a very subtle distinction was drawn between appropriating what belonged to one's kinsman, friend, or countrymen, and what belonged to one's natural or national enemy. Within the clan theft was severely punished, and was exceedingly rare; beyond the borders of the clan it was a very meritorious virtue. The same distorted standard ruled other parts of practical morals. If loyalty and fidelity were justly regarded as virtues, unfortunately revenge in certain cases never passed for a heinous vice. Hundreds of instances might be given of assassins being employed to execute revenge stimulated by private hate or fancied wrongs, and where the atrocity thus displayed seldom brought justice down upon itself.

It must in fairness be admitted that in this respect the Hebridean or Gaelic conscience was a very unsafe guide. To a large extent true law meant revenge with the unsophisticated Highlander, and all other law was a foreign imposition that received only very slight respect. A story is told of a widow who had been blessed with three husbands in

succession, and who, when asked what sort of men the deceased had been, replied that the two first were *honest men*, for that both had died for the law (*i. e.* had been hanged for sheep-stealing), whereas the third was a poor creature "who teid at hame on a puckle of straw, like an ould tög." The distinction drawn by the Gaelic conscience between *meum* and *tuum* was, that thieving on a small scale and in petty things within the clan was highly disreputable and dishonest, but that wholesale theft, such as cattle-lifting from the south of the Grampians, or a ship wrecked or cast upon the coast by storms, was a profession highly becoming a gentleman, and in full accord with the moral law. The wretch who stole a cow or a sheep was a common thief; he who soared higher and hurried past the defile with a hundred was a gentleman drover. The Lowlands and the East Coast clans were in perpetual conflict with these veteran freebooters, and sometimes tracked the lifted cattle into the fastnesses of Lochaber or Glenorchy. Sometimes spies and experts were bribed to go into the suspected country and gather evidence that might be serviceable against the veterans. But, if any one were known to accept the reward offered for this kind of information, his life was not worth a single day's purchase.

In passing to give a sketch of the second sight, the most extraordinary system of belief ever created by the sensitive Gaelic imagination, I may give one or two curious customs which partly explain it. One of these meets one in every genuine Hebridean song sung by a true islander. The song is a simple but wild series of movements, which the singers reproduce in the sympathetic swing of the body. When the Hebridean begins his song, he takes out his handkerchief, and gives the end of it to his neighbour, and they both swing it as a sort of accompaniment—

Our voices keep tune, and our oars keep time.

Two centuries ago this rhythmic movement entered into the ordinary toil of the common people, who were always eminently social and gregarious. When any considerable piece of work was to be done on the farms of the tacksmen, a large number of persons were set to work together. Whatever they did was done by them all in the same way. If they were reaping the corn, they kept time by singing or chanting, swaying their bodies to and fro in unison, bending down and rising up at the same moment, and moving with the regularity of a regiment of soldiers, sometimes to the strains of a bagpipe or the Jew's-harp. In the same way they fulled cloth, sitting in two opposite rows on a board, with the web to be fulled between, to be kicked from side to side.

Then, as in a less degree they are still, the Highlands and Islands were the land *par excellence* of apparitions, ghosts, and shades, overspread with all sorts of bewildering terrors, and inhabited by an underfed and starving people, who had a strong hereditary tendency to melancholy and mystic tears, who were creatures of impulse and fantastic in their hopes, and whose spirit was under the dominion of broken beliefs and harrowing story. From intercourse with the outside world the mass of

the people got little or no light; and in the troubled shades of their own traditions and pagan creed they clung to many venerable follies and continued to dream idle dreams. The spirit of the old pagan religion lingered under the alien forms of the Christian faith, and the Hebrideans left to themselves became the easy prey of false prophets and soothsayers. Their dearest and most permanent beliefs were founded on nothing more solid than hearsay evidence; the thin coating of Christianity over their pagan faith and practice had no other effect than to give some additional terror, or to raise some fresh or wild hope, only to vanish as it came. With such a people the tendency to illusions was always strong. The whole air was teeming with fantastic creations. The fairies, as representing the shadows and the unrealities that thwart mortal enterprise, were an important element then. In the Gaelic mythology they represented the painful unreality which flitted around the Gaelic race, in the lethargic atmosphere of the Isles, the weird mist of the corries, the luxuriant growth of myths and fables, and the tendency to illusion and the avoidance of facts and their practical lessons. Tested in the strong light of day, many of the beliefs which they cherished were but as the shadow of some inexplicable shade. The folklore of the Highlands was copious and wild, full of budding romance and charged with much fierce pessimism. Relics of old water cult were wondrous at the Union. Each lake had its dread monster, the treacherous *Ealh hirze*, who, Proteus-like, could assume all shapes, and who was ever intent on mischief to the human race; every storm had its wraith; and a thousand grotesque figures filled and frightened the troubled imagination.

Amongst such a people we might expect to find prophets of the second sight thick as autumnal leaves. When Presbyterianism was established in the Isles two centuries ago, second sight was already reduced to a system and practised as an art. It had its code of signals, its symbols, and its recognised methods of interpretation. The prophets of the second sight pretended to be born, but they were really made. It was not professed that the gift was common, or that every one could see the signs which were to be interpreted. But the favoured few who could see what was generally invisible read the symbols according to the recognised rules of a recognised craft. The prophet or the seer claimed the power of seeing into the dark future, and of foretelling what was to come to pass. What he saw the multitude could not see; but, if he deigned to reveal what he had seen, the common herd could foretell as well as he, for certain signs always indicated certain events. For example, if a woman was seen standing at a man's right hand, that was accepted as a proof that she should become his wife, whether both or either were married or unmarried at the time of the apparition. If three women were seen standing at a man's right hand, the nearest would be his first wife, and so on. Through a large and intricate system, the growth of many ages, the art of the Highland seer was not altogether based upon quackery, but it was strengthened by the pretence of the rogue. So long as an Ayrshire

ploughman, brought up like his class in the rude routine of the furrow, can suddenly shake himself free from the depressing traditions of the soil, and astonish after ages by his intense appreciation of human needs and interests, by his correct reading of the best aspirations of our nature, and by his exquisite sense of the beauty that surrounds us, why should not a shrewd inhabitant of one of the remote Hebrides, amidst scenes that tend to throw a veil of mystery over the cloudy judgment and the uncertain penetration of his contemporaries, astonish the untutored rustics around him by the force and accuracy of his daring prescience? Belief in supernatural interference was common in the Western Isles. By assuming that he was more unscrupulous than those around him, that he was working by mystic rules, which their own traditions had sanctioned, and that he knew his neighbours' weakness as well as his own strength, we can easily understand how the prophet of the second sight could make himself an object of regard and a source of power in his locality. To some extent the prophet himself occasionally shared in the common delusion. For the Gaelic race, with their passionate love of life, their intense impressibility to fear and hope, their sensitive fibre, their perturbed feelings and uncertain beliefs, nurtured the very conditions which point to or generate definite fulfilment of vague prophecy. For in all such cases there is a wide reserve for mental confusion. As the patient, by brooding over his disease, insensibly gives it unconquerable strength, and so aids in his own destruction, so the Gaelic race helped their own seers in the work of illusion. In some cases, no doubt, the seer was an out-and-out quack, and took the surest means to strengthen his reputation by divulging the oracle after the fact, or by vague predictions which might mean anything. Sometimes the oracle was dark or mysterious on purpose. Instances are quite common in which a vague statement was converted into a direct prophecy through ingenious distortion or suggestive silence, whereas the true prophecy was only an after-thought.

A highly strung people, who had an abnormal dread of the supernatural, and who drew largely upon the horrors of various pagan creeds without understanding any, would have a certain tendency to brace up their imagination and to give its forecasts a certain amount of intelligence which was not altogether fictitious. Their wisdom was contained in their songs, proverbs, and sayings, and it did not profess to encompass any mystery except by something more mysterious. They placed the facts, of sense and of imagination, those of objective fact and subjective feeling, on the same platform. They had a number of myths and time-honoured legends regarding the future and their personal salvation; but these braced up the resources of their imagination by making them more fitful and more melancholy. To the view of their philosophy and religion the departed soul was not lost, but gone before, to a place where there would be fierce retaliation, and where salutary terror might strike at defiant conscience as well as at exasperated affection. And

hence the general sense of vague terror greatly aided the seer. The Highland seer professed to see what was invisible to ordinary mortals. He held that a lively impression was made upon the nervous system, and that, like Socrates under the influence of the demon, he became absorbed in contemplation to an extent altogether denied to the multitude. The veil of the future, he said, was uplifted before him; coming events projected themselves within the sphere of his vision; he could see strange sights and hear strange sounds; and he knew how to interpret them aright. This much he claimed, and this much the multitude readily conceded. But even as early as the reign of Dutch William the seers had their critics, who, in spite of the conservative tenacity of popular beliefs, tried to pick holes in their practice. It was held that they were either enthusiastic visionaries or persons of disturbed temperament; that not one of the fraternity could give a rational explanation of his practice, the rules of his art, or the vague predictions of his order, and that the whole system of second sight was an imposition by skilful and unscrupulous rogues upon the credulous and the silly. But without adopting this extreme view, we may give a reasonable explanation of the practice. "Fire never gave up trembling, and woe from that day until the day of for ever;" and whoever is familiar with the piercing wail of the Highland laments as they used to resound through the long, narrow glens, or has witnessed the rapid hysterics that frequently accompany the departure of the *Clansman* or the *Dunara Castle* from the Broomielaw, may understand to what extent sorrow and pain, tears and trouble entered into the life of the islanders, and how gladly they would look towards any sort of prophet that professed to open up the future. Funeral wailing was a profession in the islands at the time of the Union. I know nothing more plaintive than "McCrinnon's Lament" when heard in a lonely glen or on a solitary isle. It is the essence of mystery as well as of sorrow. At a period when each noble English house had its own haunted chamber and its own sombre ghost, we need not wonder if we find each Highland hamlet in fanciful intercourse with its kith and kin after as well as before death, through its own chosen seers; that the underfed Hebridean saw his own ghost heralding his approaching death, and that in a depressed and uncertain state of mind the Gael pictured out for himself an uncertain future. A people surrounded by many intelligible terrors—in a changing phosphorescent sea and a troubled, thundery sky and frequent storms—would see the flickering pale light as it moved slowly towards the lonely graveyard, or the dark funeral crowd around the hut of him who was fated to die, or they would hear the piercing funeral wail, or their imagination would derive strange pleasure from the sorrowful luxuries of the literature of the second sight.

Oddities of Personal Nomenclature.

FROM many different points of view personal nomenclature presents itself as an interesting object of study. What have been the main forces concerned in the production of personal names? When, where, and why were the several denominations now current in England introduced among us? What circumstances have conduced to the survival of some of these through many centuries, and to the total disappearance of others once popular? Or, again, what amount of reference may be traced, in the name-creations of our own time, to the men, movements, ideas, and events of the day? These questions and many others directly or indirectly connected with them are, it will generally be allowed, not wanting in attractiveness.

It is now many years ago that such questions were considered by the present writer in the pages of this Magazine.* In the article referred to, the matter of personal names was, so far as available space would allow, dealt with at large, and its history, both past and contemporary, entered into. In our present remarks we shall be mainly concerned with the age in which we live, and with a single branch of the subject. Our facts will for the most part be drawn from the registers which have been kept under statutory provision during the last forty-four years; and we shall, as our title implies, treat chiefly of the exceptional—the odd and droll—in personal names.

It may be noticed, however, as a help in classifying nominal oddities, that their sources are necessarily to some extent identical with the sources of personal names altogether. We will therefore begin our arrangement of facts by attributing to those causes with respect to which the identity exists, such names as seem to justify the assignment. The main original sources of personal nomenclature have been—(1) Some aspiration on the part of the parents as to the future character or career of the infant to be named; (2) some fact relative to the circumstances of the child's birth; and (3) some peculiarity of person or disposition in the child itself. But all existing eccentricities of personal denomination cannot be ascribed to these sources. Among their further causes we may mention (4) suggestive surnames, and (5) error and ignorance. It will, moreover, be convenient to keep a separate place (6) for names attributable to miscellaneous fancies; while, lastly (7), we shall speak of those appellational oddities which cease to be oddities, or become less odd than before, when they are rightly understood. We

* See CORNHILL MAGAZINE for March 1871.

are far from claiming perfection for this arrangement; but it will suffice for the purpose now in view.

I. *Name-oddities answering to the description of aspiration-names.* Many of the current nominal peculiarities which appear to express the desires of parents for their children are of a religious character. The religious aspirations which in the time of our pagan forefathers had shown themselves denominationally by the simple adoption as personal appellations of the names and qualities of deities, and which, seeking a like mode of expression in the middle ages, had been mostly content to use the names of the saints—as pre-eminently in the case of *Mary*, probably to this day the commonest English name, whether male or female—found a more startling mode of utterance in the days of Puritanism. Not only did the Puritan ransack the Bible for appellations of the strangest sound, and call his child *Habakkuk*, *Epaphroditus*, or perhaps *Mahershalalhashbaz*; not only did he delight in fastening upon his offspring a phenomenon expressing some abstraction familiar in his religious phraseology, as *Experience*, *Repentance*, or *Tribulation*; but he sometimes invented for his infant's personal denomination a lengthy sentence, either admonitory, doctrinal, or otherwise; such as *Fight-the-good-fight*, *Search-the-Scriptures*, *Hew-Agag-in-pieces-before-the-Lord*, or even *If-Christ-had-not-died-for-you-you-had-been-damned*.*

These well-known extravagancies are here referred to because, although they are not to be traced in all their forms among the names of to-day, most current nominal oddities of the religious-aspiration class are nearly related to them. Some of this class have been by continuous family usage handed on to us unaltered from the seventeenth century; and those similar names with respect to which the remark cannot be made are distinctly owing to Puritan taste as it now exists. The following abstract nouns—most of them apparently representing parental aspirations, and many having, as it would seem, a religious meaning, occur as names in recent registers: *Admonition*, *Advice*, *Affability*, *Comfort*, *Deliverance*, *Duty*, *Equality*, *Faith*, *Freedom*, *Grace*, *Gratitude*, *Hope*, *Industry*, *Innocence*, *Liberty*, *Love*, *Meditation*, *Mercy*, *Modesty*, *Obedience*, *Patience*, *Peace*, *Piety*, *Providence*, *Prudence*, *Repentance*, *Sapience*, *Silence*, *Sobriety*, *Temperance*, *Truth*, *Unity*, *Virtue*, *Wisdom*, and *Zeal*.

We shall hereafter refer again to certain of these names in various connections, though for the moment we place them as abstractions in a single list. Some amongst them, it will be understood, do not *always* mean what they seem to mean. For example, *Grace*, *Hope*, *Peace*, and *Virtue* are surnames, distinguishing at this moment in most minds well-known labourers in different and somewhat incongruous fields of exertion, that is to say, a cricketer (or family of cricketers), a member

* This last was the name of the brother of the famous Praise-God Barebone. See Hume's *History*, chap. lxi. footnote. [Vol. vii. p. 230, ed. 1797.]

of Parliament, a recent murderer, and a London publisher. It is manifest that any personal name existing also as a surname may have been given to children in its surname-sense alone, without reference to the meaning of the word. This reservation as to surnames it will often be needful to make passingly as we go on; and in the proper place special remarks will be offered on the subject. The abstractions named were many of them used as prenomen in Puritan times, and are now common as such in America among the descendants of the Pilgrim Fathers. There are other appellations of religious reference, which may also have been handed down as they are from the seventeenth century. The daughter of a shepherd, born near Chichester in 1879, was named *Hope-still*; and an illegitimate child, born near Rye in 1878, was called *Faint-not*; we have noted also *Livewell* and *Diehappy*. These are quite in the religious style of two centuries ago. It may be noticed that Puritan tradition has still a remarkably firm hold of the personal nomenclature of Sussex, where two of the specimens last mentioned were found. The Old Testament names so commonly met with in that county—the *Enoses*, the *Ezras*, the *Jabez*s, the *Judah*s, the *Milcah*s, the *Naomis*, the *Reubens*, and the *Zabulons*—point probably less to present than to past religious feeling. Still, when every allowance of this kind has been made, there is good reason for recognising in many eccentric names that are given the religious desires of existing parents for their children. Sometimes the aspiration is so vague as to find expression in a word merely sacred by association, and quite without meaning as a name. The titles of the books of Scripture thus become appellations. *Acts* and *Acts Apostles* have been observed as registered names, and a labourer near Lynn called his son *Hebrews* in 1877. We have also met with *Abba*, *Olivet*, *Ramoth-Gilead*, *Selah*, *Talithacumi*, &c., which we suppose generally to represent indeterminate desires—very roughly expressed—for the religious good of the children thus named.

Among aspiration-names that are not religious must be ranked those given out of admiration for heroes; for mingled with the admiration, and with the desire to commemorate it and glorify the child to be named by applying to it the hero's title, is usually, it is to be supposed, a wish that the infant may be worthy of its appellation and an imitator of its namesake's merits. Sometimes the hero appears to be *aristocracy in general*. The *Gordon Stanleys*, *Spencer Percys*, &c., so often now presenting themselves among the lower ranks, seem to disclose an indiscriminate worship of the patrician order. Or the homage may be more personal, the reference more specific. At Reading we recently found a *Richard Plantagenet Temple Nugent*, *Brydges Chandos Grenville*; he was not a duke, but a waiter. The infant daughter of a farm-labourer near Bere Regis, Dorsetshire, lately received an appellation which appears to point to an opposite taste in heroes. She was registered *Archiner*, and this we suppose to be meant for *Archina*, and to be founded on the surname of *Joseph Arch*, the champion of the agricultural labourers. The embellish-

ment of the last syllable will be recognised as representing a common tendency amongst the uneducated; it is one that received not long since another curious exemplification. A gipsy came to a Hampshire registrar to give information of a birth, and to his astonishment requested that the child's name might be entered *Liar*. He remonstrated; the informant persisted; and registration was put off, that further inquiry might be made as to what was meant by the offensive name proposed. It proved that the intention was to call the infant *Lia* or *Liah*, and this was an abbreviation of *Athaliah*, an appellation already in use in the family concerned.

The following are further examples of that variety of aspiration-names which is based upon hero-worship or something approaching to. They are given with the surnames to which they are found prefixed in the registers: *King David Haydon*, *Martin Luther Upright*, *John Bunyan Parsonage*, *General George Washington Jones*, *Lord Nelson Portman*, *Humphry Davy Avery*, *King George Westgate*, *Empress Eugénie Aldridge*, *John Robinson Crusoe Heaton*, and *Man Friday Wilson*. It is not necessary to prolong the list.

II. We go on now to consider the oddities of personal nomenclature which are suggested by *circumstances of birth*.

Twin or triple births supply opportunities for the selection of unusual names. Some of these are pretty. Twin girls were lately registered *Pearl* and *Ruby*, at Wantage, and others near Cranleigh, Sussex, *Lily* and *Rose*. In 1878, a labourer at Robertsbridge, in the same county, presented with three daughters at a birth, called them *Faith*, *Hope*, and *Charity*; and a farm-labourer near Bridport recently gave the names *Faith* and *Hope* to twin sons. But sometimes dual births render parents positively cruel in their choice of appellations. We have known the names *Huz* and *Buz* applied to twin boys. This was sheer inhumanity. *Peter the Great Wright* and *William the Conqueror Wright* figure in registration as twins. Here the parental selection seems to have been in part determined by hero-worship, though probably the duality of birth excited the primary desire for name-distinction. Another fancy created by twofold births is that of furnishing the children with identical names transposed. Twin sons of a gardener at Chard were a few months since endowed respectively with the names *James Reginald* and *Reginald James*; and at Ixworth, Suffolk, we noticed not many years ago the decease of a *Horace Horatio*, whose brother *Horatio Horace* attested the death-entry. These brothers we infer to have been twins also. An historian of parish registers remarks that about the sixteenth century it was not unusual for parents to give the same name to two or more of their children, with the view perhaps of increasing the likelihood of its perpetuation in their families. He cites, by way of proof, the following quotation from the will of one John Parnell de Gyron: "8 Mar., 1545. —Alice my wife and Old John my son to occupy my farm together till elde John marries, and then She to have land and cattle. Young

John my son shall have Brenlay's land plowed and sowed at Old John's cost."*

The inconvenient practice here exemplified does not, we believe, now survive except in the modified shape just instanced; but it is not unknown among the lower classes for parents to give to their later children names which their earlier ones deceased have previously borne. Some babies have been named *Enough*, in indication, as it would seem, of numerous predecessors; and on the other hand is found *Welcome*, which appears to denote satisfaction at a novel kind of blessing. *Una*, *Unit*, and *Unity*† point, it may be supposed, to first arrivals; *Three* and *Number Seven* express different degrees of advance in family multitude; *Last* and *Omega* suggest a resolute protest against further increase; while *Also* hints at the grudging acceptance of an unwelcome addition, and seems to need after it a note of (melancholy) exclamation. *Posthumous* is an unmistakable nominal memorandum of a painful fact. Places occasionally give their names to children, as in the cases of *Matilda Australasia Yarra Yarra Holden*, *Odessa Silly*, &c. It may be supposed that in these instances there is usually some family connection with the locality at the time of birth. In such appellations as *Tempest Booth*, *Hustings Moore*, *Farewell Hampshire*, &c., we seem to trace references to special incidents, and may infer again that the occurrences so celebrated are circumstantially linked to the arrivals of the infants whom they name; while the titles *Admonition*, *Deliverance*, *Repentance*, and others already mentioned in our list of abstract nouns used as appellations, have probably sometimes been employed, in the same way, in allusion to various conditions under which the births of the children so named have taken place.

Festivals, seasons, &c., have long lent their titles to those whose entrances into the world have been associated with them, and not a few of the names so rendered personal have become surnames. *Munday*, *Noel*, *Pascoe*, *Pentecost*, *Sumption* (i.e. Assumption), *Yule*, and others are family denominations thus originated. This class of personal names has apparently not declined in favour, and there is an oddity about many that belong to it. The months of the year and days of the week sometimes name children now, particularly foundlings; there is a *Sabbath Ada Stone* amongst our collection of curiosities. We have known an infant born on June 24 registered *Midsummer*, and another who came into existence on Loaf-mass day (August 1) named *Lammas*. *Newyear* we lately saw as a personal name. *Easter* is not unfrequent; nor is *Christmas*—a *Merry Christmas Finnett* is known to registration. *Trinity*, too, we have observed. *Lovedy* is often to be found in current registers, especially in Cornwall. The meaning of this name deserves a passing notice, although it is now, perhaps, seldom remembered when the

* See *History of Parish Registers*, by J. S. Burn, p. 69.

† *Unity*, however, as we have seen, is at any rate sometimes to be otherwise understood.

appellation is chosen. "In former times there was often a day fixed for the arrangement of differences, in which, if possible, old sores were to be healed up and old-standing accounts settled." * The *Love-day* sometimes gave its title at the font to children born or baptized upon it; hence the name mentioned, which may often have been handed down to our time as a personal denomination by continuous usage, while—since it was early appropriated by *family* nomenclature—it has probably, in other cases, been returned as a *surname* to the category of personal names. *Noon* is a name borne by a few people, and may sometimes indicate birth at midday; but it is also a surname, being as such, in all probability, a north-country corruption of *Nunn* phonetically spelt; hence it must not be claimed as necessarily pointing to circumstance of birth. Anniversaries of events in royal history occasion some unusual appellations. At Culham, near Abingdon, is a worthy shoemaker who was named *King Charles* because he was born on that now abandoned thanksgiving day, May 29; and an old man lately died near Oxford whose prenomens was *Jubilee*, his birthday having fallen on the fiftieth anniversary of the accession of George III.

Any matter of controversy or conversation which is current at the time of nativity may supply an appellation to the infant born. No one probably will ever know the number of *Rogers* who owe their names to the claimant of the Tichborne estates; but that number is certainly large. There are, too, amongst us many living *Cypruses*, who came into the world when it was talking about the acquisition of the Mediterranean island; and in this case there would be no impossibility in reckoning the extent of the nominal appropriation. Again, if any future student of English registers is surprised to find that at a particular point in the eighth decade of our century the name *Cleopatra* was used a little oftener than before, he may discover the explanation in the fact that at the same period the famous "needle" made its difficult passage from Alexandria to the Thames Embankment. A name recently found in the registers, viz. *Sidney Joseph Anti-Vaccinator West*, seems to hint that the bearer was born in an atmosphere not unfavourable to the spread of disease; while *Temperance Sober Lane* must have come into being under conditions which would delight Sir Wilfrid Lawson. The circumstances of the birth of *Drinkall Cooper* might perhaps, on the other hand, be less satisfactory to that statesman.

III. We are to speak next of odd names referring to *some peculiarity of person or disposition* in the children to whom they are given.

Every one knows how largely our forefathers resorted to nicknames, both complimentary and otherwise, to distinguish individuals one from another, and how many of the sobriquets thus bestowed have established themselves among us as permanent surnames. The *Blythmans*, the *Cox-heads*, the *Cruikshanks*, the *Curtises*, the *Gentles*, the *Lilywhites*, the *Slys*,

* *English Surnames*, Rev. C. W. Bardsley, p. 63. (Chatto and Windus.)

and a host of other families give evidence of these facts in every quarter. But it was generally the outside world that conferred such nicknames, now become hereditary; hence it is not to be wondered at that a large number of them are unfavourable, for men are not given to be tender to the oddities of those who do not belong to them. The personal name, on the other hand, is for the most part of parental choice; and as parents usually take an indulgent view of the defects and weaknesses of their offspring, we should not expect to find among our prenoms many of uncomplimentary character. Some such, however, there undoubtedly are; for instance, *Giddy*, *Dirty*, *Faint*, *Fearful*, *Musty*, *Shady*, *Singular*, *Stubborn*, *Tempestuous*, and *Troublesome* are all recorded names. It will be conjectured that the infants thus styled must have fallen into hands other than those of their natural guardians. One name on the list is capable of the same interpretation as many other prenominal absurdities. *Giddy* is a surname: as such we lately came across it at Neath. It is perhaps possible that it has made its appearance as a personal name only in this connection.

Complimentary references to personal characteristics we are not surprised to find more common in personal nomenclature than the uncomplimentary. *Pleasant* is to all appearance one of these. When Dickens introduced this name into *Our Mutual Friend* he was not inventing. It has been a good deal used, and personal association, it is likely enough, has now as much to do with its employment as infantile sweetness of temper. *Happy* is to be met with as often. Any reader who may be familiar with the personal names about Loddon, Wymondham, and other parts of Norfolk will recognise it as not unfrequent. *Patient* we have seen in Suffolk; *Grateful*—as the last of four names—at Reading; *Choice*, near Merthyr Tydfil. We have also noticed *Smart*, which may sometimes belong to the same class; and *Treasure*, which is, it may be, now and then used as a parental testimonial to general personal excellence; but it will not be forgotten that the two names last mentioned lead us yet again into cognominal territory. *Affable*, *Bold*, *Cautious*, *Civil*, *Energetic*, *Irresistible*, *Nice*, *Placid*, and *Thankful* have all appeared in modern registration, and are most of them intelligible enough as expressive of infant characteristics. So are *Affability*, *Obedience*, *Peace*, and *Silence* (already mentioned in our list of names created from abstract nouns), which may sometimes have been used descriptively. *Wonderful*, too, is a registered name, but it means nothing, for all children are wonderful in the eyes of their parents. *Loving*, again, we have found, and *Amorous*; the former may perhaps sometimes point to disposition, but we look with suspicion upon the latter, because in some places the name *Ambrose* is so pronounced as to be easily mistaken for it. There is a *Sanspareil Scamp* in the registers, *Scamp* being the cognomen. The compliment implied in the forename—if compliment it be—is rendered doubly doubtful by what follows it.

There are many other nominal fancies which, although not outspoken

in their references to baby idiosyncrasies, appear to hint at them figuratively. When we find such appellations as *Violet Snowdrop*, *Primrose*, *Mayblossom*, *Rosebud*, *Cuckoo*, and *Melody*, we imagine at once that their bearers may have possessed early a flower-like sweetness, vernal benignity, or musical charm of disposition. *Sugar* seems to tell a like tale in less poetic image; while *Angel* and *Cherubim* take us back again to the higher regions of metaphor, and offer suggestions of even celestial temper. It is scarcely needful to say that the characteristics alluded to in the appellations probably had a larger existence in the imaginations of fond parents than in fact. There are some rather pretty plant names which may possibly have been founded on personal characteristics. Such are *Holly*, *Ivy*, and *Myrtle*, with their pleasant intimations of merriment and constancy.

IV. *Suggestive surnames* have a great deal to answer for in the way of strange and striking personal nomenclature. There is a story of a Mr. Salmon, who, on becoming the father of three children at a birth, celebrated the event by naming them *Pickled*, *Potted*, and *Fresh*. The tale is probably apocryphal, but it is certain that names no less remarkable than these are often actually given as complementary to the unfinished ideas discerned in many cognomens.* Some of the combinations thus created are merely the names of familiar heroes. Let us adduce a few examples. *Julius Cæsar* meets our eye at the outset; it is the name of a man who witnessed a marriage-register at Easthampstead not long ago, and is indeed a couplet that has often appeared.† *Cæsar* is a surname that was probably conferred in the first instance as a nickname for some assuming person.‡ It commemorates the imperious, not the imperial; so that the conjunction in question merely emphasises an old joke against pretension. Many other such combinations alter their significance when closely inspected. *Mark Antony* was doing a blacksmith's humble work at Mynyddyslwyn, Monmouthshire, only a short time since. *Wat Tyler* died scarcely two years ago at Dover. *George Frederick Handel* reappeared at Heytesbury, Wilts, in 1877; *Eveline Berenger* lately stepped from fiction into fact, and took the shape of a Margate shopkeeper's daughter; and there are *German Reeds* who have no connection with the Gallery of Illustration or St. George's Hall, and who perhaps never "entertain" any one.

Other tricks played with surnames by means of personal prefixes are very various, so much so as to render classification difficult. There is Mr. *Lance Lot*, who was married at Swansea in 1878. The manner in which a knightly turn has been given to his unattractive cognomen certainly shows resource on the part of the framer of the couplet. A little *Ivy Berry* lately fell prematurely to mother earth at Barnstaple,

* Since the above was written we have met with a registered *Joseph Fresh Salmon*.

† See Lower's *Patronymica Britannica*, p. 49.

‡ *English Surnames*, p. 173.

Surnames recalling seasons and days occasion some facetious combinations. The registers reveal an *Ernest Frosty Winter*, an *Autumn Winter*, a *Winter Summers*, an *Eve Christmas*, and a *Time of Day*. Sometimes a prefix is so judiciously chosen and applied to an ordinary cognomen that a title of dignity is the result: we have in the registers an *Arch Bishop*, a *Lord Baron*, &c. And, to be brief, those records further disclose, amongst other absurd conjunctions, the following: *Emperor Adrian*, *Rose Budd*, *Rose Bower*, *Henry Born Noble*, *J. Frost Hoar*, *Harry Bethlehem Shepperd*, *West Shcre*, *Salmon Fish*, *Elizabeth Foot Bath*, *John Cake Baker*, *True Case*, *Major Minor*; *Phæbe Major Key*, *Helen Tight Cord*, *William Rather Brown*, *Henry Speaks Welsh*, *Thomas Christmas Box*, and *Newborn Child*.

V. Our next heading brings us to those strange names which must be ascribed to *error and ignorance*. Some such are mere misspellings, and are quite without interest. These may arise from inadvertency, or from the persistent adherence of illiterate people to what is wrong. In questions of name-orthography the most ignorant are not unfrequently the most obstinate. A child, it is often insisted at registration, must bear exactly the name borne by his grandfather and father before him, which name—sometimes, in such cases as we refer to, an incorrectly spelt one—has perhaps been expressly written out by some “scholard” of the family for the registrar’s guidance. This officer may not oppose a deliberate demand for a particular spelling; and so it happens that some nominal errors of one generation are handed on to the next. But the inaccuracies thus reproduced must gradually disappear as the work of elementary education goes steadily forward amongst the masses; unless indeed, while more ambitious studies are included in the popular curriculum, instruction in the art of writing one’s own name should chance to be omitted from it.

The *inventions* of ignorance in the way of names are often entertaining. The inventive faculty displays itself largely with regard to female appellations, which are often very daringly created, or compounded of known names and other elements not always to be traced. The following examples have lately come under our notice: *Almetena*, *Alphenia*, *Annarenia*, *Arthurrena*, *Athelia*—this last may be an attempt at *Athaliah*, which we have already pointed out in still more remarkable disguise; *Berdilia*, *Bridelia*, *Edwardina*, *Elderline*, *Floralla*, *Fortituda*, *Henerilta*, *Julinda*, *Louena*, *Margelina*, *Millennarianna*, *Perenna*, *Reubena*, *Sevena*, and *Seveena*—probably both founded upon the number seven; *Swindinonia*, *Tranquilla*, *Tributina*, *Uelya*, and *Ulelia*. From such instances as these it is evident that Mrs. Kenwigs, when she invented for her eldest daughter the graceful appellation *Morleena*, did not lend herself to the charms of imagination in any exceptional degree. *Libertine* has been found registered as a name. It is perhaps an unfortunate attempt to give an especially feminine character to *Liberty*—an abstraction which might have been supposed to be sufficiently feminine before.

VI. Odd names owing their creation to *miscellaneous fancies* might obviously be more accurately classed, if only a knowledge of the facts which helped to shape the individual appellations were possessed; but in the absence of this knowledge it becomes necessary to resort to some such inclusive heading as that now to be dealt with. Who could venture, for example, to state on what principle a Wiltshire girl inheriting the family surname *Snook*, came, not very many years ago, to be called *Grecian*? Who would presume to decide why a Master Rook, registered at Wye in Kent two or three years back, was named *Sun*? or—to match this glorious Apollo with a suitable Phœbe—whence *Luna Millicent Nation*, who figures among our notes for a somewhat later period, derived her first appellation? A quarryman at Portland, surnamed White, recently called his infant daughter *Mary Avalanche*. He would scarcely be personally familiar with Alpine disasters; is it to be inferred that the second name implies the child's unwelcome descent upon an unready household? Again, what volcanic impulse can have produced such a forename as that of Mrs. *Etna Brooking*, whom we noticed as having become a mother at Saltash not long since? It is quite impossible to answer such questions. A few more nominal riddles—as difficult of solution and classification as the foregoing—may be propounded. The registers introduce us to a *Doctor Allred*, a *Tea Bolton*, a *Longitude Blake*, a *Crescence Boot*, an *Ephraim Very Ott*, a *Hempseed Barrass*, a *Purify Buckland*, a *Married Brown*, a *Quilly Booty*, a *Sir Dusty Entwistle*, &c.

Among the miscellaneous fancies must be placed that for registering, as formal appellations, those abbreviations and pet-names which are commonly applied only in familiar intercourse. Of these the ordinary monosyllabic appellatives, such as *Alf*, *Bob*, *Bill*, *Bess*, *Dan*, *Dick*, *Meg*, *Nat*, *Ned*, *Poll*, *Sall*, &c., are unfortunately not at all unfrequent in the registers. It is impossible to associate gentleness or refinement with a preference for such curt nomenclature as this, although in the domestic circle or amongst intimates the semi-jocose employment of these monosyllables is sometimes excused. On the other hand, the pet names ending in *ie* or *y* are always tender, and often pleasing; and the fact that such are largely resorted to in registration forms an agreeable set-off to the circumstance that the inelegant and disrespectful monosyllables are also much employed. Among names of this class, none has been more widely used than *Bertie*, which of course owes its popularity to the Prince of Wales. Pretty, however, as many such denominations may seem in the earlier hours of life, they are apt to become embarrassing possessions at a later period; and to register them—especially without any additional names—is a manifest mistake. What a pitiable contradiction would be a pallid *Rosie* of seventy-five, a *Pussy* on crutches, a blind *Daisy*, or a *Birdie* voiceless from chronic bronchitis!

Some name-choosers indulge a fancy for extreme brevity in personal nomenclature. This indulgence reaches its most foolish extent when

single letters are inserted in the registers. Initials (or what may be supposed to be such) have, from time to time, appeared as names in those records; but they have not often been used without the addition of other appellations in completer form. *Ex, Is, No, and Si* are recorded names. The opposite taste for very voluminous denominations now and then displays itself. *Thomas Hill Joseph Napoleon Bonaparte Horatio Swindlehurst Nelson* is an incongruous combination in which length seems to have been aimed at more than anything else; and *Arphad Ambrose Alexander Habakkuk William Shelah Woodcock* may be classed with it. Then, again, in the higher ranks, we sometimes find ancestral names piled very heavily upon single heads, as in the case of *Lyulph Ydwallo Odin Nestor Egbert Lyonel Toedmag Hugh Erchenwyne Saxon Esa Cromwell Nevill Dysart Plantagenet Tollemache-Tollemache*.

VII. In the last place, something is to be noted concerning those personal name-oddities which cease to be such, or become less odd than before when they are rightly understood.

It has many times been conceded in the foregoing remarks that different drolleries of personal nomenclature are found to exist as surnames also. It does not follow from this that a single oddity mentioned has been wrongly classed; for any word that happens to form a surname, and that is personally applied at one time because it is a surname, may at another time be so applied in its every-day sense. Nevertheless, the *cognominal* explanation ought to be constantly borne in mind when strange personal names are under consideration; for it is nearly impossible to say where it may not apply, since surnames, which include amongst them so large a host of drolleries, are freely used as personal appellations, and have been so used ever since the Reformation.

But to show that forename-oddities are cognominal oddities is merely to shift the difficulty of accounting for them from one date to another, from the nineteenth century to any period since the eleventh, when the surname itself was created or moulded into its present droll shape. How did these absurd surnames come to be surnames?

It is not easy to give a condensed answer to this wide question; but it may be said that two principal causes have produced the odd cognominal results referred to. Firstly—the large use of sobriquets in the middle ages as a means of distinguishing persons bearing the same baptismal names; and secondly—the almost endless *corruption* which surnames have constantly been undergoing since they came to be such. The corruptive forces have been: the tendency of men in former days—almost acknowledged as a right until quite lately—to follow their own pleasure as to the orthography of their own family denominations; the common inclination to shape unfamiliar surnames into accustomed words something like them in sound; the habit among uneducated people of deliberately turning foreign words (and surnames among them) to burlesque; and the liability of local peculiarities of speech to affect cognominal spelling in places where these peculiarities are not under-

stood. No surname, however absurd, can be greatly wondered at when these possibilities as to its creation and development are considered.

There is a kind of oddity in personal nomenclature which arises from seeming discrepancy between name and sex. For instance, a man bearing the name of *Jael*—the wife of Heber the Kenite—lately died near Newbury; a labourer at Ixworth, named Peck, registered his son *George Venus*, in 1877; *Margaret Absalom Hughes* was born near Pontypool in 1878, and *Noah Oatley*, recently became a mother in the neighbourhood of Devizes. Family nomenclature will account for all these apparent contradictions, and by reference to it the explanation of most others like them is probably to be found. The following female names we know to exist as cognomens: *Alice, Amy, Ann, Arabella, Bessey, Betty, Dolly, Eliza, Ellen, Eva, Eve, Fanny, Frances, Hagar, Hannah, Harriot, Helen, Hester, Jael, Jane, Judy, Kitty, Leah, Lucy, Mary, Maryan, Matilda, Maude, Meggy, Millicent, Molly, Nan, Nancy, Nanny, Nell, Patty, Polly, Psyche, Rosamond, Ruth, Sall, Sally, Sara, Sarah, Susan, Susanna, and Venus*. This list by no means exhausts the sum of those surnames which coincide with personal names of women, but it furnishes all that is needed in the way of example. It will now be asked, what is the explanation of such family denominations as these? Many of the class are not actually female names at all, but are mere corruptions of men's names and of other words. A respectable remainder, however, are acknowledged metronymics. These may sometimes point to the illegitimate birth of the founders of the families bearing them; or they may simply indicate that at the point from which the cognomen dates, the lady rather than the lord was the ruling spirit of the ancestral household. Of the personal names of men which have become surnames a large number have been modified by prefixes and suffixes, and consequently the seeming contradictions now under consideration cannot be produced through their means. But others have retained their original shape. The following are or appear to be examples of the latter class; so singular, however, are the transformations which take place in family nomenclature that not every instance quoted can be guaranteed as being in reality that which it looks like. *Absalom, Adam, Ajax, Arthur, Balaam, Bertram, Felix, Gabriel, Gomer, Hector, Herod, Jack, Jesse, Lazarus, Louis, Matthias, Michael, Noah, Oliver, Priam, Ralph, Roderick, Simon, Stephen, Toby, Tommy, Valentine, Vincent, and Zebedee* will probably be thought specimens enough to produce.

Senior Wranglers.

It is announced that the Mathematical Tripos of the present year will be the last on the old system. The name will be preserved, and to some extent the thing ; but the regulations will be so far changed that it is difficult to say how far the senior wrangler of the future will correspond to the senior wrangler of the past. Without attempting to throw any light upon that question, we may take the opportunity of glancing briefly at the past history of the most famous of all competitive examinations. The first list preserved in that fascinating volume, the *Cambridge Calendar*, is dated 1748. It was put forth, that is, twenty-one years after the death of Newton, and six years after the death of Bentley; when therefore Cambridge, though it had produced no worthy successors to those great men, was still surrounded by the halo of their glory. The tripos of January 1882 will be the 135th of the series ; and as it is the oldest of all such examinations, it has certainly been one of the most conspicuous, and has included a very large number of distinguished names. Conservatives of the good old school may tremble, if the faculty of trembling be still left to them, at the thought that a sacrilegious hand is to be laid upon this venerable institution. Amidst all the bewildering series of educational reforms which have taken place at the universities, the mathematical tripos seemed to be a sacred and unassailable institution. It may—let us hope that it will—receive fresh life under its new regulations ; but the very thought that it is capable of being improved is enough to startle those who were familiar with the Cambridge of pre-Commission days. Considerable changes had, indeed, been made from time to time in the mode of examining ; but hitherto they have not been of such a nature as in any degree to diminish the unique and special glory attached to the quaint title Senior Wrangler.

The old Cambridge system—the system which had grown into full development during the first half of this century—had, one may say, the apparent stability of a natural growth, when the first University Commission began to lay hands upon it. It was not only a well-understood system, but so thoroughly established and deeply rooted that true Cambridge men were incapable of conceiving that it could possibly be otherwise. It seemed to be part of the eternal order of things. It no more required to be justified by any aid external to itself than a planet or the solar system. It was there ; and nobody but the most daring sceptic could ask why it should be there. A speculative mind may of course question anything ; it may ask why an insect should pass through the stages of caterpillar, chrysalis and butterfly, but the ordinary naturalist is content to explain

that, as a matter of fact, such is the existing arrangement, and regards any discussion as to the possibility or desirability of a different order as beyond his sphere, if not beyond the sphere of human intelligence. The true Cambridge man took the same view of the academical organisation; the undergraduate developed into the Fellow, the Fellow into the incumbent of a college living, as the insect passed through its successive transformations. If some silly radical or wandering foreigner asked what was the use of the college system, whether it was calculated to promote education and so forth, he was simply ridiculous. There were, indeed, certain ostensible answers provided for the confutation of such cavillers, but the best answer was that the question was absurd. The university was its own end; its existence justified itself. You might ask how it had grown into its present state if you liked antiquarian discussions; but to ask why it should not be changed was like asking why men should not be made without stomachs. For practical purposes we are content to have a stomach, without asking why; and so the curiously complex system of the university was part of the fundamental data from which you started, not an accidental arrangement to be judged by its fitness for producing some assumed result.

All this has been changed; and people have begun to ask why? even in regard to senior wranglers. Meanwhile, let us admit that an institution which has thus developed by a kind of spontaneous and natural growth, has always something picturesque about it; that it is pleasant to contemplate in a time of restless change; and yet more that it has certain merits which the most ardent reformer should not altogether neglect. The picturesqueness will hardly be doubted. We have often thought, and we make a present of the suggestion to any one whom it may concern, that there could hardly be a better setting for a novel than one of the old colleges before the days of Commissions. The society described in the *Mill on the Floss* had not more of marked idiosyncrasy, of quaint tradition worked into its very structure, than the old college society of half a century back. The novelists who have touched the subject, as Thackeray in *Pendennis*, have for the most part spoken only of the undergraduates, and the undergraduate is pretty much like other young men. He had not been exposed to the influences of the place long enough to absorb its peculiar local colouring. We are thinking rather of the genuine don; the man who had lived for years amidst old buildings, on which every generation from the middle ages to the days of Victoria had left its mark; who, though not bound by vows, loved his college as the aged monk loved his monastery; to whom the college stood in place of wife and family; who held its traditions sacred, and resented the alteration of its trifling customs as sacrilege; who found all his social enjoyments in college feasts and orthodox rubbers of whist; whose furthest rambles were daily constitutionals along "Senior Wrangler's Walk" by the side of Hobson's Conduit, or to the summit of Gogmagog Range; who was as much at home in university politics and intrigues

for the headship of colleges as a parliamentary whip in the intricacies of political struggles; who sometimes developed into a cynical old bachelor, with rather too keen an appreciation of his famous vintages of port; and sometimes became the spiritual guide of a country parish, revisiting his old haunts when a feast was towards; and occasionally by good luck reaching a kind of *Nirvāṇa* in the delicious retirement of a Master's Lodge. The society in which such men were prominent figures had its failings, but there was in it plenty of real good-fellowship; it respected talent, and had a large share of intelligence; and, if the novelist might complain of a want of the feminine element, there were always cases pathetic enough in their way, if the pathos had been revealed to the portrayer of poor snuffy old Mr. Gilfil. A long engagement, with the pining girl in the distance, the stolid incumbent refusing with unreasonable obstinacy to exchange the vicarage for the churchyard, and the youthful lover dwindling into the peevish don, would suggest abundant motives for novelists in that vein.

We are digressing: but the old mathematical tripos seemed to be the natural product of the old order. There was something—so, at least, rash reformers were inclined to whisper—arbitrary about the system. They sometimes ventured to doubt whether the vast importance attached to success in the examination was really favourable to education. But such people went upon the assumption that the true end of a university was the improvement of the intellect: the true end was that vigorous, hard-headed men should win its prizes in a fair field. If a contest was incidentally good in an educational point of view, so much the better; but this was a secondary and incidental matter. The primary and essential thing was to be able to provide an automatic test which should say distinctly that A was worth 1,000 marks, and B worth only 975. Nothing could do this better than the mathematical tripos; and, accordingly, the mathematical tripos had a kind of sacred and inviolable character. Whilst it flourished, Cambridge would flourish; if it decayed, Cambridge would decay, and with Cambridge presumably the world.

The ceremony at which the senior wrangler received his degree was the outward and visible symbol of the whole system. To tamper with it would have seemed to your true Cambridge man as profane as a radical change in the mode of electing the pope would seem to a true Catholic. The college, the tutor, even the bedmaker, or "gyp," of the senior wrangler had a momentary share of his glory. To his humble competitors he was as imposing a spectacle as the Lord Chancellor is to the briefless barrister; he was at one of the culminating points of earthly glory. The sentiment still survives with some who have outlived many illusions. It is possible—as we know by experience—for a high wrangler to be a dull human being; but we cannot, to this day, look back to a senior wrangler and feel ourselves really to be of the same clay. Many a stern republican, who holds that monarchy is a mere sham, feels his

heart sink in presence of a real monarch; and our sensations in presence of these eminent persons are of the same kind.

Still, we may ask whether experience in any degree justifies the sentiment; whether the system were good or bad from an educational point of view, we may ask whether it has, in fact, succeeded in bringing out the ablest men. The question may be best answered by applying to the *Cambridge Calendar*; and we will briefly run over some of the facts. In the earlier lists there are not many names known to other than antiquarians. The first name we notice which has any kind of fame is that of Dodd, of Clare, who was a wrangler or a "senior optime" (the two classes are mixed in the first few lists) in 1750. He is called in a note the author of *Thoughts in Prison*, which is a delicate way of intimating that he was probably the first wrangler who was hanged. A little further on we find a man of whom a good Tory will perhaps say that he was the first who ought to have been hanged: the vigorous and acute radical Horne Tooke was a *senior optime* in 1758. In 1761 we find the first senior wrangler (Wilton) who afterwards reached the bench. In 1763 there is a more characteristic name: Paley, the senior wrangler of that year, represents the very type of the clear-headed, vigorous north-countrymen who have won so many triumphs in this field. One of the moderators in this year was Watson, of Trinity, who had been second wrangler in 1759, and who afterwards became Bishop of Llandaff. His *Anecdotes* give one of the most curious pictures extant of an old-fashioned variety of bishop. He thought himself a most exemplary and virtuous man, whilst it never even occurred to him that he ought ever to go near his diocese. He was, however, a man of great ability, and had he been on the right side in politics might not have had to complain that he was an instance of neglected merit—a luckless wretch with nothing but a bishopric in Wales and a rich professorship in Cambridge to comfort him in a pleasant country retirement in Windermere. In 1771, Law, afterwards Lord Ellenborough, was third wrangler; and in 1772 the senior wrangler was Pretyma (Tomlace), who had the good fortune to be the tutor of Pitt at Pembroke College, and who afterwards became Bishop of Winchester and biographer of his pupil. In 1774 the senior wrangler was Milner, of Queen's, a name of great Cambridge celebrity, though less familiar elsewhere, who was at one time a tutor of Pitt's friend, Wilberforce, and seems to have had a great influence upon the young man's mind. At Cambridge he was famed as a kind of local Johnson, and was for many years the ruler of the Conservative party. The second wrangler of 1776 was a man of very different type—the pugnacious and crotchety, versatile Gibbon Wakefield, scholar, theologian, and politician, who took the road which did not lead to preferment, and ended his days shortly after an imprisonment for his radical utterances. About the same time we have names of a more strictly academical fame. In 1778 the senior wrangler was Farish, a well-known mathematical professor; in 1783 the same place was gained by Wollaston, of scientific fame; and in the previous

year by Wood, whose name is indelibly associated with algebra in the minds of many generations of Cambridge men. In the same tripos (1782) is the great name of Porson, who, however, did only enough in mathematics to qualify him to win the classical prize of a chancellor's medal.

A period follows during which we find few names worth mentioning here. Professor Smythe was a wrangler in 1787, and Archdeacon Wrangham was third wrangler and first chancellor's medallist in 1790; but these names are known to few. There were some eminent students at Cambridge in these years, especially Coleridge and Wordsworth, who were both there about 1790. But, though Cambridge has been rich in poets, the poets have not apparently taken to the Cambridge system. In olden days, neither Milton nor Dryden seem to have found the place congenial; and, in our own, though Mr. Tennyson condescended to write a prize-poem, his name does not appear in the honour lists. Neither Coleridge nor Wordsworth were exceptions, nor—it need hardly be said—was Byron, a few years afterwards. Wordsworth's brother, afterwards Master of Trinity, was, we may notice, a wrangler in 1796. In 1794 we find a familiar name: Butler, of Sidney, afterwards the head-master of Harrow, and abused as such by Byron, was senior wrangler. His son, the present head-master, was senior classic in 1855. In the next year we find the first appearance of another name famous in a later generation at Cambridge: Selwyn, father of the bishop, was a senior optime and first chancellor's medallist in that year.

With the opening of the present century comes a remarkable series of senior wranglers. In 1801 the senior wrangler was Henry Martyn, the devoted missionary, whose fame in that respect is unique in the annals of the tripos; but amongst his successors in the honour were a number who took the more commonplace paths to success. In his own year, a feat was performed long famous in Cambridge tradition. Two brothers, Grant, were third and fourth wrangler and second and first chancellor's medallist, respectively: the third wrangler was afterwards Governor-General of Bombay; the fourth became Lord Glenelg. Kaye, afterwards Bishop of Lincoln, was senior wrangler in 1804; Turton, afterwards Bishop of Ely, in 1805; Pollock, afterwards Chief Baron of the Exchequer, in 1806; Bickersteth, afterwards Lord Langdale and Master of the Rolls, in 1808; Alderson, afterwards a Baron of the Exchequer, in 1809; and Maule, afterwards a Judge of the Common Pleas, in 1810. Thus, of ten successive senior wranglers, four became judges, two bishops, one achieved a glory of a higher kind, whilst of the remaining three, one (Starkie, 1803) was afterwards a professor. The third wrangler in Bickersteth's year was Blomfield (also first chancellor's medallist), afterwards Bishop of London, and the fifth wrangler was Adam Sedgwick, most charming of all scientific celebrities (with one living exception). With Cambridge men of this standing it naturally became an accepted principle that senior wranglers had a sort of pre-

scriptive right to grow into judges; but an examination of the later records fails to justify that belief. In the next ten years we find no judges, but some names of scientific interest. Herschel—afterwards Sir John—was the senior wrangler of 1813, the second being Peacock, afterwards Dean of Ely and astronomical professor; and 1816 was the famous year in which Whewell, the type of the true Cambridge man for many years, the man “whose foible was omniscience,” whom the prize-fighter grudged to the Church as obviously fitted for his own profession—the Whewell in whom, in spite of certain external harshnesses, all Cambridge men had learned to take a pride—was beaten by the unknown Jacob. Legends long circulated to account for this defeat; and it was told how Jacob had “run dark,” to use the only appropriate phrase, and thrown Whewell off his guard by professing to go out hunting, and really alighting to read mathematics at some distant village.

The position, however, for whatever reason, is not uncommon. In the year 1837 Professor Sylvester, in 1845 the present Sir W. Thomson, in 1854 the late Professor Clerk-Maxwell, and in 1867 the late Professor Clifford were second wranglers. These are certainly amongst the most brilliant mathematicians and physicists whom Cambridge has produced of late years, and they were beaten by men of less celebrity. This may point to the fact that originality is rather a disadvantage than otherwise in competitive examinations. The man succeeds best who is most receptive; and though receptiveness does not exclude originality, it does not necessarily accompany it in an equal degree. Another senior wrangler of high reputation at Cambridge (to resume our list) was King (1819), afterwards President of Queen's College, who was prevented, we believe, by ill-health from justifying his reputation. In 1823 we come to Airy, afterwards Astronomer Royal, and in 1825 to Professor Challis. In 1827 the famous mathematician De Morgan succeeded only in reaching the fourth place, the third being filled by Cleasby, afterwards a Baron of the Exchequer. The senior wrangler of 1828 was Perry, afterwards Bishop of Melbourne; and the sixth wrangler of the same year, as also the senior classic and first chancellor's medallist, was Professor Selwyn, who thus took one of the most brilliant degrees on record. His brother, the bishop, was second classic three years later, but near the bottom of the mathematical tripos. In 1829, the senior wrangler was Philpott, the present Bishop of Worcester, and the second wrangler Cavendish, the present Duke of Devonshire and Chancellor of the University. No member of the peerage, it seems, has ever taken such a degree until the present Lord Rayleigh was senior wrangler in 1865. For some time there follows no name of general celebrity. The year 1835 was remarkable for a degree which was long famous. The second wrangler of that year was Goulburn, son of the Right Honourable H. Goulburn, for many years member for the University. He was beaten by Cotterill, afterwards Principal of Brighton College and Bishop of Edinburgh; but he was senior classic and first chancellor's medallist.

So near an approach to supremacy in both studies has never been achieved. Whether it would have been followed by corresponding success in all is unknown ; for poor Goulburn died soon afterwards. It was of course said, and equally of course denied, that his death had been hastened by excessive intellectual exertion. A more melancholy case perhaps was that of Leslie Ellis, the senior wrangler of 1840, who made a profound impression upon all his contemporaries of the highest abilities as well as of singular charm of character. He was hopelessly crippled by a rheumatic fever soon afterwards, and doomed to a life of severe pain and forced inaction. We can only infer what he might have done from a few fragments and his share in the great edition of Bacon, in which Spedding—who took a second class in the classical tripos of 1831—was his collaborator.

In 1836, to return to the order of time, the second place was taken by Bishop Colenso, and in 1840 by Harvey Goodwin, the present Bishop of Carlisle. The following years were remarkable for senior wranglers of scientific eminence. In 1841 the senior wrangler was Stokes, in 1842 Cayley, and in 1843 Adams ; all of whom have since become mathematical professors at Cambridge ; and though the discovery of a planet may have made the name of Professor Adams better known to the outside world than that of his eminent colleagues, we do not presume to say which has penetrated the deepest into mysteries unintelligible to all but a select few. We know that Professor Cayley is in the very first rank of mathematicians ; but we are forced to take his greatness on faith. In 1845, as we have said, Sir W. Thomson was second wrangler ; the senior wrangler of 1848 was Todhunter, the author of many well-known treatises, and of 1853 the present Professor Tait. And here, for the moment, we pause ; for we are getting amongst the present generation, and therefore amongst men whose reputation may not yet correspond to their best achievements. The list, as we have hastily run through it, certainly seems to suggest one conclusion. There can be no doubt that great intellectual vigour has always been a necessary condition of success in these triposes. No one can be a very high wrangler without possessing rare mental qualifications. But it would appear, at first sight, that the kind of ability has changed ; and that whilst the senior wranglers of earlier years were men who satisfied Johnson's definition of genius, men, that is, of great general power applied to a particular pursuit, the later senior wranglers have been more commonly men of more specific taste for mathematical inquiry. The senior wrangler used to aim at the bench ; he is now more qualified for the professor's chair. Some obvious considerations may account for this. The recent development of our educational system has enormously increased the inducements to some kind of professorial career. The senior wrangler is very often a poor man, who has to make a living by his brains. His degree is, in fact, a certificate which will entitle him to preference if he chooses to become a candidate for a professorship. It is,

on the other hand, a very slight advantage if he chooses to go to the bar. It gains for him, at most, a prize fellowship, which may help to carry him through his early struggles. Though success at the bar may produce much more brilliant results, they are, of course, more distant and more precarious than those which are already secured to him if he turns his qualifications to immediate account. He has, therefore, a very strong motive for accepting the certainty of a modest competence instead of the uncertain prospect of legal success. To this, again, it must be added that the enormous increase in the demands of the tripos tells in the same direction. In the old days, a senior wrangler was often a man who had never opened Euclid till he went to Cambridge; and his whole stock of knowledge when he took his degree would perhaps be not more than is now desirable in a freshman who is to compete for high honours. The keen competition, which now begins long before entrance at the university, naturally limits the competitors to those who have a special aptitude for the study; and the encouragement of other studies at the university itself must draft off many who, in the old days, would have taken to mathematics, not because it was the most congenial, but because it was the only path to distinction. Till the establishment of the classical tripos in 1824, no one could gain university honours without some mathematical ability; and many eminent Cambridge men, as Macaulay, for example, have therefore failed to leave a name on the class-lists. Others, however, distinguished themselves in mathematics, who would, under a less narrow system which now prevails, have found other means of winning academical glory. It is therefore inevitable that the tripos should include a smaller proportion of men distinguished in after-life. We may still, indeed, find cases to the contrary. More than one senior wrangler of the last twenty years is eminent at the bar; and such men deserve all the more credit, from lawyers at least, in so far as they have taken to that thorny career in spite of greater temptations to stray in the flowery paths of science.

By looking briefly at the men who have won positions of recognised distinction we may see this more clearly. On the bench of bishops there are, of course, many distinguished university men. The Bishop of Llandaff, Dr. Ollivant, was sixth wrangler and first chancellor's medal-list (the same degree as Professor Selwyn) in 1821. The Bishop of Worcester (Philpott) was, as we have seen, senior wrangler in 1829; the Bishop of Winchester (Browne) twenty-third wrangler in 1832; and the Bishop of Carlisle (Goodwin) second wrangler in 1840. The other Cambridge bishops were chiefly distinguished in the classical tripos. The Bishop of Lincoln (Wordsworth) was senior classic in 1830, and the Bishop of Durham (Lightfoot) senior classic in 1851; Dr. Lightfoot was also a wrangler. The Bishops of Bath and Wells (Lord A. Hervey), of Hereford (Atlay), and of Truro (Benson) were first-class men in 1830, 1840, and 1852 respectively. The Bishop of Gloucester (Ellicott) was in the second class in both triposes in 1841, and the Bishop of Ely (Wood-

ford) took a similar degree in 1842. Amongst the judges we find only three names mentioned in the Cambridge tripos list. Mr. Justice Baggallay was fourteenth wrangler in 1839, and Mr. Justice Brett was a senior optime of the same year and college (Caius); whilst Mr. Justice Denman was senior classic of 1842, his second being the distinguished editor of *Lucretius*, Mr. Munro. Charles Kingsley, we may observe in passing, was ninth and last in the same first class. Passing to political celebrities, we may observe that the triposes have contributed some men of distinction to the present ministry, though we do not find any senior wrangler in that exalted sphere. The nearest approach is Mr. Leonard Courtney, who was second wrangler in 1855; Mr. Fawcett was seventh wrangler in the following year; Mr. Childers and Lord Hartington were senior optimes in 1850 and 1854. Besides these mathematical honours, Sir W. Harcourt was a classical first-class man in 1851, as was the present Lord Derby in 1848; and Mr. George Trevelyan was second in the first class of 1861, the first name being that of Mr. Abbott, the present head-master of the City of London School. Sir Charles Dilke, who, like Mr. Fawcett, is a member of Trinity Hall, was first in the law tripos of 1865. In the preceding ministry we do not find a single Cambridge name, after the secession of Lord Derby; a circumstance from which we decline to draw any inferences as to the political tendencies of the university.

Indeed, the most obvious inference from all such tests is that very little can be inferred. Universities and schools calmly speak of "producing" great men, when all that can be safely said is that they have not put an end to them. So when a list is given of men who, having distinguished themselves in examinations, have distinguished themselves in after-life, the inference is suggested that the examination must be an admirable test of merit. The truth is that the difference between a man of talent and a fool is so great that hardly any test could be devised which should bring them together. If the senior wranglers whom we have mentioned had been invited to a competition in whist, in law, philosophy, history, in almost anything except poetry, it is probable that they would have occupied much the same position. The test gives of course an advantage to the scientific as contrasted with the artistic and imaginative class of intellect; but amongst those to whom it is at all congenial, it can hardly help selecting the ablest. If we examined the classical and the other newer triposes, we should have a field wide enough for the display of most kinds of ability, and should probably find most of the names of the oldest Cambridge men. As Cambridge has presumably its fair share of such able men as can afford a university education, its examinations will probably continue to be full of names to be hereafter eminent. The occasional failure of examinations to pick out such men seems to be due to an obvious cause already hinted. Originality can never be adequately estimated by such measures, and originality is of course the great condition of success. Do all you can to exclude "cram,"

the man who has a docile mind, who is capable of becoming (as Carlyle informs us) a passive bucket to be pumped into, will always have a chance of comparing favourably with the genius who is content to be wayward and eccentric. Your poet is apt to dream when he ought ("ought" being used in the examiner's sense) to be learning. Your mathematician of genius will be trying problems of his own invention instead of plodding along the track; and your aspiring politician will be spouting nonsense at the Union, often, we may add in a whisper, to his great advantage. In truth, so far as our experience has gone, these irregular manifestations are in that sense more promising than distinction of the more recognised kind. Prize poems, for example, are a recognised topic of ridicule; and a young man who goes in for such a prize must have such a propensity for verse-making as to overcome his dread of ridicule. There can hardly be a better symptom; and we find accordingly that the list of prize poets includes some of the most eminent Cambridge names, and many perhaps compare not unfavourably with that of senior wranglers. We find in it, in fact, in the space of fifty years, the names of Whewell, Macaulay (twice), Praed (twice), Bulwer, Bishop Wordsworth (twice), Mr. Tennyson, Sir Henry Morris, Canon Farrar, Mr. F. W. Myers, and Professor Sydney Colvin, most of whom, it is true, were also distinguished in other ways. If we concluded that it was better and wiser to draw the inference that it was better to get a prize poem than a high wranglership we should be accused of preaching immoral doctrine. In truth, however, our conclusion is a very simple one, and perfectly unobjectionable. It is simply this, that university distinctions are attainable by the same qualities which lead to eminence in after-life; and therefore obtained for the most part by the man of genius if he cares to obtain them. But universities cannot of course make any adequate summary of a man's whole character; sometimes they recognise a merit which is too shrinking and confined within too delicate a frame to make itself felt in after-life; more often they have to put the plodding and industrious crammable youth on a level with the man of genius, who will distance him by an incalculable amount hereafter. All these and some other considerations are enough to explain why this little preliminary struggle should be a very inadequate prophecy of the wider struggle beyond. High promise has come to little, and great names have remained obscure. We do not find Mr. Darwin's name in the list of honours full of scientific celebrities; and we could mention names which represented extraordinary hopes destined to be completely deceived. But, for all that, we respect the senior wranglers, and could have been glad of such a distinction ourselves.

Pines to a Lady who was robbed of her Jewels.

WRITTEN SEVERAL YEARS AGO.

WHEN, jewel-girt, the priest to pray
Entered his holy place alone,
From Judah's God flashed forth a ray
Which gave a soul to every stone.

Ay, and in other lands men taught
How gems with secret power shone bright,
And that their changeless charm was fraught
With something of a spirit-light.

Dead is that dream, but none the less
Life's fountain through their lustre flows,
And fills each sparkling barrenness
With growths which blossom as the rose.

As we look back, a diamond ring
May Hope's white flag once more unfurl,
Love's blush around some ruby cling,
And Memories throb within a pearl.

Then, since no fresh gaud of to-day
Can match what vanished hours endear,
Let thy heart frankly have its way,
And sorrow without shame of fear.

Yet, sorrowing, on this faith repose,
That all who know and love thee feel
The richest of thy gems are those
No thief—not even Time—can steal.

FRANCIS HASTINGS DOYLE.

Pay the Debt.

CHAPTER XLII.

BOB AS A REFORMER.

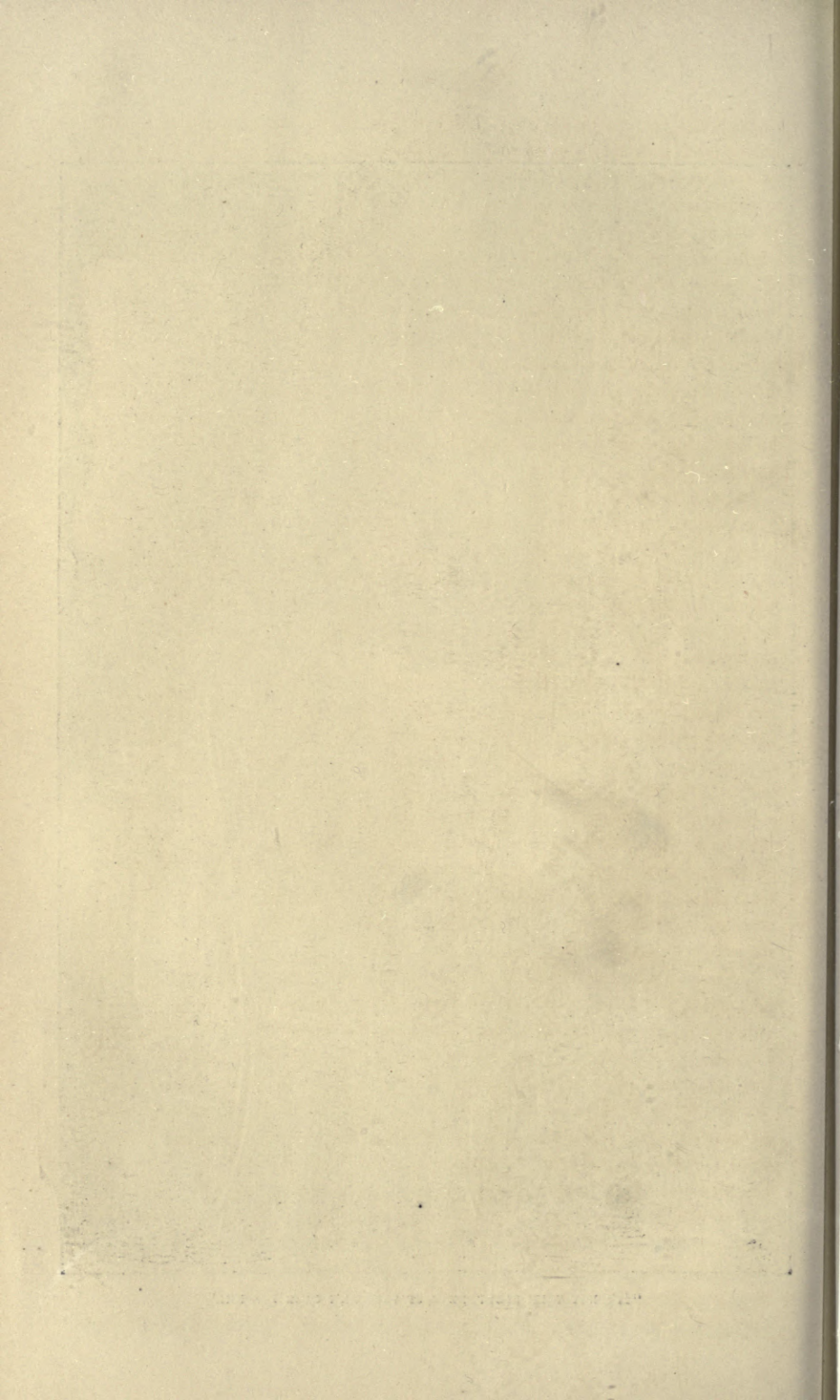


MR. SAGAR, like every one who has nothing to do, was a very busy person. There was hardly any kind of work which he did not touch, and he touched nothing of which he did not tire. His work was like his life, a perpetual spring—"the eternal boyhood of an Irishman," of which somebody speaks—beautiful and numberless beginnings, which, like an Irishman's promises, were leafy and luxuriant, but unfruitful. Leafy and luxuriant promises generally are. Now, though Mr. Sagar kept his own promises, his designs didn't. His life was like an artist's studio—all sketches. Bob was not without brains, but he had no staying power, and was thus outrun in the

race of life by men who were as dull and dogged as a mill-horse. However, he returned from India with a good pension, and plenty of time to begin a thousand things. Not that *all* his beginnings were aborted. Anything that could be begun and ended in a day was done. Hence his *opus magnum*, the inventory of the goods of the Grange. Bob threw himself into anything with a terrific force and fury for the first few hours, and if in that time it could be carried by assault, he carried it, not without the beat of drums and blare of trumpets. But there are not many things worth doing which can be so done, and Bob therefore did not do many things worth doing. On the other hand, there are few things which cannot be undone in a day, and Bob therefore was great at destruction—destruction, of course, as the first step to reconstruction. Mabel's cottage, for instance, was, within, in a state of the most perfect preparation for the introduction of every modern improvement. Under Bob's busy hands, the old order changed to



"IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT, DEAR, IF YOU CAN'T CARE FOR HIM."



yield place to the new, but unfortunately all things remained in this transitional state. Now all intermediate states, not excepting Purgatory, are uncomfortable, and it was so with Mabel's cottage. It was not comfortable. Bob was struck with the convenience of electric bells and clocks in the vast hotels where he stayed, and saw at a glance the advantage of their introduction into Mabel's cottage, where the ticking of a clock in one room could be heard in the other three—the doors being open. Bob accordingly tore down the bells, disembowelled the kitchen clock, and introduced for experiment three different kinds of batteries, one of which, being charged with nitric and sulphuric acid, filled the little place with the foulest fumes, and cost Bob a suit of clothes for himself, and a gown for the discreet Jane, his assistant. Everything, in fact, was in hushed preparation for the great improvement.

But it never came to birth. In truth, Bob was as sick as Jane of it in a day, and was glad to consign bells, batteries, and clock-bowels to the cellar "until he had a little more time." He hadn't a moment to spare at present from the pursuit of a rat which Jane had seen in the cellar and which besieged the house. At night, at least, no one dared hardly move from room to room, and as for the cellar and the beer, they were unapproachable. Bob, however, stormed the stronghold with extraordinary spirit. Armed simply with a pickaxe and a crowbar, he went down into the cellar, and in a few short hours had uprooted half its flags. Having assured himself by this simple means that he was on the wrong tack, he retired, leaving the cellar in this picturesque condition—as if it had been blown up with dynamite—and after a little consideration hit upon a happy and infallible ratsbane. He would purchase a couple of rats, tar them, and let them loose in the cellar, and so kill two birds with one stone. For he would not only banish the rats—since it was well known that these creatures could not bear the smell of tar—but he would, by the track of the tar, trace their route, block it up, and secure the cellar for all time against their return.

Jane objected strongly to this homœopathic remedy, but Bob chucked her under the chin, told her she was a goose, and by comparing a tarred rat to a policeman, brought the conscious blush to her cheek and silenced her remonstrances. When, however, the rats had been bought, tarred, and let loose in the cellar, matters were not much mended. One of them, which Bob had chosen for its great size and the vast tarable surface it presented, proved to be of the interesting sex, and in an interesting condition; and the cellar soon swarmed with rats and ratlings, who made themselves at once at home, burrowing easily under the unflagged surface Bob had prepared for them at some pains. Then Bob began, as usual, to tire of the enterprise, and made it over to the ratcatcher from whom he had bought the beasts. This professional gentleman proceeded as a preliminary to empty the beer barrel, probably under the impression that the rats had taken refuge there, and was reduced to a state of such

stormy intoxication that he was nearly as hard to get rid of as the rats. Bob then advised the introduction of a cat, a suggestion which, though brilliant, was not original, as Jane had had many battles upon this subject with Margaret, who had an instinctive and intense antipathy to cats. However, a cat was borrowed, introduced surreptitiously, and shut in the cellar with the best results, for which Bob took much credit to himself.

Meantime he was not idle, but made himself useful in many other ways in the house. In one room he took the lock off a door to free the bolt; in another he took the door off its hinges to cure a draught; he took down the gasolier in the drawing-room to ascertain if it was supplied with water, and he took Mabel's sewing-machine to pieces to silence an irritating squeak it made at each revolution. It is true that things were left long in the state of chaos which precedes creation—the door without its lock, the room without its door, the drawing-room in darkness, and the sewing-machine in bits; but eventually everything was set right by the British workman whom Bob had at last to call in to put the finishing touch to his work. For Bob spoke of the reconstructive work of these hirelings as a Stephenson might speak of the work of navvies in the employ of his contractor.

"Rather an improvement, eh?" he would say, with the utmost self-complacency, of something which had at last been put back into the state in which it was before he had meddled with it.

Fortunately for the tormented house, however, Bob found a new field for reform—no other, indeed, than political reform, for which, perhaps, his cutting down of domestic upas-trees was the best possible training. Besides, Bob was as chokeful of grievances as any other old Indian. In India grievances—like livers—are forced as in a hot-house, in a rank soil of idleness and luxury, and under a blazing sun. And Bob's grievances were the more grievous from being driven inward, so to speak, and suppressed, since the full and free expression of them would have made matters tenfold worse. Therefore Bob's wrath was like the wrath of the dumb, intemperate because inarticulate. But now there came to him in Wefton, in the shape of a general election, a golden chance of lifting the lever and letting off the pent-up pressure of years. For who should come down to seek the suffrages of the electors of Wefton but an old friend of Bob's, Bindon Crowe, Esq., barrister-at-law. Bindon was a clever compatriot of Bob's, who had gone to India, realised there a rapid fortune at the bar, and then hurried back to England to get his foot on the first step of the lawyer's ladder of promotion, a seat in the House. Bindon was not what you would call a well-principled man; in fact he had to apply for principles to his agent, a first-class Wefton solicitor, John Coates, of the firm of Coates, Jingle, and Candy. Bindon, being under the impression that Pickles was still a Liberal, had composed speeches, which almost convinced himself, against the suicidal policy of Disintegration; *i.e.* the separation of Church and

State, of England and Ireland, of Great Britain and the Colonies, of the Empire and the sun, which would soon set upon it if the Socialist, Liberationist, Home Ruler, and Cosmopolitan had their way.

"But Pickles has turned Tory," objected the practical Mr. Coates, to whom Bindon was delivering an epitome of his speech with much fluency and fervour. Bindon looked blank for a moment, but quickly recovered himself.

"You should hear me out, Mr. Coates; I'm at the same time in favour of Home Rule in the best and broadest sense. I'm not against the Church being allowed to rule herself without being hobbled and hampered by the State, and I think England had much better rule herself and attend to domestic reforms than attempt to rule Europe. I don't believe in having a finger in every pie, you know, and I don't see what business we have to interfere with the Home Rulers of Afghanistan or Zululand. As for the Colonies and Ireland, they ought to know best where the shoe pinches. We English are too much like the shoemaker in *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*, who insisted that he knew better than M. Jourdain whether the shoes he made for him hurt or no. Faith," said Bindon, beginning now to fall in love with his new programme, or rather with his own setting of it; "faith! it wouldn't be a bad cry, Mr. Coates, 'True Home Rule!'—Home Rule at home and abroad; in Church and State; in England and Ireland, Canada, Australia, Zululand, and Afghanistan. Mind your own business; sweep before your own door. That would fetch them, eh?"

"You've got the right principle, my dear sir, but you must push it a step farther. The people of Wefton are Home Rulers to a man—to a man. They mind their own business, as you say, Mr. Crowe, and don't concern themselves with these imperial questions at all. They don't want to interfere in other folks' affairs, but they don't want other folks to interfere in their affairs either. There's vaccination, for instance, my dear sir; they don't want compulsory vaccination. Then there's flogging in the army and navy; there are some Wefton men in her Majesty's uniform, and that a Wefton man should be liable to be flogged, sir, is monstrous. Then, sir, there's Local Option; that's a Home Rule measure, if you like, Local Option; a most popular measure. Then there's the Burials Bill. The Wefton folk are so independent, my dear sir, that they can't bear to be oppressed even in death. They must be buried when and where and how they like. Then there's—let me see," said Mr. Coates, counting off upon his fingers the subjects of any political interest to the Weftonians; "the Burials Bill, Local Option, Vaccination, Flogging in the Army and Navy—Flogging in the Army and Navy—ah, yes, the Buzzers Bill."

"The Buzzers Bill; what the deuce is that?"

"It's a bill against the use of steam-whistles in factories, which has, my dear sir, done more to alienate the loyalty of the working folk of Wefton than any measure of our time—any measure of our time—a most

vexatious measure, which must be repealed, Mr. Crowe, before the discontent grows to a dangerous head."

"Am I to say nothing on home or foreign politics?" asked Bindon petulantly, for he could talk endlessly on either subject and on either side of either.

"I should fill in with them, Mr. Crowe, for the newspapers. But the main questions are those I have mentioned—and trade. Trade has been very bad; harvests have been bad for years, very bad. You must make the most of that, Mr. Crowe."

"We must change all that," said Bindon laughing. "What would you suggest, Mr. Coates? Bring in a ten hours' bill for the sun, eh?"

"My dear sir, you must show that the sun had nothing to do with it, or if it had, that the sun is on the Liberal side. 'The stars in their courses,' you know. You must point out to them that the years of famine are always the years of Tory rule, and the years of plenty the years of Liberal rule. You must bring in the Corn Laws and Free Trade, and so on. But the things of real interest and importance to the people at large are Compulsory Vaccination, the Buzzers, the Burials Bill, Flogging in the Services, Local Option, and bad trade. Stick to them, and the thing is done."

"But how about the publicans?"

"We must take every important public-house for our committees, my dear sir, and you must explain to each how greatly he will benefit by Local Option."

"Benefit?"

"To be sure. If his house is shut up, he must receive four times its value for compulsory expropriation; if it is not shut up, he gets all the custom of his neighbour's house, which is."

"So he does, by Jove!" exclaimed Bindon, delighted at the prospect of hauling in publicans and teetotallers in the same net. "But," he suggested after a short pause, "there are the Home Rulers. They are awkward customers to meddle with, one way or another."

"Not they, my dear sir. If you call it 'home rule' we shall lose two votes for every one we gain: but call it 'Justice to Ireland,' which means just as much or as little, and we have the Irish without losing the English vote. What the Liberal party want, Mr. Crowe, at this crisis, is a man who will divide them least, and to do that you must be vague. Give them a blank cheque, you know, Retrenchment, Reform, Religious Equality, Justice to Ireland; a great word, like a great-coat, will fit anyone."

"My head is twice as big as yours,
They therefore needs must fit,"

quoted Bindon.

"John Gilpin? Ay, and he dropped them on the road—for why? they were too big," responded Mr. Coates, looking slyly and suggestively at his client, "What a good many of you gentlemen do on the road to

St. Stephen's, Mr. Crowe, drop your pledges—for why? they were too big—ha, ha, ha!" with a laugh which would have revolted a righteous Radical, but in which, we regret to say, Mr. Bindon Crowe joined. Mr. Coates, thus encouraged, continued his sage instructions.

"There's another cue we might take from our Liberal leaders, Mr. Crowe. It's not only a good thing to have pledges wide enough to fit anyone, but it's not a bad thing to have two sets of pledges, one set for the Radical and another set for the Whig. I don't mean of course—of course not—that you should promise one thing to a Whig and another thing to a Radical, but that you should put your pledges differently—give them neat to the Radical, and water them down a bit for the Whig. A great deal depends upon the light you put things in, my dear sir; what looks blue by daylight, looks green by candle-light, and the same political colour looks different in different lights. There are our leaders, for instance, Mr. G—— and Lord H——. There are not two honestest men in England, I should say—not in England. Yet you see, while Lord H—— roars as gently as any sucking dove for the stalls, Mr. G—— roars till it would do any man's heart good to hear him for the gallery."

"Ay, begad, they're like Face and Subtle in the *Alchemist*," chuckled Bindon, whose political leanings, such as they were, inclined to Conservatism. Mr. Coates knew not the *Alchemist*.

"Well, my dear sir, in choosing canvassers we must take a leaf out of their book, and employ Home Rulers for the Irish, Whigs for men of position and education, and Radicals for the Dissenters and proletariat. Then your views will get to be thoroughly interpreted, thoroughly interpreted, my dear sir."

Now it was to this piece of golden counsel that Bob was indebted for his political employment. Mr. Bindon Crowe, on the day of his receiving it, came upon Bob in the coffee-room of the "Queen," to his amazement.

"Bob Sagar!"

"Bindon!"

"What wind has blown you here of all places?" asked Bindon, with a moment's misgiving that Bob had come upon the same errand as himself.

"I came to see a friend, and I've found two, my boy. And what's brought you here of all places?"

"I came to woo, Bob."

"To woo? Have you seen Dick Burkitt lately, Bindon?" Bob asked solemnly.

"Burkitt? No."

"Faith, then, Bindon, I'd go see him if I were you before I committed myself," said Bob, with a nod.

"What! Is Dick married? Poor devil! he was always unlucky. Do you remember his falling into Bastable's clutches?"

"Ay, begad, and his being pulled up by old McClintock. He had

a squeak for it then, but he's run in now, and no mistake. He goes about in the clubs like a scarecrow, and frightens all the fellows out of the noose. You go and see him, my boy; take my advice."

"Too late, Bob."

"You're engaged?"

"I'm married, old boy, and a father. I've a stake in the country now, Bob, and I must look after its interests. It's the constituency I've come to woo and to win. Member for Wefton, Solicitor-General, Attorney-General, Lord High Chancellor of England!"

Bob listened breathless to this modest programme.

"You'll do it, too!" he cried, with extorted admiration, given rather to the brass than the brains of his old school, college, and Indian chum.

"Of course I'll do it, with your help, my boy. I remember how you used to fire away at the Historical." And indeed, Bob, in those old Dublin days, had been "the Rupert of debate," first in the Philosophical, and afterwards in the Historical Society, answering to the Union in Oxford and Cambridge. In those dim days of old he far outshone the sucking Lord Chancellor who had since far outstripped him.

"Ah, that tap's run out, Bindon, long ago," sighed Bob.

"Not it. You're like an old pump; you only want priming to spout as well as ever. And it's the old liquor too, my boy, Kinahan's LL Genuine Irish Whisky. Home Rule—Ireland for the Irish—'Who fears to speak of '98?' Only we must let it down a bit for English consumption."

"Why, you used to be an Orangeman, and pitch into me as a snake that stung the bosom of my Alma Mater in which I was warmed, and invoke another St. Patrick to banish such pestilent vermin from the country they cursed."

"I've learnt the error of my ways, Bob. Not too late, I hope," pleaded this exemplary penitent, who then proceeded to put his programme before Bob, not with Mr. Coates' cynical frankness, for Bob, among his other weaknesses, held fast by his political principles.

"We'll do it," cried Bob enthusiastically.

"Of course we'll do it," reiterated Bindon.

CHAPTER XLIII.

BOB AS AN ORATOR.

WE are still some way off the reason for Mr. Sagar's most mysterious disappearance from Wefton, but we are making for it as fast as the importance of the matter will permit us. Corporal Trim could not have been more eager to tell the story of "the King of Bohemia and his Seven Castles." Besides, we have to fill the stage with a divertisement

of some kind while the carpenter is preparing the next scene. The interval of a year takes some time to fill in.

By a lucky chance Tarbutt, who was to have opposed Josiah Pickles at the approaching election, gave offence to the Liberal caucus. This caucus, composed of Dissenters, who were accustomed to choose their ministers by a competitive examination in preaching and to keep them up to the mark afterwards by a criticism which was frank to brutality, had stretched poor Tarbutt on the same bed of Procrustes. Tarbutt was not thin-skinned by any means, and stood all the heckling and hectoring without wincing, but could not succeed in satisfying the Tooley Street tailors. On the contrary he succeeded in giving offence to the most influential, that is, the most wealthy, of their number, a man named Jagger, a machine-maker, a self-made man, whose education just enabled him to write and spell his name correctly. Mr. Tarbutt, upon being brutally bullied at a meeting by Mr. Jagger, ventured in reply to object to "the pragmatistical dogma of Mr. Jagger." Mr. Tarbutt, being half-educated and of Scotch extraction, always used the very longest and hardest words at his command. Mr. Jagger jumped up and appealed to the chairman for protection, at least from "such blackguard language as that." Mr. Tarbutt mildly defended the words as innocent in themselves and innocently meant. The chairman, an oil and colour merchant, ruled that the words were no doubt very offensive, but that they had probably slipped from Mr. Tarbutt in the heat of debate. Mr. Tarbutt instead of apologising laughed, and the laugh exasperated Mr. Jagger to use language so outrageous as to rouse Mr. Tarbutt to a retort which cost him his candidature.

Thus the caucus, with the election close upon them, were at sea for a candidate. Local jealousies prevented the choice of one of their own number, and there was no time to look abroad for a suitable man. At this juncture Bindon Crowe turned up, a man of brains and "brass," not only in Bob Sagar's sense, but in the Yorkshire sense of the word. For Bindon had both made and married a fortune. Thus Bindon stepped at once into Mr. Tarbutt's shoes. He rather overdid his part, but that was a fault on the right side; the only difficulty the caucus had with him was to cool and control him. It was with extreme reluctance he could be dissuaded from going in for the Disestablishment and Disendowment of the Church, and reducing the Bishops to be doorkeepers in the House of Lords. This, the caucus considered, was not yet within the range of practical politics, and Bindon therefore had to bow to their decision with as good a grace as he could. For the rest, they approved of his principles, but suggested that he should moderate his expression of them, which indeed was a little too, too strong.

Thus Bindon's chances were good, and were bettered beyond all expectation by Bob. He was told off to secure the Irish vote, which was strong and solid, and was so successful not merely as a canvasser but as an orator, that his compatriots plumped like one man for his

friend. Bob carried them away with an eloquence which was after their own heart, fluent, fiery, and imaginative, full of daring illustrations and exaggerations and relieved by ready, racy, and rollicking bursts of humour. He painted piteous pictures of Ireland, describing her as not unlike the Hall of Eblis in *Vathek*, in herself glorious as the mind of man could conceive, with everything the eye loves to see, or the ear to hear, or the hand to handle, or the senses to enjoy, but there was no enjoyment. The unhappy inhabitants, like the doomed multitude in the Hall of Eblis, whose right hands hid hearts on fire for ever, were plunged in restless and ceaseless misery, which they had to hide, since their tyrants held it to be treason even to disclose it. Then Bob would paint the millennium which the return of his friend Bindon was to hasten, when the accursed Saxon would have to take his iron heel from Erin's neck, and the rapacious landlord would have to withdraw his griping hand from her pocket; when her daughters would once more smile like her lovely plains, and her sons again stand erect and strong as her towering hills; when plenty, like her rivers, would flow everywhere and for ever; when, to put all in one word, the tenant would own the land he tilled, and the landlord would have to till what little land he was allowed to own. (Frantic applause.) Bob's eloquence always got out of hand towards the end of a speech, and hurried him into the rankest and rottenest socialism.

There was, too, another contrast on which Bob was eloquent besides that between the Ireland of to-day and of to-morrow, the contrast between the two candidates, Mr. Bindon Crowe and Mr. Pickles. He described Mr. Crowe's brilliant university career (Mr. Crowe had carried off one prize, that for putting the weight at the university athletic sports), and the rich rewards which Ireland, England, and the three learned professions had held out to him if he would stay at home. But no; Mr. Crowe's heart had been stirred to its depths by the tales of Saxon oppression brought by every mail from that Ireland of the East—India. Thither he would go and devote the best years of his life in a foreign and far-off land, and in a deadly climate, to the defence of those defenceless and down-trodden millions—aliens to him in race, in creed, in colour, bound to him only by the bond of a common oppression and a common oppressor. It is true that Mr. Crowe had come back from India. Was it merely because his health was shattered in that cruel climate, and his energies impaired by an unequal struggle of twenty years with bayonet-backed tyranny? No; though those twenty years had left their mark upon his body, had silvered his hair, bowed his frame, brought down his strength in his journey, and shortened his days, his spirit they could not blanch, or bow, or break; it was still what it was and where it was, foot to foot with the foe; and he came back to England to give him battle in a better field, to stem the torrent of these terrible abuses, not at their mouth in India, but at their source in the British House of Commons. He came back to plead the common

cause of India and Ireland in that stern Star Chamber. But how was he to enter it? He thought of his native town, Ennis, that "pole-star of the south," as its greatest poet, Dan Dermody, had called it with exquisite propriety, but he knew too well that no representative of an Irish constituency had a chance of a hearing in an alien and intolerant assembly. He must seek this honour from—might he not say, confer this honour on?—an English constituency; but an English constituency in which the dear old country was weightily and worthily represented. He had chosen Wefton, and he had chosen well. (Wild cheering.) He had come to Wefton as he had gone to India, to defend the defenceless and represent the unrepresented. For who represented the Irishmen of Wefton? Mr. Pickles? Yes, as the cuckoo represents the sparrows she smothers in their own nest. He had got into the nest under false pretences, and now that he was big enough he showed his true colours. His true colours? Were they his true colours? Bedad, nobody knew. He read in the *Wefton Witness* that morning a list of the Liberal candidates in the Parliament just dissolved in which Mr. Pickles' name did not appear; but at the foot of the list was a note explaining the omission. The editor had no return of Mr. Pickles' politics later than the day before yesterday, so he couldn't safely count him. Faith, the poor editor was like Paddy Burke, the omedhaun of Clonakilty.

"Paudheen," said his master, "did ye count the litter of pigs?"

"I did, yere honour, barring one little one, and he ran about so I couldn't count him at all at all."

But if there was some doubt as to whom Mr. Pickles represented, there was no doubt at all as to whom he did *not* represent. He did not represent the Irishmen of Wefton. The Irish in Wefton had no more bitter enemy. Was there a single Irishman in his works? Was there a single Irishman in his service? Was there an Irishman tolerated even in his Institute? cried Bob, drawing a bold bow at a venture. Nay, it was well known that "no Irish need apply" to him even for justice on the bench. And this man, who treats you as outlaws, asks you for your vote. (Three groans for Josh, given with heart-shaking savageness.) Then there was a surging towards the platform, by which a woman had her baby nearly crushed. Bob, with great presence of mind, stooped over and had the baby handed up to him, to the frantic delight of the audience. It was a great stroke for Bob, though not, perhaps, for the baby, which he held by the neck and heels as if he was measuring it, and which howled thereat like a demon. "Give it the breast, sir. Lord bless you, sir, give it the breast," shouted a facetious youth in the gallery in an accent of life and death earnestness. (Roars of laughter, during which the mother was hoisted on to the platform, and received the racked infant with a grateful curtsy.) I'm not a mother myself, resumed Bob in a plaintive tone, but faith, I'm as fit to nurse a baby as Mr. Pickles is to nurse a constituency. He gives it the bottle instead of the milk of human kindness. (This allusion to Mr. Pickles being a

brewer was taken up in a moment and uproariously received.) "And I tell you what, boys, I'd rather send that baby to Parliament as your representative than Mr. Josiah Pickles. It would make a deal more noise there, and if it did do little good, it 'ud do no mischief. Yes, by George, if you had to choose between Josh and the baby, I'd say, 'plump for the baby,' for the same reason that Mick Molloy told me yesterday he stuck an old hat in his broken window, not to let in the light, but to keep out the rain." Then he proceeded to describe the millennium which the baby would live to see, and of which they were now to lay the foundation stone by the election of Mr. Crowe.

We've given but a meagre epitome of one of Bob's speeches, all of which, by the way, owed their success rather to the manner than the matter at the command of the orator. Bob's jovial, genial manner, rolling voice, and rich Clare brogue, put on double strong for the occasion, were irresistible with an Irish audience. And not the Irish only, but the English Radicals, flocked to hear him as his fame spread, and Bob for the nonce became the most popular man in Wefton with his own party. To the other side he was, of course, proportionately detestable. Now if the Radicals had the best speakers—as truly they had—on their side, the Tories had the best caricaturists, and poor Bob therefore was gibbeted in every shop-window in Wefton. He and Bindon were sometimes represented as "carpet-baggers," Bindon as thin as a lath, and Bob as fat as Falstaff. Indeed, Falstaff was the usual character in which Bob figured when he was not represented as a carpet-bagger or as a wild Irishman. In one cartoon as Falstaff one of his wild exaggerations streamed out of his mouth, while underneath was the quotation, "These lies are like their father that begets them, gross as a mountain, open, palpable." In another a piece of sleuthing blarney was on his lips, and underneath the quotation, "Didst thou never see Titan kiss a dish of butter?" In another he was represented as spouting a high-falutin panegyric on Erin to an audience wholly hidden from him under his enormous paunch, and underneath, "How now, my sweet creature of bombast! How long is't ago, Bob, since thou savest thine own knee?" till poor Bob, like Warren Hastings, began to believe himself the monster his enemies painted him. He went privately and got himself weighed—232 lbs. It wasn't so monstrous. But perhaps his stomach was disproportionately prominent. He looked at it in and out of the glass twenty times a day from every point of view except that of which his audience in the cartoon (sitting as it were under the shadow of a great rock) had the command. He yearned to ask an impartial opinion on the point, but it was a difficult and delicate subject to broach, even to a friend. Besides, the only friend he could broach it to, Bindon, was as jocose on the subject as the cartoons themselves. To him Bob was always "Sweet Jack," "Plump Jack," or "Sir John Sack and Sugar;" and Bob's occasional melancholy meditations upon this infirmity of the flesh, were mocked by the advice, "A plague of sighing

and grief, it blows a man up like a bladder." Thus Bob's trouble, like all incommunicable miseries, was consuming. For the present, however, the excitement of the contest and the opportunities of revenge it gave him on the enemy kept him from brooding over it. If the windows abused him, the walls flattered him, for "Mr. Robert Sagar will address &c." appeared on every dead wall in letters large as those announcing the appearances of the candidates themselves. And if a new caricature of him appeared every morning, a new oratorical triumph consoled him every evening. For Bob never tired of speaking, and his audiences never tired of hearing him. They would have thought themselves repaid for being packed like herrings in a barrel, if they had only seen Bob come rolling on to the front of the platform, with a face like the welcome of an Irish hearth, frank, free-and-easy, glowing, and generous, and heard him take his revenge, as he always did in the first few sentences. "Well, boys," he would say, in a brogue round and rich as a roll of Cork butter; "well, boys, what's the news with ye to-night? Have ye seen my new portrait?" Then, with a startling change of manner, "Isn't it disgraceful? For what do you think they call me now?" half a minute's pause, during which you might have heard a pin drop, for Bob's rage seemed so savage that everyone expected the announcement of a new and abominable cartoon. "*They call me* AN IRISHMAN." At this unexpected calumny there was of course a roar of laughter, all the more hearty for the preceding suspense. "Ay, ye may laugh," continued Bob, without the least relaxation of muscle or manner, "but a man had better be called a thief than an Irishman in this country; and Josh knows that, and takes advantage of it, and thinks he'll win the election by it, and blackguards me and you and our country in every window in Wefton, and then—asks you for your vote," with a sudden drop of the voice which was very effective. "Ye'll give it to him, won't ye? Ye'll go to him, and ye'll say to him, 'Mr. Pickles, yere honour, don't be too hard on us. You shut us out from your Institute, you shut us out from your works, you shut us out from justice when you're on the bench, you'd shut us out from Wefton if you could, ay, and from England if you could. But ye'll not shut us out from the polling-booths, yere honour, will ye? Ye'll allow us to vote for ye? God bless yere honour, *do* now.' Maybe he'll let ye. If not, ye'll have to put up with Mr. Bindon Crowe, who is only one of yourselves, only an Irishman, who is not ashamed of his country, and not ashamed of his family" (here a significant pause to let the audience take in the allusion to Mr. Pickles' neglect of his niece, which was taken in accordingly with intense gusto); "and not ashamed of his colours. He doesn't change his colours like the chameleon to suit the prevailing hue—yellow when yellow is at the top, blue when blue. No, he's not ashamed of his colour, though it's not blue, and it's not yellow, but green. That's his colour, boys, and to that he'll stick, as nature sticks to it, for the blue goes with the spring, and the yellow with the autumn, but green lives and lasts all the year round.

"When laws can stop the blades of grass
 From growing as they grow;
 And when the leaves in summer time
 Their colour dare not show;
 Then he'll change that colour too
 He wears in his caubeen,
 But till that day, please God, he'll stick
 To the wearing of the green."

Bob might have been giving out a hymn, for the audience rose like one man, and sang the truly spirit-stirring song, *The Wearing of the Green*, amid the wildest excitement.

From the foregoing specimen it will be seen that Bob's eloquence was dramatic, and gave scope for good acting, and to this it owed its success, for Bob was a born actor. As with every successful speaker, it was not what he said but how he said it, that told, and an extract from his speeches gives no better idea of their effect than the mere reading of *The Wearing of the Green* gives an idea of its effect when sung by a crowd of excited Irishmen.

Anyhow, Bob's eloquence, such as it was, answered its purpose. Every Irishman in Wefton, out of jail or a sick bed, went to the poll and voted for Bindon, and the Irish vote turned the election.

Bindon Crowe, Esq.	.	.	7,341
Josiah Pickles, Esq.	.	.	6,212
Majority for Crowe	.		1,129

It was a glorious triumph, of which Bob deserved much of the credit and assumed it all. The poll was no sooner declared late on Thursday night than Bob anticipated the candidates by starting up and in stentorian tones thanking the electors. It was Bob, too, not Bindon, who was chaired, a really stupendous honour when his weight is considered. Of course, two days later he appeared in a cartoon as Falstaff in the buck-basket, coiled in it like a colossal snake, covered with filthy Irish rags, and carried by twenty staggering men to be pitched into the Irish Channel. This cartoon Bob never saw. He had disappeared from Wefton. Instead of waiting to enjoy (and no man would have enjoyed them more) the golden opinions bought from all sorts of people to be worn now in their newest gloss, he had fled, no man knew why or whither. He might have been burked by the janissaries of the furious Pickies for all anyone knew, but Mabel and Mabel only knew that some awful and ineffable business summoned him away. Speculation was rife about this grave mystery. His political friends hinted that he was hurried off by telegram to Ireland to advise Mr. Parnell. His foes gave out that he was hurried off to jail to join the Claimant on a kindred charge of forgery. Bindon believed he had gone to pick up a seat somewhere for himself, for Bob had more than once bragged to him of this being in his power. Mabel imagined from his sad and solemn and mysterious

leave-taking that he had been summoned to help some old friend out of a horrible scrape. He had told her (the day after the election and two days before she heard from Lawley of George's fate) that he had to leave Weston at once on very private and pressing business, but what it was, where it took him, and how long it would keep him, he had not hinted. The truth was, Bob had become an Omphalopsychyte. Those thrice accursed cartoons had brought on stomach on the brain. An advertisement of a famous medicine with the attractive heading "No more Stomachs" caught his eye in the *Weston Witness*. The advertisement referred to an article in the *Lancet*. The article in the *Lancet* said it was either double or quits, but that whether the medicine aggravated or abated the stomach, the patient must take it in retirement. Double or quits! It was an awful risk. He would risk it. He did. In three weeks he left his lonely cottage in Wales to get to the nearest scales. He was 263 lbs.!

CHAPTER XLIV.

TWO MORE PROPOSALS.

DURING the year which has elapsed since we last saw Mabel, Lady Saddlethwaite contrived that she should meet Lawley occasionally and hear of him continually; and all that she saw and heard of him forced her to feel that he was more deeply and wretchedly in love with her than ever. And, indeed, Lawley was not happy about his prospects. Lady Saddlethwaite admitted that the only symptom she could see of the softening of Mabel's sorrow was her willingness, or rather eagerness, to talk about George and his fate—a subject from which she shrank in the first weeks of her bereavement. On the other hand, it is true, Lawley's love for her was certainly the next thing in her thoughts and among her troubles. Lady Saddlethwaite had not the least doubt in the world that Mabel's yielding was only a question of time, though of a longer time than she had anticipated; but Lawley was not sanguine. He had all a lover's impatience, without a lover's hopefulness.

"I am crying for the moon, Lady Saddlethwaite."

"I don't think she's quite so changeable as that," she answered smiling, "but she'll change."

"There's not much sign of it."

"There's every sign of it. She thinks about you almost as much as about him."

"Yes, but very differently. She thinks of me as a creditor to whom she owes what she can't pay. It's not so, but I can see she thinks it is so, and that's against me. A woman likes to give her love, not pay it, Lady Saddlethwaite."

"I thought we were supposed to pay it. You first give us your love and we return it; isn't it so? And that's the debt which is on Mabel's

mind, Mr. Lawley. Not her life, which she owes you also, but your love, which she thinks a great deal more of, and which she is bound to pay you back one day."

"Do you think so?" eagerly.

"Of course I think so, and you know that I think so. What else have I been saying for a year?"

"For a year!" he echoed with a sigh.

"Yes; a year. What would you have? Would you have the funeral baked meats furnish the marriage tables?"

"But it seems no nearer now than a year ago," with another and profounder sigh.

"It's a year nearer; that's all. It looks the same on the surface, but her heart is being slowly undermined."

"Lady Saddlethwaite, I'd give all I have in the world to think so."

"That's why you don't think so. The wish is not always father to the thought, Mr. Lawley, not when the wish is a passion. But it's not in human nature that she should hold out much longer. A girl who is always thinking and talking of you, and is almost as miserable about it as you are!"

It was quite true, and Lady Saddlethwaite had taken good care to make it so. In spite of her love, or rather because of her love for Mabel, she kept her wretched by dwelling continually on Lawley's wretchedness.

"Mr. Lawley has been here again this morning, Mabel, and has been making love to me as usual."

"I think I should accept him if I were you, Lady Saddlethwaite," with an assumption of gaiety.

"I am glad to hear you say so, dear, for you are me in this case. I'm only the Talking Oak, and you're Olivia."

"What would you have me do, Lady Saddlethwaite?" in a distressed voice.

"I'd have you keep him as long as Rachel kept Jacob; seven years, or fourteen, was it? if he wasn't such a bore to me. But, to tell you the truth, dear, one year of him is enough for me. You know how I hate to have unhappy faces about me, and to have this knight of the rueful countenance come every other day, and sit, and speak, and look like a lost soul glaring through the gates of Paradise, is too much, really. I can't well tell him to go about his business, you know. But you could, and you ought, too, if you don't care for him."

"But I do care for him—only not as he wishes, not as he deserves."

"Oh, if you are only anxious about what he wishes, I have no doubt he will be satisfied with what you can give him. But, speaking seriously, Mabel dear, it makes me wretched to see how unhappy he is about you; more unhappy, I think, every time I see him. You should put him out of pain; you should, indeed, dear. If you feel you do not and cannot care for him, tell him so once for all. It will be best for

both. It couldn't make him more wretched than he is, and you will be easier when you are no more reminded of his misery. For of course he will leave the neighbourhood—leave the country, probably. He is so chivalrous that he will do what he can to help you to forget him, if he is persuaded that the thought of him gives you pain."

Mabel sat silent, looking straight before her, her hands lying palm upwards in her lap, with the fingers intertwined and pressed convulsively together. She looked a piteous picture of distress, and moved Lady Saddlethwaite with remorse for the pain she had given and had meant to give for her good.

"It's not your fault, dear, if you can't care for him," she said, standing over Mabel and smoothing back her hair with her hand soothingly.

"You mean love him—love him as I loved—as I loved—— My love died with him. I cannot bring it back to life. What shall I do, Lady Saddlethwaite?" looking up helplessly and appealingly into the kind face above her.

"Do you think he would make you happy, Mabel?"

"It's not that; but should I make him happy?"

"It's the same thing, dear. He'll never be happy without you in this world; I know that, and it will always be a trouble to you to think so."

"But could he be happy with me? How could he be happy? He's too noble to be happy without love, Lady Saddlethwaite."

"But I think you do love him, child. How could you help it?"

"Not as I ought to love him, and he ought to be loved. I love him as well as I shall ever love anyone again; but the love he asks for I haven't it to give anyone—it's gone from me for ever."

"If you love him as well as you can love anyone, there is no more to be said. It would be wrong and cruel, too, and not like you, dear, to keep him wretched an hour longer."

"To make him wretched for life! Dear Lady Saddlethwaite, it would come to that."

"Indeed, my dear, it would come to nothing of the sort. You've love enough left in your heart to make any man happy."

Mabel was silent for a moment.

"I might have thought so if I hadn't loved," she said at last in a low voice.

"But Mr. Lawley thinks so, and he is the best judge of his own happiness, Mabel. He doesn't want finer bread than can be made of wheat. He is starving while you are hesitating whether what you can give him is choice enough."

"Hesitating whether I should give him a stone when he asks for bread, Lady Saddlethwaite."

"My dear child, the love you can give him is not wedding-cake, but it's just such good plain wholesome bread as all married couples have to come down to when the honeymoon is over."

Mabel was silenced, or silent at least. Lady Saddlethwaite resumed after a pause. "I know you and Mr. Lawley, Mabel, better than you know each other, perhaps better than you know yourselves, and I'm sure of this, that no two people in the world would be more happy together or more unhappy apart. At least I can answer for his unhappiness; it will last his life and mar all his usefulness. I speak most of his happiness, dear, because I know that is most in your mind; but it is of your happiness that I am thinking most. If you had been my daughter—and I think you were sent to me, Mabel, in place of my dead daughter—" Here Lady Saddlethwaite paused in some agitation, stroking Mabel's hair with a trembling hand the while. But soon mastering her emotion she continued—"If you were my own daughter, dear, I would urge and press his suit on you even more earnestly than I venture to do now; I should be so certain of his making you happy. When Lord Charlecote proposed to you last autumn I said nothing in his favour, did I? though he was one of the best matches and of one of the best families in Yorkshire. But I knew you would be happier with Mr. Lawley, happier with him than with anyone else in the world; and you will make him so happy, and me too, Mabel." Who could resist such pressure? Lady Saddlethwaite pleading so for Archer Lawley—the two people dearest to her in the world! It was irresistible. As for Lord Charlecote, it was quite true that Lady Saddlethwaite had not urged Mabel to accept him, probably because she, no more than Mabel, was prepared for his proposal. His lordship had rushed down from London on one of his mad and sudden impulses, bent upon carrying Mabel by storm. It was four months since he had met her in Rome, and he might almost have forgotten her, after his manner, by this, if his mother had not judiciously kept her name and image ever before him by twitting him thereabout perpetually. He had rushed off to Weston, then, after his impulsive manner, one morning upon the receipt of a letter from Lady Saddlethwaite in which Mabel was casually mentioned; and he was in St. George's Girls' School the same afternoon at 3.30. Mr. Gant was just about to begin his religious lecture to the children, but was struck speechless by hearing Mabel address the intruder as "Lord Charlecote." Lord Charlecote was a great name in the West Riding.

"Lord Charlecote!" she exclaimed.

"Had you heard I was dead?" in answer to Mabel's look of amazement.

"No; but it's a surprise to see you here, my lord. Some way, I always think of you as in Italy."

"It's a pleasant association. I, too, think of you always;" here he paused intentionally or unintentionally and changed the subject. They were standing together near the class-room door, out of earshot of the children, the teachers, and even of Mr. Gant, who had retired in dudgeon to the far end of the room because Mabel had not introduced him. Still it is difficult, off the stage, to be sentimental with two hundred pairs of eyes fastened on you. "And so this is a national school," said

his lordship, changing the subject, and looking round at the children with such an expression of scientific interest in these strange creatures as made Mabel say—

"You should see them under a microscope, my lord. They're very interesting.

Lord Charlecote laughed. "Can you tear yourself away from them? I should like, if you will kindly accompany me, to call upon Colonel Masters."

"He's too ill, my lord, thank you. He knows no one now, not me even."

"I am very sorry."

"But you'll come in for a moment?"

"Thank you."

Having said a word to Mr. Gant and the assistant mistress, and put her things on, Mabel accompanied Lord Charlecote to the cottage. She was gratified and even grateful for his attention, which she had not the least idea of construing into 'attentions.' He had, indeed, all but proposed to her before they parted in Italy, but Lady Saddlethwaite had warned her to consider his attentions as of the value of Gratiano's conversation—two grains of wheat to a bushel of chaff. It was only 'his way' with every attractive woman he met. Mabel, therefore, not being given to fancy everyone in love with her, was duly fortified against what she considered to be only a brisk discharge of blank cartridge. Lord Charlecote, on the other hand, was perhaps as deeply in love with her as he could be with anyone except himself. She was the only woman he remembered a month after she was out of his sight; and, while she was an ideal Cinderella, there was no part he would better like to play than that of the magnanimous prince—King Cophetua in fact. It was a startling and eccentric part, would set everyone talking in amazement, first at the unworthiness, and afterwards (when he exhibited his prize) at the worthiness of his choice. But somehow when the time came for him to put out his hand and raise the beggar-maid from the dust and offer her a coronet, he was nervous and embarrassed, and began to doubt how the beggar-maid would take it. Mabel, although a national schoolmistress, was a stately personage, and he was constrained in her presence rather to look up to her than down upon her. In fact, when he sat face to face with her in the cottage sitting-room, all the beggar-maid series of scenes which had filled his mind while coming down in the train seemed absurdly inappropriate, and King Cophetua was fain to become "the fated fairy prince." While he was accommodating his mind to the new rôle they talked together, of course, of Italy.

"I am glad," he said at last, nerving himself for the spring, "I am glad you associate me with Italy. I always associate Italy with you." A graceful turn to the compliment, making all the charms of Italy but the background to hers.

"It's a doubtful compliment from you, my lord."

"What? to be associated with Italy?"

"With the old masters, and other dreary things you had to do."

"With the happiest hours of my life," he said, speaking hurriedly and nervously. "I never was so happy before, and I've not had a happy moment since we parted—Miss Masters—Mabel——"

There could be no doubt now of what was coming, and Mabel, amazed and confounded as she was, hurried to interrupt, and save him from the humiliation of a refusal.

"They would have been very happy hours to me, too, my lord, but that I've had a great sorrow—a great sorrow which has left me no heart for anything." They were both standing; he having risen to make, and she to meet and ward off his proposal. There was no mistaking her meaning, and he, though a good deal taken aback, didn't mistake it. It was not their words but their manner that made the meaning of each so unmistakable to the other.

"I ought not to have intruded on your trouble. I hope you'll forgive me, and in time—perhaps in time——," pleadingly taking and pressing her hand. Mabel did not withdraw it, but again interrupting him, said very gently, but very firmly—

"I have no hope, my lord, that I shall ever feel differently about it than I do now; but your—your sympathy has touched me deeply—more than I can express to you." There was a pleading look in the pained face raised to his that said more eloquently than words, "Do not urge it," and Lord Charlecote saw that to urge it would be cruel and useless.

"You will forgive me," he said again.

"I can never forget your kindness, my lord."

So they parted; Lord Charlecote, of course, more in love than ever, and Mabel taking herself sternly to task for the unfeeling and unbecoming levity which could alone have encouraged so true a gentleman as Lord Charlecote to think her heart free.

It was to this proposal Lady Saddlethwaite alluded—of a second, which Lord Charlecote five months later made to Mabel by letter, she had never heard; but of the first she had heard from his own lips. He had gone direct from Mabel's house to Hollyhurst, to pour all his love and loss into her sympathetic ears.

Lady Saddlethwaite, therefore, didn't deserve the credit she claimed of not pressing upon Mabel a suit which had been rejected before she heard of it. But she did deserve much credit for referring to Lord Charlecote's brilliant birth and position not more than once or twice each time she met Mabel, and for throwing the weight of her influence into Lawley's scale. It is true it was the scale in which alone it had the least chance of telling. It told, as we have suggested above, and Lady Saddlethwaite lost not a moment in letting Lawley know of her success. It was Friday evening when Mabel appeared to capitulate, and Lady Saddlethwaite, when she went upstairs to dress for dinner, scrawled a

hasty pencilled note to Lawley, bidding him be at Hollyhurst the next morning at a certain hour, when he would find Mabel alone in the library—(if Lady Saddlethwaite could so contrive it)—and might press his suit at last *with some hope of success*. Having committed this happy despatch to Parker, to be sent at once to the post, Lady Saddlethwaite joined Mabel in the drawing-room, with a face dressed in such innocent smiles as might have aroused the girl's suspicions if she had been suspicious. But she wasn't, and she fell into the trap (the library) set for her, and was duly caught therein the next morning by Mr. Archer Lawley.

She was standing on an improvised ladder of two hassocks, on a chair, her back to the door, her right hand raised above her head, to reach down a book from the bookcase—an attitude which showed her perfect figure to advantage. She didn't turn round upon hearing the door opened—by Lady Saddlethwaite as she supposed.

"I have found *Cælebs*, Lady Saddlethwaite." For, indeed, Lady Saddlethwaite had told her facetiously to look out for *Cælebs in Search of a Wife*. It wasn't the most refined or exquisite of jokes, but Lady Saddlethwaite had to express her irrepressible triumph in some veiled form or other.

"It's I, Miss Masters." In a moment Mabel saw the trap which had been set for her, and the dull point of the poor joke Lady Saddlethwaite condescended to in the exuberance of her triumph. It was not in human nature to feel no annoyance at being so betrayed, and even Mabel was a little annoyed even with Lady Saddlethwaite, and expressed the feeling in the tone of her greeting to Lawley.

"Mr. Lawley!" with a little vexation as well as surprise in the tone of the exclamation, and in the expression of the flushed face she turned towards him. Lawley's heart sank within him. It was not encouraging, and he was easily discouraged.

"I should apologise for intruding," he said hesitatingly, without advancing. Mabel was ashamed of her pettishness, and touched to the quick by the dejection expressed in his face.

"For startling me, you mean, Mr. Lawley. You couldn't think a visit from you an intrusion. At the same time you could hardly expect me to be grateful to you for surprising me perched up here, could you? However, if you'll help me down I'll forgive you." Lawley was not slow to earn his forgiveness.

"Thank you. Have you seen Lady Saddlethwaite? She doesn't know you are here, perhaps," going towards the bell. She would have done or given anything to put off the decision which she felt must be made in a moment.

"No. Don't ring. I came to see *you*," in short, quick, agitated gasps, which, coming from Lawley, suggested a volcanic force and fire of feeling that awed and arrested Mabel. "Mabel, I bid you good-bye at Genoa, but I didn't mean it. I couldn't mean it. I hoped you would

come one day to feel differently, and the hope has been my life—*my life*. I cannot live without it." The words were strong; but, like the escape of steam at a tremendous pressure, they rather indicated than fully expressed the force which underlay them. But the very greatness of his love only made Mabel falter. What had she to give in exchange for this Titanic passion? Such a return as the cold pale light of the moon makes to the glow and glory of the sun it reflects. There was a kind of childlike awe in her heart and in her face as she looked up at the intense light of love that shone down upon her out of Lawley's dark eyes.

"What shall I say?" in a voice that trembled and seemed to plead for forgiveness. "I have no love like yours to give. I like you, and shall like you always, better than anyone else, but that is not enough."

"It is enough and more than enough," cried Lawley, with an impetuosity which was startling from him, seizing and imprisoning both her hands in his. "Only take my love. Do not reject it. It is all I ask."

"But you will want more. You will not be happy; it is of your happiness I think."

"My happiness!" He drew her to him and passionately kissed her on the brow, cheeks, and lips, rebuked only by her burning blushes. Yet Mabel's heart rebelled. These kisses recalled the dead to her, and accused her of unfaithfulness to his memory. Besides, the wild, devouring passion they expressed only made her realise more miserably the difference between the love she was given and the liking she had to give. A love which was a mere liking, though the strongest of likings, was not what he asked or gave, or what she must vow to him at the altar. On the other hand, she had been so used all her life to find her happiness in the happiness of others, that Lawley's perfect joy was sweet to her. Not as the sweetest of flattery only, but as something she had given him for all he had been, and done, and suffered for her sake.

On the whole, the probabilities were all on Lady Saddlethwaite's side when she said that night to Mabel, "I thank you now, my dear, but the time will come when you will thank me for praying you, like an Italian beggar, to 'do good to yourself.'"



"THERE IS NO FINER EPITAPH IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY."

THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

MARCH, 1882.

Love the Debt.

CHAPTER XLV.

PUSHED FROM HIS STOOL.



AWLEY stayed over Sunday at Hollyhurst. The large fortune left him by his uncle enabled him to keep, among other luxuries, a curate, whom he overwhelmed by a telegram asking him to take all the duty of the day following. One sermon was nearly as grievous a burden to the newly-ordained curate as to his hearers, and two were crushing, especially when ordered late on Saturday afternoon; but, though Lawley knew this, and felt for

his wretched victim, he could not tear himself away from Mabel. She had no need to be concerned for his happiness if these first hours of their engagement were any augury of the future. "Usually in love," says the cynical Frenchman, "one loves and the other submits to be loved;" and again, "In love, to love a little is the surest way to be

loved much." Whatever truth there is in these maxims—and no doubt there is some truth in them—helps to explain the intensity of Lawley's love and happiness. It was enough for him that Mabel accepted his love and his life. Mabel took these great gifts with awe and exceeding diffidence, and found them even greater than she had imagined. Lawley disclosed to her a depth of tenderness of which she had no conception. Even when Lady Saddlethwaite was present all his cynicism was sheathed. Out of the depths sprung up a fountain of kindly humour as a fountain of sweet water sometimes springs out from the depths of the ocean, in strange contrast to the acrid cynicism he was given to. But when Mabel and he were *tête-à-tête*, and he opened his whole heart to her, she found in it, as we say, a depth of womanly tenderness which amazed and touched and drew her to him irresistibly. He told her frankly of the source of his cynicism and misogyny—the treachery of his first love, a young lady who jilted him for his elder brother—now dead—and to whom he allowed no small proportion of his income. About her, we need hardly say, Mabel was extremely curious. Lawley, however, was much more anxious to speak of his present love, and could hardly be got off this fascinating subject. He had the tact, too, scarcely to be looked for from a lunatic or a lover, to dwell upon the amount of good Mabel could do as a clergyman's wife among the poor and in the schools, and to himself. For, he gave her to understand with perfect truth, that since he was lost in love he had no heart for sacred or secular work, or anything but her. Mabel archly suggested that this great work of reclamation put at such length before her might have been tersely expressed in one word—"the MacGucken;" that she was chosen as the less of two evils, on the same principle as that by which a special fiery sherry was tried by the late Lord Derby to expel the gout, and with probably as unsatisfactory a result, for his lordship, upon trial of both, preferred the gout. But, indeed, Mr. Lawley had hit upon a happy plan for ridding himself of the MacGucken, or rather, for ridding the MacGucken of himself. He would build a vicarage, leaving the old house as a hospital in her charge. He intended to make the church some present, and might as well put it in a form which would benefit at the same time his parish and himself. But while the vicarage was being built he meant to go abroad—with Mabel. In other words, he meant that they should be married at once and spend a long honeymoon in those places—treasured carefully in his memory—which he had heard Mabel at different times express a wish to see. Mabel, thus startled into realising her betrothal, recoiled from an immediate marriage, and was with difficulty wearied into consenting to its taking place three months hence. With this hardly-wrung concession Lawley was fain to be content, and for the rest was absolutely and supremely happy, too happy, fey. As he drove into the school with Mabel on Monday morning he dwelt on the happiness she had given him in terms which almost terrified her. Even if she loved him with her whole heart she could not,

have made him half as happy as he hoped, but as it was——her heart sank within her. But he—he had no misgivings. He was in wild spirits, intoxicated with that true *vinum Dæmonum*, day dreams, and little thought that the passionate kiss he pressed upon her lips as they neared the school was his last. Two hours after they parted at the school door he was again at Hollyhurst, wild and bewildered with an unopened letter in his hand.

“Mr. Lawley! what has happened?”

He handed Lady Saddlethwaite the unopened letter, whose address, however, told her no story.

“From him,” he said, sinking into a chair, and looking wildly up at her. Lady Saddlethwaite began to think his brain was affected.

“From him? From whom?”

“Kneeshaw!”

“The murdered man?”

Lawley nodded.

“Nonsense! Impossible! You haven’t opened it.” She still thought his head turned.

“I can’t,” he said hoarsely, starting up and striding to the mantelpiece, and leaning his face upon his folded arms.

“You open it.”

Lady Saddlethwaite tore open the envelope and looked at the signature of the letter. “George B. Kneeshaw.” She looked back to the address and date, in the hope which Lawley had been too stunned to think of, that the letter was an old one. No, it was dated seven weeks since. She sat down, stunned also. Presently he faced round, white, haggard, looking ten years older than he looked two hours since.

“What does he say?”

“I haven’t read it, but it’s from him.”

“Yes, it’s from him. He was my dearest friend, yet I wished him dead. God! how I love that girl!”

He turned from her again and buried his face in his hands. Lady Saddlethwaite looked on in helpless pity. At last she said,

“He cares nothing for her. Why didn’t he write to her all this time? He has forgotten her. I should let her forget him.”

“Does he say nothing of her?” he cried with sudden hope, turning once more, and taking the letter from her hand. Its very first words had an application little intended by the writer.

“My dear Lawley,

The times have been,
That when the brains were out the man would die,
And there an end; but now they rise again,
With twenty mortal murders on their crowns,
And push us from our stools.

(“Ay ‘push us from our stools,’” repeated Lawley bitterly.)

“You at least will rejoice to hear that I am alive; and yet I left you all this time in the belief that I was murdered; and I should not

have written even now even to you if it was not for the horrible news of her engagement, which I came upon by an accident in a scrap of an old newspaper. I've gone through terrible sufferings since we parted, but I never knew what agony was till then. I thought I could write calmly; I cannot——"

Here the letter broke off and resumed under a new date a day latter.

"I allowed her to think me dead that she might be free to do as she has done; but I did not realise what it would be to me, or I could not have done it. Poor as I was, broken in fortune and health, a beggar and on the brink of starvation, I should have kept her to her miserable engagement sooner than suffer this if I had known what torture it would be to me. I did try to keep her to it when too late, when it would only have made her wretched without lightening my wretchedness. When I read the news I started for Castlemaine as I was, in workman's clothes, meaning to telegraph both to her and you. But when I reached the town I had no money, and could get none, and had to go home, two days' journey, and so had time to come to myself, and to come to thank God that I was saved from doing a cruel and dastardly thing. But I was mad in those first moments, and am mad, or at least, not sane, at times now. That she should engage herself, within two months was it? of the news of my murder! It is maddening. Who was this Lord Charlecote? She was the last girl in the world I should have thought——. Lawley, you can never know how I loved that girl. I could have died for her. It would have been easier and better for me to have died for her than to have allowed her to think me dead that she might be free to forget me—in two months! Yet since the day we parted there has not been one waking hour in which she was out of my thoughts. It was my own fault, you will say. I should have written and prevented or contradicted the report of my murder. You will not say so when you hear my story."

The letter then proceeded to give in outline the story we have already told of George's fortunes, carrying it on to the day when he came upon the news of Mabel's engagement to Lord Charlecote. Just before he chanced upon it, a wool speculation had turned out so extraordinarily well that he had made his mind up to write home and break the news of his being alive and prosperous, through Lawley, to Mabel, if she still were free.

George's letter closed with a short, simple, and touching allusion to their friendship, the only thing now left to him in the world.

The letter touched Lawley with remorse, and brought him back to his stronger and better self. Nothing showed the intensity and almost insanity of his passion more than the breakdown of his strength of mind. That he, of all men, should not have had the courage to open the letter, or the fortitude to bear the bitterness of the blow alone. He must forsooth rush off to Lady Saddlethwaite, like a hurt child, and

hand her the unopened letter. And what was this horrible news which he could not read himself, or bear alone? That his dearest friend, whose murder had been horrible news to him, was alive! But the letter recalled him to himself. He was shocked with himself, ashamed, and humiliated. "You must break it to her," he said, handing Lady Saddlethwaite the letter, which, to tell the truth, she would have liked to put in the fire.

"And you?" she asked, with the deepest sympathy in her voice.

"Oh, I'm *de trop*. It's my turn to go to Australia now," he answered bitterly, rising to take leave.

"Don't go," she said entreatingly, "wait till I come back. There will be some message."

Lawley shook his head. "She will not have a thought to spare to me. I must go, Lady Saddlethwaite; I am better alone."

After Lawley had gone, Lady Saddlethwaite sat with the letter in her lap, enraged at heart. Who was this man that came in to upset her plans at the moment of their success, to disturb and destroy the happiness of the two people in which she was most interested—this dog in the manger, who showed a fine indifference to Mabel when no one else wanted her, but began to whine when she was won by another; and who showed this fine indifference not to his own feelings only, but to hers, since a telegram would have saved her all the cruel and crushing anguish she had gone through for him? Lady Saddlethwaite hadn't taken in what, however, was plainly put in the letter, that the news of his murder did not reach George until months after it had reached Mabel. Indeed, she was too thorough a woman to be just, and was really enraged with George because he wasn't Lawley. However, there was no help for it, she must herself be the instrument to unravel all the work she had painfully knit up in the last year. She must at once see Mabel, and break this thing to her, and let her be happy in her own perverse way. There was at least the consolation that the girl would be happy. Still Lady Saddlethwaite set forth on her joyous mission in not much better heart than she had gone on her mission of consolation more than a year since.

As it was past twelve before Lady Saddlethwaite reached Weston Mabel was at home, and on seeing the carriage stop she hastened in some disquietude to meet her kind friend at the door. What could have happened to bring her in little more than three hours after they had parted? Mabel was—what with her was most unusual—nervous and unstrung, in the mood for imagining evils of all kinds. Lawley's wild raptures had frightened her. Such a love must be exacting, and what had she to pay? It was wrong to marry him—wrong to him, wrong to herself, wrong to God. And to the memory of George what was it? She read his letters over, and looked over all the relics of him she had treasured until her sorrow came upon her almost as fresh as the first day, and flooded her heart till it overflowed in unusual tears.

Traces of her trouble on her face made Lady Saddlethwaite ask the question which, at the same moment, was on the lips of Mabel.

"Has anything happened, dear?"

"No, nothing. Had you heard that something had happened to me, Lady Saddlethwaite?" asked Mabel, surprised and perplexed.

"No, dear, but you have trouble in your face. The old trouble?"

Mabel was silent. She felt that Lady Saddlethwaite would almost resent her relapse into mourning for George at the very moment of her engagement to Lawley. She was relieved when Lady Saddlethwaite said pleasantly,

"You're incorrigible, my dear; but I suppose I must let you be happy in your own way," which Mabel of course construed to mean, "if fretting is a relief to you, I mustn't scold you for it."

"You're already regretting your engagement, child?" interrogatively.

"Dear Lady Saddlethwaite, I'm regretting only my ingratitude and heartlessness. He gives me so much for—for nothing."

"You don't know how generous he is, Mabel," cried Lady Saddlethwaite impetuously. And then, after a pause, "He's been with me since we parted this morning, and asked me to come to see you." Another pause, during which Mabel was plunged in perplexity.

"He's had news from Australia, dear. Good news," she hastened to add, for the girl looked aghast at the mere name.

"Good news!"

Mabel sat, white as marble, with wide eyes and parted lips, as though she saw a spirit—George's spirit. Lady Saddlethwaite rose alarmed to ring for some wine, but Mabel clutched her dress with a convulsive grasp.

"He's not dead!" she gasped.

Lady Saddlethwaite was distressed and disgusted with her own clumsiness.

"There's a report, dear," she began hesitatingly.

"Only a report! You wouldn't bring me only a report. He's not dead!" she cried breathlessly, with a desperate intensity in her look which frightened Lady Saddlethwaite.

"No, he's not dead!" she said bluntly, thinking the shock of the truth better than the strain of the suspense. Mabel's hand relaxed its hold of Lady Saddlethwaite's dress as she fell back—not fainting—conscious, but helpless as in a dream. Lady Saddlethwaite rung the bell, and Mabel followed her movements with her eyes with the listless curiosity of a convalescent who cannot collect or concentrate his thoughts. The shock had, so to speak, knocked reason off the box, and the scattered team of her faculties wandered at will without direction or control. Jane brought in wine, which Lady Saddlethwaite administered like a medicine to her patient, and so woke her up as from sleep.

"It is true?" she asked, seizing Lady Saddlethwaite's hand, and looking up appealingly as for life into her face.

"Now, Mabel, I shall tell you nothing till you are calmer," Lady Saddlethwaite answered with calculated severity. "Let me help you to the sofa, and lie down a bit till you are more composed."

"I think I can manage that without help, dear Lady Saddlethwaite," she said, rising with an assumption of composed strength, but she had to sit down again, her head swimming, and her limbs trembling and failing her. Lady Saddlethwaite made her finish the glass of sherry and then helped her to the sofa. Mabel, laid on the sofa, did not trust herself again to speak, lest the unsteadiness of her voice would belie any assurance of calmness, but she expressed her yearning more eloquently through the pressure of Lady Saddlethwaite's hand, through her parted lips and her eyes feverishly bright fastened on her friend's face with a devouring eagerness.

"Yes, he's alive dear," said Lady Saddlethwaite in a voice that would have suited better with an announcement of death, for she could not forgive George his unconscionable resurrection. "Mr. Lawley brought the news this morning, and asked me to break it to you. There was no one to break it to him," she continued, thinking it both wise and just to divert to her displaced lover Mabel's strained attention. "I never felt so much for anyone—not even for you, dear—as I felt for him this morning. I hardly knew him, he looked so wild and haggard. He scarcely knew what he did or what he said, and could not bring himself to open the letter."

"A letter from George!" exclaimed Mabel. Alas, for Lawley! All his love and grief could not secure him now a higher interest than that of a postman. Love is as jealous and cruel as an eastern despot who slays all his kindred that he may reign in secure loneliness. Lady Saddlethwaite resented, as well she might, this insensibility to the sufferings of her ill-used *protégé*.

"Yes; a letter from Mr. Kneeshaw. He wrote in good time," she said bitterly.

Mabel heard without heeding the sarcasm.

"But why didn't he write to—— why didn't he write before?"

"Why, indeed!" cried Lady Saddlethwaite, more and more embittered.

"Doesn't the letter explain?" a kind of terror in her tremulous voice. A horrible heart-sickness seized her. Was he faithless? Lady Saddlethwaite's sympathies deserted at once to her side.

"It's your letter, dear. It's all about you. You'd better read it. It can't upset you more than my bungling." She drew the letter from her pocket and handed it to Mabel. Mabel held it in her shaking hands and tried to read it, but a mist dimmed her eyes and the letters ran together. She could not read a word.

"I cannot read it," she said helplessly. "Will you read it for me, Lady Saddlethwaite?"

"There's nothing but good news in it, child. He loves you still to distraction ; but he's been ill and unfortunate, and did not think it fair to keep you to a hopeless engagement."

"Oh, it was cruel," cried Mabel, trying again to read it in vain.

"Please read it for me, Lady Saddlethwaite."

Lady Saddlethwaite read the first few lines.

"What engagement?" cried Mabel, starting up into a sitting posture.

"Oh, it was some story of your engagement to Lord Charlecote that got into Galignani and was copied into an Australian paper." Mabel stood up strong with excitement.

"I must telegraph. Will you kindly drive me down to the office?"

"That's a very good idea, dear," said Lady Saddlethwaite, knowing that nothing would give such relief to Mabel as immediate action. "I shall just finish the letter and take you down with me. There, sit down, child. It won't take many minutes to read it through."

Mabel sat down and heard the long letter to the end. But when Lady Saddlethwaite had finished it, and Mabel attempted to rise, she trembled so that she could hardly stand, and was fain to sit down again.

"You will go ; you will send it," she sobbed, a kind of tearless sob.

"I shall send Jane with it at once. There, lie down, dear. I shall stay with you, and Jane will take it at once." She rose and went to the table to write it.

"Tell him to come home, Lady Saddlethwaite."

"I have told him, child. He'll get it in a few hours and be here in a few weeks."

She rang and gave Jane due instructions, and nearly sent her also into hysterics with the news. But as Lady Saddlethwaite told her she must not lose a moment, the discreet Jane suppressed her feelings for the present. In a short time she came back breathless.

"Please, my lady, the post office man wouldn't send it at first. He said there must be some mistake, for he had sent it off half-an-hour ago."

"Mr. Lawley !" exclaimed Lady Saddlethwaite.

"Yes, my lady ; he asked me if I wasn't Mr. Lawley's servant, but when I told him it was from your ladyship he sent it."

Yet Mabel had forgotten him.

"She will not have a thought to spare to me," he had said, and said truly.

CHAPTER XLVI.

"THE BRATTLE."

LAWLEY had an eccentric habit which had done most—next to his carelessness about money—to get him the character of being "a bit touched" among the shrewder folk of Fenton. When he couldn't sleep, either from over-smoking or over-working his brain, he would get up and go

out at all hours of the night or early morning to take an exhausting walk, and so force on sleep by means of bodily fatigue. But now sleep seemed to have gone from him altogether, and beyond recall. For two nights after the receipt of George's letter he had not closed his eyes. On the third he went to bed late—or early, rather—at about two in the morning; and, after tossing miserably for three hours, got up and went out to walk himself weary. On starting he took bye-paths, out of the track of men on the way to the mine, and girls to the factory; but as these streams ceased to flow at six o'clock, he ventured to return home by the highway, and was thereby caught in a torrent he little expected. A crowd of women, not girls, but matrons, breathless, frenzied, flying as for life, overtook him at a crossing, and swept him on with them. They were colliers' wives and mothers, and he knew at once that there had been a pit accident.

“An accident?”

“Aye.”

“Where?”

“Garthoyles.”

“How many down?”

“Four.”

Four, indeed, was the number that this poor woman had in the pit—a husband and three sons, and she had no room in her mind for the sixty-three others who were down also. A railway accident in which twenty are killed creates a greater sensation than a pit accident in which three hundred lives are lost, because every one travels by rail, but only the poorest work in a pit. For this very reason, however, a pit accident is the most deplorable possible, since all the killed are poor, and all bread-winners; and the lighting of a pipe or the opening of a lamp desolates a whole village like an earthquake. In this case, however, it was not the recklessness of any of the sufferers, but the carelessness of the engine tender that caused the accident. The man was bemused from the effects of a drunken debauch, and overwound a heavy corve of coal which, carried over the top gearing, broke loose, thundered back down the shaft, and, crashing against some massive oaken beams more than two-thirds of the way down, shivered them to matchwood, and wrecked the lower part of the double shaft of which they were the support. More than 100 tons of earth, rock, and timber fell in and choked the shaft, cutting off not only the escape of the miners, but their air supply also, since the air trunks were wrecked. There were sixty-seven men and boys down at the time, fifty-four of them in the better-bed seam, which was forty yards below the black-bed, and was connected with it by a small shaft. Their case was desperate. Only three men would have had room to work at removing the rubbish, and these could work only at the risk of their lives, since earth and stones fell at intervals from the shattered sides of the shaft. Long before so few men, working under such difficulties, could have cleared the shaft,

the imprisoned pitmen would have been starved to death; and long before they could have been starved, they would have been suffocated, for the ventilating shaft, which was divided only by a partition from the main shaft, was choked with its ruins.

It was hopeless to attempt anything, and nothing was attempted. A few men stood silent and paralysed, looking down the mouth of the shaft; round them was a crowd of women, the wives and mothers of the doomed miners—some still, as though turned to stone, others shrieking piteously; a few besieging the engine-house and clamouring savagely for the engine tender, while those nearest the inner circle of men clutched and clung to them, asking the same question in the same words a hundred times over. A sudden and a moment's silence stilled them all when Lawley appeared. It was a touching tribute to the character he had earned for helping the helpless. There was hardly a man or woman there whom he had not helped at some time and in some way, and who had not a vague hope of help from him now. In another moment, and as they made way for him to approach the pit's mouth, the silence was broken, the women appealing to him in heart-rending tones for the lives of their sons and husbands, as if he held them in his hand.

"It's awr Tom; he taiched i' t' Sunday schooil."

Another, pushing her roughly aside and clutching his arm with the grip of a vice, cried in a fierce hoarse voice, "Think on, aw've nowt aboon ground nah. Aw've five dahn, do ye hear, five!"

Another, with an insane look in her eyes, pressed upon him a basket with her husband and boy's "drinking" in it, which, upon hearing of the accident, she had set to deliberately and packed. "Tak' it to 'em, wilt ta? Shoo says," nodding towards a neighbour, "they'll niver coom up agin no more."

Lawley made his way through all this misery to the pit's mouth.

"How was it?"

The pit steward told him.

"Have you been down?"

"We've lowered the bucket, sir, and it won't go much more than half-way!"

Lawley stepped into the bucket, taking a safety-lamp from one of the men. "Lower away!" he cried.

The voices of these poor women in his ears drove him upon action of some kind.

"The sides are falling in, sir!"

"Lower away!" he cried again, impatiently.

"For God's sake, Mr. Lawley——"

"I shall not stay down more than a minute, Cook. Lower quickly, and draw up quickly, when I pull the rope."

The men lowered him at first slowly, but very fast as the bucket neared the wreck. It stopped, and while it stayed below the men, as they stooped over, could hear another fall of débris. Then the rope was

chucked, and they hauled up the bucket swiftly, and Lawley soon reappeared with a very ugly gash in his forehead, from which the blood streamed down his pale face, giving him the ghastly look of a messenger of death. A groan burst from the wretched women at his appearance, from which they augured the worst.

"It's a terrible business," he said, as he reached the top.

"You're badly hurt, sir."

"No; it's nothing, thank you. How deep was the shaft?"

"Thirty yards to the black-bed, sir. Let me tie your handkerchief round it."

"Thank you. It would take ten days to clear!"

"Ten days, sir! It wouldn't be cleared in three weeks if men could go to work at it at once. But they'd have to repair the sides first before they dared put a spade into it."

Lawley sat on the bucket turned bottom upward, while Cook bound the handkerchief about his forehead. Suddenly he sprang up, dislodging the bandage and reopening the wound.

"Where does it drain into?"

"By Gow!" cried one of the men, "I believe there's a water hoile into 'the Brattle.'"

"The Brattle" was an old pit which had been worked out years ago.

Just at this moment Mr. Murgatroyd, the manager, drove up, leaped out of the dog-cart, and joined them. Cook explained the accident to him, while one of the men rebound the bandage about Lawley's forehead.

"Mr. Lawley has been down, and got badly hurt, as you see, and it's a wonder he wasn't killed. There's another!" as a sound like distant thunder came up through the shaft.

"Does it drain into the Brattle, Mr. Murgatroyd?" asked Lawley.

"Yes; but that won't help us much, the Brattle's foul as a cesspool. It hasn't been worked this twenty years."

"Does the drain come out near the shaft?"

"I can't say. It was before my time."

"Who knows anything about the Brattle?" asked Lawley of Cook. He was irritated at the calculating coolness of Mr. Murgatroyd, who, to tell the truth, was thinking more of the blame that might attach to him for the accident than of the lives of the miners.

"Bob o' Ben's has worked in it. Him that's watchman at the coal stays."

"Mr. Murgatroyd," cried Lawley excitedly, "will you order a corve and windlass to be taken to the mouth of the Brattle, and let us pick up Bob o' Ben's and drive there at once?"

"What's the use? Who'll go down when we get there?"

"I'll go."

"It's all nonsense," began the manager, piqued at the management being taken out of his hands in this way.

Lawley was a very decided person when he chose, and now life and death seemed to hang upon his decision.

"Cook," he said imperiously, "take that rope and bucket to the dog-cart. We haven't a moment to lose, Mr. Murgatroyd."

The manager, seeing that the responsibility he dreaded would be crushing if he was the means of shutting off this last chance, such as it was, followed Lawley sulkily to the dog-cart. While they were waiting for Cook to join them with the rope and bucket, Lawley again suggested that a corve and windlass be sent on at once to the Brattle, and the manager rather sullenly gave the necessary order. Then Cook joined them with the rope and bucket, and got up behind as they drove off first to pick up Bob o' Ben's. On the way, Lawley took out his pocket-book, wrote in it for a few minutes, and then asked the manager and Cook to attest their signatures. "It's my will," he said, "in case anything happens me." Whereupon the manager became amiable, reflecting that, after all, he who paid the piper might well call the tune, and that the parson was certainly paying the piper in this case. From Bob o' Ben's they gleaned (out of an immense mass of valuable but irrelevant information about his experiences, man and boy, in the coal-pits) that the watercourse came out close to the bottom of the Brattle's shaft in a direction which he made plain enough to Lawley, who had been down a pit many times before. Bob o' Ben's was of opinion that the air at the bottom of the Brattle's shaft might be pure enough for anyone else to go down, but he didn't care himself to have to do with the adventure. "He warn't paid for it," he said.

But when you did get down, Bob o' Ben's believed the next thing you would have to do would be to come up again, for the drain was sure to be too narrow, and pretty sure to be too foul, for anyone to crawl along it. With which view both Cook and the manager were disposed to agree.

"But is there any other chance for the men?" asked Lawley.

"Well, no; I can't say there is."

"And it is a chance?"

"Yes, it's a chance. Do you think, Cook, any of the men themselves are likely to know of the passage?" asked the manager of the steward.

Cook shook his head, while Bob o' Ben's was even more positive as to their ignorance. Indeed, he seemed to think no one knew anything but himself. By this time they had reached the bye path leading to the Brattle and leaving the horse in charge of Bob o' Ben's, they hurried to the pit mouth, which was covered in with planks. There was already a large crowd about it, but the corve and windlass had not yet come.

"There's not a moment to lose," cried Lawley.

"Come, my lads," said the manager, "which of you will go down?" He hoped some unmarried collier would volunteer, since his life was worth less and his experience more than Lawley's. No one spoke.

"It's all right," said Lawley, who had already taken off his coat and

waistcoat and put them and his pocket-book (in which his will was) into the manager's hands. "It's all right. If it's a fool's errand I ought to go on it myself."

In a few minutes the planks were torn up, and Cook and two other men brought the rope and bucket and safety-lamp from the dog-cart. Lawley stepped into the bucket, took the safety-lamp, and was just about to be lowered into the shaft, when a gigantic miner stepped forward, took his hand, gripped it till the blood left it and the tears came, and said—probably to encourage him—"Good-bye, sir."

It wasn't encouraging, but it was affecting, and affected many of the men. Certainly Lawley was not a cheerful picture, with the soaking bandage, like a coronet of blood, round his forehead, and his pale face all the paler for its crimson stains.

"Not 'Good-bye,' I hope, Mathew, but 'God be with you.' God bless you all!"

Those who could trust themselves to answer said, "God bless you, sir!" huskily, some of them; others were silent, but looked the blessing through tears. It was not this single act of self-devotion that so moved and unmanned them, but the life lived for others of which this act was the crown.

"Lower away, my men."

In another moment he had disappeared, and there was the silence of death while the rope was being paid out, when the bucket at last bumped the bottom, and for the first five minutes after, while they waited for the signal to draw up which most of them expected. It did not come. Whether he would not or could not give it, no one could say. He might be lying dead, suffocated, at the pit bottom, or he might be making his painful way along the drain. In the hurry of the moment they had forgotten to pre-arrange a signal to assure them of his safety up to the mouth of the drain. The suspense was great, and grew. It became intense and all but intolerable as the crowd about the pit increased enormously, and was leavened and infected by the agony of the wives and mothers of the imprisoned miners. It was nearly nine o'clock when Lawley was lowered down the shaft. An hour later two men volunteered to go down and search for him, as far, at least, as the mouth of the drain. They had first, however, satisfied themselves as to the purity of the air by lowering a naked lamp and leaving it for some minutes at the bottom. It came up still alight. Then the two volunteers were lowered, remained some minutes at the bottom, and were drawn up again. They reported that the bottom of the shaft was pure enough, but that the air of the drain was very foul. They had no doubt at all that Lawley lay dead in it, and that it would have been death to them to have searched for his body. The sensation this news created was indescribable. It was as though the vast crowd had heard of the accident then for the first time. Something between a sob and groan broke simultaneously from the men, while the women uttered shriek upon shriek.

"Silence!" cried a stentorian voice.

In a moment there was the silence that might be felt. The speaker—the gigantic miner, Mathew—lay on the ground, stooping over the pit. Suddenly he sprang up like a madman and shouted, "Hurrah! I hear them! Stop! Listen!" Every one held his breath, and every one heard the faint shout from below. "Answer it, boys!" shouted Mathew, standing on the bottom of the upturned bucket, and acting as fugleman. "Hip, hip, hurrah, hurrah, hurrah!" The shout might have been heard at Wefton. Meanwhile the corve was being lowered, quick as the windlass could be unwound. It reached the bottom. The rope was chucked. It was hauled up. There were eight in it, looking as though they had come back from the grave—as, indeed, they had. White and exhausted, they could tell their story only by gasps. They had given up all hope of life as the air was fouling fast, and had all gathered together in the black-bed, or upper pit, where the air was purest, and had just knelt down to pray at the suggestion of a mere lad, one of Lawley's teachers, when the boy shrieked, and fell back almost fainting. All looked round and cried out in terror, for if ever a man looked like a spectre Lawley did, in the dim light of their failing lamps, as he came towards them, all white, in his shirt and drawers, his face like marble where it was not blood-stained. He soon reassured them, and hurrying them to the mouth of the drain, sent them all before him—the boys first and then the men. The drain was not so narrow as had been supposed, but was very long and very foul—fouler than the foulest part of the pit they had left—and seemed to strangle their strength so that they made slow way through it. They had got through, however, thank God, and here they were. By the time the first batch (who were all boys) had told their story piecemeal and incoherently, the last batch were being expected with breathless eagerness, for Lawley would be with them. The very women, with their sons and husbands just restored to them, and standing by them, had their eyes turned still towards the pit mouth.

There was some delay, or there seemed some in the deep silence and suspense. At last the signal came, and the crowd drew a long breath of relief at sight of the first wind of the windlass. There were only four to come—three miners and Lawley, and the windlass went round quickly with its light load. It was lighter even than they looked for, as there were but three in it when it came to bank—the three miners only. Lawley had not followed them out of the drain. They had shouted, but he had not answered, and could answer to no shout henceforth but the voice of the Archangel at the Resurrection. He lay dead midway in the watercourse. He had been very weak from want of food and sleep to begin with, and had been still further weakened by loss of blood, and so fell an easy prey to the breath of death in the foulest part of the drain. There was a rush of volunteers to the corve, which, filled in a moment with seven miners and a doctor, was lowered away swiftly. Then, for

half-an-hour, there was a kind of religious hush, in which those who spoke spoke under their breath. It was now as though, not a few women only, but the whole crowd had each a life dear to him at stake. All Lawley's kindnesses—and his life had been all kindnesses—came back to them vividly as the day they were done, and all looked and felt as though they stood in a sick-room where the life and death of one near to them trembled in the balance. When little more than half-an-hour had passed, the windlass was again seen to turn, very slowly this time, as doubtful what its burden would be. When it reached the top there was a wild shout of joy from those who saw Lawley, as it seemed, standing upright (for he had to be held upright to be drawn up), but in another moment the body was seen to be borne as they bear the dead. Mathew, mounting his modest pulpit, amid a hush in which every breath was held, tried to speak, but his voice broke into a sob which told his story better than words. There was an overpowering revulsion of feeling. Strong men broke down and cried like children. For hours there had been a terrible strain on the nerves of suspense, excitement, and the alternations of joy, agony, hope, and despair, and this in a vast crowd where every beat of the heart is, so to say, reverberated and magnified a hundredfold through sympathy. The effect, therefore, of this crushing blow on nerves already strained to their utmost tension was almost hysterical. The men in the inner ring, looking down on the peaceful face, which seemed asleep with its eyes open, wept without disguise or sense of shame, or self-consciousness, or consciousness of anything or any one but the dead. They were quite unnerved and helpless, and could do nothing and think of nothing; and it was a woman, strangely enough, who, with a coolness that seemed cruel, ordered the arrangements for the removal of the body. She had it laid on a door brought from a cottage near, she shrouded it with her shawl, and ordered the least exhausted of the rescued miners to bear it home, and marshalled the rest with their wives and mothers as chief mourners. The vast crowd followed silent and bareheaded. As they were passing through the little village which was the home of most of the rescued miners, the bearers stood still—broke down, indeed. The same thought at the same moment was in all their minds—that he had taken their place; that, but for the dead, there would not have been a house here without its dead. So the eight bearers, weak to begin with, broke down altogether and had to be replaced, and then the procession moved on, increasing as it went, till it reached his home—that home where, too, his only mourners were strangers he had been kind to—the little children of his hospital.

No one should judge West Riding poor on the surface, or at sight, or by a conventional standard. The woman who showed this hard presence of mind preserved the shawl like a relic, and twenty-four years later, on her death-bed, desired that it should be her shroud.

CHAPTER XLVII.

FENTON GRAVEYARD.

LAWLEY'S will was not characteristic of a misogynist. Having no near relations he divided the bulk of his property between the two women who had wrecked his life—his brother's widow and Mabel. Mabel's portion, indeed, was left to her delicately under cover to George, but it was love, not friendship, which inspired the bequest. Still more eccentric was his choice of an executor, which fell upon Robert Sagar, Esq. Lawley himself was the worst business man in the world, which will account for his idea (got from Mr. Sagar) that Bob was the best. Besides, Bob, as a kind of guardian of Mabel's, naturally occurred to a mind filled with Mabel.

It was a fortunate choice for Bob, and brought him, as we shall see, the happiness of his life.

Bob was not at the Queen when Mr. Murgatroyd—who took the liberty to read the will an hour after Lawley's death—sought him up there. However, Bob was easy to trace in Wefton, where he had attained to the celebrity of Lucian's *ὄψρος* 'Εκεῖνος! Men stopped to look at the stupendous figure as it rolled through the streets, women (Irishwomen) curtsied to him, and the street boys cock-a-doodle-dooed after him—for this had been the war-whoop of the Crowe faction during the election. Bob took it all in good and gracious part, smiling like Malvolio, unless when some miscreant made a derisive allusion to his corpulence, now—thanks to “No more Stomachs”—truly portentous. Then, indeed, Bob had to console himself with the reflection that the greatness he had achieved had its penalties no less than its privileges. But, these brutalities notwithstanding, Bob felt justified in thinking himself the most popular man in Wefton, so he walked its streets as a captain walks his quarterdeck, with an authoritative roll. Therefore Mr. Murgatroyd had no difficulty in tracking the village Hampden from the Queen's to Mabel's, where, indeed, Bob was busy adjusting a new kind of window-blind, which was to have gone up and down with a spring, but which could never be got henceforth to go either up or down at all.

Fortunately, Mabel was not in when Mr. Murgatroyd told his news. Bob was so horrified at it, and at Mabel's share in it, that he had no room in his heart for even an under thought of pleasure at the compliment paid to his business capacity—the highest possible compliment that could be paid him. He could think for the moment only of Mabel and of the best way to break the shock of the news to her. It was a kind of business for which poor Bob had the least fitness or fancy of anyone in the world; and therefore, after some perturbed thought, he rushed off, first of all, to telegraph to Lady Saddlethwaite. Then he hurried back to keep Mabel on her return from hearing the news from any less considerate friend. But when Mabel, on her return, met Bob at the door

with his kind-hearted face overcast, and as indicative of news of death as an envelope an inch deep in black, she faltered out at once, "Who is it, Mr. Sagar?" Of course she thought it was George.

"It isn't anyone," cried Bob, confused by the failure of his frank face to keep a secret for a moment. "It's Lady Saddlethwaite. I mean she's coming to see you. There; come in and sit down. It's not from Australia—it isn't, indeed," taking Mabel's hand and leading her into the room and to a chair.

"It's Mr. Lawley?" looking up into Bob's troubled face with the hopeless yet appealing look of one who pleads against a sentence he knows to be inevitable. It was a relief to be assured of George's safety, but even that relief gave place in a moment to this other and only less poignant anxiety.

"I believe he's badly hurt," said Bob helplessly; "there's been a pit accident, and he went down and saved all the men, and got cut about the head a bit, and caught by the choke-damp."

"I must go to him," cried Mabel, rising with the sudden strength of excitement and of a fixed resolution. In her mind at the moment was a letter she had written him the day after she had heard of George's being alive, a letter which soothed even Lawley's wounded spirit. It seemed to come, as it had come, hot from her heart. It was full of all he had been to her, and of all he would be ever to her, and of her own unhappiness in having so little to give in return for it all. There could not have been a more simple, touching, and complete expression of a love which was everything but what Lawley asked, and of a regret, which was all but a remorse, that it stopped short only of this. This letter was in her mind as she sprang up; its coldness, its thanklessness, its heartlessness. And now he was dying, perhaps! might die before she could see him and bare her whole heart to him, its love, and its longing to give her life for his.

There was a good deal of selfishness in these thoughts, alloying what was unselfish in them, it is true; but this is only to say that Mabel was human.

"You will come with me, Mr. Sagar?"

"He's too ill to see anyone, Mabel. He's unconscious, and the doctors are very doubtful. Now, do sit down, dear; it's no use; and Lady Saddlethwaite will be here soon," floundered Bob, more and more helplessly.

"He's dead!" cried Mabel with a wild look, as though she saw him as he lay that moment, white, still, and cold. She sat down again with this fixed, wild look still in her eyes, certain and silent—poor Bob silent also.

"If I had only seen him—only once," she moaned piteously after a while; "but he'll never know now." And, indeed, this, which was her first thought was her last thought. To the end of her life the thought of what she would consider the coldness of her last letter (and she often

thought of it) ached in her heart like an old wound. Now the shock of this terrible news broke her down completely, and she lay prostrate for weeks ill of what the doctor called a low fever.

Bob, leaving Mabel in Lady Saddlethwaite's charge, thought it incumbent upon him as executor to set out in the evening for Fenton. He was really as sorry for Mabel's sorrow, and for his friend Lawley too, as any kind-hearted man could be; and yet for his life he couldn't help feeling a sense of pride and importance in his executorship stir within him when he had got over the first shock of the news; for there was nothing of which Bob had become so proud as of his business ability. He was not the first great man who thought nature meant him to walk on his head, so to speak—"Optat ephippia bos piger; optat arare caballus."

Bob then, we say, hurried off to Fenton Vicarage to look after his duties and make all the necessary arrangements for the funeral. As, however, he passed through the village and saw all the blinds down, and groups of women about the doors, and men at street corners talking together with sad face and subdued voice, he again forgot his business character and thought only of Mabel's loss and his own.

At the vicarage the McGucken met him at the door. She was a kind-hearted woman and truly attached to Lawley, but much of her grief was swallowed up by the immense consolation of the remembrance of all she had been to him and done for him, and by her indignation at the state of dirt in which the crowd had left the house.

"Coming and going as if it was a pothouse, and making no more of one than if aw war the muck under their feet. And muck enough they made, Mr. Sagar, sir, if you will me believe, and him lying dead above that couldn't bide to see a speck or spot on tile or table; and little had he seen for up aw allus war late and early, a-rubbing, and a-scrubbing, and a-tubbing, and a-sweeping, and a-polishing till my knees war that sore aw couldn't bide to say my prayers on 'em; aw couldn't. But prayers is for them as has nowt else to think on but theirsens, not for sich as has childre to follow, and a haase to tidy, and a master to do for as aw hev done for him. Niver a man in this warld was better done for, that aw can say, and nobbody could say nowt else, and aw only hope he'll be as weel done for where he's goan"—a hope expressed despondently and with doubtful tears. Bob's kind heart was too much moved by the darkened house, and what its darkness symbolised and helped him to realise, for him to smile at the McGucken's doubt of Heaven being Heaven to Lawley without her.

When he had at last got rid of her, he sat sad in the still study, thinking of the last time—not so long since—he had sat there listening and learning many things from Lawley's brilliant talk. At last he rose, moved by a sudden impulse, to go and see the dead. He stole upstairs noiselessly, partly in reverence and partly to elude the McGucken's vigilance, and went on tiptoe along the corridor to Lawley's room. The

door was wide open and he paused at it for a moment, fearing the McGucken was within, but all seeming still, he entered.

It was night, the room dim, the gas down, and Bob, unused to death, stood in nervous hesitation inside the door. He could hear his heart beat, and he could hear—he was sure he could hear—in the frozen silence, from the bed where the body lay shrouded within curtains, the sound of a sleeper's regular breathing. It took him a little time to summon up courage to advance to the gas and turn it up, and then, after another hesitation, to steal to the foot of the bed. Here he was startled in a way very different from that he half expected. Lawley lay sleeping the breathless sleep; but, beside him, sharing his pillow, her face flushed in sleep, all but touching his, and making it by contrast more ghastly, lay a little girl, between three and four years of age, fast asleep, her long eyelashes wet with tears, and her bosom heaving still in sleep with the swell of a storm of sobs. One word, in passing, to this little chief mourner, who was to be all the world to Bob.

She had been brought to the hospital nearly a year ago, ill mainly of starvation and neglect, from which she soon recovered. As, however, her mother was dead and her father was an irreclaimable drunkard, Lawley had not the heart to send back the bright, pretty, engaging child to misery and degradation. Even the McGucken was moved by her winning face and ways to tolerate her. She had fast grown to be such a pet with Lawley in his loneliness, that when she could elude the McGucken she would steal, sure of a welcome, into his bedroom before he was up in the morning, and in the evening, before her bed-time, into his study. The child had much of her dead mother in her—a refined and affectionate woman—and Lawley had resolved to bring the little one up to be what nature had meant her to be, a lady. As for Amy, Lawley was father, mother, sister, brother, all to her. When Sarah Jane, eager to find anyone who had not heard the news, rushed up to tell the sick children that Mr. Lawley was dead, Amy took her to mean that he was very ill. She was but a year old when her mother died, and knew not yet of death, imagining it to be simply the superlative of illness—an impression confirmed by Sarah Jane's tears.

Illness Amy knew too well, and that he should be *very ill* was terrible to her. In the confusion no one heeded her or her timid questions, and she was kept strictly confined to the hospital end of the house all that day. At night, however, when she could not sleep through thinking of this trouble, she stole out of bed and along the corridor to Lawley's room. She pushed open the door, which was ajar, crept to the bed, climbed up upon it by means of a chair, and saw by Lawley's ghastly face and closed eyes that he was very ill and asleep, and not to be disturbed. She would wait till he waked, as she had done many a morning, and while waiting and sobbing piteously over the terrible change in the face that was as the only face in the world to her, she fell asleep at last from exhaustion.

So it came about that Bob found the little flushed face, whose troubles were beginning, nestling in the shadow of the still, set, marble face, whose troubles were over. A harder-hearted man than Bob would have been touched by the picture, and by its suggestions of love and sorrow, and of all that is best in our nature and worst in our lot, and Bob was touched by it.

While he stood looking on it, hesitating to disturb the child, hesitating to leave her there, she woke from her troubled sleep, roused either by the glare of the gas or by Bob's concentrated gaze.

After a hurried look at the stranger, whom she took for a doctor, she turned at once to see if Lawley was yet awake.

"I didn't wake him," she said in a guilty voice to Bob.

"No, dear," said Bob, not steadily. "Let me carry you back to bed."

Amy looked back wistfully at the still face with half a hope that their talking might have waked him, and that she might get a reprieve, or at least a word, a touch, a look from him before she was taken away. While looking for some sign of waking she forgot Bob altogether, for the gash in the forehead, seen now in the full glare of the gaslight, had a horrible fascination for her. She sat up transfixed, a piteous picture of horror, till Bob broke the spell.

"Come, dear," taking her up in his arms.

"I may come when he wakes. I may come in the morning. He lets me come in the morning when he wakes," beseechingly.

"Ay, dear; you may come when he wakes."

All Bob's kind heart was in his face and in his voice, so that Amy, though a shy and shrinking child, put both her arms round his neck as he carried her first to the gaslight to lower it, and then from the room—her head being turned over his shoulder toward the bed and its burden to the last.

She guided him to her room, and Bob, having put her back to bed, sat by her till she should fall asleep. But she did not soon fall asleep. She lay long wide awake, though still; the pale face with that terrible gash in the forehead looking down upon her distinctly out of the darkness. Bob, hearing that she was crying quietly by an occasional sob, soothed her now and then as he could by caresses and caressing words, till at length "Nature's soft nurse, balm of hurt minds," came to relieve him.

We have dwelt upon Bob's finding of Amy because it was a fortunate accident for him. The impression she made upon him that night was more than confirmed in the next few days of her utter desolation when he had at last to make clear to her the meaning of death. Of all the bitter tears dropped on Lawley's grave, the most bitter were those shed by this little chief mourner as she looked down upon it from Bob's arms. There is no sorrow like a child's sorrow, for in its intensity it is eternal, without hope of end, break, or morrow to it. And Amy's wretchedness so

wrung Bob's heart that he begged her from George (to whose care Lawley had bequeathed her) and adopted her. No kind act was ever better rewarded. Amy, as a child, girl, and woman was henceforth the happiness of Bob's life, more to him even than his world-wide political fame as member for Bally-Banagher and leader in the House of Commons of one of the seven sections into which the union of Irish patriots of all ranks and creeds against the tyranny of the Saxon resolved itself in a single session.

Nor, in taking a kindly leave of our kind old friend, should we omit to mention a third source of his happiness, his discovery of the genuine "No more Stomachs" receipt—a sleepless attendance on the Speaker's eye in that august House:—

Where prosy speakers painful vigils keep,
Sleepless themselves to give their hearers sleep.

If Bob's vigils did not quite reduce him to "an eagle's talon in the waist," at least they relieved him of the scurrilous notice of the street boys.

A graveyard is an appropriate place for partings. There, late or soon, we part from all, or all from us. Here, then, at Lawley's grave, we take leave of others besides Bob, of Dr. Clancy, who, for his knowledge of Greek, was made a missionary bishop of the South Sea Islands; of Mr. Gant, who obtained at last the pinnacle of his ambition, persecution in its most fiery form—a prosecution for ritualistic practices; of Josiah Pickles—we beg his pardon—Sir Josiah Pickles, for his large contributions to the Carlton electioneering funds was rewarded with knighthood; and of Clarence, who married a poor but highly accomplished girl, who with one set of toes on the boards and the other set on a level with her head could spin round like a top for two minutes together.

To come lower down, for we are getting dizzy at this height, here too we take leave of Barney McGrath, who had his own good reason for the tears he was not ashamed to shed at the grave. We should have said something of the prominent part Barney took against his old enemy, Josiah Pickles, during the election, but that poor Barney was not presentable for the greater part of that time. He threw his whole soul into the work, and did Bob yeoman's service for the first few days of the canvass, but before the close of the week he was tempted into breaking the pledge. His pledge once broken he drank furiously to drown remembrance of the breach and fell into the hands of the police—this time most justly. It would have gone hard with Barney if Lawley had not overtaken him in his carriage while he was being hauled off to the station. Lawley, recognising Mabel's *protégé*, stopped, and by a generous tip induced the police to commit Barney to his charge. Barney was shoved into the carriage, driven to Fenton Vicarage, and next morning, while overwhelmed with shame, remorse, and gratitude was reconverted to temperance. Henceforth Barney worshipped him with Celtic fervour, and now lamented him with Celtic demonstrativeness. Nor did he again relapse. He prospered exceedingly as a nursery-

man, and for the seventeen years of life that remained to him kept Lawley's grave beautiful with the choicest flowers the smoke of Fenton would allow to live.

At the graveside also we take leave of the McGucken, her eyes not so blinded by tears as to prevent her noticing that the sexton blurred with three handfuls of earth the coffin plate she had burnished like a mirror. She married a scavenger, a widower, with seven children and a temper, whom it took her ten years to bury.

At the graveside too we take leave of the Fenton folk, as warm-hearted a people as ever lived. For that day the factory was still, the mine empty, the school closed, and only the bedridden left in the houses. All men, women, and little children were in the church, the churchyard and its approaches, all in black, and nearly all in tears. A hymn was to have been sung at the graveside, but the singers broke down before they had got through the first verse, and all the crowd round the grave seemed as at a given signal to break down with them. It was such a scene as no one present ever remembered or ever forgot.

Lastly, at Lawley's grave, we take leave of Lady Saddlethwaite, Mabel, and George. Two days after George's return from Australia the three drove together on a pilgrimage to the grave, marked now by a cross of white marble, erected to his memory by the miners he had saved.

It was a silent drive, for even George was thinking of something besides Mabel. As they approached the grave three colliers (one with his hat off), who had been painfully spelling out the inscription, gave place to them.

It was a long inscription, loosely worded, but with this striking line at its close, "Erected to his memory by those for whom he lived and died."

"There's no finer epitaph in Westminster Abbey," said Lady Saddlethwaite as she read out the line, and then, after a pause, she added, "An heroic death is, after all, an easy thing compared with an heroic life, and there's no life more heroic than to choose to be unheroic and obscure for the sake of obscure and unheroic people."

"It's the life of many a clergyman," said George.

"It's the loveliest of all lives," said Lady Saddlethwaite emphatically.

Mabel said nothing, but looked through tears a hope which lay still deep in her heart—the hope, or rather the faith, for it has a higher source and sustenance than hope, that he will,

Perplex in faith, but pure in deeds,
Beat at last his music out,

and find there is an honest place for him in a church which is wide enough to comprehend a Clancy, a Gant, and a Lawley.

THE END.

Zoophily.

It is a comforting reflection in a world still "full of violence and cruel habitations," that the behaviour of men to domestic animals must have been, on the whole, more kind than the reverse. Had it been otherwise, the "set" of the brute's brains, according to modern theory, would have been that of shyness and dread of us, such as is actually exhibited by the rabbit which we chase in the field, and the rat we pursue in the cupboard. In countries where cats are exceptionally illtreated (*e.g.* the South of France), poor puss is almost as timid as a hare, while the devotion and trustfulness of the dog towards man in every land peopled by an Aryan race seem to prove that, with all our faults, he has not found us such bad masters after all. Dogs love us, and could only love us, because we have bestowed on them some crumbs of love and goodwill, though their generous little hearts have repaid the debt a thousandfold. The "Shepherd's Chief Mourner" and "Grey Friar's Bobby" had probably received in their time only a few pats from the horny hands of their masters, and a gruff word of approval when the sheep had been particularly cleverly folded. But they recognised that the superior being condescended to care for them, and their adoring fidelity was the ready response.*

Two different motives of course have influenced men to such kindness to domestic animals, one being obvious self-interest, and the necessity, if they needed the creature's services, to keep it in some degree of health and comfort; and the other being the special affection of individual men for favourite animals. Of the frequent manifestation of this latter sentiment in all ages literature and art bear repeated testimony. We find it in the parable of Nathan; in the pictured tame lion running beside the chariot of Rameses; in the story of Argus in the *Odyssey*; in the episode in the *Mahabharata*, where the hero refuses to ascend to heaven in the car of Indra without his dog; in the exquisite passage in the *Zend*

* A touching story of such sheep gathering was recently told me on good authority. A shepherd lost his large flock on the Scotch mountains in a fog. After fruitless search he returned to his cottage, bidding his collie find the sheep if she could. The collie, who was near giving birth to her young, understood his orders and disappeared in the mist, not returning for many hours. At last she came home in miserable plight, driving before her the last stray sheep, and carrying in her mouth a puppy of her own! She had of necessity left the rest of her litter to perish on the hills, and in the intervals of their birth the poor beast had performed her task and driven home the sheep. Her last puppy only she had contrived to save.

Avesta, where the Lord of Good speaks to Zoroaster: "For I have made the dog, I who am Ahura Muzda;" in the history of Alexander's hero Bucephalus; in Pliny's charming tales of the boy and the pet dolphin, and of the poor slave thrown down the Gemonian stairs, beside whose corpse his dog watched and wailed till even the stern hearts of the Roman populace were melted to pity.

But neither the everyday self-interested care of animals by their masters, nor the occasional genuine affection of special men to favourite animals—which have together produced the actual tameness most of the domesticated tribes now exhibit—seems to have led men to the acknowledgment of a moral obligation on their part towards the brutes. As a lady will finger lovingly a bunch of flowers, and the next moment drop it carelessly on the roadside, or pluck the blossoms to pieces in sheer thoughtlessness, so the great majority of mankind have always treated animals.

We tread them to death, and a troop of them dies
Without our regard or concern,

cheerfully remarked Dr. Watts concerning ants; but he might have said the same of our "unconcern" in the case of the cruel destruction of thousands of harmless birds and beasts, and the starvation of their young; and of the all-but-universal recklessness of men in dealing with animals not representing value in money.

It is not, however, to be reckoned as surprising that our forefathers did not dream of such a thing as Duty to Animals. They learned very slowly that they owed duties to *men* of other races than their own. Only on the generation which recognised thoroughly for the first time (thanks in great measure to Wilberforce and Clarkson) that the Negro was "a man and a brother," did it dawn that beyond the Negro there were other still humbler claimants for benevolence and justice. Within a few years passed the Emancipation of the West Indian slaves and that first Act for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, of which Lord Erskine so truly prophesied that "it would prove not only an honour to the Parliament of England, but an era in the civilisation of the world."

But the noble law of England—which thus forestalled the moralists and set an example which every civilised nation, with one solitary exception, has followed—remains even to this day, after sixty years, still in advance of the systematic teachers of human duty. Even while every year sermons specially inculcating humanity to animals are preached all over the kingdom, nobody (so far as the present writer is aware) has attempted formally to include Duty to the Lower Animals in any complete system of ethics as an organic part of the Whole Duty of Man.*

* The best effort to supply the missing chapter of ethics, is the charming and eloquent volume, *Rights of an Animal*, by E. B. Nicholson. I thankfully recognise the candour wherewith the author has tackled the difficult problems of the case, and the value of his demonstration that the law of England assumes the fundamental prin-

Without pretending for a moment to fill up this gap in ethics, I would fain offer to those who are interested in the subject, a suggestion which may possibly serve as a scaffolding till the solid edifice be built by stronger hands. We must perchance yet wait to determine what are the right *actions* of man to brute; but I do not think we need lose much time in deciding what must be the right *sentiment*: the general feeling wherewith it is fit we should regard the lower animals. If we can but clearly define that sentiment, it will indicate roughly the actions which will be consonant therewith.

In the first place it seems to me that a sense of serious responsibility towards the brutes ought to replace our "lady-and-the-nosegay" condition of *insouciance*. The "ages before morality" are at an end at last, even in this remote province of human freedom. Of all the grotesque ideas which have imposed on us in the solemn phraseology of divines and moralists, none is more absurd than the doctrine that our moral obligations stop short where the object of them does not happen to know them; and assures us that, because the brutes cannot call us to account for our transgressions, nothing that we can do will constitute a transgression. To absolve us from paying for a pair of boots because our bootmaker's ledger had unluckily been burned, would be altogether a parallel lesson in morality. It is plain enough, indeed, that the creature who is (as we assume) without a conscience or moral arbitrament, must always be exonerated from guilt, no matter what it may do of hurt or evil; and the judicial proceedings against, and executions of, oxen and pigs in the Middle Ages for manslaughter were unspeakably absurd. But not less absurd, on the other side, is it to exonerate men, who *have* consciences and free will, when they are guilty of cruelty to brutes, on the plea—not that *they*—but the brutes, are immoral and irresponsible.*

A moral being is not moral on one side of him only, but moral *all round*, and towards all who are above, beside, and beneath him; just as a gentleman is a gentleman not only to the king but to the peasant; and as a truthful man speaks truth both to friend and stranger. Just in the same way the "merciful man is merciful to his beast," as he is merciful to the beggar at his gate. I may add that every noble quality is specially tested by its exhibition in those humbler directions wherein there is nothing to be gained by showing it, and nothing to be lost by contrary behaviour.

ciple that cruelty to an animal is an offence *per se*, and that it is not necessary to show that it injures any human owner or spectator. In this respect, as in all others, our Act (11 & 12 Vict. c. 39) immeasurably transcends the French *Loi Grammont*, which condemns only cruelty exhibited in public places and painful to the spectators. Mr. Nicholson justifies Vivisection only so far as it can be rendered absolutely painless by anæsthetics. To such of us as have seen through that delusion, *cadit questio*.

* As a recent example of this doctrine, see Dr. Carpenter's article in the *Fortnightly Review* for February 1, 1882. "Is it not," he says, "the very basis of ethical doctrine (!) that the moral rights of any being depend on its ethical nature?"

There is a passage from Jeremy Bentham, quoted in Mrs. Jameson's *Common Place Book* and elsewhere, which will recur to many readers at this point. "The day may come," he says, "when the rest of the animal creation may acquire those rights which never could have been withheld from them but by the hand of tyranny. It may come one day to be recognised that the number of legs, the villosity of the skin, or the termination of the *os sacrum* are reasons insufficient for abandoning a sensitive being to the caprice of a tormentor. . . . The question is not, Can they reason? or Can they speak? but Can they suffer?"

Long before Bentham, a greater mind, travelling along a nobler road of philosophy, laid down the canon which resolves the whole question. Bishop Butler affirmed that it was on the simple fact of a creature being SENTIENT—i.e. capable of pain and pleasure—that rests our responsibility to save it pain and give it pleasure. There is no evading this obligation, then, as regards the lower animals, by the plea that they are not moral beings. It is *our* morality, not *theirs*, which is in question. There are special considerations which in different cases may modify our obligation, but it is on such special reasons, not on the universal non-moral nature of the brutes (as the old divines taught), that our exoneration must be founded; and the onus lies on us to show cause for each of them.

The distinction between our duties to animals and our duties to our human fellow-creatures lies here. As regards them both we are indeed forbidden to inflict avoidable pain, because both alike are sentient. But as regards the brutes, our duties *stop* there; whereas, as regards men, they being moral as well as sentient beings, our primary obligations towards them must concern their higher natures, and the preservation of the lives which those higher natures invest with a sanctity exclusively their own. Thus we reach the important conclusion that the infliction of avoidable Pain is the supreme offence as regards the lower animals, but *not* the supreme offence as regards man. Sir Henry Taylor's noble lines go to the very root of the question:—

Pain, terror, mortal agonies, which scare
Thy heart in man, to brutes thou wilt not spare.
Are theirs less sad and real? *Pain in man*
Bears the high mission of the flail and fan;
In brutes 'tis purely piteous.

Pain is the one supreme evil of the existence of the lower animals; an evil which (so far as we can see) has no countervailing good. As to Death—a painless one, so far from being the supreme evil to them, is often the truest mercy. Thus instead of the favourite phrase of certain physiologists, that "they would put hecatombs of brutes to torture to save the smallest pain of a man," true ethics bid us regard man's *moral* welfare only as of supreme importance, and anything which can injure *it* (such, for example, as the practice, or sanction of the practice, of cruelty) as the worst of evils, even if along with it should come a mitigation of bodily pain. On this subject the present Bishop of Winchester has made

an admirable remark—viz. “that it is true that Man is superior to the beast, but the part of Man which we recognise as such is his moral and spiritual nature. So far as his body and its pains are concerned, there is no particular reason for considering them more than the body and bodily pains of a brute.”

Of course the ground is cut from under us in this whole line of argument by those ingenious thinkers who have recently disinterred (with such ill-omened timeliness for the vivisection debate) Descartes’ supposed doctrine, that the appearance of pain and pleasure in the brutes is a mere delusion, and that they are only automata—“a superior kind of mario-nettes which eat without pleasure, cry without pain, desire nothing, know nothing, and only simulate intelligence as a bee simulates a mathematician.” If this conclusion (on which modern science is to be congratulated !) be accepted, it follows of course that we should give no more consideration to the fatigue of a noble hunter than to the wood of a rocking-horse ; and that the emotions a child bestows on its doll will be more serious than those we bestow on a dog who dies of grief on his master’s grave. Should it appear to us, however, on the contrary (as it certainly does to me) that there is quite as good evidence that dogs and elephants reason as that certain physiologists reason, and a great deal better evidence that they—the animals—feel, we may perhaps dismiss the Cartesianism of the Nineteenth Century, and proceed without further delay to endeavour to define more particularly the fitting sentiment of man to sentient brutes. We have seen we ought to start with a distinct sense of some degree of moral responsibility as regards them. What shape should that sense assume ?

We have been in the habit of indulging ourselves in all manner of antipathies to special animals, some of them having, perhaps, their source and *raison d’être* in the days of our remote but not illustrious ancestors,

When wild in woods the noble savage ran ;

or those of a still earlier date, who were, as Mr. Darwin says, “arboreal in their habits,” ere yet we had deserved the reproach of having “made ourselves tailless and hairless and multiplied folds to our brain.” Other prejudices, again, are mere personal whims, three-fourths of them being pure affectation. A man will decline to sit in a room with an in-offensive cat, and a lady screams at the sight of a mouse, which is infinitely more distressed at the *rencontre* than she. I have known an individual, otherwise distinguished for audacity, “make tracks” across several fields to avoid a placidly ruminating cow. In our present stage of civilisation these silly prejudices are barbarisms and anachronisms, if not vulgarisms, and should be treated like exhibitions of ignorance or childishness. For our remote progenitors before mentioned, tusked and hirsute, struggling for existence with the cave bear and the mammoth in the howling wilderness of a yet uncultured world, there was no doubt justification for regarding the terrible beasts around them with the hatred

which comes of fear. But the animal creation, at least throughout Europe, has been subdued for ages, and all its tribes are merely dwellers by sufferance in a vanquished province. Their position as regards us appeals to every spark of generosity alight in our bosoms, and ought to make us ashamed of our whims and antipathies towards beings so humble. Shall man arrogate the title of "lord of creation" and not show himself at the least *bon prince* to his poor subjects? It is not too much to ask that, even towards wild animals, our feelings should be those of royal clemency and indulgence—of pleasure in the beauty and grace of such of them as are beautiful; of admiration for their numberless wondrous instincts; of sympathy with their delight in the joys of the forest and the fields of air. Few, I suppose, of men with any impressionability can watch a lark ascending into the sky of a summer morning without some dim echo of the feelings which inspired Shelley's Ode. This is, however, only a specially vivid instance of a sympathy which might be almost universal, and which, so far as we learn to feel it, touches all nature for us with a magic wand.

If we are compelled to fight with them—if they are our natural enemies and can never be anything else—then let us wage war upon them in loyal sort, as we contended against the Russians at Balaclava; and if we catch any prisoners, deal with them chivalrously, or at least mercifully. This, indeed (to do justice to sportsmen, much as I dislike their pursuit), I have always observed to be the spirit of the old-fashioned country gentleman, before the gross slaughtering of battues and despicable pigeon-matches were heard of in the land.

As to domestic animals, their demands on us, did we read them aright, are not so much those of petitioners for Mercy as of rightful claimants of Justice. We have caused their existence, and are responsible that they should be on the whole happy and not miserable. We take their services to carry our burdens, to enhance our pleasures, to guard our homes and our flocks. In the case of many of them we accept the fondest fidelity and an affection such as human beings scarcely give once in a lifetime. They watch for us, work for us, bear often weary imprisonment and slavery in our service, and not seldom mourn for us with breaking hearts when we die. If we conceive of an Arbiter sitting by and watching alike our behaviour and the poor brutes' toil and love, can we suppose he would treat it as merely a piece of *generosity* on our part, which we were free to leave unfulfilled without blame, that we should behave considerately to such an humble friend, supply him with food, water, and shelter, forbear to overwork him, and end his harmless life at last with the least possible pain? Would he not demand it of us as the simplest matter of *justice*? *

* I have endeavoured elsewhere to work out this hypothesis of an Umpire between man and brute, as a method of helping us to a solution of the problem of what are, and what are not, lawful actions on our parts towards animals. The reader who may be interested in the inquiry may obtain my pamphlet, the *Right of Tormenting*,

For those who accept the Darwinian theory, and believe that the relationship between man and the brutes is not only one of similarity, but of actual kinship in blood, it would have seemed only natural that this new view should have brought forth a burst of fresh sympathy and tenderness. If our physical frames, with all their quivering nerves and susceptibilities to a thousand pains, be indeed only the four-footed creature's body a little modified by development; if our minds only overlap and transcend theirs, but are grown out of those humbler brains; if all our moral qualities, our love and faith and sense of justice, be only their affection and fidelity and dim sense of wrong extended into wider realms,—then we bear in ourselves the irresistible testimony to their claims on our sympathy. And if, like so many of the disciples of the same new philosophy, we are unhappy enough to believe that both man and brute when laid in the grave awake no more, then, above all, it would seem that this common lot of a few pleasures and many pains, to be followed by annihilation, would move any heart to compassion. In the great, silent, hollow universe in which these souls believe themselves to stand, how base does it seem to turn on the weaker, unoffending beings around them and spoil their little gleam of life and joy under the sun!

Nothing is more startling to me than the fact that some of the leading apostles of this philosophy, and even its respected author himself, should in one and the same breath tell us that an ape, for example, is actually our own flesh and blood, and that it is right and proper to treat apes after the fashion of Professors Munk and Goltz and Ferrier. These gentlemen, as regards the poor *quadrumana*, are “rather more than kin, and rather less than kind.”

For those who, whether they believe in Evolution or not, still hold faith in the existence of a Divine Lord of man and brute, the reasons for sympathy are, in another way, still stronger. That the Christian religion did not, from the first, like the Zoroastrian, Buddhist, Brahminist, impress its followers with the duty of mercy to the brutes—that it was left to a few tender-hearted saints, like S. Francis, to connect the creatures in any way with the worship of the Creator, and to the later development of Protestantism to formulate any doctrine on the subject of duty towards them—is a paradox which would need much space to explain. Modern religion, at all events, by whatever name it is called, seems tending more and more to throw an additional tender sacredness over our relations to the “unoffending creatures which He”—their Maker—“loves,” and to make us recognise a latent truth in the curiously hackneyed lines of Coleridge concerning him who “prayeth best” and also loveth best “both man and bird and beast.” Where that great and far-reaching softener of hearts—the sense of our own failures and offences—is vividly present, the position we hold to creatures who *have never done wrong* is always found inexpressibly touching. To be kind to them,

and rejoice in their happiness, seems just one of the few ways in which we can act a godlike part in our little sphere, and display the mercy for which we hope in our turn. Whichever way we take it, I conceive we reach the same conclusion. The only befitting feeling for human beings to entertain towards brutes is—as the very word suggests—the feeling of *Humanity*; or, as we may interpret it, the sentiment of Sympathy, so far as we can cultivate fellow-feeling; of Pity, so far as we know them to suffer; of Mercy, so far as we can spare their sufferings; of Kindness and Benevolence, so far as it is in our power to make them happy.

There is nothing fanatical about this Humanity. It does not call on us to renounce any of the useful or needful avocations of life as regards animals, but rather would it make the man imbued with it perform them all the better.* We assuredly need not, because we become humane, sacrifice the higher life for the lower, as in the wondrous Buddhist parable so beautifully rendered in the *Light of Asia*, where “Lord Buddha,” in one of his million lives, gives himself, out of pity, to be devoured by a famishing tiger who cannot feed her cubs, and

the great cat's burning breath
Mix'd with the last sigh of such fearless love.

We need not even copy the sweet lady in the *Sensitive Plant* who made the bees and moths and ephemeridæ her attendants:—

But all killing insects and gnawing worms,
And things of obscene and unlovely forms,
She bare in a basket of Indian woof
Into the rough woods far aloof,—
In a basket of grasses and wild flowers full
The softest her gentle hands could pull;
For the poor banish'd insects, whose intent,
Although they did ill, was innocent.

This is poetry not meant for practice, and yet even these hyperboles carry a breath as of Eden along with them. Of Eden, did I say? Nay, rather of the later Paradise for which the soul of the greatest of the prophets yearned, where “they shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain.”

I will not attempt here to define how the sentiment of Humanity to the brutes, thoroughly ingrained into a man's heart, would make him decide the question of field sports. My own impression is that it would lead him to abandon first, and with utter disgust, such wretched amusements as pigeon-matches and *battues* of half-tame pheasants; and later, those sports in which, as in fox-hunting and coursing and duck-shooting, the sympathy of the sportsman with his hounds and horse, or his grey-

* In fact, many men who pursue such trades, notably butchers, are genuinely humane, and do their best to get through their work in the most merciful way. Several of them have recently expressed warm satisfaction on obtaining Baxter's Mask, whereby oxen may be instantaneously killed without the chance of a misdirected blow. The mask is to be obtained from Mr. Baxter, Ealing Dean, W.

hound or retriever, is uppermost in his mind, to the exclusion of the wild and scarcely seen object of his pursuit. In nine kinds of such sports, I believe, out of ten, it is rather a case of ill-divided sympathy for animals than of lack of it which inspires the sportsman; and not many would find enjoyment where neither horse nor dog had part—like poor Robertson, of Brighton, sitting for hours in a tub in a marsh to shoot wild duck, and counting the period so spent as “hours of delight!”

But there is one practice respecting which the influence of such a sentiment of humanity as we have supposed must have an unmistakable result. It must put an absolute stop to Vivisection. To accustom ourselves and our children to regard animals with sympathy, to beware of giving them pain, and rejoice when it is possible for us to give them pleasure; to study their marvellous instincts, and trace the dawnings of reason in their sagacious acts; to accept their services and their affection, and give them in return such pledges of protection as our kind words and caresses,—to do this, and then calmly consent to hand them over to be dissected alive—this is too monstrous to be borne. *De deux choses l'une.* Either we must cherish animals—and then we must abolish Vivisection,—or we must sanction Vivisection; and then, for very shame's sake, and lest we poison the springs of pity and sympathy in our breasts and the breasts of our children, we must renounce the ghastly farce of petting or protecting animals, and pretending to recognise their noble and lovable qualities. If love and courage and fidelity, lodged in the heart of a dog, have no claim on us to prevent us from dissecting that heart even while yet it beats with affection; if the human-like intelligence working in a monkey's brain do not forbid (but rather invite) us to mutilate that brain, morsel by morsel, till the last glimmering of mind and playfulness die out in dulness and death;—if this be so, then, in Heaven's name, let us at least have done with our cant of “humanity,” and abolish our Acts of Parliament, and dissolve our Bands of Mercy and our 300 Societies for the Prevention of Cruelty throughout the world.

The idea of Vivisection (to use the phrase of its 3,000 advocates who memorialised Sir Richard Cross) rests on the conception of an animal (a dog, for example) as “a carnivorous creature, valuable for purposes of research”—a mechanism, in short, of nerves and muscles, bones and arteries, which, as they add, it would be a pity to “withdraw from investigation.” The crass materialism which thus regards such a creature as a dog (and would, doubtless, if its followers spoke out, be found similarly to regard a man) is at the opposite pole of thought and feeling from the recognition of the animal in its higher nature as an object of our tenderness and sympathy. We cannot hold both views at once. If we take the higher one the lower must become abhorrent in our eyes. There is—there ought to be—no question in the matter of a little more or a little less of torture, or of dispute whether anæsthetics, when they can be employed, usually effect complete and final, or only partial and temporary, insensibility; or of whether such processes as putting an animal

into a stove over a fire till it expires in ten or twenty minutes ought to be called "baking it alive," or described by some less distressing and homely phraseology.* It is the simple idea of dealing with a living, conscious, sensitive, and intelligent creature as if it were dead and senseless matter against which the whole spirit of true humanity revolts. It is the notion of such absolute despotism as shall justify, not merely taking life, but converting the entire existence of the animal into a misfortune, which we denounce as a brutal misconception of the relations between the higher and the lower creatures, and an utter anachronism in the present stage of human moral feeling. A hundred years ago, had physiologists frankly avowed that they recognised no claims on the part of the brutes which should stop them from torturing them, they would have been only on the level of their contemporaries. But to-day they are behind the age; ay, sixty years behind the legislature and the poor Irish gentleman who "ruled the houseless wilds of Connemara," and had the glory of giving his name to Martin's Act. How their claim for a "free vivisection table" may be looked back upon a century to come we may perhaps foretell with no great chance of error. In his last book, published ten years ago, Sir Arthur Helps wrote these memorable words: "It appears to me that the advancement of the world is to be measured by the increase of humanity and the decrease of cruelty. . . . I am convinced that if an historian were to sum the gains and losses of the world at the close of each recorded century, there might be much which was retrograde in other aspects of human life and conduct, but nothing could show a backward course in humanity" (pp. 195, 196). As I have said ere now, the battle of Mercy, like that of Freedom,

once begun,
Though often lost, is always won.

Even should all the scientific men in Europe unite in a Resolution that "Vivisection is Necessary," just as all the Dominicans would have united three hundred years ago to resolve that *autos da fê* were "necessary," or as all the lawyers and magistrates that the *peine forte et dure* was "necessary," or, as our fathers would have done, that hanging for forgery was "necessary," yet the "necessity" will disappear in the case of the scientific torture of animals as in all the rest. The days of Vivisection are numbered.

FRANCES POWER COBBE.

* See Mr. Gurney's remarks on this matter in the preceding number of the CORNHILL MAGAZINE, and Dr. Hoggan's reply in the *Spectator* for February 11.

The Early Life of J. F. Millet.

THE artist of the *Angelus* and the *Semeur* is perhaps the painter of modern times to whom the epithet "heroic" applies most readily and fitly. His work has been described as "a painted epic," himself as "a Michelangelo of the glebe;" and to those who are in sympathy with his art and its motives, with the type and quality of his sentiment and the manner of its expression, the descriptions are only adequate, and the claims implied in them no more than just. Of course there are many to whom they must seem fantastically exaggerated. Millet has been but five or six years dead, and his triumph is but now beginning. The world has not yet had time nor opportunity to search out his meanings, which are profound—as Beethoven's were—nor to learn to understand his practice, which was peculiar—as was Rembrandt's; and for some time to come there must be picture-lovers not a few who will decline to feel interested in what he had to say, or to be at the pains of studying the terms in which he said it. There is likely to be no such dissent about the man himself; nor is it probable that there will ever be two opinions as to the interest of his life. His story is sad enough in many ways; but it is encouraging in the main, and it is eminently instructive. It may be divided into three parts: one, 1814–1837, telling of Millet's origin and education; another, 1837–1849, of his apprenticeship to art and his stay in Paris; a third, 1849–1875, of his sojourn in the Forest of Fontainebleau and his achievement as a finished and an individual artist. The last two are mainly records of production more or less unpopular, and effort more or less unsuccessful, in a worldly sense at all events; there are many such chapters in the chronicle of art, and there will certainly be many more. Of the first, the general colouring of which is one of contentment and tranquillity, the circumstances are uncommon and peculiar enough to seem worth lingering over and narrating with some fulness of detail.

I.

Gruchy is a little hamlet in the Norman commune of Greville, perched upon the iron cliffs of the Hogue, and overlooking the troubled waters of Cherbourg Roads. It was there, on October 4, 1814, that Millet was born. His birth year was the year of the Campaign of France, it will be remembered, and of the abdication at Fontainebleau; and, the true child of his time—which was one of desperate defensive wars and the agony of a great ambition, when hope and endeavour

alternated with doubt and dejection, and general distress had created a disposition to individual charity—he seems to have always retained an impression of his ante-natal circumstances. He was a man strong in heart and intellect, and noble and dignified in character, with an indomitable will and a lofty audacity of purpose. But his imagination, while it was heroic and daring, was also mystical and solemn; he perceived the melancholy of things more readily than the joy in them; his message was one of peace and of pity. He represents the full and anxious year that gave him being as it must have seemed to the strong, patient, long-suffering class from which he sprang. Genius and the artistic sentiment apart, he was a peasant of the best and highest type, with that development of certain special capacities and qualities—as quiet hardihood, tenacity under trial, and dignified and thoughtful submissiveness—which some five-and-twenty years of war and revolution and unwilling conquest might be expected to induce.

He was exceptionally fortunate in the circumstances of his early environment and the facts of his ancestry and immediate parentage. Few men have had such excellent preparation for a peculiar task, and fewer still have made so good a use of their opportunity. The bent of his genius and the nature of his function were determined for him from the first. He was a peasant born and bred, and in him the sympathies and aspirations of many generations of peasants found special expression. The several strains uniting in him—of Millet, and Jumelin, and Henry du Perron—were exceptionally choice and vigorous. His father, Jean-Louis, son of Nicolas Millet and Louise Jumelin, came of an alliance between two families of varying temperaments and widely different capacities. The characteristics of the Millets were honesty, sobriety, simplicity, and laboriousness; in the Jumelins, with all of these, there was a dash of mysticism, a note of imaginativeness, a tendency to intellectual and emotional independence. The Millets worked hard, lived cleanly and kindly, and worshipped humbly and with all their hearts; the Jumelins practised science, and essayed adventure, and were versed in theology, in the moralists, in the literature and doctrine of Port-Royal. Jean-Louis, the heir of the two houses, had the distinguishing qualities of both. Tall and straight and limber, with fine hands and mild black eyes and curling and abundant hair, he was deeply religious, very thoughtful, very earnest and serious in temper, and so pure in heart and habit that his neighbours would refrain from oaths and coarse talk in his presence. And withal he was a kind of inarticulate poet. He had a fine voice and a good ear; the quire he led and trained was famed throughout the department; his music, says Sensier, is copied out in a hand that reminds you of a mediæval scribe's. He was fond of plants and trees, and interested in the ways and characters of animals, and curiously susceptible to the influences of nature; and he was always seeking to fix, or to translate, his impressions, sometimes by modelling in clay, sometimes by carving in wood. "Vois donc," he would say to

his son, as they were walking afield, "comme cet arbre est grand et bien fait; il est aussi beau à voir qu'une fleur:"—or, as they were looking out of window after the midday meal, "Vois donc comme cette maison à moitié enterrée derrière le champ est bien; il me semble qu'on devrait la dessiner ainsi." Of this good man's wife, *née* Henry, or Henry du Perron, nothing is recorded but that she came of a family of yeomen many generations old, and was a woman of exemplary life and a beautiful disposition. With her, as with her husband, devoutness was second nature. They were pious and charitable, as they were hardworking and thrifty and affectionate, without effort and without afterthought. They were poor, but they gave freely of their substance, and would accept of none but honourable gains. They were hardly literate, but they knew the Bible by heart, and Augustine and Jerome were household oracles with them. They worked as only French peasants can and do, but they remained generous and unsophisticated always; and when, years afterwards, Madame Millet writes to her son in Paris, she is found expressing herself in terms and with an accent that recall the mothers of antiquity. Nor were they alone in virtue among the members of their household. Had they stood in need of examples, they would have found them without crossing their own threshold. Domesticated with them were the painter's great-uncle, the Abbé Charles Millet, and his grandmother Louise. The Abbé, a man of great simplicity and sweetness, and of enormous personal strength, had been eased of his functions by the operation of the Revolution, and, after having been hunted for his life, had settled quietly down to till the fields he had been used to bless. He was a kind of ideal country curate, three parts labourer and one part churchman—a half-heroic *bête du bon Dieu*, one of the draught oxen of the Church; taking a pride in building walls and dykes, without help, of stones that he only could lift; teaching stray urchins their accidence and their catechism for the love of God, and to keep them out of mischief; watching over his infant grand-nephew with the imperturbable and slow solicitude of an animal for its young. The grandmother was of another temper. She was a woman of singular piety and humanity, and, for all her fervent Catholicism, a kind of unconscious Pantheist, who saw the Deity in all created things, and his action in all natural and human incidents. She had a great deal of character and intelligence, her culture was exceptional, she was full of morality and good counsel, hers was an enterprising and commanding personality; in another state of life she would certainly have been a personage of mark. She was the artist's god-mother; and she named him François after her patron, the good saint of Assisi, the lover of nature, the open-air apostle, the evangelist of the birds—as fortunate and appropriate a protector for a landscape painter, I think, as could well be found in the calendar. He was her special charge for many years, and her character and teaching were among the best and most active influences of his life. One of his earliest recollections is of a bright morning when she came and roused him from sleep,

saying to him, with gentle and loving reproachfulness, "Si tu savais comme il y a longtemps que les oiseaux chantent la gloire du bon Dieu ;" and in 1846, she writes to him of the *St. Jerome* he is painting, and bids him "work for Eternity" always. "Pour quelque raison que ce puisse être," she adds in her antique and simple French, "ne te permets jamais de faire de mauvais ouvrages, ne perds pas la présence de Dieu ; avec saint Jérôme, pense incessamment entendre la trompette qui doit nous appeler au Jugement." Her life and conversation were of a piece with these counsels ; and Millet, who was passionately and devoutly attached to her, may well have had her in his mind when he painted and etched the third and eldest of his *Glaneuses* : the three majestic and mystical figures—as of priestesses upon a sacred beach, gathering the pebbles for some lofty and momentous act of divination—the "Parcæ of Poverty," as they have been called, in which he has embodied all the solemn and pathetic beauty and all the old-world dignity and romance of the gleaner's toil. His work, indeed, may be described as in some sort an expression of ideas that, in a greater or less degree and in one or another form, were common to the three or four of his immediate kindred of whom I have spoken. It is hard to believe that they would not have understood his greater pictures better than did, or could, the most enthusiastic of his critics. He dealt with facts they knew in a spirit that, elevated and ennobled as it had come to be, was, after all, the same with that in which they wrought out their own fortunes and lived their own lives. To me, indeed, they have a sort of share in Millet's whole achievement ; for I cannot but think his character and genius, original and personal as they were, to have been largely inherited from them, and to have been deeply moulded and permanently impressed by them as well ; so that they may, in a certain sense, be said to have been as much his masters as Poussin and Michelangelo themselves.

It is the same with his early environment as with the facts of his kinship. Walter Scott himself, the most fortunate of scholars, was not so well placed for the study of Border lore and Border character as Millet for the study of the external aspects and the inner meanings of peasant life. At Gruchy, between the green and pleasant Norman landscape and the solemn and mysterious seas, manners were simple, and life was earnest and hard. The villagers tilled their own little plots for food, spun their own linens, coopered their own tubs and pails, and carpentered their own tools and furniture. In summer time they lived much in the open air. On winter nights they gathered round the fire to sew and spin and work in wicker, and to tell old stories and sing old songs. They were no fishers. If they harvested the sea it was for weed and drift,* wherewith to fatten their fields and feed their hearths.

* Some of them made money now and then as smugglers' labourers. The contraband trade was still profitable ; the Channel teemed with knavish luggers and sloops ;

For they were essentially a race of husbandmen, and they had enough to do with reaping and shearing, and grafting and harrowing and delving, and the hundred other tasks of rustic labour. Of late the farmer and his lot have suffered change. Science has come to him, and steam, and machinery—"the Devil's oän teäm." He has grown positive and professional; and his trade, the oldest trade of all, has lost its antique airs of naturalness and individuality. In Millet's day its associations were yet biblical and solemn, its practice was yet personal and traditional. The sower still went forth to sow; and the painter's own *Semeur* is in some sort an illustration of the matter and spirit of the admirable line,

Wi' joy the tentie seedsman stalks,

of Robert Burns. The sentiment of gleaning was practically the same that it had been with Naomi and Ruth. The corn was reaped with sickles, and threshed upon a floor with flails, and ground into flour between stones under the impulse of water or of wind. The art of ploughing was human and majestic; and it was natural to see, upon some brown upland slopes, or far away on the luminous level of the plain, that noblest of all the sights of labour—a ploughman working with his team, the stately pacing horses, the shining shares, the alert and busy following of birds, the straight furrows lengthening and multiplying under the workman's will. The elemental forces were romantic and passionate as of yore; and to the shepherd watching his flock by night the darkness had all its terrors yet, and there was a mystical and sacred quality in the inexplicable stars. Ghostly presences were still formidable and dreadful, so that doubtfulness and awe came with the shadows, and the dawning light gave argument for gratitude and joy. Millet was reared upon the Bible, the most open-air of books, and bred to open-air employment under all the old solemn and picturesque conditions. Hardly had he entered upon his teens ere he went to work in the fields; and till two or three and twenty he was to all intents and purposes as diligent and complete a husbandman as Burns himself. During infancy, that is to say, and during youth and early manhood, while his imagination was at its quickest and freshest, and while his sympathies were readiest and most receptive, he was engaged in assimilating a world of sincere and memorable impressions. With the innumerable details of country life and labour he was familiar, both physically and intellectually, from the very first. He grew up among them, and took part in them; they entered into and became a portion of his being; he learned by actual experience to apprehend and express the peculiar sentiment of

and on dark and moonless nights, when cargo could be run, there was plenty of work for long-shore hands all down the coast. It is characteristic of the Millets that they would not meddle with this traffic, and would neither deal in smuggled wares nor handle smugglers' wages. They were strict, too, in the matter of wreckage, and would have nothing whatever to do with it.

each, as he learned to master its peculiar practice ; they were elements in an unconscious education of uncommon breadth and thoroughness, and they became the sole material of his art. It is not too much to say of him that, given the circumstances of his breeding and training, he could not have painted otherwise than he did. His work is the natural outcome of his life. He was in heart and mind the painter of the *Semeur* and the *Angelus* ere he quitted Gruchy ; he was "Millet le Rustique" while he was yet a labourer on his father's land.

II.

He has left some pleasant memoranda on his younger years, so that the nature of his surroundings and the tenour of his occupations are easily explained. He was the second child in a family of eight : his elder being the beloved sister Emilie, of whose death he has written so simple and touching an account, and who, until he left Normandy for Paris, was the dearest of his companions and friends. She was a good creature, it would seem—pious, diligent, fine-tempered, careful ; the model of what an elder sister should be. Millet has sketched her sitting at her wheel, in sabots and a linen cap, and in the short homespun skirts and quaint bodice of her country and class, and differing in no respect from the heroines of his most imaginative work ; and the portrait, of which the chief qualities are truthfulness and a tender melancholy, is like a page from the painter's early story. In after years he appears to have looked back upon his childhood and his youth as the only happy parts of his life. His memories were clear, definite, and pleasing ; he wrote them down affectionately and well, as if the task were a pleasure to him, and he felt himself a boy again in doing it.

Jean-Louis Millet tilled his own land, and had labourers in his employ to help him with the work. The farm-house in which he lived was rude enough in its way, no doubt, but there was always plenty to do in it, and there was always plenty to eat. In the garden was a great laurel tree by which Jean-François was always greatly impressed, and which he regarded as in some sort worthy of Apollo himself. An elm hard by the cottage divided his worship with the laurel, and afforded him matter for infinite meditation. "Mon vieil orme," he writes to Sensier when over fifty years old, "commence déjà à être rongé par le vent. Que je voudrais bien pouvoir le dégager dans l'espace comme mon souvenir le voit. O espaces qui m'ont tant fait rêver quand j'étais enfant, me sera-t-il jamais permis de vous faire soupçonner !" That was the way in which he looked at nature from the first, and the way in which he prepared himself for his splendid share in the development of modern art. The glimpses of life in his father's house which he gives us elsewhere are cheerful and moving. "Je me rappelle," he says, "m'être éveillé un matin dans mon petit lit en entendant des voix de gens qui causaient dans la chambre où j'étais. Parmi les voix il se faisait une espèce de ronfle-

ment qui s'interrompait de temps en temps. C'était le bruit d'un rouet, et les voix étaient celles des femmes qui filaient et cardaient la laine. La poussière de la chambre venait danser dans un rayon de soleil qui entraient par la fenêtre étroite et un peu haute qui donnait toute seule du jour à cette chambre." In one corner of the room, he adds, was a big bedstead, with a striped coverlet of brown and red, "retombant jusqu'à terre;" and against the wall stood a tall brown cupboard. That is one of the earliest of his definite recollections. Mingled confusedly in his mind were vague memories of the time between sleeping and waking, and its many morning sounds:—"le va-et-vient qui se fait dans une maison, les cris des oies dans la cour, le coq qui chantait, le bruit du fléau dans la grange." Adventures and experiences were not wanting later on. Once, when three new bells were waiting to be christened and hung in the village belfry (the old ones had been taken away and cast into cannon), he went with his mother and a little girl named Julie Lecacheux to see them in the church. All his life long he remembered the feeling of wonderment he had when he found himself in a place "aussi épouvantablement vaste que l'église," which seemed to him "plus immense qu'une grange," and his admiration of the great windows with their diamond panes and leaden lattices. The bells, too, looked formidable and gigantic; and when Julie Lecacheux was so bold as to rap the biggest of them, which was taller than he was himself, with the church key, it gave forth a noise that filled him with amazement, and that he never forgot. He was much abroad with his uncle, the Abbé Charles, whom he plagued unmercifully, and whose despair and delight he was alternately. The pair would go visiting together at the great houses in the neighbourhood, where the old curate was well known and greatly regarded. At one of these he saw two peacocks, before whose tails he fell into a kind of ecstasy, which was increased when the lady of the house presented him with a slice of bread and honey and an inestimable and most gorgeous feather. At another, he was sometimes allowed to gather fir cones and take them away with him: "ce qui me causait une grande joie." As a rule, he seems to have been a solemn and diligent kind of urchin; but on one occasion, which he never forgot, he was guilty of chattering during mass, and when his uncle came forward to take him from his seat and set him on his knees, under a lamp in the quire, to do penance for his crime, he was so unfortunate, by some mischance or other, as to catch his foot in the good man's surplice, and to rend the garment badly ere he could extricate himself from its folds. The consequences of this dreadful deed, which the Abbé looked upon as deliberate and intentional, were terrible. "Accablé de l'acte impie que je venais de commettre," says Millet, "il me laissa sans me donner la punition pour laquelle il s'était dérangé, et retourna s'asseoir à sa place, où il resta plus mort que vif jusqu'à la fin de la messe. Je n'avais aucune espèce de conscience de l'énormité que j'avais commise; je fus donc bien étonné, tout le monde rentré de la messe, lorsque mon grand-oncle se mit à raconter (encore sous le coup de son

émotion) à toute la famille l'abominable action que j'avais commise sur sa personne, et qu'il ne balançait pas, je crois, à considérer comme une espèce de sacrilège. Un tel acte commis sur un prêtre lui faisait présager pour mon avenir les plus effroyables choses. Dire de quel air consterné toute la famille me regardait ne serait pas possible. Le fait est que je ne comprenais pas comment j'étais devenu tout d'un coup un objet d'horreur, et que mon trouble n'aurait pas pu être plus grand." The Abbé, who appears to have taught Millet his letters, died when his pupil was seven years old; and Millet remembered how, the day of his uncle's death, the servant came to fetch him home from school, that he might not shame the family by playing and shouting through the street with his schoolfellows. Another memorable circumstance occurred the day of the Abbé's funeral, when the little boy heard folks talking secretly and stealthily of the way in which they had arranged to fortify the new-made grave. There were to be big stones about the head of the coffin, it appeared, and a couple of trusses of hay over all:—"car, disait-on, c'est ce qui leur donne le plus d'embarras. Leur outil s'embarrasse d'abord dans les bottes de foin, et après, il se brise entre les pierres, ce qui les empêche de pouvoir crocheter la tête et de tirer le corps hors de la fosse." He did not know to whom the "leur" of this sentence referred, nor could he understand why a posse of labourers and friends, armed with guns and flails, should have spent several nights in succession drinking mulled cider and watching the Abbé's tomb. Afterwards he learned that they were on the look-out for body-snatchers. These ruffians, it seemed, were in the habit of coming in the night with long screws, which they planted from above in corpses newly earthed, and so screwed them gently from their graves. Belated villagers had often come upon them on their way from the churchyard, supporting their prey between them as if it were alive and drunk, and they were merely engaged in helping a fellow-creature in distress; or carrying it away *en croupe* on horseback, heavily cloaked, and with its arms tied round the rider's waist:—"mais on voyait les pieds qui passaient au-dessous du manteau." On grim stories of this sort, on legends of ghosts and wild rumours of goblins and fairies—one is sure that the romance of the Witch of Endor was a special favourite—the lad was nursed and reared. An old book, called the *Tableau des Visions Chrétiennes*, containing, he says, "les opinions d'un tas de casuistes sur une infinité de choses qui se passeront dans l'autre monde," was constantly in his hands; it had for him the fearful charm that Stackhouse's *History of the Bible* had for Charles Lamb. He was always a lover of ghosts, and to the day of his death he could never confidently say that he was not a believer in them, too. To me it has always been a matter of regret that he did not sometimes paint them. With his astonishing sense of atmospherical mystery and romance, his solemn and grandiose imagination, his unequalled capacity for the portraiture of gesture, he might, I think, had he been so minded, have produced a *Samuel and Saul*,

for instance, or a *Meeting of the Weird Sisters*, that would have proved a new and heroic development of the supernatural in art. The one essay, however, which he made in this direction, the tremendous *Le Bûcheron et la Mort*, turned out, so far as the Salon and the public were concerned, an utter and disastrous failure. The jury refused to give it a place in the exhibition; and though many of the critics—Alexandre Dumas among the number—took up the painter's cause, and proclaimed the merits of his work incomparable, he had considerable difficulty in finding a buyer, and was glad in the end to sell his picture for such a paltry sum as 40%. It is not surprising, after all, that with the exception of a strange and moving drawing of the *Ascension* the *Bûcheron et la Mort* should remain the painter's only achievement in legendary art.

In the matter of formal education his opportunities, irregular as they were, were in some sort good and fortunate: as even Mr. Ruskin has deigned resentfully enough to allow; and while he could he made a right use of them. At school he learned but little. His handwriting was fair and neat, and he could read anything; but he could get nothing by heart, and in arithmetic he never advanced beyond simple addition. He was better in the playground than at the desk, and he won his first fight gallantly enough. It came off as soon as ever he became a schoolboy. His fellows picked out a champion, put a straw on his shoulder, and dared the new comer to knock it off. This he did forthwith, and the consequences were battle and victory. His backers were much pleased with him. "Millet," they said, "n'a que six ans et demi, et il a battu un garçon de plus de sept ans." It was not until his twelfth year that he began to work hard at his books. Then, however, he had to prepare for his first communion, and in doing so he won the heart of the Abbé Herpent, the young priest who was teaching him his catechism, and fitting him to take the sacrament. The Abbé urged him to learn Latin; and though Millet at first declined to do so, inasmuch as he had to be a labourer and not a priest, he had in the end to sit down to his accidence, and to grind away at his *Selectæ e Profanis* and his *Epitome Historiæ Sacræ*. Presently, however, he fell upon the old Desfontaines' edition, in Latin and in French, of the *Bucolics* and *Georgics*, and had a revelation of the heroic in art, and of that epic quality in rustic life of which his own work was afterwards to present so many striking and lofty examples. Certain verses affected him prodigiously; and Virgil became a chief influence in his life, to be studied continually in the original tongue side by side with the Vulgate itself. Meanwhile the Abbé Herpent had removed to Heauville, a hamlet at some little distance from Gruchy, and had taken Millet with him. The boy, however, was a lover of home and of his kinsfolk, and for the five or six months over which his exile extended was fond of likening himself to Ovid among the Goths. On his return to Gruchy he began to read Latin with the Abbé Lebrisseux, who had succeeded the Abbé Herpent in his ministry, and found in him

a firm and kindly friend. Between them, they remind one of Wordsworth,—with whom Millet has so much else in common—and his colloquies with old Matthew :—

We talked with open heart, and tongue
Affectionate and true,
A pair of friends, though I was young,
And Matthew seventy-two.

Millet at this time was an interesting child enough. A man visiting in the neighbourhood, a professor from Versailles, described him, indeed, after a day's talk with him, as "un enfant dont l'âme était aussi charmante que la poésie elle-même." Such as he was, he was never weary of questioning and confiding in the good Abbé Lebrisseux; and the Abbé for his part loved nothing better than to speak with the solemn, imaginative boy who at an age when others of his state in life were intent on nothing higher than chapman's literature, or the adventures of the Sons of Aymon, was deep in Virgil and in Job, and had thoughts of his own about the wandering, inexplicable sea, the pageant of the seasons, the mystery of sailing clouds and running waters, and all the majesty and romance of inanimate nature. There is no doubt that he recognised his pupil's genius, and there is none that, if he delighted in considering and developing it, he was often anxious and often troubled when he came to think of what the world would make of it. "Va, mon pauvre enfant," he would sometimes say, "tu as un cœur qui te donneras du fil à retordre; va, tu ne sais pas ce que tu souffriras." That was unhappily prophetic. But the evil days were as yet far off; and the future sufferer had naught to do for the moment but to feed his mind on great thoughts and good literature, and strengthen his body by toiling at his father's side in the fat Norman fields and meadows, to help to get bread for his seven little brothers and sisters.

He was never what is called cultured, but all his life he was a reader, and what he read he read well. At Gruchy he studied Virgil and the Bible, as I have already noted, with especial ardour and intention; but he grew conversant as well with authors like Arnault and Nicole, like Fénelon and Bossuet, like Jerome and François de Sales, like Augustine (in the *Confessions*) and Pascal, La Fontaine and Charron and Montaigne. During his apprenticeship at Cherbourg, his appetite for books appears to have been insatiable. His list of authors ranges from Shakespeare and Homer away to Paul de Kock and American Cooper. He knew Byron and Scott and Chateaubriand; he was deep in Schiller and Uhland and Bürger; he read Goethe and Corneille, and he read Hugo and Beranger; he was already versed in literature of many sorts—in the masterpieces of classicism and the lucubrations of romanticism alike—when he started for Paris, to worship the old masters in the Louvre, and to learn painting under Paul Delaroche. Years afterwards he is found delighting in Burns and in François Hugo's translation of Shakespeare, and projecting a version, informed with the authority of his own prac-

tical rusticity, of one of the Theocritean idylls. For the rest, his taste in literature was exceptionally sound. In his choice of books, as in his life and work, he was emphatically the "Jupiter en Sabots" of Gérôme's description. He liked nothing that was not strong and sincere. Affectation, corruption, falsehood, effeminacy, were eminently displeasing. He had as hard a word for the random cynicism of Musset as for the pictorial mummeries of Delaroche and the Deverías; he believed as little in the renovated maidenhood of Hugo's Marion Delorme as in the lackadaisical seuality of Ary Scheffer's Francesca de Rimini. He affected the heroic in letters, and was as passionate a worshipper of Homer and Shakespeare as of Jeremy and Isaiah themselves, divinely important in his belief as they were.

III.

Millet's artistic education appears to have been almost as informal in its beginnings as was the education of his mind. He was interested in the forms of things, and their relations to each other and to their surroundings, from the first, and he was young indeed when he began to draw. His first notions of design were derived from the prints in an old Bible. These he reproduced in pencil upon paper, or with chalk upon doors and shutters, as best he might; and no doubt he learned much from them. Not for nothing, however, was he a born great painter, and a student of Virgil and the Scriptures withal. He soon became dissatisfied with the imitation of other people's ideas, and anxious to express his own; and he took to drawing from nature. Of an afternoon, while his father slept—or feigned to sleep, the better to watch him at his work—he would sit at the window and sketch the open landscape without. He drew his father's horses and his cows and sheep. He made studies of trees, and studies of carts and ploughs. He reproduced on paper the house and the stables, the ivy on the wall, the dandelions in the grass, the fowls that fussed about the farmyard, the geese in the pond, the clouds in the sky, the waves on the sea; and his people were soon proud of him. One day he walked home from mass behind a bent and decrepit old man, and as he walked he studied the crooked spine, deflected at an angle from the point of curvature, and thrusting the head far forward from the centre of gravity. When he got home he took a piece of chalk and drew what he had seen upon the wall. It was a portrait *vu de dos*, and so like that every one could swear to the original. What was of more consequence was that from that time forth the young man had a clear and workmanlike understanding of the principle of foreshortening. I may note in this connection that it was always Millet's way to find things out for himself, and to be extremely jealous of restraint and suspicious of authority. "Je suis venu à Paris," he says of himself at three-and-twenty, "avec mes idées toutes faites en art, et je n'ai pas jugé à propos de les modifier." That sentence gives the measure of the man. He had not seen a dozen good pictures in his life when he had to make

his choice between the old masters in the Louvre and the moderns in the Luxembourg; but he put aside the little talents for the men of genius as promptly and decisively as if he had been trained in the studio of Rembrandt himself. His master, Delaroche, considering the first study he produced, opined that he had painted much and often, when, as a matter of fact, he had never taken brush in hand before. It is evident that if he had failed to do great work he would have belied his destiny.

We may be sure that the portrait in chalk was seen and applauded by all the hamlet, and that the wisdom of keeping the artist at the ploughtail got to seem very questionable. Millet was about eighteen years old, and the feat, which was sufficiently surprising, appears to have made his father more anxious about the future than ever. It is not, I think, to be wondered at if the Millet family met often in council on the matter, or if, after many months of argument and doubt, Jean-Louis Millet at last determined to make his son a painter in right earnest, useful as he was upon the farm, and large as was the household whose bread he had helped so long to win. "Mon pauvre François," he said, "je vois bien que tu es tourmenté de cette idée-là : j'aurais bien voulu t'envoyer faire instruire dans ce métier de peintre qu'on dit si beau, mais je ne le pouvais ; tu es l'aîné des garçons, et j'avais besoin de toi ; maintenant tes frères grandissent, et je ne veux pas t'empêcher d'apprendre ce que tu as tant envie de savoir. Nous irons bientôt à Cherbourg ; nous saurons si tu as vraiment des dispositions dans ce métier pour y gagner ta vie." This manly and touching little speech (which Millet's biographer declares authentic) gave France her greatest painter. The young man at once produced a couple of drawings, to take, as specimens of his skill, to Cherbourg. Both were compositions, and in both he foreshadowed himself as he was presently to be—the Millet, that is to say, of the *Berger au Parc* and the *Grande Tondeuse*. "Vous connaissez mon premier dessin," he wrote long afterwards to his friend and biographer, "fait au pays, sans maître, sans modèle, sans guide ; il est encore là dans mon atelier ; je n'ai jamais fait autre chose depuis." In one of these works a shepherd played upon a pipe among his sheep, while his comrade lounged and listened hard by ; the costume was that of Gruchy, the scene was one of the fields on Millet's own farm. In the other, in darkness under a starry sky, a peasant stood at his cottage door giving bread to a beggar ; underneath was inscribed a verse from the Vulgate according to St. Luke. They were certainly most striking work ; for old Mouchel, the painter in Cherbourg, to whom Jean-Louis Millet submitted them for inspection, after flatly refusing to believe that the young bumpkin he saw before him could possibly be their author, turned round upon the anxious father and threatened him with eternal damnation for having kept a son with the makings of a great painter in him so long from labouring at his true vocation. In this way Millet's fate was decided. He became Mouchel's pupil, and spent two months with him, drawing from the cast and copying engravings,

Mouchel was an oddity in his way. He had been educated for the priesthood, but he had married and settled down to gardening and painting. He hovered continually between the practice of scepticism and the practice of piety—between open warfare with all the priests in the neighbourhood and the production of altar pieces, which he bestowed on any curate who might happen to be in want of one. He was a lover of animals, and spent hours in communion with a favourite pig, whose conversation he declared he perfectly understood, and for whose opinions he professed a great respect. Odd as he was, however, he had a right taste in art, for he worshipped Rembrandt, and was an ardent admirer of Brauwer and Teniers. He showed, too, a good deal of sound sense and discrimination in dealing with his new pupil, whom he refused to advise in any way: merely telling him to do exactly as he pleased, draw what he pleased, work how he pleased, go and come when he pleased, and make the best use he could of the materials at his disposal. Millet, as I have said, was suspicious of precept and example; and I doubt not that he obeyed his teacher to the letter. Things might have gone on in this way for a long time; but in 1835, some two months after the eventful journey to Cherbourg, Jean-Louis Millet died of brain fever, and the student had to return to Gruchy. He had resolved to give up art, and take his place as the head of the family, and work for his brothers and sisters; but of this his mother and grandmother refused to hear. The dead man's will, they said, was sacred to them. It had been the wish of his life that his son should be a painter, and it was not for them to set that wish aside. Matters must be with them as they might; they would do the best they could; Millet must return to Cherbourg and study his art. And this, after some debate, he did. He had been seen at work in the picture-gallery; many people had conceived an interest in him and in his prospects; and he was soon a student under the local artist. The local artist, whose name was Langlois, and who had been a pupil of Gros, showed himself as cautious in his dealings with Millet as Mouchel himself had been, though probably for very different reasons, and on very different grounds. He made him copy some of his old teacher's academical studies and some replicas of famous pictures; and he sent him back to work in the picture-gallery. There Millet produced a copy in crayons, 6 ft. long and 5 ft high, of Jordaens' *Adoration of the Magi*; with studies after Van Loo, Philippe de Champagne, Schidone, Van der Mol, and some of the older Flemings. And in 1837, on Langlois' recommendation, the municipal council allotted him a yearly pension of 400 francs—afterwards increased to 1,000 francs by the Council General of La Manche, and very seldom paid in full or up to date—and despatched him to Paris to finish his studies under Paul Delaroche, the idol of the Philistines, the stagiest of painters, the master whose art is to his own much as is *Hernani* to *King Lear*, or the *Book of Mormon* to the *Book of Job*.

He was eager, and yet afraid and doubtful. Paris, just then the

theatre of a noisy and successful revolution in æsthetics, was to him "le centre de la science et le musée de toutes les grandes choses ;" and he was impelled to adventure himself in it as by the promptings (he says) of a familiar spirit. All the same it was with many tears and misgivings—"le cœur bien enflé"—that he left his people and his home. The journey was all by broad, straight highways, between interminable rows of trees, and through vast flats of pasture :—"si riches en verdure et en bestiaux qu'ils me semblaient plutôt des décors de théâtre que de la vraie nature ;" and it only served to increase his sadness. It was a January evening when he alighted. The lamps were dim with a foul fog ; the streets were heavy with slush and dirty snow. The air, the smells, the clamour of wheels, the lights and voices and footsteps were too much for him, and he wept aloud in the street. He bathed his face at a fountain and went and munched an apple—a Gruchy apple!—before a printseller's window. It was full of Gavarnis and Devérias, of cheap sentiment and specious immodesty, and was more repulsive to him than the roaring streets themselves. He went off to bed in a cheap lodging house, and lay all night a prey to monstrous and affecting dreams : sometimes of his mother and grandmother weeping and at prayer for him ; and sometimes of pictures ablaze with colour and form—"que je trouvais si belles, si éclatantes qu'il me semblait les voir s'enflammer dans une gloire, et disparaître dans un nuage céleste." In the morning he arose to shudder at the vileness and squalor of his room, and gradually to grow calm and determined once more. But his melancholy abided with him, and he mourned for himself in the words of Job, "Let the day perish wherein I was born, and the night in which it was said, *There is a man child conceived.*"

These were his first impressions of Paris and the world. It was as if he had had a presentiment of the forty years of misery and derision and uphill battle their conquest was to cost him.

W. E. H.

Living Death-Germs.

THE conquests made by science are varied in character, sometimes seeming to promise a domain more hurtful (on the whole) than fruitful; a sort of intellectual Afghanistan. In other cases a land of promise seems before us, but the way to it is not clear. As an instance of the former kind, may be mentioned the progress which science is making in the study of explosive substances and the recognition of their power. Of the latter kind no more marked instance could be cited than the researches of Pasteur and others into the nature of the germs of various diseases, and the power of cultivating these germs so that their character may be modified.

Let us for a moment suppose it proved (though at present we have only promise of proof) that the disease-germs which produce vaccinia (the disease—if so it can be called—following vaccination) are the same in species as those which produce small-pox, but that during the residence of those germs in the heifer their power has undergone a certain modification which renders them innocuous, while yet they produce that particular change which results in what we call protection from small-pox. Then it would follow, as at least highly probable, that in the case of any other illness produced by living germs, we may learn how the disease-germs can be so cultivated as to lose their power for serious mischief, while retaining the power of producing protective ailment akin to the more dangerous illness produced by the unmodified germs. So that typhus, scarlet fever, diphtheria, and a host of other ailments, which are more or less certainly known to be due to the presence of living organisms in the blood or tissues, would be treated as we now treat small-pox. People inoculated with the specific “matter” for each of these diseases, once perhaps in every six or seven years, would be safe from them, or safe at any rate from severe attacks. Epidemics of such diseases would be rendered almost impossible; but when they occurred sensible people could find protection even as they now find protection from an epidemic of small-pox. Of course there would follow effects similar to those which have led many to imagine that vaccination has done more mischief than good, because so many weakly lives which would otherwise have succumbed to the unmodified disease have been saved. Just as in a race of warlike savages the type is improved by the constant weeding out of the weaker in battles and through the hardships of campaigning, so in a people exposed to many dire forms of disease the stronger only survive, and the race seems improved. But precisely as men of sense would

object to see their nation improved in physique by the thinning out resulting from constant wars, so should they advocate every method by which the action of the more fell diseases may be modified, even at the risk of the survival of many weaker members who would otherwise have been weeded out by disease.

This, then, is the promised, or rather suggested, future,—protection for those who are wise enough to accept protection, possibly even compulsory protection from those diseases which now produce so much misery and sorrow. Let us see how the matter stands, examining the evidence by experiments made on creatures of comparatively smaller worth, and, be it noted, not made on them that man alone may gain, but directly for the protection of the lower animals from disease.

Let us take first a disease which has been proved to be produced by living germs,—by creatures capable of reproducing their kind, so that once a suitable abode is found, their numbers may increase until they kill their unwilling host.

In the twenty years ending 1853, the silk culture of France had more than doubled, and there seemed every reason to believe that it would continue to increase for many years to come. The weight of the cocoons produced in 1853 amounted to no less than 52 millions of pounds. But on a sudden the aspect of affairs changed. A disease appeared which rapidly spread, and in little more than half the time during which the silk culture had doubled, it was reduced to less than the sixth part of its amount in 1853. In 1865 the cocoons only weighed eight millions of pounds. The loss in revenue, in this single year, amounted to four million pounds sterling.

The disease which had produced these disastrous results has received the name of *Pébrine*. It shows itself in the silkworm by black spots (whence the name). When it is fairly developed the worms become distorted and stunted, their movements are languid, their appetites fail them, and they die prematurely. But the disease does not necessarily become fairly developed in the worm. On the contrary, it may be only incipient during this stage of the silkworm's life. The worm may even produce a fine cocoon. Yet the disease incipient in the worm will be developed in the moth, and the eggs produced by the diseased moth will be diseased too!

It was in 1849 that the characteristic feature of the disease was first recognised. In that year Guérin Méneville noticed small vibratory bodies in the blood of silkworms. It was shown that the vibrations were not due to independent life; and the error was made of supposing that the corpuscles belonged to the blood of the worm. In reality they are capable of indefinite multiplication. They are the real germs of the disease. These living bodies "first take possession of the intestinal canal, and spread thence throughout the body of the worm. They fill the silk cavities," says Tyndall, "the stricken insect often going automatically through the motions of spinning, without any material to work

upon. Its organs, instead of being filled with the clear viscous liquid of the silk, are packed to distension by the corpuscles."

The case of the silkworms may be regarded as closely similar to that of a nation attacked by plague or pestilence. If anything, the case of the silkworms seemed even more difficult to deal with. At any rate, no plague which has fallen on man ever gave rise to so many suggestions for the remedy of the mischief. "The pharmacopœia of the silkworm," wrote M. Cornalia, in 1860, "is now as complicated as that of man. Gases, liquids, and solids have been laid under contribution. From chlorine to sulphurous acid, from nitric acid to rum, from sugar to sulphate of quinine, all has been invoked in behalf of the unhappy insect." "Pamphlets were showered upon the public," says Tyndall; "the monotony of waste paper being broken at rare intervals by a more or less useful publication." The French Minister of Agriculture signed an agreement to pay 500,000 francs for a remedy, which, though said by its inventor to be infallible, was found on trial to be useless.

It was when matters were in this state, that Pasteur was invited by Dumas, the celebrated chemist, to investigate the disease. Pasteur had never even seen a silkworm, so that it was not because of any special experience in the habits of the creature that Dumas considered him likely to achieve success where so many had failed. Yet he attached extreme importance to Pasteur's compliance with his request. "Je mets un prix extrême," wrote Dumas, "à voir votre attention fixée sur la question qui intéresse mon pauvre pays; la misère surpasse tout ce que vous pouvez imaginer." For it was in Dumas's own district that the disease prevailed most terribly.

Pasteur first studied the worm at various stages of its life. Most of our readers are doubtless aware of the nature of these stages; and doubtless many have had practical experience, as we have, of the ways of the creature as they progress. First the eggs, neatly arranged by the mother moth on some suitable surface provided by the worm-keeper, are watched until in due course comes forth a small dark worm. This grows, and as it grows casts its skin, three or four times, becoming lighter at each such moulting. After the last moulting the worm has its characteristic white colour. It continues to grow (feeding on mulberry-leaves), until, the proper time having arrived, it climbs into whatever suitable place has been provided for it (silkwormers use small brambles, but our schoolboys use little paper cups) and there spins its cocoon. When this is completed and the silk has been wound off, the chrysalis is found inside, which becomes a moth, and the moth laying her eggs, the cycle is recommenced.

It was Pasteur who showed that the disease germs might lurk in the egg, or might first appear in the worm, and in either of these stages might escape detection. But the destructive corpuscles in the blood grow with the growing worm. In the chrysalis they are larger than in the full-grown silkworm; and, finally, in the moth (assuming the germ to

have begun either in the egg or the young worm) the corpuscles are easily detected. He therefore said that the moth and not the egg should be the starting point of methods intended for the destruction of the seeds of disease. For in the egg or the young worm the germs might escape detection ; in the moth, he affirmed, they could not.

When Pasteur, in September 1865, announced these views, physicists and biologists agreed in rejecting them. He was told he knew nothing about silkworms, and that his supposed discoveries were old mistakes long since shown to be such.

He answered by the simple but impressive method of prediction. Parcels of eggs, regarded by their owners as healthy, were inspected by him, the moths which had produced them being submitted to his examination. He wrote his opinion in 1866, placing it in a sealed letter, in the hands of the Mayor of St. Hippolyte. In 1867, the cultivators communicated their results. Pasteur's letter was opened, and it was found that in twelve cases his prediction was fulfilled to the letter. He had said that many of the groups would perish totally, the rest almost totally ; and this happened in all except two cases, where, instead of almost total destruction, half an average crop was obtained. The owners had hatched and tended these eggs in full belief that they were healthy : Pasteur's test applied for a few minutes in 1866 would have saved them this useless labour.

Again, two parcels of eggs were submitted to Pasteur, which, after examination of the moths which had produced them, he pronounced healthy. In their case an excellent crop was produced.

Pasteur carefully investigated the development of the disease-germs. He took healthy worms by 10, 20, 30, 40, and 50, and placed matter infected with the germs on their food. "Rubbing a small diseased worm in water, he smeared the mixture," says Tyndall, "over mulberry-leaves. Assuring himself that the leaves had been eaten, he watched the consequences from day to day. Side by side with the infected worms he reared their fellows, keeping them as much as possible out of the way of infection. On April 16, 1868, he thus infected thirty worms. Up to the 23rd they remained quite well. On the 25th they seemed well, but on that day corpuscles were found in the intestines of two of them. On the 27th, or eleven days after the infected repast, two fresh worms were examined, and not only was the intestinal canal found in each case invaded, but the silk organ itself was charged with corpuscles. On the 28th the twenty-six remaining worms were covered by the black spots of pébrine. On the 30th, the difference of size between the infected and non-infected worms was very striking, the sick worms being not more than two-thirds of the bulk of the healthy ones. On May 2, a worm which had just finished its fourth moulting was examined. Its whole body was so filled with the parasite as to excite astonishment that it could live. The disease advanced, the worms died and were examined, and on May 11 only six out of the thirty remained. They were the strongest of the lot,

but on being searched they also were found charged with corpuscles. Not one of the thirty worms had escaped; a single meal had poisoned them all. The standard lot, on the contrary, spun their fine cocoons, two only of their moths being proved to contain any trace of the parasite, which had doubtless been introduced during the rearing of the worms."

He examined the progress of infection still more carefully, counting the number of corpuscles, which, as the disease increased, rose from 0 to 10, to 100, and even to 1,000 or 1,500, in the field of view of his microscope. He also tried different modes of infection. "He proved that worms inoculate each other by the infliction of visible wounds with their claws." He showed that by the simple association of diseased with healthy worms the infection spread. He demonstrated in fine that "it was no hypothetical infected medium—no problematical pythogenic gas—that killed the worms, but a definite organism."

Thus did Pasteur teach the worm-cultivator how to extinguish the pestilence which had destroyed his egg crops. The plans for extirpating the diseased worms had failed before his researches, for the very sufficient reason that no sufficient means had been devised for distinguishing the diseased from the healthy. As Pasteur himself stated the matter,— "the most skilful cultivator, even the most expert microscopist, placed in presence of large cultivations which present the symptoms described in my experiments, will necessarily arrive at an erroneous conclusion if he confines himself to the knowledge which preceded my researches. The worms will not present to him the slightest spot of pébrine; the microscope will not reveal the existence of corpuscles; the mortality of the worms will be null or insignificant; and the cocoons leave nothing to be desired. Our observer would, therefore, conclude without hesitation that the eggs produced will be good for incubation. The truth is, on the contrary, that all the worms of these fine crops have been poisoned; that from the beginning they carried in them the germ of the malady, ready to multiply itself beyond measure in the chrysalides and the moths, thence to pass into the eggs and smite with sterility the next generation. And what is the first cause of the evil concealed under so deceitful an exterior? In our experiments we can, so to speak, touch it with our fingers. It is entirely the effect of a single corpusculous repast; an effect more or less prompt according to the epoch of life of the worm that has eaten the poisoned food."

His plans for the elimination of diseased worms, and for the isolation of the healthy from contagion in any possible form, met with full success. The disease has not been eradicated, because the silk-producing districts cannot be completely isolated; but its ravages have been so far reduced that the cultivation of silk promises soon to reach something like the position which had been hoped for before the disease had shown itself.

Now between the ideas, which had prevailed respecting pébrine before Pasteur's researches, and those which still prevail respecting many con-

tagious diseases, there is a striking analogy. Just as Pasteur was assured by many experienced silk-growers that the disease was due to some deleterious medium, rendered more or less poisonous at different times by some mysterious influence, so epidemic diseases, we are assured by many experienced medical men, are due to occult influences arising spontaneously in foul air. It matters not that as certainly as an animal produces creatures of its own kind, and not of some other kind, so the poison of one fever produces always that fever, and not some other fever. In this they find no evidence of anything akin to what Dr. Budd has called parentage. The followers of Pasteur in the silk districts, and those who have benefited by others of his researches, presently to be described, would as soon believe in the spontaneous generation of pébrine and kindred diseases, as in the spontaneous generation of cats and dogs. But many still believe respecting diseases affecting the human race in which precisely the same phenomena of reproduction are presented, that they arise from some spontaneous fermentation (unlike every form of fermentation on which experiments have yet been made).

But before we pass to consider other and even more decisive evidence, we may note that, so far as the researches of Pasteur on pébrine are concerned, we have not yet seen the way to any means of safety from the contagious diseases which affect human beings. We cannot kill all diseased persons in order that we may get rid of the disease-germs within them.

Even more remarkable than his investigation of the silkworm disease was Pasteur's investigation of the disease known as splenic fever, which affects horses, cattle, and sheep on the continent. In the rapidity of its action this disease (known also as "anthrax," and "charbon") resembles the black plague. In bad cases death ensues in the course of twenty-four hours. In less severe cases the creature attacked suffers greatly, and retains the traces of the attack during the rest of its life. It is stated that between the years 1867 and 1870 no less than 56,000 deaths occurred among horses, cattle, and sheep in the district of Novgorod, in Russia, while 568 human beings perished, to whom the disease had been somehow communicated. In France the disease is very prevalent, and many proprietors have been ruined by the entire destruction of their flocks and herds. It is said that a malady which occurs among the woolsorters at Bradford (often proving fatal) is a modification of anthrax communicated by the wool of sheep which have suffered from splenic fever.

In 1850 MM. Rayer and Devaine discovered minute transparent rodlike bodies in the blood of animals which had suffered from this disease. Koch, a German physician, then scarcely known, showed that these objects are of a fungoid nature, and traced the various stages of their existence. Cohn obtained similar results, as did Ewart in England. The growth of the disease-producing rods, as studied under microscopic examination, is as follows :—First, germs of extreme minuteness are seen

in the form of simple tubes with transverse divisions; next, minute dots appear, which enlarge into egg-shaped bodies lying in rows within the tubes; lastly, the rods break up, freeing the ovoid germs. It has been shown that "the minutest drop of the fluid containing these germs, if conveyed into another portion of cultivated fluid, initiates the same process of growth and reproduction; and this may be repeated many times without any impairment of the potency of the germs, which, when introduced by inoculation into the bodies of rabbits, guinea-pigs, and mice, develop in them all the characteristic phenomena of splenic fever. Koch further ascertained," continues Dr. Carpenter, from whom the above passage is quoted, "that the blood of animals that succumbed to this disease might be dried and kept for four years, and might even be pulverized into dust, without losing its power of infection."

Pasteur's first steps in inquiring into this disease were characterised by the same keenness of judgment which he displayed in investigating *pêbrine*. He ascertained that "charbon" would often appear in its most malignant form among sheep feeding in seemingly healthy pastures, where there were no known causes of infection. He found on inquiry that animals which years before had died in those regions, had been buried ten or twelve feet below the surface, so that it seemed obvious they could have had nothing to do with the reappearance of the malady. But in inquiries such as these, Pasteur has taught us that what obviously *cannot be* has an unfortunately perplexing fashion of turning out to be precisely what *is*. He quickly became persuaded that in some way the germs of disease supposed to be buried out of the way three or four yards beneath the soil reached the surface and originated fresh attacks of the "charbon" pestilence. He found in earth-worms—those creatures which Darwin has recently shown to be such important workers in the earth's crust—the cause of the trouble. He was ridiculed, of course. But he has a troublesome way of turning ridicule upon those who laugh at him. Collecting worms from pastures where the disease had reappeared, "he made an extract of the contents of their alimentary canals, and found that the inoculation of rabbits and guinea-pigs with this extract gave them the severest form of 'charbon,' due to the multiplication in their circulating current of the deadly anthrax-bacillus" (this is the pleasing way science has of describing the disease germs), "with which their blood was found after death to be loaded."

Our countryman, Professor Brown Sanderson, discovered another way in which "anthrax" has been communicated. He found that herds affected with it had been fed with brewers' grains supplied from a common source, "and on examining microscopically a sample of these grains, they were seen to be swarming with the deadly bacillus, which, when once it has found its way among them, grows and multiplies with extraordinary rapidity."

But now comes the point which renders this inquiry important to ourselves. The poison germs are small, visible only in the microscope,

but they are fungoid, and the laws of their growth and development are as determinable (with suitable care) as the laws of the growth and development of the monarchs of a forest. Now whatever lives and grows and produces creatures after its own kind, whether animal or vegetable, can be cultivated. With due care and watchfulness it may be altered in type and character, just as the wild plants of the hedgerow may be altered into plants producing the flowers and fruits of our gardens and hothouses. The methods of cultivation are not precisely the same, because as yet microscopists do not know how to select the less from the more destructive germs, so as to propagate from the former only. But, as Dr. Carpenter puts the matter, two modes of "culture" suggest themselves: first, "the introduction of the germs into the circulating current of animals of a different type, and its repeated transfusion from one animal into another;" and secondly, "cultivation carried on out of the living body, in fluids (such as blood-serum or meat juice) which are found favourable to its growth, the temperature of the fluid, in the latter case, being kept up nearly to blood-heat. Both these methods have been used by Pasteur himself and by Professor Burdon Sanderson; and the latter especially by M. Toussaint of Toulouse, who, as well as Pasteur, has experimented also on another bacillus which he had found to be the disease-germ of a malady termed 'fowl cholera,' which proves fatal among poultry in France and Switzerland. It has been by Pasteur that the conditions of the mitigation of the poison by culture have been most completely determined; so that the disease produced by the inoculation of his 'cultivated' virus may be rendered so trivial as to be scarcely worth notice. His method consists in cultivating the bacillus in meat-juice or chicken-broth, to which access of air is permitted while dust is excluded; and then allowing a certain time to elapse before it is made use of in inoculation experiments. If the period does not exceed two months the potency of the bacillus is little diminished; but if the interval be extended to three or four months, it is found that though animals inoculated with the organism take the disease, they have it in a milder form, and a considerable proportion recover; whilst if the time be still further prolonged, say to eight months, the disease produced by it is so mild as not to be at all serious, the inoculated animals speedily regaining perfect health and vigour."

Now, if we consider what has been done in this case we shall recognise the probability, if not the absolute promise, of protection being obtained against some of the most terrible of the diseases which affect the human race. We see that in some cases, at any rate, the germs of a deadly disease may be so "cultivated" that the disease, though communicable by the altered germs, is no longer fatal. Now we know that the milder attacks of scarlet fever, measles, whooping-cough, diphtheria, and other such diseases, produce as completely protective a change in the constitution of the patient as the severest forms short of absolutely fatal attacks. We see, then, that even had no experiments been made

to determine whether the disease communicated by cultivated germs is protective, there would be good reason to believe that it is so.

But such experiments have been made. What Pasteur calls the "vaccination" for the "anthrax" disease has been shown by repeated experiments to be absolutely protective. Prof. Greenfield has vaccinated cattle from rodents (gnawing animals like rats, squirrels, &c.) with the "anthrax disease," and has found that they remain free from all disorder, local or constitutional. The same result has attended M. Toussaint's experiments with the bacillus "cultivated" in special fluids, not in the living body of any creature: sheep and dogs inoculated with this cultivated poison showing no form of the deadly "anthrax" disease.

The experiment was conducted on a large scale under the auspices of the provincial agricultural societies of France. A flock of fifty sheep was placed at M. Pasteur's disposal. Of these he vaccinated twenty-five with the cultivated "anthrax" poison on May 3, 1881, repeating the operation a fortnight later. All the animals thus treated passed through a slight illness, but at the end of the month were as well as their fellows, the twenty-five which had not been vaccinated. On May 31, all the fifty were inoculated with the strongest anthrax poison "M. Pasteur predicted that on the following day the twenty-five which were inoculated for the first time would all be dead, whilst those protected by previous 'vaccination' with the mild virus would be perfectly free from even mild indisposition. A large assemblage of agricultural authorities, cavalry officers, and veterinary surgeons met on the field the next afternoon to learn the result. At two o'clock twenty-three of the unprotected sheep were dead; the twenty-fourth died an hour later, and the twenty-fifth at four. But the twenty-five 'vaccinated' sheep were all in perfectly good condition; one of them, which had been designedly inoculated with an extra dose of the poison, having been slightly indisposed for a few hours, but having then recovered."

These experiments are important in themselves. The French owners of flocks and herds have now an infallible protection against the deadly "charbon" poison, which had caused serious loss to nearly all of them, and ruinous loss to not a few. But such experiments are infinitely more important in what they promise. If the law which they seem to indicate is general, if every kind of disease-germ can be "cultivated" so as to be deprived of its malignancy, but not of its protective agency, then we may hope to see cholera, diphtheria, measles, scarlatina, and other diseases brought as thoroughly under control as one which formerly was the most deadly of them all—small-pox.

Let us here pause for a moment to consider some inquiries which have been made by two American doctors, H. C. Wood and Formad, under the direction of the American National Board of Health, into the nature of the poison which is active in diphtheritic epidemics. Read in the light of what Pasteur, Toussaint, and Greenfield have done with diseases affecting the lower animals, the inquiries of Drs. Wood and

Formad are full of promise that before long complete protection will be found against the fatal disease, diphtheria.

They had shown long ago that shreds of diphtheritic membrane, taken from the throats of human patients and used for the inoculation of rabbits, produced tubercular disease, and also that the false membrane supposed to be characteristic of diphtheria appears as a result of severe inflammation of the trachea, however produced. But now they have found that in every case of true diphtheria the membranes are loaded with minute organisms, micrococci, while the blood and the internal organs of patients dying from the disease are similarly infected. They have ascertained also how these micrococci destroy life. They attack the white corpuscles, or leucocytes in the blood. These lose their form, and eventually burst, giving exit to an irregular transparent mass packed with micrococci. Hence a new and multiplied crop of blood foes, and, with the increased destruction of the white corpuscles of the blood, the destruction of the person in whose veins the contaminated blood flows. They showed also that the disease can readily be communicated artificially from animal to animal. Another fact detected by Drs. Wood and Formad is of extreme importance, as showing how epidemics of diphtheria may be brought about as a development of the malignancy of sore throats not hitherto regarded as akin to diphtheria. They showed that in ordinary sore throat as well as in the diphtheritic sore throat the micrococci are present, differing only in development and activity. In other words, diphtheria may be regarded as due to naturally cultivated micrococci, the cultivation being of such a kind as to increase their destructiveness.

Some experiments by Pasteur illustrate the kind of cultivation just mentioned. "It is not a little curious," writes Dr. Carpenter, "that, as culture of one kind can mitigate the action of the poison germs, so culture of another kind may restore or even increase their original potency. It has been found by Pasteur"—in the case of the "anthrax" or "charbon" poison—"that this may be effected by inoculating with the mitigated virus a new-born guinea-pig, to which it will prove fatal; then using its blood for the inoculation of a somewhat older animal; and repeating this process several times. In this way a most powerful virus may be obtained at will." "This discovery," proceeds Dr. Carpenter, "is not only practically available for experimental purposes, but of great scientific interest, as throwing light upon the way in which mild types of other diseases may be converted into malignant." Dr. Grawitz has, indeed, recently asserted that even some of the most innocent of our domestic forms of disease-germs may be changed by artificial culture into disease-germs of the most destructive nature.

Of the importance of such researches as those made by Wood and Formad, some conception may be formed when we note that the deaths from diphtheria in England and Wales during the last ten years have amounted to nearly 30,000, or to more than half as many again as have been caused by small-pox.

We have seen that in diseases known to be due to living germs, the circumstances under which propagation of the disease takes place are precisely those which medical science recognises in the propagation of small-pox, measles, scarlet fever, and other so-called zymotic diseases. We have seen further that a modified form of "anthrax" (as of "fowl-cholera") can be produced which, while by no means destructive of life, exerts a perfectly protective influence. We should be justified in inferring that the protective influence of vaccination is similar in character, were it not that in such matters science requires proof, not surmise, or even highly probable inference. For, as we have seen, one disease can no more be produced by the germs of another disease than cats from dogs (to use an apt illustration of Miss Nightingale's); nor can one disease, so far as any experiments yet made seem to show, exert a protective influence against another entirely distinct. If this last rule were absolutely certain, instead of being but exceedingly probable, we might at once argue that the germs which produce vaccinia (the disturbance following vaccination) are simply the germs of small-pox "cultivated" by residing for a while in the blood of the heifer. For vaccination exerts a protective influence against small-pox, and, if such influence can only be exerted by the small-pox disease germs, it follows that the disease-germs in the case of vaccination are the same in kind as those to which small-pox is due, differing only in the energy with which they attack the springs of life.

But science is not content to take such matters for granted. The relationship between small-pox and vaccination has been definitely put to the test. Unfortunately the results hitherto obtained have not been in satisfactory agreement. Dr. Thiele of Kasan, forty years ago, repeatedly succeeded (according to a report issued under Government authority) in producing genuine vaccination by inoculating heifers with small-pox poison; and having done this he used this artificial vaccine matter in vaccinating human beings, "its protective power being found fully equal to that of the natural vaccinia." But not only so—at that comparatively remote date, Dr. Thiele unconsciously cultivated the small-pox poison germs after the second manner described above. According to his own account, and his own erroneous idea as to the meaning of what resulted, he diluted the small-pox poison with warm milk, or, as Pasteur would say, he cultivated the living germs in warm milk; and, with the poison thus modified, he produced vaccinia, without passing the small-pox poison through the blood of the cow at all. Now this was thought so unlikely to be true, in those days, that Dr. Thiele's other statements were by many physicians discredited, and this particular result was simply ignored by subsequent workers. But now, at any rate, the very improbability of what he achieved, according to the views prevalent in his day, should cause us to regard with all the more confidence his account of his experiments. For no man, still less a skilful physician as Dr. Thiele undoubtedly was, would invent experiments with improbable results. If he invented at all he would at any rate invent what

seemed likely to be true, especially if the experiments were such as could be very readily repeated. In our own time this particular experiment might be invented by a dishonest person, the result being altogether likely to be right: others might be left to make the experiments and the credit claimed by him who asserted that he had made them himself. But in Thiele's time it was very unlikely that this would be done. It seems, therefore, exceedingly probable, so far as his account is concerned, that in the first place a modified form of the true small-pox poison is communicated in vaccination, and in the second, that a suitably modified form can be obtained without the use of the cow at all, by simply cultivating the small-pox disease-germs in warm milk.

But simultaneously with Dr. Thiele's researches others were made in this country by Mr. Ceely, of Aylesbury, which led to results not exactly contrary to those by Dr. Thiele, but which were certainly less satisfactory. He was able to produce an eruption in cows inoculated with small-pox virus, and the disease was transmissible to the human subject; but it resembled small-pox rather than vaccinia, and its transmission by inoculation did not produce what the best judges considered as genuine cowpock. It was allowed to die out.

We may suggest in passing, as a possible cause of the difference thus observed between Ceely's and Thiele's results, some difference in the length of time allowed to elapse after the small-pox virus was transmitted to the cow. It may be necessary, in making such experiments, to recall Pasteur's experiments with "fowl-cholera," when it was found that the potency of the bacillus was only sufficiently reduced after the lapse of a considerable time.

On the contrary the experiments made a few years later than Ceely's by Mr. Badcock, of Brighton, were similar in their results to those made by Dr. Thiele. Dr. Carpenter, who has been able to examine the record kept by Mr. Badcock's son, states that Mr. Badcock "inoculated his cows with small-pox virus furnished to him from an unquestionable source, and that this inoculation produced vesicles which were pronounced by some of the best practitioners of Brighton to have the characters of genuine vaccinia, while the lymph drawn from these vesicles, and introduced by inoculation into the arms of children, produced in them vaccine vesicles of the true Jennerian type. "Free exposure of some of these children to small-pox infection," adds Dr. Carpenter, "showed them to have acquired a complete protection, and the new stock of vaccine has been extensively diffused through the country, and has been fully approved by the best judges of true vaccinia both in London and the provinces. Mr. Simon, writing in 1857, stated that from the new stock thus obtained by Mr. Badcock (not only once but repeatedly), more than 14,000 persons had been vaccinated by Mr. Badcock himself, and that he had furnished supplies of his lymph to more than 4,000 medical practitioners. And I learn from Mr. Badcock, jun., who is now a public vaccinator at Brighton, that this stock is still in use in that town and neighbourhood."

These results seem decisive. But against them we must set the failures of attempts made by Professors Chauveau and Burdon Sanderson, by Belgian physicians who have recently conducted experiments in this direction, and the earlier experiments of Ceely. But as Dr. Carpenter well remarks, failures cannot be regarded as negating the absolute and complete successes obtained by Thiele and Badcock. We can perhaps learn from a careful study of the failures the conditions on which success and failure may depend. But a single success is absolutely decisive; because, as we have seen, persons inoculated with the poison germs obtained from the cows experimented on by Thiele and Badcock were found to be fully protected against the deadly small-pox poison—a result which there can be no mistaking.

It is gratifying to know that neither Chauveau nor Burdon Sanderson consider their failure as negating decisively the results obtained by Thiele and Badcock. A reinvestigation of the matter is to be carried on before long, and as Mr. Badcock, sen., himself is able and willing to give all necessary information as to the way in which his researches were carried on, there is every prospect that the secret of success in such researches will be discovered. We venture to predict with considerable confidence that the new researches will unmistakeably confirm those of Badcock and Thiele.

In the meantime let us note some experiments which are full of promise in another direction.

Anti-vaccinationists, not concerned by the terrible mischief which has followed the attempts of their followers to escape vaccination, continue their outcry against what they call legalised poisoning, and often with success, especially in America, where there is no settled system of compulsory vaccination. But, when there are outbreaks of malignant small-pox, those who have seemed to agree with the anti-vaccinationists are found singularly ready to seek the protection which vaccination affords; and in America they are not only willing to be vaccinated themselves in such cases, but eager to pass municipal enactments for compulsory vaccination. It seems, however, that even independently of the vaccination of the healthy, there is a resource by which safety can be secured in cases of epidemic small-pox, and the disease quickly stamped out. The importance of this will be recognised when we consider the probability that protective means will before long be found in the case of other diseases, and the extreme unlikelihood that (for many years to come) all adults would consent, except perhaps in times of epidemics, to be inoculated with the specific poisons of other diseases than small-pox.

Dr. Payne, late Professor of the Theory and Practice of Medicine in the Southern Medical College, Atlanta, noticed, as far back as 1846, when at the Small-pox Hospital in New York, that the initial fever of small-pox can be detected by the pulse for some time before any other symptom appears. The pulse is peculiar, and difficult to describe; “but recognisable by any physician who will patiently and carefully investigate

the subject until his finger becomes educated." "When once recognised," says Professor Payne, "it can *never* be forgotten, any more than the peculiar thrill imparted to the finger by the pulse of a patient who has lost large quantities of blood by hæmorrhage can be forgotten by a physician who has once learned to detect it."

Now Dr. Payne, whenever he recognises the initial fever in this way, at once vaccinates the patient. If this is done within ten or twelve hours after the initial fever of small-pox has set in, the patient will have but a slight illness, will show no trace of eruption, and will be thenceforth as perfectly safe from a recurrence of the disease as if he had had small-pox in its most malignant form. A still more remarkable feature of the case is this, that if the patient is vaccinated after the initial fever sets in, he can go about where he pleases without any fear of imparting the disease to others. The ingrafting of the vaccine matter upon the primary small-pox fever seems to destroy its ability of reproduction or propagation entirely. (Here, of course, it is to be noted, that its power of reproduction by actual revaccination remains, but that its power of reproduction in the ordinary way in which small-pox spreads is destroyed, just as in vaccination.) "Another peculiarity," says Dr. Payne, "is this; if an unprotected patient is vaccinated before the beginning of the fever, and the vaccine takes, but does not prevent, only modifies the disease, the eruption will be like that of variola in its appearance and characteristics. But if vaccinated after the commencement of the initial fever, and too late to entirely prevent an eruption, the eruption will resemble in size and character the small-pox eruption. There is," he adds, "as great a difference in the appearance of the varioloid and small-pox eruption as there is between grey and yellow."

Dr. Payne relates a very interesting case illustrating his method of dealing with cases of small-pox, first where the patient had not been vaccinated in good time, and later with those who showed signs of the initial fever. In 1873 an epidemic of small-pox broke out in Virginia, the small-pox being of the variety known as *variola nigra*, and when not modified by some benign influence was invariably confluent. Both in and around Manassas the cases were of the same kind. Being called on to attend a coloured servant-girl, who was ill in a room over the kitchen of a large hotel near his own dwelling, he recognised in her the pulse peculiar to small-pox, and next day the eruption appeared. "I saw," he says, "it would never do to remove this woman, and I determined to isolate the case, and abide the consequences, be they what they might. If I have her removed the poor woman will die, and the prevailing winds will blow the poison for miles down the valley below, and the disease will spread beyond control. But should she die (of which there is strong probability) my plans will be defeated. Firm in faith of the greatest good to the greatest number, I said to myself, 'If she dies, I will wrap her from her toes to the crown of her head in double linen, and with the aid of some one who has had the small-pox, I will bury

her.'” Luckily she recovered. “Three persons who were in the room at the time were ordered to report to the Doctor twice daily. One showed the peculiar pulse on the 24th ; he was then vaccinated, and after being indisposed for two days (but without eruption) recovered. The others, who had been vaccinated before, did not take it.

In one case, a family of eight persons, “poor and shiftless coloured people,” occupied a house in which there was only one room, and where good air and cleanliness were impossible. The father suffered from a very malignant attack of varioloid and was terribly scarred, but the rest of the family, none of whom had ever been vaccinated before, were vaccinated after the initial fever began, and escaped with slight attacks. In another case, where a whole family were exposed to the infection, he vaccinated the father and two sisters, but an old aunt who had not been vaccinated for many years, refused to be vaccinated, being attacked by varioloid. The day after vaccinating the father and sisters, a brother who had returned showed the peculiar pulse. Dr. Payne vaccinated him at once, and the next day his arm looked as if he had been vaccinated eight days before ; it rapidly became sore ; he was indisposed for two or three days, and recovered without a single sign of eruption. These cases are taken from a report of Dr. Payne’s experiments in the *Scientific American*. Dr. Payne’s plan has been tried in more than a hundred cases, extending over a period of thirty-four years, without a single failure.

Supposing that what has been shown to be true of small-pox is true also of other malignant diseases, a haven of safety is in view, though it may be that some time must elapse before it can be reached. The germ peculiar to each disease has to be made the subject of special study. The proper habitat for such “cultivation” as shall result in mitigating the virulence of its action has to be determined, and the degree of protective power remaining after cultivation has to be ascertained. Next the indications of the initial stage of each form of disease have to be recognised,* and the effects of inoculation with the mitigated disease determined. When this has been done (always on the assumption we have made that what seems most probably true is really so), “plague and pestilence” will no longer be feared as they now are. Isolation of those first attacked from the rest will go a great way to diminish the risk of the infection spreading. A careful watch for the signs of the initial fever among those exposed to infection will do the rest, if due measures are taken in every case when the initial fever shows itself.

And as the inquiries of Pasteur and his fellow-workers seem thus to indicate a haven of safety, so also do they show the presence of concealed rocks, of dangers heretofore unnoticed. What Pasteur showed respect-

* It may well be that in many cases, instead of the comparatively rough test of feeling the pulse, the use of the sphygmograph, or some other instrument for determining minute changes in the character of the pulse, may be required.

ing the deadly "anthrax" has its analogue, we may be sure, in diseases affecting the human race. Dangers lurk where none would suspect them, and where only the keen eyes of the trained science-worker can find them. The poison-germ may attack through the alimentary canal in the food we eat, through the lungs in the air we breathe, as well as directly through the blood-current. Disease and death may lurk in a dress, a child's toy, a lock of hair, a letter, or a carpet. Neither time nor distance avails to destroy the fatal infection.

We may note lastly a point to which attention has been directed by Dr. Andrew Wilson, in *Knowledge*, that the practical and actual benefits which have flowed to human health, and which are likely to flow in the future as well—"the saving of life by the prevention and extermination of disease"—have arisen from a simple study in natural history. So-called practical minds are often given to loudly express their disapproval of any science which deals with what to them seem mere abstractions. Doubtless to such minds the study of the development of the "rods" of splenic fever under a watch-glass must seem a piece of scientific *dilettantism*, just as information respecting the solar system may seem despicable enough, because its results cannot be measured by a profitable currency, or, in plain language, because it does not seem to pay. The best answer to such reasoning is found in the recital of the results to human and animal life, to which studies in an apparently unimportant field of research in natural history have led and seem likely to lead mankind.

R. A. P.

Far-Connaught: a Sketch.

THE most salient features of a region are not always its most characteristic ones, those which a longer and a better acquaintanceship stamps upon our memories as final. Roughly speaking, all acquaintanceship with scenery may be said to come under one or other of two heads: to be either extrinsic or intrinsic—the point of view, namely, of the man that looks at it from the inside, or of the man that looks at it from the outside; in other words, that of the tourist and that of the native. With the former everything, or nearly everything, depends upon first impressions. Should things go ill then for him, that scenery is destined ever after to remain blotted with the mists that enshrouded it during his visit, or, worse still, environed with the discomforts endured at that diabolical inn, whose evil memory stands out as the most prominent fact of his travels. He is also (unless possessed of unusual strength of mind) much at the mercy of his guide-book; still more perhaps—at all events in Ireland—at that of his local Jehu. Pursued with the terror of not seeing everything, he as a consequence sees little, and that little unsatisfactorily. The native, on the other hand, is troubled with none of these things. He keeps to his own ground, and he knows it well; its roads, lanes, fields, ditches, dykes—probably its sheep, cows, and pigs. Here, however, as a rule, he stops. Beyond his own parish, or his own boundary, he knows and professes to know nothing. Why should he? He is not a tourist nor yet a land surveyor; why should he trouble himself, therefore, to go poking about over mountains and moors, especially out of the shooting season? Now and then, however, one happens to come across a being who does not fall strictly speaking into either one or other of these categories; who is not tied by the ties and shackled by the shackles of the resident, and who, on the other hand, does not believe in the possibility of exploring an entire tract of country, and plucking out the whole heart of its mystery within a space of twenty-four hours; who has a prejudice, too, in favour of forming his own views unbiassed by the views of his predecessors. Now if in this particular region named in my heading I were happy enough to find myself in the company of such a discriminating traveller as this, what course should I suggest his pursuing in order as quickly as may be to come at the main facts and features of its topography? All things considered, I should suggest his first and foremost clambering up to the top of one of the neighbouring mountains—there are no lack, fortunately, to choose from—and there, having first seated himself as comfortably as may be upon an obliging boulder, to proceed leisurely to

spell at the main features of the scene below, so as to secure some general notion of its character previous to studying it in greater detail. Before doing this it may be as well for me to state, however, a little more definitely what and where this same region of Iar-Connaught is, since, beyond a general impression that it is somewhere or other in Ireland, it is by no means impossible that some of my readers may be completely at sea as to its whereabouts. Iar, or West Connaught, then, is, or rather was, the original name for the whole of the region now known to the tourist as Connemara, with the addition of a further strip of country stretching eastward as far as the town of Galway. This latter and more familiar name would seem to have crept gradually into use, and its limits consequently to have never been very accurately defined. In the generality of maps and guide-books it will be found to begin at a line drawn from somewhere about the south-east side of Kilkieran Bay to the upper end of Lough Corrib—a wholly imaginary line where no boundary whatsoever exists; west of this line being called Connemara, while the name of Iar or West-Connaught is usually, though obviously improperly, assigned to the remaining or south-eastern portion. Any one who will glance at the map of Ireland will see the natural boundaries of the region at a glance. A great lake—the second or third largest in the kingdom—extends nearly due north and south, cutting the county of Galway into an eastward and a westward portion. This lake is only separated from the sea by a narrow neck of land barely four miles wide, which neck of land is again divided into east and west by the salmon river—dear to all fishermen—which falls into the sea just below the town. Between this and the Atlantic the whole region to the westward is more or less mountainous ground, some of the highest summits in Ireland falling within its area; while, on the other side, no sooner do we leave the coast than we get upon that broad limestone plain which occupies the whole centre of Ireland. Taking all this into consideration, it will, I think, be admitted that the original boundaries are as good as need be, and that whether we call the region Iar-Connaught or Connemara, it is better to abide by them than by the newer and more obviously arbitrary ones. North, again, the boundary of our region coincides pretty closely with those of the counties Mayo and Galway; and here, too, what we may call the natural frontier is very sharply and clearly defined; the Killary Bay stretching its long arm some ten miles or so inland, while from the other side a long loop or “coose” at the southern extremity of Lough Mask stretches seaward in friendly fashion to meet it; the intermediate space being occupied by the Lake Nafuoey, and the various streams, small and big, which flow in and out of it. North of this, again, we have two more mountain ranges: the Fornamore, which, with Slieve Partry and the hill called the Devil’s Mother, forms a single continuous train of summits; while to the west, on the further side of the Killary Bay, rise the great mountain-mass of Mweelrea and its two brother peaks; the whole constituting a sort of

fraternity or community of mountains, separated by the sea or intervening plains from every other.

And now to return to our much-enduring traveller, who has been left "poised in mid-air upon the giddy top" of one of the Bennabeolas (commonly known as the Twelve Pins), and whose patience will probably be at an end before he has begun even to acquire his lesson.

The first thing certain, I think, to strike anyone who attains to at all an extended view over Iar-Connaught is the extraordinary extent to which land and water have here invaded, or rather, so to speak, interpenetrated, one another. To a more or less extent this of course is characteristic of all rugged coasts, but here it would really seem as if the process must have attained its maximum. Looking out from our eyrie over the surrounding country, the general effect is as though the sky had been dropping lakes upon the land, and the land in return had been showering rocks upon the sea. Westward, where the two great headlands of Angrus and Slyne Head jut into the sea, we see, between their outstretched points, and to right and left of them, and far out over the sea in every direction, an infinite multitude of island points, dark above, gleaming and glittering below, where the sun catches upon their wave-washed sides. Some of these islands are gathered together into clusters; others are single or in scattered groups. Round islands, long islands, oblong islands; islands of every shape and size, from the tiny illauns and carrigeens, which barely afford a foothold to the passing gull, up to the respectable-sized islands of Inishbofin and Inishturk, which boast their populations of five and six hundred inhabitants apiece, and carry on, or did until lately carry on, a considerable traffic in kelp, receiving in return poteen and such other necessities of life as are not as yet grown upon the islands. Now if, turning our eyes away from the sea, we look inland, we shall see that the same sort of general effect presents itself, only that here the elements are reversed. Here the sea has everywhere invaded and taken possession of the land. Try to follow one of its glittering arms to its end, and when you think you have seen the last of it, lo! it reappears on the other side of some small summit, winding away in intricate curves and convolutions far as the eye can see. As for the lakes, they are endless, bewildering, past all power of man to count or to remember. With all the Celt's talent for bestowing appropriate names upon the objects with which he finds himself surrounded, here nature has been too many for him, a large proportion of these lakes having, so far as I am aware, received no names at all. Indeed, even to know them apart is quite sufficiently perplexing. Lough Inagh and Derryclare, perhaps, with their wooded islands; Ballinahach, with its castle and its salmon streams; Kylemore Lake in its wooded glen, and Lough Muck and Lough Fee, filling up the deep gorge which stretches seaward between two steep cliffs; these, and perhaps some dozen or so more, we may distinguish readily enough; but who will undertake to give an account of the countless multitude of loughs and

lougheens, drift-basins, bog-basins, and rock-basins, which stud the whole face of the country between Lough Corrib and the sea? Look at the low ground south of Clifden and between us and Slyne Head! You might compare it with a looking-glass starred with cracks, or to a net, of which the strands stood for the ground, and the intermediate spaces for the water! Many, too, of these lakes lie far away out of every one's reach, and are never seen at all, or only once a year, perhaps, by some turf-cutter, on his way to a distant bog, or some sportsman taking a fresh cast in hopes of coming upon that pack of grouse someone is reported to have seen in this direction. Others, again, lie high up upon the mountain sides, often close to the very summit, where they are still less likely to be seen, though any one who will take the trouble of clambering up in search of them will find that few things are more beautiful in their way than these little desolate tarns, set about with huge rocks, yet so clear that every modulation of the skies may be seen reflected on their surface. Most striking of these, perhaps, are the so-called "corries"—bowl-shaped hollows, usually flat-bottomed, and cut out of the solid rock. Often a whole series of these may be seen lying parallel to one another upon the vertical sides of precipices; the effect from below being very much as if so many mouthfuls had been bitten out of the cliff. Some of these corries contain water; others again are dry. When full they are usually partly formed of drift, which, accumulating at the mouth of the hollow, hinders the water from escaping. As to their origin, geologists differ not a little, some maintaining that they are due to direct ice action, and chiefly for the following reasons: first, that they differ entirely from hollows made by any other agencies; secondly, that nothing in the least resembling them is now being formed by the sea; and, thirdly, that they cannot possibly be due to the ordinary meteoric agents—rain, snow, wind, running water, &c.—since these very agents are at present busily engaged in smoothing them away. Others, equally entitled to our confidence, maintain, first, that other agents besides ice are perfectly capable of making similar hollows; secondly, that the sea is at this very moment engaged in scooping out small coves and cooses, which, if raised in a general elevation of the land, would in time present an appearance very similar to these hill corries, such as we now see them; and thirdly, that the original cause, or at any rate the chief agent, must have been, not ice, but faults and dislocations in the rock, aided subsequently by glacial or marine action. Where experts differ to such an extent, how, it may be asked, is the humble inquirer to steer his modest course?

But we are not dependent upon rock corries for our evidence of ice action in this neighbourhood; we meet it in ten thousand different forms. In fact there is probably no district in Great Britain where its sign-manual has been written in plainer or more legible characters. In this respect our Bennabecola range is of special interest, as from it, rather

than from either of the neighbouring and rival ranges, is held to have spread that great ice-sheet whose effects are so plainly visible upon every scratched stone and crag-rounded hill-side within an area of sixty miles. Why it *should* have spread here is, however, at first by no means obvious. On the contrary, it would at first sight seem more likely that from the higher and on the whole bulkier mass of Mweelrea and its brother peaks would have come that impetus which has thus stamped itself upon all the country round. But no—they have been swept across by ice coming from this direction. This has been very well and clearly shown in an admirable little memoir on the subject published some years since by Messrs. Close and Kinahan.* “The ice stream,” say these authors, “has passed on and moved, not only against Croagh Patrick, but farther northward against the range of the Erris and Trawley mountains. Although partly forced out of its way by them, it has nevertheless streamed across them—certainly through their passes, *e.g.* that of Coolnabinnia on the west side of Nephin (as shown by the striations on the summit of Tristia, nearly 1,100 feet above the sea), that of Lough Feeagh (witness the striations on the side of Buckoogh at 1,200 feet), and that of Ballacragher Bay near Molranny (as evidenced by the striations in Corraun Achill on the north-west side of Clew Bay); in all these cases the movement of the red sandstone blocks corroborates the evidence of the striations.”

As to the further question of why this and not the Mweelrea range should have been selected for the honour of being the local “birthplace of glaciers,” that is believed to be due, partly to the fact that, though less high, these Bennabeolas form on the whole a more compact mass than the Mayo group; but still more to the circumstance of the latter having been robbed of their full share of snow by the former, which, stretching further to the south-west, then as now were the first to intercept the moisture-laden winds of the Atlantic. Instead, however, of curdling into cloud and discharging themselves in sheets of rain as they do at present, their burden was then flung down in the form of snow, which, hardening and consolidating into ice, rapidly accumulated in the valleys, heaped itself up over every hillside, in many instances burying the very summits themselves under what was practically a huge superimposed mountain of solid ice.

Though often spoken of as a glacier, this, it must always be remembered, is not what in Switzerland and elsewhere is understood by a glacier at all. In picturing to ourselves the state of things which must once have existed in these islands, we are too apt to draw all our ideas and illustrations from these Swiss Alps—the only perpetually snow-clad region with which most of us have any practical acquaintance. Now nothing can be more misleading. In Switzerland the glaciers only exist down to a certain well-defined line, where, being met by the

* *Glaciation of Iar-Connaught and its Neighbourhood.* G. H. Kinahan, M.R.I.A., and Rev. Maxwell H. Close.

warm air of the valleys, they pass away in the milky torrents, familiar to any one who has stood, for instance, beside the Rhone, and seen it pour its white volumes into the Lake of Geneva, where, leaving behind it all the heavier and more insoluble part of its burden, it issues gaily upon the further side, the bluest of blue rivers leaping to the sea. Here, however, a very different order of things from this existed. The ice which has scraped and planed these hill-sides was not in fact a glacier at all. No puny glacier, such as hills of this height could alone have given birth to, would ever have reached a tithe of the distance covered by this mighty stream, one arm of which alone has been traced the whole way up the valley of Lough Mask, and out at Killala Bay, a distance of over sixty miles ; while how much further it went no human being of course can tell, all further traces of it being henceforth hidden by the sea. To find a region where ice is now *really* moulding and fashioning the landscape, as it once moulded and fashioned these Galway valleys and hillsides, we must go, not to Switzerland or to any temperate region at all, but to a very much less comfortable part of the world—to Greenland and the icy shores of Baffin's Bay. There, in the grim and gruesome regions of the "central silence," few, if any, of the phenomena familiar to us in Switzerland are to be seen ; no tall peaks rising out of green laughing valleys ; no glaciers with their wrinkled ice falls, their blue crevices, and their brown moraines ; everything, save a few here and there of the highest summits, being hidden away under a huge all-encompassing death-shroud of snow and ice, from which all life, and nearly all movement, have vanished. So, too, it must once have been with our Twelve Pins, and with all the region round about. They too have known what it is to be smothered up in ice and snow ; ice which in this instance must have risen high above their heads, as its handiwork can be seen written upon the crags at the summit ; though how many feet or hundreds of feet higher, it would doubtless puzzle even the best and most experienced of geologists to decide.

Meanwhile we must not expend the whole of the time at our disposal upon one mountain summit, but must hasten away to other though not perhaps necessarily more attractive scenes.

I just now said that Iar-Connaught was a land of lakes ; but, if so, it is even more emphatically a land of streams. Go where we will our ears are filled with the noise of running water. Streams drop upon us from the rocks, dash across the road under our feet, and appear unexpectedly in all directions. Many, too, of the lakes are united to one another by streams—strung together, as it were, upon a thin silvery thread of water. Not many, certainly, of these streams attain to any very great volume, but what they lack in size they more than make up for by their multitude. Larger ones, such as the Erriff and Joyce's River, are fed by an infinite number of small rivulets, which come racing down the hillsides from a thousand invisible sources, and after prolonged rains the hills appear literally streaked with white, so closely do the torrents lie

together. Where smaller streams find their own way to the sea, their course is often impeded and almost obstructed by the mass of stones and detritus which they have themselves brought down from the hills. Walking up one of these stream-sides, one is often fairly astounded at the size and the number of these blocks. Boulders, varying from the size of a hencoop to that of a comfortable-sized cottage, strew the bed of the stream, witnesses of a thousand forgotten storms. In the wider portions these get often piled up into small rocky islands, where sods of peat lodge, and where the young birch and mountain ash spring up safe from the tooth of marauding sheep or goats. It is in the narrower portions, however, where the stream has had to saw a channel for itself through the hard face of the rock that the boulders become jammed and accumulate to such an extraordinary degree, often filling the narrow channel to the very brim, and obliging the water to escape, as best it can, in a series of small gushes and separate torrents, which meet again in a tumultuous rush below the obstruction. No one can wander much over this district without coming to the conclusion that these streams are very much smaller most of them now than they once were. Several facts point to this conclusion. Even after the heaviest rains their present carrying power is certainly insufficient to enable them to transport the enormous blocks with which we find their course encumbered ; added to which the channels themselves are often much larger than are at present needed, and in some instances, as along the course of the Erriff River, are being actually now filled up with bog. Indeed, when we remember how lately the whole of this district was one great forest, traces—melancholy traces—of which are to be seen in every direction ; when we come upon stumps of oak high up upon the bleak hill-sides, where now nothing taller than the bilberry or the bog myrtle grows ; when, on the other hand, pushing out from the shore, we look over our boat-side and see the big “corkers” rising up out of the marl and sand in which their roots lie buried—seeing all this, and remembering how invariably the destruction of forests is followed by a diminution of rainfall, it is not difficult to believe that, numerous as are these streams and rivers now, they were once more numerous, and certainly very much larger than they are at present.

North of Galway Bay the country is comparatively flat, and there the rivers run chiefly between low ridges or hills of drift, whose sides are thickly strewn with the omnipresent granite boulders which there form such a prominent feature in the landscape. Much of this district is uninteresting and monotonous enough, yet even here the scenery along the river edge is often full of interest and beauty. As often as the stream takes a bend, a little triangular patch of intensely fertile ground accumulates upon the convex side, where the river year by year has deposited a share of the spoil which it has elsewhere filched. These little fertile plots are taken advantage of, and respectable crops of oats and potatoes grown right up to the brink of the water, which is only too

apt to overflow and destroy them when a freshet comes down from the hills. Here too, for the same reason, grow the loosestrifes and meadow-sweets, not scattered as elsewhere, but in a dense variegated jungle, which is repeated, leaf for leaf and petal for petal, in the smooth brown currents below. Nowadays the region is but a very thinly populated one. Looking around us, we see in every direction rows upon rows of granite boulders lifting their grey sides out of the purple heather, while in one direction, perhaps, and in one direction only, a cottage, or a couple of cottages, scarcely less grey and time-worn, may be seen peering disconsolately over the little hills. As for trees, often for long distances the stunted, much-enduring thorn-bushes are the only representatives of these to be seen; then a corner is turned, and suddenly, out of the wild melancholy moor, the stream rushes all at once into a tiny glen or valley green with brushwood, and gay with *Osmunda* and bell-heather and half-submerged willow-herbs—a genuine scrap of the old forest, where the gnarled oak stumps have sent up young shoots, and where the birch and willow and mountain ash dip downward so as almost to touch the water; then another turn, and the glen is left behind, and we are out once more in the open moor. No better way of getting to know this country can be devised than by following the vagrant course of one of these streams from its source to its finish, though it must be owned that the walking is far from invariably delightful. Where footpaths, with stiles or holes in the walls, have been left for the benefit of fishermen, there matters, of course, are simplified; this, however, is quite the exception. Generally the explorer has to make his own way over the tottering lacework walls, whose stones have a most uncomfortable predisposition to fall upon his toes. When there are bridges, which is seldom, they usually consist of a few logs, supported and covered over with huge stones in a primitive and Cyclopean fashion. On smaller streams the bridges are of loose stones only, the central arch being flanked right and left with lesser ones, so as to allow the water in flood-time to escape. More often still there are no bridges at all, or only at intervals so wide as to be practically useless; he is forced, therefore, to find out his own crossing, choosing between stumping bodily through the stream, or picking his steps along the slimy tops of the stones, where the water rushes and races under his feet at the rate of some forty miles an hour, or slips by in those long oily curves which always seem to draw our eyes down to them whether we will or no. Nor is this the only or even the chief part of his difficulties. What with crossing and re-crossing the stream; now skirting along where the projecting rocks nearly push him into the water; now out again into the open, clambering over huge boulders crouched like petrified dragons or mammoths in his path; now picking his steps through squelching bog-holes, or, again, balancing upon tussocks which give way under his tread—what with all this, and the endless climbing of walls, the explorer who has conscientiously followed one of these streams through all its windings and doublings will find that he has

about had his full share, and something more than his fair share, of walking by the time he again reaches home. In wild weather, when the wind is from the Atlantic, gales blow straight up these glens, cutting the tops off the small waves as they come careering over the stones, and apparently doing their best to drive the water up-stream again. A salmon leap is a fine sight on such a day as that. The water, no longer a series of insignificant trickles, comes down in a broad yellow gush, sending out great flakes of foam before it, to be carried back by the wind and lodged in creamy clots upon the trees and upon every scrap of herbage within reach. On such days, the whole glen above the fall may often be seen through a sheet of finely divided spray, caught from the fall and flung backwards by the wind. Standing above the leap, and looking down, we may see the big salmon and white trout crowding in the pool below us, their heads held well up-stream, despite the tug of the current in the opposite direction. Now and then one detaches himself from the rest, leaps upward, quivers a moment in mid-air, and then, in nine cases out of ten, falls headlong down into the pool again. The height to which both salmon and white trout will spring on these falls is astonishing, a leap of eight and ten feet being by no means unusual; and, however often defeated, after a few moments' rest the same salmon may be seen returning again and again to the assault. When thus intent upon business the fish seem to lose all their natural shyness, as if every faculty was for the moment concentrated wholly in the effort to reach the upper waters. Leaning over the rocks alongside of the salmon leap, we may stoop so as to actually touch with a stick the smooth brown backs so temptingly near at hand, and we shall find that they take little or no notice, merely moving to one side, without for a moment relaxing in their efforts to reach the top—a trait which unfortunately has the effect of making them fall only too easy a prey to the local poacher. No art of any sort is required to spear a salmon when, spent and exhausted, it reaches the top of its climb. Armed with a gaff—one extemporised out of a scythe—the loafing “gossoon” or village ne’er-do-weel may pick and choose amongst a crowd of salmon and white trout, and the silvery scales which catch the eye here and there amongst the wet grass are a proof only too convincing that he has not neglected his opportunities.

Throughout the whole of this part of Iar-Connaught the presence of the granite largely influences the character of the landscape. Where limestone predominates we usually get peculiarly transparent effects, delicate ærial greys and blues everywhere prevailing. On the other hand, limestone is cold, and even when weathered the rocks seldom present any particular beauty of detail. Granite, on the contrary, lends itself peculiarly to richness of colouring, no foreground being so rich as a foreground of granite rocks. Here, too, the granite has an especial beauty of its own, from the presence of large pink or violet crystals of feldspar, which in weathered places frequently stand out in bold relief, as though handfuls of pale amethysts had been sprinkled loosely over

the surface. Lichens, too, of a peculiar brilliancy and beauty cling to the granite, so that whatever else is wanting to the picture we may always count upon a foreground of ever-varying beauty and interest. A few of these boulders might nevertheless be spared with advantage ! The multitude strewn broadcast over the whole face of the country here is almost past belief, and increases perceptibly as we approach the sea—here cropping up in the middle of a potato patch—there built into the sides of a cabin—now raised on stalks showing the amount of wear and tear which has gone on since they took their place—now sunk deep in the ground with only a corner appearing above the brown turf mould. Many show signs of having fallen from a height, lying broken as they fell, not flung about in fragments, but seamed through and through with a single crack, which has been further prized open by small stones falling in at the top and gradually working their way to the bottom ; others again stand perched high overhead, or balanced upon the very brink of a cliff, as though ready to be launched upon some aerial voyage. Foreign rocks, quartzes, sandstones, and mica-schists, coming from the other side of the country, mingle occasionally with the granite, all contrasting strongly, in their rough-hewn masses, with the smooth glacier-ground rocks upon which they rest, and which are as smooth and as polished still as if the great ice-plane had only left them yesterday.

Now that we are approaching the coast we find that our stream widens. Strengthened by a couple of contributions, it has swollen well-nigh to the proportions of a river. No longer champing and churning, fretting against every stone in its bed, it rolls silently, conscious that at last it is nearing its destiny. Now fast and fleet, but with hardly a sound, it swirls along under the tottering banks, raking out all the loose stones and water-weeds ; now widening into a mimic lake, and then again narrowing as it rushes between two steeply overhanging rocks. The last corner is turned. The grey hills of Clare rise over the parapet of the little bridge ; between them and us flash the waters of the bay, with perhaps a solitary "pookhaun" or "hooker" working upon their way to Galway ; under the bridge darts the stream, and with a flash and a ripple, and a quick noisy rattle over the stones, it has taken its last leap, and flung itself rejoicing into the arms of the sea.

From the hills we have wandered to the rivers ; from the rivers let us now glance for a few minutes along the shore. Leaving Galway with its fringe of villas and of bathing-houses behind us, the road runs westward for many a mile, along a low coast, varied only by an occasional ridge or "esker" of granite drift. The shore itself mainly consists of loosely piled boulders, alternating with small sandy bays ; the most unprofitable of all shores, by the way, for the marine zoologist, whose game is apt to be uprooted with every tide. Here and there, however, long reefs project seaward, and these being seamed with fissures

are worth exploring when they can be reached, which generally is only at the dead low tide. As we advance we find ourselves passing over an endless succession of low drift-hills with intervening valleys choked with boulders, the road keeping steadily west, the country growing wilder and wilder with every mile. At Barna a small grove of trees is passed, with grass and ferns growing rich and rank beneath their shadow. The trees themselves are nothing very particular,—a few moderate sized oaks, with ash, and a sprinkling of sycamores, and elsewhere doubtless pass them without a glance; here, however, we turn to look at them again and again with an interest quite pathetic, sighing regretfully as we pass out into the grey desolate moorland again. It were worth spending a few weeks in Iar-Connaught, if only to learn to appreciate trees for the future! Still on and on, and on, mile after mile, over a treeless, almost featureless tract, abounding in stones and abounding in very little else. A police barrack, green with ivy, up which some dog-roses are creeping, is greeted with enthusiasm. So, too, are a couple of villas, through whose gates we catch a pleasant vista of haycocks, and children playing, with the rocks and the tumbled surf beyond. Turning away from this somewhat lamentable foreground, we fix our eyes upon the range of terraced hills which stretch beyond the bay, and further yet again to where a line—worn by distance to a mere thread—shows where the far-famed cliffs of Moher lift their six hundred feet of rock above the sea. Westward again, the three isles of Aran stream across the horizon, so low and grey as hardly to be visible, save where the surf catches against their rock-girt sides; yet, looking intently, we can, even at this distance, distinguish the huge outline of Dun Connor, the great rath which crowns the middle island, and whose watch-fires when lighted must have been visible along the entire line of coast from the Mayo hills to the mountains of Kerry. About Spidal the scenery begins to improve. Far in the distance the Twelve Pins once more come into sight, long chains of lakes stretching northward to their very feet. Near Tully the coast is broken up into small brown creeks, where turf is being dug at low tide; islands dot themselves about in the bay beyond; a substantial-looking row of coastguard houses presently rises into sight, with chimneys hospitably smoking; yet another half-mile, and we find ourselves brought up short by the discovery that our road ends abruptly, all further advance in this direction being hopelessly at an end. We have in fact arrived at a regular *cul-de-sac*—one of the many to be found in Iar-Connaught. Only one road of any kind extends beyond this point, and that merely lands us at a fishing lodge some three miles or so further on. To reach the mountains which we see so distinctly before us, we must either retrace our steps to Spidal, and so round by Oughterard, a distance of over forty miles, or else take to the moors, and try to make our own way across country, an attempt which would probably result in our having to crave hospitality for the night at some cabin door, the chances of reaching any

other shelter before nightfall being problematical to a degree. A more unfrequented and a more unbefriended region is perhaps hardly to be found in Her Majesty's dominions than that same stretch of country between Cashla and Roundstone Bay. Life there is indeed reduced to the very elements. A few villages exist, thinly scattered over its surface, but hardly any roads connecting them—none certainly over which vehicles with springs could travel. Everywhere, too, the land is invaded by long arms of sea, still further increasing the difficulties of communication. For instance, as the crow flies, the distance between this point and Roundstone is barely twenty miles; whereas, if the coast-line were followed, it would probably be found to extend to fully five times that length. The variety of sea-board, too, is extraordinary; many of the islands being separated from the mainland by the merest streak of sea, the promontories, on the other hand, being in several instances connected by strips of land so low that a depression of a few feet would result in the setting free of a fresh crop of islands. The best, indeed the only, way of exploring this, the wildest bit of all Iar-Connaught, is to take boat, and to sail from headland to headland, and in and out of the archipelagoes of islands, which choke up every bay, and lie scattered in a thick fringe along the coast. There are several landing-places, but the most convenient probably will be found to be Roundstone, where the harbour is good, and a pier, built when dreams of an Atlantic packet station were in the air, stands ready for us to moor up our yacht or hooker. Here, too, is an hotel, and here, if the traveller is a naturalist, he can hardly do better than spend a few days, for not only is the shore itself unusually rich in zoology, but in the bay below he will find perhaps the best dredging-ground to be met with along the entire line of coast. From Roundstone the road lies direct to Clifden, which claims, and fairly claims I suppose, to be the capital of our mountain region. Thence, turning northward, we bowl along the wide coaching road, through the refreshingly clean little village of Letterfrack; through the valley of Kylemore, where the towering crest of the Diamond stands a glittering sentry over our heads; under steep wooded banks; past more lakes and glens, and across a valley floored with bog, until we suddenly find that we have come full circle, and are back again at the foot of the Twelve Pins, the place from which we originally started.

Two more remarks before I end. First as to the question of popularity, or rather lack of popularity. It is undeniable that few regions equally come-at-able, and equally admittedly striking and picturesque, find so few admirers, not to say lovers, as Connemara. People come and go, drive along its roads, fish in its lakes, and even praise it after a fashion, but grudgingly; they break into no raptures, as for instance over Killarney, and, what is still more significant, they seldom show any particular desire to return to it again. Now this probably may be set down to a combination of causes. Its hotels, for one thing, are not (with one or two exceptions) by any means equal to the demands of

modern sophistication ; and this, deny it who will, is a very important factor in the matter. When a man's cogitations are secretly turning upon the badness of his breakfast, and the yet more doubtful prospect which awaits him at dinner, he is seldom, it must be owned, in the mood for very warmly appreciating scenery—especially when that scenery is admittedly somewhat of the bleak and hungry kind. Then, again, there is another and a very serious matter—the weather ! Without going into the vexed and oft-disputed question as to whether this part of Ireland or the west of Scotland is the worst and the wettest, it may be admitted at once, and without further question, that it is bad—*very bad indeed*. Even while in the very act of abusing it, however, it is only fair to add that to this very badness, fractiousness, what you will, of the climate the scenery owes a share, and to my mind a by no means inconsiderable share, of its charm. The actual landscape doubtless is fine, but the actual landscape is nothing, literally nothing, until you have seen it under a dozen different moods : now grey and sullen ; now fierce and passionate ; now, when you least expect it, flashing out smile after smile, as only an Irish landscape can smile when the sun suddenly catches it after a spell of rain. At all events I can personally vouch for the fact of long-continued dry weather being anything but becoming to the scenery. Wanting the moisture which lends them atmosphere and distance, the mountains lose their aerial tints, become dull and grey, oppressed as it were with their own nakedness. I remember (the statement, by the way, is not perhaps a particularly credible one)—nevertheless as a matter of fact I *do* remember a summer in the west of Ireland, when for weeks together not a shower fell. The loughs sank low in their beds of rock ; the bogs, seamed with cracks, showed as dry as so many high roads ; the grass turned brown ; the flowers withered ; the mountains, hard as iron, stood out with every muscle in their stony anatomy brought into the strongest possible relief ; now and then a wind got up, but no rain fell ; every atom of moisture seemed to have vanished out of the atmosphere, and from morning till night the sun shone down with the same broad, unwinking persistency. It was exactly what everybody had always been wishing and sighing for, but somehow when it came no one appeared particularly gratified, and I can recall no very genuine expression of regret when at last one morning we got up to find that the sky had lost its brazen look, and that the greys had once more resumed their dominion. Nowhere, perhaps, in the world are there such greys as here—pale greys, dark greys, greys tinted with blue, and with green, and with rose-colour ; greys merging and melting into one another, and into every other tint imaginable. Yet nowhere, on the other hand, is the colouring more gorgeous when now and then the sky does take a colouring fit. See it at the coming on of rain ! A minute, perhaps, ago sky and sea were cloudless ; suddenly as you look again the clouds have gathered, struck against the cold sides of the mountains, and begun to descend in rain, which goes sweeping like a pall

along the whole length of the valley, brushing against the flanks of the mountains, and passing away eastward, to be followed by a rapid burst of sunshine, bringing out the colours of the wet grass and smoking rocks ; in its turn passing on, reappearing for an instant in fantastic patches of light upon the distant slopes, and then again being swallowed up in the wide-spreading darkness of another sudden storm. The brilliancy and swift chromatic changes of these alternate sun-bursts and rain-squalls are indescribable, and, when seen from a height where they can be followed across a wide stretch of mountain and sea, they constitute a never-failing panorama—a drama the incidents of which are perpetually varying. One is in fact tempted to dwell far *too* much upon these transitory effects, because in a climate so capricious it is they rather than the [permanent features which create the most vivid and lasting impressions. Looking back into that private picture-gallery which most of us, consciously or unconsciously, carry about with us, two scenes at this moment start into my memory, and both, as will be seen, owe the fact of their being remembered at all, not certainly to anything in the actual scenery, but wholly and solely to the disposition of the lights and atmosphere.

The first was an effect of early morning seen from a window overlooking a wide tract of comparatively low-lying land, sodden with recent rain, where small pools caught the eye, leading it on to a large freshwater lough which lay beyond. Across this tract lay the arch of a rainbow, stretching from the grey of the water to the pale green of the hill-sides above. Not a rainbow which came and vanished, but a rainbow which hovered and lingered ; now fading until it was all but invisible, now unexpectedly flaring into sudden splendour again. And behind, the nearest hills were vague and dim with mist, while the distant ones were wholly hidden under a vast and capacious cloud-canopy, through which a pale sun shone upon the lough, so that it gleamed like a tarnished shield. All the greens and blues had vanished out of the landscape, but the yellows seemed brighter than ever ; the highest note of all being struck where the foam, driven in a long sinuous line across the lough, was washed in a broad palpitating drift against the yellow sand.

The second—an effect of a very different kind—occurred at the end of one of those utterly hopeless days when the weather, after holding out some slight promise in the morning, settles down to rain with a dull and dogged self-satisfaction, as if it never had rained before. For an hour or more we had been tramping homeward, knee-deep in drenching heather, and had just reached the crest of a ridge, overlooking the bay and the dull grey flanks of the opposite hills ; already the sun had set behind fourfold walls of cloud without showing itself, and without a moment's intermission of the pelting rain. Suddenly, when we least expected it, an arrow of red light was seen to shoot across the leaden-coloured sky. Another and another followed. Layer after layer of clouds caught the glow, until the whole heavily-laden floor of heaven was burning with an

intense and terrible conflagration, out of the very midst of which bars of molten metal appeared to rise, writhing and melting as in a furnace. Across all this swept a few lighter clouds, driven by the wind, each tipped with an edge of light, too intensely luminous to be looked at. A rush of colour, caught from the sky, spread itself over the dull face of the bay, the very stream at our feet being tinged with the pale opal-coloured tints. Nor was this all; for the clouds, which had been rolling overhead, began suddenly to descend; not in wisps and scrolls, nor in a thin impalpable veil, but altogether, in a vast and apparently solid body; rolling, pouring, gathering on the tops of the hills, and streaming down through the passes. It was a regular cloud-avalanche; and, despite our knowledge that we were too near home to run any risk by being enveloped in its folds, there was something curiously alarming in the sight of these huge summits rolling downhill, and approaching momentarily nearer. On and on they came, until suddenly, just as they were within about a hundred yards of us, their course was arrested by a fresh conflicting current of air. Here, then, the vanguard stood still, and began slowly melting, passing away in thin shreds and rags of vapour; but the rearguard still continued to pour in fresh reinforcements from behind; which, accumulating faster than they could be dissipated, reared themselves up in vast dome-like masses, towering thousands of feet in air, and gradually slipping downwards until they had enveloped not only us, but the whole valley in their folds. An hour later the overcharged atmosphere relieved itself by a couple of violent thunder-claps following one another in quick succession; after which the night grew calm and clear, and the next morning was glorious; but, alas! before the day ended the dull, persistent, pitiless drizzle had again set in.

E. L.

Upstairs and Downstairs.

A rosy lass stands one evening in a bare-boarded room where the shadows are gathering quickly. Except for some wooden chairs and a table, and a few books upon some shelves in a corner, the place is empty enough; but the windows look out upon the river, upon a great vault of drifting sky, upon the floating vapours, and the thousand lights of London that are kindling along the banks and reflected into the stream. A small maiden stands perched upon a chair in the window, rubbing her nose against the pane and absorbed by the unaccustomed sight of the fiery lights and the rushing waters, and above all by the swinging creaks of a giant crane at work just in front of the house. The little one has come with a party of visitors, who together with the rosy girl, and a busy lady secretary, just leaving the room, represent for the moment what the report calls "the Central Office of the Metropolitan Association for Befriending Young Servants." And of all the long names ever given to a most simple and efficient piece of work this seems to be one of the longest. The whole thing is a necessary and very friendly bit of machinery, chiefly worked by the goodwill of the various people concerned in it. It is much to be wished that the number of those who are kindly disposed with help of money and good service could grow with the society itself, which has spread in one direction and another, and which, from the few hundreds of girls with which it began, has now near 3,000 upon its books—a statistician might tell us how many more there are growing up, a youthful ever-increasing congregation of many necessities and claims, troublesome enough, at times, but rarely ungrateful. These girls are divided among a certain number of associates, who are prepared to take an interest in their affairs. One could see the whole thing represented that evening at a glance—the books upon the shelf, the people who wish to help, the office, and the rosy lass herself, an item of the 3,000, who had come in by chance and been asked to tea. She stood a sturdy little figure in the usual smart hat and cloth jacket of "a general," with a round-faced and a bright-eyed and unmistakable "out for a holiday" air. She seemed quite prepared for conversation, but our first start was not propitious.

"Are you in service? Are you a little nurse?" I ask affably.

"I ain't *in* service; I'm *out* at service," says the girl, somewhat offended. "Nor I ain't a nurse neither; I'm a general servant; but master says I could be a housemaid any day. I don't like children myself," she goes on, "but ours ain't no trouble; they are such good little things. I minds the three; and I does the house and cleans out

the kitchen. I've had a very nice holiday" brightening up ; "I've been round and round by myself, and across the bridge, ever so far, and then I come back here at last to see Miss D——."

"You look like a country girl," says one of the ladies. "Do you know your way about London?"

"I'm a London girl, I am. I was born in the New Cut. I knows my way. I ain't ever been in the country," says the child. "I've heard say mother was a country girl once, long ago. Mother's dead, she is, and father's in China, aunt says. He don't care nothen' about me (angrily), and I don't want to have nothen' to do with him ; he never did nothen' for me. Miss D—— she found me my place."

And this was true enough, and Miss D—— told me afterwards of all the trouble she had to find the place, which had, however, turned out well. For many months before going there the girl had been tiresome and unruly, and no one would keep her. She was saucy, intractable, violent at times ; but at last a special place was found, and in this special friendly effort lies the whole secret of this unpretending work. "We are often sorely puzzled what to do with them," said Miss D——. "Sometimes, as a last resource, we have been obliged to advertise, 'Will anybody take a difficult tempered or dishonest girl on trial?' and people actually do come forward in answer, and very often the girls we have despaired of do well after all."

Besides the Central Office of the Association there are branch offices all over London now—at Chelsea, Islington, Notting Hill, Paddington, North St. Pancras, South St. Pancras, Poplar, Southwark, Wandsworth, Westminster, Whitechapel, and Fulham. Each of these offices means a committee and a certain number of visitors, who undertake to help and care about a certain number of little girls who are from circumstances among the most absolutely friendless and helpless members of society. Their fathers have abandoned them or are dead ; their mothers are dead, or mad, or drunk ; they have no relations, or, worse still, only bad ones. They have been kept alive, indeed, by the State ; but the State at best is more of an incubator than a parent, and this Association for years past has tried to help the children, with some heart and pity to spare for so much helplessness and childish misery.

When Mrs. Nassau Senior was appointed Inspector of Girls' Schools by Mr. Stansfeldt, she became convinced after experience (which experience she had gathered together during many previous years) that, although most of the masters and chaplains of district schools had made an effort (quite independently of their own hard work) towards continuing the care of the children after they had left the district schools, yet some further organisation was absolutely necessary for their proper supervision. Workhouse girls generally leave school for domestic service at about fourteen, and are not at that early age, any more than other girls, supernaturally endowed with every discretion and necessary experience of life. Some few happily constituted little creatures, established by chance in

comfortable homes, may have scrubbed on and prospered ; but the average of those who failed, who came to utter grief and disaster, to prison, and to the streets, to untimely death in hospitals and workhouse wards, was something cruel. About two-thirds of the girls whose careers were traced, with much pains and difficulty, by Mrs. Senior and her assistants were found to be utter failures. And, indeed, when one thinks of it, three clean shifts and half a dozen aprons and two pairs of stout shoes, or whatever the outfit may be, is scarcely to be regarded as a complete armoury against the many perils of life. Cruel mistresses exist, though they are not very common, I am told ; but what a crowd of insinuating temptations, of possible dangers exist as well ! The little stupid creatures come friendless and scared, or, worse still, impudently ignorant, to the little places where they are as much at the mercy of their own tempers as of their mistresses'. If temptation comes, if they succumb to it, if they break down from over-work, woe betide them ; they have not a friend to turn to. If they are dismissed, if the mistress is unkind, or only very poor and overstrained herself, if they fall ill and are sent to the hospital, or if they are sent away, they wander off from the area gate or the hospital door, with no human being to help them, with no refuge except, indeed, the casual ward of the workhouse, from which they come, and to which they must return.

The Association for Befriending Young Servants was formed upon the model of another which had been tried at Bristol by some kind women who felt the want of some such scheme of help and protection. Some meetings were called ; a certain number of ladies living in different parts of the town offered their services ; a certain number of guardians offered to assist ; lists of the girls as they left the schools were given to the Association ; various small offices were opened here and there ; girls were divided among the ladies willing to help them, and henceforth were visited at their places, distinguished apart, helped in case of necessity, advised and received into special homes when necessary.

One kind and most influential friend to the little maid-servants, no less a person than the Speaker of the House of Commons, addressing on their behalf the Lord Mayor himself and any kind-hearted aldermen that happened to take an interest in the subject, explained in a few terse and lucid sentences the whole working of the administration :—

“ The Speaker said that he had for the last two days laid aside the consideration of the Land Bill, and taken to the study of the reports of the Association. The composition of the Association had some peculiar features, for it was formed wholly of women. There were no men employed, except a very few who were members of the council and assisted its deliberations with their advice. The Association was founded by a lady—Mrs. Senior—whose memory would be dear to most of those present. The work of the Association was truly a woman's work from beginning to end. The friendless girls, for whose welfare the Association was solicitous, were divided into two classes—one class embracing desti-

tute and friendless girls struggling to earn a livelihood by domestic service in the Metropolis, who had been in pauper schools, and who, when discharged from pauper schools, were consigned to the care of the Association every year. The Association took care of them until they were twenty years of age; and there were now accumulated 917 destitute girls, over whom the Association kept careful watch.

"The girls discharged from the pauper schools were brought into correspondence with the Association in this way:—The Metropolis, as was well known, was divided into thirty-two unions, the guardians of most of which were in correspondence with the Association, and he hoped the day was not far distant when all of them would be. When girls left the pauper schools, they were placed in domestic service, and their names and addresses were sent to the Central Office of the Association by order of the guardians. The work of the Association was divided amongst eleven branches, covering the greater part of the Metropolis. The girls were each placed in communication with some branch of the Association according to their address, and each girl was assigned to a member of the branch, who made herself responsible for the care of her, and reported upon her condition and conduct from time to time to the committee. A principle of the Association which was of the greatest importance, and to the maintenance of which, he believed, much of the success which had attended the work of the Association was due, was the intimate relationship which existed between the lady visitors who undertook the care of the girls and the girls themselves."

"As to the second class of girls he had mentioned—those who had not been in the pauper schools—he found from the Report that no less than 1,600 had been during the past year placed in situations in domestic service, while many more girls had been assisted in other ways. This class of girls also was consigned to the care of lady visitors who watched over their welfare. Attached to each branch of the Association was a registry office, which had proved of great value in securing employment for the girls coming under the care of the Association."

"With regard to the financial condition of the Association, he found that the Central Office cost about 500*l.* a year, and the Central Home about 400*l.* a year. This Central Home of the Association was no doubt somewhat expensive, but was absolutely necessary, as the Association had to deal in the course of a year with (speaking roughly) nearly 3,000 girls, in whose circumstances there were many changes. The Society dealt with a very large number of girls, and the whole cost was 2,020*l.*, which gave an average of something like 15*s.* a head."

This does not seem a very exorbitant subscription for the results achieved—3,000 little charmaids helped and comforted, and scolded and advised, and kept from incalculable temptation and wretchedness; sheltered when homeless, nursed when they are sick, encouraged and comforted in every way.

If only some philanthropist or millionaire, instead of building

another empty palace, would bestow 2,000*l.* a year upon the Association, no more meetings, articles, or collections would be necessary ; but then the millionaire would not have the pleasure of seeing his bricks and mortar piled up before his eyes.

The first office the Association ever opened was at Chelsea, a friendly little place which takes a benevolent interest in the various domestic fortunes and misfortunes of the neighbourhood. If you go there of a Monday morning you may find a room full of customers of various sizes, and an almost providential adjustment of different requirements. But indeed most of these offices are alike. There was one at B., where I spent an hour the other morning admiring the cheerful presence of mind of the manager, who seemed able to combine all sorts of difficult requirements. It was, as usual, crowded when I went in.

"Well, you see," a stout lady was saying confidentially, "I'm so much alone of evenings, my husband being out with the carriage, I want a girl for comp'ny as much as anything else. I don't want no house work from her. I want her to do any little odd jobs I can't attend to myself, and to mind the children. That was a good little girl enough you sent me, Miss Y—— ; but, dear me, she was always a crying for her mother. I let her out on Mondays, and Wednesdays, and Fridays ; but she wanted to go home at night as well, and now she says she won't stay."

"It's her first place, m'am," says Miss Y——. "They are apt to be home-sick at first ; but here is a very good little girl who has no home, poor child, she is quite alone. Fanny, my dear, should you like to live with Mrs. —— and take care of her nice little children ? You might like to take her home with you now directly, m'am, and show her the place and the dear children ?"

Smiling Fanny steps forward briskly, and off they go together. Then a pretty young lady, fashionably dressed, begins—

"That girl was no good at all, Miss Y——. Such a dance as she led me ! She came and gave me a reference miles away, and, ill as I was, I dragged myself there ; and when I got to the house she opened the door, and said her mistress was out and was never at home at all. I said at once, 'You don't want to come to us, and you haven't the courage to say so,' and then she shut the door in my face and ran away. The fact is, many girls don't like houses with apartments. Our first floor is vacant at present, but I hope it will soon be let ; and I should be so glad to find a girl who would come at once, and who knows something of cookery, though my mother always likes to superintend herself in the kitchen."

"There is a young woman here who says she can cook," says the superintendent doubtfully, "but there seems to be some difficulty about getting her character. Do you think we had better write to your mistress for it, my dear ?"

A poor, fierce, wildbeast-looking creature, who had been glaring in a corner, here in answer growls, "I don't know, I'm sure."

"Why did you leave?" says the young lady.

"Cos she had such a wiolent temper," says the girl, looking more and more ferocious.

"That is a sad thing for anybody to have," said the young lady gravely.

At this moment a boy puts his head in at the door. "Got any work for me?" says he.

"No, no," cry all the girls together. "This isn't for boys; this is for females," and the head disappears.

"Well, and what do you want?" says the superintendent, quite bright and interested with each case as it turns up, and a spruce young person, who had been listening attentively, steps forward and says, looking hard at the young lady who had been speaking,

"I wish for a place, if you please, m'am, with a little cooking in it, where the lady herself superintends in the kitchen—a ladies' house that lets apartments, if you please; and I shouldn't wish for a private house, only an apartment house." At which the young lady, much pleased, steps forward, and a private confabulation begins.

While these two people are settling their affairs a mysterious person in a veil enters and asks anxiously in a sort of whisper, "Have you heard of anything for me, miss? You see (emphatically) it is something so *very* particular that I require, quite out of the common."

"Just so," says Miss Y——. "I won't forget."

"It is peculiar, and you won't mention it to anyone," says the other, and exit mysteriously with a confidential sign.

Follows a smiling little creature, with large round eyes.

"Well," said Miss Y——, who is certainly untiring in sympathy and kindness, "is it all right? Are you engaged, Polly?"

"Please, miss, I'm *much* too short," says the little maiden.

As we have said, it is not only the district girls who apply at these offices; all the young persons of the neighbourhood are made welcome by the recording angels (so they seemed to me), who remember all their names, invite them to take a seat on the bench, produce big books where their histories, necessities, and qualifications are all written down, and by the help of which they are all more or less "suited." Besides a home, a mistress, a kitchen to scrub, if they behave themselves they are also presented with a badge and honourable decoration, fastened by a blue ribbon, and eventually they are promoted to a red ribbon, the high badge of honour for these young warriors. And though some people may smile, it is, when we come to think of it, a hardly earned distinction, well deserved as any soldier's cross. What a campaign it is for them—a daily fight with the powers of darkness and ignorance, with dust, with dirt, with disorder. Where should we be without our little serving girls? At this moment, as I write by a comfortable fire, I hear the sound of the virtuous and matutinal broom in the cold passages below, and I reflect that these 3,000 little beings on our books are hard at work all over London and fighting chaos in the foggy twilight of a winter's morning.

It is a hard life at best for some of them ; so hard that they break down utterly in the struggle with temper and other tempers, with inexperience, with temptations of every sort. If one thinks of it one can imagine it all, and the impatience, and the petty deceptions, and the childish longings, almost irresistible, one might think, to little waifs who have no one to look to for praise if they are good or blame if they are naughty. And yet indeed they are not ungrateful ; they respond to any word of real friendship. "I am quite frightened sometimes to find how much they think of my opinion," said a good friend the other day, who has for some years past worked steadily for the Association. "They make me quite ashamed when they produce my wretched little notes out of their pockets." When I asked this lady about the children's comparative friendlessness, she said it was very rare to find them absolutely alone, but that in truth friends are often far worse enemies than loneliness. They come and take their poor little earnings. They lead them into mischief out of wanton wickedness, and desert them in their troubles. A girl came staggering into her office not long ago so ill that she could hardly stand. She had gone to her sister, whom she had always helped with her wages, and been in bed two days with fever, and then her sister would not let her stay, and turned her into the street, though she fell twice as she was dressing. It was a case of small-pox, and the poor thing was sent off to the Small-pox Hospital. "I went to see her there," said Miss T——, speaking quite as a matter of course. "The poor child began searching under her pillow and showed me a little scrap of a note I had written her a year before, which she had carried about ever since. One can scarcely believe," the kind lady said, "how they prize a little interest, a little friendly intercourse with some one who cares about what happens to them."

The letters which come to Miss T—— are of every variety. The first I take up comes from a curious sort of girl :—

"Dear Madam,—You will be surprised to hear that I have left Mrs. ——, but she was so unkind that I left her on Friday, which was two days before the time was up, so she kept 2s. 6d. out of my wages. But before leaving I asked God to open some other place, but thought that He had not heard me ; and as I was going to the station, I thought of the woman that did the washing. She had been very kind to me, and I did not like to go home without saying good-bye to her ; and if I had not I should not have heard of this place, and then I found that my prayer had been heard. And the housekeeper under whom I am living is a Christian, and has taught me a great deal about the Second Coming, which troubled me so much that I want to hear more and more, and am glad to say am saved from the wrath to come, and never was so happy in my life ; and I only went to church twice in the ten weeks at Mrs. ——, and I now go to chapel three times on Sunday and three evenings in the week.—Your humble Servant, B. B."

Another little girl, for whose theological leanings one certainly feels

more sympathy than for "B. B.'s," writes to say that since the family has moved she goes "to a very nice little chapple every Sunday evening." She thinks she likes it better than church; it is more understanding. And this seems an excellent summary in one simple word of the great vexed question of Dissent *versus* Church and State.

But neither chapel arousings nor church exhortings can touch these little creatures so closely as does that most divine function of human kindness which makes them truly feel their kinship to those who wish to be their friends: those who have been created true ministers to those who are in need.

"Would you be kind enough to get me a Place?" writes a very naughty girl, who is dismissed for complaining that she is starved (a fancy statement). "Do get me a place," she repeats; "please do—not near home—as I will promise you to be a better girl; and I do ask God to help me to be a good servant, as you told me in your letter you sent me three years ago; and it was such a nise letter that I have got it now, 1878, and shall not part with it, for I am so prude of it; and beleave me to be your humble servant, R. E."

Then follows a penitential letter from a nurse of twelve years old, and whoslapped the baby. She is very sorry. "I have done everything to make her come to me, and yet sometimes the baby will not come to me; sometimes she will love me and kiss me, and other times the baby will tell me to go away. I'll try very much to be good; I want to be good; and I go to church every Sunday afternoon with the little baby.—Yours respectfully, JEMIMA."

Some of the children's letters are really very touching; one writes of her mistresses, "They are such dear ladies." "I like my Mrs. and Mr.," says another. "Sometimes I feel very downhearted, for it is lonely in the nursery, and it brings all manner of thoughts of home and how I should like to see them." But wholesome distractions arise, for her Mrs. has said she "could clean a grate beautifully, and her stove looks very nicely."

The letters are almost all warm-hearted and full of expression of affection. "May God give you strength as long as you live on this earth," says one little scrub; "and I hope we shall meet in heaven, and we shall never part again there."

"Dear Miss,—I now take the pleasure of writing to you. Will you write to me as soon as you can? It would make me feel so very happy." "I think I have said all, as I have to get the supper ready now; so good night," writes another, finishing with, "My dear friend, I remain your obedient servant, MARY ANNE. Will you please tell me if I don't end my letters right? It is a long time since I have written to a lady."

Here is a litany to another friend of mine from a little grateful girl:—"O, I hope you have not forsaken me, for I don't feel at all comfortable, for you have been a dear kind loving friend to me, and I should miss you very much. You have been kinder than a mother. I hope

you had a happy Christmas, also dear Miss S. (the cook), and Emily ; it seems a long, long time since I see them, and let me give my love to them, and I remain, yours ebendiently, EMMA W." Emma is seventeen. She had a disreputable, drunken mother and sister, from whom she is always trying to get away. She may well say, "Kinder than a mother," poor child !

The other day I asked a neighbour, whom I shall call Lucia, if she could tell me anything about any of the girls she had known. "I have nothing at all romantic to tell you," said Mrs. Lucia with a smile. "They are all very commonplace girls that I have ever had to do with. One little thing called Eliza sometimes comes to play in the garden with my own little daughter. Eliza is a funny little creature, with a nice fresh face, though she was brought up in a workhouse ; but she never opens her lips. She is more fortunate than some of them, for her mistress, the grocer's wife, is a good woman. Not long ago I went to see Eliza, and Mrs. Grocer came in and asked me if I could do anything to help a school friend of Eliza's who was to be sent by the guardians to the chandler's round the corner. Mrs. Grocer declared that Mrs. Chandler was quite unfit to have any child at her mercy. She got tipsy and beat her maids, and turned them out at night into the street. It is always a little difficult to interfere," said Lucia. But the guardians were spoken to privately and inquiry was made. The story was found to be true, and the poor child was not allowed to go. "And don't you think," said kind Lucia, "that this is one very real way in which the Association can be of use ? It would be almost impossible, without some such means, to know the truth about the poor children."

The children may not know their friends' names or their existence as yet, but it is something after all to feel that there are people trying to find out the truth for them and patiently trying to enforce it.

My little girls gave an entertainment the other day which is not inapplicable to the subject. We had poked the fire again and again, and lit the candles and waited expectantly for nearly half-an-hour, the kettle was boiling, the buns were crying "Come, eat us ! come, eat us," the tea was getting cold. "Where can they be ?" says Molly, "can they have lost their way ?"

"Are the poor little girls walking round and round all alone in the streets, and haven't they got no mammas to hold their hands ?" says little Cuckoo, who has already appeared perched on one of the chairs at the central office.

"Perhaps a policeman will tell them where to go," says Nancy. Are the children talking metaphors ? One might almost think so, but there is no more time for speculation ; we hear a diffident tinkle at the bell, and after a minute's delay the company comes filing in one by one out of the dark street into the little lighted-up dining-room, where is spread a modest share of the night's festivities—some two pennyworth of

welcome, a few crackers and oranges, and a Christmas card or two. It is little enough, but the guests look with admiring eyes and seem more than satisfied and ready to enjoy the banquet. They are welcomed shyly by their young hostesses, and by a very short host with gold curls and steel buttons, and a white frock, who cuts a caper as they come in. "Oh, you dear little chap!" cries the company, catching sight of his beaming face, and rushing forward in a body. The poor little host is frightened, and pulls a piteous lip, and suddenly the phalanx stops short. "Take care, don't make him cry, poor little dear!" says one to another, and so they all take their places, still nodding and smiling at him over their shoulders. Then the banquet begins.

Fashions change about in names, as in every thing else. Edith, Emily, Amelia, who are the little washerwomen, sit down to tea, while Molly and Nancy hand the buns, and the little host, whose courage has come back, trots assiduously, without stopping for a moment, round and round the table with a plate of bread and butter at a surprising angle.

"I ironed his pinnyfore, m'am," says one of the little girls, looking after him.

The guests come from a small laundry establishment at Fulham, which was opened a year or two ago for their use and ours. It is hoped that high tempers may be there ironed a little smooth, and difficult natures soaped down and scrubbed, and that meanwhile fewer temptations may assail the little maidens than out at service, where they are left to their own resources. And this hope has been in a measure justified; for there are many girls unfit for domestic service, though they are strong and able to work. Some are saucy, some feel the inevitable worry of constant restrictions and demands, some of them have forfeited their character by petty pilfering and come here to earn another before they can start again. If you ask them their stories, they are much alike. They were taken to the District School when mother died, or left them. They were sent to service and didn't get on; out of the six here at tea, two had been in hospital after leaving their places, and the district lady had fetched them away. I ask after a girl who had not come with the others.

"Well, you see," said Edith, conversationally, "Elizabeth she went away one night from the home; she ran away to her mother, she did, and her mother she turned her into the street. She said she couldn't have her there no more, and so Elizabeth she come back to us and hid, and the girls gave her what they could; she slep' on the mangle at night, and all day long she sat in the coal-cellar. She used to tell us she could get half-a-crownd a day six days in the week if she left, but I don't think she got so much as that or she wouldn't have come back so soon. One of the ladies looked into the coal-cellar and found her sitting on the coals, and took her to another home."

All this is recounted by Edith in a most natural and easy-going manner. Next to Edith sits Emily, a pretty girl with fair hair and a pleasant placid smile, who takes up the tale.

"I don't mind the laundry work," says Emily. "I like it better than service. I was a very long time in my situation, and I didn't like it at all. Why didn't I like my situation? The lady she used to beat me till I was all over marks and bruises. I had to show my arms to the police after I left."

The little hostesses here gather round in sympathy and horror, while Emily continues with a certain complacency, "I don't think they put the lady in the papers; they put me in, so I was told. I was very short at the time, and she used to beat me about the head and shoulders too; some days she would go out all day and lock me in, and she would only leave out two bits of bread for all the time. She had a little boy of her own; she used to beat him just the same."

"And how did you get away?" says little Molly, breathless with pity.

"Well, you see Miss, she was a-bed one morning, and I was a lighting of her fire, and she had a cane by her, and she called me and began to cut at me, and I run out of the room, and the key was in the street door, and I went out and she being in her nightgown and couldn't come after me, and I run a very long way till I met someone who told me to go to the office, and when they see what a state I was in they sent for the police, and the police put me in the papers," says Emily, taking another bun.

Emily's is an extreme case, but it is one which tells its own lesson and proves the necessity for the existence of the Office of Help to which she ran by some hapless chance. The school from which she had been sent to this vile mistress was a country union not falling as yet into the Society's organisation.

"I was a nurse, I was," says a little creature about as big as a child of nine years old. "I had twins and three more to mind; they wasn't much trouble. I did the rooms and missus made weskits. I used to help her when I had time, but there wasn't much, for I did the cooking too, and took the children out in the perambulator. I left because I was so very ill and had to go to the 'ospital, and one of the ladies she called at the 'ospital, and I was sent to a coalest 'ospital, and Miss S—— took me into the laundry after that."

As the Speaker said in his speech, it is an absolute necessity to have some one or two homes connected with the Association where girls may be received and harboured for a time in between their places. Lodgings are dangerous and expensive, and besides this, some girls are absolutely unfitted for common domestic service, and require some sort of training to quiet them down. "When they are at work from breakfast to dinner, and from dinner to tea, and then till bedtime again, they have no time to be naughty," said one of their matrons. It must be remembered that these poor little creatures are no community of immaculate beings, but many of them belong to a most turbulent and inexperienced class. They are obstinate, credulous, hot-tempered, with every disadvantage of birth and

education to counterbalance the efforts of their well-wishers. One of these, a very delightful person, who is, happily for them all, still alive and prospering in her undertaking, told me that there is a saying among them, "that three Sutton girls would kill any matron." This lady told me that no one who had not gone through the actual experience could imagine the difficulty of keeping the troublesome-among them in order and tolerably happy too. They are so ignorant and careless of opinion that there is at first scarcely any standard by which to get at them. Little by little they learn better things and gain some experience in the ways of the civilised world.

One of these little Bosjes girls had been chosen out to wait upon the matron of the Hammersmith Home, and to bring in her meals. When the young person was told she need not bring in the luncheon-tray with her face and hands all over streaks of black lead, and that she should always try to look nice and tidy whenever she came into the Superintendent's room, she put down the tray, stared in absolute amazement, and exclaimed, "Well! I call that cheek." There are many more stories such as this, which give one a curious impression of the state of these unsophisticated minds; and yet when I paid a visit to this very Laundry Home, I could not but notice the good understanding and pleasantness of manner which seemed to exist between the inmates. Certainly there was no sign of any struggle going on, but cheerful noises, and voices, and echoes of singing everywhere. The Hammersmith Home stands at the corner of Chiswick Lane, on the high road to Richmond; it is close to that pretty colony at Bedford Park; and the old Home where the little laundry girls live may well hold its own with the most successful of Mr. Norman Shaw's beautiful designs. The pretty old country house which was once a family dwelling place, and where wide oaken staircases and carved chimneys tell of some ancient dignity and splendour, is now promoted to new dignity, and shelters a wider family than it ever did before. Dwelling houses shelter people for years, make a pleasant background to their comfortable existence, but homes such as these take in a whole barren life, stock it with memories, teach it a useful craft, and make a future for it as well as a past.

"This is the good girls' room," said the Superintendent, opening a door into a tidy little square room neatly put up in order, and vacant. "She is just gone to a situation; she learned her work nicely while she was with us. This is the naughty girls' room," she continued, showing us another equally pleasant, with a neat little bed, and a cheerful wide view over the apple trees. "The naughty girls, alas! are always with us, and are more difficult to place than the good. Six months' training is supposed to be sufficient to change the one into the other; at all events, it is long enough to teach them all to do laundry work—they take to it very kindly—and scrub, and starch, and rinse, and iron from winter time to summer, fulfilling their appointed task in the economy of the world."

They had all been up very early the morning I saw them, preparing for one of the festivals of the Church. On these occasions the neighbouring rector, the curate, the choristers, all come out resplendent in dazzling white robes, and the little girls peep from their places and wonder which particular surplice is their own handiwork, which is their own special saint out of the great white assemblage round the Communion-table. It is affecting to think of our little scrubs preparing Easter splendours and ceremonial; and meanwhile, as we have said, let us hope our little washerwomen themselves are being starched into shape and washed and smoothed into order.

The Superintendent led the way to the pretty old drawing-room, with the arched windows, where some stately lady had perhaps once lived, and looked out across the fields towards the river; now the yellow winter light shone in upon the heads of the busy girls as they bent over their ironing boards. A stove was heating the irons in the centre of the room, and the floating trophies of their day's work hung across the room from long lines. Down below again were wash-houses, and cheerful mermaids perched upon planks in a floating sea were singing at their work.

With all the dreary things there are to think about, it is as well to have some bright places to turn to, and of these surely none are more cheering to melancholy souls bemoaning the darkness of humanity than the gas becks and beacons that are flaring cheerfully and lighting up the hours of hard-worked, scant-paid little toilers. I have no room here to enumerate the various useful busy undertakings and admirable suggestions and enterprises which have been started of late, but I cannot refrain from here mentioning (quite apart from the Association, but closely connected with it in warm and true sympathy with those it concerns) a most successful club or guild for working girls, which was started some little time ago by the Hon. Miss Stanley, in Soho.

The lights are bright, the big room is made warm and ready, the girls come in after their ten hours' and twelve hours' work. There are books for them and papers; there is companionship and a pleasant hour after the long day's grind. There are classes to attend if they wish it. The working girls themselves thoroughly like the place, and enjoy coming to it, and willingly pay twopence a week out of their scant earnings for the club membership; they chatter and sing and laugh as girls should do. One lady or another attends regularly. They are made at home, welcomed warmly to good wholesome things, and kept out of the temptations of the streets. "Will Miss Smith favour the company with a song?" Miss Smith, blushing and laughing, stands up and sings a ditty as merrily as some bird might sing it to its small brown companions in a woodland glade.

There is no great machinery about this, no special appeals and protestations any more than in the working of the society about which I have now been writing. I am told that as the society extends its operations it finds more and more difficulty in meeting the necessary expenses

of its work. It is to be hoped that, with the help of many who are kindly disposed, neither help in money nor in good services may be found to fail. Two thousand a year does not seem so very large a sum to count upon when it is to be spent to such good purpose and with so much common sense, and common sense seems on the whole to be one of the most uncommon and most valuable of qualities, and far beyond gold. It means all sorts of things—unselfishness, modesty, constancy, patience and hopefulness, a sense of duty in the place of vague and passionate impulse, and intelligent sympathy shown by quiet and repeated good offices, which will bear more and more fruit in good time.

The Sleeper.

I.

THE fire is in a steadfast glow,
 The curtains drawn against the night;
 Upon the red couch soft and low
 Between the fire and lamp alight
 She rests half-sitting, half-reclining,
 Encompassed by the cosy shining,
 Her ruby dress with lace trimmed white.

II.

Her left hand shades her drooping eyes
 Against the fervour of the fire •
 The right upon her cincture lies
 In languid grace beyond desire,
 A lily fallen among roses;
 So placidly her form reposes,
 It scarcely seemeth to respire.

III.

She is not surely all awake,
 As yet she is not all asleep;
 The eyes with lids half open take
 A startled deprecating peep
 Of quivering drowsiness, then slowly
 The lids sink back, before she wholly
 Resigns herself to slumber deep.

IV.

The side-neck gleams so pure beneath
 The underfringe of gossamer,
 The tendrils of whose faery wreath
 The softest sigh suppressed would stir.
 The little pink-shell ear-rim flushes
 With her young blood's translucent blushes,
 Nestling in tresses warm as fur.

V.

The contour of her cheek and chin
Is curved in one delicious line,
Pure as a vase of porcelain thin
Through which a tender light may shine;
Her brow and blue-veined temple gleaming
Beneath the dusk of hair back-streaming
Are as a virgin's marble shrine.

VI.

The ear is burning crimson fire,
The flush is brightening on the face,
The lips are parting to suspire,
The hair grows restless in its place
As if itself new tangles wreathing,
The bosom with her deeper breathing
Swell and subsides with ravishing grace.

VII.

The hand slides softly to caress,
Unconscious, that fine-pencilled curve
"Her lip's contour and downiness,"
Unbending with a sweet reserve;
A tender darkness that abashes
Steals out beneath the long dark lashes,
Whose sightless eyes make eyesight swerve.

VIII.

The hand on chin and throat downslips,
Then softly, softly on her breast;
A dream comes fluttering o'er the lips,
And stirs the eyelids in their rest,
And makes their undershadows quiver,
And like a ripple on a river
Glides through her breathing manifest.

IX.

I feel an awe to read this dream
So clearly written in her smile;
A pleasant not a passionate theme,
A little love, a little guile;

I fear lest she should speak, revealing
The secret of some maiden feeling
I have no right to hear the while.

X.

The dream has passed without a word
Of all that hovered finely traced;
The hand has slipt down, gently stirred
To join the other at her waist;
Her breath from that light agitation
Has settled to its slow pulsation;
She is by deep sleep re-embraced.

XI.

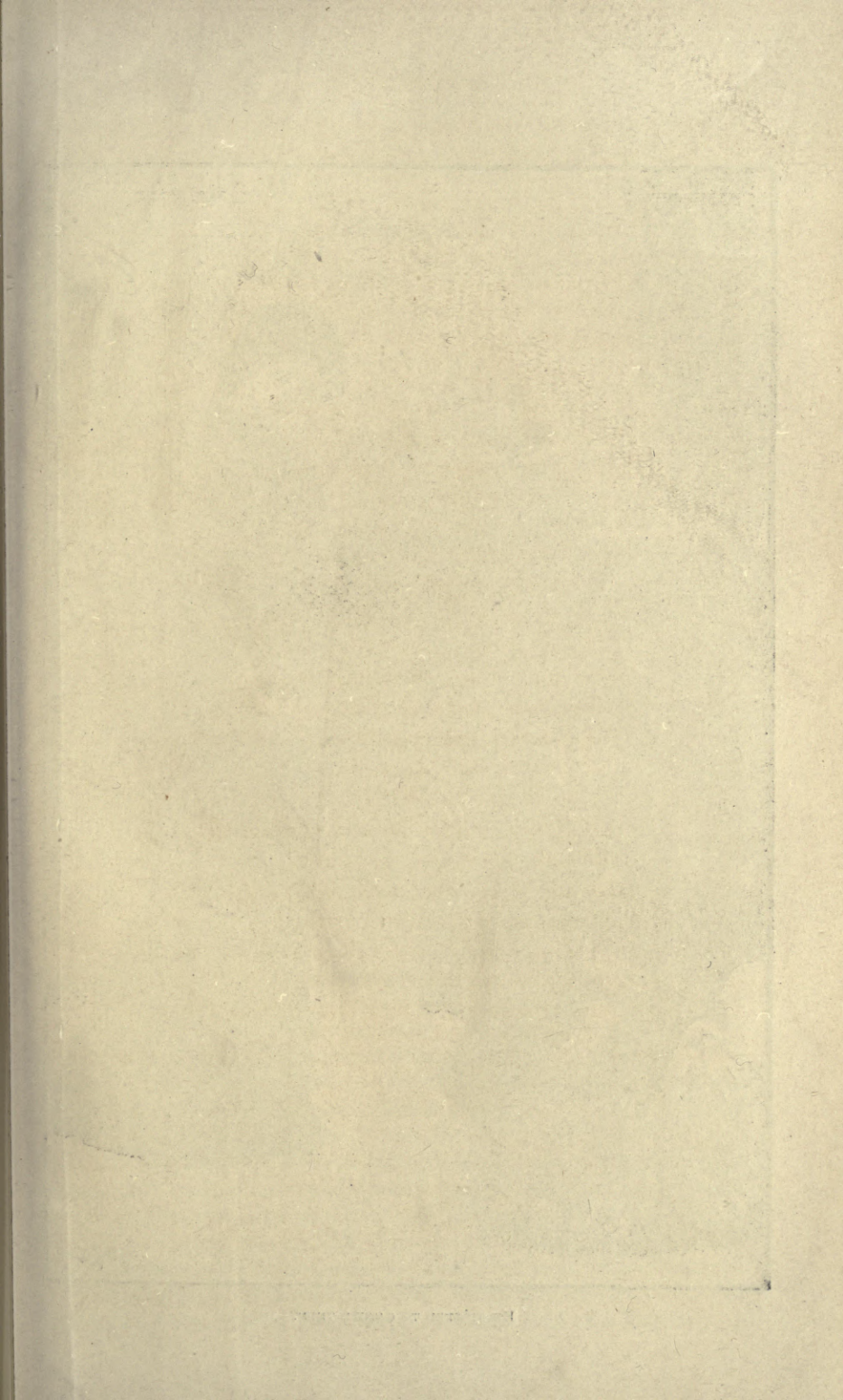
Deep sleep, so holy in its calm,
So helpless, yet so awful too;
Whose silence sheds as sweet a balm
As ever sweetest voice could do;
Whose trancèd eyes, unseen, unseeing,
Shadowed by pure love, thrill our being
With tender yearnings through and through.

XII.

Sweet sleep; no hope, no fear, no strife;
The solemn sanctity of death,
With all the loveliest bloom of life;
Eternal peace in mortal breath:
Pure sleep, from which she will awaken
Refreshed as one who hath partaken
New strength, new hope, new love, new faith.

January 1882.

JAMES THOMSON.





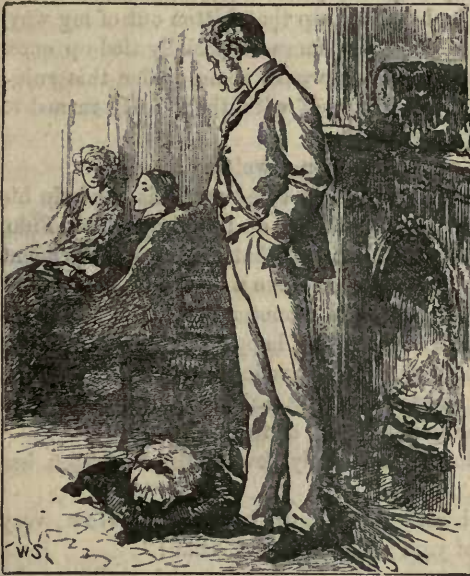
HE STOOPED TO GATHER THEM.

Damocles.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "FOR PERCIVAL"

CHAPTER III.

SHADOWS AND A GHOST.



MRS. EASTWOOD'S

hopes with regard to the weather were not destined to be fulfilled. The next day was mild and grey, with persistent, softly-dropping showers which kept all the party indoors. "Better to-day than to-morrow," said Charley, who had fixed Friday for Effie and himself to visit some friends at Brookfield. Good-tempered as he was, it vexed him to see his holiday melting away in these soft spring rains, when there were so many walks he would have liked to take with

Rachel. Nor could he find much occupation indoors. When he had done with the newspaper, he was reduced to studying the sky from the front and back of the house alternately, and strolling in and out of the rooms to see what other people were doing. "Oh, here's Charley!" said Fanny on one of the occasions. "Now please don't tease Fido—he has just gone to sleep on his cushion, poor dear!"

"I tease Fido!—what next?" said Eastwood. "I'm sure you tease him much more than I do—you are always washing the miserable little beast, and combing him, and fussing after him, and putting ribbons round his neck—only he hasn't got any neck, he's so fat."

"Well, I know you do tease him, and he doesn't like you," Fanny replied as she threaded her needle. "Now, Effie, doesn't he tease him?"

"Not very often, I think," said Effie. "Only now and then. You're a nice, kind boy, Charley dear, but you are very cruel on a wet day."

Rachel looked up from her book. "At that rate you'll be something terrible if this rain goes on," she remarked.

"Shan't I?" said Charley. "I should think the effect would be permanent." He meditated a little. "Lucky I wasn't one of Noah's sons—fancy me shut up in the ark with all that live stock! But you needn't trouble yourselves, you two; I'm never going to tease a dog again."

"I'm very glad to hear it," said Fanny.

"Never again," Charley repeated in a tone of regret. "I'm a reformed character."

"What's the cause of the reformation?"

"Oh, I saw the error of my ways a day or two ago," he replied. "I don't know about cats—you had better keep that kitten out of my way, Effie. But I'm never to tease dogs any more—especially tied-up ones. I'm not sure that a mad bull-dog, loose, would come under this rule; perhaps I might be allowed to amuse myself with that." He turned to Miss Conway. "What do you think?"

"I should think perhaps you might—on a wet day."

"Oh, yes, on a wet day, of course." He stood with his hands in his pockets, looking down. But he felt so strong an impulse to kick Fido, who lay, snow-white and snoring, at his feet, that he judged it prudent to fly from temptation, and went away to smoke a pipe in the porch.

The only pleasant interruption to the monotony of the day was the arrival of a messenger from the Hall. Effie happened to meet Mary in the passage, and came running into the drawing-room, where Rachel, book in hand, leaned by the window, looking out into a bower of damp greenery, and listening to the gentle falling of the rain.

"Look!" cried Effie, "look what lovely flowers Mr. Lauriston has sent me!"

Rachel rushed to see them. "Oh, how beautiful! How very beautiful! That's because of your song last night, Effie!"

"It's worth while singing songs, then," said the girl coolly, as she laid her treasures out one by one. "Oh, aren't they sweet?" she exclaimed, stooping over the delicate blossoms. "Rachel, weren't we silly to go hunting for wild flowers yesterday?"

"They are pretty, too," said Miss Conway, "only they faded so."

"But not pretty like these." She stood looking at the tender waxen petals on their background of dusky green cloth. "Rich people have all the nice things," she said with a sigh. "*He* never goes out and picks a bunch of rubbish out of the hedges."

"Mr. Lauriston? No, I don't suppose he does."

"No, and Mrs. Lauriston didn't, *I* know," said Effie with a little nod. "Not when she could have all the flowers she wanted. She made believe she liked them, I suppose, when she was a shepherdess. So would I make believe I liked them now and then if I had the others every day."

"Effie, we heard more than once how charming wild flowers were, when we went out yesterday."

"That was because I couldn't get any others. Let's turn out those shabby old things of Fanny's, and put these beauties in." Effie sighed again as she began to arrange them, and felt that Fate was very cruel to her. She remembered the time when she could please Mr. Lauriston without an effort, when she might sit on his knee, and play with his watchguard, and turn the ring on his finger, and kiss him, instead of having to keep up the conversation and behave like a young lady. She did not particularly wish for any alteration in herself, but she thought that Mr. Lauriston might be changed in many respects with advantage. Why wasn't he easy to talk to, like Charley, or like ——? Effie had had more than one harmless little flirtation already, and could have supplied a name or two to fill up the blank.

She felt this cruelty of Fate still more that evening when Mr. Lauriston sent his carriage to fetch them. As they rolled easily and swiftly through the park, Effie remembered what miles and miles her little feet had trudged through country lanes, and recalled her experience of cab and omnibus in London streets. For the time the hothouse flowers were half forgotten, and the possession of a carriage became the height of felicity. Rachel meanwhile sat opposite, and looked with obedient interest at every view which Mrs. Eastwood pointed out. "You don't see it to advantage," said the latter regretfully. But Miss Conway liked the green dimness of the judiciously designed plantations, and the softened outlines of the irregular swells, as she saw them first that evening through a thin veil of rain. She was almost sorry when they arrived at the Hall, where Effie, alighting, added two tall footmen to her dream of joy.

Mr. Lauriston had invited Mr. Brand, the curate, to meet them. Rachel had already seen him in church—a dark, rather handsome man, with a narrow forehead and a determined mouth. The young ladies of the parish worshipped him, and he accepted their adoration with unaffected ease as a matter of course. Even before they went to dinner he began to talk of parish matters to Fanny and Effie, while Mrs. Eastwood monopolised Mr. Lauriston, and boldly questioned him about the little boy.

"He is very well, thank you," was the reply. "No, I never see him in the evening—don't such young people go to bed before this time?"

Well, yes, Mrs. Eastwood had no doubt that he would be in bed. She was glad to hear he was well.

"Yes," Mr. Lauriston repeated, "he is very well. Not a very strong child, they tell me, but he never seems to be ill."

"A great favourite, of course?" she said with a beaming smile, though in fact she had her doubts. "I daresay his papa spoils him, if the truth were known."

"I believe I'm not bound to criminate myself, am I?" he replied.

"I suppose he goes with you to-morrow?" she said, returning to the charge. "Or does he stay on at the Hall while you are away?"

"Oh, no—my sisters will take him. I'm a rolling stone, you know."

"Your sisters? They have not been to Redlands for a long while, I think? I hope they are well—Miss Mary especially."

Mr. Lauriston smiled. "Not Miss Mary now—you did not know that she married a year and a half ago," he said, as he offered her his arm, and they went to dinner. He foiled most of her questions, and she was obliged to be satisfied with learning that Miss Mary Lauriston was Mrs. Clarke, and, vaguely, that she had gone to America with her husband. "Henrietta and Eliza will take the child; they have more room than they want in their house," he said.

Miss Conway was hardly as much amused during dinner as she had been the day before. She sat by Mr. Lauriston (for he had asked Mrs. Eastwood to take the head of the table, which she did with much dignity), but Mr. Brand led the conversation to local matters which she did not understand, and Charley kept up a dropping fire of unconnected remarks. She found it difficult to talk to Charley with Mr. Lauriston at her side, and she hardly acknowledged to herself that she would have liked to talk to Mr. Lauriston. "Do you dine in this great room when you are quite alone?" she asked him once when the question was covered by the general conversation.

"Always," he said. "You think it dreary?"

"I don't know. I don't think I should like the shadows in all the corners if I were alone."

"No? They are very good company when you are used to them. I daresay many people would call it dreary; but do you know, Miss Conway, I think I fancied you would like my room."

She shook her head. "Not if I were by myself. I would have a little room and light it well."

"It would be difficult to light this"—he began, when Mr. Brand was heard saying,

"We have been talking about the possibility of getting a cottage for mission-work, and a night-school, in Brook Lane, Mr. Lauriston. Something ought to be done there. Can't you help us?"

He answered; but Rachel, who knew nothing of Brook Lane, took advantage of a momentary silence on Charley's part to glance round the room, and picture to herself the little island of light in the dusk, with Mr. Lauriston sitting there all alone. She could see it vividly enough, till all at once the thought of his dead wife came into it, and the girl sat with drooping eyelids, wondering what those two had looked like in the lamplight together, and whether that beautiful memory lingered in the shadows that Mr. Lauriston found good company. Did he think of her in those lonely evenings, or not? Rachel could have believed either

answer to her question. It was absurd—she knew it was perfectly absurd—he was only a gentlemanly, well-dressed man, with quiet manners and a gentle voice, who had just refilled his glass as he sat by her side, and was pushing the decanter to Mr. Brand, yet it seemed to her as if in some way he belonged to the shadow of which he had spoken.

Mrs. Eastwood was eager to tell her girls the news she had learned from their host, and to exclaim over it with them. "Only think," she said, when they had left the gentlemen to their wine and were safe in the drawing-room, "Mary Lauriston is married! Fanny, you must remember Mary?"

"Oh, I remember them all. Mary was the fair one—she was younger than the others."

"But she was older than Mr. Lauriston," said Effie scornfully. She must be ever so old now."

"Well, she is about five or six and forty," Mrs. Eastwood allowed. "Still, she was the youngest of the three, and much the best-looking. I think Adam Lauriston was fond of her in his own way, and I always thought she might have got on all right with her stepmother if it hadn't been for the others. But if ever there were a couple of old cats—they were enough to make mischief with anybody!"

"I remember them," said Effie. "I remember their coming once when I was quite little and walking round the garden with papa."

"Well, even he didn't like them!" Mrs. Eastwood exclaimed triumphantly, "though we were all saints and angels according to your papa. And now Adam Lauriston is going to send that poor child to live with them! I shouldn't have wondered if Mary had been there—but to send a child to those two old maids!"

"Poor little wretch!" said Fanny.

"And Mary married more than a year! I wonder I never heard of it. I shouldn't be much surprised," Mrs. Eastwood remarked sagely, "if they weren't pleased with the marriage for some reason."

"Perhaps Miss Henrietta thought he ought to have asked the eldest first," said Effie. "I say, Rachel, let's go round the room and look at the pictures and things while we are by ourselves. I never had the chance before."

The gentlemen did not stay very long in the dining-room. It would have been difficult to find three men who had less in common, and, in spite of Mr. Lauriston's best endeavours, the conversation flagged. He tried politics, but without success. Charley was a Conservative, and a strong partisan. It was evident to Charley that all who differed from him were not only blind, but wilfully blind, to the truth. It was neither very easy nor very profitable to discuss political questions with him, but at least in so doing you knew what you might expect. Now Mr. Brand tested all statesmen by their Church principles—that is, by their opinions concerning vestments and candles—and in his talk with

young Eastwood this classification led to an occasional agreement which was far more irritating than any discord. That was the last attempt at conversation, and, after its failure, they adjourned to the drawing-room. Mr. Lauriston, pausing on the threshold to let his guests precede him, looked across the room at the girls who had just completed their tour of inspection. Effie had thrown herself into a stately old-fashioned arm-chair, a chair which seemed to proclaim itself the master's seat. The childish little figure was half lost in its depths ; but the light gleamed on the soft white folds of her dress, and on her bright face as she leaned forward, speaking to her friend. Mr. Lauriston, however, hardly noticed Effie. He looked at Miss Conway who stood on the hearth-rug, erect and slender, idly fanning herself with a fan of peacock feathers which she had picked up. It was like a picture, he thought—the girl's head with the golden-brown hair drawn back and wound in a soft, shining knot, the dark eyes, the delicately tinted face, against the carved white marble of the great chimney-piece. He saw it all in one quick glance, for Rachel looked round when she heard them coming, and paused, with the fan drooping in her hand. Eastwood went straight up to her, and Mr. Lauriston stood discreetly aside.

His turn came a little later, however, while Mr. Brand was turning over a portfolio of photographs, and talking to Fanny and Effie. (If Miss Conway had been willing, the curate would very readily have added her to his listeners, experience having given him confidence in dealing with numbers.) On the outskirts of the little group sat Mrs. Eastwood, inspecting a photograph through her gold eye-glass from time to time, with gentle little nods of which she was happily unconscious. Charley, as he sat near Rachel, rested an elbow on the table, and turned the leaves of the last *Punch*. Apparently his occasional remarks did not engross all her attention, for she raised her eyes to Mr. Lauriston, who had been answering a question about one of the photographs, and was turning away. "We were looking at your pictures before you came in—Effie and I," she said.

He came directly and took a chair by her side. "You couldn't see much of them by this light, I'm afraid. I'm very unlucky, Miss Conway ; there are some things I should like to show you, and I haven't the chance."

"Thank you, you are very kind. I should have been very pleased."

"I have travelled a good deal," he went on, "and one picks up things—treasures one thinks them. And to find some one else who will think so too—or successfully make believe to think so—is one of the greatest pleasures I know. I doubt you wouldn't make believe, Miss Conway, but there is the other possibility."

"I hope I wouldn't make believe," she said with a smile. "But I can't say ; I might try, perhaps."

"It would be very kind, you know. But I don't think you would.

You didn't pretend to like my gloomy rooms. If I had only known, I would have bought up all the candles in Redlands, and lighted them in your honour."

"Perhaps it was just as well you didn't know. And I only said I didn't like shadows when I was alone. Your house is too big, Mr. Lauriston, and it sounds hollow. There is room for too many shadows in it; but I don't mind them to-night, as I am not alone."

There was a pause. "Do you like ghosts? I have a ghost belonging to me," said Mr. Lauriston. "Did you know that?"

She shook her head. "It won't do, I won't be frightened. People don't have ghosts in elegant modern mansions. I don't believe in it."

"Ah, but my ghost is not to be disposed of in that summary fashion. It lives out of doors."

"In the park, then?"

"No, in the garden, in a wide grassy walk between two high yew hedges."

"Is it dreadful to look at?"

"Not at all. At least I hope not, for the credit of the family, since it is my great-great-grandmother. She comes hurrying down the middle of the walk, and looks backward over her shoulder as she comes."

"Did you ever see her, Mr. Lauriston?"

"Never; and never knew any one who did."

"It seems to me," said Rachel with a smile, "that this is only the ghost of a ghost story."

"So much the better," said Lauriston. "That is the charm of it. It keeps out of the way, and cannot be explained into something prosaic. I hate a clumsy, meaningless ghost; but this story of mine is just a shadowy expression of the tradition that the walk was once haunted by a most miserable woman."

Rachel looked at him with startled eyes. "Why did she haunt it? Did she do anything dreadful?"

"Nobody knows that she did anything at all."

"Mr. Lauriston, you and your story are very mysterious."

"Shall I explain?" he said. "But mind, I vouch for nothing. This—what shall I say?—this distant grandmother of mine had a boy of whom she was passionately fond. He was not the heir, for her husband was the second son, and the elder brother had left a little child, younger than her own. There is a deep pond in the garden close to the end of this walk I told you of, and one day the little fellow fell into it and was drowned. The nurse who ought to have been with him heard him scream, and hurried to him by the nearest way, (which was not the yew walk) but she had some distance to go, and was too late. It was all simple enough, and there was nothing to connect my great-great-grandmother with it in the slightest degree."

"No," said Rachel wonderingly.

"But after that time, according to the story, her people noticed that

she was changed. She walked continually in the yew walk, but never turned the corner by the pond. Naturally they said that she had been there the day the child was drowned, and might have saved him."

"Do you suppose she *was* there?"

"I can't say," he answered with a smile. "It sounds unpleasantly probable."

"But it is horrible!" said Miss Conway. "I don't like your story at all, Mr. Lauriston. I can fancy her walking there, and never daring to look round the corner, because she would not look that one moment!" There was a pause. "And what became of the boy for whose sake she did it? Did he die?"

"He died," said Mr. Lauriston gravely, "at the age of eighty-three."

"What—he lived? But was he happy? was he fortunate?"

"He married a beautiful heiress, was universally respected, paid off most of the mortgages, and left the estate to his grandson, my uncle. You seem disappointed, Miss Conway, but it was a very good thing for the family."

"No; but I felt as if it ought not to end so," she answered. "I felt as if she ought to fail, somehow, and instead of that she succeeded after all."

"Well, if she had failed, that would have been tragic, no doubt, but this may have been more tragic still. Failure leaves you your ideal; you can think, 'If it had been!' But suppose you succeed and find that it was not worth while"—he shrugged his shoulders.

"I wonder whether she thought it *was* worth while," said Miss Conway.

"Assuming the truth of the story, I suspect not."

"I don't see why you think not."

"Well, from the nature of things in general—will that do? If it will not do, I will remind you that the people who knew her best thought not, or they would not have seen her haunting the yew walk."

Charles Eastwood, who had committed himself to the prediction that Mr. Lauriston and Miss Conway would get on together, was very well content to bear the quick interchange of speech going on at his elbow. He had been listening, too, as he glanced at his paper, and of course he knew what it was all about. They were talking about ghosts. Now he saw the *Field* lying at a little distance on the table, and pushed his chair rather further to reach it. Rachel turned her head, looked at him, and there was a brief pause before she spoke again.

"But, Mr. Lauriston, perhaps she loved him so much that she thought it was worth while in spite of all her suffering."

"Again I think not, Miss Conway."

"Why not?"

"If she could have been capable of such love as that she would have been brave enough to face the consequences. Afraid of that pool!"

Why she would have played ducks and drakes across it, unless"—Mr. Lauriston suddenly recollected himself—"unless she thought that perhaps people might consider it improper. No, it was an impulse, not a great passion. And she was thinking of herself, not of her boy, when she haunted the yew walk. Don't you agree with me?"

"I don't know, I'm sure. Perhaps. I don't pretend to be a judge."

"Why not? We all know how women can sacrifice themselves for their children, or their lovers. Don't you think the love might deaden the pain? One would be sorry to suppose they always regretted it," said Mr. Lauriston drily.

"I didn't mean that," was her hurried reply, while the colour came into her face. "I only meant that I was not romantic; I don't know, I am sure, whether I should be capable of a great passion or self-sacrifice under any circumstances—most likely not; and so I could not pretend to decide what a woman might do or feel. That was all I meant."

"I understand. You must allow me to draw my own conclusion from your doubt."

She looked curiously at him. "Tell me what it is, Mr. Lauriston."

He smiled. "Well, since you ask me, if I may say so, I conclude that there is a possibility that you *are* capable."

"I don't see why—you don't know me well enough to tell," she said, while her colour deepened.

"I never meant to imply that I did know you well enough to tell. I was only judging by a general rule. If a woman is certain that she is capable of a great passion," said Mr. Lauriston lightly, "one suspects that she bases her certainty on half a dozen lesser ones. If she doubts—one may at least doubt too."

She laughed, a little uneasily. "Well, I don't want to prove my capability," she said, half to herself. Mr. Lauriston arched his brows, but did not speak. "I don't," she repeated. "If a good fairy could give me my wish, I would choose to be always quiet, and peaceful, and safe, and commonplace—yes, I would choose to be commonplace."

Mr. Lauriston took the feather fan which lay idly in her lap, and turned it in his hands. "It is a curious wish," he said. "But I don't think it sounds unreasonable. I should say there could be hardly any difficulty about bestowing that boon on one more."

"But I mean it—I mean it, really. I'm not ambitious. I hope and trust that I am just fit to lead a commonplace life like my neighbours."

"You think that? Well, if so—pardon me, Miss Conway—your looks belie you."

"So much the worse for my looks!" she answered hotly. "I'm very sorry, but I do hope it."

"So much the worse! What next?" said Mr. Lauriston. "First I am to believe that you wish to be commonplace. Well, it is an effort, but I consider faith my strong point. But this is too much. I am to

believe that a woman not only wishes to *be* commonplace—let that pass—but to *look* commonplace! Forgive me, but I can't."

He smiled as he said it, and Rachel smiled too, and answered honestly, "Well, I'm not quite sure about the looks myself. We won't say anything more about them, please."

"Are you sure of the rest?"

"Yes!" She turned her head and met his eyes. "Oh, you may laugh; I know you think I am talking nonsense, but it is true."

Mr. Lauriston slightly bent his head in token of acquiescence. "So be it," he said. "Must I wish you success in the attainment of your ideal?" It might be a mere accident, but he fixed his eyes as he spoke on Mrs. Eastwood, who was just getting the gold eye-glass into position to examine Salisbury Cathedral.

"Looking east, mamma; but you've got it sideways," said Fanny.

Miss Conway looked defiantly at Mr. Lauriston. "No, I won't trouble you for your good wishes," she said.

"Thank you. They would be rather grudgingly given, I'm afraid."

There was a pause. She held out her hand for the fan, which he resigned. "Is it—is it very strange to wish not to be peculiar in any way?" she said presently. "Don't you think people are happier so?"

"It is difficult to put happiness into figures and add it up," said Mr. Lauriston. "How many days of a comfortable life will equal a moment of rapture?"

The fan moved slowly to and fro, and Miss Conway did not attempt an answer. "I suppose your great-great-grandmother wasn't commonplace," she said after a time. "And she wasn't happy. People whose ghosts walk can't be quite commonplace, I think."

Mr. Lauriston smiled. "After all, I know very little about my great-great-grandmother. The whole story, you perceive, rests on nothing more than the facts that she walked in that particular path, and that her spirits were not good. Still I admit that she was not altogether commonplace. But I didn't propose her as an ideal; in fact I think we decided that she was weak."

"Yes, I know," said Miss Conway absently; and for a few moments the two seemed to be pursuing their different trains of thought. Mr. Lauriston spoke first in a low voice.

"Suppose, now, the story I told you was true, I don't mean the apparition—that doesn't matter—but that lifelong dread and horror of hers; doesn't it seem strange that it should fade away to a faint uncertain shadow—oh, a human shadow, I grant you," for Miss Conway had made a quick gesture of dissent, "and we can't tell whether there is anything real behind it or not?"

"I should like to know that there was not," she said.

"Well, very likely there was not, and you have wasted your pity on a shadow. But it seems strange that we cannot be sure. Don't you feel that, more or less, with all old stories? Loves and hates which were

all fire, and madness, and blood, and nothing left but a little shadowy sentiment hovering about old houses."

Charley Eastwood glanced over his shoulder at his neighbours. In spite of his reading he had listened to their conversation. They were still talking about ghosts. Being an observant young man, he noted the fact that Rachel looked grave and preoccupied, and he hoped that she had not got a headache. As he pushed his paper away, the heading to a paragraph caught his eye, and he stopped to read it.

"She thought the whole world was miserable, and it was only she herself who was changed," said the girl.

"True; but you are taking this grandmother of mine much too seriously, Miss Conway. I could almost fancy that you had been in the yew walk, and seen her with your own eyes."

She looked at him. "Do you tell everybody about her, Mr. Lauriston?"

He shook his head, meeting her look with a smile. "There, that will do," he said, after a pause. "Shall we have some music, and drive the ghost away? I haven't forgot your flattering speech to me last night, but I'm not quite sure that I can play the part of David. I shouldn't look the character, should I?" said Mr. Lauriston with a laugh. "'Ruddy and of a fair countenance'—Eastwood is our man. We'll make him begin, and my turn shall come afterwards."

And two minutes later Charley was singing, and Mr. Brand had come softly across the room with a couple of photographs, to ask Miss Conway if she had ever seen Furness Abbey.

When Mr. Lauriston had said goodbye to his guests that evening he came back to the drawing-room. Standing on the hearthrug he surveyed the photographs strewn over the table, the piano with its scattered sheets of music, the chairs that stood about with a queer meaning in their disarray. There was the group that suggested the Eastwoods worshipping the curate; that other, somewhat apart, which brought back Charley, a little bored, perhaps, and conscious that he had got through an unusual amount of reading; and here was one with something in its position that instantly recalled the fluent ease with which Mr. Brand discoursed of Furness Abbey. Mr. Lauriston, softly whistling to himself, stepped forward, and picked up the feather fan which lay where Rachel Conway had left it.

The tune grew fainter and died. He looked round the room. "So—it is too big, and dreary, and full of shadows. Well, perhaps it is. I suppose Eastwood will take a neat little suburban villa somewhere, and they will have the curtains drawn, and the gas lighted, when he comes home from the office. And Mrs. Charles Eastwood will do her best to think of nothing outside that little house, and Charley will criticise her dress, and her manners, whenever he feels inclined, and the girls will go and stay there, and old Mrs. Eastwood will give her good advice about the servants and the furniture. Ah! by the way, the little

drawing-room will be full of hideous wedding presents. And sometimes they will have a few friends to dinner, or some musical fellow clerk of Charley's, who sings comic songs, will drop in. And she thinks she can live that life and be happy! Is the girl mad? And what will be the end of it?"

He stood for a moment, pursuing the thought which seemed to grow more distasteful as he viewed it more clearly. Then he threw down the fan. "Charles Eastwood's wife! Well, it's no business of mine, but I wish to heaven I had never seen her."

CHAPTER IV.

AN AFTERNOON IN REDLANDS PARK.

"La mélancolie,
Cette fleur du Nord et d'un ciel souffrant,
Dont le froid calice, inondé de pluie,
S'exhale en poison."

RACHEL came down on Friday morning in a dreamy mood, which found no satisfactory response from the faces round her. Charley had a faint perception of a far-away look in her eyes, and he called attention to the fact, causing Fanny to suggest that she was thinking of Mr. Lauriston. Miss Conway met this remark with a lofty silence, which might be taken as jest or earnest. In point of fact she was very much displeased. And yet she was thinking of Mr. Lauriston.

It had been almost a relief to her to come away from Redlands Hall the night before. The great lonely house had cast a shadow over her, Mr. Lauriston had perplexed her, and the thought of his young wife, so early lost, had saddened her through its very vagueness. The woman in his story, with her vain remorse, had pressed too closely on Rachel's excited imagination. It seemed as if, after long years of silence, finding some one who could understand her pain, she had poured a share of her guilty anguish into a pure soul. Rachel had been glad to watch Effie's pretty little head nodding sleepily in the dim light as they drove home, and Charley's pleasant cheery voice had been a welcome sound. The clasp of his strong hand as he said goodnight had been effectual to banish the lingering pressure with which Mr. Lauriston bade her farewell, wondering, with a curious expression in his eyes, how and when they would meet again. That touch had been with her all the way, till Charley held her hand, and told her that she looked tired, and must sleep well.

But things were altered with the morning. She had slept, and the visionary fancies of the night before were too hopelessly worsted by the daylight to be any longer formidable. Indeed, they were slipping away so fast that Rachel found herself regretting them, and would willingly

have called them back, and given them a little shelter. But where? The aggressive daylight filled every corner of the Eastwoods' house. If it had even been sunshine it would have brought its shadows with it; but the sky was cloudy, and the pale diffused light shed a common-place clearness over all the world.

And Mr. Lauriston? Rachel could not help wondering what effect the daylight would have on him. If she could see him that morning, would he seem different, like everything else? She tried to imagine him taking his ticket, and starting off to town, as anybody might do, and in the effort she realised that he was gone, and that life seemed smaller, and speech more contracted, in his absence.

"I suppose he will drive past here," said Mrs. Eastwood, breaking strangely into the girl's thoughts.

"Lauriston? Oh, he's gone before now," Charley replied, looking up from his paper. "He always drives to the station by Raymond's End."

Miss Conway turned away her eyes indifferently. "Surely that is further than the other way, isn't it?" said his mother.

"A little, perhaps. But there isn't a quarter of a mile's difference between them, and it's a better road, you know—not so much up and down. Still I dare say he'd have come this way if he'd known you wished it."

"Well, it wouldn't really have been any good, but I must own I should have liked just a glimpse of the child," said Mrs. Eastwood.

"The child!" Charley burst out laughing. "What on earth did you want to see the child for? Just like other babies, I suppose, especially driving by at the pace Lauriston's horses mostly go."

"Well, I said it wouldn't be any good. Still—you didn't see him at all, did you?"

"No—only heard him howl, as I told you. The little beggar has tolerable lungs, I should say, if that interests you."

"I *cannot* think how he can send him to those two old maids," said Mrs. Eastwood, whose surprise could bear several such repetitions before losing the keenness of its edge. "I cannot understand it!"

"Well, it's his own look-out. And I see no particular objection so long as he doesn't want to send me. Is Effie getting ready for this precious Brookfield expedition of ours, does anybody know?"

Rachel was sorry when Charley and Effie drove off, Effie waving her a bright farewell, and Charley looking back with an easy disregard of the old horse from the "Falcon." His carelessness mattered the less, as that sagacious animal was accustomed to a variety of incapable drivers. And though it did young Eastwood some injustice—not understanding the peculiar circumstances of the case—it turned safely into the Brookfield road, which was the important thing, and started off at what it considered a suitable pace. "I do hope Charley will be careful," said Mrs. Eastwood, as she and Rachel went back into the house.

Fanny was happy in the prospect of a morning's dressmaking. She

had cleared the table in readiness for cutting out, and she was impatiently waiting, with a fashion-book in her hand, to consult Rachel about the pattern of a trimming. Rachel tried to throw herself heart and soul into the work, and she partly succeeded. But even while she considered what style was best adapted for Fanny's neat, plump figure, and quite agreed with Mrs. Eastwood that the material was very pretty, and likely to wear well, and not expensive—no, not at all expensive—she was conscious of an underlying life of fancy in her brain. The world was full of wonders, and splendours, and shadows—was it not? At least it had seemed so the night before—full of doubts and fears, of dreams high as heaven and deep as hell. And meanwhile she measured and pinned. “You will get it out of that, I am sure, and then it will come all right for cutting on the cross; of course those folds must be cut on the cross,” she said to Fanny, who stood by with a great pair of scissors, eager to begin. The work progressed rapidly, yet they were surprised when one o'clock came and found them absorbed in it. However, as Fanny remarked, the cutting out was just finished, and she could do up some of the seams that afternoon in the machine. She made up her mind on a question of buttons, between the meat and pudding at their early dinner, but hesitated about fringe till the cloth was taken away. Miss Conway never failed to show an intelligent interest in these matters, though it occurred to her once to wonder what Mr. Lauriston's great-great-grandmother did when she wanted a new gown. “I suppose she chose the colour she liked best, in spite of her misery,” the girl thought to herself, “and settled what buttons she would have—like Fanny!”

“You look pale,” said Mrs. Eastwood; “you mustn't stay indoors all day. I don't suppose Fanny will leave her work”—Fanny shook her head—“but you might walk into the village with me, and while I call on Mrs. Wilkinson you could go a little way by yourself.”

Rachel readily assented. She was glad to be in the open air, though they talked of Fanny's dress till they reached Mrs. Wilkinson's door. But she rejoiced still more when she found herself alone and free, walking with swift steps, she hardly heeded where. It was one of those spring days when the damp soft air is like the breath of a hothouse, smelling of earth and leaves. Every bud was opening, all life quickening, under the low, grey sky. It was so sunless and still that it would have been melancholy, if the year had not been so young, and it seemed to Rachel, as she walked, as if the birds were singing through a strange and silent dream. She let her fancy wander where it would; she was content to listen to the ever flowing stream of song, yet not even that with too much earnestness, lest a thought should break the spell. She liked to be alone, going her way between the white-blossomed hedges, with her head high, as if the often trodden country lane were a pathway leading into an unknown world.

Other steps, as light and quick as if they were echoes of her own, were drawing near. Miss Conway turned a corner of the road, came

suddenly upon a small gate leading into the park, and found herself face to face with Mr. Lauriston.

There was the briefest possible pause of surprise before he spoke. "Alone, Miss Conway?" He unfastened the gate, and came forward, holding out his hand. "What, did I startle you?"

"I thought you had gone away," she answered.

"*L'homme propose*," said Mr. Lauriston, with that slight shrug of his shoulders which was already so familiar to Rachel, "but, to finish in plain English, my sister has fallen downstairs, and is too much shaken to be able to travel to-day."

"Is she much hurt?" inquired Rachel, still confused, but prompted by an instinct of politeness.

"Only shaken; nothing serious, I think, as she hopes to meet me in town to-morrow. But when I had the telegram I decided to wait here, rather than there. And now it is your own turn to account for yourself; how come you to be wandering about alone?" said Mr. Lauriston, with a quick glance, as if he half expected to see some one else turn the corner. "Where are the rest?"

"Effie and Mr. Eastwood are gone to Brookfield for the day, Fanny is busy, and Fido is asleep. So I went into the village with Mrs. Eastwood, and left her to pay some calls, while I came a little way by myself."

"I see. And where are you going?"

"Going? Oh, nowhere."

Mr. Lauriston swung the little gate back on its hinges, and leaned against it. "You will find this the most direct route, Miss Conway."

Rachel laughed doubtfully, and looked along the lane. He followed the direction of her eyes.

"In less than three minutes that way will take you into the Bucksmill Hill road, which, as you know, is nothing remarkable, at any rate till you get to the farm. Besides, you have been there already. Come where you have not been."

She smiled again, and this time she looked towards the park. In the grey canopy of cloud there was a spot of luminous mist, and the only gleam of sunshine which that Friday afternoon was destined to know stole softly over the face of the land, and brightened it with a yellow glow. It was like an answering smile to Rachel.

"Well?" said Mr. Lauriston, still leaning on the gate. Something of easy grace in his attitude caught the girl's eye, as he stood in the foreground of the picture, waiting her decision. "It is evident to me," he said, "that 'the good fates please' that you should be introduced to my domain in spite of your indifference, or why did they bring us together exactly at the gate? Come, Miss Conway," he went on, with a sudden change of tone; "come and see the irregular swells!"

The pathetic entreaty triumphed, though even then she paused.

"Promise me that you won't take me to that yew walk, Mr. Lauriston."

"No, no, I won't," he promised, as he held the gate for her to pass.

"Nor the pond," she said, stopping short.

"Nor the pond. And the pond and the yew walk shall be taken as including everything else of the same kind, though I don't think there is anything else? Will that do?"

"Yes," said Miss Conway gravely, "that will do. But weren't you going anywhere, Mr. Lauriston?"

"Nowhere. Our destination is precisely the same, you perceive."

Towards that destination they walked together through the warm stillness of the afternoon, from which the soft glow had not yet quite faded. Rachel found it hard to believe that it was scarcely more than half an hour since she left the hot little house which was full of the busy noise of Fanny's machine, and the smell of early dinner. In the first surprise of her meeting with Mr. Lauriston she had forgotten all about the birds; but now they were singing afresh, and filling all the pauses in her thoughts with gushes of music. There were leafy whispers overhead as they went across "shady levels, mossy fine." Between the trunks there were glimpses of the tranquil reaches of the river, and beyond that were slopes and lawns of greenest grass among the oaks and beeches. Miss Conway felt as if Fanny, working at her seam, must be miles and miles away; or rather, perhaps, some strange distance which could not be expressed in miles. And yet through it all, with a half smile, half sigh, she was conscious that she herself should go home to a meat tea.

"Why did you smile?" said Mr. Lauriston. "What were you thinking of?"

"Nothing," she answered. How could she tell him that she was thinking about her tea—why, he would suppose she was hungry!—or about Fanny's new dress? Besides, she was not really thinking of these things, and she hardly knew what made her smile.

"You are going nowhere, and thinking of nothing by the way. Well, it is exceedingly appropriate, but you seem to be in rather a negative mood this afternoon, Miss Conway."

"I don't quite know what I was thinking of," she said. "But I fancy I must have been thinking how beautiful all this is—how could one think of anything else here?"

"Oh, I am silenced," said Mr. Lauriston with a well pleased smile, and they went some little distance before he spoke again. "Come this way, and I will show you something that you will like."

She followed obediently as he led the way up a little knoll close by. "Mr. Lauriston," she said, and he turned round quickly, "is this an irregular swell?"

"Unquestionably," he replied, with extreme gravity. "Though it is rather a small specimen, there is no doubt whatever about it."

"Well, it isn't very big, certainly, but it is very nice. And what am I to see now that I am here?"

"Do you know what that is?" Mr. Lauriston inquired. She looked where he pointed, and in the distance she saw the rounded top of Bucksmill Hill against the soft grey sky. She could distinguish the roof of the farm at its foot, among the clustered orchard trees, and, looking upward for the track which they followed that night, she caught sight of a bit of it, like a scar on the hillside, just below the spot where it branched off to the purple moorland. "You would see it better if the sun were shining," said Mr. Lauriston.

"It is very pretty now." And Rachel paused, with parted lips and eager eyes, looking at it. Only three days earlier she had stood on that hill, and looked at Redlands Hall, where it lay far off in its moonlit woodland. She remembered how they had talked of Mr. Lauriston, "a little dark man with bright eyes," and how her fancy had called up a shadow to haunt the shadowy moor. And now they stood together looking at Bucksmill Hill. Charley's words came back to her so clearly that it seemed as if they had that minute been spoken, and, turning to her companion, she said with a smile, "And all that belongs to you, Mr. Lauriston!"

"Yes," he said. "It belongs to me, or—sometimes I think it is the other way, and that I belong to it."

"What do you mean?"

"Why, it seems rather absurd to talk about owning all that, when there is so little I can do with it. In what sense do I really possess the earth that is under our feet? I could cut down some trees if I liked, and leave my mark so, but even that wouldn't last for ever. And when I'm underground there'll be the grass growing, and the river flowing, and Bucksmill Hill up aloft against the sky, just the same."

"That's true," said the girl.

"And meanwhile here I am, tied to the place after a fashion."

"But you like it?"

"Oh, yes, I like it," he said with a laugh. "I'm not complaining, Miss Conway. I was only trying to make out whether I own Redlands, or Redlands owns me."

"You could sell it, I suppose?"

"I have the legal power to do so—it isn't entailed—did you mean that? But I couldn't do it. There are tenants who have held under us for many years; all the old people in the village know us. I'm not a model landlord by any means. In fact, I'm simply King Log. But, such as I am, these good folks understand me, and we get on very well. Suppose I sold the place to a cotton spinner. He might take to improving them—I don't see how I could stipulate that he shouldn't improve them—and they wouldn't like it at all. And I have an idea that I should feel as if I had deserted my post."

"I think you would. I'm afraid there's no help for it, Mr. Lauriston."

"No, I must stick to the old place till I die. Till I die," he repeated with a whimsical smile, and faced round abruptly, with his back to Bucksmill Hill. "Look there, Miss Conway; do you see that glimpse of road across there, through the trees?"

She turned and looked. "Yes; I see it."

"Well, that's the straight road to the village. That's the way my funeral will go, one of these days. Now do you understand what I mean when I say I feel as if I belonged to the estate? *You* don't know where you will be buried." He stood with his bright eyes fixed upon the bit of road, as if he saw the slowly moving blots upon its whiteness. Rachel looked too, and suddenly remembered that the last funeral procession was little more than a year before, when his wife was buried. The thought startled her, and she wondered whether he was thinking of the same thing. It seemed to her—though what did she know about him?—that it was impossible to imagine Mr. Lauriston grieving in a commonplace, customary way. She could fancy a strange intensity of sorrow on his part, or a cool indifference—anything but the honest yet not all-absorbing griefs, which are woven like black threads into ordinary lives. Miss Conway might be foolish in this fancy of hers. She was only two and twenty, a dreamer of dreams, and Mr. Lauriston was the first man she had known who looked like the possible hero of a story, for her imagination could hardly glorify Charley Eastwood to that extent. At any rate she had this fancy; and since she was thinking of a beautiful young wife, won and lost within a year, did it not follow that her companion was hiding a lifelong sorrow?

He had turned and was looking at her. "Don't you like people to talk about dying and being buried, Miss Conway? You look grave, as you looked last night when you took my ghost so seriously."

"Oh, I don't think I mind," she said, as they resumed their walk. "Everybody must die; it would be silly to be afraid to talk of that. But I'm not like you, Mr. Lauriston; I don't like talking about horrors."

"Do I talk about horrors?"

"I think you do, don't you?"

"That depends partly on your definition of horrors, perhaps."

"Well, crimes," she said. "Or—or dreadful sufferings, or"—she stopped short, glanced at him, and, as he did not speak, she made another attempt. "I think you want to know about people who are strange in any way. I think you want to study them and understand how they feel. Oh, I can't tell you exactly what I mean!"

"But that will do; I know what you mean," said Mr. Lauriston. "Well, such things are in the world—misshapen lives, and all manner of queer growths—one must look at them, surely. But I have no morbid taste for them, I hope; I don't think I particularly want to talk about

them. Certainly I don't want to talk about them to you, Miss Conway," he said, with one of his swift smiles.

"But why do you like to think about such things at all?—things that cannot be mended, I mean; it is terrible to think about them. Why do you want to look at them, Mr. Lauriston?"

"I won't retort that it is difficult to say what can or can't be mended," he replied, "because I don't profess to do anything in that line. I simply take things as I find them, one with another. What do you want me to do? Go through the world with my eyes shut, and swear that it is Eden?"

"It might be like Eden, perhaps, if one only looked at what was good and beautiful," said the girl. "Dying doesn't matter so much. But if one thinks of dreadful things, they come back over and over again——"

She was looking at the ground as she walked, and Mr. Lauriston had time for a quick curious glance at her face, before she raised her eyes. He saw that her lip trembled.

"This is only a better version of your desire to be commonplace," he said, and was apparently interested in a distant group of trees. "Of course, as you say, innocence can make an Eden of its own, let the world be what it may."

"Well, then, isn't that the best?"

"If you like," said Mr. Lauriston. "It is very beautiful, no doubt. But give me my choice, and I should like to see this queer world of ours just as it really is, if that were possible—shadows, blood-stains, smouldering fires, and all the rest of it, as well as the beauty. Innocence such as you talk of—pardon me—is something like jaundice; you see the universe your own colour, only of course it is white instead of yellow. It is far better than a preference for horrors; but I should like the truth best, if such a vision could be!"

He had apparently given her time to recover something of the self-possession which she had so unaccountably lost, for she smiled as she answered, "I didn't know you were so prejudiced against innocence, Mr. Lauriston. Well, it is easily got rid of, isn't it?"

He arched his brows. "Do you really think that, Miss Conway? Did your favourite preacher tell you so, and did you believe him? But that is a mistake. The beautiful trustfulness, which sees Eden in this everyday world, clings to some characters. I knew a man once"—Mr. Lauriston looked straight before him, with a half smile, as if he called up the face of his friend—"who thought himself just a little embittered by his knowledge. He fell in love, and made up his mind that happiness might fairly be hoped for in an alliance between a little too much keen-sightedness and the softest and most confiding innocence. What should you say?"

"I don't know, I'm sure. Did he try it?"

"Oh, yes; he tried it."

"Well, what happened?" said Rachel, as if she were compelled to ask the question.

"Why, it turned out rather unexpectedly. He found that he had mistaken the parts, and had been playing the wrong one all the time."

"Well, even then I think your friend had the best of it," Miss Conway began defiantly; but a look at Mr. Lauriston's face disconcerted her. "I believe you invented that man," she said. "You are laughing."

"Not at you, then."

They walked a little further. Rachel, distrustfully silent, gazed at the dull sky, while Mr. Lauriston was still half smiling at his jest. He was the first to speak. "Ghost stories are not included among the horrors, really, I hope? My great-great-grandmother didn't haunt you last night, did she?"

"I'm afraid she did, a little," said Rachel, with a quick glance. "But I don't think the ghost had very much to do with it."

"No, of course not. One can't well be frightened by the spectres of past ages. There is a fashion in terrors as in everything else. A man who has an encounter with the devil doesn't do now; the brimstone-burning red-hot style of thing has gone by. It wanted twilight, like snapdragon."

"Yes," she said, in a low voice, "but how dreadful it is to think of the people who lived and died in the twilight, and believed all that! It is easy for you to laugh at their fancies."

"And for you, too, I hope?"

"Yes, here and now. But suppose one were to be alone, and to believe something hideous and dreadful! If I did, it would be true for me then, you know."

Mr. Lauriston was touched by the little cloud of sadness on Miss Conway's pure face, the faint, passing shadow cast by darker ages. "No doubt," he said. "But I don't see how that is to be, unless one went mad."

"Well?" said the girl breathlessly, and looked straight into his eyes.

He felt a cold shock as he met that look with its sudden revelation of fear. There was a moment of startled silence, and she turned her face away. "So that is the bugbear," he said after a pause. "And why, Miss Conway?"

"I don't know," she said, trying to make her tone indifferent. "There isn't any real reason. I suppose everybody has fancies."

"But tell me why," he said, and there was something different in his voice. "Stay, you will be tired; why shouldn't you rest a little while? Sit down here."

They were close to some felled trees, and Rachel obeyed without a word. He chose his place somewhat lower, and rested his elbow on the tree she sat on. Again she heard the birds singing through the grey stillness. The whole afternoon seemed like a dream, and Mr. Lauriston—

who was studiously looking down, and lightly touching a daisy with his foot—was more dream-like than anything else. He had drawn off his glove, and she gazed absently at the white hand with the black signet ring on it, which lay on the rough bark.

"Now tell me about this fancy of yours," he said. It was neither an entreaty which left the decision to her, nor a command which might arouse defiance, but something between the two. And why should she not tell him? It was nothing—how often she had told herself it was nothing, in the loneliest hours of the night! He might laugh—but if he did, would not that laugh help her? Could she not despise her terror, remembering his scorn? Or if—if in the very folly of her fears he saw their meaning plainly written, what then? Had she not seen it many a time before? Why should she not tell him? She could not have told Effie, or Mrs. Eastwood, or Charley, but Mr. Lauriston would understand. This was but the third time she had seen him; a week earlier he had been only the merest name to her, and yet she was sure he would understand. Besides, he was going away. She would not have told him if he had stayed on at Redlands; but he was going, and she herself would leave on Monday, and the Eastwoods were only to remain a few days longer. Perhaps she would never see Mr. Lauriston again.

"There isn't anything to tell, really," she said in a tremulous voice. "You will say that I am silly; that will be the kindest thing that you can say. It was only something that frightened me when I was a little child."

"And frightens you still because it frightened you then," he said, looking up at her very kindly. "We leave most of our childish terrors behind us as we grow up, but now and then we find one which grows up with us. Well, Miss Conway?"

She clasped and unclasped her restless hands as she sat. "I wasn't more than ten years old," she said suddenly. "It was before mamma died, and before my father died, too; but he was ill, and away from home, and mamma and I were alone. It was one day in the spring—something like this—and she told me she was going for a drive to see a lady who was ill, and she would take me with her. I don't know where the place was. It was a long way, and I remember crossing a little bridge, and then turning the corner and seeing the house—a grey house with some fir-trees growing on a little hill by it, and a steep drive up to the door. I feel as if I could see it now," said Miss Conway. "There were some straggling laurels, and I remember two vases with the last year's dead geraniums in them. We went into a room where there were three ladies. One was quite old, and I think she was nearly blind, for I know they had to explain to her that I was there. She told them to give me some cake, and that would help to pass the time; and then my mother said we could not stay long, and might she see Miss Agatha?"

"I didn't understand that I was meant to stay with the blind lady, and eat my cake. I always went everywhere with mamma, so I

followed her when she went out with the others, and nobody took any notice. It was an old-fashioned dark passage, and I was small, so as soon as they opened a door I squeezed in amongst them, and stood just inside the room.

"There was a window at the further end, a great desolate-looking grey window, and a lady was standing by it. I fancy she must have been between fifty and sixty. She was very tall, I know. When she heard the door open, she came towards us, waving her hand to us to stay where we were, while she swept a great courtesy in the middle of the room, and then came a step or two further and courtesied again, and all the time she kept her eyes fixed on me. I don't know what the others said or did, I only heard the rustling of her grey silk dress. I couldn't move, she frightened me so with her great staring eyes. It wasn't that she was ugly—I think she must have been handsome once—but it was a dreadful face; one was forced to watch it, one didn't know what she would do next, it was like a nightmare. She took no notice of mamma; she just nodded and said, 'I'm welcoming my new visitor; she shall come and stay with me—she shall come and stay with me.' Of course it was only a moment, really; and then a woman at a work-table, who stood up when we went in, stepped forward, and said, 'It's little miss she means, ma'am'; and my mother looked round and saw me standing there. She ran and caught me, and took me into the passage, and held me in her arms, and said I mustn't be frightened, that the lady didn't mean any harm, but she never intended me to go in to see her. I heard Miss Agatha calling after me as we went back to the other room. I waited there with the blind lady till mamma was ready to go. She was crying when she came, and she cried in the carriage as we drove away. And I remember looking back just before we crossed the little bridge, and seeing the old house on the hill, and the fir-trees all black and twisted against the clouds, and feeling as if there must be something wicked about the place."

"You poor little frightened child!" said Mr. Lauriston softly. "And what more did you learn about Miss Agatha?"

"Only that my mother used to stay with her when she was a girl. Miss Agatha and her sisters were no relations of hers, but they lived in the same place, and were rich people. I know I thought that those were the sisters I had seen; but she said, 'No, only Miss Agatha lived with them; their brother was a doctor.' She would not tell me much, and she did not know how frightened I was, nor how I used to dream at night."

Miss Conway stopped all at once. "It *does* sound childish," she said. "Are you laughing at me, Mr. Lauriston? I don't think I knew how silly it would seem. But yet, indeed, there hasn't been one day since that day that I haven't thought of that madwoman. And I don't care if you *are* laughing," she said desperately, while the hot colour flushed her face; "I am going to finish since I've begun."

"I'm not laughing," Mr. Lauriston replied.

"And there isn't much more to say, luckily. Only it was just then that my father died. He was away and mamma went to him. She had never been very strong—she was tiny and slight, with dark eyes—not like me, I'm like papa—and she caught a cold, and that was the beginning of the end. She was dead too before I was twelve. I will tell you what is dreadful, Mr. Lauriston, even if you *do* laugh. If you are alone in a big school, and would give all the world to dream of your mother at night, and yet you would keep awake if you could, because you know you will dream of something else. It is perfectly silly, I know, but it is dreadful all the same."

"Poor child, how you must have suffered! But now—surely not now?"

"Not now," Miss Conway repeated. "But, Mr. Lauriston, why is it that even now it haunts me, only in a different way? I feel as if that madwoman had somehow laid hands on my life, and, though I fight for it, it is all spoiled and ruined in the struggle. Why am I so frightened if people only mention the word 'madness?' If anybody points out a building, and says it is a lunatic asylum, the blood runs cold in my veins. Suppose one went mad and were shut up in one of those awful places"—Miss Conway made a gallant attempt to smile—"shut up with people who came courtesying to one, and had staring eyes! I know all this is folly, but that is just what frightens me most of all. Why should such a little thing take possession of me like this? Would it if I were like other people?" She turned her appealing eyes to Mr. Lauriston. "You laughed at me last night when I said I wanted to be commonplace, but if I could only be sure that I should live and die like the millions of happy commonplace folks—if I could be quite sure——"

"You would have a security that not one man, woman, or child of all those millions possesses," he replied. "You would be the one standing apart from all our common fears and perils. All that you have told me is natural enough—a most unlucky chance, but nothing more. This mad friend of your mother's saw you and forgot you within the day; you were no more to her than she really was to you; but, being a child with a powerful imagination, you were haunted by her meaningless looks and words. And then your mother's death left you alone with your terror."

"But now," said Rachel, "now that I know all this?"

"Well," Mr. Lauriston replied, "what is unnatural now? Your thoughts have been fixed on this one dark subject, till madness has assumed too prominent a position in your vision of the world. People who make it their study generally do so with some hope of alleviating its misery. That gives a healthful interest; but you know nothing of it, you have not studied it, you have only brooded over your childish fancy."

"Are you blaming me?" she asked doubtfully.

"Blaming you, no! You could not help it. I am merely trying to put the matter in the right light, to show you that there is nothing awful and exceptional about it. I want you to see that the cause of your trouble is simple enough." He stopped abruptly. "Good heavens! what can I say? I believe that I am talking the most excellent sense, and yet how atrociously cold it all sounds!"

"You are very kind," she said, looking down. "I don't think you are cold."

"Thank you. No, I hope I am not. And, really, I am saying the best I have to say. If it is any good to tell you that I am very sorry, and that I would help you if I could, I can give you that assurance. But I have no stock of universally consoling maxims to offer you, Miss Conway. I don't deal in them. It matters the less, as I have no doubt that some one has already suggested the usual style of comfort."

"But I have never told any one else," she said.

"Never told any one else—do you mean that literally? Never when you were a child? Never since then?"

"Never," she repeated. "I was afraid. I thought people wouldn't understand. I never said anything from that day to this."

"You told no one through all these years?" said Mr. Lauriston, half to himself. "And now you have told me!"

Simple as the words were, they gave a new significance to Rachel's confession. She felt a weight of meaning in them, and drew back, colouring afresh as she met his eyes. This secret of hers might be the merest folly, a trifle, an absurdity; but she had guarded it from her childhood, she had spoken no syllable of it to those who knew her best, and she had told it unreservedly to this chance acquaintance of three days. The passing touch of his surprise awoke her own. Why had she done it? She was not even sure that she liked Mr. Lauriston—at that moment she was half inclined to believe that she hated him. And what would he think of her?

It was true that he was surprised, but he was not, as Rachel imagined, reckoning the hours of their acquaintance. That she should have spoken after three days was no more in his eyes than if she had spoken after three weeks, or three months, but that she had told her secret suffering to him alone out of all the world was an all-important fact. What did she think of him that she had done it?

"I don't know why I told you," she said, as she drew back, with a quick glance of distrust and defiance, a sign of the inevitable reaction after the strong impulse of confidence. "It was too bad to bore you with that silly story."

"I hope you told me because you felt you might trust me. You did not bore me."

"Trust you with my nightmare fancies?" said the girl, trying to laugh. "Well, perhaps. At any rate I think I knew you would

understand. Some people wouldn't, you know, even if they were my best friends."

"The Eastwoods, for instance?" Mr. Lauriston suggested. "I don't know much about the girls. Charley is a good fellow; but, possibly, if I had a fanciful secret——"

"Tell *him*! No, I couldn't," said Rachel. "He always seems so bright, and all his life so frank and open. Why, I hardly think of such things when he is by."

"So," said Mr. Lauriston to himself, "that is the charm;" and aloud he answered, "And, though you have told me, it seems to me that I have said nothing, and done nothing. What *can* I do, Miss Conway?"

"You can't do anything," she said, "except tell me the truth. Do you think me—mad to be frightened as I am?"

"No, I don't. Did I not tell you that before?"

She leaned towards him, pleading with earnest eyes, and half reaching out a timid hand. "Do tell me the truth, Mr. Lauriston."

"I don't think anything of the kind, upon my honour I don't," he repeated. "Anybody might be frightened. I'm speaking the simple truth—you believe me?"

"Yes," she said. "Thank you. I am very glad." There was a pause during which she looked far away into the green dimness of the wooded landscape. Mr. Lauriston felt as if that spot would be haunted for ever by the pale, beautiful shadow of a girl, questioning the distance with an anxious gaze. The little interval of silence seemed curiously long to him, and it was a relief when a shiver in the branches overhead broke the spell, and she looked at the sullen sky and stood up.

"Miss Conway," he said as he rose, "you must try not to think of all this."

She smiled. "Do you know, I was wishing, as I sat there, that I had never said a word about it. You can't think how vividly it has all come back to me. It might be yesterday—or to-day."

"But that will pass off," he urged in his gentle voice. "And then do you not think that you will like to remember that you have a friend who tells you that all this fear is nothing—that there is no foundation for it? For we shall be friends, shall we not?"

"If you like," she said absently, but after a moment she recollected herself. "I beg your pardon, Mr. Lauriston, I didn't mean to be ungrateful; you have been very good to me. Yes, let us be friends, please. It is quite true, I *shall* like to think that there is some one who knows about my stupid fancies; it will help me. It was silly of me to say I was sorry I had talked about it; if it does make me realise it more just to-day, what does it matter?" She stood, drawing a long blade of grass through her fingers. "It isn't as if we were likely to meet often," she added softly.

Even if she had been looking at Mr. Lauriston she might hardly have

understood the flash of expression which crossed his face. As it was, she was utterly unconscious of it.

"No, I suppose we shan't meet often," he replied. "And perhaps it is just as well, if you are always going to see me in your mind's eye side by side with the madwoman."

"Oh, no, no! I only meant that of course I should remember that you knew. I must remember that."

"Naturally," he said with a smile. "Of course you must. So all I can do for you is to stand out of the sunshine? It doesn't sound like asking very much of me, and yet I'm tempted to ask for something in return."

"What is that?"

"Well, in common fairness that something mustn't be very much either, must it? Don't look round as if you were thinking of turning back."

"But I must go back now, Mr. Lauriston."

"No; come a little further through a bit of the garden, and you shall go out another way, nearer the village. There is my request," he said, still smiling.

"Is it far?"

"No, not far. Oh, no, you needn't look at the sky. It will not rain."

"I feel as if there might be thunder, don't you? But I shall like very much to come," she added politely.

Why did Mr. Lauriston wish to prolong their walk? Did he want his garden, as well as the park, haunted by that pale memory of Rachel Conway? Or was it only a whim? He did his best to amuse her, with anxious kindness in every word and look, and she did her best to be amused, but it was an effort. She felt as if she were in dreamland still, as if a melancholy change had passed over everything. It almost seemed as if, when she uttered her secret, the trees and flowers had heard it, and would whisper it mournfully one to another through all the world. The grey sadness of the afternoon was *her* sadness, the singing of the birds was strange and new, the very daisies in the grass looked up with eyes of deep significance. She was half frightened at her wandering fancies while she tried to talk to Mr. Lauriston. They pursued her when she passed into the old-fashioned garden, which had been the glory of an earlier Redlands Hall. Mr. Lauriston showed her where the old house once stood. She answered almost mechanically, and she looked round with a show of interest; but she walked in dreamland all the while, and felt oppressed and dull among the high clipped hedges and formal paths. Her companion's soft voice was saying in her ear, "I've no doubt that my great-grandfather would have done away with it all, but happily he was so busy laying out the grounds about his new house, that he never found time to modernise this."

"That was very lucky," she replied.

"Yes; for it is a quaint old place, isn't it? And my uncle cared so much for it, that nothing would have induced him to make the slightest change. Judging from a sketch we have, the old house was picturesquely suited to the garden, and I don't think he ever forgave its destruction."

"Well, it was a pity. Don't you think so?"

He shrugged his shoulders. "Yes, it was a great pity. I'm only thankful that the present Hall is a tolerably comfortable place in which to deplore my ancestor's want of taste. It was a very great pity, of course, and I am exceedingly sorry. It is sad to think of such utter want of reverence for the memories that had gathered round the old home." After a moment's pause he added gravely, "I always feel that there is such scope for beautiful sentiment when a thing cannot possibly be altered."

Rachel answered only with a languid smile, glancing from Mr. Lauriston's face to the site of the old house, a bit of smooth sward, green and fresh as countless graves are green. She drew a long breath as they turned their backs on it, and went forward under the trees. It seemed to her that the low arch of sky dropped its curtain of cloud so heavily about the narrow landscape that all the air was dead. And, as she walked, she pictured to herself how the madwoman might suddenly turn the corner of one of those long avenues, and come towards her, sweeping stately courtesies, while Mr. Lauriston would vanish with a polite bow, and leave her alone with her terror. Of course she knew perfectly well that it was utter nonsense; but the scenery was so curiously suited to the visionary drama, that she felt as if she could actually see it, and it troubled her as an ill dream might have done.

"You are tired," said Mr. Lauriston, in a tone of self-reproach.

Any other voice would have startled her out of her fancies, but Mr. Lauriston's words came softly, with no discord, as if he belonged to her dream world. "No, I'm not tired; not really tired," she replied. And when he persisted, she answered, with a determination which he recognised as unchangeable, "No; she would walk home, he should not send her." As she spoke they turned into a wide path, and he crossed it quickly and went on. For a moment it occurred to her to wonder whether it could be the yew walk of which he had talked. The doubt lasted only for a moment, the place did not answer to his description, but her backward glance, as she followed him, gave her a glimpse of a nursemaid and child at the further end of the avenue.

Mr. Lauriston slackened his pace and was silent, and Rachel's heart smote her. He had been kind to her; had she spoken coldly? Even if she had not, she was conscious of a longing to escape from her companion and the dreary fancies which his talk had called up, and she felt the unspoken desire an ingratitude, for which she wanted to make amends. Instinct told her that to ask a favour, however trifling, would be the best way to please Mr. Lauriston. She looked round. "May I have

one or two of those lilies of the valley?" she said. "I like them so much."

He stooped to gather them, and she watched his fingers parting the broad leaves. "Shall you ever come to Redlands again, Miss Conway?" he asked, with a quick, upward glance.

"Ah, that is more than I can say. But I don't think it is very likely."

"No, I suppose not. And even if you did, you would not want to come here."

"Why not?" she said, looking down, as she took the flowers from his hand. "How sweet these lilies are!"

"You would not," he repeated. "I meant you to enjoy your walk this afternoon; or, perhaps," with a smile, "I meant to enjoy it."

"Well," said the girl, "I did enjoy it—at first. And if, afterwards—it was no fault of yours!"

"That may be," Mr. Lauriston replied. "I didn't say I was to blame. But you yourself allow that it did not end as it began. I am not surprised, for, judging from my own experience, Fate is generally ironical. As a rule I get what I want, and then I discover either that I didn't want it, or that it has slipped through my fingers. Have you found that?"

"I don't know," she said. She understood that he was thinking of his beautiful wife so quickly lost, of his son and heir a poor little cripple, of Redlands, perhaps, so full of memories of that year of happiness, and now almost a burden to him. She was touched by his half confidence, and looked timidly at him.

"And so I am sorry," he went on, "sorry that you are less happy than I fancied——"

"Oh, but I am very happy sometimes," she said. "I'm not always thinking about that."

"No, indeed, I should hope not. And I'm sorry, too, that you seem to regret having trusted me. You need not, Miss Conway. I suppose you haven't any brothers or sisters?" he said abruptly.

"I have nobody," Rachel answered, "not even a cousin. I live with a Miss Whitney, who was a friend of my mother's."

"Then do you think you could look upon me as a kind of elder brother?" said Mr. Lauriston, half smiling in his deliberate speech; "so that you might take it as a matter of course that I was very much at your service, if ever I could help you in any way? No, I see that won't do; you don't like the idea. Is it that you fancy that brothers are too apt to dictate to their sisters?"

Rachel blushed, perceiving that she had betrayed herself. It was true that the idea of Mr. Lauriston as a brother had struck her as absurdly impossible. She might not know what a girl's feelings towards a brother would be, but she was quite certain that they could not be the least like the curiosity, the fanciful wonder, the alternate attraction and

repulsion, trust and distrust, which she felt as she looked at Mr. Lauriston. And his soft-voiced politeness was not a brother's manner as she had imagined it. "I don't think I can fancy what it would be like to have a brother," she said doubtfully.

"Well, then, it shall be friendship, as you said a minute ago. Perhaps that will be best." They had left the garden, and were walking along the drive which crossed the park. As they passed a clump of trees the great gates, with the Lauriston crest upon them, came in sight, and Miss Conway paused. "Don't come all the way with me, please," she said. "I think I would rather go back alone."

He stopped at once. "You granted my request," he said, "so I must not complain. You won't have far to go when once you are in the road, Miss Conway. I hope you won't be tired."

"Mr. Lauriston," said Rachel, "you have been very kind to me, and it seems to me that I've been very ungrateful all the time."

"Not at all," he politely assured her; but there was an expression in his bright eyes which she did not quite understand.

"I'm very sorry," she said. "I'm afraid I was rather rude once. I think I said more than I meant to say. I don't quite know how to make you understand. I meant"—she hesitated, looking down at the lilies in her hand—"that is, I didn't mean——"

"I fancy I know what you meant," he said. "Surely I've made it clear that I haven't taken anything amiss."

"But it seems to me that I have done something amiss."

"No, indeed you have not. And for proof of it," he said, with a peculiar little laugh, "for proof that you have not, we are sworn friends, you know." Rachel glanced at him, fancying she detected something of mockery in his laugh; but the next moment he went on, and his voice took a fuller and deeper tone, "Do not apologise, Miss Conway, and never trouble yourself about anything you have said or done to me."

She held out her hand. "Goodbye," she said softly, "and thank you."

"Ah, don't thank me! It sounds so cruelly ironical, when I would have done something, and could do nothing. Goodbye."

But, as she turned away, he called after her, "Miss Conway," and rejoined her. "I think I'm old enough to claim the privilege of giving advice," he said. "Of course you have the privilege of taking no heed of it—that belongs to us all from our cradles. May I speak?"

"Yes," Rachel answered, looking at him in some surprise.

"You want to be commonplace," said Mr. Lauriston, "but you are not commonplace, and you can't be. Don't ruin your life in the attempt. You are so young, you have many years before you, take care what you are about. Half a century or so of weariness would be a terrible penalty to pay for a blunder. Pardon me for saying this, and once more goodbye."

His earnestness startled her. "Goodbye," she echoed, and went hurriedly towards the gate. "Half a century!" The words had caught

her attention and held it. They pursued her as she walked, and, brief as they were, they overwhelmed her with their volume of meaning. He could not know—could he know?—what need there was of his warning, how, in the terror of her loneliness, she longed to mix her life with lives narrower than her own, and to rest in their homely shelter. It would not be hard to speak a word on one of those spring days, just a word which would give an undefined future into Charley's kindly keeping. But half a century with Charley Eastwood! She went out into the road, burdened with the weight of those accumulated years. She questioned within herself whether it was fair to expect any one to live as long as that. Half a century! The mere thought of it was like putting life under a microscope; every little failing, every harmless habit, was exaggerated into something enormous, grotesque, oppressive. Why should not Charley go to sleep on Sunday afternoons if he liked? She knew he always did, and on the previous Sunday she had exchanged amused and stealthy glances with Effie, when, after letting his book slip downward to the floor, he laid his head on the end of the sofa, and slumbered peacefully with his mouth open. Miss Conway, a little listless herself, had felt no ill will towards the sleeping youth. But now she could not escape from a whimsical calculation of two thousand six hundred heavy Sundays, an unbroken vista of drowsy afternoons, at the end of which she saw Charley waking up, and stretching himself in his far-off old age, before he went down into his grave. And every nap, in that lifelong series, would mark a completed week of little thoughts and cares. It was terrible, and she felt her heart grow sick within her, even while she was fully conscious of the ridiculous aspect which Mr. Lauriston's half-century had assumed in her thoughts. The laughter which trembled on her lip did not mend the matter, for absurdities are often of all things most intolerable. How was she to live through all those Sunday afternoons, and what would she be at the end of them?

Coming to a curve in the road, she turned for a last look at Redlands Hall. Through the fanciful spirals and bars of the iron gates, she could see the long drive, the smooth green turf, the trees, in their heavy leafiness of early summer, massed round the great brick house, and the sullen sky above them all. As she looked, she had a momentary glimpse of Mr. Lauriston, crossing an open space. He passed behind a widely sweeping cedar, and, though she watched, wondering whether the slim far-off black figure would appear again, she watched in vain, for he was gone. "Sworn friends," he had said, and already it seemed to her that her friend was out of reach. It was true that only a few minutes earlier she had wished to escape from him; but nevertheless, as she lingered on the road, looking backward at that sunless picture, she felt lonely and deserted.

It was, however, too late to stand gazing, even if it had not been so utterly useless. Miss Conway looked at her watch, and set her face homeward, making a resolute effort to banish all thoughts of that after-

noon, and to fix her mind on the speedy return of Charley and Effie from their drive, and the prospect of a meat tea. She planned a brief and bald account of her walk with Mr. Lauriston, which she hoped would not offend anybody's sense of propriety, though she felt a little dubious about Mrs. Eastwood's view of the matter. "I suppose I shall have to tell her first," she thought. "Well, it can't be helped, and it's lucky it isn't Miss Whitney." So she walked bravely on, with curiously mingled feelings of guilt and innocence. She was quite certain that Mrs. Eastwood would strongly disapprove of such confidential talk between a young lady and a gentleman, especially when the confidences were all on the young lady's side; and, indeed, Rachel felt the colour rising to her cheeks again, as she remembered her own frankness. But below this guilty trouble lay the consciousness of utter guiltlessness.

There was a quick sound of pursuing wheels, a cry of "Rachel! Rachel!" in Effie's clear little voice, and Charley was pulling up, and calling to her to jump in. "Room—yes, lots!" was his answer to an attempted objection, "and I'm not going on without you—so there! Jump in at once. That's it—are you all right? If you haven't room enough it's Effie's fault; take it out of her. And what have you been doing with yourself, eh?" So before Rachel well knew what had happened, she was perched up between Charley and Effie, and they were rattling along the lane.

She answered their questions lightly and shortly, and found it easier to do than she had expected. "Then Lauriston has made you walk too far," said Charley. "He ought to have known better than to march you about like that."

"I'm not tired, really."

"Oh, no," said the young fellow, "not at all. Does he think he's the only man in the world with a park and gardens, that he's so awfully anxious to show them off? And he tired you last night, too. I wish I'd been there this afternoon; don't you think I'd have taken better care of you than that?"

Rachel laughed. Her fantastic terrors were vanishing at the cheery sound of Charley's voice, and she could almost believe that the skies were brightening round her as they drove. A touch of the whip quickened the leisurely old horse, and the evening air came freshly to her face. They jolted over a stone, Rachel swayed a little, and her shoulder came into momentary contact with Charley, while, on the other side, Effie's small, caressing hand stole under her arm. She felt safe in a little world of simple, everyday facts, and honest kindness. "And now tell me what you have been doing," she said.

"Rowing on the river," Effie promptly replied. "I've been rowing; Reggie Maxwell has been teaching me. Such fun; I wish you'd been with us."

"Here we are!" said Charley. "The old horse wanted to take us up that last turning to his stable, did you see?"

Fanny came running out of the leafy porch to meet them. "Oh, you've got Rachel!—we began to wonder—why, Effie, you've torn your dress, did you know? Have you had a pleasant day?"

Charley helped Rachel down, and answered Fanny's question in her ear as he did so. "I'd rather have been here," he said softly.

"Oh, a glorious day!" Effie exclaimed. "Only we kept thinking it was going to pour. I say, Fanny, Susie Maxwell has grown quite pretty, and Reggie is such a nice fellow, not a bit shy."

"By Jove, no, I should think he wasn't," said Charley.

"Well, he used to be very shy," Effie replied. "Did you say I'd torn my dress, Fanny? Where is it? Is it very bad?"

"Here—no, not so very bad. You can put a little bit in—you had some bits left, hadn't you? Oh, Effie, who do you think came to call this afternoon?"

"Who?" Effie asked, passing the hem of her dress between her fingers. "I daresay I caught it on one of those bushes by the river when I was getting into the boat. Who called, Fanny?"

"Mr. Brand. Rachel, Mr. Brand came just as mother came back. He stayed ever so long."

"Mr. Brand!" Effie repeated, with a faint accent of regret in her voice. But in a moment she recovered herself. "And Fanny, I was going to tell you, Reggie Maxwell's hair isn't bad now at all. Only a *nice* red, you know, like what they put in pictures—isn't it, Charley?"

"Yes, just like what you'd put into a picture of a tomato," Charley replied. "Nice cheerful colour for a dull day."

"I daresay you think that's clever. I call it silly," said Effie. "Oh, here's mother! Mother, Mrs. Maxwell sent you her love, and there's some asparagus for you. Charley, where's that asparagus? I know it's somewhere; I saw Reggie put it in just before we started. Oh, you dear darling Fido, aren't you glad to see me again—aren't you, then? And was it a dear little doggie, and would it have liked to come to Brookfield, too, and didn't Rachel take it out for a nice little run—didn't she, then? Oh, a naughty Rachel, wasn't she, going for her walks with her Mr. Lauristons, and never thinking about a poor Fido, a poor old bow-wow!"

"He was asleep," said Miss Conway. She rejoiced to find that in the eager haste of question and reply, her own adventures seemed likely to be lightly passed over. Mrs. Eastwood, it is true, wondered several times how Miss Lauriston happened to fall downstairs, which Miss Lauriston it was who had fallen downstairs, and how many stairs she fell down; but being greatly interested in telling Rachel about an aunt of hers, who slipped from the top to the bottom of a flight of stone steps, and only took a bit of skin about the size of a three-penny piece off her elbow, it did not occur to her to ask many questions about the walk. Later in the evening, when tea was over, and Rachel had begun a game of bezique with Charley, Effie, who was looking over her friend's hand

and scoring for her, was suddenly struck with an idea. "What on earth did you talk about all this afternoon, you and Mr. Lauriston?" she asked.

"Oh, I don't know—all sorts of things. Aces, Effie. You think he isn't easy to talk to, but he has plenty to say, really."

"Oh, Lauriston can talk as fast as you please," said Eastwood. "Not much in my style, though; I suppose I'm not clever enough to appreciate him." He smiled good-humouredly, as if cleverness were an amiable weakness which he had happily escaped. "And if I'm not much mistaken he bored you last night, didn't he? You were curious about the Squire before you saw him—weren't you?—and I rather thought you two would get on; but I fancy you've had about enough of him if the truth were known, eh?" And Charley nodded, pleased at his own penetration.

"*Did* he bore you?" said Effie, sympathetically, as she marked sixty for queens. "The park is lovely; but I'm sure if I had to walk about there, *tête-à-tête* with Mr. Lauriston, I should soon have had enough of him, and wanted somebody else. That's a common marriage, isn't it?"

"Reggie Maxwell, for instance?" said Charley, and the discussion ended in a scuffle, which rather interfered with the bezique.

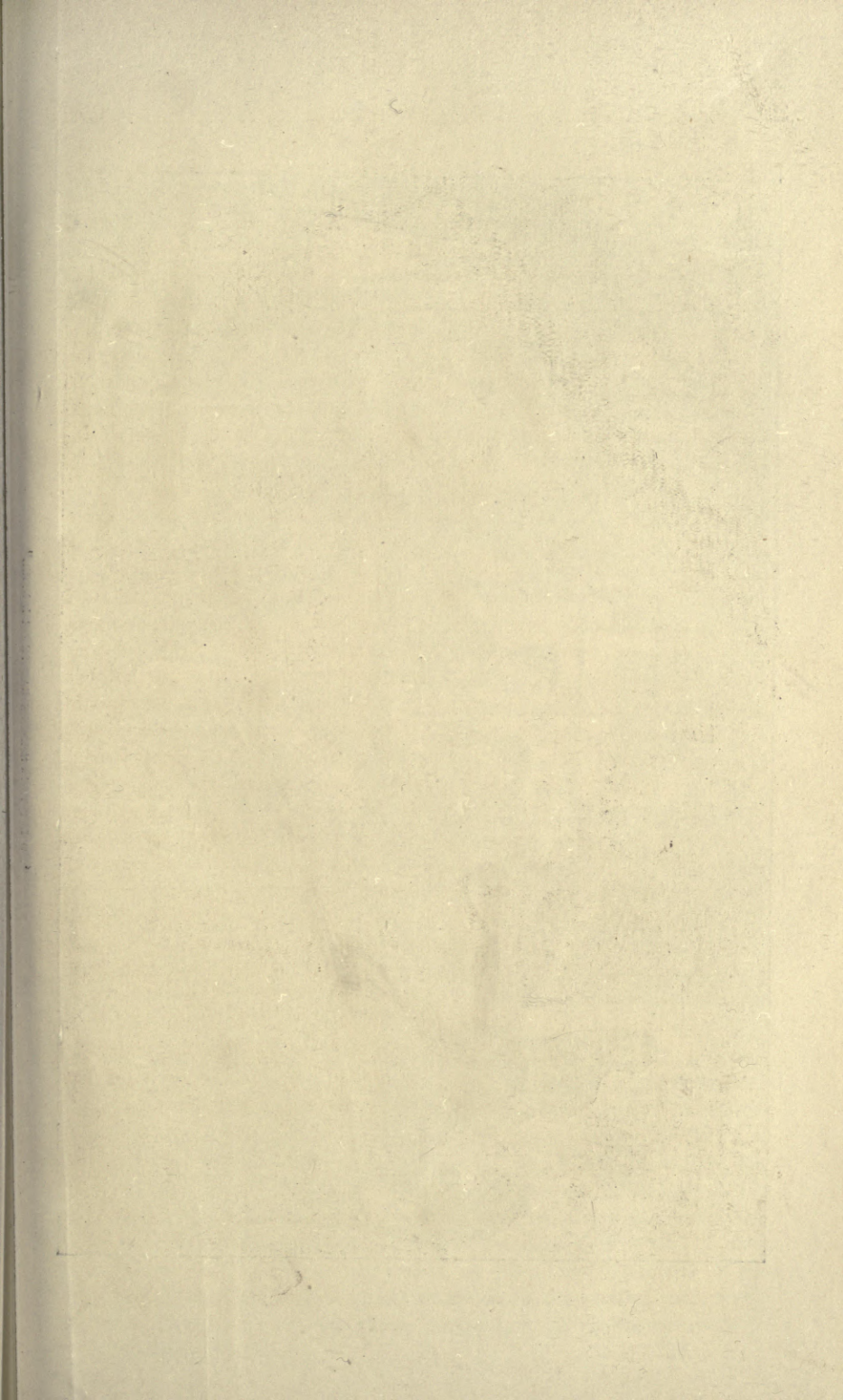
When Rachel went up to her room that night, there was a faint sweetness in the air, which puzzled her for a moment, till she remembered Mr. Lauriston's gift of lilies. She had put them in a glass of water on her table, and, as she paused before them, she recalled the spot where they grew, his quick hands seeking among the leaves, and the dark brightness of his eyes, as he rose and gave them to her. It was commonplace enough; and yet she fancied that the flowers were like those which blossom here and there in old legends, gathered hastily in some borderland of strange visions, and brought back to fade in the light of common day, and she turned away, feeling as if their perfume were the subtle essence of her melancholy. Outside, the rain was falling in heavy drops. She opened the window, and instantly the dreary pattering upon the roof became a rushing wave of sound, and a breath of pleasant coolness. One might have fancied whispers of unknown meaning abroad in the night, mixed with a multitude of softly falling footsteps. Rachel gazed out into the darkness. Close at hand she could see the glimmer of her candle on the wet sill, and the shining leaves of ivy and wistaria. She could partly make out the dark mass of the great elm-tree which overshadowed the house, and further off she knew were lights in the village windows. Beyond those, gaze as she would, she saw nothing, but she leaned and looked till she seemed to understand the message of the rain. It told her of the drops that were falling on the whispering leaves in Redlands Park, soaking the heather on the dusky moor, feeding the scarcely formed fruit in Mrs. Pattenden's quaint orchard, and roughening the river's glassy surface into countless

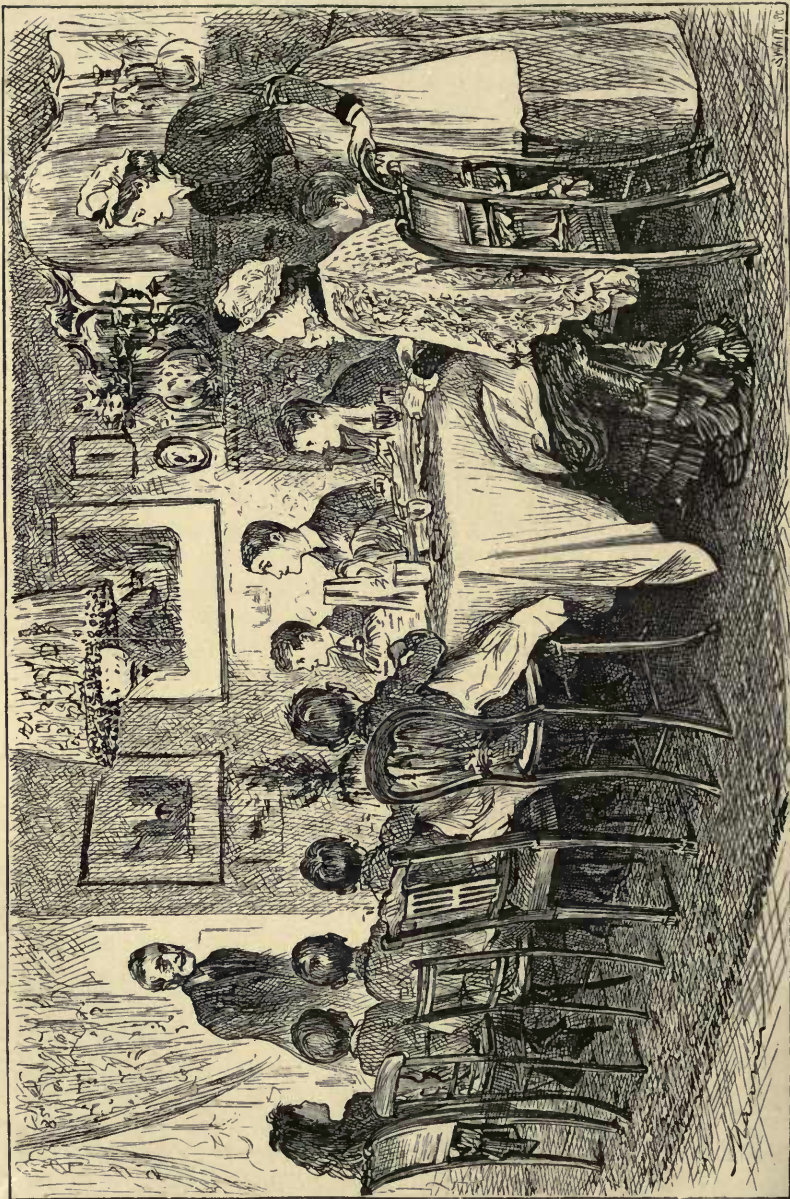
little eddies. All these things became present to her as she looked. And beyond them—what? She gazed into the darkness in an ever-widening dream. There were roads leading outward into a great world—fields, sown for the food of busy millions, drinking the fallen rain— islands and vast continents—mountains with lonely summits—forests, and seas, with strange life in their hiding-places—cities with flaring lights, all lying behind the thin black curtain of the night. The darkness was full of that great life. Rachel saw her own existence as the merest atom, built into a mighty fabric, which could crush, but could not shelter.

What had Mr. Lauriston said? That if she could be secure she would stand apart from all mankind. There was no one of all those myriads, then, who was safe—no refuge in all the weary miles of earth and sea. She felt as if her fear had become the fear of all the world. And she had thought that he might help her, or Charley Eastwood!

It was long before she slept that night. She tossed restlessly from side to side, she recalled the events of the past day, she burned with uneasy shame at the thought of her silly confidences, she was angry with Mr. Lauriston for her own foolishness, she was angry with Charley for being exactly what he had been ever since she first knew him and liked him. She was tired out, and yet she could not sleep, and as the slow hours wore away she was frightened. The grey lady came back to her more vividly than she had done since those nights of childish agony. The stiff silk dress swept over the floor, the great eyes sought her own, the shadows of those other figures stood, as they stood on that terrible day, with their backs to her, unheeding. The darkness seemed to stifle her; and in the darkness lurked thoughts from which she turned in dismay, fearing lest a glance should stamp them for ever on her soul—thoughts of barred windows, and alien faces, and passionate frenzies of delusion, breaking like beaten waves against the immovable might of common sense. Her inconstant humour veered round again. Oh, for Charley, Charley Eastwood with his simple pleasure in living, and his healthy scorn of sick and baseless fancies! Oh, for Charley's pleasant smile, and one breath of the happy breezes blowing over Bucksmill Hill!

Sleep came at last; but not till the tired eyes had seen the light stealing drearily over the village roofs, while the wistaria which by day was all blossom and perfume and colour, and busy humming of the bees, hung in cold grey clusters against a desolate morning sky.





"DO LET THE CHILDREN EAT THEIR DINNER."

THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

APRIL, 1882.

No New Thing.

CHAPTER I.

FRIENDSHIP.



It is now close upon three thousand years since an old king in Jerusalem sat down in some weariness and bitterness of spirit to record his conviction that nothing new was discoverable by human wisdom: "The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done; and there is no new thing under the sun." A later and less famous philosopher has added to this that there is nothing true, together with the comfortable conclusion that "it don't signify." To such extreme lengths not many of us will be prepared to go; but it will be agreed on all hands that our common mortal nature remains much the same to-day as it was in King

Solomon's time. Now, as then, gardens and orchards, men-singers and women-singers, gold and silver, and all the delights of the sons of men can bestow nothing but satiety; now, as then, the experience of all the past generations is of very little service to the passing one; now, as then, the wise man's eyes are in his head, while the fool walketh in

darkness, and one event happeneth to them all; very much the same vices and virtues flourish, and meet with very much the same degree of recognition. And so, when a small novelist of the nineteenth century takes up his pen to describe, within the limits of his small capacity, that infinitesimal section of humanity which has come under his own observation, no one, surely—except a very unreasonable person—will expect his work to be novel in anything save the name.

The following story, then, will professedly contain nothing new. The personages who are to figure in it will be, without exception, unremarkable personages. There will be good and bad folks among them; but none of these will be very good or very bad, and the events of their several and joint lives will not be half so startling as many that may be read of in the newspapers every day.

It is to be hoped, however, that readers will not allow themselves to be discouraged by the candour of this preliminary confession, but will plod cheerfully on; and who knows but that, before they reach the last words of the last chapter, they may light upon something that will be at any rate new to them?—seeing that they will not be all of them Solomons. For, although there be nothing new in the planet which we inhabit, it by no means follows that phenomena calculated to fill us with the most profound astonishment are not daily occurring upon its surface. Are we not invariably astonished by some proof that our fellow-creatures are made of the same clay as ourselves? Does not ingratitude, for instance, shock to the full as much as it angers us, especially when we suffer personally in consequence of it? When we are brought face to face with selfishness, baseness, infidelity, are we not usually as much surprised at the sorry spectacle as if such failings had never been heard of before, and as if we ourselves were wholly exempt from them? Does any man understand how his neighbour can be so utterly stupid as to fall a victim to self-deception?

All these qualities, and their opposites, will appear incidentally in the course of the ensuing pages; so that the fault will lie with the writer, not with the subject, if no interest is felt in the persons treated of; the first of whom shall, without further waste of words, be introduced upon the scene as he hurries along the platform of the Charing Cross station on a bright summer's morning.

“Guard,” says he, “I want a smoking-carriage.”

“Very good, sir.”

“And—here you are, guard.”

“Thank you, sir.”

“Just lock the door, will you, till we’re off? I don’t want anybody else in here.”

“I’ll do the best I can, sir,” says the functionary, making use of the time-honoured formula of his genus; and apparently his efforts to earn five shillings in defiance of the Company’s regulations are crowned with the success which honest labour merits, for presently the train

glides out of the station with but one occupant of the carriage in question.

The passenger who had displayed so great a love of privacy as to require an entire smoking-compartment for his own use lit a cigar, sighed heavily once or twice, and dropped into a brown study, which, judging by the frown on his brow and the worried expression of his face, must have had some intricate and perplexing matter for its starting-point. He was a tall, thin man, whom some people might have called fine-looking, but whom no one, probably, would have considered handsome. He had a pair of pleasant brown eyes, a nose which was decidedly too large for beauty, and his mouth was concealed by a long moustache, which he twisted and tugged in the course of his meditations. He had in no way the appearance of a young man, although his age at this time could hardly have exceeded three-and-thirty. Some men, as the casual observer has doubtless noticed, preserve the ways and the air of youth up to the confines of middle age; while others—and these are perhaps the majority—pass through a transition period which is neither the one thing nor the other. Our solitary passenger was of the latter class. The casual observer would scarcely have found anything sufficiently striking about him to excite curious speculations as to his identity; but no observer, however casual, could have felt one instant's doubt as to what was his calling in life. He was a soldier from the crown of his closely-cropped head to the tips of his well-blacked boots; and observers with an eye for detail might even have formed a tolerably confident guess at the branch of the service to which he belonged. Had he been an officer of infantry he would not have had a clearly-defined diagonal line across his forehead, separating a corner of white skin from a larger expanse of red brown; a hussar or a lancer would have been more fashionably, and a plunger more loudly, dressed. There remain the two scientific corps; and some trifling points about this gentleman, such as his attitude, as he sat slightly sideways, his right leg tucked under the seat and his left stretched out stiffly before him, seemed to harmonise with the addresses upon a packet of letters which he presently drew from his pocket—"Captain Kenyon, R.H.A., Aldershot."

He had read his letters before, for the envelopes were all torn open; but possibly he may have desired to refresh his memory by reading them again. He ran through the first two or three briskly enough; they had a legal aspect, and evidently related to matters of business. But over the last he lingered for a long time, often referring back to words already perused, breaking off every now and again to gaze abstractedly out of the window, smiling faintly sometimes, yet sighing even while he smiled, and maintaining always the puzzled and anxious expression of one who has got into a situation of which the full significance is not yet clear to him. This letter was written in a woman's firm, flowing hand, upon paper with a broad black border, and ran as follows:—

"LONGBOURNE: 18th August.

"MY DEAR HUGH,

"I ought to have written before this to thank you for the kind letter which you sent me four months ago; but I am sure that I need not really apologise, and that you will know that I did not value your sympathy the less because I could not acknowledge it just at once. If I could have written to anybody, it would have been to you. Now I am quite able to write, and to talk to you too; and you need not have any scruple about discussing the business matters which you say we must go into, because I want to hear about them, and to know what my duties are, and where I am to begin, and all the rest.

"And I do very much long to see you. The others mean to be kind, but they don't understand; and of course they cannot, never having had to suffer in quite the same way that I do. It is only you who have the secret of putting yourself in everybody's place, and knowing things that you have never been told, and could not have been told. Do you remember how poor old nurse used to say, 'There's not a man or woman in Crayminster as can hold a candle to 'Ugh'? And then the person whom she was addressing would simper, and look down with an air of modest deprecation, till she explained, 'Bless your soul, I don't mean *you*! I mean 'Ugh Kenyon.' I reminded them of it yesterday, when we were talking of your coming down; and I think they were a little shocked at my laughing. They think I ought not to be able to laugh, and at the same time they talk of the necessity of my 'rousing myself,' and are in a terrible fright lest I should 'shut myself up and mope.' My father reminds me that I have many duties and responsibilities to face, and a career of great usefulness open to me; and Mr. Langley warns me to beware of the temptation of a selfish sorrow, and is convinced that I should be better in mind and body if I went to confession. I don't think I will go to confession; but of course I should like to be of use to others, if I can, and I do wish and intend to put my wretched self out of sight, and let my neighbours suppose that I have 'got over' my trouble, as everyone is expected to do after a time. But, oh! dear old Hugh, *you* know, if nobody else does, that that is quite an impossibility, and that neither four months, nor four years, nor any number of years can make the smallest difference. It won't be the same Margaret whom you used to chase round the Precincts when she was a child, and whom you used to dance with at the county balls when she was a gawky girl—it won't be that Margaret who will meet you to-morrow, but another person altogether, who has somehow got into her skin, and would give anything to be out of it. I died when Jack died: that was the end of my happiness and the end of my life. Only someone, who is I, and yet not I, has got to live many years longer in a world which is the old world, and yet is a totally new one; for, like auld Robin Gray's wife, 'I'm no like to dee.' And so it is all bewilderment and a puzzle; and I think, if anyone can give the clue to it, it will be you. You re-

member how I used to run to you in all my little troubles in the old days; you were always my best friend. And then you were Jack's best friend too. I have got a few things of his to give you—his gun, and a trout-rod, and some other things. I don't know whether they are good of their kind; but I thought you would like to have them, so I set them aside for you. It has been such a comfort to me that he made you his executor. Old Mr. Stanniforth has written to me; but he seemed to think you would tell me all that it was necessary for me to know—and I would very much rather have it so. I can't tell you what a relief it will be to me to be able to talk to someone just as I feel.

"I should never have ventured to inflict all this rambling egotism upon anyone but you, and perhaps, after now, I won't make even that exception; but I know you will forgive it for this once. I have a great deal to tell you and ask you about; but it will be better said than written.

"Ever your affectionate friend,

"MARGARET STANNIFORTH."

"A comfort to her that Jack made me his executor!" muttered Captain Kenyon, as he restored this letter to his pocket, after having perused it often enough to have learnt its contents by heart. "I hope it may be a comfort to her, poor thing! I hope so, I'm sure, with all my heart. It ain't much of a comfort to me, I know."

He sighed, re-lighted his cigar, which had gone out, and shifted his place from one side of the carriage to the other and then back again. "Not that I grudge the trouble, mind you," he added, apologetically addressing an imaginary hearer, "nor the—the—awkwardness of it; it isn't that. But——" He did not finish the sentence, but presently resumed, in a more decided and cheerful voice, "Well, Lord knows how it will all end! but for the present my duty is clear and simple enough; there's some consolation in that."

So he gave his broad shoulders a shake, as though mental burdens could be cast off after that easy fashion, and, turning to the window, looked out at the woods and hills and pastures of the pleasant county where he had been born and bred, and through which the train was now rushing. It was a year since he had last gazed at those familiar scenes and landmarks. Barely twelve months before he had travelled down from Aldershot, on just such a sunny summer's morning, to be present at a gay wedding in Crayminster Cathedral. It had been his pleasing duty to act as best man on that occasion, and the bridegroom had been his old friend Jack Stanniforth, and the bride his still older friend Margaret Winnington, the daughter of the Bishop. The ceremony had been a grand and largely attended one, and had created no small stir in the county, where Mrs. Winnington, whose eldest daughter had recently been led to the altar by no less a personage than Lord Travers, enjoyed that mixture of respect, envy, and detraction which commonly falls to

the lot of mothers who marry their daughters well. Jack Stanniforth, to be sure, was hardly so big a fish as Lord Travers, being not only unconnected with the aristocracy, but devoid, to all intents and purposes, of so much as an authentic grandfather. But then, as everybody remarked, Kate had been a beauty, whereas Margaret was really almost what you might call a plain girl, and the riches of the Stanniforths were understood to be boundless.

Big fish or little fish, Jack had, as a matter of fact, been landed by no skill on the part of his future mother-in-law, but simply by his own good will and pleasure. He had been brought down into those waters by Hugh Kenyon, who was thus responsible, if anyone was, for his subsequent capture; and it was therefore only right and proper that Hugh should have been present, in his best blue frock-coat and with a sprig of stephanotis in his buttonhole, to stand behind the bridegroom on the auspicious day.

Of old Mr. Stanniforth, the wealthy Manchester merchant, who dwelt in a palace near the city in which he had made his fortune, and who rarely stirred beyond his own park-gates, Crayminster knew nothing and London very little; but his two sons had the privilege of a large acquaintance in the metropolis and beyond it, and were as popular as rich, well-mannered, and modest men are sure to be. Tom, the elder, had for some time sat as one of the members for a large manufacturing borough; Jack, the younger, had entered a smart hussar regiment, and had disported himself therein, during the early years of his youth, to the satisfaction of himself and his brother-officers, and to the intense admiration of the opposite sex, until he had added to all his other charms the crowning one of inheriting unexpectedly a large fortune by the death of a maternal uncle. Upon this he had sent in his papers; and almost immediately afterwards, having happened to go down to Crayminster with his friend Kenyon, had seen Margaret, had fallen in love with her, and, after a very brief courtship, had proposed and been accepted.

Little as Captain Kenyon had foreseen such a result of his introduction of the ex-hussar to the Bishop's family, his share in bringing it about was not the less gratefully and magnanimously acknowledged by Mrs. Winnington. "Dear Hugh," she had said, in her most benign manner, "I shall never forget, and I am sure Margaret will never forget, that her happiness has come to her through you." And this compliment should have been the more agreeable to its recipient, inasmuch as Mrs. Winnington had not always been used to address him in so friendly a tone. Of course—as she would often explain to her intimates—she was devoted to dear old Hugh, and during the lifetime of his uncle the Dean, he had almost lived in the house, and had been quite like a son to herself and an elder brother to her daughters; but now that Kate and Margaret were growing up, one really had to be a little more careful; because people would talk, and there was no saying what

preposterous notions men might not get into their heads if proper precautions were not taken to nip such notions in the bud. There had, therefore, been occasions upon which a sense of duty had led Mrs. Winton to turn the cold shoulder to her dear old Hugh, and to point out to him with somewhat unnecessary emphasis how great was the disparity of years between him and the young ladies to whom he had been "quite like an elder brother." Now a glance at Hart's Army List would have disclosed the fact that Jack Stanniforth was only Captain Kenyon's junior by a year; but, as has been already remarked, some men are young up to the verge of middle age, while others have ceased to be so before they are out of the twenties; and Jack certainly belonged to the former and Hugh to the latter category. He had, indeed, been so long accustomed to hearing himself addressed as "old Hugh" that he had ended by accepting the adjective in its literal sense and acquiescing in its propriety; nor had he failed to join in the laughter which arose from all sides when the bridegroom, in returning thanks at the wedding-breakfast, had expressed a hope that his best man would soon follow his bright example. Old Hugh was so evidently a predestined old bachelor.

Immediately after the wedding the young couple had started for Switzerland and Italy upon a tour which was prolonged far beyond the limits of ordinary honeymoons, the excuse for their protracted absence being that their new home could not possibly be made ready to receive them in less than six months at earliest. This new home was that fine old place Longbourne, near Crayminster, for many generations the residence of the Brune family. It had come into the market some years previously, owing to the necessitous circumstances of the owner, and had found a purchaser in Mr. Stanniforth of Manchester. What could have been Mr. Stanniforth's object in acquiring an estate which he had scarcely seen and showed no disposition to occupy was a puzzle to everybody, until the construction of the Crayminster and Craybridge branch line, which cut through an angle of the property, with satisfactory results to the pocket of its new owner, seemed to throw some light upon the mystery. Now, the old gentleman, in an easy and princely fashion, had offered Longbourne as a wedding gift to his second son, stipulating only that he should be allowed to put the place in order before the bride and bridegroom took possession of it. They, for their part, were nothing loth to consent to an arrangement which promised them a somewhat longer holiday under southern skies; and so architects and artists, landscape-gardeners, stonemasons, and upholsterers, had come down from London in a small army, and had busied themselves throughout the winter in beautifying the house and grounds, which were destined never to be enjoyed by those for whose sake all this expense and trouble had been incurred. For, one afternoon, Jack Stanniforth, a strong man, who had scarcely known what illness was in the course of his merry life, rode back to Rome feeling tired and chilled after hunting

on the Campagna ; and the next day he took to his bed ; and before the week was out he was dead and buried.

Under the shock of this sudden and terrible calamity the young widow had fallen into a sort of stupor, which at first caused considerable alarm both to her friends and to her medical advisers. The latter had enjoined absolute rest, change of scene, a bracing atmosphere, and what not—since doctors, when they are called in, must needs enjoin something—and Mrs. Winnington had hastened out to Italy, and had taken her daughter, passive and indifferent, to the Engadine. After a time Margaret had rallied, had returned, by her own desire, to England, and had taken up her residence at Longbourne, where it now became necessary that Hugh Kenyon should seek her out, in order to explain to her the provisions of her husband's will, under which he and the dead man's father had been appointed executors and trustees.

Such was the condensed tragedy of which the details passed quickly through Captain Kenyon's mind, as he sat looking out of the railway-carriage window. And as he remembered it all, and how, only the other day, he had travelled over the same ground on his way down to the wedding, and how, but a few months before that, Margaret had not even seen the man who was to be her husband, he could not help saying to himself that it was impossible that so brief an episode—however terrible it might be—should cast a permanent gloom over a young life.

"It isn't the same thing," he mused, "it can't be the same thing, as losing a husband or a wife after twenty years of married life. That would be like having an arm or a leg cut off—there would be something gone from one which one could never forget nor replace. But this—well, this is more like having a tooth out ; a wrench and a howl, and all's over." Then, repenting of having used so homely a metaphor, even in thought, he muttered sadly, "Poor Jack—poor old fellow !"

Presently the train drew up in Crayminster station, and a groom in mourning livery came to the door and touched his hat. The dog-cart was waiting outside, he said, and was there any luggage, please ? No ; Kenyon answered, there was no luggage ; he was going back that same evening. He climbed into the dog-cart, but declined to take the reins. With an odd sort of pang and feeling of compunction, he had recognised the cart as one that Jack used to drive, and the horse as one of his friend's old hunters. As the vehicle clattered through the narrow streets of the old town, more than one pedestrian nodded and waved his hand to its occupant ; but Hugh, who kept his eyes obstinately fixed upon his boots, saw none of these friendly signals. He knew that by no possibility could he traverse Crayminster on any day of the week without encountering at least a dozen acquaintances ; and he was afraid of being stopped and questioned. Therefore he would not look up, and was relieved when he had left the town behind him and was well out into the open country.

Half an hour's drive, at first across broad water-meadows and then through woods and up a long gradual incline, brought him to the lodge gates of Longbourne—new gates and a new lodge, as Hugh observed. He had known the place well in the late Mr. Brune's time, and was prepared to find it altered, not altogether for the better, by the touch of the Manchester millionaire. It appeared, however, that Mr. Stanforth's taste, or the taste of those employed by him, had been better than Hugh had anticipated; for the alterations were not conspicuous, and such as there were were of a kind to which exception could not be taken. In the undulating park and in the long avenue of lime-trees which was the pride of Longbourne there was no room for change; only the gardens had been extended and improved; new lawns and terraces had been laid out, and brilliant masses and ribbons of colour replaced the scanty and ill-tended flower-beds of former years. The house itself, a red-brick structure, which, like most country-houses of its date, was said to have been built after designs of Inigo Jones, showed no traces of interference, except in so far as that its white stone facings had been renewed or cleaned; no plate-glass had superseded the many panes of the large oblong windows, nor was the long flat façade disfigured by any modern bows or bays.

But when once the hall-door was passed, Hugh found himself upon totally unknown ground. Under the Brune *régime* the furniture of the mansion had been meagre and its servants few; now there was perhaps rather a superabundance of both. The entrance-hall was embellished with antlers, with old carved-oak chests and cabinets, with huge vases of Oriental china and with arm-chairs in stamped leather. The drawing-room, into which Hugh was ushered, had been despoiled of its tarnished gilding, its brocade and three-pile Axminster; and in lieu of these departed glories was a more sober style of decoration; subdued colouring; a few paintings by old Dutch masters; chairs, sofas, and tables more valuable than resplendent. Everything was perfectly correct—a little too correct, Hugh thought; for at the time with which we are concerned correctness of upholstery had not yet become the chief aim and object of the British householder. The place looked a trifle cold and stiff and uninhabited; and over the whole establishment there brooded the solemn hush of wealth.

While Captain Kenyon was proceeding with his unspoken criticisms the door opened, and a tall, slim woman, dressed in widow's weeds, entered, and held out her hand to him, saying, "How do you do, Hugh?" in a low, quiet voice. Though he could hardly have been unprepared for the appearance of this lady, he started as violently as if he had seen a ghost, and, finding not a word to say, grasped her hand silently, while he looked into her face with an eager, questioning gaze.

The face that he scanned so anxiously was not beautiful, nor even pretty. For one thing, it was extremely pale, with that grey pallor which comes only from illness or suffering; and, as is often the case

with fair-complexioned women, the colourlessness was not confined to the cheeks, but seemed to have extended to the hair and eyes, the former of which ought to have been, but was not, golden, while the latter ought to have been, but were not, blue. An old-fashioned passport would probably have summed up the remaining features tersely with "forehead high, nose ordinary, mouth rather large." It was, however, an honest, trustworthy, and kind face—a face which all dogs and children, and some discriminating adults, understood and loved at the first glance. Margaret Stanniforth had never been accounted a beauty, yet she had never lacked admirers; and, when in the glow of youth and health, she might even have passed for a pretty girl, had she not happened to be the plain one of a family somewhat notorious for good looks. For the rest, she had a good figure; she carried her head well, as all the Winningtons do, and she had, as they all have, a certain undefinable grace and air of good breeding.

The sight of her in those deep mourning robes almost unmanned the soft-hearted Hugh; and, instead of one of the brisk little cheerful speeches which he had rehearsed on his way from the station, he blurted out something awkward and incoherent, at last, about never having thought he should meet her again like this; but she had the quiet ease of manner which belongs to unselfish people, and she gave him time to recover himself by talking about the proposed restoration of the cathedral, and her father's speech in the House of Lords, and other matters which could be treated of without danger of disturbance to anyone's equanimity.

"Are you all alone here?" Hugh asked at length.

"I am now. I had two of the boys with me until yesterday; but they have gone back to school." She added after a pause, "My mother is very kind, and would stay with me as long as I liked; but of course she is wanted at home; and, as I shall have to be a great deal by myself in future, I thought it was better to begin at once."

She spoke without a tremor in her voice, quite calmly and almost coldly; and Hugh was just the least bit in the world disappointed and chilled. Her speech was so very unlike her letter, he thought. But then the speech of most people is unlike their letters. Presently luncheon was announced, and he had to seat himself opposite Mrs. Stanniforth in a dining-room, or rather dining-hall, which would have accommodated fifty guests comfortably. He had hoped that a cover might have been laid for him beside her, for he had an uncomfortable feeling about occupying Jack's place; but the butler had probably omitted to take this delicate scruple into account. The repast was prolonged and very dreary. The table, though narrowed to its smallest dimensions, was still a long one; and Hugh and Margaret laboriously kept up conversation in a high key across it, conscious all the time of being furtively watched by a discreet butler and two stealthy giants in mourning livery. Hugh thought to himself that, if he were Margaret, and if he were compelled to eat his

meals every day with three respectful pairs of eyes fixed upon him, he should infallibly go out of his senses in less than a week.

Perhaps she guessed what was passing through his mind ; for, as soon as they were alone, she said, laughing a little, "Those servants are a terrible ordeal to me. I found them here when I arrived : Mr. Stanniforth had supplied them, with the furniture and the carriages and all the rest. I am hoping that you will tell me I must dismiss at least two of them."

"Oh, I don't think there will be any need for that," answered Hugh.

"No? So much the worse for me, then. Shall we go back to the drawing-room now, and get our business talk over?"

Jack Stanniforth's will was a portentous document of the old-fashioned pattern, drawn up for him by his father's lawyers and signed by him on his wedding-day. The effect of it—there being no child born of the marriage—was that, subject to the usual restrictions, his widow took a life-interest in all his property, real and personal ; which, together with her settlements, would give her an income of from fourteen to fifteen thousand a year. But it took Captain Kenyon some little time to state this simple fact. He was a man of an orderly and somewhat slowly-moving mind ; and he thought it incumbent upon him to explain the will, clause by clause, going into many details which his hearer only half understood, and with which it is needless that the reader should be wearied.

"Fifteen thousand a year!" ejaculated Margaret, with a sigh, when he had at last reached his conclusion ; "that sounds an enormous sum of money."

"Well, yes ; it is a large sum. Not so large as it might have been, if we had not been so tied down as to investments ; still——"

"Still, enough to live upon with strict economy," interrupted Margaret, with a slight laugh. "Hugh," she added suddenly, "do you know what I should like to do?"

"Yes ; you would like to give away the whole of it to somebody without loss of time."

"Not exactly that ; but I should like to give Longbourne away ; or at least to restore it to its proper owner."

"To Mr. Stanniforth, do you mean?"

"No ; to the Brunes. It really belongs to them, you know ; we have no right to the place. Jack felt that very strongly, and he did not at all like the idea of coming to live here. He always used to say that Mr. Brune had been deprived of his property by an unfair bargain."

"Hardly that, I think. Of course it was a bit of bad luck for him. If he had held on a little longer, the railway would have put him pretty nearly straight, I suppose ; but no one could have foreseen that at the time of the sale."

Margaret was silent. "At all events," she said presently, "I want to let him have his own back now, if it can be managed."

"But, my dear Margaret, it cannot possibly be managed."

"Why not?"

"For many good reasons; but one of them is final. The place is not yours to dispose of. I am afraid I must have explained matters very stupidly; but the fact is that you are only a tenant for life."

"It is I who was stupid; I ought to have listened more attentively. And what becomes of Longbourne after my death?"

"Well, then it goes, with the rest of the property, to Tom Stanniforth or his heirs."

"Tom Stanniforth will have more money than he will know what to do with," observed Margaret. "I am sure he would willingly surrender his chance of inheriting Longbourne."

"I am not much of a lawyer; but I almost doubt whether he could. In any case, Mr. Brune would not be very likely to accept a gift of an estate from a stranger; and he could not buy it back. I used to see the elder brother sometimes in years gone by: this one I hardly knew; but from what I have heard of him, I should think he was about the last man in the world to whom one could venture to propose such a thing."

Margaret rose, and walked to the window. "Ah, well," she said, "it was only an idea of mine; I scarcely expected to be able to carry it out. But, Hugh, I feel almost certain of one thing: I shall never be able to go on living here."

Hugh wrinkled up his forehead, and looked distressed. If he had felt free to speak out plainly the thought that was in his mind, he would have answered, "I'm sure you won't. Flesh and blood couldn't stand it." But women are so uncertain, and so prone to act upon impulse: and it is not always wise or kind to show all the sympathy that one may feel. Upon the whole, it seemed best to reply, "I wouldn't do anything in a hurry, if I were you."

Margaret went on, as if she had not heard him. "It isn't the solitude that I mind; I could be contented enough in a little cottage, with a cook and a housemaid to look after me; but I was never meant to rule over a large establishment. The small worries of it suffocate me. One would think that a great sorrow, like mine, ought to make one indifferent to small worries; but somehow or other it doesn't. You would be amused if you knew how frightened I am of the servants. There is an old housekeeper, a Mrs. Prosser, who was here under Mr. Brune, and who took care of the house all the time that it stood empty, after Mr. Stanniforth bought it. I am obliged to have an interview with her every morning, and she is very respectful and deferential; but of course she looks upon me as an interloper, and she has a way of standing with her hands clasped before her, turning one thumb slowly over the other and staring at me with her little black eyes, which makes me so nervous that I hardly know what I am saying to her."

"Give her the sack."

"I don't think I should ever dare. And there would be no excuse for sending her away either; for, as far as I can judge, she is an ad-

mirable housekeeper. Besides, the butler and the coachman are quite as bad in their way. Sometimes I have thought of entering a sisterhood. Would that be very wrong, do you think?"

"I don't think it would be wrong," answered Hugh slowly; "but——"

"Yes; I know there are a great many buts; too many for me to think, except in a vague sort of way, of doing such a thing as yet. I keep it as a last resource—in case I should find my life quite unbearable."

Captain Kenyon had risen, and was standing beside her at the window now.

"Oh, Hugh," she said suddenly, clasping her hands round his arm, "what am I to do? What am I to do with my life?"

"My dear," he answered, greatly moved and full of pity, yet quite unable to express what he felt, "how can I tell you? You must have patience. When things go wrong with us, there is nothing for it but patience."

After all, it is seldom by speech that a sense of sympathy and friendship is conveyed. Perhaps no eloquence could have given Margaret more comfort than these few words from a friend who was himself always patient, always brave, and whose life had been full of petty troubles, arising for the most part out of the lack of that which she found so heavy a burden.

"I will try," she said, straightening herself up. "Only it seems to me that it would be so much easier if I were not rich. Everybody keeps repeating to me that money is such a blessing, and that I ought to be so thankful for it; and yet what can it do for me? Nothing—absolutely nothing!"

"It is at least so far a blessing that it brings independence with it."

"But if one does not want to be independent? I am one of those weak people who are born to be subordinates and to be told their duty day by day. Is there *no* way in which I could rid myself of this enormous income?"

"I'm afraid not. You see, the will says—let me see; where is it? Oh, here—'Trusts.'" And Hugh began reading, in a hurried, mumbling voice—"To be received by her my said wife for her own use and benefit during her life or until she shall marry again or until she shall sell assign mortgage or charge or otherwise incumber the same or attempt so to do or shall do or suffer or become subject or liable to some act proceeding matter or thing whereby the same interest dividends and annual produce if payable to her absolutely for her life would become vested in or payable to some other person or persons Provided nevertheless and——'"

"Oh, never mind," interrupted Margaret, with a half laugh. "I quite understand that there is no legal way out of the difficulty." And she wondered why a slight flush had mounted into Hugh's brown cheeks

while he had been reading, and why he looked so oddly, and was such a long time in folding up the big document again.

How could she tell that he had loved her almost from her childhood? How could she tell that her marriage to his friend had shattered all his hopes and day-dreams? How could she tell that that possibility of her re-marriage, contemplated as a mere formality by the will, was one that, despite poor Hugh's honest efforts to banish it from his mind, was forcing its way thither every day and every hour? These were secrets which Captain Kenyon had hitherto successfully kept, and was likely to continue to keep, to himself. If, in the depths of his heart, he had begun to look forward to some remote future time, at which Margaret, having read and re-read this dark page of her life, might find that the power was still in her to open a fresh one, and if he had heard with a certain inward exultation of her anxiety to be free from that wealth which must needs be hers so long as she bore the name of Stanniforth, he was sincerely ashamed of such thoughts, and did his best to stifle them. For he had been loved and trusted by the man who was dead; he was trusted, and in a manner also loved, by the dead man's widow; and to be guilty of an unspoken treachery to either of them was what he could not bear without self-reproach.

But if the tongue is an unruly member, the brain is a substance yet more unruly, and is wont to assert its independence after a specially vexatious fashion when it receives direct orders from the will. Therefore this conscientious executor and compassionate friend was ill at ease, and discharged himself of his double functions in an awkward, guilty and half-hearted manner. He fancied, at least, that he was doing so; as a fact, he could hardly have shown greater kindness to Margaret than by abstaining, as he did, from counsel or consolation, and by listening to her in silence while she told him of the incidents of her short wedded life and of the swift catastrophe which had closed it. She shed no tears; she had a low, pleasantly-modulated voice; she talked so calmly that it might almost have been the story of another woman's life that she was relating. Pacing by her side along the shady lawns, he heard her with a mixture of pleasure and pain and hopelessness. He knew—though she never said so—that he was the first person to whom she had spoken so openly since her husband's death; he knew that she was treating him with a confidence which she would not have reposed in her father or mother; but this knowledge made him neither more sanguine nor less remorseful.

"You will come and see me again soon, won't you?" she asked, when the time came for him to bid her good-bye. And he answered hurriedly, "Yes; as soon as I can—that is, as soon as you please. I can almost always get away for a day now; and you know you can't give me greater pleasure than by sending for me whenever you want me."

Nevertheless, as he drove away, he hoped that no very speedy summons from her would reach him. Such advice or assistance as it was in his

power to give her would be more easily and safely conveyed by letter than by word of mouth, he thought; and it even occurred to him once or twice to regret that he had not effected an exchange to India which had been upon the point of arrangement when the news of Jack Stanniforth's death and his own appointment as executor had caused him to abandon the project.

On the platform he encountered the Bishop of Crayminster, who was on his way to hold a series of confirmations in neighbouring towns, and who hurried up to him with trembling hands outstretched.

"Ah, my dear Kenyon, my dear friend, this is a sad meeting! You have been with our poor Margaret—poor dear!—poor dear! How little we anticipated this a year ago!"

The Bishop of Crayminster was a tall, thin old gentleman, with a weak, handsome face, blue eyes, and white hair. He spoke habitually in tremulous lachrymose accents, addressed all men as "my dear friend," was greatly beloved by the clergy of his diocese and commiserated by their wives, who asserted that Mrs. Winnington ruled him with a rod of iron.

"I should like much to have a few minutes' conversation with you," he said, casting an imploring glance at his chaplain, who discreetly got into a carriage lower down in the train, leaving Hugh to enter the empty compartment which had been reserved for the Bishop.

"And how did you find her?" asked the latter, when the train had begun to move. "Sadly altered, I fear: terribly shaken and bowed down?"

"Well, no," answered Hugh, "I can't say that she struck me as being exactly that. Of course she feels the loneliness of her position a good deal, and the—the weight of her wealth, you know."

"Ah yes, dear me, yes! Riches are indeed a doubtful blessing. But we must not repine. Poverty is perhaps a more severe trial."

"Perhaps it is."

"In some ways—in some ways. I don't know what she will do with herself, poor child."

"She spoke of entering a sisterhood," Hugh remarked.

The Bishop threw up his white hands in dismay. "A sisterhood! Oh, my dear friend, I trust you dissuaded her from taking so serious a step as that."

"Oh, I don't think she contemplated it very seriously. In time, I dare say, she will learn to stand alone; but it comes a little hard upon a woman just at first."

"It does—it does indeed. Her mother thinks—of course it is early days yet to speak of anything of the kind; but mothers will look forward—she thinks that dear Margaret may eventually marry again. Perhaps we ought to hope that it may be so. I doubt whether our dear Margaret's shoulders are broad enough to bear the cares of life unaided."

"If she does marry again, she will be delivered from the cares of a

large fortune," said Hugh bluntly. "Her interest in Stanniforth's estate terminates with her death or re-marriage."

"Eh?—really? I don't think Mrs. Winnington—I—er—I did not understand that. Is it not rather an—unusual arrangement?"

"I believe not at all."

"Ah, well; I am very ignorant of such matters—very ignorant. Can this be Craybridge already? Well, my dear friend, I must bid you goodbye. I trust we shall see you in these parts again before long. Dear Margaret, I know, leans very much upon your help and advice; and I am sure you will advise her wisely."

The Bishop had taken Hugh's big brown hand, and was patting it paternally. "We must trust to time and Providence," he said, "and not try overmuch to rule the destinies of others. For my own part, I am disposed to be of St. Paul's mind with regard to widows. They are happier if they so abide—happier if they so abide."

And with that, his lordship descended slowly to the platform, and shuffled away on his chaplain's arm.

CHAPTER II.

MRS. STANNIFORTH'S NEIGHBOURS.

THE venerable city of Crayminster stands in a vast hollow. From the neighbouring heights its gabled roofs may be seen huddled together in a compact phalanx round the cathedral towers, having changed little in aspect or area in the course of the last hundred years or so, and having only thrown out here and there an outpost in the shape of a detached suburban villa. The slow-flowing Cray intersects the town and winds down the long valley, through water-meadows where cattle crop the rich grass, and over which light mists usually hang in summer and cold fogs in winter. The valley of the Cray does not indeed bear a high character for salubrity, and the strangers who are attracted to Crayminster by the fame of its ancient cathedral seldom carry away with them a favourable impression of the surrounding district. For when, having duly admired the Lady-chapel, descended into the crypt, and climbed the tower, they escape from the hands of the verger into those of the flyman, the latter, whose generic instinct leads him to shirk up-hill work, commonly suggests to them a nice drive along one of the excellent turnpike roads which leave the town either by the eastern or western gate, and pass through mile after mile of flat, fertile, and monotonous country, where sleepy silence reigns, where there are but few habitations, and those of an unpretending and eminently unpicturesque order.

But if, instead of following these rather dreary thoroughfares, they were to strike off due north or due south, they would find themselves

almost immediately in a higher, healthier region—a region of low, rolling hills and leafy coverts, a region of hop-gardens and waving cornfields and frequent hamlets, diversified by glimpses of park lands and old timber—for properties do not run to any great size hereabouts, and the squirearchy rules in force—a region rich in pleasant mansions and substantial, prosperous-looking farmhouses.

Near the high-road, some two miles beyond Longbourne, is a long, low edifice, which can hardly be said to come under either of the above denominations. The paddocks which surround it could not, by any stretch of courtesy, be made to duty for a park; adjoining it are barns and ricks and a large strawyard, while the sunny slope of the hill behind it is occupied by a well-filled orchard in the place of terraces and shrubberies. These and other indications sufficiently show its tenant to be a farmer; but, on the other hand, the house itself has an air of comfort and refinement somewhat above the aspirations of an ordinary yeoman. This house, known as Broom Leas Court, had at the time with which we are concerned been for a good many years owned by Mr. Neville Brune, and inhabited by him and his numerous family. It would be difficult to give an accurate description of it. It had been constructed bit by bit as occasion had seemed to require, and as funds to pay the builder had been forthcoming, and was a complete architectural jumble. Here was a fragment of the original structure, with gables, overhanging upper story, latticed casements and black beams upon plaster of a yellowish-white tinge; there a modern bay, with French windows opening upon the lawn; every kind of building material seemed to have been employed, brick in one place, stone in another, stucco in a third; over all was a mantle of ivy, of swaying Virginia-creeper and clematis.

A great deal of money had been spent, first and last, upon the creation of this queer domicile, for Neville Brune had the family incapacity for doing anything cheaply, and the family dislike to being worried by small economical details. With the fortune which he had inherited from his father—a very respectable one for a younger son—he had purchased and stocked the Broom Leas farm; there he had dwelt ever since, and there, to all appearance, he was now likely to end his days.

A gentleman who adopts farming as a trade is, by common consent, only a step removed from the proverbial fool who chooses to be his own lawyer; and Neville Brune's friends and neighbours, who were acquainted with his hereditary failings, smiled and shook their heads when they heard after what fashion he proposed to make his living. A considerable time, however, elapsed, during which he lived, not extravagantly, yet with a certain careless profusion of expenditure, and if he did not make his fortune, neither did he figure in the *Gazette*. Then he married Miss Boulger, the daughter of a rich banker, and began those building operations which were long the delight of his life, and which were renewed intermittently, year after year, to meet the requirements of a rapidly increasing family. It was rumoured that Mr. Brune was getting into

difficulties, when his elder brother and his father-in-law died suddenly within a few days of one another. Either of these events might have been expected to convert him into a much richer man, but it so happened that neither of them did produce that desirable effect, for the old banker bequeathed to his daughter a thousand pounds, her mother's jewels, and nothing more; and Mr. Brune the elder, who had been a very eccentric and expensive personage, living much in foreign countries, and squandering money through every channel whereby money can be squandered, left his affairs in such inextricable confusion, and his estate so heavily encumbered, that Longbourne seemed likely to prove a white elephant to the heir. It was always Neville Brune's way to make up his mind quickly, after holding counsel with himself and with nobody else. He saw clearly that neither he nor his son would ever be able to live at Longbourne. To let it would be a mere protracting of misery and putting off of the evil day; moreover, he wanted ready money badly. He therefore determined to offer the place for sale, and it was immediately snapped up by Mr. Stanniforth.

No sooner had this decisive act been accomplished than there arose up to heaven such a weeping and wailing from the numerous collateral Brunes, to whom Longbourne had ever been as the Palladium to the Trojans, that the luckless head of the family was like to have been deafened by the din of it. Uncle John and Uncle James, Aunt Harriet and Aunt Elizabeth, not to mention a host of cousins far and near, all wrote to say that they could find no words adequate to express their horror of the sacrilege which had been committed. Sooner would they have starved, sooner would they have united their own small means and purchased the estate between them, than that it should have passed into the hands of a stranger. And, great as had been the wrath of these worthy people at the outset, it was naturally increased tenfold when that windfall of the Crayminster and Craybridge railway went to swell the already overflowing money bags of the infamous Stanniforth. Then it was that the insane—the indecent precipitancy of Neville's conduct cried aloud for denunciation. Then it was that Aunt Elizabeth, in an eloquent and breathless letter, drew a parallel between her nephew and Esau, and predicted that his ill-gotten gains would prosper no better than those of Ananias. Nor, unhappily, was it only by reproaches from without that the delinquent was made to feel the heinousness of his guilt. Mrs. Brune, who had once been pretty and fond of society, who had always detested a rural life, and had consoled herself through long years of monotony with an undefined expectation of one day escaping from it, considered that she had a strong case against destiny. Being blessed with high principles and a fine sense of duty, she could not breathe a word reflecting upon the memory of her father, and for the same unexceptionable reasons she refrained from bringing railing accusations against her husband; but neither principle nor duty forbade her to sigh over the loss of Longbourne, and accordingly her life became, so to speak, one

protracted sigh. She had long wanted a grievance, and now that she had got one, she did not stint herself in the indulgence of it. Never a day passed without some reference being made by her to the fallen fortunes of the Brunes. Her children were taught to regard themselves as despoiled and the Stanniforths as their despoilers; and her husband, who would fain have allowed the whole matter to pass into the category of those misfortunes which, being irreparable, are best not talked about, was soon driven to recognise the impracticability of such a course. Mrs. Brune was a weak, plaintive, and disappointed woman, much given to religious exercises and to breakfasting in bed. Her health was bad, and so perhaps was her temper; but as the latter defect did not manifest itself in any of the recognised fashions, she passed pretty generally for a martyr, and was as much commiserated as she was respected by the entire parish.

From all this it will be seen that the world had not gone altogether well with Neville Brune, but he was not one of those who cry out when they are hurt, nor had any one ever heard him complain of his luck. Acquaintance with disappointment had not soured his strong and sweet nature, but had bred in him a disposition to make the best of things, an increased enjoyment of the woods and fields, and a kindly humour which was not always understood by those of his own household. It had not been without a sharp struggle that he had brought himself to part with the old home where he had been born, and where the happiest years of his life had been spent; but of this he had said nothing. Only—unlike Mrs. Brune, who, through the long period during which Longbourne had remained untenanted, had loved to wander among its silent paths and gardens like a Peri at the gates of Paradise—he had never once set foot upon the property since it had ceased to be his. At the time when this story opens he was a small, spare, wiry man of forty or thereabouts, dark complexioned and a trifle stern of aspect, as his father had been before him, but by no means stern of character. He had a trick of looking straight into the face of any person whom he might be addressing, which sometimes gave offence, and which was certainly rather embarrassing, for his grey eyes were as keen as a hawk's; but, in truth, he meant no offence by this practice. At people whom he disliked—there were not many such—he avoided looking at all.

One day, shortly after that on which Hugh Kenyon had paid his first visit to Longbourne, Mr. Brune came in late for luncheon. This was a most unusual event, for at Broom Leas punctuality was a duty rigidly inculcated and practised, and a number of small heads were turned inquisitively towards the master of the house as he took his seat at the end of the long table.

"I will give you all three shots apiece," he said, "and bet you a big apple that you don't guess where I have been this morning."

"Oh, Neville," murmured Mrs. Brune plaintively, "do let the children eat their dinner."

"My dear, I feel sure that you need be under no apprehension of their failing to do that. But suspense is bad for digestion, I dare say. Will you make a guess yourself?"

"I am not curious," said Mrs. Brune languidly.

"Still, you are susceptible of astonishment, and I am confident that I shall astonish you when I say that I have been at Longbourne."

A slightly incredulous murmur ran round the table, starting with Walter the eldest boy, who was at home for the holidays, and ending with Geoffrey, a young gentleman in his third year, who cried "Oh, oh!" from a precocious tendency to shout with the majority. Mrs. Brune straightened herself in her armchair, and gathered her shawl about her with a quick nervous movement.

"Has that woman gone away, then?" she asked.

"On the contrary, that woman is making up her mind to settle down at Longbourne, and it was she who took me up to the house."

"Upon what pretence?"

"I ought not to have said that she took me. I walked up with her of my own accord, and a very pleasant walk it was. To avoid future unpleasantness, Ellinor, I may as well confess at once that I have fallen in love with that woman."

Mrs. Brune laughed a little, in a forced, perfunctory way. She had a notion that her husband often intended to be funny, and that, though he failed to amuse her, it was her duty to make some polite acknowledgment of his efforts.

"I met her," Mr. Brune went on, "at the church door. I wanted to see Langley this morning about some parish matters, and feeling pretty sure that he would be reading complines or nones, or whatever it is——"

"I suppose you mean matins?"

"I suppose I do. Feeling sure that something of the kind would be going on, I went down to the church, and there, sure enough, I heard his voice murmuring melodiously within. So I sat in the porch till he came out in his cassock and biretta, accompanied by a tall lady in widow's weeds, who had one of the most interesting faces I have ever seen in my life. I stated my business while she stood reading the inscriptions on the tombstones, and then, as Langley didn't introduce me, I made bold to introduce myself."

"Really, Neville!" cried Mrs. Brune in a tone of great vexation, "you are like nobody else in the world. How extraordinary she must have thought it of you!"

"Perhaps she did; but, if so, she was well-bred enough to disguise her feelings and to behave as though it gave her pleasure to meet me. We walked away together quite amicably, and were fast friends in less than ten minutes."

"But what induced you to go up to the house with her?"

"The pleasure of talking to her, I suppose. I daresay you would have been equally weak in my place."

"I should certainly not have entered Longbourne as the guest of that woman. I shall always feel that Longbourne no more belongs to the Stanniforths than—than Lorraine does to the Germans."

"You will be interested in hearing that that is precisely her own view of the case. She told me so, blushing and looking as much ashamed of herself as if she had picked my pocket. Really, Ellinor, she has strong claims of various kinds upon your sympathy."

Mrs. Brune shook her head decisively. "I could never feel sympathy with any one bearing the name of Stanniforth," she declared.

"Why not? Here is a woman who not only attends matins and sends down a cartload of flowers to decorate the altar, but confesses her sins with every appearance of sincere remorse. Are we to be so inconsistent to all Christian principles as to refuse her forgiveness? Her sin, if you come to think of it, is not an unpardonable one; it only consists in her being the daughter-in-law of a man who once bought some property of mine and paid me my own price for it. Seriously, Ellinor, I want you to be kind to this poor Mrs. Stanniforth. It made my heart ache to think of her living all alone in that great barrack, and trying to put a good face upon it too. It would be a real act of charity if you would call upon her. And, in point of fact, I have promised that you will do so."

The silence that followed this announcement was broken by a small childish voice, which asked—

"Papa, does Longbourne belong to Mrs. Stanniforth?"

"To the best of my belief it does, Nellie. Anyhow it will be her home for the rest of her life, most likely."

"Then I won't go and see her," declared the young lady emphatically. And Walter, with his mouth full of tart, growled out, "Hear, hear, Nellie!"

"Upon my word!" exclaimed Mr. Brune, "you are a pretty set of young mutineers. I have a great mind to order the whole tribe of you up to Longbourne this very afternoon. After this I suppose I must expect nothing less than a flat refusal from your mother."

"Of course, Neville," said Mrs. Brune, "if you tell me to leave cards I must obey you; but I do think it will look very odd. You never consider what people will say."

"Not very much, I confess."

"I always thought," Mrs. Brune continued, "that you did not wish me to visit strangers. During all these years that the Bishop has been at Crayminster we have never called upon Mrs. Winnington, though everybody else in the county has; and to thrust ourselves upon their daughter now—under the very peculiar circumstances of the case too—does seem to me unnecessary, to say the least of it. As to my being kind to her, that is nonsense. She has plenty of friends, and needs no kindness from me. Probably she thinks she would do me a kindness in receiving me."

"I assure you she is not a born idiot."

"I don't see how you can possibly tell what she may be. Besides I must say I should hardly have expected that she would wish for visitors yet, considering that her husband has not been dead a year."

"My dear Ellinor, I am not asking you to pay a formal visit, still less to leave cards at the door. What I wanted you to do was to go in a neighbourly way, and try to be of some comfort to a fellow-creature, who perhaps has not so many friends as you credit her with. However, I have not the gift of persuasiveness, and I see I had better leave you to Langley, who is coming up to dinner, and who will probably use his ghostly authority over you in the matter. Come along, Miss Nell."

And Mr. Brune rose and left the table, Nellie, a sturdy little brown-haired maiden, toddling after him with the important air which beseeemed her father's chosen companion and the only girl out of a family of ten.

Mr. Brune had not erred in attributing to Mr. Langley an influence more powerful than he could hope to exercise. The rector of Longbourne was a gentleman who took himself very seriously, and who, as a natural consequence, was accepted at his own valuation by the majority of his flock. The female portion of it, in particular, looked up to him with an unquestioning faith and devotion which may have been called forth in part by his pale, smooth-shaven face, his stooping figure and his reputation for asceticism, but which was doubtless also due to the blameless integrity of his life, and to the known fact that he spent three-fourths of his income upon his church and upon the poor. When he mentioned his new parishioner emphatically as one whom it was a privilege to know, Mrs. Brune capitulated without a protest, murmuring that it would give her great pleasure to make Mrs. Stanniforth's acquaintance. Accordingly she walked over to Longbourne the following day, accompanied by the recalcitrant Nellie, and confessed on her return that she had found her neighbour a very quiet and ladylike person. "A little cold and reserved in manner perhaps, but that was far better than rushing into the opposite extreme, as I was half afraid from your description of her, Neville, that she would do. If she had begun about the question of her title to be where she is, I hardly know how I could have answered her; but I am glad to say that she had the good taste not to refer to the subject."

It was in this somewhat unpromising fashion that the foundation was laid of an intimacy between the houses of Longbourne and Broom Leas which lasted throughout the lives of their respective occupants. Mrs. Brune did not, it is true, at once accord her friendship to the newcomer: she tolerated her; and that, according to her lights, was of itself no small concession. But of the children Margaret made a prompt and facile conquest. It was agreed among these young people that the resentment which they were bound to harbour against the whole Stanniforth family should not be extended to this alien, who was not by birth one of the proscribed race, and whose personal amiability took forms difficult to resist. They soon found out that they were welcome in her house at all hours of the day, and needed but little persuasion to convert her

gardens into a playground. She let them come and go as they pleased, sometimes looking on at their games, sometimes taking part in them, and being always ready to act as arbitrator and referee in those disputes which sports of all kinds are apt to engender, be the players young or old. And then no one could tell fairy-tales with so leisurely, serious, and convincing an air as she did. One day Walter announced gravely that he had discovered a simple solution of certain family difficulties.

"When I am grown up," he said, "I shall marry Mrs. Stanniforth; and then we will all live at Longbourne together."

"That is such an admirable plan," Mr. Brune remarked, "that I cannot think how your mother has failed to hit upon it before this. You have obtained the lady's consent, I presume?"

"Oh, that'll be all right," Walter replied confidently. "I told her about it, and she said she would have to take a little time to consider of it. She'll have a good ten years, you see, to think it over in;—or, perhaps, we might make it eight years. I don't want to marry before I leave Oxford, though."

"Walter," said Mrs. Brune, "you ought not to talk nonsense upon such a subject as that to Mrs. Stanniforth; it is very thoughtless of you. I don't know where you children get your want of consideration for the feelings of others from. I am sure you do not inherit it from me."

"The inference," remarked Mr. Brune, "is unavoidable. Still, a capacity for better things will crop up occasionally even in the worst of us; and to prove it, I mean to go up to Longbourne this afternoon and meet Mrs. Winnington at five o'clock tea; and I shall make an excuse for you, Ellinor. I need not point out to you what that implies; for you know how I love five o'clock tea—not to speak of Mrs. Winnington."

The truth is that Mrs. Winnington had not contrived, and probably had not endeavoured, to make herself beloved by the Brunes. She was a person of the fine-lady type, common enough twenty years or so ago, but now rapidly becoming extinct. Of a commanding presence, and with the remains of considerable beauty, she was always dressed handsomely and in bright, decided colours; she carried a gold-mounted double eye-glass, through which she was accustomed to survey inferior mortals with amusing impertinence; while, in speaking to them, her voice assumed a drawl so exaggerated as to render her valuable remarks almost unintelligible at times. These little graces of manner had doubtless come to her from a study of the best models, for she went a good deal into the fashionable world at that time; but, in addition to these, she possessed a complacent density and an unfeigned self-confidence which were all her own, and which would probably have sufficed at any epoch, and under any circumstances, to render her at once as disagreeable and as contented a woman as could have been found under the sun.

Whether because she resented the slight put upon her by the Brunes in that they had never seen fit to call at the Palace, or because she had an inkling that their pride surpassed her own vain-glory, she made up

her mind to snub them; and when Mrs. Winnington made up her mind to any course of action, it was usually carried through with a will. The plainness with which these worthy folks were given to understand that, in her opinion, they were no better than country bumpkins, and the mixture of patronage and insolence with which she bore herself towards them, were in their way inimitable. There are some people magnanimous enough, or indifferent enough, to smile at such small discourtesies; and probably the former owner of Longbourne was more amused than angry when he was informed that the house had been a positive pig-stye before it had been put in order, and that Mrs. Winnington really could not imagine how any one had found it possible to live in such a place. But Mrs. Brune, who was more irritable, trembled with suppressed wrath at the contemptuous allusions which were frequently made in her presence to "bankers, and brewers, and people of that class"; and, indeed, it is not likely that friendly relations could long have been maintained between Broom Leas and Longbourne if Mrs. Winnington had not, fortunately, been due in Scotland early in September.

What Mrs. Stanniforth thought of the cavalier manner in which her new friends had been treated it was not easy to say. She never attempted to check or soften down her mother's rude speeches; for she had not that exasperating quality which is known as tact, and she was probably aware that by no amount of stirring can oil and vinegar be made to mix. Also she loved her mother—"The Lord knows why!" said Mr. Brune, who had observed this phenomenon); and it may have been that she was a little blind to the defects of that unamiable lady. However, Mrs. Winnington departed for Scotland to pay a round of visits to various aristocratic friends; and then all went smoothly again.

Mr. Langley was much pleased by the amicable spirit in which the new lady of the manor had been received by her nearest neighbours. He had been interested in Margaret as a doctor is interested in a difficult case; he had perceived that company and occupation were the medicines of which she stood chiefly in need, and he had at first hardly seen how or whence these two alteratives were to be obtained. But the companionship of the Brune children had seemed in a great measure to supply the first want, and he had himself been able to satisfy the second by an ample provision of parish work, so soon as he had found that the patient had aptitudes that way. He thought she was doing very nicely now, and would soon be convalescent.

In truth, however, she was not doing so well, either in mind or in body, as Mr. Langley and others supposed. When she was alone—and she was a great deal alone—she was listless and miserable; she slept badly and had little appetite; and no sooner had the autumn set in with chilly winds and rain than she caught a cold, which settled on her chest and kept her in bed for a week.

It was at this juncture that Hugh Kenyon, who, throughout the

summer, had been inventing one excuse after another to defer his second visit to Longbourne, reappeared upon the scene, and was frightened out of his wits by the change in Margaret's aspect. He found her lying upon the sofa, looking flushed and feverish, and coughing at every other word, and was horrified to hear that she had not yet thought it necessary to call in a doctor. Shortly afterwards it was known in Crayminster and the vicinity that Mrs. Stanniforth had been ordered to the Riviera for the winter, and would start immediately. Hugh had remembered that the Winningtons were a consumptive family, and had been seized with a panic which had found relief in prompt action. By mere force of will, and in spite of Margaret's protestations, he carried her off to London, and took her to see an eminent specialist, by whom his fears were to some extent confirmed. Then he wrote to Mrs. Winnington to come back from Scotland instantly; and, without waiting for an answer, telegraphed to Nice to secure suitable rooms. Mrs. Winnington arrived from the Highlands in no very good humour, and informed Hugh in so many words that there was such a thing as over-officious friendship; but when she heard the doctor's report, she said no more, but packed up her trunks, and prepared to accompany her daughter once more to the continent. Hugh took first leave, and travelled with the ladies to their destination.

"After all," said Mrs. Brune, with unwonted charity, "there must be some good in that horrid vulgar woman. I should have imagined her utterly heartless and devoid of all maternal affection; but I suppose I must have judged her too harshly."

"We are all of us too prone to judge our neighbours harshly," her husband remarked; "but I don't think that, in my moments of bitterest injustice towards Mrs. Winnington, I should ever have suspected her of being the sort of old woman to kill the goose that lays the golden eggs."

"I don't know what you mean, Neville," said Mrs. Brune. "Mrs. Winnington is not an old woman, and——"

"And Mrs. Stanniforth is not a goose? Well, I don't know. If ever you find me deliberately spending a winter in the south in such company as she has chosen, I will give you leave to call me a goose, at all events."

Talk and Talkers.

Sir, we had a good talk.—JOHNSON.

As we must account for every idle word, so we must for every idle silence.—FRANKLIN.

THERE can be no fairer ambition than to excel in talk ; to be affable, gay, ready, clear, and welcome ; to have a fact, a thought, or an illustration, pat to every subject ; and not only to cheer the flight of time among our intimates, but bear our part in that great international congress, always sitting, where public wrongs are first declared, public errors first corrected, and the course of public opinion shaped, day by day, a little nearer to the right. No measure comes before Parliament but it has been long ago prepared by the grand jury of the talkers ; no book is written that has not been largely composed by their assistance. Literature in many of its branches is no other than the shadow of good talk ; but the imitation falls far short of the original in life, freedom, and effect. There are always two to a talk, giving and taking, comparing experience and according conclusions. Talk is fluid, tentative, continually “in further search and progress ;” while written words remain fixed, become idols even to the writer, found wooden dogmatisms, and preserve flies of obvious error in the amber of the truth. Last and chief, while literature, gagged with linsey-woolsey, can only deal with a fraction of the life of man, talk goes fancy free and calls a spade a spade. Talk has none of the freezing immunities of the pulpit. It cannot, even if it would, become merely æsthetic or merely classical like literature. A jest intervenes, the solemn humbug is dissolved in laughter, and speech runs forth out of the contemporary groove into the open fields of nature, cheery and cheering, like schoolboys out of school. And it is in talk alone that we can learn our period and ourselves. In short, the first duty of a man is to speak ; that is his chief business in this world ; and talk, which is the harmonious speech of two or more, is by far the most accessible of pleasures. It costs nothing in money ; it is all profit ; it completes our education, founds and fosters our friendships, and can be enjoyed at any age and in almost any state of health.

One of the greatest pleasures to a youth is his first success in conversation ; the first time that he falls among congenial people, that the talk runs on some point of common interest, that words come to him full of authority and point, and that he is heard in silence and answered with approval. Next, after he has found that he can talk himself, he goes on to meet others who can talk as well or better than he, finishing

his thoughts, uttering the things he had forgotten, using his own language, or one yet more apt and copious, but still native to his understanding. The first discovery is the more striking, but the second is the more cheerful. Then is the date of his first conversation worth the name, when he shall measure himself against his match, Greek meeting Greek, and in the discovery of another soul, glow into the knowledge of his own. The spice of life is battle; the friendliest relations are still a kind of contest; and if we would not forego all that is valuable in our lot, we must continually face some other person, eye to eye, and wrestle a fall whether in love or enmity. It is still by force of body, or power of character or intellect, that we attain to worthy pleasures. Men and women contend for each other in the lists of love, like rival mesmerists; the active and adroit decide their challenges in the sports of the body; and the sedentary sit down to chess or conversation. All sluggish and pacific pleasures are, to the same degree, solitary and selfish; and every durable bond between human beings is founded in or heightened by some element of competition. Now the relation that has the least root in matter is undoubtedly that airy one of friendship; and hence, I suppose, it is that good talk most commonly arises among friends. Talk is, indeed, both the scene and instrument of friendship. It is in talk alone that the friends can measure strength, and enjoy that amicable counter-assertion of personality which is the gauge of relations and the sport of life.

A good talk is not to be had for the asking. Humours must first be accorded in a kind of overture or prologue; hour, company, and circumstance be suited; and then, at a fit juncture, the subject, the quarry of two heated minds, spring up like a deer out of the wood. Not that the talker has any of the hunter's pride, though he has all and more than all his ardour. The talker will lose his fox and run a hare, miss the hare and come in, at the end of his day's sport, flushed and happy and triumphant, though with empty hands. There are some, indeed, who will bait the same subject by the hour, as in the House of Commons, and cry treason on the man who flags or wanders. But this is not the stamp of the true talker. These talk for victory, or to improve their minds—a purpose that defeats itself. The genuine artist follows the stream of conversation as an angler follows the windings of a brook, not dallying where he fails to “kill.” He trusts implicitly to hazard; and he is rewarded by continual variety, continual pleasure, and those changing prospects of the truth that are the best of education. There is nothing in a subject, so called, that we should regard it as an idol, or follow it beyond the promptings of desire. Indeed, there are few subjects; and so far as they are truly talkable, more than the half of them may be reduced to three: that I am I, that you are you, and that there are other people dimly understood to be not quite the same as either. Wherever talk may range, it still runs half the time on these eternal lines. The theme being set, each plays on himself as on an instrument;

asserts and justifies himself; ransacks his brain for instances and opinions, and brings them forth new-minted, to his own surprise and the admiration of his adversary. All natural talk is a festival of ostentation; and by the laws of the game, each accepts and fans the vanity of the other. It is from that reason that we venture to lay ourselves so open, that we dare to be so warmly eloquent, and that we swell in each other's eyes to such a vast proportion. For talkers, once launched, begin to overflow the limits of their ordinary selves, tower up to the height of their secret pretensions, and give themselves out for the heroes, brave, pious, musical, and wise, that in their most shining moments they aspire to be. So they weave for themselves with words, and for a while inhabit a palace of delights, temple at once and theatre, where they fill the round of the world's dignities, and feast with the gods, exulting in Kudos. And when the talk is over, each goes his way, still flushed at once with vanity and admiration, still trailing clouds of glory; each declines from the height of this ideal orgie, not in a moment, but by slow declension. I remember, in the *entr'acte* of an afternoon performance, coming forth into the sunshine, in a beautiful green, gardened corner of a romantic city; and as I sat and smoked, the music moving in my blood, I seemed to sit there and evaporate the *Flying Dutchman* (for it was that I had been hearing) with a wonderful sense of life, warmth, well-being, and pride; and the noises of the city, voices, bells, and marching feet, fell together in my ears like a symphonious orchestra. In the same way, the excitement of a good talk lives for a long while after in the blood, the heart still hot within you, the brain still simmering, and the physical earth swimming around you with the colours of the sunset.

Natural talk, like ploughing, should turn up a large surface of life, rather than dig mines into geological strata. Masses of experience, anecdote, incident, cross-lights, quotation, historical instances, the whole flotsam and jetsam of two minds forced in and in upon the matter in hand from every point of the compass and from every degree of mental elevation and abasement—these are the material with which talk is fortified, the food on which the talkers thrive. Such argument as is proper to the exercise should still be brief and seizing. Talk should proceed by instances; by the apposite, not the expository. It should keep close along the lines of humanity, near the bosoms and businesses of men, at the level where history, fiction, and experience intersect and illuminate each other. Into that illusory region where the speakers reign supreme, mankind must be evoked, not only in the august names and shadowy attributes of history, but in the life, the humour, the very bodily figure of their common friends. It is thus that they begin to marshal armies of evidence on either side of their contention; and as they sit aloft and reason high, the whole pageant of man's life passes before them in review. I am I, and You are You, with all my heart; but conceive how these lean propositions change and brighten when, instead of words, the actual you and I sit cheek by jowl, the spirit housed in the live body, and the

very clothes uttering voices to corroborate the story in the face. Not less surprising is the change when we leave off to speak of generalities—the bad, the good, the miser, and all the characters of Theophrastus—and call up other men, by anecdote or instance, in their very trick and feature; or trading on a common knowledge, toss each other famous names, still glowing with the hues of life. Communication is no longer by words, but by the instancing of whole biographies, epics, systems of philosophy, and epochs of history, in bulk. That which is understood excels that which is spoken in quantity and quality alike; ideas thus figured and personified, change hands, as we may say, like coin; and the speakers imply without effort the most obscure and intricate thoughts. Strangers who have a large common ground of reading, will, for this reason, come the sooner to the grapple of genuine converse. If they know Othello and Napoleon, Consuelo and Clarissa Harlowe, Vautrin and Steenie Steenson, they can leave generalities and begin at once to speak by figures.

Conduct and art are the two subjects that arise most frequently and that embrace the widest range of facts. A few pleasures bear discussion for their own sake; but only those which are most social or most radically human; and even these can only be discussed among their devotees. A technicality is always welcome to the expert, whether in athletics, art, or law; I have heard the best kind of talk on technicalities from such rare and happy persons as both know and love their business. No human being ever spoke of scenery for above two minutes at a time, which makes me suspect we hear too much of it in literature. The weather is regarded as the very nadir and scoff of conversational topics. And yet the weather, the dramatic element in scenery, is far more tractable in language, and far more human both in import and suggestion than the stable features of the landscape; sailors and shepherds, and the people generally of coast and mountain, talk well of it; it is often excitingly presented in literature, and Mr. Clark Russell's squalls and hurricanes are things to be remembered during life. But the tendency of all living talk draws it back and back into the common focus of humanity; talk is a creature of the street and market-place, feeding on gossip; and its last resort is still in a discussion on morals. That is the heroic form of gossip; heroic, in virtue of its high pretensions; but still gossip, because it turns on personalities. You can keep no men long, nor Scotchmen at all, off moral or theological discussion. These are to all the world what law is to lawyers; they are everybody's technicalities; the medium through which all consider life, and the dialect in which they express their judgments. I knew three young men who walked together daily for some two months, in a solemn and beautiful forest and in cloudless summer weather; daily they talked with unabated zest, and yet scarce wavered that whole time beyond two subjects: theology and love. And perhaps neither a court of love nor an assembly of divines would have granted their premisses or welcomed their conclusions.

Conclusions, indeed, are not often reached by talk any more than by private thinking, that is not the profit; the profit is in the exercise, and above all in the experience; for when we reason at large on any subject, we review our state and history in life. Here we may apply the fable of the father and his sons; there is, after all, no hidden treasure, no sounding discovery is made; but the soil is laboured and oxygenated, and yields more freely of its natural products. From time to time, however, and specially, I think, in talking art, talk becomes effective, conquering like war, widening the boundaries of knowledge like an exploration. A point arises; the question takes a problematical, a baffling, yet a likely air; the talkers begin to feel lively presentiments of some conclusion near at hand; towards this they strive with emulous ardour, each by his own path, and struggling for first utterance; and then one leaps upon the summit of that matter with a shout, and almost at the same moment the other is beside him, and behold they are agreed. Like enough, the progress is illusory, a mere cat's cradle having been wound and unwound out of words. But the sense of joint discovery is none the less giddy and inspiring. And in the life of the talker such triumphs, though imaginary, are neither few nor far apart; they are attained with speed and pleasure, in the hour of mirth; and by the nature of the process, they are always worthily shared.

This emulous, bright, progressive talking, the pick of common life, is most usually enjoyed in a duet. Three, in spite of the proverb, is often excellent company, but the talk must run more gently. When we reach these breathless moments, when there comes a difference to be resolved, the third party is either badgered by a coalition, or the two others address him as an audience and strive for victory; and in either case, the necessary temper and sincerity are lost. With any greater number than three, fighting talk becomes impossible; and you have either indolent, laughter-loving divagation, or the whole company breaks up into a preacher and an audience. It is odd, but true, that I have never known a good brisk debate between persons of opposite sex. Between these it has always turned into that very different matter, a dispute. Instead of pushing forward and continually changing ground in quest of some agreement, the parties have instantly fortified their starting-point, and held that, as for a wager, against all odds and argument. To me, as a man, the cause seems to reside in the superior obstinacy of woman; but there is little question that the fault is shared; for the prosperity of talk lies not in one or other, but in both. There is a certain attitude, combative at once and deferential, eager to fight yet most averse to quarrel, which marks out at once the talkable man. It is not eloquence, not fairness, not obstinacy, but a certain proportion of all of these, that I love to encounter in my amicable adversaries. They must not be pontiffs holding doctrine, but huntsmen questing after elements of truth. Neither must they be boys to be instructed, but fellow-teachers with whom I may wrangle and agree on equal terms. We must reach some solution, some

shadow of consent ; for without that, eager talk becomes a torture ; but we do not wish to reach it cheaply, or quickly, or without the tussle and effort wherein pleasure lies.

The very best talker, with me, is one whom I shall call Spring-Heel'd Jack. I say so, because I never knew anyone who mingled so largely the possible ingredients of converse. In the Spanish proverb, the fourth man necessary to compound a salad, is a madman to mix it : Jack is that madman. I know not which is more remarkable ; the insane lucidity of his conclusions, the humorous eloquence of his language, or his power of method, bringing the whole of life into the focus of the subject treated, mixing the conversational salad like a drunken god. He doubles like the serpent, changes and flashes like the shaken kaleidoscope, transmigrates bodily into the views of others, and so, in the twinkling of an eye and with a heady rapture, turns questions inside out and flings them empty before you on the ground, like a triumphant conjuror. It is my common practice when a piece of conduct puzzles me, to attack it in the presence of Jack with such grossness, such partiality and such wearing iteration, as at length shall spur him up in its defence. In a moment he transmigrates, dons the required character, and with moonstruck philosophy, justifies the act in question. I can fancy nothing to compare with the *vim* of these impersonations, the strange scale of language, flying from Shakspeare to Kant, and from Kant to Major Dyngwell,

As fast as a musician scatters sounds
Out of an instrument—

the sudden, sweeping generalisations, the absurd irrelevant particularities, the wit, wisdom, folly, humour, eloquence, and bathos, each startling in its kind, and yet all luminous in the admired disorder of their combination. A talker of a different calibre, though belonging to the same school, is Burly. Burly is a man of a great presence ; he commands a larger atmosphere, gives the impression of a grosser mass of character than most men. It has been said of him that his presence could be felt in a room you entered blindfold ; and the same, I think, has been said of other powerful constitutions condemned to much physical inaction. There is something boisterous and piratic in Burly's manner of talk which suits well enough with this impression. He will roar you down, he will bury his face in his hands, he will undergo passions of revolt and agony ; and meanwhile his attitude of mind is really both conciliatory and receptive ; and after Pistol has been out-Pistol'd, and the welkin rung for hours, you begin to perceive a certain subsidence in these spring torrents, points of agreement issue, and you end arm-in-arm, and in a glow of mutual admiration. The outcry only serves to make your final union the more unexpected and precious. Throughout there has been perfect sincerity, perfect intelligence, a desire to hear although not always to listen, and an unaffected eagerness to meet concessions. You have, with Burly, none of the dangers that attend

debate with Spring-Heel'd Jack; who may at any moment turn his powers of transmigration on yourself, create for you a view you never held, and then furiously fall on you for holding it. These, at least, are my two favourites, and both are loud, copious, intolérant talkers. This argues that I myself am in the same category; for if we love talking at all, we love a bright, fierce adversary, who will hold his ground, foot by foot, in much our own manner, sell his attention dearly, and give us our full measure of the dust and exertion of battle. Both these men can be beat from a position, but it takes six hours to do it; a high and hard adventure, worth attempting. With both you can pass days in an enchanted country of the mind, with people, scenery, and manners of its own; live a life apart, more arduous, active, and glowing than any real existence; and come forth again when the talk is over, as out of a theatre or a dream, to find the east wind still blowing and the chimney-pots of the old battered city still around you. Jack has the far finer mind, Burly the far more honest; Jack gives us the animated poetry, Burly the romantic prose, of similar themes; the one glances high like a meteor and makes a light in darkness; the other, with many changing hues of fire, burns at the sea level, like a conflagration; but both have the same humour and artistic interests, the same unquenched ardour in pursuit, the same gusts of talk and thunderclaps of contradiction.

Cockshot is a different article, but vastly entertaining, and has been meat and drink to me for many a long evening. His manner is dry, brisk, and pertinacious, and the choice of words not much. The point about him is his extraordinary readiness and spirit. You can propound nothing but he has either a theory about it ready made, or will have one instantly on the stocks, and proceed to lay its timbers and launch it in your presence. "Let me see," he will say. "Give me a moment. I *should* have some theory for that." A blither spectacle than the vigour with which he sets about the task, it were hard to fancy. He is possessed by a demoniac energy, welding the elements for his life, and bending ideas, as an athlete bends a horseshoe, with a visible and lively effort. He has, in theorising, a compass, an art; what I would call the synthetic gusto; something of a Herbert Spencer, who should see the fun of the thing. You are not bound, and no more is he, to place your faith in these brand-new opinions. But some of them are right enough, durable even for life; and the poorest scene for a cock-shy—as when idle people, after picnics, float a bottle on a pond and have an hour's diversion ere it sinks. Whichever they are, serious opinions or humours of the moment, he still defends his ventures with indefatigable wit and spirit, hitting savagely himself, but taking punishment like a man. He knows and never forgets that people talk, first of all, for the sake of talking; conducts himself in the ring, to use the old slang, like a thorough "glutton," and honestly enjoys a telling facer from his adversary. Cockshot is bottled effervescency, the sworn foe of sleep. Three-in-the-morning Cockshot, says a victim. His talk is like the driest of all imaginable

dry champagnes. Sleight of hand and inimitable quickness are the qualities by which he lives. Athelred, on the other hand, presents you with the spectacle of a sincere and somewhat slow nature thinking aloud. He is the most unready man I ever knew to shine in conversation. You may see him sometimes wrestle with a refractory jest for a minute or two together, and perhaps fail to throw it in the end. And there is something singularly engaging, often instructive, in the simplicity with which he thus exposes the process as well as the result, the works as well as the dial of the clock. Withal he has his hours of inspiration. Apt words come to him as if by accident, and, coming from deeper down, they smack the more personally, they have the more of fine old crusted humanity, rich in sediment and humour. There are sayings of his in which he has stamped himself into the very grain of the language; you would think he must have worn the words next his skin and slept with them. Yet it is not as a sayer of particular good things that Athelred is most to be regarded, rather as the stalwart woodman of thought. I have pulled on a light cord often enough, while he has been wielding the broad-axe; and between us, on this unequal division, many a specious fallacy has fallen. I have known him to battle the same question night after night for years, keeping it in the reign of talk, constantly applying it and re-applying it to life with humorous or grave intention, and all the while, never hurrying, nor flagging, nor taking an unfair advantage of the facts. Jack at a given moment, when arising, as it were, from the tripod, can be more radiantly just to those from whom he differs; but then the tenor of his thoughts is even calumnious; while Athelred, slower to forge excuses, is yet slower to condemn, and sits over the welter of the world, vacillating but still judicial, and still faithfully contending with his doubts.

Both the last talkers deal much in points of conduct and religion, studied in the "dry light" of prose. Indirectly and as if against his will the same qualities from time to time appear in the troubled and poetic talk of Opalstein. His various and exotic knowledge, complete although unready sympathies, and fine, full, discriminative flow of language, fit him out to be the best of talkers; so perhaps he is with some, not *quite* with me—*proxime accessit*, I should say. He sings the praises of the earth and the arts, flowers and jewels, wine and music, in a moon-light, serenading manner, as to the light guitar; even wisdom comes from his tongue like singing; no one is, indeed, more tuneful in the upper notes. But even while he sings the song of the Sirens, he still hearkens to the barking of the Sphinx. Jarring Byronic notes interrupt the flow of his Horatian humours. His mirth has something of the tragedy of the world for its perpetual background; and he feasts like Don Giovanni to a double orchestra, one lightly sounding for the dance, one pealing Beethoven in the distance. He is not truly reconciled either with life or with himself; and this instant war in his members sometimes divides the man's attention. He does not always, perhaps not often, frankly surrender himself in conversation. He brings into the talk other thoughts than those

which he expresses ; you are conscious that he keeps an eye on something else, that he does not shake off the world, nor quite forget himself. Hence arise occasional disappointments ; even an occasional unfairness for his companions, who find themselves one day giving too much, and the next, when they are wary out of season, giving perhaps too little. Purcel is in another class from any I have mentioned. He is no debater, but appears in conversation, as occasion rises, in two distinct characters, one of which I admire and fear, and the other love. In the first, he is radiantly civil and rather silent, sits on a high, courtly hilltop, and from that vantage ground drops you his remarks like favours. He seems not to share in our sublunary contentions ; he wears no sign of interest ; when on a sudden there falls in a crystal of wit, so polished that the dull do not perceive it, but so right that the sensitive are silenced. True talk should have more body and blood, should be louder, vainer and more declaratory of the man ; the true talker should not hold so steady an advantage over whom he speaks with ; and that is one reason out of a score, why I prefer my Purcel in his second character, when he unbends into a strain of graceful gossip, singing like the fireside kettle. In these moods, he has an elegant homeliness that rings of the true Queen Anne. I know another person who attains, in his moments, to the insolence of a Restoration comedy, speaking, I declare, as Congreve wrote ; but that is a sport of nature, and scarce falls under the rubric, for there is none, alas ! to give him answer.

One last remark occurs : It is the mark of genuine conversation that the sayings can scarce be quoted with their full effect beyond the circle of common friends. To have their proper weight, they should appear in a biography and with the portrait of the speaker. Good talk is dramatic ; it is like an impromptu piece of acting where each should represent himself to the greatest advantage ; and that is the best kind of talk where each speaker is most fully and candidly himself, and where, if you were to shift the speeches round from one to another, there would be the greatest loss in significance and perspicuity. It is for this reason that talk depends so wholly on our company. We should like to introduce Falstaff and Mercutio, or Falstaff and Sir Toby ; but Falstaff in talk with Cordelia seems even painful. Most of us, by the Protean quality of man, can talk to some degree with all ; but the true talk, that strikes out all the slumbering best of us, comes only with the peculiar brethren of our spirits, is founded as deep as love in the constitution of our being, and is a thing to relish with all our energy, while yet we have it, and to be grateful for for ever.

R. L. S.

Easters and Chesters.

EVERYBODY knows, of course, that up and down over the face of England a whole crop of places may be found with such terminations as Lancaster, Doncaster, Manchester, Leicester, Gloucester, or Exeter; and everybody also knows that these words are various corruptions or alterations of the Latin *castra*, or perhaps we ought rather to say of the singular form, *castrum*. So much we have all been told from our childhood upward; and for the most part we have been quite ready to acquiesce in the statement without any further troublesome inquiry on our own account. But in reality the explanation thus vouchsafed us does not help us much towards explaining the real origin and nature of these ancient names. It is true enough as far as it goes, but it does not go nearly far enough. It reminds one a little of Charles Kingsley's accomplished pupil-teacher, with his glib derivation of amphibious "from two Greek words, *amphi*, the land, and *bios*, the water." A detailed history of the root "Chester" in its various British usages may serve to show how far such a rough-and-ready solution as the pupil-teacher's falls short of complete accuracy and comprehensiveness.

In the first place, without troubling ourselves for the time being with the diverse forms of the word as now existing, a difficulty meets us at the very outset as to how it ever got into the English language at all. "It was left behind by the Romans," says the pupil-teacher unhesitatingly. No doubt; but if so, the only language in which it could be left would be Welsh; for when the Romans quitted Britain there were probably as yet no English settlements on any part of the eastern coast. Now the Welsh form of the word, even as given us in the very ancient Latin Welsh tract ascribed to Nennius, is "Caer" or "Kair;" and there is every reason to believe that the Celtic *cathir* or the Latin *castrum* had been already worn down into this corrupt form at least as early as the days of the first English colonisation of Britain. Indeed I shall show ground hereafter for believing that that form survives even now in one or two parts of Teutonic England. But if this be so, it is quite clear that the earliest English conquerors could not have acquired the use of the word from the vanquished Welsh whom they spared as slaves or tributaries. The new-comers could not have learned to speak of a Ceaster or Chester from Welshmen who called it a Caer; nor could they have adopted the names of Leicester or Gloucester from Welshmen who knew those towns only as Kair Legion or Kair Gloui. It is clear that this easy off-hand theory shirks all the real difficulties of the question, and that we must

look a little closer into the matter in order to understand the true history of these interesting philological fossils.

Already we have got one clear and distinct principle to begin with, which is too often overlooked by amateur philologists. The Latin language, as spoken by Romans in Britain during their occupation of the island, has left and can have left absolutely no direct marks upon our English tongue, for the simple reason that English (or Anglo-Saxon as we call it in its earlier stages) did not begin to be spoken in any part of Britain for twenty or thirty years after the Romans retired. Whatever Latin words have come down to us in unbroken succession from the Roman times—and they are but a few—must have come down from Welsh sources. The Britons may have learnt them from their Italian masters, and may then have imparted them, after the brief period of precarious independence, to their Teutonic masters; but of direct intercourse between Roman and Englishman there was probably little or none.

Three ways out of this difficulty might possibly be suggested by any humble imitator of Mr. Gladstone. First, the early English pirates may have learnt the word *castrum* (they always used it as a singular) years before they ever came to Britain as settlers at all. For during the long decay of the empire, the corsairs of the flat banks and islets of Sleswick and Friesland made many a light-hearted plundering expedition upon the unlucky coasts of the maritime Roman provinces; and it was to repel their dreaded attacks that the Count of the Saxon Shore was appointed to the charge of the long exposed tract from the fenland of the Wash to the estuary of the Rother in Sussex. On one occasion they even sacked London itself, already the chief trading town of the whole island. During some such excursions, the pirates would be certain to pick up a few Latin words, especially such as related to new objects, unseen in the rude society of their own native heather-clad wastes; and amongst these we may be sure that the great Roman fortresses would rank first and highest in their barbaric eyes. Indeed, modern comparative philologists have shown beyond doubt that a few southern forms of speech had already penetrated to the primitive English marshland by the shores of the Baltic and the mouth of the Elbe, before the great exodus of the fifth century; and we know that Roman or Byzantine coins, and other objects belonging to the Mediterranean civilisation, are found abundantly in barrows of the first Christian centuries in Sleswick—the primitive England of the colonists who conquered Britain. But if the word *castrum* did not get into early English by some such means, then we must fall back either upon our second alternative explanation, that the townspeople of the south-eastern plains in England had become thoroughly Latinised in speech during the Roman occupation; or upon our third, that they spoke a Celtic dialect more akin to Gaulish than the modern Welsh of Wales, which may be descended from the ruder and older tongue of the western aborigines. This last opinion would fit in very well with the views of

Mr. Rhys, the Celtic professor at Oxford, who thinks that all south-eastern Britain was conquered and colonised by the Gauls before the Roman invasion. If so, it may be only the western Welsh who said *Caer*; the eastern may have said *castrum*, as the Romans did. In either of the latter two cases, we must suppose that the early English learnt the word from the conquered Britons of the districts they overran. But I myself have very little doubt that they had borrowed it long before their settlement in our island at all.

However this may be—and I confess I have been a little puritanically minute upon the subject—the English settlers learned to use the word from the first moment they landed in Britain. In its earliest English dress it appears as *Ceaster*, pronounced like *Keaster*, for the soft sound of the initial in modern English is due to later Norman influences. The newcomers—Anglo-Saxons, if you choose to call them so—applied the word to every Roman town or ruin they found in Britain. Indeed, all the Latin words of the first crop in English—those used during the heathen age, before Augustine and his monks introduced the Roman civilisation—belong to such material relics of the older provincial culture as the Sleswick pirates had never before known: *way* from *via*, *wall* from *vallum*, *street* from *strata*, and *port* from *portus*. In this first crop of foreign words, *Ceaster* also must be reckoned, and it was originally employed in English as a common rather than as a proper name. Thus we read in the brief chronicle of the West Saxon kings, under the year 577, “Cuthwine and Ceawlin fought against the Welsh, and offslaw three kings, Conmail and Condidan and Farinmail, and took three ceasters, Gleawan ceaster and Ciren ceaster and Bathan ceaster.” We might modernise a little, so as to show the real sense, by saying, “Glevum city and Corinium city and Bath city.” Here it is noticeable that in two of the cases—Gloucester and Cirencester—the descriptive termination has become at last part of the name; but in the third case—that of Bath—it has never succeeded in doing so. Ages after, in the reign of King Alfred, we still find the word used as a common noun; for the *Chronicle* mentions that a body of Danish freebooters “fared to a waste ceaster in Wirral; it is hight Lega ceaster;” that is to say, Legionis castra, now Chester. The grand old English epic of *Beowulf*, which is perhaps older than the colonisation of Britain, speaks of townsfolk as “the dwellers in ceasters.”

As a rule, each particular Roman town retained its full name, in a more or less clipped form, for official uses; but in the ordinary colloquial language of the neighbourhood they all seem to have been described as “the *Ceaster*” simply, just as we ourselves habitually speak of “town,” meaning the particular town near which we live, or, in a more general sense, London. Thus, in the north, *Ceaster* usually means York, the Roman capital of the province; as when the *Chronicle* tells us that “John succeeded to the bishopric of *Ceaster*,” that “Wilfrith was hallowed as bishop at *Ceaster*,” or that “Æthelberht the archbishop died

at Ceaster." In the south it is employed to mean Winchester, the capital of the West Saxon kings and overlords of all Britain; as when the *Chronicle* says that "King Edgar drove out the priests at Ceaster from the Old Minster and the New Minster, and set them with monks." So, as late as the days of Charles II., "to go to town" meant in Shropshire to go to Shrewsbury, and in Norfolk to go to Norwich. In only one instance has this colloquial usage survived down to our own days in a large town, and that is at Chester, where the short form has quite ousted the full name of Lega ceaster. But in the case of small towns or unimportant Roman stations, which would seldom need to be mentioned outside their own immediate neighbourhood, the simple form is quite common, as at Caistor in Norfolk, Castor in Hunts, and elsewhere. At times, too, we get an added English termination, as at Casterton, Chester-ton, and Chesterholme; or a slight distinguishing mark, as at Great Chesters, Little Chester, Bridge Casterton, and Chester-le-Street. All these have now quite lost their old distinctive names, though they have acquired new ones to distinguish them from *the* Chester, or from one another. For example, Chester-le-Street was Conderco in Roman times, and Cunega ceaster in the early English period. Both names are derived from the little river Cone, which flows through the village.

Before we pass on to the consideration of those *castra* which, like Manchester and Lancaster, have preserved to the present day their original Roman or Celtic prefixes in more or less altered shapes, we must glance briefly at a general principle running through the modernised forms now in use. The reader, with his usual acuteness, will have noticed that the word Ceaster reappears under many separate disguises in the names of different modern towns. Sometimes it is *caster*, sometimes *chester*, sometimes *cester*, and sometimes even it gets worn down to a mere fugitive relic, as *ceter* or *eter*. But these different corruptions do not occur irregularly up and down the country, one here and one there; they follow a distinct law, and are due to certain definite underlying facts of race or language. Each set of names lies in a regular stratum; and the different strata succeed one another like waves over the face of England, from north-east to south-westward. In the extreme north and east, where the English or Anglian blood is purest, or is "mixed only with Danes and Northmen to any large extent, such forms as Lancaster, Doncaster, Caistor, and Casterton abound. In the mixed midlands and the Saxon south, the sound softens into Chesterfield, Chester, Winchester, and Dorchester. In the inner midlands and the Severn vale, where the proportion of Celtic blood becomes much stronger, the termination grows still softer in Leicester, Bicester, Cirencester, Gloucester, and Worcester, while at the same time a marked tendency towards elision occurs; for these words are really pronounced as if written Lester, Bister, Cisseter, Gloster, and Wooster. Finally, on the very borders of Wales, and of that Damnonian country which was once known to our fathers as West Wales, we get the very abbreviated forms Wroxeter, Uttoxeter,

and Exeter, of which the second is colloquially still further shortened into Uxeter. Sometimes these tracts approach very closely to one another, as on the banks of the Nene, where the two halves of the Roman Durobrivæ have become Castor on one side of the river, and Chæsterton on the other; but the line can be marked distinctly on the map, with a slight outward bulge, with as great regularity as the geological strata. It will be most convenient here, therefore, to begin with the *casters*, which have undergone the least amount of rubbing down, and from them to pass on regularly to the successively weaker forms in *chester*, *cester*, *ceter*, and *eter*.

Nothing, indeed, can be more deceptive than the common fashion of quoting a Roman name from the often blundering lists of the Itineraries, and then passing on at once to the modern English form, without any hint of the intermediate stages. To say that Glevum is now Gloucester is to tell only half the truth; until we know that the two were linked together by the gradual steps of Glevum castrum, Gleawan ceaster, Gleawe cester, Gloucester, and Gloster, we have not really explained the words at all. By beginning with the least corrupt forms we shall best be able to see the slow nature of the change, and we shall also find at the same time that a good deal of incidental light is shed upon the importance and extent of the English settlement.

Doncaster is an excellent example of the simplest form of modernisation. It appears in the Antonine Itinerary and in the *Notitia Imperii* as Danum. This, with the ordinary termination affixed, becomes at once Dona ceaster or Doncaster. The name is of course originally derived in either form from the river Don, which flows beside it; and the Northumbrian invaders must have learnt the names of both river and station from their Brigantian British serfs. It shows the fluctuating nature of the early local nomenclature, however, when we find that Bæda ("the Venerable Bede") describes the place in his Latinised vocabulary as Campodonum—that is to say, the Field of Don, or, more idiomatically, Donfield, a name exactly analogous to those of Chesterfield, Macclesfield, Mansfield, Sheffield, and Huddersfield in the neighbouring region. The comparison of Doncaster and Chesterfield is thus most interesting: for here we have two Roman stations, each of which must once have had two alternative names; but in the one case the old Roman name has ultimately prevailed, and in the other case the modern English one.

The second best example of a Caster, perhaps, is Lancaster. In all probability this is the station which appears in the *Notitia Imperii* as Longovico, an oblique case which it might be hazardous to put in the nominative, seeing that it seems rather to mean the Town on the Lune or Loan than the Long Village. Here, as in many other cases, the formative element, vicus, is exchanged for Ceaster, and we get something like Lon-ceaster or finally Lancaster. Other remarkable Casters are Brancaster in Norfolk, once Branadunum (where the British termination *dun* has been similarly dropped); Ancaster in Lincolnshire, whose Roman

name is not certainly known; and Caistor, near Norwich, once Venta Icenorum, a case which may best be considered under the head of Winchester. On the other hand, Tadcaster gives us an instance where the Roman prefix has apparently been entirely altered, for it appears in the Antonine Itinerary (according to the best identification) as Calcaria, so that we might reasonably expect it to be modernised as Calcaster. Even here, however, we might well suspect an earlier alternative title, of which we shall get plenty when we come to examine the Chesters; and in fact, in Bæda, it still bears its old name in a slightly disguised form as Kaelca ceaster.

First among the softer forms, let us examine the interesting group to which Chester itself belongs. Its Roman name was, beyond doubt, Diva, the station on the Dee—as Doncaster is the station on the Don, and Lancaster the station on the Lune. Its proper modern form ought, therefore, to be Deechester. But it would seem that in certain places the neighbouring rustics knew the great Roman town of their district, not by its official title, but as the Legion's Camp—Castra Legionis. At least three such cases undoubtedly occur—one at Deva or Chester; one at Ratæ or Leicester; and one at Isca Silurum or Caerleon-upon-Usk. In each case the modernisation has taken a very different form. Diva was captured by the heathen English king, Æthelfrith of Northumbria, in a battle rendered famous by Bæda, who calls the place "the City of Legions." The Latin compilation by some Welsh writer, ascribed to Nennius, calls it Cair Legion, which is also its name in the Irish annals. In the *English Chronicle* it appears as Lege ceaster, Læge ceaster, and Leg ceaster; but after the Norman Conquest it becomes Ceaster alone. On midland lips the sound soon grew into the familiar Chester. About the second case, that of Leicester, there is a slight difficulty, for it assumes in the *Chronicle* the form of Lægra ceaster, with an apparently intrusive letter; and the later Welsh writers seized upon the form to fit in with their own ancient legend of King Lear. Nennius calls it Cair Lerion; and that unblushing romancer, Geoffrey of Monmouth, makes it at once into Kair Leir, the city of Leir. More probably the name is a mixture of Legionis and Ratæ, Leg-rat ceaster, the camp of the Legion at Ratæ. This, again, grew into Legra ceaster, Leg ceaster, and Lei ceaster, while the word, though written Leicester, is now shortened by south midland voices to Lester. The third Legionis Castra remained always Welsh, and so hardened on Cymric lips into Kair Leon or Caerleon. Nennius applies the very similar name of Cair Legeion to Exeter, still in his time a Damnonian or West Welsh fortress.

Equally interesting have been the fortunes of the three towns of which Winchester is the type. In the old Welsh tongue, Gwent means a champaign country, or level alluvial plain. The Romans borrowed the word as Venta, and applied it to the three local centres of Venta Icenorum in Norfolk, Venta Belgarum in Hampshire, and Venta Silurum in Monmouth. When the first West Saxon pirates, under their

real or mythical leader, Cerdic, swarmed up Southampton Water and occupied the Gwent of the Belgæ, they called their new conquest Wintan ceaster, though the still closer form Wāntan once occurs. Thence to Winte ceaster and Winchester is no far cry. Gwent of the Iceni had a different history. No doubt it also was known at first as Wintan ceaster; but, as at Winchester, the shorter form Ceaster would naturally be employed in local colloquial usage; and when the chief centre of East Anglian population was removed a few miles north to Norwich, the north wick—then a port on the navigable estuary of the Yare—the older station sank into insignificance, and was only locally remembered as Caistor. Lastly, Gwent of the Silurians has left its name alone to Caer-Went in Monmouthshire, where hardly any relics now remain of the Roman occupation.

Manchester belongs to exactly the same class as Winchester. Its Roman name was Mancunium, which would easily glide into Mancun-ceaster. In the *English Chronicle* it is only once mentioned, and then as Mame ceaster—a form explained by the alternative Mamucium in the *Itinerary*, which would naturally become Mamuc ceaster. Colchester of course represents Colonia, corrupted first into Coln ceaster, and so through Col ceaster into its present form. Porchester in Hants is Portus Magnus; Dorchester is Durnovaria, and then Dorn ceaster. Grantchester, Godmanchester, Chesterfield, Woodchester, and many others, help us to trace the line across the map of England, to the most western limit of all at Ilchester, anciently Ischalis, though the intermediate form of Givel ceaster is certainly an odd one.

Besides these Chesters of the regular order, there are several curious outlying instances in Durham and Northumberland, and along the Roman Wall, islanded, as it were, beyond the intermediate belt of Casters. Such are Lanchester in Durham, which may be compared with the more familiar Lancaster; Great Chesters in Northumberland, Ebchester on the northern Watling Street, and a dozen more. How to account for these is rather a puzzle. Perhaps the Casters may be mainly due to Danish influence (which is the common explanation), and it is known that the Danes spread but sparingly to the north of the Tees. However, this rough solution of the problem proves too much; for how then can we have a still softer form in Danish Leicester itself? Probably we shall be nearer the truth if we say that these are late names; for Northumberland was a desert long after the great harrying by William the Conqueror; and by the time it was re peopled, Chester had become the recognised English form, so that it would naturally be employed by the new occupants of the districts about the Wall.

No name in Britain, however, is more interesting than that of Rochester, which admirably shows us how so many other Roman names have acquired a delusively English form, or have been mistaken for memorials of the English conquest. The Roman town was known as Durobrivæ, which does not in the least resemble Rochester; and what is

more, Bæda distinctly tells us that Justus, the first bishop of the West Kentish see, was consecrated "in the city of Dorubrevi, which the English call Hrofæs ceaster, from one of its former masters, by name Hrof." If this were all we knew about it, we should be told that Bæda clearly described the town as being called Hrof's chester, from an English conqueror Hrof, and that to contradict this clear statement of an early writer was presumptuous or absurd. Fortunately, however, we have the clearest possible proof that Hrof never existed, and that he was a pure creation of Bæda's own simple etymological guesswork. King Alfred clearly knew better, for he omitted this wild derivation from his English translation. The valuable fragment of a map of Roman Britain preserved for us in the mediæval transcript known as the *Peutinger Tables*, sets down Rochester as Rotibis. Hence it is pretty certain that it must have had two alternative names, of which the other was Durobrivæ. Rotibis would easily pass (on the regular analogies) into Rotifi ceaster, and that again into Hrofi ceaster and Rochester; just as Rhutupiæ or Ritupæ passed into Rituf burh, and so finally into Richborough. Moreover, in a charter of King Æthelberht of Kent, older a good deal than Bæda's time, we find the town described under the mixed form of Hrofi-brevi. After such a certain instance of philological blundering as this, I for one am not inclined to place great faith in such statements as that made by the *English Chronicle* about Chichester, which it attributes to the mythical South Saxon king Cissa. Whatever Cissan-ceaster may mean, it seems to me much more likely that it represents another case of double naming; for though the Roman town was commonly known as Regnum, that is clearly a mere administrative form, derived from the tribal name of the Regni. Considering that the same veracious *Chronicle* derives Portsmouth, the Roman Portus, from an imaginary Teutonic invader, Port, and commits itself to other wild statements of the same sort, I don't think we need greatly hesitate about rejecting its authority in these earlier and conjectural portions.

Silchester is another much disputed name. As a rule, the site has been identified with that of Calleva Atrebatum; but the proofs are scanty, and the identification must be regarded as a doubtful one. I have already ventured to suggest in this magazine that the word may contain the root Silva, as the town is situated close upon the ancient borders of Pamber Forest. The absence of early forms, however, makes this somewhat of a random shot. Indeed, it is difficult to arrive at any definite conclusions in these cases, except by patiently following up the name from first to last, through all its variations, corruptions, and misspellings.

The *Cesters* are even more degraded (philologically speaking) than the *Chesters*, but are not less interesting and illustrative in their way. Their furthest north-easterly extension, I believe, is to be found at Leicester and Towcester. The former we have already considered: the latter appears in the *Chronicle* as Tofe ceaster, and derives its name from

the little river Towe, on which it is situated. Anciently, no doubt, the river was called Tofe or Tofi, like the Tavy in Devonshire ; for all these river-words recur over and over again, both in England and on the Continent. In this case, there seems no immediate connection with the Roman name, if the site be rightly identified with that of Lactodorum ; but at any rate the river name is Celtic, so that Towcester cannot be claimed as a Teutonic settlement.

Cirencester, the meeting-place of all the great Roman roads, is the Latin Corinium, sometimes given as Durocornovium, which well illustrates the fluctuating state of Roman nomenclature in Britain. As this great strategical centre—the key of the west—had formerly been the capital of the Dobuni, whose name it sometimes bears, it might easily have come down to us as Durchester, or Dobchester, instead of under its existing guise. The city was captured by the West Saxons in 577, and is then called Ciren ceaster in the brief record of the conquerors. A few years later, the *Chronicle* gives it as Cirn ceaster ; and since the river is called Chirn, this is the form it might fairly have been expected to retain, as in the case of Cerney close by. But the city was too far west not to have its name largely rubbed down in use ; so it softened both its initials into Cirencester, while Cissan ceaster only got (through Cisse ceaster) as far as Chichester. At that point the spelling of the western town has stopped short, but the tongues of the natives have run on till nothing now remains but Cisseter. If we had only that written form on the one hand, and Durocornovium on the other, even the boldest etymologist would hardly venture to suggest that they had any connection with one another. Of course the common prefix Duro- is only the Welsh Dwr, water, and its occurrence in a name merely implies a ford or river. The alternative forms may be Anglicised as Churn, and Churn-water, just like Grasmere, and Grasmere Lake.

I wish I could avoid saying anything about Worcester, for it is an obscure and difficult subject ; but I fear the attempt to shirk it would be useless in the long run. I know from sad experience that if I omit it every inhabitant of Worcestershire who reads this article will hunt me out somehow, and run me to earth at last, with a letter demanding a full and explicit explanation of this silent insult to his native county. So I must try to put the best possible face upon a troublesome matter. The earliest existing form of the name, after the English conquest, seems to be that given in a Latin charter of the eighth century as *Weogorna civitas*. (Here it is difficult to disentangle the English from its Latin dress.) A little later it appears in a vernacular shape (also in a charter) as Wigran ceaster. In the later part of the *English Chronicle* it becomes Wigera ceaster, and Wigra ceaster ; but by the twelfth century it has grown into Wigor ceaster, from which the change to Wire ceaster and Worcester (fully pronounced) is not violent. This is all plain sailing enough. But what is the meaning of Wigorna ceaster or Wigran ceaster ? And what Roman or English name does it represent ? The old

English settlers of the neighbourhood formed a little independent principality of Hwiccas (afterwards subdued by the Mercians), and some have accordingly suggested that the original word may have been Hwicce-wara ceaster, the Chester of the Hwicca men, which would be analogous to Cant-wara burh (Canterbury), the Bury of the Kent men, or to Wiht-gara burh (Carisbrooke), the Bury of the Wight men. Others, again, connect it with the Brannogenium of the Ravenna geographer, and the Cair Guoranegon or Guiragon of Nennius, which latter is probably itself a corrupted version of the English name. Altogether, it must be allowed that Worcester presents a genuine difficulty, and that the facts about its early forms are themselves decidedly confused, if not contradictory. The only other notable *Cesters* are Alcester, once Alne-ceaster, in Worcestershire, the Roman Alauna; Gloucester or Glevum, already sufficiently explained; and Manchester in Staffordshire, supposed to occupy the site of Manduessedum.

Among the most corrupted forms of all, Exeter may rank first. Its Latin equivalent was Isca Damnoniorum, Usk of the Devonians; Isca being the Latinised form of that prevalent Celtic river name which crops up again in the Usk, Esk, Exe, and Axe, besides forming the first element of Uxbridge and Oxford; while the tribal qualification was added to distinguish it from its namesake, Isca Silurum, Usk of the Silurians, now Caerleon-upon-Usk. In the west country, to this day, *ask* always becomes *ax*, or rather remains so, for that provincial form was the King's English at the court of Alfred; and so Isca became on Devonian lips Exan ceaster, after the West Saxon conquest. Thence it passed rapidly through the stages of Exe ceaster and Exe cester till it finally settled down into Exeter. At the same time, the river itself became the Exe; and the Exan-mutha of the *Chronicle* dropped into Exmouth. We must never forget, however, that Exeter was a Welsh town up to the reign of Athelstan, and that Cornish Welsh was still spoken in parts of Devonshire till the days of Queen Elizabeth.

Wroxeter is another immensely interesting fossil word. It lies just at the foot of the Wrekin, and the hill which takes that name in English must have been pronounced by the old Celtic inhabitants much like Uricon: for of course the awkward initial letter has only become silent in these later lazy centuries. The Romans turned it into Uriconium; but after their departure, it was captured and burnt to the ground by a party of raiding West Saxons, and its fall is graphically described in the wild old Welsh elegy of Llywarch the Aged. The ruins are still charred and blackened by the West Saxon fires. The English colonists of the neighbourhood called themselves the Wroken-sætas, or Settlers by the Wrekin—a word analogous to that of Wilsætas, or Settlers by the Wyly; Dorsætas, or Settlers among the Durotriges; and Sumorsætas or Settlers among the Sumor-folk,—which survive in the modern counties of Wilts, Dorset, and Somerset. Similar forms elsewhere are the Pecsætas of the Derbyshire Peak, the Elmedsætas in the Forest of Elmet, and the

Cilternsætas in the Chiltern Hills. No doubt the Wroken-sætas called the ruined Roman fort by the analogous name of Wroken ceaster; and this would slowly become Wrok ceaster, Wrok cester, and Wroxeter, by the ordinary abbreviating tendency of the Welsh borderlands. Wrexham doubtless preserves the same original root.

Having thus carried the *Castra* to the very confines of Wales, it would be unkind to a generous and amiable people not to carry them across the border and on to the Western sea. The Welsh corruption, whether of the Latin word or of a native equivalent *cathir*, assumes the guise of *Caer*. Thus the old Roman station of Segontium, near the Menai Straits, is now called *Caer Seiont*; but the neighbouring modern town which has gathered around Edward's new castle on the actual shore, the later metropolis of the land of Arfon, became known to Welshmen as *Caer-yn-Arfon*, now corrupted into *Caernarvon* or even into *Carnarvon*. Gray's familiar line about the murdered bards—'On Arvon's dreary shore they lie'—keeps up in some dim fashion the memory of the true etymology. *Caermarthen* is in like manner the Roman *Muridunum* or *Moridunum*—the fort by the sea—though a duplicate *Moridunum* in South Devon has been simply translated into English as *Seaton*. Innumerable other *Caers*, mostly representing Roman sites, may be found scattered up and down over the face of Wales, such as *Caersws*, *Caerleon*, *Caergwrle*, *Caerhun*, and *Caerwys*, all of which still contain traces of Roman occupation. On the other hand, *Cardigan*, which looks delusively like a shortened *Caer*, has really nothing to do with this group of ancient names, being a mere corruption of *Ceredigion*.

But outside Wales itself, in the more Celtic parts of England proper, a good many relics of the old Welsh *Caers* still bespeak the incompleteness of the early Teutonic conquest. If we might trust the mendacious Nennius, indeed, all our *Castles* and *Chesters* were once good *Cymric Caers*; for he gives a doubtful list of the chief towns in Britain, where Gloucester appears as *Cair Gloui*, Colchester as *Cair Colun*, and York as *Cair Ebrauc*. These, if true, would be invaluable forms; but unfortunately there is every reason to believe that Nennius invented them himself, by a simple transposition of the English names. Henry of Huntingdon is nearly as bad, if not worse; for when he calls Dorchester "*Kair Dauri*," and Chichester "*Kair Kei*," he was almost certainly evolving what he supposed to be appropriate old British names from the depths of his own consciousness. His guesswork was on a par with that of the schoolboys who introduce "*Stirlingia*" or "*Liverpolia*" into their Ovidian elegiacs. That abandoned story-teller, Geoffrey of Monmouth, goes a step further, and concocts a *Caer Lud* for London and a *Caer Osc* for Exeter, whenever the fancy seizes him. The only examples amongst these pretended old Welsh forms which seem to me to have any real historical value are an unknown *Kair Eden*, mentioned by Gildas, and a *Cair Wisc*, mentioned by Simeon of Durham, undoubtedly the true native name of Exeter.

Still, we have a few indubitable Caers in England itself surviving to our own day. Most of them are not far from the Welsh border, as in the case of the two *Caer Caradocs*, in Shropshire, crowned by ancient British fortifications. Others, however, lie further within the true English pale, though always in districts which long preserved the Welsh speech, at least among the lower classes of the population. The earth-work overhanging Bath bears to this day its ancient British title of *Caer Badon*. An old history written in the monastery of Malmesbury describes that town as *Caer Bladon*, and speaks of a *Caer Dur* in the immediate neighbourhood. There still remains a *Caer Riden* on the line of the Roman wall in the Lothians. Near *Aspatria*, in Cumberland, stands a mouldering Roman camp known even now as *Caer Mote*. In *Carvoran*, Northumberland, the first syllable has undergone a slight contraction, but may still be readily recognised. The *Carr-dyke* in Norfolk seems to me to be referable to a similar origin.

Most curious of all the English Caers, however, is Carlisle. The Antonine Itinerary gives the town as *Luguvallium*. *Bæda*, in his barbarised Latin fashion, calls it *Lugubalia*. "The Saxons," says *Murray's Guide*, with charming naïveté, "abbreviated the name into *Luel*, and afterwards called it *Caer Luel*." This astounding hotchpotch forms an admirable example of the way in which local etymology is still generally treated in highly respectable publications. So far as we know, there never was at any time a single Saxon in Cumberland; and why the Saxons, or any other tribe of Englishmen, should have called a town by a purely Welsh name, it would be difficult to decide. If they had given it any name at all, that name would probably have been *Lul ceaster*, which might have been modernised into *Lulcaster* or *Lulchester*. The real facts are these. Cumberland, as its name imports, was long a land of the *Cymry*—a northern Welsh principality, dependent upon the great kingdom of *Strathclyde*, which held out for ages against the Northumbrian English invaders among the braes and fells of Ayrshire and the Lake District. These Cumbrian Welshmen called their chief town *Caer Luel*, or something of the sort; and there is some reason for believing that it was the capital of the historical Arthur, if any Arthur ever existed, though later ages transferred the legend of the British hero to *Caerleon-upon-Usk*, after men had begun to forget that the region between the Clyde and the Mersey had once been true Welsh soil. The English overran Cumberland very slowly; and when they did finally conquer it, they probably left the original inhabitants in possession of the country, and only imposed their own overlordship upon the conquered race. The story is too long a one to repeat in full here: it must suffice to say that, though the Northumbrian kings had made the "*Strathclyde Welsh*" their tributaries, the district was never thoroughly subdued till the days of Edmund the West Saxon, who harried the land, and handed it over to the King of Scots. Thus it happens that Carlisle, alone among large English towns, still keeps unchanged its Cymric name, instead of

having sunk into an Anglicised Chester. The present spelling is a mere etymological blunder, exactly similar to that which has turned the old English word *igland* into *island*, through the false analogy of *isle*, which of course comes from the old French *isle*, derived through some form akin to the Italian *isola*, from the original Latin *insula*. Kair Leil is the spelling in Geoffrey; Cardeol (by a clerical error for Carleol, I suspect) that in the *English Chronicle*, which only once mentions the town; and Carleol that of the ordinary mediæval historians. The surnames Carlyle and Carlile still preserve the better orthography.

To complete the subject, it will be well to say a few words about those towns which were once *Ceasters*, but which have never become Casters or Chesters. Numerous as are the places now so called, a number more may be reckoned in the illimitable chapter of the might-have-beens; and it is interesting to speculate on the forms which they would have taken, "si qua fata aspera rupissent." Among these still-born Chesters, Newcastle-upon-Tyne may fairly rank first. It stands on the Roman site, called, from its bridge across the Tyne, Pons Aelii, and known later on, from its position on the great wall, as Ad Murum. Under the early English, after their conversion to Christianity, the monks became the accepted inheritors of Roman ruins; and the small monastery which was established here procured it the English name of Muneca-ceaster, or, as we should now say, Monk-chester, though no doubt the local modernisation would have taken the form of Muncaster. William of Normandy utterly destroyed the town during his great harrying of Northumberland; and when his son, Robert Curthose, built a fortress on the site, the place came to be called Newcastle—a word whose very form shows its comparatively modern origin. *Castra* and *Ceasters* were now out of date, and castles had taken their place. Still, we stick even here to the old root: for of course castle is only the diminutive *castellum*—a scion of the same Roman stock, which, like so many other members of aristocratic families, "came over with William the Conqueror." The word *castel* is never used, I believe, in any English document before the Conquest; but in the very year of William's invasion, the *Chronicle* tells us, "Willelm earl came from Normandy into Pevensey, and wrought a castel at Hastings port." So, while in France itself the word has declined through *chastel* into *château*, we in England have kept it in comparative purity as castle.

York is another town which had a narrow escape of becoming Yorchester. Its Roman name was Eburacum, which the English queerly rendered as Eoforwic, by a very interesting piece of folks-etymology. *Eofor* is Old English for a boar, and *wic* for a town; so our rude ancestors metamorphosed the Latinised Celtic name into this familiar and significant form, much as our own sailors turn the Bellerophon into the Billy Ruffin, and the Anse des Cousins into the Nancy Cozens. In the same way, I have known an illiterate Englishman speak of Aix-la-Chapelle as Hexley Chapel. To the name, thus distorted, our forefathers

of course added the generic word for a Roman town, and so made the cumbrous title of Eoforwic-ceaster, which is the almost universal form in the earlier parts of the English Chronicle. This was too much of a mouthful even for the hardy Anglo-Saxon, so we soon find a disposition to shorten it into Ceaster on the one hand, or Eoforwic on the other. Should the final name be Chester or York?—that was the question. Usage decided in favour of the more distinctive title. The town became Eoforwic alone, and thence gradually declined through Evorwic, Euorwic, Eurewic, and Yorick into the modern York. It is curious to note that some of these intermediate forms very closely approach the original Eburac, which must have been the root of the Roman name. Was the change partly due to the preservation of the older sound on the lips of Celtic serfs? It is not impossible, for marks of British blood are strong in Yorkshire; and Nennius confirms the idea by calling the town Kair Ebrauc.

Among the other *Ceasters* which have never developed into full-blown Chesters, I may mention Bath, given as Akemannes ceaster and Bathan ceaster in our old documents, so that it might have become Acheman-chester or Bathceter in the course of ordinary changes. Canterbury, again, the Roman Durovernum, dropped through Dorobernia into Dorwit ceaster, which would no doubt have turned into a third Dorchester, to puzzle our heads by its likeness to Dorne ceaster in Dorsetshire, and to Dorce ceaster near Oxford; while Chesterton in Huntingdonshire, which was once Dorne ceaster, narrowly escaped burdening a distracted world with a fourth. Happily, the colloquial form Cantwara burh, or Kent-men's bury, gained the day, and so every trace of Durovernum is now quite lost in Canterbury. North Shields was once Scythles-ceaster, but here the Chester has simply dropped out. Verulam, or St. Albans, is another curious case. Its Romano-British name was Verulamium, and Bæda calls it Verlama ceaster. But the early English in Sleswick believed in a race of mythical giants, the Wætlingas or Watlings, from whom they called the Milky Way "Watling Street." When the rude pirates from those trackless marshes came over to Britain and first beheld the great Roman paved causeway which ran across the face of the country from London to Caernarvon, they seem to have imagined that such a mighty work could not have been the handicraft of men; and just as the Arabs ascribe the rock-hewn houses of Petra to the architectural fancy of the Devil, so our old English ancestors ascribed the Roman road to the Titanic Watlings. Even in our own day, it is known along its whole course as Watling Street. Verulam stands right in its track, and long contained some of the greatest Roman remains in England; so the town, too, came to be considered as another example of the work of the Watlings. Bæda, in his Latinised Northumbrian, calls it Vætlinga ceaster, as an alternative title with Verlama ceaster; so that it might nowadays have been familiar to us all either as Watlingchester or Verlamchester. This is one of the numerous cases

where a Roman and English name lived on during the dark period side by side. In some of Mr. Kemble's charters it appears as Watlinga ceaster. But when Offa of Mercia founded his great abbey on the very spot where the Welsh martyr Alban had suffered during the persecution of Diocletian, Roman and English names were alike forgotten, and the place was remembered only after the British Christian as St. Albans.

There are other instances where the very memory of a Roman city seems now to have failed altogether. For example, Bæda mentions a certain town called Tiowulfinga ceaster—that is to say, the Chester of the Tiowulfings, or sons of Tiowulf. Here an English clan would seem to have taken up its abode in a ruined Roman station, and to have called the place by the clan-name—a rare or almost unparalleled case. But its precise site is now unknown. However, Bæda's description clearly points to some town in Nottinghamshire, situated on the Trent; for St. Paulinus of York baptized large numbers of converts in that river at Tiowulfinga ceaster; and the site may therefore be confidently identified with Southwell, where St. Mary's Minster has always traditionally claimed Paulinus as its founder. Bæda also mentions a place called Tunna ceaster, so named from an abbot Tunna, who exists merely for the sake of a legend, and is clearly as unhistorical as his piratical compeer Hrof—a wild guess of the eponymic sort with which we are all so familiar in Greek literature. Simeon of Durham speaks of an equally unknown Delvercester. Syddena ceaster or Sidna cester—the earliest see of the Lincolnshire diocese—has likewise dropped out of human memory; though Mr. Pearson suggests that it may be identical with Ancaster—a notion which appears to me extremely unlikely. Wude cester is no doubt Outchester, and other doubtful instances might easily be recognised by local antiquaries, though they may readily escape the general archæologist. In one case at least—that of Othonæ in Essex—town, site, and name have all disappeared together. Bæda calls it Ythan ceaster, and in his time it was the seat of a monastery founded by St. Cedd; but the whole place has long since been swept away by an inundation of the Blackwater. Anderida, which is called Andredes-ceaster in the *Chronicle*, becomes Pefenes-ea, or Pevensey, before the date of the Norman Conquest.

It must not be supposed that the list given here is by any means exhaustive of all the Casters and Chesters, past and present, throughout the whole length and breadth of Britain. On the contrary, many more might easily be added, such as Ribbel ceaster, now Ribchester; Berne ceaster, now Bicester; and Bladbyrig ceaster, now simply Bladbury. In Northumberland alone, there are a large number of instances which I might have quoted, such as Rutchester, Halton Chesters, and Little Chesters on the Roman Wall, together with Hetchester, Holy Chesters, and Rochester elsewhere—the county containing no less than four places of the last name. Indeed, one can track the Roman roads across England by the Chesters which accompany their route. But enough instances have probably been adduced to exemplify fully the general principles at

issue. I think it will be clear that the English conquerors did not usually change the names of Roman or Welsh towns, but simply mispronounced them about as much as we habitually mispronounce Llangollen or Llandudno. Sometimes they called the place by its Romanised title alone, with the addition of Ceaster; sometimes they employed the servile British form; sometimes they even invented an English alternative; but in no case can it be shown that they at once disused the original name, and introduced a totally new one of their own manufacture. In this, as in all other matters, the continuity between Romano-British and English times is far greater than it is generally represented to be. The English invasion was a cruel and a desolating [one, no doubt; but it could not and it did not sweep away wholly the old order of things, or blot out all the past annals of Britain, so as to prepare a *tabula rasa* on which Mr. Green might begin his *History of the English People* with the landing of Hengest and Horsa in the Isle of Thanet. The English people of to-day is far more deeply rooted in the soil than that: our ancestors have lived here, not for a thousand years alone, but for ten thousand or a hundred thousand, in certain lines at least. And the very names of our towns, our rivers, and our hills, go back in many cases, not merely to the Roman corruptions, but to the aboriginal Celtic, and the still more aboriginal Euskarian tongue.

G. A.

Peppiniello.

TWENTY-FOUR HOURS WITH A NEAPOLITAN STREET-BOY.

I.

If you have ever sauntered along the Strada del Molo at Naples, you can hardly have failed to notice the *mozzonari* who gather there in greater numbers than in any other part of the city. You frequently catch sight of a single *mozzone* in other places, it is true—lounging on the steps of a church, it may be, or basking in the hottest corner of a piazza; but here is the great centre of the trade in old cigar ends, and here its “merchants most do congregate”—as ragged, dirty, an dunkempt a set of little beggar-boys as any European city can show. Each has his stock-in-trade spread out before him on the sheet of an old newspaper, and carefully divided into little heaps of eight or nine ends apiece. The lots have been carefully selected according to the quality of the cigars of which they are composed, and cost one soldo each; for the *mozzonari* are almost the only Neapolitan traders who have really fixed prices, and with whom it is useless to bargain, though even they stoop to human weakness in so far as to keep a general heap from which each purchaser is allowed to select a stump.

Perhaps you may wonder who can be found to buy such nasty rubbish. Wait a minute or two, and you will see.

But first fix your eyes on the boy who lounges at the corner of the road leading down to the custom-house and the landing-place. His name is Peppiniello, and he is about twelve years old. Judging from his face you might fancy him older, it wears in its moments of rest so astute and self-reliant an expression; but if you looked at his body you would think him at least a year or two younger, for a scanty diet has checked his growth. Otherwise his limbs are not ill-formed. If you watch him while bathing in the dirty waters of the harbour, you will be amazed at their suppleness and activity, and also at their leanness. He seems to consist of nothing but skin and bone. “The wonder is,” as an Italian shopkeeper once remarked to me, “that there should be so much life in so little flesh!” The whole of his skin is of one colour, a deep greyish-brown; there is not blood enough in the veins to lend it the warmer tint that the Venetian painters loved. The upper part of the face is well formed, and the eyes are very bright and intelligent; the mouth, however, is not only too large, but there is a precocious trait about it of something which generally appears to be merely humour, but at

times looks unpleasantly like cunning. Still it is, at the worst, a quick, cheerful, not unkindly face, and it would look far better if the hair were not shorn so closely to the head. In dress, Peppiniello does not greatly differ from his companions. His shirt is open before and torn behind; his trousers are so full of holes that you wonder he should think it worth while to put them on at all, particularly in a town where their absence in a boy of his age would attract but little attention. He is wiser than you, however, and he knows that in Naples it is only the children who have parents to care for them that can afford to run about in their shirts. He does not look at the nether article of his dress—at least during the summer months—as a matter either of comfort or decency, but simply as the badge of the social position he is desirous of occupying. In the same light, too, he regards the little round cap, of nearly the same colour as his skin, which seems to be made of some woollen material. I have never been daring enough to examine it closely. It is rarely to be seen upon his head, and its chief practical purpose seems to be to serve as an elbow cushion.

At present Peppiniello looks idle enough. He is stretched at full length upon the ground, watching a game which two other boys are playing with peach-stones, a natural substitute for marbles; but he has a keen eye for business, and makes more money than any of the fraternity. This his comrades attribute to his luck; but it is really the result of a number of small observations. Thus, more than a year and a half ago he noticed that when four or five of them sat in a row those at the two ends were sure to sell their wares quickest; for if the purchaser is in haste he will buy of the first that he sees, and hurry on; if he is at leisure he will probably inspect all the piles, and, finding them pretty much alike, he will take his tobacco of the last, in order that he may not have to retrace his steps. Some months passed before he made a second discovery, namely, that the spot he now occupies is the best for its purpose in all Naples, because the mechanics who pass along the Strada del Molo are generally anxious to get to or from their work as quickly as may be, while, on the other hand, the boatmen who return from the landing-place have usually finished their task, and have nothing very particular to do. As soon as he had noticed this, he made a point of occupying the corner before any of his comrades were astir, and he has now almost a prescriptive right to it. Some of his success must also be attributed to his good-nature. When his wares are exhausted, or there is no hope of custom, he is always ready to run an errand for the men who are working near. Sometimes he is rewarded by a crust, a slice of cabbage, or a handful of fruit, and more rarely by a centesimo or two; but on such occasions he never asks for anything, and those whom he serves in this way naturally repay him by giving him their own custom and recommending him to their friends. In fact, he is a favourite with most of the men who are employed in the neighbourhood; and this is useful to him in more ways than one.

Among Peppiniello's other observations is this—that during the morning hours it is useless for him to take much trouble in recommending his wares. Those who want old cigar ends will come and buy them; but everyone is then too busy to pay attention to his noise and nonsense. Later in the day it will be different—a joke may secure a customer, or a grin and a caper draw a soldo from the pocket of some foreign gentleman, and Peppiniello is as equal to these as to the other requirements of his trade. But there is a time for everything, and at present the most brilliant display of his talents would make no impression on anyone but his companions, for whose applause he does not greatly care; so he lies at his ease with the happy conviction that his own stock is the finest in this morning's market.

It consists of eleven piles, and a little heap of foreign cigar ends, which are their possessor's great joy and pride, though he is a little uncertain as to their exact market value. If a sailor of luxurious tastes and reduced means happens to pass, he will probably offer a good price for them; but at present the boy is not anxious to sell, for he knows the unusual display will attract customers for his other wares. This special heap is the result of a daring raid into the Grand Café, which he made the other evening, and in which his retreat was covered by a party of good-natured foreigners. When he found himself in safety, and gesticulated his thanks from the middle of the street, they threw him a soldo or two, and one of them, supposing that an infantile craving for the prohibited joys of tobacco was the cause of his boldness, added a cigar which he had only just lighted. There it lies at the top of the sheet of paper. Peppiniello is resolved not to part with it for less than eight centesimi. It must surely be worth ten, he thinks; but, unfortunately, those who are ready to pay such a price for a cigar usually prefer to buy it in a shop.

But see, a mechanic in his working-dress pauses for a moment, lays down two soldi, sweeps up two piles, which he wraps in a piece of paper, and thrusts them into his pocket as he walks on. The whole transaction has been the work of a few seconds, and has not cost a single word. The next customer is of a very different type: he is a fisherman coming up from the landing-place to fill his morning pipe. He feels the deepest contempt and animosity for the mechanic on account of his calling; but, at the same time, he has a firm conviction that he belongs to a class which knows how to cheat the devil, and that consequently it is by no means unadvisable for a good, simple, Christian fisherman to take a hint from it in worldly matters. He has, consequently, made up his mind as to which of the *mozzonari* he will patronise long before he reaches the first of them; but that does not prevent him inspecting all the other papers with a critical, irresolute air. When he reaches Peppiniello, he looks at his wares with a new expression of marked contempt, pauses for half a minute, and then commences to gesticulate. To all his movements Peppiniello only replies by that slight and peculiar toss of the head which

every Neapolitan accepts as a final refusal. In fact, they have been having an animated discussion, although not a single word has been spoken; for the common people of Naples, though ready enough with their tongues, are fond of "conversing silently" with each other—not exactly as lovers are said to do, but by means of a perfect language of signs. The fisherman has offered, first three, and then four centesimi for a single lot, and then nine centesimi for two. These offers have of course been refused. He knew from the first that they would be, for any *mozzone* who was observed to increase the size of his piles, or even suspected of selling below the established price, would not only lose caste, but be subjected to constant persecution by his comrades; but then, as a fisherman, he feels he would be outraging every feeling of propriety if he were to buy any article whatever without at least attempting to cheapen it. It would almost look as if he wished to be taken for a *signore*. At last, with a sigh, he places the exact price of a single pile—which he has all the time been holding ready—upon the paper, and then, with a most innocent expression, he stretches out his hand to the foreign tobacco at the top of the sheet. He knows that is not its price, and he does not want it, as he greatly prefers the Italian tobacco below: he only wishes to show that he is not quite a fool. Peppiniello gently pushes back his hand, draws a line with his own finger between the upper and the lower lots, and points to the latter. He is very careful not to touch the money, as that might lead to an unpleasant discussion with respect to the exact amount. The fisherman now makes as if he intended to resume it, and purchase of the next dealer; but, as he sees Peppiniello is still unmoved, he takes instead the heap on which from the first his heart has been set, seizes the largest cigar end in the general pile, and moves off slowly till he finds an empty place on the coping on which to seat himself. When he feels quite comfortable, he slowly takes off that peculiar piece of headgear, which young artists and enthusiastic antiquarians delight to call Phrygian, but which to the uninitiated eyes of ordinary mortals rather suggests a cross between an overgrown nightcap and a gouty stocking; from this, after fumbling about in it for a time, he draws a red clay pipe with a cane stem, and a clasp knife, and begins to prepare for the enjoyment of a morning smoke. If you could get near enough to look into that Phrygian headdress of his, as it lies there beside him, you would probably find that it still contains a hunch of bread, half an onion, an apple, two peaches, a few small fish wrapped up in seaweed, and a picture of San Antonio; for the fisherman's cap is not only his purse and tobacco-pouch, but a general receptacle for miscellaneous articles of his personal property. It is but just to add, however, that the fish he carries in this way is always intended for his own consumption.

II.

At ten o'clock, Peppiniello has disposed of all his wares. As the day is hot he feels almost inclined to have a swim in the harbour; but he sees no one near with whom he could safely deposit the eleven soldi which he has made by his morning's work, and, besides, he is hungry, as well he may be, for he has been up since dawn and has eaten nothing yet. Where to get a dinner?—that is the question; for it never even occurs to him that he might spend a part of his hard-earned gains upon common food, though now and then, when the times are good, he will buy a slice of water-melon. He would hardly feel justified in doing even that to-day; so, as he rolls up the foreign tobacco, which he has not sold, in the old newspaper, and places it inside the breast of his shirt, which serves all Neapolitans of his class as a capacious pocket, he revolves in his mind the chances that are open to him. He knows he could have what he wants at once by going to the narrow street near the Porta Capuana, where his father used to live; for there are still several women in the neighbourhood who remember his family, and who would give him a crust of bread, a slice of raw cabbage, or a part of whatever their own dinner happened to be. But he has noticed that the more rarely he comes the warmer his welcome is; and he wishes to leave these friends as a last resource in cases of the utmost need. Though it is not the hour during which strangers are likely to be moving about, it might be worth while to saunter down to Santa Lucia, as there is no saying what a foreigner may not do, and, if he is out, that is the likeliest place to find him. But the children in that district hold together, and look upon him as an intruder on the hunting-grounds that belong by right to them. They will crowd him out of the circle, if possible, spoil his antics, and snatch the soldi out of his very hand. Nay, a few weeks ago, when he stole the purse from the English gentleman, they seemed half inclined to betray him instead of covering his retreat. It is true that, at last, their instinctive hatred of law and the police got the better of their local jealousy, and he made his escape. In half-an-hour, when he had brought his booty into safety, he returned, and invited the boys who had helped him into a neighbouring *taverna*, where he placed four litres of wine before them. That was the right thing to do, and he did it; nay, as the purse had contained nearly twenty lire—though that he confessed to nobody—he even added a kilo of bread to the repast. Since then he has enjoyed a half-unwilling respect in that quarter. But Peppiniello is not the boy to forget their hesitation, which seems to him the basest of treachery. Besides, their manners disgust him. It is right enough that boys should cut capers, and make grimaces, and beg, and steal; but it is indecent for girls of eleven or twelve to do so. If he has a contempt for anything in the world, it is for those girls and their relations. No; he will not go to Santa Lucia.

So he turns up one of the dark narrow ways that lead away from the Porto, looking wistfully into every *taverna* that he passes. Most of them are empty. In some a single workman is sitting, with a small piece of bread and one glass of wine before him, or half-a-dozen have clubbed together to buy a loaf and a bottle. Peppiniello knows it is useless to beg of these—they have little enough to stay their own appetites. “Ah!” thinks he, who, like all his class, is a bitter enemy of the present government—perhaps only because it is the government—“it was different in good King Ferdinand’s days, when bread only cost four soldi the kilo, and wine seven centesimi the litre. Then, they say, if a hungry beggar-boy could find a workman at his dinner, he was sure of a crust and a sup; but how can they give anything now, with bread at eight and wine at twelve soldi?” At last he sees what appears to be a well-dressed man, sitting at the further end of the low, dark room. He slips in in a moment, and stands before him making that movement of the forefinger and thumb to the mouth by which Neapolitan beggars express their hunger. The man cuts off a small fragment of his bread and gives it him. Now Peppiniello is near, he can see by the pinched face and bright eyes of the man that he, too, has nothing to spare. He is almost ashamed of having begged of him; but he munches the bread as he goes along. It is such a little piece that it seems only to make him hungrier. He hardly knows what to do; so he sits down on a doorstep to reflect.

He knows an English ship came into port last night. The chance is that some of the sailors are ashore. If he could find them, they would very likely give him something, and he fancies he can guess pretty nearly where they are; but then—to tell the truth—he is afraid. Such sailors, it is true, have never shown him anything but kindness; but who knows what they may do? They are so strong and rough, and have no respect for anything. He looks upon them as he does on the forces of nature, as something entirely capricious, incalculable, and uncontrollable. They threw him a handful of soldi the other day; perhaps to-day they may throw him out of the window. The people say they are not even Christians. Who can tell? Yet surely the Madonna must have power over them too; and he is very hungry. So he rises, and turns once more in the direction of the Porto, murmuring a Paternoster and an Ave, with eyes in the meantime perfectly open to any other chance of provender.

He goes to one, two, three of the houses they are likely to frequent, and convinces himself they are not there. At last he hears them in the front room of the first story of the fourth. It is the very worst house for his purpose that they could have chosen; for the hostess is a very—well, I know no English word which would not be degraded if applied to her. She looks upon all the money in the pockets of her guests upstairs as already her own, and naturally resents any new claim upon it, however small. Peppiniello knows her well; but he has not come thus far to be turned back at last by fear of an old woman. He saunters

carelessly and yet wearily into the street, and seats himself on the step opposite the door of the *locanda*, leans his head upon his arm, and finally stretches himself at full length. Any passer would fancy him asleep; in fact, he is on the watch. He knows his only chance is to wait till the lower room and, if possible, the kitchen behind it, are empty, and then make a dart for the staircase. He lies there for more than half-an-hour. At last the cook is sent out to fetch something, as it seems from a distance; for he takes his coat and hat. The hostess stands at a table at the back of the front room, with a tray of grog-glasses before her which are half full of spirits. In a moment more the scullion comes with a kettle of boiling water, which he pours into the glasses while the hostess stirs them. By some accident a drop or two falls upon her hand; she says nothing, but simply wipes it with a cloth beside her. As soon, however, as the last glass is full, and the scullion has taken two steps away from the table, she gives him such a cuff as sends him flying to the other end of the kitchen, with the scalding water streaming down his legs. Of course there is a howl. He, at least, is not likely to take much notice of anything at present. The hostess quietly takes up the tray, puts on a bland smile, and mounts the stairs. This is Peppiniello's chance. He lets her ascend three or four steps, and then, with a spring as stealthy as a cat's, he follows her. His bare feet fall noiselessly, and he steals up so close behind her that there is no chance of her seeing him, even if she should turn, which she can hardly do, as the stairs are narrow and she has the tray in her hand. When she reaches the landing, she stops to place her burden on a table, in order that she may open the door; Peppiniello at once springs forward, and enters without being announced, satisfied so far with his success, but by no means certain that he may not have sprung out of the frying-pan into the fire.

Round a table which is strewed with the remnants of what seems to have been a sumptuous though rather coarse meal, six sailors are seated in company not of the most respectable.

Peppiniello knows that boldness is now his only hope, for if the hostess can catch hold of him before he has attracted the men's attention he will certainly fly down the stairs much more quickly than he ascended them. So he advances at once, and with a low bow and a grin makes the gesture that indicates his hunger.

"What does the young devil mean?" asks one of the men in very imperfect Italian.

"He only wants some of the broken bread," replies a girl, throwing him half a loaf.

Peppiniello springs into the air, catches it halfway, makes a gesture of the wildest joy, and then, with a face of preternatural gravity, bows his thanks and stands like a soldier on parade. The men are amused, and soon all the bread upon the table is stowed away within his shirt. This gives him a strange appearance, as the slender arms and legs form a striking contrast to the enormous trunk. He at once sees his advantage,

and proceeds to contort his face and limbs in a way that makes him appear hardly human. Shouts of laughter follow, and one of the girls hands him a glass of wine. Meanwhile the grog has been placed on the table and the men have lighted their pipes. One pulls out an Italian cigar, but after the first whiff he throws it away with a curse, declaring that it is made of a mixture of rotten cabbage-leaves and india-rubber. Peppiniello seizes it almost before it falls, seats himself in a corner, and begins to puff away with an expression of the most luxurious enjoyment.

"What, you smoke, do you, you little imp of hell? You'd better take the whole lot of them, for I'll be d——d if any human being can smoke them."

The words are spoken in English, and Peppiniello can hardly believe his eyes when a parcel of cigars comes flying across the room into his lap.

"Ask him if his mother knows he's out," says one of the men. His companion puts the question into such Italian as he can command. One of the girls repeats it in the Neapolitan dialect, and explains Peppiniello's answer, which is then translated into English for the benefit of the male part of the company.

"I have no mother."

"His father, then?"

"I have no father."

"How does he live, then?"

"How I can."

"Ask him if he'll come aboard with us; and tell him we'll make a man of him."

"What would my sisters do then?"

"How many sisters has he?"

"Four."

"How old?"

"One a year older and three younger than I am, and they have nobody in the world to take care of them but me."

The idea of that little monkey being the father of a family is too comic not to excite a laugh, yet there is something pathetic in it. None of the girls believe the tale; but if questioned by their companions they would all assert a firm conviction of its truth. Nay, one or two of them would probably say they were personally acquainted with all the facts of the case.

"It's all a d——d lie, of course," says another of the men; "but it don't matter," and he throws the boy a two-soldi piece. The other sailors follow his example.

Peppiniello gathers up his riches. He feels that it is time for him to withdraw, but he knows the landlady is waiting below with a stick, and that she purposes first to beat him as unmercifully as she can, then to rob him of all that has been given him, and finally to kick him into the street. He is afraid that even his morning's earnings will go with the rest of his gains. It is not a pleasant prospect. Fortunately for him

the girls at the table know all this as well as he does. One of them whispers a word or two to her companion, rises, beckons slightly to the boy, and goes downstairs. He makes a silent bow to the company and slinks after her, but when they reach the lower room she takes him by the hand and leads him to the street door amid a perfect storm of abuse from the landlady, who, however, does not venture to give any more practical expression to her rage.

"Now run, you little devil, run!"

Peppiniello only pauses for a single moment to raise the girl's hand gently to his lips, and before half a minute is past he has put a dozen corners between himself and the scene of his adventure.

But the girl turns and faces the infuriated hostess. "What harm has the boy done you?" she says quietly. "If the gentlemen upstairs had been angry I could understand it, but they were amused. What harm has he done you?"

The hostess is rather cowed by the girl's manner, and she replies in an almost whining tone, "All that bread he has robbed me of—is that nothing?"

"Why, what can you do with broken bread?"

"Sell it to the poor."

The girl's form assumes a sudden dignity; she feels that this woman has sunk far below her, and her voice is very low but very biting as she says, "Donna Estere, you are as hard and wicked as a Piedmontese. If you speak another word I will never enter your house again, but take all my friends over there," and she moves her head slightly in the direction of a rival establishment.

This is a threat that Donna Estere cannot afford to disregard, but she is still too excited to be able to fawn on the girl and flatter her as she will in half an hour's time. So she retires silently into the kitchen, to vent her rage first in abusing and then in beating the scullion.

III.

When Peppiniello feels himself well out of the reach of danger, he draws out a piece of bread and eats it greedily as he walks slowly in the direction of his father's old home. He has not gone far before he sees another boy of his own class seated in a doorway and dining off a raw cabbage head and two onions. Peppiniello squats down opposite, and by way of beginning a conversation he remarks in a friendly tone that the cabbage doesn't look very fresh. The owner of the maligned vegetable replies that he pulled it that very morning in his uncle's garden, and adds that he is sorry for boys who are obliged to dine off stale bread. This gives rise to an animated discussion, which in about five minutes leads to the exchange of a thick slice of cabbage and half an onion for a piece of bread. Each now feels that he is dining sumptuously, and in order to remove any unpleasant impression that may have been left on his neigh-

bour's mind, he praises the provisions he has just received at least as warmly as he before disparaged them. The stranger then gives a glowing description of his uncle's garden, which, by his account, must certainly be the most remarkable estate ever possessed by a violent and eccentric old gentleman, whose only weakness is a doting fondness for his nephew. Peppiniello has his own doubts as to the existence of that earthly paradise, but he is far too polite to express any. In his turn he relates how his father went to sea a year and a half ago and was, as they thought, lost, and how they mourned for him, and how that very morning his aunt had received a letter stating that he had married a great heiress in Palermo, and was going to return to Naples in a few weeks.

"Ah, won't your stepmother just beat you!" says the stranger, in a tone which implies that he could quite enter into the fun of the operation.

"Ah, but she can't!" replies Peppiniello. "That's the best of it. She's only one leg; the other's a wooden one, but they say it's stuffed full of good French gold pieces."

And so, having finished his meal, he proceeds upon his way, pondering upon what to do with the fortune he has so unexpectedly invented for himself. The stranger, as he saunters in the opposite direction, considers the important question whether a ferocious miser of an uncle who can refuse nothing to his single pet, or a stepmother with a wooden leg stuffed with gold pieces, is the most desirable imaginary possession for a little street-boy of limited means.

Peppiniello at last reaches a small tobacco-shop at the corner of a narrow close. "Good day, Donna Amalia," he says as he enters.

"What, Peppiniello! you here again, and dinner's over, and I don't believe there's a bite left in the house." Her tone is rough, but she turns with the evident intention of searching her larder.

"Thank you; I've eaten to-day. I only want to ask you to take care of this for me till the evening;" and he heaps the bread upon the counter.

"What, ten pieces; you *have* had luck to-day!"

"And here are some cigars. Will you sell them for me? Of course I should not expect the full price."

It goes rather against Donna Amalia's conscience to refuse any lawful profit that may fall in her way; but she remembers that the boy is an orphan, and that the Virgin has a way of rewarding those who are pitiful to such.

"Well, let me see them. Yes, they are whole. They cost, you know, eight centesimi apiece; that makes fourteen soldi and two centesimi. There it is," and she pays him the whole sum. She has no doubt in her own mind that she is receiving stolen goods, but no one can identify a cigar, and it is no business of hers, so she asks no questions. Peppiniello puts it together with the rest, and then commits the whole to her care. She counts over the sum with him very carefully, wraps it in a piece of paper, and places it on a shelf in the inside room beside the bread. He

has already bidden her good-bye, and is passing out of the shop, when she calls him back.

"You will never be able to eat all that bread while it is fresh."

"It is quite at your service, Donna Amalia;" but there is something in the eyes that contradicts the tone and the words.

"Nay, boy, I don't want to beg your bread of you; but look here, these three pieces are as good as when they came from the baker's. If you like, I will take them to-day, and give you new bread for them to-morrow."

"A thousand thanks, but let it be the day after to-morrow."

"Very well."

He is really grateful to the rough kind woman, but he does not kiss her hand. That one only does to people of a higher social class, and he does not feel so very much below Donna Amalia.

It is now more than time for the mid-day sleep, so Peppiniello retires into a doorway where the stones are pretty smooth, and there is no danger of the sunshine stealing in to waken him. He does not go to sleep so quickly as usual, perhaps because he has dined better; and as he reviews the events of the morning he comes to the conclusion that it is his duty to go to mass next morning, to return thanks for his deliverance from danger. He has no doubt that it was the Madonna who saved him from Donna Estere, and it never occurs to him that she chose rather a strange messenger. Then he begins to consider on what numbers he had better set in this week's *lotto*. He is rather doubtful of his luck; for he has lost six of the francs he found in the purse in that way. How he wishes he could dream of numbers, but somehow he never does. The priests of course know them all, for they are learned, but they are bound by a vow not to impart their knowledge to anyone; yet they say that sometimes a monk will whisper the sacred secret to a friend. Surely they ought to do so, if only to be revenged on the government who has turned them out of their monasteries. Peppiniello resolves to be very polite to all monks in future. If he could read, he would try and get hold of one of those wonderful books which explain things so well you can hardly dream of anything without finding the number it signifies in them. Well, this time he will set upon 32, the number of Donna Estere's house, and upon 12, for there were twelve guests at table. Fate will doubtless give him another number before the time for playing comes round. Pondering these things, he falls asleep.

It is later than usual when he awakens, and he sees with some consternation how low the sun has already sunk. He has missed the best early harvest for old cigar ends, which is at its height at two o'clock, when the gentlemen who have lunched and smoked return to their places of business. He must make haste or he will have nothing for the evening market and miss that too. So he hastens off to the railway station, picking up here and there a bit of merchandise by the way. He is not lucky even there, though a good-natured porter lets him slip into the

waiting room, which is empty for the moment ; and on his way to the Porto, which he chooses to take through the narrow streets and not by the most frequented road, he walks slowly, as if in doubt. At last he sits down and counts over his scanty gleanings with a look that says plainly enough, "They won't do." So he turns once more away from the Porto, and after climbing two or three streets at rather a rapid pace, he reaches the corner of one in which a poverty-stricken café is situated. Then his whole manner changes ; he assumes an indolent but merry air, and begins to sing a Neapolitan song. The threadbare waiter who is sitting at the door hails him with a loud jest, and then asks in a low voice,—“Don't you want any cigar-ends to-day?”

“Well, I hardly know. I have such a large stock, and I sell so few: but let me see them.”

They enter the empty café together, and the treasure is displayed.

“What do you want for them?”

“What will you give—four soldi?”

“Not two for that lot,” says the boy contemptuously.

A discussion of course follows, and Peppiniello finally agrees to give two soldi, but only that he may not lose the waiter's friendship and patronage. The tobacco he still insists is not worth the price.

“And when am I to be paid?”

“To-night, if I sell enough.”

He resumes his indolent walk and his song, which he continues till he reaches the end of the street, when he quickens his pace and leaves off singing. Both parties are rather ashamed of this transaction. The waiter knows he has been acting meanly, and the boy, who looks upon all cigar-ends as the rightful property of the *mozzonari*, feels he has been put upon. It is only in extreme cases like to-day's that he will submit to this. In fact, this perfectly legitimate purchase, by which he is sure of making a large profit, weighs on his conscience far more heavily than any of his thefts. Hence each is sure of the other's secrecy.

As Peppiniello turns again in the direction of the Porto, he fancies that some misfortune is sure to overtake him shortly, for he feels he has deserved a punishment, and only hopes the avenging powers will lay it on with a light hand. So when he finds a perfect stranger to the whole company of *mozzonari*—a great hulking youth of some fifteen years—has taken possession of his place, he looks upon it as the result of their immediate interposition, but this does not make him feel any the more inclined to bear it patiently. Besides, he knows that if he gives way now his favourite seat is lost for ever. Accordingly he utters an indignant protest, which calls forth a contemptuous answer. An angry altercation follows, in which sufficiently strong language is used on both sides. A boatman passing up from the landing-place soon puts an end to the situation by first pushing the youth to a distance of some yards and then tossing his wares after him. This being done, he passes on, fully satisfied that he has been performing an act of justice, for he knows

Peppiniello does usually sit there, and then his opponent is old enough to gain his living in some other way. The sale of old cigar ends is work that children can do, and so it ought to be left to them.

Peppiniello quietly takes his old seat, from which the new-comer does not venture to expel him by force—he has evidently too powerful allies; so he crouches down at a distance of a few yards in front of him, and covers him with every term of abuse. Hitherto the language, though strong, has been confined within the wide limits of what the lower class Neapolitans consider decent, or at least tolerable; now the vilest and most offensive terms which their unusually expressive dialect furnishes are freely used. At first the boy gives epithet for epithet, but then he falls silent, his eyes dilate, his lips tighten, his right hand is fumbling inside his shirt.

“You son of a priest.”

The words are scarcely uttered, when the boy's knife is unclasped, and, with a spring as sudden and unexpected as a cat's, he has flown at his enemy's throat.

Fortunately for both, a well-dressed man has been silently watching the scene, and with a motion as quick as Peppiniello's he has seized the boy, claspng his body with his right arm and grasping the knife with his left hand. Another moment, and a hearty kick has sent the intruder sprawling upon the stones. The latter gathers up first himself and then his wares, and goes off muttering threats and curses. A single glance at his face, however, is sufficient to show that he will never venture to interfere with Peppiniello again.

“If you had ever seen the inside of a prison, my boy,” says the man whose intervention has just been so opportune, “you would not run the risk of being sent there for such a foul-mouthed fool as that; nor,” he adds in a voice that none but the child in his arms can hear—“nor for a purse either, even if it did contain twenty lire;” and so he pushes him with apparent roughness, but real gentleness, back into his place.

Peppiniello stretches himself at full length. His face is on the ground and covered by his two arms, his whole body is still quivering, but his protector sees at a glance that it is only with subsiding rage, so he passes on as if nothing particular had happened. When he returns in an hour's time the boy is jesting merrily with his comrades; but his quick eyes catch the approaching form, he draws back into his corner, and whispers with a downbent head, “Thank you, Don Antonio.”

Don Antonio, if that is his name, takes no notice; he does not even cast a passing glance at the scene of the late conflict.

IV.

At about eight o'clock, Peppiniello resolves to give up business for that evening. It is true the market is at its height, and he has not yet sold more than half his wares, but he will want a new supply to-morrow, and the best time for gathering it has now begun. To-night, too, he

must make good use of his time, for he will have to return home earlier than usual, as Donna Amalia goes to bed between eleven and twelve. He turns in the direction of San Carlo, and walks slowly past the small theatres, picking up what he can by the way, till he reaches the garden gate of the palace, over which he throws a two-centesimo piece, with a hardly perceptible motion of his hand, and without turning his head. On each side stands a colossal bronze statue of a man governing an unruly horse. The Emperor Nicholas of Russia sent them as a present to King Ferdinand after his return from Italy, and they were supposed by the Italian liberals of those days to convey a delicate hint as to what the Autocrat of the North considered the true principles of government. Of all this Peppiniello of course knows nothing; but the stalwart forms have made a deep impression on his imagination, and he has invented this strange way of paying his adoration to them. He does not number them with the saints, still less has he any intention of paying them divine honours. What he attributes to them is great, though by no means unlimited, power, and some such capricious goodwill to himself as the boatmen frequently show. He is not given to analysis, and he sees no contradiction between this worship and the rest of his religious creed; indeed, the bronze statues fill a place that would otherwise be left vacant in his pantheon. He looks upon them as leading strong joyous lives of their own, and caring on the whole very little for human affairs, though he thinks they must be somewhat pleased by sincere devotion. At best they are only good-natured, not good; and so they stand far below the saints, whose whole time is spent in acts of graciousness and pity. But then you cannot call upon the saints to help you in committing what the Church calls a sin, though doubtless they will often save you from its consequences. With respect to the two bronze figures, he has no such scruples, for he is convinced that their moral code is no more stringent than his own. So he called upon them when the children at Santa Lucia seemed inclined to abandon him to the police, and we know how well he got out of that scrape. Nevertheless, he keeps his irreligious faith a profound secret, partly from a fear of ridicule, no doubt, but partly also because he has a shrewd suspicion that the objects of it are more likely to pay attention to his prayers if the number of their worshippers remains strictly limited.

Peppiniello now sets to work in good earnest, and by twelve o'clock he has collected an ample stock-in-trade, paid the waiter the two soldi he owed him, and received his bread and money from Donna Amalia. He now turns homewards. It is a long way, but he only pauses to buy two slices of water-melon at a stall, and these he carries in his hand until he reaches a small open court at the mouth of a cavern, where a number of women are seated to enjoy as much of the freshness of the night as the high walls of the neighbouring houses will allow. He gives a sharp whistle, and immediately a girl hastens towards him. You can see at a glance that she is Peppiniello's sister. Her name is Concetta, and she is

about thirteen years old, though a Northerner would probably think her a year and a half older. Her complexion is sallow than her brother's, her eyes are very bright, and her black hair, which is tied in a rough wisp round her head, has been burnt and bleached by exposure till the surface coil is almost brown. With a little care it might be made to look well, but it has never been brushed since her mother's death, and is rarely combed more than once a week. Her dress is decent, but it has been patched in many places with different materials, and she is far dirtier than Peppiniello, to whom custom allows the luxury of sea-bathing. Still there is a great deal of intelligence, some kindness, and not a little care in her look. Yet at times she can break into wild fits of merriment, and dance the tarantella with all the wild passion of a bacchanal. She seldom does that, however, when her brother or, indeed, any male person is present, and to-night she follows him very quietly down a narrow street to a little open place, and there seats herself on a doorstep beside him. She feels quite as strongly as he does that it would be beneath his dignity to take a place among the women and girls at the cavern's mouth.

"The children are asleep?" asks Peppiniello, as he gives his sister a hunch of bread and one of the slices of water-melon.

"Yes; and Donna Lucia has promised to have an eye on them till I come back."

Peppiniello now gives the girl four soldi for the household expenses of the morrow, and when he adds eight centesimi to enable them each to buy a piece of water-melon, she knows he has had a prosperous day, for in hard times she and her sisters are obliged to live on a soldi each, and what they can manage to earn or pick up. The bread is a new and pleasant surprise over which her eyes brighten; to-morrow, housekeeping will be an easy task.

Business being over, the two fall to their suppers with a hearty appetite, while Peppiniello relates all his day's adventures, with the exception of the bargain with the waiter, and his sacrifice to the statues. The manner of both is quite changed; they are mere children chatting together as merrily as if they had never known want or care. When he has finished his tale, he places the money in her hand—all except a single soldo which he has hid away before. She counts it over carefully, and then exclaims joyously, "Why, you *have* been lucky! With the rest this makes seven lire and a half: only ten soldi more and the month's rent is ready, and to-morrow is only the thirteenth."

Peppiniello's tone assumes some of its old business weightiness, as he replies, "Yes, but that must be made up before we spend anything."

Concetta readily assents to this, and then goes on to propose that, even when their rent is ready, they shall continue to hoard their gains until they have money enough to buy one of the children a nice dress, so that they may be able to send her out of an evening to sell flowers to the ladies and gentlemen in the villa. "That is the way to make

money." But Peppiniello very decisively rejects the proposal, and the girl, who, like most affectionate women that have not been spoiled by culture, has a habit of obeying even the unreasonable wishes of those whom she loves, gives way at once, and all who know more of Neapolitan life than she does will feel that in this difference her brother is in the right. Still, though she does not sulk or quarrel, she is disappointed by the rejection of her plan, and more silent than usual. She has a great trust, love, and admiration for her brother: they never quarrel, partly perhaps because they are so little together, and, what is more, she never yet had a secret from him. He, as we have seen, is not so open. He never told his sister anything about that purse; but he had several good reasons for this. He does not wish her to know that he steals, for she might imitate his example, and that would be unfeminine. There is no harm in boys doing a great many things that girls must not do, and he would be as much shocked to hear that Concetta had been guilty of a theft as to find her swimming in the waters of the harbour. But he had also another reason for keeping that secret. He knew exactly what he wanted to do with the money. The great terror of his life is that some month he may be unable to pay the rent, and that they will consequently be turned into the street. For himself the discomfort would not be great, as in most weathers he can sleep at least as comfortably on a doorstep as in bed; but he dreads it for the children's, and still more for Concetta's, sake. So as soon as the money fell into his hands, he resolved to keep eight lire constantly in store as a resource against cases of the utmost need, and to say nothing about this, in order that neither he nor his sister might be tempted to be less careful in always getting the rent together as early in the month as possible. Nearly three lire were spent on the banquet he had to give to his half-hearted associates. He has still three left to dispose of, but they will go, as six have already gone, to the *lotto*. For that, too, he reserves the soldo which he daily abstracts from his earnings. It is the only way he knows of investing his savings, but he is afraid of awakening hopes in his sister's mind which a sad experience has shown to be so often fallacious. Yet he has many compunctions of conscience about that soldo, which he tries to quiet by remembering that he allows each of the others the same sum for her daily expenditure. Otherwise he scrupulously shares everything he gains with the rest. If he buys a little fruit, the only way in which he ever spends anything upon himself, he brings them some, or gives them money to do the same. What Concetta and the children can earn or pick up they do as they like with, but though she keeps the family purse, into which all his gains flow, she never thinks of taking a centesimo out of it without his previous consent.

But, by this time, Peppiniello and his sister have finished their supper and are returning to the cavern's mouth. More than twenty families sleep in that gloomy hole, divided from each other by no partition greater than a line drawn upon the floor. The sides of the grotto are damp,

and the air close and fetid with a thousand evil odours, though the entrance and the roof are lofty. You can catch no glimpse of the latter at this time of night; there is only one great starless darkness overhead, but below, here and there, a tiny oil flame glimmers before the picture of some saint. There is one burning at the foot of Peppiniello's bed, which occupies the worst place but one, that farthest from the entrance, and when the two reach it, after exchanging a few friendly words with Donna Lucia, one of the occupants of the neighbouring bed, they refill the lamp from a little flask, and then kneel down before a rough print of the Virgin to repeat a Paternoster and an Ave.

The bed itself is large enough not only for the whole family, but also to accommodate a stranger now and then, when, of a stormy night, Peppiniello happens to find some homeless boy shivering on a doorstep that does not shelter him from the rain. Three children are now sleeping quietly enough in it. The eldest of them, who may be nine, has a strong family likeness to Concetta, and so has one of the younger girls, whom you take to be six; but the third, who seems to be of nearly the same age, has quite a different face and figure. She is far more slightly built, has a little rosy mouth and tiny hands and feet. Her skin, though it is bronzed by the sun, is far fairer than that of her bedfellows, and she has fine light brown hair which would be silken if it were kept in proper order. Her name is Mariannina, and she is not in fact one of Peppiniello's sisters. This is her story:—

One night, about a year ago, when the boy was returning home, he saw her sleeping all alone in the portico of a church. If it had been a boy he would have passed on without taking any notice, but that wasn't, a proper place for little girls to sleep in, so he wakened her, and asked where her home was that he might take her there. It was a long way off, she said; she didn't know where, but a long, long way. At length, in answer to many questions and a good deal of coaxing, she told him she lived alone with her mother, who, as soon as she had had her breakfast, used to give her a hunch of bread, turn her into the street, lock the door, and go to her work, from which she did not return till after dark. But one morning some time ago—Mariannina did not know exactly how long: it seemed a long while—her mother was lazy and would not get up. The child had nothing to eat that day, but in the evening her mother gave her the key of the cupboard where the bread was, and told her where to find some money. Mariannina had a good time of it for several days, as her mother took no notice of her, and would not eat anything; but when the money was all spent she told her she had no more, and that she must get her breakfast how she could. She went out to play as usual, and a neighbour gave her something to eat. When she came back her mother was talking very loud, but there was no one else in the room, and the child could not understand what she said. She went on in that way for a long time, but at last she made a strange noise and then she was quite still. Afterwards the lamp before the Virgin went out; there

had been no oil to replenish it with. Next morning when Mariannina awoke her mother was still asleep. When she touched her she was quite cold. At first she had tried to awaken her, but she would not speak nor move, so the child was frightened and ran away. All day she had tried to get as far away as she could. She did not want to go home; she would go with Peppiniello, and she was hungry.

The kindest as well as the wisest thing would of course have been to take the little orphan to the Foundling Hospital, but Peppiniello never thought of that. He was convinced that the Holy Virgin had sent him to take care of this child, and he was not the boy to shrink from such a trust. Concetta was of the same opinion, and from that day to this Mariannina has been a member of the family. She is a quiet child, with soft, caressing ways, and never has those fits of wild merriment into which the others fall; but she has also less cheerfulness to face hard times with, and when the supply of food is very scanty, she is apt to be rather subdued and to look weary. The girls treat her exactly as they do each other, but there is just a shade of extra gentleness in the relation between her and her protector, which may arise from the consciousness that the ties between them have been formed by their own free choice, or perhaps from the belief which both entertain that it was the Blessed Virgin who brought them together.

As soon as Peppiniello and Concetta have finished their prayers they arm themselves with two long sticks. A rusty fork is firmly bound to the end of that which the girl leans against her side of the bed, while her brother's terminates in the blade of an old knife, carefully sharpened. As he creeps into his place, Mariannina puts her hands up to his cheeks and falls asleep again in the midst of the caress. And now the purpose of the strange weapons soon becomes clear, for scarcely has quiet been restored than the floor is literally covered with hundreds of rats. Concetta makes several ineffectual thrusts before Peppiniello moves his arm, but at his first blow he succeeds in wounding one of them, which utters a sharp squeak as it disappears. In a moment all the rest have vanished, and a shrill yet tremulous voice is raised in angry protest from the darkness beyond. At first it utters nothing but vile abuse and frightful curses, but then in a whine it urges that it is a sin to maim and injure the poor creatures. "They, too, are God's children."

"Why doesn't he keep them at home, then? While I'm here, they're not going to nibble Mariannina's toes," replies Peppiniello, but in a tone only just loud enough to catch Concetta's ear, for he respects the age and pities the suffering of the wretched being who has just spoken.

It is Donna Lucia's mother, who, having been found too loathsome to retain her place in the family bed, has been accommodated with a sack of dried maize leaves in the darkest corner of the cave. As her daughter and son-in-law are abroad at their work all day, their children are too little to be of any use, and she cannot move from her pallet, she has perhaps some reason to be grateful to the natural scavengers she vainly endea-

vours to protect. Perhaps, too, the last affectionate instincts of a motherly nature have centred themselves on the only living beings that constantly surround her. At length the querulous voice dies away, the stick falls from Peppiniello's hand, and he sinks into a sound sleep.*

V.

When Peppiniello wakes he feels instinctively that it is dawn, though as yet no ray of light has penetrated even to the entrance of the cavern, so he awakens Concetta. She is tired, and would willingly sleep another hour or two as she usually does, but in that case she could not go to mass with her brother, so she rouses herself, and they are soon on their way to a neighbouring church.

It is still dusk, the larger stars have not yet faded out of the sky, and the freshness of the morning air is felt even in the narrow streets through which their way leads them. There is a stillness everywhere, and an unusual light on common things which impress both the children, but chiefly Concetta, who never rises so early except when she goes to mass. And when they pass the portal of the church the blaze of the candles upon the altar, the glow of the polished marble, the rich colours of the hangings, seem to stand in a strange contrast, not only to the quiet twilight outside, but also to all their ordinary surroundings. To you and me the church looks gaudy, a miracle of bad taste it may be; to them it is a little glimpse of splendour which they feel all the more keenly because it is so different from all the sordid circumstances of their daily life. And they are so safe here, too. Dirty as they are, no one rudely forbids their entrance or will push them from the altar step at which they kneel. For this is no great man's palace, but the house of God and the Madonna, and even these outcast children have a right to a place in it.

And so the mass begins, and Peppiniello remembers a number of trifles, and asks forgiveness for them. He thinks about the daily soldo.

* The incident of the old woman's affection for the rats is borrowed from Renato Fucini's interesting "*Napoli a occhio nudo*," p. 67. On his visiting one of the habitations of the poor, some such wretched being as Donna Lucia's mother used the expression employed in the text, in reproving him for frightening the rats away. The Italian words are "*Son creature di Dio anche loro*," and the verbal translation would of course be, "They, too, are God's creatures;" but this would quite fail to give the point of the reproof, for the word *creatura* is constantly applied in affectionate excuse for little children, or to urge their claim on the pity of adults. When a poor widow says in begging "*Tengo tre creature*," she means to insist on their inability to care for themselves in any way, and "*Sono creature*" is the constant plea of the mother whose children have excited the anger of a grown-up person; pretty much as an Englishwoman might say, "They are too young to know what they are doing, poor things." In calling the rats "*creature di Dio*," therefore, the old woman wished to insist upon their weakness and their ignorance of right and wrong as a claim upon human pity, quite as much as on the fact of their having been created by God; almost as if she had said, "Spare the poor helpless innocents who have no protector but Him who made them."

he conceals from his sister, and has half a mind not to do so any more, though he is by no means sure it is a sin, and he thanks God and the Madonna for having taken care of him so often, but particularly yesterday, and prays them still to be good to him and his sisters and Mariannina, and to the girl who so kindly befriended him yesterday. For the rest of his friends and benefactors he prays in a general way and in the usual form; he does not specially think even of Donna Amalia or Don Antonio (though he would pray for both if they asked him), far less of the English sailors; and when he repeats the petition which he has been taught to use with respect to his enemies, I doubt whether any remembrance of Donna Estere comes into his head. When the elevation of the host is past, and the time has come to remember the dead, Concetta gently presses his hand, and he prays for the souls of his parents and of Mariannina's mother, and for "all that rest in Christ." She remembers their old home better, and thinks oftener about it, than he does, and so she is more moved by this part of the service, which he is sometimes apt to forget.

And all his real sins, his lies and thefts, doesn't he repent of them? I am afraid not. Some time ago he took his sisters to see the miracle of San Gennaro, and when the liquefaction of the blood was long delayed, did not think of all the other spectators who crowded the church, but concluded that it was some personal sin of his that had offended the saint. So he searched his conscience, and remembered that some time before he had refused an old woman a part of his scanty dinner, even though she had begged for it in the Madonna's name, and that he had spoken harshly to Donna Lucia's mother a few days afterwards; and he resolved to be gentler and kinder to the aged and infirm in future. Then the miracle was wrought, and hitherto he has kept his resolution. But his lies and thefts he did not remember. Nay, when he next prepares himself for confession, they will probably be the last sins that come into his mind. When the priest insists on their wickedness, the boy will be moved, and he will really repent, and make up his mind to give them up altogether, and for a day or two he will persevere; but then he will begin to consider the matter from a worldly point of view. The priest was doubtless right in what he said. Peppiniello himself can hardly imagine that a saint ever picked anyone's pocket, but then there is no chance of his ever becoming a saint, and *they* know how hard a poor *mozzone*'s life is, and will not judge him too harshly. In some such way he will probably arrive at the conclusion that perfect honesty is a luxury as far beyond his means as the whelks and periwinkles which are heaped upon the itinerant vendor's tray, and whose dainty odours so often vainly excite his appetite.

But now the mass is over, and Peppiniello and Concetta pass out of the church into the golden morning sunshine and there part, each to begin anew the labours and adventures of the day. And here we must leave them for the present.

Rambles among Books.

No. IV.—THE STATE TRIALS.

IT sometimes strikes readers of books that literature is, on the whole, a snare and a delusion. Writers, of course, do not generally share that impression; and, on the contrary, have said a great many fine things about the charm of conversing with the choice minds of all ages, with the *innuendo*, to use the legal phrase, that they themselves modestly demand some place amongst the aforesaid choice minds. But at times we are disposed to retort upon our teachers. Are you not, we observe, exceedingly given to humbug? The youthful student takes the poet's ecstasies and agonies in solemn earnest. We who have grown a little wiser cannot forget how complacently delighted the poet has been to hit upon a new agony; how he has set it to a pretty tune; how he has treasured up his sorrows and despairs to make his literary stock in trade, has taken them to market, and squabbled with publishers and writhed under petty critics, and purred and bridled under judicious flattery; and we begin to resent his demand upon our sympathies. Are not poetry and art a terrible waste of energy in a world where so much energy is already being dissipated? The great musician, according to the well-worn anecdote, hears the people crying for bread in the street, and the wave of emotion passing through his mind comes out in the shape, not of active benevolence, but of some new and exquisite jangle of sounds. It is all very well. The musician, as is probable enough, could have done nothing better. But there are times when we feel that we would rather have the actual sounds, the downright utterance of an agonised human being, than the far-away echo of passion set up in the artistic brain. We prefer the roar of the tempest to the squeaking of the æolian harp. We tire of the skilfully prepared sentiment, the pretty fancies, the unreal imaginations, and long for the harsh, crude, substantial fact, the actual utterance of men struggling in the dire grasp of unmitigated realities. We want to see Nature itself, not to look at the distorted images presented in the magical mirror of a Shakspeare. The purpose of playing is, as that excellent authority is constantly brought to us, to show the very age and body of the time, his form and pressure. But, upon that hypothesis, why should we not see the age itself instead of being bothered by impossible kings and queens and ghosts mixed up in supernatural catastrophes? If this theory of art be sound, is not the most realistic historian the only artist? Nay, since every historian is more or less a sophisticator, should we not go back to the materials from which histories are made?

I feel some touch of sympathy for those simple-minded readers who avowedly prefer the police reports to any other kind of literature. There at least they come into contact with solid facts; shocking, it may be, to well-regulated minds, but possessing all the charm of their brutal reality; not worked into the carefully doctored theories and rose-coloured pictures set forth by the judicious author, whose real aim is to pose as an amiable and interesting being. It is true that there are certain objections to such studies. They generally imply a wrong state of mind in the student. He too often reads, it is to be feared, with that pleasure in loathsome details which seems to spring from a survival of the old cruel instincts capable of finding pleasure in the sight of torture and bloodshed. Certainly one would not, even in a passing phrase, suggest that the indulgence of such a temper can be anything but loathsome. But it is not necessary to assume this evil propensity in all cases; or what must be our judgment of the many excellent members of society who studied day by day the reports of the Tichborne case, for example, and felt that there was a real blank in their lives when the newspapers had to fill their columns with nothing better than discussions of international relations and social reforms? You might perhaps laugh at such a man if he asserted that he was conscientiously studying human nature. But you might give him credit if he replied that he was reading a novel which atoned for any defects of construction by the incomparable interest of reality. And the reply would be more plausible in defence of another kind of reading. When literature palls upon me I sometimes turn for relief to the great collection of State Trials. They are nothing, you may say, but the police reports of the past. But it makes all the difference that they are of the past. I may be ashamed of myself when I read some hideous revelation of modern crime, not to stimulate my ardour as a patriot and a reformer, but to add a zest to my comfortable chair in the club window or at the bar of my favourite public house. But I can read without such a pang of remorse about Charles I. and the regicides. I can do nothing for them. I cannot turn the tide of battle at Naseby, or rush into the streets with the enthusiastic Venner. They make no appeal to me for help, and I have not to harden my heart by resisting, but only for a sympathy which cannot be wasted because it could not be turned to account. I may indulge in it, for it strengthens the bond between me and my ancestors. My sense of relationship is stimulated and strengthened as I gaze at the forms sinking slowly beyond my grasp down into the abyss of the past, and try in imagination to raise them once more to the surface. I do all that I can for them in simply acknowledging that they form a part of the great process in which I am for the instant on the knife-edge of actual existence, and unreal only in the sense in which the last motion of my pen is unreal now. "I was once," says one of the earliest performers, "a looker-on of the pageant as others be here now, but now, woe is me! I am a player in that doleful tragedy." This "now" is become our "once," and we may leave it to

the harmless enthusiasts who play at metaphysics to explain or to darken the meaning of the familiar phrase. Whatever time may be—a point, I believe, not quite settled—there is always a singular fascination in any study which makes us vividly conscious of its ceaseless lapse, and gives us the sense of rolling back the ever closing scroll. Historians, especially of the graphic variety, try to do that service for us; but we can only get the full enjoyment by studying at firsthand direct contemporary reports of actual words and deeds.

The charm of the State Trials is in the singular fulness and apparent authenticity of many of the reports of *viva voce* examinations. There are not more links between us, for example, and Sir Nicholas Throgmorton—whose words I have just quoted—than between us and the last witness at a contemporary trial. The very words are given fresh from the speaker's mouth. The volumes of course contain vast masses of the dismal materials which can be quarried only by the patience of a Dryasdust. If we open them at random we may come upon reading which is anything but exhilarating. There are pages upon pages of constitutional eloquence in the Sacheverell case about the blessed revolution, and the social compact and the theory of passive resistance, which are as hopelessly unreadable as the last parliamentary debate in the *Times*. If we chance upon the great case of Shipmoney, and the arguments for and against the immortal Hampden, we have to dig through strata of legal antiquarianism solid enough to daunt the most intrepid explorer. And, as trials expand in later times, and the efforts of the British barrister to establish certain important rules of evidence become fully reported, we, as innocent laymen, feel bound to withdraw from the sacred place. Indeed, one is forced to ask in passing whether any English lawyer, with one exception, ever made a speech in court which it was possible for any one, not a lawyer, to read in cold blood. Speeches, of course, have been made beyond number of admirable efficacy for the persuasion of judges and juries; but so far as the State Trials inform us, one can only suppose that lawyers regarded eloquence as a deadly sin, perhaps because jurymen had a kind of dumb instinct which led them to associate eloquence with humbug. The one exception is Erskine, whose speeches are true works of art, and perfect models of lucid logical exposition. The strangely inarticulate utterance of his brethren reconciles us in a literary sense to the rule—outrageous in a moral and political point of view—which for centuries forbade the assistance of counsel in the most serious cases. In the older trials, therefore, we assist at a series of tragedies, which may shock our sense of justice, but in their rough-and-ready fashion go at once to the point and show us all the passions of human beings fighting in deadly earnest over the issues of life and death. The unities of time and place are strictly observed. In the good old days the jury, when once empanelled, had to go on to the end. There was no dilatory adjourning from day to day.* As wrestlers who have once taken hold must struggle

* In the trial of Horne Tooke in 1794 it was decided by the judges that an ad-

till one touches earth, the prisoner had to finish his agony there and then. The case might go on by candlelight, and into the early hours of a second morning, till even the spectators, wedged together in the close court, with a pestilential atmosphere, loaded, if they had only known it, with the germs of gaol fever, were well-nigh exhausted; till the judge confessed himself too faint to sum up, and even to recollect the evidence; till the unfortunate prisoner, browbeaten by the judge and the opposite counsel, bewildered by the legal subtleties, often surprised by unexpected evidence, and unable to produce contradictory witnesses at the instant, overwhelmed with all the labour and impossibility of a task to which he was totally unaccustomed, could only stammer out a vague assertion of innocence. Here and there some sturdy prisoner—a Throgmorton or a Lilburne—thus brought to bay under every disadvantage, managed to fight his way through, and to persuade a jury to let him off even at their own peril. As time goes on, things get better, and the professions of fair play have more reality; but it is also true that the performance becomes less exciting. In the degenerate eighteenth century it came to be settled that a minister might be turned out of office without losing his head; and it is perhaps only from an æsthetic point of view that the old practice was better, which provided historians with so many moving stories of judicial tyranny. But in that point of view we may certainly prefer the old system, for the tragedies generally have a worthy ending; and instead of those sudden interventions of a benevolent author which are meant to save our feelings at the end of a modern novel, we are generally thrilled by a scene on the scaffold, in which it is rare indeed for the actors to play their parts unworthily.

The most interesting period of the State Trials is perhaps the last half of the seventeenth century, when the art of reporting seems to have been sufficiently developed to give a minute verbal record—vivid as a photograph—of the actual scene, and before the interest was diluted by floods of legal rhetoric. Pepys himself does not restore the past more vividly than do some of those anonymous reporters. The records indeed of the trials give the fullest picture of a social period, which is too often treated from some limited point of view. The great political movements of the day leave their mark upon the trials; the last struggle of parties was fought out by judges and juries with whatever partiality in open court. We may start, if we please, with the “memorable scene” in which Charles I. won his title to martyrdom; then comes the gloomy procession of regicides; and presently to come we have the martyrs to the Popish plot, and they are followed by the Whig martyr, Russell, and by the miserable victims who got the worst of Sedgemoor fight. The Church of England has its share of interest in the exciting case of the Seven Bishops; and Nonconformists are represented by Baxter’s sufferings under Jeffreys, and by luckless frequenters of prohibited conventicles; and

journment might take place in case of “physical necessity,” but the only previous case of an adjournment cited was that of Canning (in 1753).

beneath the more stirring events described in different histories, we have strange glimpses of the domestic histories which were being transacted at the time; there are murderers and forgers and housebreakers, who cared little for Whig or Tory; superstition is represented by an occasional case of witchcraft. And we have some curious illustrations of the manners and customs of the fast young men of the period, the dissolute noblemen, the "sons of Belial flown with insolence and wine," who disturbed Milton's meditations, and got upon the stage to see Nell Gwyn and Mrs. Bracegirdle, in the comedies of Dryden and Etherege. It is unfair to take the reports of a police court as fully representing the characteristics of a time; but there never was a time which left a fuller impression of its idiosyncrasies in such an unsavoury record office. Let us pick up a case or two pretty much at random.

It is pleasantest, perhaps, to avoid the more familiar and pompous scenes. It is rather in the byplay—in the little vignettes of real life which turn up amidst more serious events—that we may find the characteristic charm of the narrative. The trials, for example, of the regicides have an interest. They died for the most part (Hugh Peters seems to have been an exception) as became the survivors of the terrible Ironsides, glorying, till drums beat under the scaffold to silence them, in their fidelity to the "good old cause," and showing a stern front to the jubilant royalists. But one must admit that they show something, too, of the peculiarities which made the race tiresome to their contemporaries as they probably would be to us. They cannot submit without a wrangle—which they know to be futile—over some legal point, where simple submission to the inevitable would have been more dignified; and their dying prayers and orations are echoes of the long-winded sermons of the Blathergows. They showed fully as much courage, but not so much taste as the "royal actor" on the same scene. But amidst the trials there occurs here and there a fragment of picturesque evidence. A waterman tells us how he was walking about Whitehall on the morning of the "fatal blow." "Down came a file of musketeers." They hurried the hangman into his boat, and said, "Waterman, away with him; be-gone quickly." "So," says the waterman, "out I launched, and having got a little way in the water, says I, 'Who the devil have I got in my boat?' Says my fellow, says he, 'Why?' I directed my speech to him, saying, 'Are you the hangman that cut off the King's head?' 'No, as I am a sinner to God,' saith he, 'not I.' He shook, every joint of him. I knew not what to do. I rowed away a little further, and fell to a new examination of him. 'Tell me true,' says I, 'are you the hangman that hath cut off the King's head? I cannot carry you,' said I. 'No,' saith he;" and explains that his instruments had been used, but not himself; and though the waterman threatened to sink his boat, the supposed hangman stuck to his story, and was presumably landed in safety. The evidence seems to be rather ambiguous as concerns the prisoner, who was accused of being the actual executioner; but the vivacity with which Mr. Abra-

ham Smith tells his story is admirable. Doubtless it had been his favourite anecdote to his fellows and his fares during the intervening years, and he felt, rightly as it has turned out, that this accidental contact with one of the great events of history would be his sole title to a kind of obscure immortality.

Another hero of that time, unfortunately a principal instead of a mere spectator in the recorded tragedy, is so full of exuberant vitality that we can scarcely reconcile ourselves to the belief that the poor man was hanged two centuries ago. The gallant Colonel Turner had served in the royal army, and, if we may believe his dying words, was specially valued by his Majesty. The poor colonel, however, got into difficulties: he made acquaintance with a rich old merchant named Tryon, and tried to get a will forged in his favour by one of Tryon's clerks; failing in this, he decided upon speedier measures. He tied down poor old Tryon in his bed one night, and then carried off jewels to the value of 3,000*l*. An energetic alderman suspected the colonel, clutched him a day or two afterwards, and forced him to disgorge. When put upon his defence, he could only tell one of those familiar fictions common to pickpockets; how he had accidentally collared the thief, who had transferred the stolen goods to him, and how he was thus entitled to gratitude instead of punishment. It is not surprising that the jury declined to believe him; but we are almost surprised that any judge had the courage to sentence him. For Colonel Turner is a splendid scoundrel. There is something truly heroic in his magnificent self-complacency; the fine placid glow of conscious virtue diffused over his speeches. He is a link between Dugald Dalgetty, Captain Bobadil, and the audacious promoter of some modern financiering scheme. Had he lived in days when old merchants invest their savings in shares instead of diamonds, he would have been an invaluable director of a bubble company. There is a dash of the Pecksniff about him; but he has far too much pith and courage to be dashed like that miserable creature by a single exposure. Old Chuzzlewit would never have broken loose from his bonds. It is delightful to see, in days when most criminals prostrated themselves in abject humiliation, how this splendid colonel takes the Lord Chief Justice into his confidence, verbally button-holes "my dear lord" with a pleasant assumption that, though for form's sake some inquiry might be necessary, every reasonable man must see the humour of an accusation directed against so innocent a patriot. The whole thing is manifestly absurd. And then the colonel gracefully slides in little compliments to his own domestic virtues. Part of his story had to be that he had sent his wife (who was accused as an accomplice) on an embassy to recover the stolen goods. "I sent my poor wife away," he says, "and, saving your lordship's presence, she did all bedirt herself—a thing she did not use to do, poor soul. She found this Nagshead, she sat down, being somewhat fat and weary, poor heart! I have had twenty-seven children by her, fifteen sons and twelve daughters." "Seven or eight times this fellow did round her." "Let me give that relation,"

interrupts the wife. "You cannot," replies the colonel, "it is as well. Prythee, sit down, dear Moll; sit thee down, good child, all will be well." And so the colonel proceeds with admirable volubility, and we sympathise with this admirable father of twenty-seven children under so cruel a hardship. But—not to follow the trial—the colonel culminated under the most trying circumstances. His dying speech is superb. He is honourably confessing his sins, but his natural instinct asserts itself. He cannot but admit, in common honesty, that he is a model character, and speaks under his gallows as if he were the good apprentice just arrived at the mayoralty. He admits, indeed, that he occasionally gave way to swearing, though he "hated and loathed" the sin when he observed it; but he was—it was the source of all his troubles—of a "hasty nature." But he was brought up in an honest family in the good old times, and laments the bad times that have since come in. He has been a devoted loyalist; he has lived civilly and honestly at the upper end of Cheapside as became a freeman of the Company of Drapers; he was never known to be "disguised in drink;" a small cup of cider in the morning, and two little glasses of sack and one of claret at dinner, were enough for him; he was a constant churchgoer, and of such delicate propriety of behaviour that he never "saw a man in church with his hat on but it troubled him very much" (a phrase which reminds us of Johnson's famous friend); "there must be," he is sure, when he thinks of all his virtues, "a thousand sorrowful souls and weeping eyes" for him this day. The attendant clergy are a little scandalised at this peculiar kind of penitence; and he is good enough to declare that he "disclaims any desert of his own"—a sentiment which we feel to be a graceful concession, but not to be too strictly interpreted. The hangman is obliged to put the rope round his neck. "*Dost thou mean to choke me, fellow?*" exclaims the indignant colonel. "What a simple fellow is this! how long have you been executioner that you know not how to put the knot?" He then utters some pious ejaculations, and as he is assuming the fatal cap, sees a lady at a window; he kisses his hand to her, and says, "Your servant, Mistress;" and so pulling down the cap, the brave colonel vanishes, as the reporter tells us, with a very undaunted 'carriage to his last breath.

Sir Thomas More with his flashes of playfulness, or Charles with his solemn "remember," could scarcely play their parts more gallantly than Colonel Turner, and they had the advantage of a belief in the goodness of their cause. Perhaps it is illogical to sympathise all the more with poor Colonel Turner, because we know that his courage had not the adventitious aid of a good conscience. But surely he was a very prince of burglars! We turn a page and come to a very different question of casuistry. Law and morality are at a deadlock. Instead of the florid, swaggering cavalier, we have a pair of Quakers, Margaret Fell and the famous George Fox, arguing with the most irritating calmness and logic against the imposition of an oath. "Give me the book in my

hand," says Fox; and they are all gazing in hopes that he is about to swear. Then he holds up the Bible and exclaims, "This book commands me not to swear." To which dramatic argument (the report, it is to be observed, comes from Fox's side) there is no possible reply but to "pluck the book forth of his hand again," and send him back to prison. The Quakers vanish in their invincible passiveness; and in the next page, we find ourselves at Bury St. Edmunds. The venerated Sir Matthew Hale is on the bench, and the learned and eloquent Sir Thomas Browne appears in the witness-box. They listen to a wretched story of two poor old women accused of bewitching children. The children swear that they have been tormented by imps, in the shape of flies, which flew into their mouths with crooked pins—the said imps being presumably the diabolical emissaries of the witches. Then Sir Thomas Browne gravely delivers his opinion; he quotes a case of witchcraft in Denmark, and decides, after due talk about "superabundant humours" and judicious balancing of conflicting considerations, that the fits into which the children fell were strictly natural, but "heightened to a great excess by the subtlety of the devil co-operating with the malice of the witches." An "ingenious person," however, suggests an experiment. The child who had sworn that the touch of the witch threw her into fits, was blindfolded and touched by another person passed off as the witch. The young sinner fell into the same fits, and the "ingenious person" pronounced the whole affair to be an imposture. However, a more ingenious person gets up and proves by dexterous logic, curiously like that of a detected "medium" of to-day, that, on the contrary, it confirms the evidence.* Whereupon, the witches were found guilty, the judge and all the court being fully satisfied with the verdict, and were hanged accordingly, though absolutely refusing to confess.

Our ancestors' justice strikes us as rather heavy-handed and dull-eyed on these occasions. In another class of trials we see the opposite phase—the manifestation of that curious tenderness which has shown itself in so many forms since the days when highway robbery appeared to be a graceful accomplishment if practised by a wild Prince and Pains. Things were made delightfully easy in the race which flourished after the Restoration. Every Peer, by the amazing privilege of the "benefit of clergy," had a right to commit one manslaughter. Like a school-boy, he was allowed to plead "first fault;" and a good many Peers took advantage of the system.

Lord Morley, for example, has a quarrel "about half-a-crown." A Mr. Hastings, against whom he has some previous grudge, contemptuously throws down four half-crowns. Therefore Lord Morley and an attendant bully insult Hastings, assault him repeatedly, and at last fall upon

* This case was in 1665. It is curious that in the case of Hathaway in 1702, a precisely similar experiment convinced everybody that the accuser was an impostor; and got him a whipping and a place in the pillory.

him "just under the arch in Lincoln's Inn Fields," and there Lord Morley stabs him to death, "with a desperate imprecation." The Attorney-General argues that this shows malice, and urges that Mr. Hastings, too, was a man of good family. But the Peers only find their fellow guilty of manslaughter. He claims his privilege, and is dismissed with a benevolent admonition not to do it again. Elsewhere, we have Lord Cornwallis and a friend coming out of Whitehall in the early morning, drunk and using the foulest language. After trying in vain to quarrel with a sentinel, they swear that they will kill somebody before going home. An unlucky youth comes home to his lodgings close by, and after some abuse from the Peer and his friend, the lad is somehow tumbled downstairs and killed on the spot. As it seems not to be clear whether Lord Cornwallis gave the fatal kick, he is honourably acquitted. Then we have a free fight at a tavern, where Lord Pembroke is drinking with a lot of friends. One of them says that he is as good a gentleman as Lord Pembroke. The witnesses were all too drunk to remember how and why anything happened; but after a time one of them is kicked out of the tavern; another, a Mr. Cony, is knocked down and trampled, and swears that he has received what turned out some days later to be mortal injuries from the boots of Lord Pembroke. The case is, indeed, doubtful; for the doctor who was called in refused to make a post-mortem examination on the ground that it might lead him into "a troublesome matter;" and another was disposed to attribute the death to poor Mr. Cony's inordinate love of "cold small beer." He drank three whole tankards the night before his death; and when actually dying, declined "white wine posset drink," suggested by the doctor, and "swore a great oath he would have small beer." And so he died, whether by boots or beer; and the Lord High Steward in due time had to inform Lord Pembroke that his lordship was guilty of manslaughter, but, being entitled to his clergy, was to be discharged on paying his fees. The most sinister figure amongst these wild gallants is the Lord Mohun, who killed, and was killed by, the Duke of Hamilton, as all the readers of the Journals of Swift or of Colonel Esmond remember. He appears twice in the collection. On December 9, 1690, Mohun and his friend Colonel Hill come swaggering into the play-house, and got from the pit upon the stage. An attendant asks them to pay for their places; whereupon Lord Mohun nobly refuses, saying, "If you bring any of your masters I will slit their noses." The pair have a coach-and-six waiting in the street to carry off Mrs. Bracegirdle, to whom Hill has been making love. As she is going home to supper, they try to force her into it with the help of half-a-dozen soldiers. The by-standers prevent this; but the pair insist upon seeing Mrs. Bracegirdle to her house, and mount guard outside with their swords drawn. Mrs. Bracegirdle and her friends stand listening at the door, and hear them vowing vengeance against Mountford, of whom Hill was jealous. Presently the watch appears—the constable and the beadle, and a man in front with a lantern. The constable asks

why are the swords drawn. Mrs. Bracegirdle through the door hears Mohun reply, "I am a Peer of England, touch me if you dare." "God bless your honour," replies the constable, "I know not what you are, but I hope you are doing no harm." "No," said he. "You may knock me down, if you please," adds Colonel Hill. "Nay, said I" (the lantern-bearer), "we never use to knock gentlemen down unless there be occasion." And the judicious watch retire to a tavern in the next street, in order, as they say, "to examine what they (Mohun and Hill) were, and what they were doing." There was, as the constable explains, "a drawer there, who had formerly lived over against him," and might throw some light upon the proceedings of these polite gentlemen. But, alas! "in the meantime the murder was done." For as another witness tells us, Mr. Mountford came up the street and was speaking coolly to Mohun, when Hill came up behind and gave him a box on the ear. "Saith Mr. Mountford, what's that for? And with that he (Hill) whipped out his sword and made a pass at him, and I turned about and cried murder!" Mountford was instantly killed; but witnesses peeping through doors, and looking out of windows, gave conflicting accounts of the scuffle in the dim street, and Lord Mohun, after much argument as to the law, was acquitted. Five years later, he appears in the case reported by Esmond, with little more than a change in the names. An insensate tavern-brawl is followed by an adjournment to Leicester Fields; six noblemen and gentlemen in chairs; Mr. Coote, the chief actor in the quarrel, urging his chairman by threatening to goad him with his sword. The gentlemen get over the railings and vanish into the "dark wet" night, whilst the chairmen philosophically light their pipes. The pipes are scarcely alight, when there is a cry for help. Somehow a chair is hoisted over the rails, and poor Mr. Coote is found prostrate in a pool of blood. The chairmen strongly object to spoiling their chairs by putting a "bloody man" into them. They are pacified by a promise of 100*l.* security; but the chair is somehow broken, and the watch will not come to help, because it is out of their ward; "and I staid half-an-hour," says the chief witness pathetically, "with my chair broken, and afterwards I was laid hold upon, both I and my partner, and kept till next night at eleven o'clock; and that is all the satisfaction I have had for my chair and everything." This damage to the chair was clearly the chief point of interest for poor Robert Browne, the chairman, and it may be feared that his account is still unsettled. Mohun escaped upon this occasion, and, indeed, Esmond is unjust in giving to him a principal part in the tragedy.

Such were the sights to be seen occasionally in London by the watchman's lantern, or the candle glimmering across the narrow ally, or some occasional lamp swinging across the street; for it was by such a lamp that a girl looked into the hackney-coach and saw the face of the man who had sent for Dr. Clench ostensibly to visit a patient, but really in order to strangle the poor doctor on the way. They are strange illu-

minations on the margin of the pompous page of official history ; and the incidental details give form and colour to the incidents in Pepys' *Journals* or Grammont's *Memoirs*. We have kept at a distance from the more dignified records of the famous constitutional struggles which fill the greatest number of pages. Yet those pages are not barren for the lover of the picturesque. And here I must put in a word for one much reviled character. If ever I were to try my hand at the historical amusement of whitewashing, I should be tempted to take for my hero the infamous Jeffreys. He was, I dare say, as bad as he is painted ; so perhaps were Nero and Richard III., and other much abused persons ; but no miscreant of them all could be more amusing. Wherever the name of Jeffreys appears we may be certain of good sport. With all his inexpressible brutality, his buffoonery, his baseness, we can see that he was a man of remarkable talent. We think of him generally as he appeared when bullying Baxter ; when "he snorted and squeaked, blew his nose and clenched his hands, and lifted up his eyes, mimicking their (the Nonconformists') manner, and running on furiously, as he said they used to pray ;" and we may regard him as his victims must have regarded him, as a kind of demoniacal baboon placed on the bench in robes and wig, in hideous caricature of justice. But the vigour and skill of the man when he has to worry the truth out of a stubborn witness, is also amazing. When a knavish witness produced a forged deed in support of the claim of a certain Lady Ity to a great part of Shadwell, Jeffreys is in his element. He is perhaps a little too exuberant. "Ask him what questions you will," he breaks out, "but if he should swear as long as Sir John Falstaff fought" (the Chief Justice can quote Shakspeare), "I would never believe a word he says." His lordship may be too violent, but he is substantially doing justice ; and shows himself a dead hand at unmasking a cheat. The most striking proof of Jeffreys' power is in the dramatic trial of Lady Lisle. The poor lady was accused of harbouring one Hicks, a Dissenting preacher, after Sedgemoor. It was clear that a certain James Dunne had guided Hicks to Lady Lisle's house. The difficulty was to prove that Lady Lisle knew Hicks to be a traitor. Dunne had talked to her in presence of another witness, and it was suggested that he had given her the fatal information. But Dunne tried hard in telling his story to sink this vital fact. The effort of Jeffreys to twist it out of poor Dunne, and Dunne's futile and prolonged wriggling to escape the confession, are reported at full, and form one of the most striking passages in the State Trials. Jeffreys shouts at him ; dilates in most edifying terms upon the bottomless lake of fire and brimstone which awaits all perjurers ; snatches at any slip ; pins the witness down ; fastens inconsistencies upon him through page after page ; but poor Dunne desperately clutches the secret in spite of the tremendous strain. He almost seems to have escaped, when the other witness establishes the fact that some conversation took place. Armed with this new thumbscrew, Jeffreys leaps upon poor

Dunne again. The storm of objurgations, appeals, confutations, bursts forth with increased force; poor Dunne slips into a fatal admission: he has admitted some talk, but cannot explain what it was. He tries dogged silence. The torture of Jeffreys' tongue urges him to fresh blundering. A candle is held up to his nose that the court "may see his brazen face." At last he exclaims, the candle "still nearer to his nose," and feeling himself the very focus of all attention, "I am quite cluttered out of my senses; I do not know what I say." The wretched creature is allowed to reflect for a time, and then at last declares that he will tell the truth. He tells enough in fact for the purpose, though he feebly tries to keep back the most damning words. Enough has been wrenched out of him to send poor Lady Lisle to the scaffold. The figure of the poor old lady falling asleep, as it is said, while Jeffreys' thunder and lightning was raging in this terrific fashion round the feeble defence of Dunne's reticence, is so pathetic, and her fate so piteous and disgraceful, that we have little sense for anything but Jeffreys' brutality. But if the power of worming the truth out of a grudging witness were the sole test of a judge's excellence, we must admit the amazing efficiency of Jeffreys' method. He is the ideal cross-examiner, and we may overlook the cruelty to victims who have so long ceased to suffer.

In the post-revolutionary period the world becomes more merciful and duller. Lawyers speak at greater length; and even the victims of '45, the strange Lord Lovat himself, give little sport at the respectable bar of the House of Lords. But the domestic trials become perhaps more interesting, if only by way of commentary upon *Tom Jones* or *Roderick Random*. Novelists indeed have occasionally sought to turn these records to account. The great Annesley case has been used by Mr. Charles Reade, and Scott took some hints from it in one of the very best of his performances, the inimitable *Guy Mannering*. Scott's adaptation should, indeed, be rather a warning than a precedent; for the surpassing merit of his great novel consists in the display of character, in Meg Merrilies and Dandie Dinmont and Counsellor Pleydell, and certainly not in the rather childish plot with the long-lost heir business. He falls into the common error of supposing that the actual occurrence of events must be a sufficient guarantee for employing them in fiction. The Annesley case is almost the only one in the collection in which facts descend to the level of romance. The claimant's case was clearly established up to a certain point. There was no doubt that he had passed for Lord Annesley's son in his childhood; that he had for that reason been spirited away by his uncle, and sold as a slave in America; and, further, that when he returned to make his claim and killed a man by accident (an incident used by Scott)—that his uncle did his best to have him convicted for murder. The more difficult point was to prove that he was the legitimate son of the deceased lord by his wife, who was also dead. A servant of the supposed mother gave evidence which, if true, conclusively disproved this assumption; and though young Annesley won his first

trial, he afterwards failed to convict this witness of perjury. The case may therefore be still doubtful, though the weight of evidence seems decidedly against the claimant. The case—the “longest ever known” at that time—lasted fifteen days, and gives some queer illustrations of the domestic life of a disreputable Irish nobleman of the period. Perhaps, however, the most curious piece of evidence is given by the attorney who was employed to prosecute the claimant for a murder of which he was clearly innocent. “What was the intention of the prosecution?” he is asked. “To put this man out of the way that he (Lord Anglesea, the uncle) might enjoy the estate easy and quiet.” “You understood, then, that Lord Anglesea would give 10,000*l.* to get the plaintiff hanged?” “I did.” “Did you not apprehend that to be a most wicked crime?” “I did.” “If so, how could you engage in that project, without making any objection to it?” “I may as well ask you,” is the reply, “how you came to be engaged in this suit.” He is afterwards asked whether any honest man would do such an action. “Yes, I believe they would, or else I would not have carried it on.” This is one of the prettiest instances on record of that ingenious adaptation of the conscience, which allows a man to think himself thoroughly honest for committing a most wicked crime in his professional capacity. The novelist who wishes rather to display character than to amuse us with intricacies of plot, will find more matter in less ambitious narratives. A most pathetic romance, which may remind us of more famous fictions, underlies the great murder case in which Cowper the poet’s grandfather was defendant. Sarah Stout, the daughter of a Quaker at Hertford, fell desperately in love with Cowper, who was a barrister, and sometimes lodged at her father’s house when on circuit. She wrote passionate letters to him of the *Eloïse* to *Abelard* kind, which Cowper was ultimately forced to produce in evidence. He therefore had a final interview with her, explained to her the folly of her passion, there being already a Mrs. Cowper, and left her late in the evening to go to his lodgings elsewhere. Poor Sarah Stout rushed out in despair and threw herself into the *Priory* river. There she was found dead next morning, when the miller came to pull up his sluices. All the gossips of Hertford came immediately to look at the body and make moral or judicial reflections upon the facts. *Wiseacres* suggested that Cowper was the last man seen in her company, and it came out that two or three other men attending the assizes had gossiped about her on the previous evening, and one of them had, strange to relate, left a cord close by his trunk. These facts, transfigured by the Hertford imagination, became the nucleus of a theory, set forth in delicious legal verbosity, that the said Cowper, John Masson, and others “a certain rope of no value about the neck of the said Sarah, then and there feloniously, voluntarily, and of malice aforethought did put, place, fix, and bind; and the neck and throat of the said Sarah, then and there with the hands of you, the said Cowper, Masson, Stephens, and Rogers, feloniously, voluntarily, and of your malice aforethought, did hold,

squeeze, and gripe." By the said squeezing and griping, to abbreviate a little, Sarah Stout was choked and strangled; and being choked and strangled instantly died, and was then secretly and maliciously put and cast into the river. The evidence, it is plain, required a little straining, but then Cowper belonged to the great Whig family of the town, and Sarah Stout was a Quaker. Tories thought it would be well to get a Cowper hanged, and Quakers wished to escape the imputation that one of their sect had committed suicide. The trial lasted so long that the poor judge became faint and confessed that he could not sum up properly. The whole strength of the case, however, such as it was, depended upon an ingenious theory set up by the prosecution, to the effect that the bodies of the drowned always sink, whereas Miss Stout was found floating, and must therefore have been dead before she was put in the river. The chief witness was a sailor, who swore that this doctrine as to sinking and swimming was universal in the navy. He had seen the shipwreck of the "Coronation" in 1691. "We saw the ship sink down," he says, "and they swam up and down like a shoal of fish one over another, and I see them hover one upon another, and see them drop away by scores at a time;" some nine escaped, "but there were no more saved out of the ship's complement, which was between 500 and 600, and the rest I saw sinking downright, twenty at a time." He has a clinching argument, though a less graphic instance, to prove that men already dead do not sink. "Otherwise, why should Government be at that vast charge to allow threescore or fourscore weight of iron to sink every man, but only that their swimming about should not be a discouragement to others?" Cowper's scientific witnesses, some of the medical bigwigs of the day, had very little trouble in confuting this evidence: but the letters which he at last produced, and the evidence that poor Miss Stout had been talking of suicide, should have made the whole story clear even to the bemuddled judges. The novelist would throw into the background this crowd of gossiping and malicious *quidnuncs* of Hertford; but we must be content to catch glimpses of her previous history from these absurdly irrelevant twaddlings, as in actual life we catch sight of tragedies below the surface of social small-talk. Sarah Stout was clearly a Maggie Tulliver, a potential heroine, unable to be happy amidst the broad-brimmed, drab-coated respectabilities of quiet little Hertford. Her rebellion was rasher than Maggie's, but perhaps in a more characteristic fashion. The case suggests the wish that Mr. Stephen Guest might have been hanged on some such suspicion as was nearly fatal to Cowper.

Half a century later our ancestors were in a state of intense excitement about another tragedy of a darker kind. Mary Blandy, the only daughter of a gentleman at Henley, made acquaintance with a Captain Cranstoun, who was recruiting in the town. The father objected to a marriage, from a suspicion, apparently well founded, that Cranstoun was already married in Scotland. Thereupon Mary Blandy

administered to her father certain powders sent to her by Cranstoun. According to her own account, she intended them as a kind of charm to act upon her father's affections. As they were, in fact, composed of arsenic, they soon put an end to her father altogether, and it is too clear that she really knew what she was doing. It was sworn that she used brutal and unfeeling language about the poor old man's sufferings, for the poison was given at intervals during some months. But the pathetic touch which moved the sympathies of contemporaries was the behaviour of the father. In the last day or two of his life, he was told that his daughter had been the cause of his fatal illness. His comment was: "Poor lovesick girl! What will not a woman do for the man she loves." When she came to his room his only thought was apparently to comfort her. His most reproachful phrase was: "Thee should have considered better than to have attempted anything against thy father." The daughter went down on her knees and begged him not to curse her. "I curse thee!" he exclaimed. "My dear, how couldst thou think I should curse thee? No, I bless thee, and hope God will bless thee and amend thy life." And then he added, "Do, my dear, go out of the room and say no more, lest thou shouldst say anything to thy prejudice; go to thy uncle Stevens, take him for thy friend; poor man, I am sorry for him." The tragedy behind these homely words is almost too pathetic and painful for dramatic purposes; and it is not strange that our ancestors were affected. The sympathy, however, took the queer illogical twist which perhaps, who can tell? it might do at the present day. Miss Blandy became a sort of quasi saint, the tenderness due to the murdered man extended itself to his murderer, and her penitence profoundly edified all observers. Crowds of people flocked to see her in chapel, and she accepted the homage gracefully. She was extremely shocked, we are told, by one insinuation made by uncharitable persons; namely, that her intimacy with Cranstoun, who was supposed to be a freethinker, might justify doubts upon her orthodoxy. She declared that he had always talked to her "perfectly in the style of a Christian," and she had read the works of some of our most celebrated divines. In spite of her moving conduct, however, the "prejudices she had to struggle with had taken too deep root in some men's minds" to allow of her getting a pardon. And so, 5,000 people saw poor Miss Blandy mount the ladder in "a black bombazine, short sack and petticoat," on an April morning at Oxford, and many, "particularly several gentlemen of the University," were observed to shed tears. She left a declaration of innocence which, in spite of its solemnity, must have been a lie; and which contained an allusion from which it appears that Miss Blandy, like other prisoners, was suspected of previous crimes.

"It is shocking to think," says Horace Walpole, in noticing Miss Blandy's case, "what a shambles this country has become. Seventeen were executed this morning, after having murdered the turnkey on Friday night, and almost forced open Newgate." Another woman was

hanged in the same year for murdering her uncle at Walthamstow ; and the public could talk about nothing but the marriage of the Miss Gunnings and the hanging of two murderesses. Fielding, then approaching the end of his career, was moved by this and other atrocities to publish a queer collection of instances of the providential punishment of murderers. Another famous author of the day was commonly said to have turned a famous murder to account in a different fashion. Foote, it is said, was introduced at a club in the words, " This is the nephew of the gentleman who was lately hung in chains for murdering his brother ; " and it is added that Foote's first pamphlet was an account of this disagreeable domestic incident. A more serious author might have found in it materials for a striking narrative. Captain Goodere commanded his Majesty's ship *Ruby*, lying in the King's Road off Bristol. He had a quarrel with his brother, Sir John Goodere, about a certain estate. The family solicitor arranged a meeting in his house, where the two brothers appeared to be reconciled. But Sir John had scarcely left the house, when he was seized in broad daylight by a set of sailors who had been drinking in a public-house, and carried down forcibly to the Captain's barge. The Captain himself followed and rowed off with his brother to the ship. There Sir John was confined in a cabin, a suggestion being thrown out to the crew that he was a madman. A few hours later, one Mahony, who played the part of " hairy-faced Dick " to Hamilton Tighe, strangled the unfortunate man, with an accomplice called White. Attention had been aroused amongst the crew by ominous sounds, groans and scufflings heard in the dead of night, and next morning, the lieutenant, after a talk with the surgeon, resolved to seize their captain for murder. A more outrageous and reckless proceeding, indeed, could scarcely have been imagined, even in the days when a press-gang was a familiar sight, and the captain of a ship at sea was as absolute as an Eastern despot. Every detail seemed to be arranged with an express view to publicity. One piece of evidence, however, was required to bring the matter home to the captain ; and it is of ghastly picturesqueness. The ship's cooper and his wife were sleeping in the cabin next to the scene of the murder. The cooper had heard the poor man exclaim that he was going to be murdered, and praying that the murder might come to light. This, however, seemed to be the wandering of a madman, and the cooper went to sleep. Presently his wife called him up : " I believe they are murdering the gentleman." He heard broken words and saw a light glimmering through a crevice in the partition. Peeping through, he could distinguish the two ruffians standing with a candle over the dead body and taking a watch from a pocket. And then, through the gloom, he made out a hand upon the throat of the victim. The owner of the hand was invisible ; but it was whiter than that of a common sailor. " I have often seen Mahony's and White's hands," he added, " and I thought the hand was whiter than either of theirs." The trembling cooper wanted to leave the cabin

but his wife held him back, as, indeed, with three murderers in the dark passage outside, it required some courage to move. So they watched trembling, till he heard a sentinel outside, and thought himself safe at last : he roused the doctor, peeped at the dead body through a "scuttle" which opened into the cabin ; and then urged the lieutenant to seize the captain. The captain was deservedly hanged, bequeathing to us that ghastly Rembrandt-like picture of the white hand seen through the crevice by the trembling cooper on the throat of the murdered man. There is no touch which appeals so forcibly to the imagination in De Quincey's famous narrative of the Mar murders.

I have made but a random selection from the long gallery of grim and grotesque portraiture of the less reputable of our ancestry. It must be confessed that a first impression tends to reconcile us to the comfortable creed of progress. The eighteenth century had some little defects which have been frequently expounded ; but it can certainly afford to show courts of justice against its predecessor. The old judicial murder of the Popish Plot variety has become extinct ; if the judges try to strain the law of libel, for example, the prisoner has every chance of making a good fight ; for which the readers of Horne Tooke's gallant defences, and of some of Erskine's speeches, may be duly grateful. The ancient brag of fair play has become something of a reality. And the character of the crimes has changed in a noticeable way. There are hideous crimes enough. A brutal murder by smugglers near the case of Mary Blandy, surpasses in its barbarity the worst of modern agrarian outrages ; though it is not clear that in number of horrors the present century is unable to match its predecessor. When the wild blood of the Byrons shows itself in the last of the old tavern brawls à la Mohun, we feel that it is a case (in modern slang) of a "survival." The poet's grand-uncle, the wicked Lord Byron, got into a quarrel with Mr. Chaworth about the game laws at a dinner of country gentlemen at the Star and Garter ; whereupon, in an ambiguous affair, half scuffle and half duel, Byron sent his sword through Chaworth's body, and then politely requested Mr. Chaworth to admit that he (Byron) was as brave a man as any in the kingdom. But this little ebullition required Byronic impulsiveness, and was not a recognised part of a gentleman's conduct. Lord Ferrers, a short time before, was hanged, to the admiration of all men, like a common felon, for shooting his own steward ; whereas in our day, he would almost certainly have escaped on the plea of insanity. Other cases mark the advent of the meddlesome, but perhaps on the whole useful person, the social reformer. Momentary gleams of light, for example, are thrown upon the scandals which ruined the trade of the parsons of the Fleet. Poor Miss Pleasant Rawlins is arrested for an imaginary debt, carried to a sponging-house, and there persuaded (she was only seventeen or thereabouts), that she could obtain her liberty by an immediate marriage to an adventurer who had scraped acquaintance with her and taken a liking to her fortune. The famous (he was

once famous) Beau Fielding falls into a trap unworthy of an experienced man of the world. He is persuaded that a lady of fortune has fallen in love with him on seeing him walking in her grounds at a distance. A lady, by no means of fortune, comes to his lodgings, and passes herself off as this susceptible person. Hereupon Fielding sends off for a priest of one of the foreign embassies, gets himself married at his lodgings the same evening, and discovers a few days afterwards that he is married to the wrong person. It is exactly a comedy of the period performed by real flesh and blood actors. The catastrophe is painful. Mr. Fielding ventures to grant himself a divorce, and to marry the wretched old Duchess of Cleveland; and in due time the Duchess finds it very convenient to have him tried for bigamy. It did not take more than half a century or so of such scandals to get an improvement in the marriage law, which implies, on the whole, a creditable rate of progress. Another set of cases illustrates a grievance familiar to novel readers. In *Amelia* the atrocities of bailiffs, sponging-houses and debtors' prisons, are drawn with startling realism. We may easily convince ourselves that Fielding was not speaking without book. The bailiff who has arrested Captain Booth gives a "wipe or two with his hanger," as he pleasantly expresses it, to an unlucky wretch who gives trouble, and delivers an admirable discourse upon the ethics of killing in such cases. It might have come from the mouth of one Tranter, a bailiff, who, a few years before, had stabbed poor Captain Luttrell, for objecting to leave his wife in a delicate state of health. Soon after, we find a society of philanthropists headed by Oglethorpe of "strong benevolence of soul," endeavouring to expose the horrors of the Fleet and the Marshalsea. A series of trials, ordered by the House of Commons, had the ending too characteristic of all such movements. Witnesses swore to atrocities enough to make one's blood run cold; of men guilty only of impecuniosity, half-starved, thrust naked into loathsome and pestiferous dungeons, beaten and chained, and persecuted to death. But then arise another set of unimpeachable witnesses, who swear with equal vigour, that the unfortunate debtors were treated with every consideration; that they were made as comfortable as their mutinous spirit would allow; that they were discharged in good health and died months afterwards from entirely different causes; that the accused were not the responsible authorities; that they had never interfered except from kindness, and that they were the humanest and best of mankind. Nothing remained but an acquittal; though the investigation did something towards letting daylight into abodes of horror which Mr. Pickwick found capable of improvement a century later.

Other cases might show how in various ways the strange power called Public Opinion was beginning to increase its capricious and desultory influence. The strange case of Elizabeth Canning (1753) is one of the most picturesque in the collection. Miss Canning was a maid-servant, who disappeared for a month, and coming home told a story of kidnapping by a gipsy. Officious neighbours rushed in, and by judicious

leading questions managed to help her to manufacture evidence against a poor old gipsy woman, preternaturally hideous, who sits smoking her pipe in blank wonder as the crowd of virtuous avengers of innocence rush into her kitchen. Mary Squires, the gipsy, was sentenced to be hanged, and doubtless at an earlier period she would have been turned off without delay. But in that delicious calm in the middle of the last century, when wars, and rebellions, and constitutional agitations were quiet for the moment, and people had time to read their modest newspapers without spoiling their digestions and their nerves, the case came to absorb the popular interest. If the news did not flash through the country as rapidly as that of the Lefroy murder, it slowly dribbled along the post-roads and set people gossiping in alehouses far away in quiet country villages. A whole host of witnesses appeared and put together a diary of a gipsy's tour. We follow the party to village dances; we hear the venerable piece of scandal about the schoolmaster who "got fuddled" with the gipsies; and what the gipsies had for dinner on January 1, 1753, and how they paid their bill; we have a glimpse of the little flirtation carried on by the gipsy's daughter, and the poor trembling little letter is produced, which she managed to write to her lover, and which cost her sevenpence: threepence being charged for it from Basingstoke to London, and fourpence from London to Dorchester. After more than a week spent in overhauling this and other evidence, proving amongst other things that the scene of the girl's supposed confinement was really tenanted the whole time by a man strangely and most inappropriately named Fortune Natus, the jury decided that the accuser was guilty of perjury, but boggled characteristically as to its being "wilful and corrupt." However, Elizabeth Canning got her deserts, and was transported to New England, still sticking to the truth of her story. Her guilt is plain enough, if anybody could care about it, but the little details of English country life a century ago are as fresh as the doings of the rustics in one of Mr. Hardy's novels.

It all happened a long time ago, but we cannot hope with the old lady who made that consolatory remark about other historical narratives that "it ain't none of it true." On the contrary such vivid little pictures flash out upon us as we read that we have a difficulty in supposing that they were not taken yesterday. Abundance of morals may be drawn by historians and others who deal in that kind of ware; it is enough here to have indicated as well as we can, what pleasant reading may be found in the dusty old volumes which are too often left to repose undisturbed on the repulsive shelves of a lawyer's library.

A Port of the Past.

THERE is only one thing in the world more wonderful than Rome, and that is the neighbourhood of Rome. Yet of the myriads of tourists who annually pass through the Eternal City, how few are there who condescend to do more than take one or two desultory drives in the Campagna ! Perhaps they get as far as the tomb of Cecilia Metella on the Via Appia. Possibly they drive out to Sant' Agnese on the Nomentan Way. If very enterprising, conceivably they take the tram to Frascati, or the railway to Albano. But of the scores of places of absorbing historical and antiquarian interest within a twenty miles' radius of the Seven Hills they know and care nothing. In this respect modern travellers have greatly changed for the worse as compared with their forerunners. They cover a vast amount of space with their locomotives and their hired carriages ; but they keep to the more beaten tracks, and they skim a country almost with the swiftness of swallows. Like gold nuggets, human intelligence and human curiosity can either be beaten out very thin, and so be made to cover a considerable superficial area, or they may be compressed and concentrated till their depth is equal to their breadth. The spreading-out process seems to be the one most in vogue in these days. People prefer to make a superficial journey round the world in a given number of days, rather than to devote an ungiven number of days to the world's most precious and sacred localities. One place is treated exactly like another. Florence occupies no more of the tourist's time than Vienna ; and Rome is supposed to be seen in the same number of hours that are required for Berlin. In olden days, fewer people, far fewer people, visited Rome ; but those who visited it did so with intelligent interest and to some useful purpose. They remained for months at a time in a city which is not to be thoroughly explored in less ; and to their acquaintance with intramural Rome they added some familiarity with the numerous suburbs that lie between Rome and the sea, or between Rome and the mountains.

One of the most delightful excursions to be made in the neighbourhood of Rome, and one which best repays the expense of the journey, is a day's trip by carriage to Ostia and Castel Fusano. The time was when a carriage that held four persons could be hired for this purpose for five scudi, or little more than a sovereign. But last spring nearly twice that sum was demanded for the cost of the expedition. The temporal power of the Popes has disappeared ; Rome boasts a Parliament, a free press, and many new thoroughfares ; and these are luxuries which invariably bring costly living in their train. Even in the middle of March, w en you

are going to undertake a journey of this kind—only fifteen miles out and fifteen back—a Roman coachman is anxious to be off betimes; and if you know what a Roman sun can do long before noon, even at the Vernal Equinox, you will second his humour, and be settling into your seat not long after 8 A.M. strikes. People are not taking down shutters in Rome at that hour, as in Oxford Street or Piccadilly. All the world is up and about; the streets are thronged; the markets are crowded; and a fair amount of the day's work has already been done. How charming it is at that hour to wind through the streets that lead to the Forum, where all modern improvements despite, the buffaloes are still lying down in the shafts of the two-wheeled country carts that are stacked with fodder for the use of the Capital. You can see at a glance that Rome is still far from being an opulent city; that the old ways of primitive poverty, as shown in garb, in victual, in harness-gear, in every turn and detail of life, still subsist; and as you pass out of the Porta San Paolo, and get upon the Ostian Way, you can hardly believe that you are in the neighbourhood of a great Capital. It is not that the Campagna is as yet about you, or that signs of moral cultivation do not abound. But there is a ruggedness, a carelessness, a don't-mind air about everything, that is more than provincial in character. The only houses are roadside *Osterie*, or inns, their walls decorated with flaming frescoes or trellis decoration of the rudest sort, intimating that a good rest and *vino nostrale* are, on the whole, the best things in this world. The Roman peasant, and indeed the Roman citizen of a certain class, readily believes this otiose philosophy; and the amount of drinking and reposing that is got through in these suburban gardens is amazing. For gardens they all of them possess; and when summer comes, there will be a *pergola* of vine leaves, and under the grapes of this year the stalwart *contadini* and handsome *Trasteverine* matrons will quaff the juice of the grapes of last. They are true descendants of Horace. They love their Falernian or their Massic; they gather rosebuds when they may; and they take as little heed of the morrow as possible. Yet they are amiable and graceful in their cups unless the demon of jealousy lurks at the bottom of the draught; and then their bouts are terrible.

By degrees, however, these wayside inns become more and more sparse, and finally vanish altogether. You have passed the great Basilica of St. Paul, so tame and poor externally, so splendid and gorgeous within, with its attendant Convent, stricken with annual malaria, and you find yourself following the course of the truly yellow Tiber, through scrub, through rough pasture, and past little low hills scarce deserving of the name. It is the horizon rather than the foreground that now attracts your eye; and you note where, far away to the left, lies Frascati, further still, Tivoli. There is little traffic along the road, though it leads to the most famous port of Ancient Rome and to where the Tiber still debouches. Sheep grazing, lambs frisking, shepherds in goat-skin garments leaning upon their crooks, troops of

young colts, shaggy, spare, and easily startled, are the main objects and incidents of your progress. Now and again there is a green thicket and a deep-banked stream, and now you catch sight of the sea. What is that? That is Ostia? Which? That round Tower, with some farm buildings clustered round it? Precisely. That is all which represents the greatest port of the most celebrated city in the world. Listen to the description of what it once was. The historian is describing one of the feats of Alaric. "Instead of assaulting the Capital, he successively directed his efforts against the Port of Ostia, one of the boldest and most stupendous works of Roman magnificence. The accidents to which the precarious subsistence of the city was continually exposed in a winter navigation and an open road, had suggested to the genius of the first Cæsar the useful design, which was executed under the reign of Claudius. The artificial moles, which formed the narrow entrance, advanced far into the sea, and firmly repelled the fury of the waves; while the largest vessels securely rode at anchor within three deep and capacious basins, which received the northern branch of the Tiber, about two miles from the ancient colony of Ostia. The Roman Port insensibly swelled to the size of an Episcopal City, where the corn of Africa was deposited in spacious granaries for the use of the Capital." The rest may be easily surmised. As soon as Alaric got possession of Ostia he menaced Rome with the destruction of these granaries unless the Capital was instantly surrendered into his hands; and the clamours of the people, and the terror of famine, subdued the pride of the Senate. It would be impossible to terrify Rome to-day by threats directed against Ostia. An invader might flog the waves like Xerxes, or sack the barren sands; but his power of mischief would end with those bootless exploits.

Ostia never recovered from that famous assault in the fifth century, and till A.D. 830 it remained to all intents and purposes deserted, the sea-sand continually silting up and adding future uselessness to past ravages. Then Gregory IV. founded another Ostia, about a mile distant from the site of the original city; and it is at what is left of this second Ostia that your coachman will descend, take out his horses, and show every intention of having nothing more to say to you till you think proper to turn your face Romewards again. It is some distance hence to the Roman Ostia, some distance again in another direction to the woods of Castel Fusano; but the day is young, and one wants to walk and to have as little company as possible while prowling among ruins and excavations. A malaria-stricken peasant emerges from a massive stone doorway, and helps to stable the horses. A priest, dirty and unshaven, is amusing himself by feeding with coarse oatmeal the litter of a wild boar, which he has tamed to be his companion in this solitary place. The old sow, in spite of her fierce appearance and shaggy bristles, is very friendly; and but for his cassock the padre would look far more like a professional swineherd than a servant of the Altar. Once upon a time the Bishopric of Ostia was the most famous in the world. Pious tra-

dition has always maintained that it was established in the time of the Apostles; though I fear that erudite sceptics would claim for it no earlier origin than the Pontificate of Urban I., about 229 A.D. This privilege, however, it undoubtedly had, that when the Pope elect happened to be in priest's orders he was enthroned by the Bishop of Ostia, who was regarded as the Dean of the Sacred College, and must therefore have had the dignity of Cardinal by virtue of his office. Apparently this smiling, grimy ecclesiastic is all that is left of the Ostian bishopric, which is now merged in that of Velletri. We ask him if he will show us his church. With all the pleasure in the world, for it gives him something to do; but it evidently surprises him that anybody should wish to see it. Truly, it is unremarkable and, to the eye, devoid of interest. But look at that fresco in the side chapel on the right. It represents the death and apotheosis of Santa Monica. And then you remember that it was here, at Ostia, that St. Augustine, on his way to Africa, had to bid adieu to his saintly mother. The records of history contain no tenderer chapter than the relations of Monica with her ardent, erratic, and finally repentant, immortal son. Who does not remember Ary Scheffer's picture of the pair gazing out to sea together! So did they, at Ostia before Monica died. And here, at Ostia, Augustine buried her, lingering awhile to write his treatise *De Libero Arbitrio*, and then sailed for the African see with which his name is for ever associated. Not content with trying to revive the existence of Ostia, Gregory IV. surrounded it with walls, and the sycophants of the time tried to christen it Gregoriopolis, but the name Ostia could not be got rid of. Under Leo IV. the Saracens swooped down upon it and got that picturesque thrashing which Raphael has commemorated in the *Stanze* of the Vatican. That event must have administered a fillip to the place, for it was important enough to be besieged and captured by the King of Naples in 1413. Then the famous Cardinal Giuliano della Rovere, better known as Julius II., took a fancy to it, and employed Sangallo to build, and Baldassare Peruzzi to decorate. The decorations have gone the way of all such; but the massive circular Tower, surrounded by bastions connected by a curtain and defended by a ditch, still remains. Everywhere where they can be put are the arms of the Della Rovere—an evergreen oak, the *robur* of the Italian poets. The cardinal gallantly defended his tower against the French for two whole years, and finally drove them off. After that, new Ostia languished; and now nothing survives but this same Tower, a small church, and a farmyard with the litter of a wild boar. Inside the tower are staircases, vaults, mutilated statues, undecipherable inscriptions, votive altars, funeral tablets, broken utensils of bronze, pottery, and glass, the *disjecta membra* of a vanished civilisation. I am told the population of the *paese*, or neighbourhood, is sometimes as high as one hundred souls, though in the season of malaria it sinks below this figure. I can only speak of it as I found it, and I saw only one priest and one peasant. To make the population larger I must count the wild sow's litter.

And now, with your face seawards, you may walk through sandy drives to the site of ancient Ostia. Of late years, the excavations begun in the time of Cosmo de' Medici, under the direction of Poggio Bracciolini, and then for many a generation suspended till the present century, have been pushed on diligently. Cosmo found what folks there were upon the spot, occupied in reducing an entire temple back again into lime; and doubtless that was the chief industry of the place for many centuries. Is there much to see? Well, yes, and no. No, if you expect to find a huge city disinterred—a *Herculaneum* or a *Pompeii*. But yes, if you are satisfied with a street or two, part of a theatre, portions of a temple, and many a roadway with the marks of the chariot-wheels of senator, consul, and augur cut into them. There is enough, if you are learned, to embarrass your erudition; there is more than enough, if you be sensitive, to flood your feelings. You may say that this temple was dedicated to Jupiter; or, if you like, you may safely contradict anybody who affirms as much. It is still a fine brick structure. The *cella* is entire; much of the floor, which is of African marble, is there to testify to you. The altar of the Divinity still stands. But where are the worshippers? Here they come, down that winding grass-grown street of tombs. First, an old crone, I should think as old as Ostia itself, her face not only withered parchment, but a very palimpsest upon which many a generation has inscribed its obscure meaning. She has the comely square towel upon her head; the hard, unyielding bodice round her waist; the short, gay petticoat; and the *cioce* or sheepskin sandals round her feet and legs, which otherwise are encased in stoutly knitted blue stockings. She is fingering her rosary, for it is Sunday, and she totters along, the genius of the place. Second, a young girl, dressed in precisely the same garb, but somehow making it look quite different. She stands erect like a goddess, and her gaze is that of the ox-eyed Juno. She has no rosary, no anything. She is a splendid mass of colours, a splendid embodiment of form, and she is an ignorant pagan who hopes the Madonna will send her a lover. Third, a lamb, decked with bright ribands, and following for company's sake, as for company's sake it has been adopted. Beyond these, deeply-worn slabs, draped statues without heads, prone and splintered columns, acanthus leaves, heaps of chipped marble, and the undying associations of the mightiest empire man has ever built or seen. Antiquarians would prattle to you by the hour about Ancus Martius, who, if you please, founded Ostia; about Claudius, Procopius, Hadrian, Septimius Severus, and Aurelian. I think such lore goes in at one ear and out at the other, when there is so little visible and tangible to impress it on the memory. One of the strangest relics of the place is an oblong room with an apse at the end of it, in the middle of which is a sacrificial altar with Mithraic reliefs. Statues of priests of Mithra were likewise found upon the spot. In the front part of the altar you may plainly see the circular depression that received the blood of the victims sacrificed. There is, too, an inscription recording that Caius Cælius,

antistes hujus loci, erected it *de sua pecuniâ*, or at his own expense. Obviously, then, there was here a Temple of Mithra. Many charming statues have been found hereabouts: the bust of the young Augustus, the Ganymede of Phædimius, and excellent bas-reliefs of Diana and Endymion. The early Christians, too, have left visible traces of themselves, of their creed, of their martyrdom, and of their special modes of interment; and there is one headless statue, much steeped in fading colour, of which the toe is worn away with constant kissing, as is that of St. Peter in the Vatican Basilica, known to all men and tourists. But nothing has availed to save Ostia; neither emperor nor cardinal, neither pope nor martyr, neither Jove, Mithra, nor Augustine.!

From the summit of the excavated ruins of ancient Ostia, or, still better, from the top of the *Torre Boacciano*, a trifle nearer to the sea, you command a splendid view of that branch of the Tiber by which Virgil makes Æneas and his companions enter Latium. Hither it was that, as the poet describes, propitious Neptune directed their ships. Here was it that the cakes of bread were spread under a shady tree; that the wandering Trojans ate their trenchers, as provender was running short, and thereby reminded Æneas of a prediction of Anchises, which convinced him that he had "touched land" at last. It was from this very spot that the embassy set out to the Court of King Latinus at Laurentum, only a few miles away, received as gifts the three hundred horses, and took back to Æneas the message concerning Lavinia. The woods described by Virgil have gone; but it is as true to-day as then, that the Tiber, dimpled with whirlpools, and driving the sand along, "rolls his yellow billows to the sea." True now, as then, that the seabirds "*æthera mulcebant cantu*," were softening the air with their song. How is it possible, with such tender phrases as these abounding in Virgil, that critics can pretend it was left to modern poets to divine the subtlety of Nature? No doubt Dryden renders this lovely phrase, "to tuneful songs their narrow throats applied;" but we may depend upon it that this horrible parody would have revolted Virgil as much as it does ourselves. What a fascination Virgil still sheds around all this Latin coast! "*Nunc magnum manet Ardea nomen*," he wrote, hundreds of years ago, of the Argive capital of Turnus; and *magnum nomen* is all that can now be predicted of Laurentum, of Lavinium, of Antium, of Alba Longa. But the names will always remain great, because of the author of the *Æneid*. It was from this same mouth of the Tiber that Claudius sailed for Britain. We know that Claudius lived, and we are all considerably interested in the island he subdued. But who can bring himself to associate Ostia with either or both, in the same sense in which he does so with the mythical landing of Æneas and his followers? Claudius has fared but ill at the hands of historians, and poets have troubled themselves about him not at all. Why does Gibbon speak of him as "the most stupid of Roman Emperors?" But if neglected by the bard, and stigmatised by the chronicler, Claudius, after the Expedition he

organised from here, evidently had his flatterers. There was an Arch of Claudius in Rome, in the Piazza Sciarra, which Andrea Fulvio tells us existed even down to his time. In 1565, excavations were made in its neighbourhood, and many sculptured marbles were disinterred; among them, a head of Claudius, and a relief, in which he is represented as addressing his troops. It is still to be seen in the Villa Borghese. In a garden wall, behind the Barberini Palace, is a complacent inscription to Claudius, "Quod Reges Britannos absque ullâ jacturâ domuerit, gentes Barbaras primus judicio subegerit." But these haughty imperial boasts are all in vain; and the "*æthera mulcebant cantu*" moves us infinitely more.

To the pine-woods of Castel Fusano is a smartish little walk, in the heat of the March sun, which is now high in the heavens. But under their dense canopy of shade, upon turf growing a harvest of asphodels, you may spread your table-cloth, set out your luncheon, uncork your Montepulciano, eat your oranges, and be very happy. What is it that smells so sweet? It is the rosemary you are lying on, for the forest is full of it. There is a Casino or villa belonging to Prince Chigi, which is inhabited only for a few weeks in the spring. Why not for more? They say the malaria strikes no one, at a certain height above the ground. Then why not make yourself a hammock in the topmost boughs of those lofty murmuring pines? Better couch, better cradle, no man could have; and from your eyrie you would descry the winding of the Tiber, the Tyrrhene main, and Rome itself. The word reminds you that you must sleep there to-night; for it is a conventional world, and men no longer couch in trees. If you did, where would you find your breakfast? Like the followers of Æneas, you would have to eat your trenchers; and I much doubt if any Lavinia would be in store for you, or any Latin king send you horses and provender. Back to Rome! It would always be worth while to go fifteen miles from Rome, if only for the sake of the pleasure of driving back to it. Its majesty never ends nor palls; and nothing can stale its infinite variety. Etruscan civilisation, Roman civilisation, Greek civilisation, the early Christian, the mediæval, the Papal, the strictly modern, all are there. Rome is the compendium of History; and you may open the human story at what page you will.

The World's End.

"Great talk among people how some of the Fanatiques do say that the end of the world is at hand, and that next Tuesday" (Dec. 2, 1662), "is to be the day."—*Pepys' Diary*.

IN the year 1000 A.D. it was almost the universal opinion that the world approached its end. Early Mother Shiptons had indicated that as the fateful year. Satan had been chained for a thousand years, and was to be loosened when the thousand years were complete. The end of the world was to be brought about by him indirectly, for his temporary triumph was to lead to the second coming of Christ, the Day of Judgment, and the end of all things terrestrial. The anticipation of these events caused natural phenomena, such as are occurring all the time, to assume a more than usually portentous aspect. Just as last year, when, according to the Shipton prophecy, our world was to come to an end, everyone who believed in the prophecy found in the weather reports from different parts of the earth proof positive, or at least confirmation strong, of the threatened end—men's hearts failing them for fear because of earthquakes, storms, and so forth, which ordinarily pass without attracting special attention; so in the year 1000, every meteorological and celestial phenomenon was anxiously watched as the possible precursor of the coming catastrophe. A comet appeared and was visible for nine days, and everyone began to ask (like Fanny Squeers), "Is this the end?" A wonderful meteor was seen, and men's frightened fancies enabled them to see what men of science seldom have the opportunity of observing now during meteoric displays. "The heavens opened," we are told, "and a kind of flaming torch fell upon the earth, leaving behind a long track of light like the path of a flash of lightning. Its brightness was so great that it frightened not only those who were in the fields, but even those who were in the houses. As this opening in the sky slowly closed, men saw with horror the figure of a dragon, whose feet were blue, and whose head seemed to grow larger and larger." A terrible picture accompanies this description. There is the meteor track, with various coruscations and widenings, so arranged as to correspond with the figure of a dragon assigned to the portentous object; but as the resemblance might not seem absolutely convincing to unimaginative persons, a dragon to match is set beside the celestial apparition, and this creature is labelled for the benefit of the inexperienced, "*Serpens cum ceruleis pedibus*."

It is exceedingly probable that if general literature had reached as

widely then as it does now, the fears entertained in the year 1000 would have surpassed in intensity those which have been engendered since that time by successive predictions of the world's approaching end. But the great bulk of the population here and elsewhere probably heard very little of these terrible forewarnings. They had many other things to attend to in those "good old times," and some of their surroundings might very likely have suggested that they could not be much worse off if the world should actually perish at that time. As for their betters, they also were pretty busily engaged plundering each other and fighting with such zeal that manifestly for a considerable number the end was likely to come at least as soon as the general destruction threatened by the prophets. At any rate, though we have clear evidence that many believed in the predicted end of the world (indeed it was thought very wicked to be in doubt about it), matters went on much as usual; the year 1001 began and still the world endured, with every sign of continuing.

The belief that the world would come to an end in the year 1000 was associated with, if not absolutely derived from, a much older belief entertained by the earliest astronomers of whom any records remain to us. They considered that certain cyclic periods of the planetary motions begin and end with terrestrial calamities, these calamities being of different characters according to the zodiacal relations of the planetary conjunctions. Thus the ancient Chaldeans taught (according to Diodorus Siculus) that when all the planets are conjoined in Capricornus the earth is destroyed by flood; when they are all conjoined in Cancer the earth is destroyed by fire. But after each such end comes the beginning of a new cycle, at which time all things are created afresh. A favourite doctrine respecting these cyclic destructions was that the period intervening between each was the *Annus Magnus*, or great year, required for the return of the then known planets to the position (of conjunction) which they were understood to have had at the beginning of the great year. According to some this period lasted 360,000 years; others assigned to it 300,000 years, while according to Orpheus it lasted only 120,000 years. But it was in every case a multiple of a thousand years, and the subordinate catastrophes were supposed to divide the great year into sets of so many thousand years.

In Plato's *Timæus* we have some account of the Egyptian ideas concerning these successive world-endings, though minor catastrophes only are referred to; but when Solon described to the Egyptian priests Deucalion's flood, and counted for them the generations which had elapsed since it occurred, an aged priest said to him: "Like the rest of mankind the Greek nation has suffered from natural convulsions, which occur from time to time according to the position of the heavenly bodies, when parts of the earth are destroyed by the two great agents, fire and water. At certain periods portions of the human race perish in the waters, and rude survivors too often fail to transmit historical evidence of the event.

You Greeks remember one record only. There have been many. You do not even know at present anything of that fairest and noblest race of which you are a seed or remnant." The aged priest then read from Egyptian annals the records of events which had happened in Greece 9,000 years before; he described the founding of the city of Sais 8,000 years before; and this account, registered in their ancient and sacred records, Solon read at leisure. The most remarkable of the earth's cataclysms were there described, including the destruction by flood of the great island of Atlantis. This was described as a continent opposite the Pillars of Hercules (the Straits of Gibraltar), larger in extent than Lybia and Asia together (!), and was on the road to other islands, and to a great continent of which the whole of the Mediterranean Sea was then but the harbour. Within the Pillars the empire of Atlantis reached to Egypt and Tyrrhenia. In remote times this mighty power was arrayed against Egypt and Hellas, and all those countries which bordered on the Mediterranean. Greece bravely repelled the invaders and freed all nations within the Pillars. Some time after, there was a great earthquake, and the warrior races of Hellas were drowned—the great island of Atlantis also disappeared, being submerged beneath the sea.

The conflagrations and deluges by which portions of the earth, and at times the whole earth, were destroyed, were believed to be intended for the regeneration of the world. After each catastrophe, men were created afresh free from vice and misery; but gradually they fell away from this happy state to a condition of immorality, which rendered a new decree of destruction necessary.

Lyell notes that the sect of Stoics adopted most fully the system of catastrophes thus designed for the alternate destruction and regeneration of the world. They taught that they were of two kinds—"the cataclysm, or destruction by water, which sweeps away the whole human race, and annihilates all the animal and vegetable productions of nature; and the epyrosis, or destruction by fire, which dissolves the globe itself. From the Egyptians also they derived the doctrine of the gradual debasement of man from a state of innocence. Towards the termination of each era the gods could no longer bear the wickedness of men, and a shock of the elements, or a deluge, overwhelmed them; after which calamity Astræa again descended on the earth, to renew the golden age."

That the partial destructions of the earth, whether by flood or fire, were associated with the movements of the heavenly bodies is evident from the fact that, wherever we meet with these ideas, whether in Egyptian, Assyrian, Indian, or Chinese records, direct reference is always made to the conjunction of the planets, the position of the sun and moon, and occasionally to the apparition of comets and the fall of meteoric bodies. The following account of the Chinese Flood, attributed to the reign of Yu, is traced in the order of Hangshan, a mountain on which for many ages annual sacrifices were made by the ancient emperors of China. "The great and little islets and inhabited places," says the venerable emperor of the

house of Hia, "even to their summits, the abodes of the beasts and birds and all beings, are widely inundated. I repose on the top of the mountain Yohlu. By prudence and labours I have communicated with spirits. I know not the hours, but repose myself only amid incessant labours. By the dark influence of sun and moon the mountains Hwa, Yoh, Tai, and Hang alone remain above the waters. Upon them has been the beginning and end of my enterprise. When my labours were completed I offered a thanksgiving sacrifice at the solstice. My affliction has ceased; the confusion in nature has disappeared; the deep currents coming from the south flow into the sea. The flood began at equinox. The skies rained meteoric showers of iron of extraordinary duration." Some portions of the country remained under water several years until B.C. 2233, when canals ordered to be cut by the Emperor Ta Yu conveyed to the sea the immense bodies of water which had been precipitated upon and overflowed so large a part of China. By this means river beds were finally cut, shedding water in new directions, and continued to be worn deeper by the receding flow, until the whole country was tolerably free from inundation.

Sir Charles Lyell remarks of this flood that it rather interrupted the work of agriculture than involved any widespread destruction of the human race. Mr. Davis, who accompanied two British embassies to China, points out that "even now a great derangement of the waters of the Yellow River might cause the flood of Yaou to be repeated, and lay the most fertile and populous plains of China under water." It is noteworthy, however, that in the ancient records the action of the sun and moon, presumably in raising tides, is mentioned, while meteoric showers are distinctly associated with the occurrence of the flood—though whether they came at the beginning of the disturbance, or simply occurred while the waters were out over the plains of China, does not clearly appear.

After the threatened but not accomplished destruction of the world in the year A.D. 1000, comets were for a while looked on with suspicion, an idea appearing to prevail that the torch which was to light the final conflagration would be a cometic one. For several centuries, however, no comet came near enough to the earth or sun to excite any serious terrors founded on observed astronomical relations. But the comet of 1680 really presented characteristics which suggested dangers even to men of science. It was a comet of remarkable appearance; its course seemed at first directed full upon the sun; and though in those days it was the erroneous idea that the comet might supply an undue amount of fuel to the central fire of the solar system, which chiefly occupied men's thoughts (even Newton sharing the idea), the danger from which the solar system then escaped was considered to be real and serious.

In the year 1773 a report got abroad—how engendered is not known—that Lalande, one of the ablest mathematicians of the day, had pre-

dicted the end of the world, as the result of a collision to take place between a comet and the earth. We say it is not known how the report got abroad. The circumstance which gave rise to the report, is, however, well known, though avowedly there was nothing in it to have suggested special anxiety. The difficulty is to connect the circumstance with the exaggerated terrors presently excited. It had been announced that Lalande would read before the Academy of Sciences a paper entitled "Reflections on those comets which can approach the earth." It would be difficult to inquire how the report of this came gradually to be changed into the definite news that in the year 1773—nay, the very day was named, on May 20, 1773—a comet would encounter and destroy the earth, did not recent experience show how a statement of one kind may be changed—through carelessness, not through wilful misrepresentation—into a statement of an entirely different kind, when (in its later form) it seems to indicate the approach of some great danger to the earth. Plantamour, lecturing in 1872 about comets and meteors, says that the comet of 1862 passed near the earth's orbit; that along its track are travelling millions and millions of meteoric bodies; and that when the earth crosses its track meteoric displays may be expected; adding that the next display of the kind may be expected on or about August 11 or 12. Presently the news is travelling about that on August 12, 1872, a comet will fall upon the earth and we shall all be destroyed. Who gave to Plantamour's true and innocent statement this false and mischievous form? No one can say; no one can point out where or how the true became merged into the misleading, the misleading into the incorrect, the incorrect into the utterly false. But the terrors excited were none the less real that no one could tell whence they came or how they were generated.

Once such fears have been excited, it seems useless to attempt to quiet them, at least among the hopelessly ignorant, who unfortunately are so numerous and so readily made the victims of idle terrors. Lalande published in the *Gazette de France* of May 7, 1773, the following advertisement, to quiet, as he hoped, the public mind: "M. Lalande had not time to read his memoir upon comets which may approach the earth and cause changes in her motions; but he would observe that it is impossible to assign the epochs of such events. The next comet whose return is expected is the one which should return in eighteen years; but it is not one of those which can hurt the earth." But this tolerably explicit statement had no effect. M. Lalande's study was crowded day after day with anxious inquirers. A number of pious people, of whom a contemporary journal made the very rude remark that "they were as ignorant as they were imbecile," begged the Archbishop of Paris to appoint a forty days' prayer to avert the threatened danger, which for some reason they agreed was to take the form of a mighty deluge. And he would have complied with their request only he was told by members of the Academy that he would bring ridicule upon himself and upon science if he did so.

It was at this time that Voltaire wrote his well-known "Letter on the pretended Comet." It ran thus :—

Grenoble, May 17, 1773.

Certain Parisians who are not philosophers, and who, if we are to believe them, will not have time to become such, have informed me that the end of the world approaches, and will occur without fail on the 20th of this present month of May. They expect that day a comet, which is to take our little globe from behind and reduce it to impalpable powder, according to a certain prediction of the Academy of Sciences which has not yet been made. Nothing is more likely than this event, for James Bernouilli, in his treatise upon the comet of 1680, predicted expressly that that famous comet would return with a terrible uproar on May 19, 1719; he assured us that its peruke indeed would signify nothing mischievous, but that its tail would be an infallible sign of the wrath of heaven. If James Bernouilli mistook, it is, after all, but a matter of fifty-four years and three days. Now, so small an error as this being regarded by all geometricians as of little moment in the immensity of ages, it is manifest that nothing can be more reasonable than to hope for the end of the world on the 20th of this present month of May 1773, or in some other year. If the thing should not come to pass, "omittance is no quittance" (*ce qui est différé, n'est pas perdu*). There is certainly no reason for laughing at M. Trissotin, triple idiot though he is (*tout Trissotin qu'il est*), when he says to Madame Philaminte (Molière's *Femmes Savantes*, act. iv. sc. 3) :—

Nous l'avons en dormant, madame, échappé belle ;
Un monde près de nous a passé tout du long,
Est chu tout au travers de notre tourbillon ;
Et s'il eût en chemin rencontré notre terre,
Elle eût été brisée en morceaux comme verre.

"A comet coursing along its parabolic may come full tilt against our earth." But then, what will happen? Either that comet will have a force equal to that of our earth, or greater, or less. If equal, we shall do the comet as much harm as it will do us, action and reaction being equal; if greater, the comet will bear us away with it; if less, we shall bear away the comet. This great event may occur in a thousand ways, and no one can affirm that our earth and the other planets have not experienced more than one revolution through the mischance of encountering a comet on their path. The Parisians will not desert their city on the 20th inst.; they will sing songs, and the play of "The Comet and the World's End" will be performed at the Opéra Comique.

Singularly enough, something even more preposterous than what the great wit had thus suggested did actually occur on this occasion. The fears inspired by the predicted approach of the comet were so great that speculators took advantage of the terrors of the ignorant, and absolutely persuaded many that the priesthood had by special intercession obtained the privilege of dispensing a number of tickets for seats in Paradise; and these pretended tickets were sold at a very high rate. It would be interesting to inquire what idea was entertained by those who purchased these tickets as to the way in which they were to be used, to whom presented, at what time, and where.

The story to which I have just referred was quoted by a Parisian professor in 1832, when a similar scare prevailed in France. It had been announced that the comet of 1826 (Biela's) would return in 1832; and it had also been stated that the path of the comet intersected, or

very nearly intersected, the path of the earth. This was immediately interpreted to signify an approaching collision between the earth and the comet, though nothing of the kind was implied. These fears, said the worthy professor, may produce effects as mischievous as those produced by the cometic panic in 1773, unless the authority of the Academy apply a prompt remedy; and this salutary intervention is at this moment implored by many benevolent persons.

At the present time, the end of the world is threatened in more ways than one. The methods of destruction are incongruous; but that is a detail hardly worth considering. If Scylla does not destroy us, Charybdis is bound to do the work, and *vice versâ*. There is no escape for us.

A few months ago, the prophecy of Mother Shipton was chiefly feared. But as the world certainly did not come to an end in 1881 (though Gerald Massey says Mother Shipton's prophecy—which she never made by the way—was really fulfilled) we must now look for the world's destruction in other ways.

And first we see it clearly indicated in the Great Pyramid. By slightly altering the dates accepted by historians, adding a few years in one place and taking off a few years in another, it can be proved to demonstration that the number of inches in the descending or entrance passages, as far as the place where the ascending begins, is equal to the number of years from the descent of man to the Exodus; and that the ascending passage contains as many inches as there are years from the Exodus to the beginning of the Christian era. (The rest of the descending passage, as far as the bottomless pit, or the pit with ruin-hidden bottom—it is the same thing—clearly represents the progress of the rest of the human race downwards.) This being so, of course it follows that the grand gallery represents the Christian era. This gallery has a length of 1882 inches, or, according to recent statements (not new measurements), 1881.59. Hence, in the year 1882, or more exactly at the time 1881.59, which corresponds to 1881 years + 7 months + $2\frac{1}{2}$ days, or to midnight between August 3rd* and 4th, the Christian era is to end. The reader is not to be alarmed, however, by this seemingly precise statement. As the time has drawn nearer, the pyramidalists have seen fit to add fifty years (more or less, according to circumstances) during which the end is to be finally brought about; August 3 will only mark the "beginning of the end." Still, it may fairly be presumed that something significant will happen about that time. Possibly some remarkable person, or person who is hereafter to be remarkable, will be born at midnight August 3; in which case it seems possible that the world might remain in ignorance of the fact for a year or two.

But next the planets take their turn. The terrible words "perihelion conjunctions" are heard with appalling effect. It is true they

* Astronomically the second day in August ends at noon August 3.

are entirely without meaning ; science knows nothing about perihelion conjunctions ; but that is nothing—any name is good enough to conjure by. Let us see what perihelion mischief is in store for us.

Jupiter was in perihelion on September 25, 1880 ! “The perihelia of other planets in 1881 occurred” (this is not a scientific mode of presenting the matter ; but that is not the fault of the prophets—they speak as correctly as they can) “as follows : Mercury, February 21 ; Venus, March 6 ; Mercury, May 20 ; Mars, May 26 ; Mercury, August 16 ; Venus, October 16 ; Mercury, November 12.” This was very dreadful ; though somehow the earth escaped that time. Imagine Mercury being four times in perihelion in one year ! We may perhaps find an explanation in the circumstance that he completes the circuit of his orbit more than four times a year, and must pass his perihelion each time ; but science tries to explain everything, and we must not be too precise in such matters. The year 1882, in which we are more interested, is even worse. Mercury has already been in perihelion, viz. on February 8 ; then we have March 25 (April 9 ?), Uranus ; May 7, Mercury ; August 3, Mercury ; October 29, Mercury again ; and absolutely on December 6 Venus transits the sun’s disc ! Something will surely come of this, if we only live to see it.

But worse remains behind. “In August 1885, Saturn will be in perihelion !” “Neptune is in apparent perihelion” (whatever that may mean) “from 1876 to 1886, the height (?) being about $1881\frac{1}{2}$!” “Those skilled in astronomy inform us it is fully 6,000 years since the occurrence of a similarly powerful situation, although conjunctions and perihelia have occurred at more frequent intervals of time. To form an approximate opinion of what the earth is liable to experience at such periods, we must review the records of effects attending similar situations, remembering that with the ripening of our planet the effects upon the earth and its inhabitants will be more generally distributed.”

This being so, these perihelia occurring in so unusual a way, being also rendered very terrible by being called perihelion conjunctions, and the dependence of terrestrial disturbances on planetary motions being too obvious to be worth proving, we have only to consider what has happened during past floods, earthquakes, and so forth, to see exactly what is in store for us pretty soon. Science, which is always too particular in such matters, may perhaps show that whatever influences the outer and larger planets may produce on the earth (it is very doubtful whether they produce any except very slight deviations from her mean track) cannot be effectively greater when the planets are in perihelion than when they are in aphelion ; that terrestrial disturbances have nothing whatever to do with these relations ; and that as perihelion passages and planetary conjunctions are occurring every year, earthquakes and floods could not possibly occur in years when there were no such phenomena : but the prophets have nothing to say to all that ; they calmly go on to describe the various terrestrial disturbances which have occurred

regarding any attempt to show that there is the slightest real connection between the planetary movements and the earth's throes as quite unnecessary.

Here, however, is the summing up of the planetary prophecies by one of the most earnest, and therefore wildest, of the prophets. "In cases of planetary attraction, the earth's crust becomes attracted as a solid whole. Its fluid and ærial envelope responds when irregularly attracted, by oscillating in high and low tides, alternating with unequal pressure. We are approaching both stellar and planetary conditions which fortunately will require a certain number of years—say 1880 to 1885—for their complete unfoldment; hence their action may not be wholly manifest in a special month of any year; but this whole cycle of years is liable to be affected by a generally disturbed condition of the earth and its inhabitants."

But utter rubbish as all this is—the offspring of sheer ignorance and hysteric vapours—it is not much more absurd than the prediction recently based on the observed fact that the comet of 1880 travelled along the same path as that of 1843, this path lying very close indeed to the sun. Assuming, as is really not improbable, that the comet of 1843 passed so near to the sun as to have been retarded by the resistance of the corona, and so came back after a shorter circuit than it had before traversed, it is likely enough that the comet will next return after a yet shorter interval. Possibly Marth's period—"say seventeen years" he puts it—may be near the truth, in which case the comet would come back in 1897. The next return after that might be in seven or eight years, say in 1904. The next perhaps is three or four, and very likely by about the year 1920 or 1925 that comet may reach the end of its career, being finally absorbed by the sun. It is also very likely that if, instead of being thus gradually checked off, so to speak, this comet in its original full-sized condition, with many millions of millions of meteoric attendants, had rushed full tilt upon the sun, it might have done a deal of mischief. A very able astronomer, Professor Kirkwood, of Bloomington, Indiana, believes (and very likely he is right) that two of the larger meteoric attendants on this comet falling into the sun in September 1859, produced that remarkable solar disturbance which was accompanied by very remarkable magnetic disturbances and auroral displays all over the earth; so that doubtless the whole comet with its attendants pouring all at once upon the sun would have stirred him in a way which we should have found very noteworthy, even if we did not find it absolutely destructive to the earth and its inhabitants. But as a mere matter of fact (and so counting for something what end-of-the-world prophets may imagine) the comet of 1843 and 1880 does not travel full tilt upon the sun, and can never do so; its meteoric attendants are not all gathered in a single cluster, but form an immensely long train (if Kirkwood was right in the above-quoted surmise, those which fell into the sun in 1859 were at least sixteen years behind the main body); and it is clear that a

very effective interruption of the comet's career in 1843, repeated in 1880, can take place without in any appreciable degree affecting our comfort, still less our existence. If the comet of 1880 was the same object as the object of 1843, it showed very evident signs of having suffered grievously during its former perihelion passage. If it is proportionately reduced at its next return, we might even see it fall straight upon the sun (were that possible) without much fearing any evil consequences. Nothing which is known about comets in general, or about this comet in particular, suggests the slightest danger to the solar system, though everything suggests that the comet's career as an independent body will before very long come to an end. If the comet ever was a dangerous one, owing to the concentration of its meteoric components, it is not so now. If it really has been effectively checked in its career, it is evident such interruption can take place without harming us, and therefore the final throes of the comet need not trouble us in the least. If it has not been effectively interrupted, then the end is not nearer—in any appreciable degree—now than it was in 1843 or in 1686. In any case, the end of this comet's career, whether far off or near at hand, will in all probability take place in such a way that terrestrial astronomers will never know of the event.

R. A. P.

The Church by the Sea.

I.

THAT spirit of wit, whose quenchless ray
 To wakening England Holland lent,
 In whose frail wasted body lay
 The orient and the occident,

II.

Still wandering in the night of time,
 Nor yet conceiving dawn should be,
 A pilgrim with a gift of rhyme,
 Sought out Our Lady by the Sea.

III.

Along the desolate downs he rode,
 And pondered on God's mystic name,
 Till with his beads and votive ode,
 To Walsingham Erasmus came.

IV.

He found the famous chapel there,
 Unswept, unwindowed, undivine,
 And the bleak gusts of autumn air
 Blew sand across the holy shrine.

V.

Two tapers in a spicy mist
 Scarce lit the jewelled heaps of gold,
 As pilgrim after pilgrim kissed
 The relics that were bought and sold.

VI.

A greedy Canon still beguiled
 The wealthy at his wicket-gate,
 And o'er his shining tonsure smiled
 A Virgin doubly desecrate.

VII.

The pattered prayers, the incense swung,
The embroidered throne, the golden stall,
The precious gifts at random flung,—
And North Sea sand across it all!

VIII.

He mocked, that spirit of matchless wit;
He mourned the rite that warps and seres:
And seeing no hope of health in it,
He laughed lest he should break in tears.

IX.

And we, if still our reverend fanes
Lie open to the salt-sea deep,
If flying sand our choir profanes,
Shall we not laugh, shall we not weep?

X.

We toll the bell, we throng the aisle,
We pay a wealth in tithe and fee,
We wreath the shrine, and all the while
Our Church lies open to the sea.

XI.

The brackish wind that stirs the flame,
And fans the painted saints asleep,
From heaven above it never came,
But from the starless Eastern deep.

XII.

The storm is rising o'er the sea,
The long bleak windward line is grey,
And when it rises, how shall we
And our weak tapers fare that day?

XIII.

Perchance amid the roar and crack
Of starting beams we yet shall stand;
Perchance our idols shall not lack
Deep burial in the shifting sand.



SHE DREW OFF HER LONG GLOVES SLOWLY.

Damocles.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "FOR PERCIVAL."

CHAPTER V.

ON THE CLIFF.

"Can I not say a word shall do you good?"



AUGUST by the sea. The words are enough to call up a picture of boats, bathing-machines, donkeys, children, mammas, nursemaids, seaweed, shells, wooden spades, and parasols, all gathered together on a strip of sand under a hot sky. The seaside place which Miss Whitney had chosen for a three weeks' stay had its share of most, if not all, of these, but a comparatively small share, being a quiet little village, not very widely known. As it could not be reached by rail, it

escaped the hordes of excursionists who are attracted from afar by the promise of a day at the seaside. A few came occasionally by boat from a fashionable town across the bay, but, as a rule, the lesser place was left to its regular visitors.

Rachel Conway had left the shore, followed an often-trodden upward path, and now sat near the edge of the cliff, gazing seaward. The dog's-eared, untidy novel, which lay on the grass beside her, might be supposed to represent amusement by any one who had never looked into it. Rachel rather suspected that its shabbiness was due less to study than to the resentful carelessness of would-be readers. (What power presides over the choice of books in seaside libraries? Blind chance must surely produce happier results.) Luckily the dulness of the story was of little importance in this case, as Miss Conway was dreamily

thoughtful. Beyond her and far away to the south lay the level sea, breaking in restless ripples through a dazzling network of sunlight. With half-closed eyes she watched the diamond flashes, varying at every glance, and yet eternally the same. Time after time she listened to the wave as it drew backward, and waited through the momentary pause for the soft recurring rush of water far below. Or, lifting her head, she gazed up into the blue at the swiftly-flying birds, or the shreds of cloud which changed and disappeared, leaving no trace to tell that they had ever been. Little gusts of wind came idly to her upturned face—little wandering breezes that seemed to faint in the hot air and die upon her cheek.

She was content that her thoughts should drift as idly as the clouds in the languor of the August afternoon. She had spent more than a fortnight by the sea, and she felt as if she had been steeped in sunshine and saltiness, till she could half defy and half forget her melancholy. She would not endanger her lazy happiness by thinking, in any earnest meaning of the word. Besides, it was too late to think. She had a letter in her pocket, and Charley Eastwood was coming by the coach the next day. She hardly knew how or when she had made a momentous decision; but she knew that it was made, and felt it a relief that no room was left for further hesitation. It was true that the final word was yet to be spoken, but there was no doubt what that final word must be. Charley, when he proposed to come to the little seaside village for a couple of days, had so worded the suggestion that Miss Whitney understood the state of affairs in a moment. And when Rachel said, in a tone which was intended to convey a proper degree of unconsciousness, that it would be very nice if Mr. Eastwood would come and wake them up a little, Miss Whitney's invitation was written and re-written with the utmost care, and, after being submitted to Rachel for her approval, was posted with her own hands as a document of vast importance. The girl understood what it all meant, and smiled to herself. Of course she was going to say "Yes" to Charley, who had sent her a little note naming the train by which he would leave town, and more than hinting at the reason of his coming. It was not for one moment to be supposed that she would invite him to travel that distance, and tell her about his increase of salary, in order that she might have an opportunity of saying "No." Nor did she wish to say it. Charley was not perfect; but he was a dear, good fellow, frank, fearless, sweet-tempered, and he loved her. And perhaps Rachel found more romance in Charley's love-making than any one else could have done. It dated from the time when she was a shy, lonely schoolgirl, and the Eastwoods' house was her first glimpse of a real home since the day that her mother died. Charley was the pride and darling of that home, a long-limbed, smooth-faced, curly-haired youth, with more possibilities, if not more actual promise, of brightness and distinction than he ever attained. It would have been a kind of treason to the house which sheltered her, to have refused to

believe in the young hero ; and she did believe in him, and was delighted with his homage. Effie's innocent wonder at the revelation of her brother in a new character touched Rachel with her first delicious consciousness of power, and with the certainty that there was some one in the world who cared for her lightest word. Charley's boyish love-making was mixed up with all manner of pleasant things—with the sweetness of that happy midsummer, with bright days, with long evenings under the trees, with sunlight and moonlight, and flowers. On the eve of her departure they stood together by the rose-covered trellis in the garden, looking at the last faint glow in the western sky. Some one called Effie, who was with them, and they found themselves alone in the warm twilight. Charley turned to his companion. "Shall you forget us?" he said. She shook her head, with one quick upward glance, and the boy put his arm about her waist, drew her to him, and kissed her with lips as smooth as her own. Rachel's heart beat fast ; she did not speak, but she felt as if Charley and she stood together in the centre of the whole world, and she never forgot that moment. They parted thus for a couple of years, during which time she thought of him with simple fidelity, and when they met again his rekindled admiration did duty for the most exemplary constancy. He was not much altered. His good looks were somewhat more defined, his boyish bashfulness was almost gone, he felt himself vastly improved, and naturally supposed that the improvement was as evident to others as to himself. Rachel, however, regretted the slight change, though she regarded it as something inseparable from manhood. She imagined that she, too, had grown more practical, and she neither expected nor desired that they should take up their love-story precisely where they laid it down. To no one else could she ever give her love with the delicate bloom of a first fancy, a first kiss, upon it, and her self-respect bound her to him more strongly than a thousand spoken words. Since Charley was constant, she asked no more, but was content to wait, never doubting that the recollection of their parting was as present to his mind as to her own. As far as the main fact was concerned she was quite right. Charley perfectly remembered that he had kissed her in the garden, though it might be questioned whether he remembered that he had kissed her but once.

Thus Rachel continued to idealise her first love, with an instinctive delicacy which justified her fidelity while it preserved a likeness. Instead of picturing a splendid hero, and calling him Charles Eastwood, she frankly accepted her lover's deficiencies, yet touched them with such a tender hand that she could hardly have wished them away. The hardest matter to idealise would have been the easy style of flirtation which was Charley's way with girls ; but of that she knew nothing. He did not merely conceal it, he forgot it in her presence. And, for her part, she had never doubted herself till she met Mr. Lauriston. During those three days she had been perplexed and uneasy, but when he went his disquieting influence seemed to go too. Three days failed to undo the

bonds that years had woven ; and Rachel, though swayed for a moment from her course, reverted to it on his departure, and thought of the temporary lapse as a kind of dream, unreal, yet leaving a peculiar impression on her mind. She would have fought against any temptation to be false, and she turned to Charley with something of renewed tenderness, because it seemed to her that, after a fashion, she had been false without any temptation to fight against. She was very certain that she was in no danger of caring for Mr. Lauriston. Her thoughts of him were poisoned by a faint aftertaste of distrust and repentance, but, while they were together, she was compelled by some strange sympathy to see Charley with his eyes. Since, however, she felt that anything that degraded Charley degraded her also, she liked Mr. Lauriston none the more for that.

But she was not thinking of Mr. Lauriston as she sat by the edge of the cliff, seeking her love-letter from time to time where it lay hidden in her pocket, and caressing it with dainty finger-tips while she looked out to sea. She had been curiously touched by the half-expressed tenderness, and the unwonted humility, with which Eastwood asked permission to plead his cause. As a rule, he found no particular difficulty in saying what he wanted to say. Such as they were, his ideas and words were very tolerably matched. But on this special occasion his clumsy attempt to express a feeling altogether beyond his ordinary range was laughable or pathetic according to the reader's mood. Rachel liked it better than if he had been more fluent. Words had so obviously failed him that the underlying sentiment was left to her generous imagination, and she found a manly sincerity in his very clumsiness. And if he were commonplace, did she not wish to be commonplace ? She looked forward to her future with Charley as to something far more honest and energetic than the aimless monotony of life as she knew it. She was grateful to Miss Whitney for much kindness, but she longed intensely for more liberty. Miss Whitney in the gentlest, meekest, most unanswerable way uttered oracles for the guidance of conduct. Having lived longer than Rachel, she knew what Everybody did, and she knew what Nobody did, so that she could speak with a kind of frightened authority on every question that arose. It would have mattered less if Rachel had not invariably found herself on Nobody's side. Nobody did what she wanted to do, and she was thwarted at every turn by Miss Whitney's fluttering anxiety. She never felt so free as when she was with the Eastwoods, and their warm kindness contrasted pleasantly with the timid and well-regulated affection which was all that Miss Whitney had to bestow.

"This time to-morrow he will be here," Rachel was saying to herself, as she looked out to the far horizon. "What shall we do when he comes ? I must make the most of my two days. Suppose we have a boat in the evening ; there will be a moon, and the bay will be beautiful. And on Sunday afternoon we will go for a walk on the downs—a real, good, long walk—there can't be any harm in my going for a walk with

Charley on Sunday afternoon. I've half a mind to meet the coach to-morrow, but I doubt it wouldn't do; I'm afraid it wouldn't be proper for me to go all by myself, and claim a young man when the passengers were divided. Well, it doesn't matter; he will find us out fast enough. Last time I saw him was at the station, when I came away from Redlands." Miss Conway smiled to herself, recalling that day. Charley, Effie, and Fido went with her to the train. Fido joined the party entirely on his own responsibility, his presence not being discovered till it was too late to send him back. On reaching the station he became somewhat bewildered, pursued an imaginary path of safety across the track of the coming express, and then started off down the line in a determined search for Effie, who was calling him from the platform. He was captured at last, and Rachel from the carriage window saw him safe in Charley's arms, with Charley showing a face of flushed and smiling triumph over the struggling mass of white hair. He had not a hand to spare, so, as the train began to move, he stooped, with a smile, for Effie to lift his straw hat. She obeyed; but, absorbed in gazing after her friend, she absently replaced it very much on one side, and Rachel caught a last glimpse of him laughing and remonstrating, and tossing his curly head in a vain attempt to set it right. And now, recalling this, she looked up with a smile which suddenly died away. Perhaps it was partly because her thoughts were already turned to Redlands that she was reminded of Mr. Lauriston by a small, dark figure which was leisurely descending the opposite slope. She sat up and looked again, but the man had disappeared behind some palings and tamarisk bushes. "How stupid of me!" she said to herself. "I wish I hadn't thought of him just now, and yet he really was a little like." A shadow came over her face as she sat pulling dry little blades of grass, with her eyes fixed on the spot where she had seen the figure which startled her. She never thought of Mr. Lauriston willingly. There might be an unacknowledged comfort in the certainty that some one understood her trouble; but shame at her impulsive confidence was still hot within her soul, and Mr. Lauriston was for ever identified with that stinging memory. Had the confession been made to some old and trusted friend, there would have been pleasant associations as well as the painful one, and a better understanding of his feelings towards herself. But this stranger seemed to have entered into her life for no purpose but to possess himself of her secret. And kind as his manner might be, she said to herself uneasily that Mr. Lauriston could use words as he pleased, and play any part he chose. He was not like Charley. He understood, but perhaps he had laughed, or—she could not precisely say what she feared he might have done. She would have known if Charley had laughed, but she did not feel certain about Mr. Lauriston.

She was vexed that this chance resemblance should have disturbed the drowsy quiet of the afternoon, and she resolutely turned her eyes from the tamarisk bushes and stretched out her hand towards her novel.

But, even as she did so, she saw the man again. He had followed the footpath by the edge of the cliff, and was coming up from the hollow. Now that he was nearer the likeness was curiously strong, or—"It is Mr. Lauriston!" she said to herself with a shock of surprise. Her outstretched hand dropped loosely by her side, and she watched the slim, dark figure, advancing with no change of pace, till she felt as if she waited for it in a dream. It might have been that fear of hers climbing the hillside to return to her once more. Why did such idle fancies always come into her mind when she met Mr. Lauriston? She glanced over her shoulder, and wondered what strange chances might be silently travelling, by converging ways, to find her where she sat and waited for them all.

When she looked back Mr. Lauriston had left the footpath, and was coming towards her across the sunburnt turf. He was so close at hand that she could see the expression of his face. It is a trying thing to manage that expression of face when a friend is seen at a distance. Naturally you smile at the earliest moment, and almost unconsciously you emphasise the smile lest it should not be visible; you, as it were, telegraph your gladness at the prospect of meeting. But having got this broad smile, what are you to do with it? It is painful to maintain, and you feel that it is fast becoming fixed and ghastly. You are glad to see your friend—you are very glad; but you are not accustomed to wear a smile like that. And yet you must not let it go, lest it should look as if you had changed your mind, and were not particularly pleased after all. Mr. Lauriston passed through the ordeal very well, with a touch of amusement as well as pleasure about his eyes and mouth, but even he came forward a little hastily just at last. "And how are you, Miss Conway?" he said, as he held out his hand. "You didn't expect to see me, did you?"

"I began to expect you about five minutes ago," she answered.

"Ah! as long as that? I didn't find you out till I was halfway up the hill."

"Didn't you really? I was surprised when I saw you first, and I watched you; but you never seemed the least surprised, and you came so straight to me that I fancied you knew."

"Well, I did know that you were in the place. But I was surprised when I looked up and saw you just above me."

"You didn't show it, then."

"Well, no, perhaps not," said Mr. Lauriston, as he sat down on the grass. "For one thing, I don't think I quite know how to express my feelings in dumb show all that way off. A startled pause, and then a hasty rush—would that have been right? But it was uphill, you see. Besides, there are five small boys on the slope, and I think, if it can be helped, it is as well not to display strong emotion before five small boys."

Miss Conway laughed. "I should think you contrive to avoid it pretty successfully as a rule, don't you?"

"Yes, I suppose I do." He leaned on his elbow and looked round. "You have chosen a pleasant place to rest in," he said. "And I think the sea air has done you good, Miss Conway."

She drew off one of her long gloves slowly, looking at her wrist. "Is that a polite way of telling me that I am of a fine mahogany colour? But I know that already; I've nearly driven Miss Whitney to despair. I can't keep my gloves on, and I can't keep my parasol up."

Mr. Lauriston smiled. She was not burnt, but there was a tinge of richer colour in the face which had seemed a little too pale that day in Redlands Park. He tried to find an adjective to describe the happy change to himself, and "sun-warmed" came into his mind as he looked at her. Suddenly she blushed.

"Miss Whitney must be very observant," he said. "You are not quite a nut-brown maid at present."

"Then perhaps there is some hope for me, as we have nearly come to an end of our time here. We go home on Wednesday." She looked down as she spoke, and absently lifted the cover of the book by her side.

"Am I disturbing you?" Mr. Lauriston asked. "Are you impatient to finish the story?"

"The story!—what, this? Oh, no! It is horribly dull. I did try when I came up here first, but it is too stupid."

"And so you were thinking instead? Well, may I interrupt your daydream for a few minutes?"

"If you like," she answered a little confusedly. She had not wished him to come, and yet she hardly wished him to go. He had interrupted the daydream so effectually that she felt as if it would be impossible to return to it. She made no effort to do so; in fact, she instinctively felt that she must not think of Charley while Mr. Lauriston was there. After his question she expected him to speak again, but he did not, and there was a brief silence while he looked at the headlands right and left, at the lightly-flying birds, at the brazen glitter of the sea. She cast a quick glance at him, and once more she was struck with the easy grace of attitude which she had noticed that afternoon in Redlands Park. It was curious to Rachel that she could recall that afternoon so quietly. Ten minutes earlier the thought of Mr. Lauriston had been a disturbing shock, but now that he was actually by her side she did not feel so much ashamed of having told him her secret. It seemed almost as if he belonged to that hidden life of hers—that life which struck its roots deep down into strange thoughts and shadowy places. He had nothing to do with her happier, healthier everyday life. But which life was most truly hers? She could hardly have answered the question at that moment, and yet she was pledged. Charley was coming by the coach next day; it was too late—everything was too late. Why had he come to make her feel as if that which must be were nevertheless impossible? "And it isn't as if he meant to do it," she said to herself; "it is just the

way he speaks, and looks, and moves. And it isn't that I like him, only when he is here I like no one else. I wish I had never seen him, and yet——"

Mr. Lauriston looked round, but Miss Conway was apparently absorbed in uprooting some of the little closely-clinging weeds which were woven in the turf. He watched her for a moment, then took a knife from his pocket, opened it, and politely offered it to her. She took it with perfect composure, used it to dig up one peculiarly obstinate root, and returned it with a word of thanks. "You are fond of gardening?" he inquired.

"I suppose so. I've never had much opportunity of trying, but it must have been some kind of gardening instinct which made me pull up that unlucky weed. Did you come by the coach, Mr. Lauriston?" She was trying hard to keep the thought of Charley somewhere apart and safe, but only with moderate success.

"No; I took a fly."

"And are you going to stay here?"

"I hardly know. Not for any length of time."

Here she might have remarked, "Mr. Eastwood is coming to-morrow;" but though she felt that it must be said, sooner or later, she was afraid lest Mr. Lauriston should look up and she should be forced to remember what he thought of Charley. While she hesitated he spoke again.

"I was going to tell you how I happened to come here to-day. The fact is I feel as if I ought to apologise——"

"To apologise—why? Do you mean to me?"

"No, not to you. To fate, or fortune, or luck, or whatever you please to call it. I have sometimes said that it was ironical. Occasionally I miss what I want by a hair's-breadth, and that is the worst kind of failure; in fact, no other is really of any importance. But very often I get it, and then it turns out to be something quite different from what I had supposed, and I shouldn't have wanted it if I had known. Or else I lose it." He paused. "Miss Conway, I fancy I have said this to you already."

"I think you have, or something rather like it."

"Very likely. Well, for this once I apologise to luck. By the merest chance I have come in for a great pleasure; an hour earlier or an hour later, I might have missed it. There is no merit of mine in the matter; I have nothing whatever to do with it. But I am very glad."

Miss Conway was a little puzzled; but she looked at him and she thought that he *was* glad. His eyes were shining, and his quick smile came and went as he spoke. She had not fancied that Mr. Lauriston could look glad. Amused—yes; but gladness was more for some one like Charley Eastwood.

"What is it?" she asked.

"It concerns you. Ah! but let me guard against any possible chance that my pleasure may turn out a pain after all. Miss Conway, did you not tell me that you had no relations; that you lived with this Miss Whitney, and that she was only a friend?"

"Yes, I did say so," she answered, fixing her great eyes on his face. "I have no relations—why?"

He drew a long breath of relief. "I thought so," he said, "and yet I was half afraid. The truth is, there is death in my news—there is death in everything, isn't there?—but it is death so far away, and so natural, that it cannot pain you much."

"Who is dead?"

"Well, it is a relation, though it seems you didn't know of her. She was an aunt of your father's—a confirmed invalid, I understand—and she died abroad a few days ago."

"I didn't even know my father had an aunt."

"She had very bad health," Mr. Lauriston repeated. "They represented it as a kind of miracle that she should have lived so long. I don't think she had been in England for many years. But I can't tell you much about her—I really hardly know anything."

"But who was she?—you can tell me her name?"

"Oh, yes; Mrs. Elliott."

"Mrs. Elliott—no, I never heard of her. I don't think Miss Whitney knows, either. She was my great-aunt, then? Fancy having a great-aunt for one's only relation, and never hearing of her till now! It is very absurd, but somehow it makes me feel even more lonely than when I thought I had nobody."

"I think I can understand that," he said.

"But how did you hear anything about her, Mr. Lauriston? Who told you? And what is the news that pleases you?"

He answered with a question. "Do you know Mr. James Goodwin?"

"Why, yes. At least I know a Mr. James Goodwin. If I wanted to be very dignified, I should say he was my lawyer."

"Then you may always be dignified if you please, for you will want a lawyer. If I had known I was going to see you now— isn't it strange how fate seems determined that we shall meet?—I should have brought you a letter from him. As it is, the letter is in my portmanteau at the hotel, and my man has orders to find out your lodgings before I get back from my stroll. Will you be content for the present with an informal announcement that all Mrs. Elliott's money comes to you, or shall I go and fetch the letter at once?"

"No," said Rachel, putting out her hand as if to stop him; "don't go."

"May I congratulate you?"

She sat looking at him with a startled face. "Do you mean that I shall be rich?"

He smiled and bent his head. "You are surprised," he said. "You

didn't expect me to come and tell you this. But it is very simple. Goodwin is my lawyer, too ; I called at his house last night to speak to him about some business, and as I was coming away he asked me if I knew the Eastwoods' address. I told him where Charles Eastwood was ; and then it turned out that there was a romance in the matter—a young lady had come in for a fortune and her whereabouts was unknown, but Goodwin thought the Eastwoods might be able to tell him."

"Yes," said Rachel ; "I was staying with them when I came of age, and Mrs. Eastwood went with me when I saw Mr. Goodwin."

"The Eastwoods and a young lady!—my curiosity was excited. I asked a question or two, and ascertained that you were the young lady. I had heard from Eastwood that you were staying here, and I was coming to this part of the world myself ; so I explained that I knew you and would find you out, and deliver the letter to-day, which would be quicker than writing to ask your address, and then sending it by post. Simple enough, wasn't it ?"

"Oh, yes, quite simple," Miss Conway repeated absently. Then suddenly waking up to a remembrance of manners, "And it was very good of you to take the trouble," she added.

"But that was the pleasure I told you of," he replied.

She smiled, at first in acknowledgment of his words, then vaguely, looking away and following her new and wondering thoughts. To her companion the sea, the western sunlight, the long line of the downs, the arch of sky, seemed all to take fresh meaning from that musing smile, and the brief pause was strangely bright and calm. She was the first to speak, and the smile deepened on her lips as she looked round. Whimsically enough, her talk with Effie, before she even saw Mr. Lauriston, had come back to her. "A little dark man, with bright eyes, and a pocketful of presents," she had called him then. And there he sat on the turf by her side, his bright glances ready to meet her eyes, as if he had just put his hand in his pocket and pulled out a fortune to give her. "I think I'm dreaming," she said softly, leaning slightly towards him as she spoke. "Mr. Lauriston, is it really true ? Am I rich ?"

"Yes, it's quite true."

"But tell me some more—make it seem real—what do you mean by rich ?"

"I think you had better wait till you read Mr. Goodwin's letter. I wish I had brought it with me. When you are ready we will go back, and you shall have it."

"Not just this minute," she said. "I'm too much startled ; I want to understand it if I can. But you might tell me a little." He was silent, still brightly looking at her, and after a moment she went on : "You don't mean something like that man everybody quotes, 'Passing rich on forty pounds a year,' do you ? I don't call that rich ; I've more than that already."

"No, no ; I don't mean that."

"Well, then"—a sudden idea presenting itself—"am I as rich as you are, Mr. Lauriston?"

"No. Of course you haven't a big house to keep up; but still—no, not so rich as I am."

"You are afraid of saying anything lest I should be disappointed afterwards if you made a mistake? Something between you and the forty-pound man—that's a little vague, isn't it?"

Mr. Lauriston laughed. "I think I can safely say, if I understood Goodwin, that you won't have less than three or four thousand a year."

"Oh!" said Rachel, opening her eyes. "I didn't know you really meant as rich as that!"

"And what will you do with it?"

"I don't know. Perhaps I had better go and buy myself a new dress; Miss Whitney told me this morning I wasn't fit to be seen." She glanced smilingly at the linen gown of dusky blue, from which spray and sun and wind had taken any freshness it might once have possessed. Mr. Lauriston looked down, too, at the dark sleeve, and the warm white wrist and hand which rested idly on the turf.

"By all means get another gown," he said; "but can't it be just the same colour as this one?"

"Am I only to get one? Or are they all to be this colour? Do you like it so much?"

"Yes. You wore black, though, the first time I saw you."

"But I'm not going to spend all my money on dresses; I'll travel, and see all manner of beautiful places and things. And I'll tell you what I will do—I'll buy pictures. Fancy being able to *buy* a picture that one liked, instead of having just to stand and look at it, and go away. And I'll——" She stopped short, glanced at Mr. Lauriston with a startled expression in her eyes, and turned away her head.

"And—what?" he said softly, after a pause.

"Oh, nothing!" she replied, looking round and laughing. "Isn't it silly to make all these plans, when one doesn't really know what one will do? I dare say I shan't carry any of them out."

It was the thought of Charley that had startled her. For the moment she had actually forgotten him; he had slipped out of her mind as if he belonged to a past existence. Now she suddenly realised that everything was changed except Charley. He was the same as ever, he was coming to claim her, this new life would be his as inevitably as the old. And was Charley to travel about, see beautiful things, and buy pictures? She might well laugh as she looked round.

Had she not laughed, Mr. Lauriston would have thought that he understood her. As it was, he was puzzled, but he perceived that the conversation had somehow touched a dangerous point, and hastened to turn it with a harmless remark. "Well, I dare say you will find plenty to do with your money," he said. "At any rate, I'm glad you have it, and glad that I had the chance of bringing you the news."

"One would think you imagined that I was very anxious to be rich," said Rachel. "I suppose it is a good thing, but——"

"Don't say it isn't everything; I'm sure your friend, Miss Whitney, will take an early opportunity of telling you that. Of course it is a good thing, and of course you wish to be rich. Riches are a kind of royalty, and every woman would like to be a queen in her own right."

"There I don't agree with you, Mr. Lauriston. You may say what you please, but I'm quite sure we are not all of us so fond of ruling."

"Of ruling—no. A few want to rule, but the majority want to abdicate. That is a woman's idea of happiness."

Rachel kept her eyes fixed on the turf. "Oh, was that what you meant?" she said. "Well, I suppose we do like to give up better than you do. But why do you sneer at us for that? It sounded as if you were sneering."

"Heaven forbid!" said he. "Why should I sneer? By all means let woman sacrifice herself for man; it seems to me quite right and proper that she should do so. Unluckily," he added, slightly shrugging his shoulders, "she will insist on sacrificing herself for some other man, and he generally happens to be a fool."

Rachel laughed, as he intended she should laugh; but the shaft struck home. She knew pretty well what Mr. Lauriston thought of Charles Eastwood, and she thought she knew what he would think of her. Well, he must think what he liked. She threw back her head, and looked out to sea with a defiant face. Charley was a dear, good fellow, even if Mr. Lauriston thought him a fool. He loved her, and she loved him; he was brave and strong and true, a good son, a good brother, though he might not be able to talk fluently like this man. Why should Mr. Lauriston depreciate Charley? As it happened, Mr. Lauriston had not mentioned his name, but Miss Conway was too much vexed to consider this just then. And perhaps she was not far wrong; for while Mr. Lauriston sat on the grass by her side, he had thought of Eastwood, and said devoutly to himself, "Thank Heaven that the old lady wouldn't let her dear boy do anything rash. And blessings on the old uncle who had to be consulted—how mad they will be! Their hesitation has saved her. Eastwood can't very well rush off and propose to her the moment she comes into a fortune, and he would never have had a chance with her if it had not been for her ignorance and loneliness. Once let her understand what her new life will be, and she will be out of his reach for ever." He could hardly keep a smile from his lips at this triumphant conclusion. He knew nothing of that letter, which was only at arm's length, in the pocket of the blue linen gown, and, as he sat by Rachel, he could afford to wonder whether he could not contrive to do John Eastwood's son a good turn, and help him on in his business a little.

"It is time for me to go now, I think," said Miss Conway. She did

not intend that the angry perplexity of her feelings should find any expression in the tone of her voice, but Mr. Lauriston turned his head and looked at her.

"By all means," he said; and rose without another word.

The quick inquiry of his glance told her that her manner had been ungracious, and she was ashamed. For, after all, he had been good to her; that very day he had come out of his way to serve her; he did not know that she was going to marry Charley, and it would be absurd if she were to be indignant with everybody who—well, who was not so much in love with Charley as she was herself. She blushed; and, though she stood up, she hesitated for a moment before she moved. "I am so very much obliged to you," she began.

"What for? As I told you, it is simply luck. I had nothing to do with it. I'm just a fortunate messenger, nothing more."

Still she hesitated. "This is not the only time I have had to thank you."

It was her first allusion to their walk in Redlands Park. "Ah!" he said, as their eyes met, "that afternoon gave me the wish to help you, but it didn't give me the power."

She looked at him for a moment, then looked away. "I'm not so sure of that," she said in a low voice. "I think perhaps, without knowing it you have helped me—Oh! but I don't want to think of that just now, Mr. Lauriston!"

"No; why should you?" He put out his hand as he spoke, and took hers. "Remember only—but, no—forget it all. You will have plenty to think of in this new life of yours which begins to-day."

"Yes," she said simply, "I hope so. I had not been thinking, but seeing you again like this——"

Mr. Lauriston released her hand. "Forget it all," he repeated, looking far away at a white sail. Rachel's eyes followed his, and watched the vessel moving slowly on the sunlit sea.

"Must we be going, then?" he said at last.

"I suppose we must." Yet even then she lingered, and stooped to pick a late-blown scarlet poppy by the footpath. "I don't like going," she said, half laughing, yet in a disconsolate voice. "Everybody will have to be told, and there will be such a fuss."

"Is that such a heavy price to pay?" he asked with a smile.

"I don't like anybody to make a fuss about me," she replied. "And I don't want to make a fuss about anybody. Why can't people always understand?"

"Who is everybody in this case?" said Mr. Lauriston.

"Well, Miss Whitney. And she will make a dreadful fuss. Oh! you needn't laugh; you don't know what a fuss Miss Whitney can make. You should have heard her about my dress this morning, and even that will be doubly dreadful now."

"Oh, no, I think not," he replied, with a glance at her as she stood

in the western sunlight, tall and slender, pulling on one of her gloves, and smiling at him from under the brim of her broad hat. The over-blown poppy in her hand dropped all at once, and a couple of delicate red petals floated lightly down the dusky blue folds. "Mark my words," he continued, "you'll find that an old blue gown with all the starch out of it is universally admired, and quite the correct thing—if you'll go on wearing it."

"You admired it, I think, Mr. Lauriston?"

"Yes, I did. And I'll go on admiring it on that condition."

"I can't promise to fulfil my part of the bargain, I'm afraid, so you needn't mind about yours," said Miss Conway, as she threw away the remains of the poppy. Mr. Lauriston acknowledged his release from this obligation, with a slight bow and a slighter smile. Why did it occur to Rachel, at that moment, that she had never found an opportunity to remark, in a casual way, that Mr. Eastwood was coming by the coach the next day? She felt that it must be done before Mr. Lauriston met Miss Whitney; but she could not possibly say it just then, and she hastened to say something else. "Will your wonderful letter tell me everything, do you suppose? I can't make out how Mrs. Elliott had all this money."

"Perhaps her husband was rich," Mr. Lauriston suggested. "And she was the last survivor of a family of three or four. I fancy she inherited all the property, and one after the other, as the Rutherfords died——"

"What?" said Rachel.

He turned towards her. "As the ——" he began, and stopped short.

She looked straight into his eyes. "Oh!" she said in a low voice, "it's the madwoman's money!"

Lauriston stepped back. "No!" he cried, "it can't be! It isn't! You shall not say that!" He did not know what he was saying. He only felt that something awful had risen up between them as they stood, which must be crushed that moment.

"Yes, it is," she repeated, still in the same tone. "Miss Agatha Rutherford. That was her name—I didn't say so, but I knew. But I didn't know that my grandmother's name was Rutherford. Nor does Miss Whitney, but she never knew much about my father's people." As she spoke she was nervously unbuttoning the gloves she had just drawn on. There was no other sign of agitation in her manner.

Lauriston was pale as death. He understood now, and he was frightened at what he had said, and at her calmness. "It can't be!" he persisted, but he felt as if the words were choking him.

"I think I'll stop for a few minutes," said Rachel, turning back towards the edge of the cliff.

He followed her. "Sit down," he said, looking at her with anxious eyes.

"You startled me for a moment," she said, "but I don't think I am surprised really. Now it has come I feel as if I had expected it."

Mr. Lauriston watched her with something of fascination as she laid her gloves on the grass by her side, pulling them straight and arranging them carefully. It seemed to him as if the whole world of sky and glittering sea were an absolute blank, in which he could find no breath to draw, no single word to say to her. How much did she understand? "When I was sitting here only a little while ago," she went on, "and saw you coming up the hill, I wondered all at once what strange things might be coming from ever so far away, and climbing slowly up to find me here. Wasn't it curious? And this has been coming all these years."

"Don't talk like that," he entreated. "There may be some mistake; perhaps the name wasn't Rutherford."

She looked up at him with a faint smile, and the slightest possible movement of her head.

"Or there might have been some other Rutherfords. It isn't such a very uncommon name."

Again she made the little negative sign. "What's the use of trying to persuade me it isn't true when it is? I know all about it now. This Mrs. Elliott's name was Phœbe?"

"I don't know," he said.

"You'll find her name was Phoebe. I remember they said it was so sad that every one of them should be like that—a touch of it at any rate—except Phœbe, and people always thought she was the weakest of them all. Then my grandmother must have been—mad, my father's mother—ah, and my father too!"

With the last words came the break in her voice for which Lauriston had waited in terror. They were uttered in a sharp and sudden cry of pain, as if her heart had broken. He threw himself on his knees beside her, and caught her hands in his. "No, no, no!" he cried. "What do you mean? I never told you that!"

She looked at him with frightened entreaty in her eyes, as if she besought him to save her from the horrible dread which came nearer in successive strides. "My father too!" she repeated more than once. One would have said that her lips had learned the terrible lesson, and spoke without her will.

"Don't! don't!" he entreated.

Her eyes were still fixed upon his face, but all at once it seemed to him as if she did not see him. "Can't I die?" she said.

Lauriston was silent. Her hands were in his, and yet it seemed to him as if she were worlds away; he could not follow her, he could not help her, he had not a word to speak. And of what use would a thousand words have been? He knew, as no other man could know, the meaning of the tidings he had brought her, and he said to himself that it was enough to drive her mad. Yet what could he do? It was altogether beyond his reach; he could no more change it than he could change the colour of the sky overhead. That which had been, had been, and he was as helpless as Rachel herself in the grasp of that unalterable past.

The voices of the children playing and wrangling on the hillside came through the hot stillness of the afternoon. Some men in a boat shouted to those on shore, and pushed off with a measured beat of oars, and the commonplace sounds were unfamiliar and strange as if they belonged to another existence. Rachel drew one of her hands away, and listened, turning aside her head. "It's all just the same as when I came here," she said, "only the sun is a little lower. Oh! Mr. Lauriston, you didn't know what your news was!"

"No! Don't remind me of that! If I had known——"

"You couldn't have helped it. I must have known to-morrow."

"To-morrow; yes; but not to-day."

"A day doesn't matter much," she answered gently.

"Doesn't it? Who knows what may happen in a day?" He thought to himself, as he spoke, that Rachel might have died that night. It seemed to him that Death's random strokes must surely sometimes fall where Pity would strike. "Well, much or little, I have robbed you of a day," he said, "and I can't give it back to you."

"No; but it is best as it is. I'm glad you told me." He questioned her downcast face with a quick glance. "I can bear it better so. Perhaps if you hadn't come to-day Charley would have brought the news."

"Eastwood?"

"Yes; he is coming to-morrow. But he mustn't come; somebody must stop him; I couldn't bear it. I know you are sorry for me, Mr. Lauriston, but it isn't like Charley."

"No," he said in a low voice; "you are right; it isn't like Charley."

She turned and looked at him, but he was twisting the signet ring on his finger and did not meet her eyes. "I was going to marry him," she said, "you didn't know; but now that is all over. I shall never marry."

There was a long pause, and then Lauriston spoke in a slightly altered voice. "You must not think too much of this. After all, you are not changed." The words, as he uttered them, seemed weak to the point of silliness; but he had nothing better to say.

"Not think too much of this! What am I to think of, then? It isn't that I am changed, but I know now what it all meant. Mr. Lauriston, I thought you understood;" their glances met; "yes, and you do understand. I can never marry. I'm the last, and I'll be the last; no one who has this money after me shall hate it as I do. Oh! please go, and leave me by myself just for a minute."

He got up, and strolled slowly to and fro on the footpath. He turned his eyes steadily inland, and yet he seemed to see nothing but the girl at the cliff's edge, looking at her ruined life. The noise of the water softly lapping on the stones grew louder and louder in his ears, and the height of the cliff became terrible. A dim thought lay underneath the sight and sound, but he dared not suffer it to rise up. It seemed to him that if it were once distinctly realised it must fill the air, and reach Rachel Conway sooner than he could; but, while he was still contending with it,

he heard her call "Mr. Lauriston," and the unnamed dread passed away like a dream as he went towards her.

"I'm not going to be stupid any more," she said, looking up at him. "I was trying to be brave at first, but when I thought of my father it took me by surprise, and I don't quite know what I said."

Lauriston sat down on the turf. "What made you think it?" he asked.

"He was away for more than a year before he died, and I used to wonder where mamma went sometimes. I know now."

The girl's dreary certainty impressed her companion, and he made no answer.

"I wanted to be by myself for a few moments," said Rachel, "to try to get used to it. Now will you let me wait a little longer till I make sure that I can talk to you without being foolish—talk about anything or nothing, I mean?"

"We will stay exactly as long as you like," he replied. Then they were silent; Rachel looking along the line of coast, Mr. Lauriston staring absently at the dry grass.

"I haven't anything to say now," said the girl, with a faint smile.

"But I have." He continued to look down as he spoke. "Miss Conway, I think I understand what all this means to you. You said yourself you thought I understood. Well, suppose the worst—mind, I don't for a moment anticipate it—but suppose that your fears were realised——"

"Yes," said Rachel, looking intently at him. "Go on."

"I think you are afraid not only of—the thing itself, but of places and people connected with it, are you not?" He was painfully conscious of the clumsiness of his expressions, but he could not speak more explicitly. "When one pictures that kind of thing—as I suppose most of us have done some time or other—one imagines oneself put out of the way, not listened to, forgotten, out of sight, out of mind."

"Yes," said Rachel in a whisper.

"And I fancy, from what you said, that you feel that you have not many friends."

"There will be no one who will care for me," she answered, with something of defiance in her voice. "If *that* happened, Miss Whitney would be sorry for me—from a safe distance. There is nobody else now."

"Well, then," said Mr. Lauriston, "will you let me say that, failing any one else, I will do what I can? It may not be much, but I can promise at any rate that I will know what happens to you, and where you are, and that you shall not be forgotten. Not for a single day," he added in a lower voice. "What do you say? Is it a bargain?"

Rachel hesitated. "I don't see why you should take so much trouble about me, Mr. Lauriston."

"I don't think you will give me any trouble at all. And I'm an idle

man, you know. It is a bargain, then?" and he held out his hand with a keen glance at her.

Rachel put hers into it gratefully; yet, even as she did so, she felt as if Mr. Lauriston were in some way connected with her fear, and as if the shadowy half of her life grew nearer and more real at his touch.

"That is settled, then," he said, as she attempted some word of thanks; "don't let us talk any more about it." There was a pause. "Let us talk about anything, or nothing, as you said." He half smiled as he spoke, and Rachel looked round obediently to see if the wide world held anything that could by any possibility be talked about. The red sunlight from the west shone on her pale face, and touched it with colour. She put up her hand, and after a moment she moved a little to escape the level gleam, and, as she did so, her eyes fell on a dwarfed and stubborn shrub beside her. She broke off a bit. "Rest-harrow they call it; did you know?" she said, showing it to Mr. Lauriston, who was looking at her. "Isn't it a queer name?" She touched her lips absently with the dull pink blossoms. "Oh, I hate it! I hate it! How sickly it smells!" And she threw it from her with a passionate movement of disgust. It seemed to him as if she threw away more than the flower, and indeed Rachel felt as if all that life contained had grown sickly and horrible.

At that moment the children who had been playing on the hillside came trooping along the path, calling to one another in shrill boyish voices, and staring at the lady who sat on the grass with her white face turned towards them. She looked absently at the sturdy fresh-coloured little lads who tramped so unconsciously, in a commonplace little procession, through her world of shadowy terror. The foremost made a wonderful discovery of some insect creeping in the grass, and they all huddled together to look at it, and bandied questions, assertions, and contradictions, till with vehement stamping of a small hobnailed boot the investigation and the wonder came to an end together. Rachel's preoccupied gaze softened to something of interest and wistful kindness, as the little group broke up. "Look at them," she said. "I wish I were one of those boys. I think I should like to be that small one who lags behind."

Mr. Lauriston glanced at the little, white-headed, shortlegged urchin, and then at Miss Conway. "I think not," he said with a smile.

"Yes, I should. I should be just trotting home to my tea. Perhaps my mother would box my ears for being late. And after tea I should hardly be able to keep my eyes open; I should tumble into bed, and, oh, how I should sleep till the morning came again!"

Her companion shook his head. "I can't wish that," he said. "A thickheaded little urchin, with a hopeful prospect of developing into a rheumatic ploughman and pauper! No! a thousand times better be what you are and face your risk."

She looked at him; then rose with an unconscious grace which em

phasised the immeasurable difference between herself and the little rustic she envied. "So be it," she said, "especially as I can't help myself."

"I suppose that's about as wise a speech as it is possible for man to make," said Lauriston, as they turned their faces eastward, and began to descend the slope. Rachel did not answer, and they went almost to the foot of it in silence, when she suddenly stopped and looked back. "Oh, the library book!" she exclaimed.

"I'll get it!" and he was gone in a moment.

She watched him as he hurried up the hill, and saw him stoop in the distance and pick up the volume from the turf, and she realised, as he did so, how dingy and dog's-eared and utterly unimportant it was. "I suppose I could buy up all the shop and hardly know it," she said to herself. She seemed to enter into possession of her wealth at that moment, and many things grew clearer to her. "It wasn't worth sending you back for," she said when Mr. Lauriston rejoined her.

"Why not?" he answered, turning the leaves as he walked. "Send me where you please."

"You are very kind, but you can't be always at my beck and call like that."

"Why not?" he said again.

"Of course you can't be." He made no reply; and presently she said in a low voice, "Mr. Lauriston, shall you remember what you promised me? If ever I *did* want you, it might be years hence, years and years——"

"And what if it were? I shall remember this day as long as I live. Why is it you cannot trust me?"

"Haven't I trusted you?" said Rachel, lifting her brows a little. "It seems to me as if I had!"

"Yes; you trust me for a moment, and then distrust your first impulse. The repentance has been at least as evident as the confidence. Oh, I'm not reproaching you; don't look at me like that! You can't help it, of course, but I should like to know where it is that I fail. Miss Conway, how can you possibly think that I shall forget?"

"I don't," she said, with her sad eyes fixed upon the sea. "But when I am alone I *shall* think so," she added with dreary foreknowledge.

"If I knew anything more binding than my word——" he began. "What can I do?—Stay!" He drew the black signet ring from his finger. "Will you take this?" he said. "Take it to be an assurance of my promise when you are alone, and think yourself forgotten." Rachel hesitated and drew back, glancing doubtfully at him. "What are you afraid of now?" he asked, with a slight despairing shrug of his shoulders.

"I am not afraid," she said; and in the act of holding out her hand she paused, drew off a thin little ring of chased gold, and offered it to

Mr. Lauriston. Her confidence had something proudly defiant about it, like a challenge. He took her gift silently, with an inclination of his head, and slipped the ring on a finger as slender as Rachel's own. She watched him, and her eyes filled suddenly with tears. "It was my mother's," she said; "it has her name inside."

"Then I make my promise to your mother," Mr. Lauriston answered.

This "giving and receiving of a ring" so far fulfilled his intention that it impressed Rachel's mind with a sense of the reality of their compact. Yet it turned her thoughts rather to the past than to the future. As she looked down and saw his signet ring upon her hand, she remembered Redlands. She seemed to see once more the great shadowy room, in which her companion leaned forward, with bright eyes fixed upon her face, and told her of the haunted walk. But, above all, the ring recalled that dim afternoon which they had spent together in Redlands Park. The low arch of sad-coloured sky, the misty distances, the rounded masses of foliage, the quaintly-ordered garden paths, came back to her remembrance like the landscape of a recurring dream. Again she felt as if she could hardly draw breath in the heavy atmosphere; and, in the effort to escape from the haunting impression, she thought of Bucksmill Hill, as she saw it the last evening of her earlier life, before she knew Mr. Lauriston. She recalled the white splendour of moonlight, the fresh breeze blowing over the height, the dusky purple moor stretching far away like a poet's land of rest and mysterious peace. And Charley was there—strong, fearless, honest, kindly, banishing all sickly fears by his mere presence. As she stood in the hollow between the hills, turning the black ring on her finger, as Mr. Lauriston had turned it on his only a few minutes earlier, she realised with a sudden heart-ache that she and Charley were parted for ever. She had said it before, she had repeated it to herself over and over again, but she had never understood the meaning of her words. She shivered in the consciousness of her loneliness, and turned to Mr. Lauriston with a desire to propitiate him, which was strangely unlike anything she had ever felt before. "Please take me home," she said, with a tremor in her voice. He offered her his arm, and she took it with an appealing glance at him. "You know," she said abruptly, "this is only the fourth time I have seen you." He hardly knew what he said in answer, but the expression of her eyes haunted him after they parted. It was like the look of a dumb animal in pain.



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BY THE AUTHOR OF "FOR PERCIVAL."

CHAPTER VI.

MISS WHITNEY.



MR. LAURISTON had pledged himself to hold his life at Miss Conway's beck and call. He was so much in earnest that existence seemed to gain a new meaning as he spoke, and desire to serve her demanded an instant outlet of expression. But when he had sent Mr. Goodwin's letter to her lodgings, and despatched a telegram to Charles Eastwood, he found nothing better to do than to return her novel to the library. He hoped as he gave back *Sir Hubert's Vow, a Romance of*

Real Life, that the action of paying twopence for it was ennobled by the depth of his feelings, since otherwise it seemed inadequate. He could only remind himself, as he took his change from the counter, that feelings and opportunities are often grotesquely mismatched. If splendid

deeds spring occasionally from a combination of good luck and rather queer motives, it is certain that devotion enough to equip a forlorn hope may find no better expression than an inquiry at the door, and the one chance might as well befall him as the other.

He strolled back to his hotel, and dined, slowly and meditatively, looking out at the picture of sea and sky which was framed by the open window. It lost its brightness as he watched it, and took the soft indistinctness of twilight. From his lighted room he saw how the night, flowing into the little bay like a dusky tide, filled its narrow bounds with all that they could hold of mystery and suggestive sadness, and the greyness of the dim expanse made a fitting background for the pale vision of Rachel Conway which ruled his thoughts. His sympathy with her was like a talisman, suddenly revealing the existence of a multitude of obscure and unsuspected sorrows, stirring confusedly beneath the surface of ordinary life. He touched the little ring upon his hand, as if it might by chance call up an obedient genius to ask his pleasure, though if the twilight had thickened then and there to such a shape, he would not have known what command he could utter. This was not one of the simple difficulties of the old fairy tales; and only a power which could undo the past, and alter the complex influences which had shaped the lives of Conways and Rutherfords dead and gone, could be of any service. The facts of the case were cold and hard as adamant, and the girl's quivering life was driven against them. Lauriston pictured it as actual tender flesh, dashed on cruel rocks, and himself as a bystander. And yet, in spite of these inexorable facts, he was well aware that the whole matter had its fanciful and visionary aspect. It belonged to a world of shadows, though a world in which shadows took the form of unconquerable fate. "Eastwood would say that Rachel Conway and I were mad together," was the sum of Mr. Lauriston's reflections, as he threw himself back in his chair, and looked at the thin circlet of gold. "And upon my word I am not at all sure that we are not. But it is a kind of madness which will be more than a match for Master Charley's sanity, I fancy." And, with all his knowledge of Rachel's pain, he laughed softly at the thought of Charley's discomfiture.

He had sent word with Mr. Goodwin's letter that he would call in the evening to see if he could be of any service to the two ladies, and he rose, with the smile still on his lips, to fulfil his promise. He had not far to go. Five minutes' walk, through cool evening air which smelt of the sea, brought him to a tiny garden, where a miniature flagstaff was erected in the midst of fuchsias and marigolds, and after a brief pause he was ushered into a little gaslit sitting-room where Rachel came forward to meet him and to introduce him to Miss Whitney.

The introduction might have made a queer little picture for an untroubled spectator, and even Rachel perceived the contrast between Mr. Lauriston's easy courtesy and pliant grace of attitude, and Miss

Whitney's timid formality. Miss Whitney was not ugly. In earlier years she had possessed a certain blonde girlish prettiness; but she had stiffened and grown cold, till she was like one of those prim, pale figures which archæologists discover on a whitened wall. She was gentle, bloodless, depressing. She measured out a little smile, and extended a chalk-white hand to her visitor; but she eyed him cautiously through her bleached lashes as she did so, for men, in her opinion, were dangerous creatures. It is true that she was slightly acquainted with an archdeacon who was very nearly perfect, and she knew two or three beneficed clergymen, and one family doctor, who might be trusted; but, as a rule, she disapproved of men. They broke right and left through the little code of laws by which she regulated morals and manners; they offended her sense of propriety, almost by the fact of their existence; they made jokes, they laughed at things which should not be laughed at, they were careless and extravagant, they stayed out late at night, they unsettled the servants, and they smelt of smoke. She supposed that Mr. Charles Eastwood was a deserving and right-minded young man, and she had sanctioned his attentions to Rachel, partly for his mother's sake, though she did not approve of his style of dress and conversation. She saw that his friend did not at all resemble him; but she was not certain that it was altogether a gain, for the brilliant swiftness of Mr. Lauriston's glances, and something a little picturesque and singular in his general appearance, made her vaguely uneasy.

Meanwhile, Mr. Lauriston, bowing politely, saw through Miss Whitney at once, as a clever man sees through a prudish, narrow-minded woman—he understood her too clearly. The very touch of her chilly, reluctant fingers was a revelation to him, and every word she uttered helped to justify Rachel in her longing for the warmth and kindness of the Eastwoods' home. It seemed strange to him that Miss Whitney, with her timid scruples and hesitations, should feel herself qualified to rule the girl, but that was because he could not understand how feebly she apprehended her own incompetence.

Miss Whitney realised the change in Rachel's prospects as small people always realise a great fact, that is, in its smaller aspects. She was anxious about their packing, and their lodgings, and preoccupied concerning mourning. She moved restlessly about the room, taking up things and laying them down in an aimless way, and talking disconnectedly. "Isn't it wonderful?" she said. "Such a legacy! And coming all at once, too!" She repeated this two or three times, as if a legacy usually took the form of a succession of sixpences.

Rachel looked up with a tired smile. "Dear Miss Whitney, do sit down. You will be worn out."

"My dear," said Miss Whitney gently, "you forget that there is a great deal to do. Mr. Lauriston will excuse me, I'm sure. Somebody must do it. By all means sit still and rest, and enjoy your prospects," she added, with a little laugh. "I don't want to disturb

you. Excuse me"—she leaned before Rachel to pick up some books, and then behind her to take a workbox from a little table—"we can't all rest, you know."

"But I can't rest if you don't," Rachel answered.

Mr. Lauriston did not care whether Miss Whitney was tired or not, but there was an accent of weariness in the girl's voice which told him that she could not bear much more. "You don't know what a fuss Miss Whitney can make," she had said laughingly as he stood beside her on the cliff. Miss Whitney had been making a fuss ever since. While he was quietly eating his dinner, and looking out at the little harbour with its shadowy shores, she had been worrying Rachel. It was intolerable, but here again he was helpless. What could he do? A life's devotion was very much at Miss Conway's service, but he could not make Miss Whitney sit down and hold her tongue.

"Of course there is a great deal to do," he said, wondering, as he spoke, what it could possibly be. "But I'm not tired; can't you set me to work?"

"Thank you, you are very kind; but no, I think not." She put the things she had collected in a confused heap on the table. "How strange that you should have met Rachel this afternoon! And yet I don't know. If she *will* go sitting about the rocks—— But I'm afraid you'll think I don't take proper care of her."

"I thought I was very fortunate," said Mr. Lauriston.

"I can't climb up those places and sit in the sun," Miss Whitney continued. "It affects my head. And Rachel is not happy indoors. I tell her sometimes that she really ought to take an interest in this new crewel work or something; she seems to have no occupation."

He looked across to the girl where she sat, with her hands idly folded on her lap. On the wall above her head was a coloured print of the Queen and Prince Albert, in a gilt frame swathed in yellow gauze. This work of art was tilted forward so much that Rachel seemed to be under the especial patronage of the Royal family. "This is a very sad account of you, Miss Conway," he said. "What do you do with yourself when you can't get out? In a November fog, for instance?"

She lifted her tired eyelids a little. "Oh, I despair!" she answered lightly. "What else can one do in a November fog?"

"My dear, how foolish!" said Miss Whitney. "Of course, you can't see to do any black work, but you can have a strip of embroidery always on hand. It's wonderful how much I have done in really bad weather. But then I can always make myself happy indoors."

Mr. Lauriston, murmuring something about "extremely fortunate," tried to imagine what Miss Whitney's idea of happiness might be. She meanwhile gathered up most of the things which she had just laid down, and suddenly reverted to her previous remark. "I'm really afraid you will think I don't take care of Rachel."

"Indeed you do," said Rachel herself. "I'm sure Mr. Lauriston won't think anything of the kind."

Miss Whitney cut his protestations short. "Mrs. Eastwood would be more particular, I know."

The memory of that long afternoon in the leafy shades of Redlands Park, rose up suddenly before Lauriston and Rachel. The colour came into her face; but he answered quickly, "Oh, Redlands is a very quiet place. I meet Miss Eastwood sometimes going about the lanes; she visits the poor people, I think."

"Yes," said Rachel, "Fanny has a district."

"Oh, Rachel!" Miss Whitney exclaimed; "what are we to do about Mr. Charles Eastwood? Did you forget him?"

Rachel glanced at Mr. Lauriston. "Hadn't we better telegraph?" she said. "I don't think I can write."

"It is done," he replied. "You said he must not come here, so I ventured to send word that your plans were changed." Her look of gratitude pained him. He was eager to serve her, yet he felt that only her secret loneliness drove her to accept his help. Had she been happy and hopeful she would not have worn his ring upon her finger, nor appealed to him in her difficulties. The expression of her eyes was not so much confidence in him, as helpless resignation. He felt as if he had watched some beautiful wild creature, out of his reach, and all at once it was driven to his feet by hunger, or some cruel hurt. He might lay his hand upon it if he liked, but it would never have come to him had it not been for its mischance.

"I'm sure we are very much obliged to you," Miss Whitney began, just as the door opened and the servant announced, "Mrs. Allen, ma'am, says she can come and speak to you now if it suits you."

"Thank you; tell her I will come to her almost directly," Miss Whitney replied. "Our landlady," she explained to Mr. Lauriston. "Going away so hurriedly makes it necessary to have our little settlement to-night. Rachel, my dear, have you seen my account-book—the little black one? Oh, I remember now, I took it upstairs."

"I'll get it," said Rachel, and departed in search of it.

"Don't go," said Miss Whitney to her guest. "I wanted to ask you if you knew about trains. The time-table is here somewhere; Rachel will find it when she comes down. Trains are so perplexing, aren't they? Rachel thinks she understands; she is very independent; but I like to ask somebody; I like to be sure."

"If I can be of any use I shall be delighted," Mr. Lauriston replied. "I feared I was only hindering you."

"Not at all." She had a preoccupied air, being still inwardly troubled by his possible doubt of her efficiency as a guardian. "I am afraid," she said after a pause, "that, in consequence of my delicate health, Rachel is perhaps a little too independent. I doubt she has more liberty than is quite advisable."

Mr. Lauriston was not inclined to talk over Rachel with Miss Whitney. "But isn't liberty a very good thing?" he asked, preferring to discuss the question in the abstract.

"A very dangerous thing," she gently corrected him. "Few people know how to use it, I fear."

To that he assented. "But I suppose we must become fitted for it by possessing it; there is no other way, is there?" He spoke with a suggestion of deference in his tone, as if he were seeking information.

Miss Whitney considered a moment before she replied. "Perhaps not. But in that case I am sure that girls are better without it. Liberty, when people are not fitted for it, tends to singularity." A flush mounted to her pale cheek, as it struck her that she was turning her sentences rather successfully, and with gentle self-approval she repeated, "Yes; decidedly it tends to singularity."

"No doubt." Mr. Lauriston gazed at the floor, and softly stroked his lip, as if he were seriously weighing her words. "You are perfectly right; there is such a tendency——"

"In people who are not fitted for it," she said, hastening to supply the qualification. "Those who are fitted for it would of course wish always to act according to the rules of propriety."

"I see," said Mr. Lauriston, still reflectively intent on Miss Whitney's view of the matter. "But do you think," he asked, raising his bright eyes to her face, "that singularity is altogether objectionable? Doesn't it occasionally give something of a charm?"

"To a young girl?" Miss Whitney inquired; and there was a sound of warning in her articulation of the words.

"Well, yes, to a young girl," Mr. Lauriston repeated. "Don't you think it may?" If there was a touch of defiance in this persistence, he seemed to make amends by the even more strongly marked deference of his manner.

"It is very possible," she answered frigidly; "I daresay it may. But I should have my own opinion of the people who could find a charm in a lady's eccentricity." The good creature looked away as she spoke, as if she felt it her duty to crush him with this reply, but would rather not see the effect of her blow.

"I am answered," he said simply.

Miss Whitney was pleased. "If you reconsider the matter," she said, magnanimously offering him a way of escape, "I hardly think that you would be charmed by singularity in the manners of—of your sisters, or of—well, of any lady in whom you might—a—take an interest."

Rachel's entrance spared his answer. "I can't find your book anywhere," she said, pausing in the doorway. "Are you quite sure it isn't here? Why, what is that on the table by your workbox?"

Miss Whitney apologised for her mistake. "I quite thought I had taken it upstairs," she said, as she hurriedly turned the pages. "Thank you, my dear. And now, if you will excuse me for five minutes, I will have my little talk with Mrs. Allen. Of course, going away like this, we must pay for our lodgings till next Wednesday; but I don't think

we ought to pay for gas, do you, Mr. Lauriston? It's sixpence a week for each burner. You see she may not be able to let the rooms, and we took them by the week; but if the gas isn't burnt she won't have to pay for it—so why should we? And kitchen fire, too. I would not do anything unladylike, but I think she ought not to charge us for kitchen fire after to-morrow."

Mr. Lauriston replied that, strictly speaking, such a demand would not be fair. "But lodging-house keepers are birds of prey, you know," he said. "Don't be too sanguine."

Miss Whitney shook her head. "I am not. But I shall try what I can do."

The door closed behind her. Mr. Lauriston drew a long breath. "Sit down," he said to Rachel. "How tired you are!"

"By the window, please," she answered, as he pushed an easy-chair towards her. She dropped into it and leaned back, resting her head on an anti-macassar adorned with a bouquet of gigantic light-blue harebells. He stood at the other side of the window, and looked at her in silence. She seemed so curiously out of place in the cheap little drawing-room, and he remembered how the same idea struck him when he saw her first at the Eastwoods' house. At Redlands Hall, as she stood on the rug with the yellowish-white marble of the great carved chimney-piece for a background, she had made a picture whose delicate grace and harmony lived in his memory. And again, in Redlands Park, her beauty and sadness had given a deeper meaning to the soft melancholy of the sunless afternoon, so that he recalled them together. But here her commonplace surroundings pained him like a jarring discord.

After a time she put out her hand, and lifted a corner of the blind. "I am not so very tired, really," she said, "but I can't help feeling worried. Oh, I would give anything to get out into the coolness and the dark! I daresay I want it all the more because I know it's impossible."

"I suppose it is impossible." His brilliant eyes were very eager. "The fresh air and the darkness are conveniently close at hand, only it isn't very dark."

Rachel was still looking out. "Would you like to suggest it to Miss Whitney? Tell her, please, that it is between nine and ten at night, and that I should like to go for a walk on the downs."

"With me for your escort."

"But that would only be a variation in the way of impropriety," Miss Conway answered, as she let the blind fall. "No, it is utterly impossible. Besides, that isn't what I really want."

"What do you really want?" he asked. His eyes were fixed on her, but the direct and continued gaze did not seem to trouble her in the least.

"Oh, I don't know." Again for a moment she lifted the corner of the blind. "No; as you say, it isn't very dark. The moon is just rising over the hills. If one were on Bucksmill Hill now, how it would shine

on that moor of yours! There was a path across it. Do you remember?"

"Yes; I know there is a path," he answered.

"A straight path; and it seemed to melt away into the dusky purple. I feel as if I should like to travel on and on and on, along that path, with a cool wind blowing over the heather."

"And never come back," said Mr. Lauriston softly, as if he were finishing her sentence.

"No; that's the worst of it. Unless I died, the morning would come; and it wouldn't matter where I was, I couldn't get away. I should be obliged to come back and meet Charley."

Her voice quivered, and she turned her head a little away. Mr. Lauriston looked down; and there was a silence, soon broken by the arrival of Miss Whitney, triumphant as far as she considered triumph ladylike.

"I've had a little difficulty with Mrs. Allen," she announced, "but she has taken off one-and-ninepence."

Mr. Lauriston, called suddenly from Rachel's dreamland to the important realities of life, looked blankly at Miss Whitney for a moment, and then barely suppressed a smile. It is so hard for people, accustomed to well-filled pockets, to understand why their fellow-creatures do such unpleasant and unnecessary things. But he quickly recovered himself. "Ah, that's good news!" he said sympathetically.

"It ought to have been more," Miss Whitney replied with a little smile. "But I can't do anything mean. People take advantage of me, I know, but I can't help it. Well, one-and-ninepence is something." She was in the act of laying down the account-book when she suddenly exclaimed, "Oh, those eggs! Rachel, I forgot to speak to her about those eggs she put down for last Tuesday—the three eggs that we never had."

"Oh, never mind," said Rachel, sitting up in her easy-chair. "Please don't take any more trouble; it doesn't matter." She could not altogether realise her change of fortune; her grasp of the fact was intermittent. But she understood it perfectly while Mr. Lauriston stood there congratulating Miss Whitney on her one-and-ninepence. "It isn't worth while—it really doesn't matter," she repeated eagerly.

Miss Whitney shook her head. "That's a bad principle to begin with," she said. "Everything matters. You mustn't think that because your circumstances are changed it is right to be extravagant. There will be fresh claims on you; there will be just as much need for care. Isn't it so, Mr. Lauriston?"

He looked up with a quick smile. "Oh, yes; there are always plenty of claims," he said, "if you choose to attend to them."

"And I'm sure you will agree with me that no fortune, however large, will justify extravagance," Miss Whitney persisted.

"Of course it won't," he readily assented. "Unluckily, so many people don't seem to understand what extravagance really is."

"That is quite true." Miss Whitney was pleased with Mr. Lauriston's manner, and, fortified by his approval, she determined, as a matter of principle, to fight the question of the three eggs that they never had. "You will excuse me once more, I hope," she said; "it is really very rude, running away like this; but, you see, business is business. I shall not be a moment."

He assured her that he perfectly understood; that he only blamed himself for coming at an inconvenient time. He gave her the account-book, which she had again mislaid. He closed the door after her, and then went back to the window, where Miss Conway watched him with a spark of something like defiance in her eyes.

"You have lived with Miss Whitney ever since you were a child," he said meditatively, as he drew a chair towards her.

Rachel leaned forward. "You shall not find fault with Miss Whitney! you must not!" she exclaimed with sudden passion. "She was my mother's friend. She has always been good to me. I should hate myself if I said anything unkind of her."

Mr. Lauriston paused with his hand on the back of the chair. "Yes," he replied. "And I said—what did I say? I'm very sorry, whatever it was."

She smiled unwillingly. "You didn't say anything, of course; but you were laughing at her. Well, you must laugh, I suppose, but not to me."

He sat down. "You didn't laugh, then?" he said, after a moment's silence.

"Do you want me to hate myself?" the girl demanded. "Yes; I did."

Mr. Lauriston, leaning back, surveyed the overhanging portrait of the Queen. "I don't know that I particularly want to laugh," he said.

"And you mustn't be sorry for me, either."

"Very well. You don't leave me much liberty, do you?" He smiled as he spoke, and looked at her, and she answered his eyes.

"But you *are* sorry, Mr. Lauriston!"

"Why do you torment yourself?" he asked. "If Miss Whitney has been good to you, I shall not laugh at her for that. And as for her friendship with your mother, why, that is a bygone affair. I fancy it wasn't precisely this Miss Whitney that your mother knew. We don't all of us grow brighter and broader-minded as we grow old. Perhaps Miss Whitney would not have been quite the same if her friend had lived."

"Perhaps not," said Rachel. "They were friends at school."

Mr. Lauriston smiled. "At school!" he repeated. "And, in good time, here she comes. I hope she has not paid for the eggs you never had."

Rachel smiled too, though with a little hesitation, as Miss Whitney came in. "Is it all right?" she asked.

"Quite right," Miss Whitney replied, taking the chair Mr. Lauriston offered her. She was evidently calmed and soothed by the consciousness of success. "It is the principle, you know," she said, smoothing the little white frills at her wrists; "it isn't the fourpence-halfpenny."

"Of course not," he replied; and then suggested that if he could be of any service in making arrangements for their journey, he should be only too happy.

The time-table was found, and Miss Whitney's mind was set at rest on the subject of trains. Mr. Lauriston was prepared to explain everything, and to undertake everything; and she began to think that this friend of Mr. Charles Eastwood's was really very pleasant and gentlemanly.

"I want to be in town in good time," she said to him, "because of the mourning. Saturday is an awkward day; but, if we can manage to give the order some time in the afternoon, they can at any rate begin it the first thing on Monday."

"Oh, the mourning!" said Mr. Lauriston. "I never thought of that. Yes, of course."

"I hope you are not one of those people who disregard such things," said Miss Whitney. "There are such Radical ideas abroad now that one never knows what will be attacked next."

"I? Oh, I'm not the man for hasty innovations. And as to mourning, I think it most desirable that there should be a recognised expression of the feelings one ought to have on such occasions. What, now, do you consider a proper depth of blackness for a great-aunt?"

"Oh, I don't know. I couldn't decide a thing like that off-hand. I must talk it over with a regular dressmaker, or perhaps we had better go to Jay's. Rachel, dear, I wonder whether we had better go to Jay's?"

"I really don't mind where we go," said Rachel. "Just where you like."

"Crape, of course," said Miss Whitney, pursuing her train of thought. "Some crape, I mean. Not always for a great-aunt, but in this case I should say certainly *some* crape. You see, there's the money."

"Yes," said Mr. Lauriston with bright interest, "there's the money. I should think it would be a tolerably safe rule always to say crape when there's money. It would be a kind of grateful acknowledgment, wouldn't it?"

Miss Whitney hesitated. General rules were all very well, but she would have preferred an appeal to a dressmaker. "Well," she said, "perhaps it might be a safe rule; it would show proper feeling certainly."

Satisfied on this important point, Mr. Lauriston rose to go. He felt that he was on dangerous ground. He could not resist his impulse to draw Miss Whitney out—not from any vulgar pleasure in her folly, but because every word she uttered helped him to understand what Rachel's life had been. It was absurd, it was detestable; it was like the tortures

of which one reads—a thousand times more hateful because they were grotesque. He felt as if he ought to apologise for his own freedom and independence, when he realised the worrying, well-meaning tyranny which Rachel had had to endure. It seemed to him that he had had more than his fair share of liberty. Miss Whitney was an excellent woman, sincerely anxious to do right, to behave as a lady should under all circumstances, and to do the best she could for her charge; but to Lauriston she was a nightmare. There was something ghastly in the thought of the girl's long agony of dread lying hidden under the discreet propriety of such a narrow little life. He cast one of his swift sidelong glances at Rachel as he said "good-night" to Miss Whitney, and saw how she had lifted the blind again, and was gazing at the night into which he was going. He longed to defy everything, and take her out with him then and there. If they two could but stand together, in silence if she pleased, in the silver lights and dusky shadows of the world without, she would surely find rest and healing in that great calm. She would see—she *must* see—that Miss Whitney was impossible and absurd; yes, and Charles Eastwood too. But, of course, as she had told him, it was out of the question.

"I shall see you to-morrow," he said, in reply to Miss Whitney's thanks. "And if there is anything I can do, pray let me know. Yes, I will see that the fly is ordered for a quarter past ten; it shall not be forgotten. Good-night." He turned to Rachel, who had risen. She gave him her hand lifelessly enough, but, as their eyes met, it suddenly quickened in his clasp, as if with a throb of fear and remembrance.

He went hastily out, but paused in the road and looked back at the little house, with its gleaming yellow windows, and the diminutive flagstaff asserting itself in the strip of garden. Such houses may be counted by scores in seaside places; but to Mr. Lauriston, at that moment, Arundel Cottage had a distinct individuality. It held his idea of Rachel's previous life. He knew very well that she had only stayed there for two or three weeks; but he understood what that everyday life was, which spent its holidays in Arundel Cottage, and succeeded in getting one-and-ninepence taken off its account for gas and kitchen fire. There is a dignity in earning and a dignity in spending; but this empty existence, with its petty economies, seemed to miss both. As Mr. Lauriston walked thoughtfully away, the expression of his face was not scorn, nor was it precisely pity, but rather distaste. Life, as ruled by Miss Whitney, without grace, or freedom, or honest endeavour, was not a pleasant subject for meditation. At the same time he did not blame anybody. Unless Miss Whitney had been more amply gifted with heart and brains, he did not see that she could have done any better, and she might easily have done much worse. Only it was all so dreary, so ignoble, so joyless for Rachel. "Well, at any rate, *that* is ended," he said to himself; and, as he said it, he awoke to the consciousness that he had mechanically taken the path which led to the cliff. He hesitated a

moment, half laughed at his absence of mind, and then went on, climbing the hillside to the spot where Rachel had waited for him and for her fate. Was it only that afternoon? The south-west wind blew softly, yet strongly, over the sea—such a wind as the girl had longed for, to cool her tired brow and drive away her thickly-crowding thoughts and fancies. The white clouds went hurrying across the arch of moonlit sky. Rachel herself could see those hurrying white clouds above the hills, as she looked out of her little window, while Miss Whitney was folding her Sunday dress and counting her pocket-handkerchiefs. She spent that brief interval of peace in wondering uselessly how Charley would take it. Mr. Lauriston, if the question had been put to him, and he had thought fit to answer frankly, would have said, “He will not understand you; he will not believe you; he will take it brutally,” and would have put the matter aside. He was not thinking of Charley as he stood, a slim, black figure at the cliff’s edge, gazing at the heaving breadth of the sea. He was looking beyond Charley, and wondering what the end would be; but the waves below seemed only to whisper with sad persistence of something that could have no end, but must go on and on for ever.

CHAPTER VII.

CHARLEY’S EXPECTATIONS.

MR. LAURISTON’S hurried telegram to Charley was quickly followed by a carefully-written note from Miss Whitney, suggesting that he should put off calling on them in their London lodgings for two or three days. The good lady had not the faintest idea of the blow which awaited young Eastwood. To do her justice, she was not mercenary. When an honest young man had been encouraged, and as good as accepted, it would be, in her opinion, neither true nor ladylike to dismiss him in consequence of an accession of fortune. She had no deeper motive in postponing Charley’s visit, than a desire to see Rachel duly clothed in crape before his arrival. She doubted whether it was proper that an engagement should be ratified at all at such a time of mourning. She feared, however, that this impropriety was inevitable, and it only remained to her to prevent a meeting during the few days which the heiress was obliged to spend in her old clothes. So she wrote on black-edged paper, and spoke of deep affliction.

The note lay waiting for Charley in a little suburban drawing-room which Rachel knew well. The bright green Venetian blinds were down to save the bright green carpet from the rays of the western sun, and in the airless obscurity Mrs. Eastwood sat alone, dozing over her knitting, amid her household treasures. The room was full of traces of the decorative skill of the family. Mrs. Eastwood herself had painted a couple of little cardboard screens, still occupying honourable places by the fireside,

though their gilded handles were somewhat tarnished, and she had made the wax flowers which bloomed perennially under a glass shade on a side table. Effie's crewel work adorned the chimney-piece with sprays of yellow jasmine, and she had gathered and dried the grasses which once were airily beautiful in Redlands fields. Fanny's sketches hung upon the walls. Fanny, while at school, had shown a marked devotion to art, and had produced six water-colour landscapes of singular equality of excellence. Returning home, she had rested on these six laurels. Perhaps she was justified in feeling that her work was done, since they were advantageously hung, four in the drawing-room and two in the dining-room, and there were really no suitable places for more. Those who have a leaning towards mystical and poetical fancies may find a virtue in irregular numbers, such as three, or seven, or nine, but there are minds which find more satisfaction in an even half-dozen or dozen. Fanny liked things to be symmetrical and in order. The pile of music which belonged to Effie and Charley was the untidiest thing in the room, but Fanny's back numbers of the *Queen* were laid neatly on the table, with her work-basket set on them to keep them in their place.

As young Eastwood opened the door his mother recommenced work with sudden energy. "There's a letter for you," she said. "Who is it from?"

Charley glanced at the address. "Miss Whitney."

Mrs. Eastwood looked up eagerly. "I thought it was Miss Whitney. What does she say?"

Charley read, and his face grew grave. Miss Whitney alluded to altered circumstances, and the unlooked-for bereavement, so solemnly that he was seriously disquieted, not with any fear about Rachel, but with a doubt as to the demands which might be made on his sympathy. "I can't go and cry about the old woman," he said, as he gave Miss Whitney's note to his mother. "And I don't see that it's much of a bereavement after all."

Mrs. Eastwood laid down her knitting, and read the letter with serious attention. "I wish matters had been settled with you and Rachel a little sooner," she said.

"Oh, confound it!" said Charley. "Weren't you always telling me not to be imprudent? Whose doing was it that things were not settled when she was with us in the spring? Why, you were for ever at me,—'Make sure of your uncle's approval,' and, 'Wait—wait.'"

"You needn't be in such a hurry to blame your mother, I think," said Mrs. Eastwood. "I don't remember that I said all that, but I'm sure I gave you very good advice under the circumstances. Of course you couldn't be too careful then; but now, you see, circumstances are altered."

"I should think they were," Charley answered, almost in a tone of awe. "They say it's five or six thousand a year."

"As much as that?" Mrs. Eastwood read the note through a second time, while Charley whistled sweetly to himself, and stood with his eyes

fixed on some imaginary prospect. What that vision was, only Charley could tell.

"Miss Whitney writes a very kind letter, and that is something," said his mother, "though I *do* wish, as it has turned out, that you had spoken sooner. Still, she doesn't seem to think it will make any difference."

Charley stopped whistling, opened his eyes more widely, and looked at his mother. "Any difference?" he repeated.

"Well, of course it ought not to make any difference. It is really as good as an engagement. And Miss Whitney says nothing to the contrary."

"What does it matter what Miss Whitney says or does? Stupid old woman!"

"Well, everything matters at such a time. But, for my own part, I shall think very badly of Rachel Conway, very badly indeed, if she backs out of her engagement—for it really *is* an engagement—because she has come into this money. When I have treated her like my own daughter, too!"

"What possesses you to suppose that Rachel will do anything of the kind? Some girls might, but not Rachel!" said Charley indignantly. He drew himself up, his grey eyes shone, his lip curved, he stood there finely defiant. "She isn't that sort. Don't you know her better than that? Why, I'm as sure of her as I am of myself. No, I'm a precious deal surer!"

"Well, I hope so," said Mrs. Eastwood dubiously. "As I say, she ought to be the same. Since you really are engaged——"

"Queer way of being engaged," said Charley, staring at the ceiling. "She was, and I wasn't."

Charley had a feeling for fair play which sometimes made a clean sweep of his mother's assertions, explanations, accusations, lamentations, or whatever they might happen to be. He sat down on the end of the little crêtonne-covered sofa, with a whimsical smile on his face. He could afford to smile; for while Mrs. Eastwood was toiling to spin a rope to hold the reluctant heiress, out of countless little cobweb strands, Charley was happily confident in his knowledge of Rachel's heart. His trust in her seemed to ennoble his features in some undefinable way.

"Oh, if you are going to make fun of everything I say, I had better hold my tongue," Mrs. Eastwood rejoined. "I hope it will all turn out as it should. I *hope* so; but money changes people strangely."

"Wonder whether it will change me!" said Charley. "Hullo! here's Effie. Well, young woman, and where have you been?"

"Oh, I only ran round to the Robinsons and the Parkers. I wanted to tell them about Rachel. Fanny tells all the people if I don't look sharp, so I thought I would tell Ada Robinson and Gwendolen Parker."

"Here's my mother prophesying that Rachel will throw us all over," said Charley.

"Rachel? Why, mother, dear, how can you think it? You don't mean it, now do you?"

"I didn't say she would. I said I hoped she wouldn't," Mrs. Eastwood explained, in a tone conveying a sense of injury and affront.

"But, of course, she won't. Why, Rachel couldn't do anything mean. I don't believe she cares for money a bit, and she doesn't care for dukes and people like that. If I were rich I should want to marry a duke; but Rachel wouldn't. She'll be just the same to Charley" (here the brother and sister exchanged quick glances which lighted up their faces) "as if she hadn't a penny more than she had a week ago. Oh, Charley, don't ever think Rachel will change!"

"I don't," said Charley.

"I'm sure I don't say she will," Mrs. Eastwood exclaimed, a little reassured by this unanimity of confidence. "But such things do make a great difference. You young people think everything is to be just as you want to have it; but when you have lived as long as I have you'll know better."

Effie took off her hat, and stood before the glass arranging the little rings of fair hair about her forehead. "Rachel isn't like the rest of us," she said meditatively. "She is like a girl in a novel. That's half the fun in telling people about her fortune. They say, 'How nice!' when they hear that my friend has come into a lot of money; and 'How delighted you must be!' and all the time they are thinking, 'Oh, you poor little silly, much you'll see of your friend now she's rich!' They are very clever, but they don't know Rachel." She moved away from the glass as she spoke, looking back at it, nevertheless, over her shoulder. Charley suddenly put out his hand, pulled her to him, and kissed her. "And did he like to hear his Rachel praised, then, did he?" said Effie, leaning back against his arm, and looking at him with her pretty little head on one side. "And he wasn't such a bad-looking boy, either, though he wasn't a duke. Oh, Charley, how I wish you were!"

"So that Rachel might be a duchess?"

"Why I should be Lady—Lady Euphemia."

"But you were christened Effie. Wasn't she, mother? You're not Euphemia, not a bit of it."

"Ah, but I shouldn't have been Effie then. It's quite good enough as it is," said the girl, with a half-contemptuous resignation, an expression to which the curves and dimples of her soft, childish face gave a very droll effect. "Little Effie Eastwood—that's what I am, and that's all."

"Tisn't much, is it?" said Charley in a sympathetic voice.

Whereupon she boxed his ears, and then, recurring suddenly to the original subject of conversation, "When are you going to see Rachel?" she asked.

"Well, I don't know," young Eastwood replied. "It seems she's very much bereaved, and can't receive anybody."

"Rachel can't!"

"So Miss Whitney says. You can read the note if you like. Somebody had better get me a black-edged handkerchief, and I'll try to weep when I go. She talks about 'a house of mourning.' That means full of dressmakers, doesn't it?"

"Yes; I suppose so," said Effie abstractedly, knitting her little brows over Miss Whitney's long loops and undecided letters. "'This'—what? Oh, I see! 'This sad bereavement was very sudden, but I am thankful to say that, so far, our dear Rachel has borne it better than I could have expected.'" Effie paused a moment to consider. "Well, I should have expected her to bear it pretty well," she remarked. "What's this bit squeezed up in the corner? Something about the death of an only relation. I can't make it out."

Charley looked. He did not read the sentence, but he recognised it. "Oh," he promptly replied, "she says it's necessarily a shock to a sensitive nature."

"But Rachel had never seen her! She has told me ever so often that all her people were dead, and that she hadn't anybody. Well, I haven't a sensitive nature, I suppose, for I shouldn't mind how often my only relation died, if I hadn't known she was alive."

"I'm shocked at you," said Charley. "Now I understand it perfectly. She says at the end that she is sure I shall."

"Here, take your note. Why doesn't Rachel write herself? I suppose Miss Whitney won't let her. Who sent the telegram, Charley? Was that Rachel?"

"No; Lauriston." His own utterance of the name seemed suddenly to arrest his attention. "I wonder what took him there," he said. "I'm never surprised at hearing of him anywhere, only I've just this minute remembered that he certainly told me he was going to North Wales."

"Perhaps he meant to travel all round the coast. He would get there some day," said Effie flippantly.

"He couldn't have gone on purpose, surely. I don't see that it was any business of his," Charley went on.

Mrs. Eastwood looked up from her knitting. "If you choose to take any heed of my opinion," she said with a solemn air, "I should recommend you to be on your guard with Mr. Lauriston. But I daresay you will prefer to go your own way."

"What next?" said Charley. "Look here; if you've changed all your opinions, you'd better say so at once and get it over. You've always wanted me to keep in with Lauriston. I've told you scores of times that, though he was well enough in his way, he'd never be much good to me, but you would have it he was to help me somehow. And now here you are turning round on him. What has he done?"

"Nothing yet, I hope," Mrs. Eastwood replied.

"What do you suppose he is going to do? Cut me out with Rachel?"

"Perhaps, if you are not careful."

"Not he," said Charley.

"Well, I have warned you," said his mother. "There was always something crafty-looking about Mr. Lauriston to my mind, and if I were you I wouldn't trust him."

"Oh, I don't want to trust him. But I trust Rachel, and Lauriston may do his worst."

"Rachel doesn't like him," said Effie. "I know she doesn't."

"Well, but circumstances are changed," Mrs. Eastwood persisted, "and Mr. Lauriston can make himself very agreeable if he pleases, very agreeable indeed."

"Oh, yes, to those who like his style," said Charley, getting up with a prolonged yawn, and adding half to himself, "But if he were as tempting as the devil himself, Rachel wouldn't listen to him." He drew a long breath, as if there were not air enough in the little room without an effort to get it. And indeed it was somewhat small and close, and the big young fellow, yawning and stretching himself, seemed to take up a great deal of space. At that moment Fanny opened the door, and walked in with an aggrieved expression.

"You went in and told Gwendolen Parker!" she said to Effie. "I said, before I went out, that perhaps I might find time to call on the Parkers. It looks so silly both of us going in, as if we were so very anxious to tell a bit of news."

Charley began to laugh. "So Effie was beforehand with you, was she?"

"Come now," Effie expostulated, "you said you meant to tell the Pembertons, though I'm sure Gertrude and Muriel are much more my friends than yours. I thought you had gone off there."

"Yes," said Fanny, "I did go, but they weren't at home."

"I call that hard," said Charley sympathetically. "And so you told nobody?"

"Nobody but old Miss Humphreys. I met her as I was coming back."

"Oh, well, then you've told all the world!" cried Effie. "She'll find the Pembertons at home, or she'll sit on the doorstep till they come. You needn't take any more trouble, my dear; if you've told Miss Humphreys there's nobody left to tell."

"Well, never mind," Fanny answered a little shortly. "What were you all talking about when I came in?"

"Rachel, of course," said young Eastwood. "We don't talk of anything else, do we? Give her Miss Whitney's note, Effie; it's on the sofa by you."

Fanny deciphered it without asking for any assistance, and apparently accepted Rachel's deep affliction as a simple matter which needed no comment. "You won't go for a day or two, of course," she said to Charley. "But I think some of us ought to call; I think mamma ought. It

looks so strange to take no notice of her at such a time. She could see mamma, you know, even if she hadn't got her mourning."

Mrs. Eastwood was rather pleased with this suggestion, but Charley objected. In spite of his faith in Rachel, which was very real, he felt that he stood at the turning point of his fortunes, and that the moment was critical. He was too honest to pretend that Rachel was more bound to him than he was to her, and he knew very well that if, instead of inheriting this money, she had lost the little she already possessed, his mother would have declared that there was really no engagement at all. As the merest matter of course she, his uncle, and his relations generally would have done their utmost to dissuade him from marrying a penniless girl. He did not expect Rachel's friends to welcome him—she was sure to have friends now—and he so far agreed with Mrs. Eastwood's latest opinion as to think that Lauriston, if he had anything to say on the matter, could hardly be reckoned as an ally. "He'll sneer, and shrug his shoulders, and say I'm a very good fellow—confound him!" said Charley to himself. "What business has he to meddle?" But neither did he think his mother's interference was likely to help him. "I can manage well enough if they'll only let me alone," he murmured with a not unjustifiable irritation. "I understand Rachel; why can't they leave me to go my own way?" He expressed his disapprobation so strongly that Mrs. Eastwood reluctantly gave up the proposed visit. "If you go, I don't, that's all!" said Charley obstinately; and it was so evident that nothing could be done towards securing Rachel's fortune without Charley, that his mother was compelled to yield. She was permitted to write, however, and sat awhile, with her pen in her hand, questioning what she should say to account for her failure to go and see her dearest Rachel at this melancholy time. Happily she sneezed, and it suddenly occurred to her that she certainly had had a severe cold hanging about her for some time, which would make it imprudent for her to go out. She explained this so beautifully in her note that she honestly began to shiver, and was obliged to ask Fanny to get her a shawl.

"I really don't think I should ever have got there, even if Charley hadn't been so disagreeable about it," she said as she wrapped herself up. "It was for his sake I thought of trying, but it is so unwise to go out with a nasty lingering cold like this. One always suffers for it. There, see what I've said; do you think that will do?" Fanny read, and thought it would do very well indeed. "Yes," said Mrs. Eastwood with a smile of mournful satisfaction, "and when Rachel asks Charley how my cold is, he'll stare and say he never knew anything about it. He never takes any notice. I believe I might break every bone in my body and he'd go about saying I was very well, thank you."

"I'll remind him just before he starts," said the practical Fanny. —

Mrs. Eastwood might perhaps have found more justification for her newly-developed distrust of Mr. Lauriston, if she had known how much he was allowed to do for Miss Whitney and Rachel. The truth

is, they were both perplexed and helpless—the one because she was taken suddenly out of her narrow groove, and set down in the midst of a bewildering crowd of events and people; the other because she had no thought for anything but her shadowy dread, and the approaching interview with Charley. She was willing to leave everything in Mr. Lauriston's hands, if only she might be undisturbed. Lying awake through many hours of the hot August nights, she saw her life spread visibly before her, as if it were a country, mapped out, through which she had to travel. She could trace the path by which she had already come, through a region, commonplace and melancholy enough, yet brightened by flying gleams of sunlight and hope, and budding with the pale and tender promise of spring. The fears which had saddened it seemed only like passing clouds, compared with the dull eternal shadow hanging over the wide level on which she was about to enter. That monotonous waste stretched before her to a grey horizon, a cheerless boundary which limited the view, but knew no light either of dawn or sunset. All the healthful brightness of the earlier days gathered about the thought of her young lover, and her overwrought and wearied brain idealised the simplicity of his fondness. That first kiss in the garden was still fresh as very dew upon her lips, and sadder than tears, because she might have so long to live, and yet it must be the last. Charley would go, must go, and leave her to that hopeless life, and Mr. Lauriston's friendship. At night she gazed into the future, and during the day she tried to play the part of her ordinary self. She partially succeeded; though Miss Whitney, who was pleased from the first that her manner betrayed no undue exultation or eagerness, but was passive and ladylike, began to think after a day or two that Rachel really felt her great-aunt's death quite as much as anybody could have expected. She was rather proud of the girl's sadness, as an instance of inborn propriety of feeling.

Mr. Lauriston, while doing all in his power to help Miss Whitney, had yet made up his mind that she must no longer pretend to rule Rachel. A quiet country town, where she would find congenial unmarried friends, was the haven he pictured for her. Miss Conway's gratitude would of course arrange a pleasant addition to her guardian's narrow income, and permit her to spend the remainder of her days in comfort, and in strict accordance with the laws of good society. With a view to this he made appalling allusions to what Miss Conway would probably do, in fact, what would be expected of her in her new position, opening a terrible vista of difficulties and duties before Miss Whitney's eyes. The poor lady began to think that it was a mercy that Rachel would marry Charles Eastwood before long, and so relieve her of such responsibilities. Nor did Mr. Lauriston stop there, but brought his cousin Mrs. Latham to call.

Laura Latham was a woman of five-and-thirty, who had been a widow for seven or eight years. When she walked into the room

Rachel looked first at Mr. Lauriston, and then at her, with a questioning uncertainty of expression. She was vaguely afraid of a reinforcement of the curious influence, the mixture of attraction and repulsion, which Mr. Lauriston exerted over her. She half expected to see his eyes looking at her from a new face, and his smile coming and going on a woman's lips. It was with a feeling of relief that she said to herself, "No, they are not alike," just as Miss Whitney exclaimed, "Oh! I should have known you were Mr. Lauriston's cousin, there is no mistake about it! Or you might be his sister."

"I hope you are flattered, Adam?" said the new-comer in a prompt, pleasant voice. Rachel's eyes turned quickly towards him. The unaffected utterance of his name, "Adam," seemed somehow to reveal him in a new aspect.

"I should have thought it might have been a certainty instead of a hope," he answered quietly.

Miss Whitney was right. Mr. Lauriston and Mrs. Latham were very much alike. She was somewhat bigger for a woman than he was for a man, but the similarity of feature was great. Her eyes were dark, like his, and bright, though with a steadier brightness; her brows were arched like his, but thicker and not so intensely black; her lips as flexible, but with a franker and less subtle smile. Her dark hair was as soft and fine, and, though she had not his colourless complexion, she was pale rather than florid. The likeness was evident, and could not but be unfavourable to one or other of the pair. It was a question of taste whether one should say that in Laura the type became commonplace, or that in Adam it was refined to something over-delicate, intense, and somewhat morbid.

Rachel was right too. There was no overmastering influence to be feared from Mrs. Latham. She was not without a touch of her cousin's quickness of apprehension, and she set the girl at her ease before she had said a dozen words. Miss Whitney did not quite know what to make of the stranger. Mrs. Latham's ideas of what it was fit and right for Miss Conway to do were not hers, but they seemed to be based on the one thing essential, that which was done by the best people. The poor country lady was bewildered, and began to doubt her own infallibility, and to think that perhaps times were changed. After a long call, Mrs. Latham rose to take her leave, proposing to help in some necessary shopping the next day. "It must be in the morning then," Miss Whitney said. "We have a friend coming in the afternoon." She hesitated a moment and then named him, "Mr. Charles Eastwood."

"Oh! is Eastwood coming?" said Mr. Lauriston. But when his cousin and Miss Whitney were saying goodbye he looked at Rachel. The girl stood with set lips, and hanging hands, and did not meet his eyes, and he carried away a melancholy little picture of her in that passive attitude of patience.

"Your friend is not in the highest spirits on account of her change

of fortune," said Mrs. Latham, when they were outside the door. "She tries to seem cheerful, but it isn't much of a success. I think I could do better if some one would kindly leave me a few thousands a year."

"I hope you may have a chance of trying," said Mr. Lauriston.

"I don't see who is to do it. I know the family tree too well to have any hope of discovering new relations. Herbert's people were all as poor as church mice, and not over fond of me, and you've got all the Lauriston money."

"Is that a hint to me to do it?"

"It wouldn't be any good. To begin with, you ought to be forty or fifty years older. I can't wait till I am eighty, and you are ready to dispose of your spare cash."

Mr. Lauriston looked at her with something of significance in glance and gesture, but did not speak.

"Nonsense," she said. "Why, they said the same of your uncle. I don't believe in it."

"I do. But I am not anxious that you should be convinced of your error yet awhile."

"And then," she went on lightly, "there's the boy. And thirdly and lastly, if you were ninety, and there was no boy, you wouldn't do it."

"Being in my second childhood, I might," he replied.

Mrs. Latham laughed. "Well," she said, "if you want me to see much of Miss Conway, I hope she'll manage to be a little happier. What is amiss with her? Not grief for the great-aunt, surely?"

"Can't say. I think Miss Whitney's society might be enough to depress anybody, without losing a great-aunt. But you might ask Miss Conway."

"Heaven forbid! Of all things I abhor confidences. It's quite enough to do one's own weeping and wailing; and to have to pull a long face just when one happens to be in excellent spirits is intolerable. Then of course if one has the toothache, and could be gloomy without any trouble, it's just the other way, and ecstatic idiots come blushing in to say they are engaged. No; I like people who can hold their tongues."

"As far as I can judge," said Mr. Lauriston, "you will find Miss Conway quite capable of holding hers."

The Foreigner at Home.

This is no my ain house ;
I ken by the biggin' o't.

Two recent books, one by Mr. Grant White on England, one on France by the diabolically clever Mr. Hillebrand, may well have set people thinking on the divisions of races and nations. Such thoughts should arise with particular congruity and force to inhabitants of that United Kingdom, peopled from so many different stocks, babbling with so many different dialects, and offering in its extent such singular contrasts, from the busiest overpopulation to the unkindest desert, from the Black Country to the Moor of Rannoch. It is not only when we cross the seas that we go abroad ; there are foreign parts of England ; and the race that has conquered so wide an empire has not yet managed to assimilate the islands whence she sprang. Ireland, Wales, and the Scottish mountains still cling, in part, to their old Gaelic speech. It was but the other day that English triumphed in Cornwall, and they still show in Mousehole, in St. Michael's Bay, the house of the last Cornish-speaking woman. English itself, which will now frank the traveller through the most of North America, through the greater South Sea islands, in India, along much of the coast of Africa, and in the ports of China and Japan, is still to be heard, in its home country, in half a hundred varying stages of transition. You may go all over the States, and—setting aside the actual intrusion and influence of foreigners, negro, French, or Chinese—you shall scarce meet with so marked a difference of accent as in the forty miles between Edinburgh and Glasgow, or of dialect as in the hundred miles between Edinburgh and Aberdeen. Book English has gone round the world, but at home we still preserve the racy idioms of our fathers, and every county, in some parts every dale, has its own quality of speech, vocal or verbal. In like manner, local custom and prejudice, even in spots local religion and local law, linger on into the latter end of the nineteenth century—*imperia in imperio*, foreign things at home.

In spite of these promptings to reflection, ignorance of his neighbours is the character of the typical John Bull. His is a domineering nature, steady in fight, imperious to command, but neither curious nor quick about the life of others. In French colonies, and still more in the Dutch, I have read that there is an immediate and lively contact between the dominant and the dominated race, that a certain sympathy is begotten, or at the least a transfusion of prejudices, making life easier for both. But the Englishman sits apart, bursting with pride and

ignorance. He figures among his vassals in the hour of peace with the same disdainful air that led him on to victory. A passing enthusiasm for some foreign art or fashion may deceive the world, but it cannot impose upon his intimates. He may be amused by a foreigner as by a monkey, but he will never condescend to study him with any patience. Miss Bird, an authoress with whom I profess myself in love, declares all the viands of Japan to be uneatable—a staggering pretension. So, when the Prince of Wales's marriage was celebrated at Mentone by a dinner to the Mentonese, it was proposed to give them solid English fare—roast beef and plum pudding, and no tomfoolery. Here we have either pole of the Britannic folly. We will not eat the food of any foreigner; nor, when we have the chance, will we suffer him to eat of it himself. The same spirit inspired Miss Bird's American missionaries, who had come thousands of miles to change the faith of Japan and openly professed their ignorance of the religions they were trying to supplant. They had no time, they said, to squander on such trifles.

I quote an American, in this connection, without scruple. Uncle Sam is better than John Bull, but he is tarred with the English stick. For Mr. Grant White the States are the New England States and nothing more. He wonders at the amount of drinking in London; let him try San Francisco. He wittily reproves English ignorance as to the status of women in America; but has he not himself forgotten Wyoming? The name Yankee, of which he is so tenacious, is used over the most of the great Union as a term of reproach. The Yankee States, of which he is so staunch a subject, are but a drop in the bucket. And we find in his book a vast virgin ignorance of the life and prospects of America; every view partial, parochial, not raised to the horizon; the moral feeling proper, at the largest, to a clique of States; and the whole scope and atmosphere not American, but merely Yankee. I will go far beyond him in reprobating the assumption and the incivility of my countryfolk to their cousins from beyond the sea; I grill in my blood over the silly rudeness of our newspaper articles; and I do not know where to look when I find myself in company with an American and see my countrymen unbending to him as to a performing dog. But in the case of Mr. Grant White example were better than precept. Wyoming is, after all, more readily accessible to Mr. White than Boston to the English, and the New England self-sufficiency no better justified than the Britannic. I hate to find fault with a book so loyal, kind, and clever, or a man so amiable by his simplicities and so formidable from his slogging style of controversy. But the fact is one which would have been held, in the old days, worthy of italics: he seems to know more of England than America and to be most at home abroad.

It is so, perhaps, in all countries; perhaps in all, men are most ignorant of the foreigners at home. John Bull is ignorant of the States; he is probably ignorant of India; but, considering his opportunities, he is far more ignorant of countries nearer his own door. There is one

country, for instance—its frontier not so far from London, its people closely akin, its language the same in all essentials with the English—of which I will go bail he knows nothing. His ignorance of the sister kingdom cannot be described; it can only be illustrated by anecdote. I once travelled with a man of plausible manners and good intelligence—a University man, as the phrase goes—a man, besides, who had taken his degree in life and knew a thing or two about the age we live in. We were deep in talk, whirling between Peterborough and London; among other things, he began to describe some piece of legal injustice he had recently encountered, and I observed in my innocence that things were not so in Scotland. “I beg your pardon,” said he, “this is a matter of law.” He had never heard of the Scots’ law; nor did he choose to be informed; the law was the same for the whole country, he told me roundly; every child knew that. At last, to settle matters at one blow, I explained to him that I was a member of a Scottish legal body, and had stood the brunt of an examination in the very law in question. Thereupon he looked me for a moment full in the face and dropped the conversation. This is a monstrous instance, if you like, but it does not stand alone in the experience of Scots.

England and Scotland differ, indeed, in law, in history, in religion, in education, and in the very look of nature and men’s faces, not always widely, but always trenchantly. Many particulars that struck Mr. Grant White, a Yankee, struck me, a Scot, no less forcibly; he and I felt ourselves foreigners on many common provocations. A Scotchman may tramp the better part of Europe and the United States, and never again receive so vivid an impression of foreign travel and strange lands and manners as on his first excursion into England. The change from a hilly to a level country strikes him with delighted wonder. Along the flat horizon there arise the frequent venerable towers of churches. He sees, at the end of airy vistas, the revolution of the windmill sails. He may go where he pleases in the future; he may see Alps, and Pyramids, and lions; but it will be hard to beat the pleasure of that moment. There are, indeed, few merrier spectacles than that of many windmills bickering together in a fresh breeze over a woody country; their halting alacrity of movement, their pleasant business, making bread all day, with uncouth gesticulations, their air, gigantically human, as of a creature half alive, put a spirit of romance into the tamest landscape; when the Scotch child sees them first he falls immediately in love; and from that time forward windmills keep turning in his dreams. And so, in their degree, with every feature of the life and landscape. The warm, habitable age of towns and hamlets, the green, settled, ancient look of the country; the lush hedgerows, stiles and privy pathways in the fields; the sluggish, brimming rivers; chalk and smock-frocks; chimes of bells and the rapid, pertly-sounding English speech—they are all new to the curiosity; they are all set to English airs in the child’s story that he tells himself at night. The sharp edge of novelty

soon wears off; the feeling is soon scotched, but I doubt whether it is ever killed. Rather it keeps returning, ever the more rarely and strangely, and even in scenes to which you have been long accustomed suddenly awakes and gives a relish to enjoyment or heightens the sense of isolation.

One thing especially continues unfamiliar to the Scotchman's eye—the domestic architecture, the look of streets and buildings; the quaint, venerable age of many, and the thin walls and warm colouring of all. We have, in Scotland, far fewer ancient buildings, above all in country places; and those that we have are all of hewn or harled masonry. Wood has been sparsely used in their construction; the window-frames are sunken in the wall, not flat to the front, as in England; the roofs are steeper-pitched; even a hill farm will have a massy, square, cold, and permanent appearance. English houses, in comparison, have the look of cardboard toys, such as a puff might shatter. And to this the Scotchman never becomes used. His eye can never rest consciously on one of these brick houses—rickles of brick, as he might call them—or on one of these flat-chested streets, but he is instantly reminded where he is, and instantly travels back in fancy to his home. "This is no my ain house; I ken by the biggin' o't." And yet perhaps it is his own, bought with his own money, the key of it long polished in his pocket; but it has not yet, and never will be, thoroughly adopted by his imagination; nor does he cease to remember that, in the whole length and breadth of his native country, there is no building even distantly resembling it.

But it is not alone in scenery and architecture that we count England foreign. The constitution of society, the very pillars of the empire, surprise and even pain us. The dull, neglected peasant, sunk in matter, insolent, gross, and servile, makes a startling contrast with our own long-legged, long-headed, thoughtful, Bible-quoting ploughman. A week or two in such a place as Suffolk leaves the Scotchman gasping. It seems incredible that within the boundaries of his own island a class should have been thus forgotten. Even the educated and intelligent, who hold our own opinions and speak in our own words, yet seem to hold them with a difference or from another reason, and to speak on all things with less interest and conviction. The first shock of English society is like a cold plunge. It is possible that the Scot comes looking for too much, and to be sure his first experiment will be in the wrong direction. Yet surely his complaint is grounded; surely the speech of Englishmen is too often lacking in generous ardour, the better part of the man too often withheld from the social commerce, and the contact of mind with mind evaded as with terror. A Scotch peasant will talk more liberally out of his own experience. He will not put you by with conversational counters and small jests; he will give you the best of himself, like one interested in life and man's chief end. A Scotchman is vain, interested in himself and others, eager for sympathy, setting forth his thoughts and experience in the best light. The egoism of the

Englishman is self-contained. He does not seek to proselytise. He takes no interest in Scotland or the Scotch, and, what is the unkindest cut of all, he does not care to justify his indifference. Give him the wages of going on and being an Englishman, that is all he asks; and in the meantime, while you continue to associate, he would rather not be reminded of your baser origin. Compared with the grand, tree-like self-sufficiency of his demeanour, the vanity and curiosity of the Scot seem uneasy, vulgar, and immodest. That you should continually try to establish human and serious relations, that you should actually feel an interest in John Bull, and desire and invite a return of interest from him, may argue something more awake and lively in your mind, but it still puts you in the attitude of a suitor and a poor relation. Thus even the lowest class of the educated English towers over a poor Scotchman by the head and shoulders.

Different indeed is the atmosphere in which Scotch and English youth begin to look about them, come to themselves in life, and gather up those first apprehensions which are the material of future thought and, to a great extent, the rule of future conduct. I have been to school in both countries, and I found, in the boys of the North, something at once rougher and more tender, at once more reserve and more expansion, a greater habitual distance chequered by glimpses of a nearer intimacy, and on the whole wider extremes of temperament and sensibility. The boy of the South seems more wholesome, but less thoughtful; he gives himself to games as to a business, striving to excel, but is not readily transported by imagination; the type remains with me as cleaner in mind and body, more active, fonder of eating, endowed with a lesser and a less romantic sense of life and of the future, and more immersed in present circumstances. And certainly, for one thing, English boys are younger for their age. Sabbath observance makes a series of grim, and perhaps serviceable, pauses in the tenor of Scotch boyhood—days of great stillness and solitude for the rebellious mind, when in the dearth of books and play, and in the intervals of studying the Shorter Catechism, the intellect and senses prey upon and test each other. The typical English Sunday, with the huge midday dinner and the plethoric afternoon, leads perhaps to different results. About the very cradle of the Scot there goes a hum of metaphysical divinity; and the whole of two divergent systems is summed up, not merely speciously, in the two first questions of the rival catechisms, the English tritely inquiring, "What is your name?" the Scottish striking at the very roots of life with, "What is the chief end of man?" and answering nobly, if obscurely, "To glorify God and to enjoy Him for ever." I do not wish to make an idol of the Shorter Catechism; but the fact of such a question being asked opens to us Scotch a great field of speculation; and the fact that it is asked of all of us, from the peer to the ploughboy, binds us more nearly together. No Englishman, of Byron's age, character, and history, would have had patience for long theological discussions on the way to

fight for Greece; but the daft Gordon blood and the Aberdonian schooldays kept their influence to the end. We have spoken of the material conditions; nor need much more be said of these; of the land lying everywhere more exposed, of the wind always louder and bleaker, of the black, roaring winters, of the gloom of high-lying, old stone cities, imminent on the windy seaboard, compared with the level streets, the warm colouring of the brick, the domestic quaintness of the architecture, among which English children begin to grow up and come to themselves in life. As the stage of the University approaches the contrast only grows more telling. The English lad goes to Oxford or Cambridge, there, in an ideal world of gardens, to lead a semi-scenic life, costumed, disciplined, and drilled by proctors. Nor is this to be regarded merely as a stage of education; it is a piece of privilege besides, and a step that separates him farther from the bulk of his compatriots. At an earlier age the Scottish lad begins his greatly different experience of crowded class-rooms, of a gaunt quadrangle, of a bell hourly booming over the traffic of the city to recall him from the public house where he has been lunching, or the streets where he has been wandering fancy-free. His college life has little of restraint, and nothing of necessary gentility. He will find no quiet clique of the exclusive, studious, and cultured, no rotten borough of the arts. All classes rub shoulders on the greasy benches. The raffish young gentleman in gloves must measure his scholarship with the plain, clownish laddie from the parish school. They separate, at the session's end, one to smoke cigars about a watering-place, the other to resume the labours of the field beside his peasant family. The first muster of a college class in Scotland is a scene of curious and painful interest; so many lads, fresh from the heather, hang round the stove in cloddish embarrassment, ruffled by the presence of their smarter comrades and afraid of the sound of their own rustic voices. It is in these early days, I think, that Professor Blackie wins the affection of his pupils, putting these uncouth, umbrageous students at their ease with ready human geniality. Thus, at least, we have a healthy democratic atmosphere to breathe in while at work; even when there is no cordiality there is always a juxtaposition of the different classes, and in the competition of study the intellectual power of each is plainly demonstrated to the other. Our tasks ended, we of the North go forth as freemen into the humming, lamplit city. At five o'clock you may see the last of us hiving from the college gates, in the glare of the shop windows, under the green glimmer of the winter sunset. The frost tingles in our blood; no proctor lies in wait to intercept us; till the bell sounds again, we are the masters of the world; and some portion of our lives is always Saturday, *la trêve de Dieu*.

Nor must we omit the sense of the nature of his country and his country's history gradually growing in the child's mind from story and from observation. A Scottish child hears much of shipwreck, outlying iron skerries, pitiless breakers, and great sea-lights; much of heathery mountains, wild clans, and hunted Covenanters. Breaths come to him in song

of the distant Cheviots and the ring of foraying hoofs. He glories in his hard-fisted forefathers, of the iron girdle and the handful of oatmeal, who rode so swiftly and lived so sparsely on their raids. Poverty, ill-luck, enterprise, and constant resolution are the fibres of the legend of his country's history. The heroes and kings of Scotland have been tragically fated; the most marking incidents in Scottish history—Flodden, Darien, or the Forty-five—were still either failures or defeats; and the fall of Wallace and the repeated reverses of the Bruce combine with the very smallness of the country, to teach rather a moral than a material criterion for life. Britain is altogether small, the mere taproot of her extended empire; Scotland, again, which alone the Scottish boy adopts in his imagination, is but a little part of that, and avowedly cold, sterile, and unpopulous. It is not so for nothing. I seem to have perceived in an American boy a greater readiness of sympathy for lands that are great, and rich, and growing, like his own. I am sure, at least, that the heart of young Scotland will be always touched more nearly by paucity of number and Spartan poverty of life.

So we may argue, and yet the difference is not explained. That Shorter Catechism which I took as being so typical of Scotland, was yet composed in the city of Westminster. The division of races is more sharply marked within the borders of Scotland itself than between the countries. Galloway and Buchan, Lothian and Lochaber, are like foreign parts; yet you may choose a man from any of them, and, ten to one, he shall prove to have the headmark of a Scot. Indeed, the sense of national identity is more hard to be explained than that of national difference. A century and a half ago the Highlander wore a different costume, spoke a different language, worshipped in another church, held different morals, and obeyed a different social constitution from his fellow-countrymen either of the south or north. Even the English, it is recorded, did not loathe the Highlander and the Highland costume as they were loathed by the remainder of the Scotch. Yet the Highlander felt himself a Scot. He would willingly raid into the Scotch lowlands; but his courage failed him at the border, and he regarded England as a perilous, unhomely land. When the Black Watch, after years of foreign service, returned to Scotland, veterans leaped out and kissed the earth at Port Patrick. They had been in Ireland, stationed among men of their own race and language, where they were well liked and treated with affection; but it was the soil of Galloway that they kissed, at the extreme end of the hostile lowlands, among a people who did not understand their speech, and who had hated, harried, and hanged them since the dawn of history. Last, and perhaps most curious, the sons of chieftains were often educated on the continent of Europe. They went abroad speaking Gaelic; they returned speaking, not English, but the broad dialect of Scotland. Now, what idea had they in their minds when they thus, in thought, identified themselves with their ancestral enemies? What was the sense in which they were Scotch and not English, or Scotch and not

Irish? Can a bare name be thus influential on the minds and affections of men, and a political aggregation blind them to the nature of facts? The story of the Austrian Empire would seem to answer, No; the far more galling business of Ireland clenches the negative from nearer home. Is it common education, common morals, a common faith, that joins men into nations? There were practically none of these in the case we are considering. I will hand the problem over to those more ingenious than myself; to Mr. Green, Mr. Grant Allen, and the other rival nation-makers. It is one they will do well to weigh.

The fact remains: in spite of the difference of blood and language, the Lowlander feels himself the sentimental countryman of the Highlander. When they meet abroad, they fall upon each other's necks in spirit; even at home there is a kind of clannish intimacy in their talk. But from his true compatriot in the south the Lowlander stands consciously apart. He has had a different training; he obeys different laws; he makes his will in other terms, is otherwise divorced and married; his eyes are not at home in an English landscape or with English houses; his ear continues to remark the English speech; and even though his tongue acquire the Southern knack, he will still have a strong Scotch accent of the mind. Nay, and if you consider even his English friends you will find them, in nine cases out of ten, chosen for some Scottish trait of character or mind.

R. L. S.

An English Weed.*

SITTING here on the stile that leads into the Fore Acre, I have just disentangled from my nether integuments a long trailing spray of clinging goose-grass, which has fastened itself to my legs by the innumerable little prickly hooks that line the angles of its four-cornered stem. It is well forward for the time of year, thanks to our wonderfully mild and genial winter ; for it is already thickly covered with its tiny white star-shaped flowers, which have even set here and there into the final mature stage of small burr-like fruits. Goose-grass, or cleavers, as we ordinarily call it, is one of the very commonest among English weeds, and yet I dare say you never even heard its name till I told it to you just now ; for it is an inconspicuous, petty sort of plant, which would never gain any attention at all if it were not for its rough clinging leaves, that catch one's fingers slightly when drawn through them, and often obtrude themselves casually upon one's notice by looping themselves in graceful festoons about one's person. Now I am glad to have got you button-holed here upon the stile, because I can tell you all about the goose-grass as we sit on the top bar without risk of interruption ; and I dare say you will be quite surprised to learn what a very interesting and historical plant it is after all, in spite of its uninviting external aspect. You will find that its prickly leaves, its square stem, its white flowers, and its odd little fruit all tell us some curious incident in its past evolution, and are full of suggestiveness as to the general course of plant development. Here is our weed in abundance, growing all along the hedgerow by our side, and clambering for yards from its root over all the bushes and shrubs in the thicket. Pick a piece for yourself before I begin, and then you can follow my preaching at your leisure, with the text always open before you for reference and verification.

Of course goose-grass had not always all its present marked peculiarities. Like every other living thing, it has acquired its existing shape by slow modification from a thousand widely different ancestral forms. One of the best ways to discover certain lost links in the pedigree of plants or animals is to watch the development of an individual specimen from the seed or the egg ; for the individual, we have all often been told, to some extent recapitulates in itself the whole past history of its race. Thus the caterpillar shows us an early ancestral form of the

* The substance of this article originally formed the subject of a lecture delivered at the London Institution, Finsbury Circus, in February last. The scenery and accessories have, however, been thoroughly redecorated throughout for this occasion.

butterfly, while it was still a wingless grub ; and the tadpole shows us an early ancestral form of the frog, while it was still a limbless mud-fish. So, too, the chick hatching within the shell goes through stages analogous to those of the fish, the amphibian, the reptile, and the bird successively. In just the same way young plants pass through a first simple shape which helps us to picture to ourselves what they once were—what, for example, the ancestors of the goose-grass looked like, long before they were goose-grasses at all. Now here in my hand I have got a young specimen in its very earliest stage, which closely reproduces the primitive type of its first progenitors, a million ages since. Goose-grass is an annual weed : it dies down utterly every autumn, and only reproduces itself by seed in the succeeding spring ; but this year the weather has been so exceptionally warm and summerlike that thousands of young plants have sprouted from the seed ever since Christmas ; and among them is this which I have just picked, and which you may have for examination if you will take the trouble. Look into it, and you will see that its two first leaves are quite unlike the upper ones—a phenomenon which frequently occurs in seedling plants, and with which you are probably familiar in the case of the pea and of the garden bean. But this difference is always a difference in one direction only ; the first leaves which come out of the seed are invariably simpler in shape and type than all the other leaves which come after them. In the language of science, they are less specialized ; they represent an earlier and undeveloped form of leaf—nature's rough sketch, so to speak—while the later foliage represents the final improvements introduced with time, and perfected by the action of natural selection.

These large oval leaves which you see in the seedling are mere general models or central ideals of what a leaf should be ; they are quite unadapted to any one special or definite situation. They are not divided into many little separate leaflets, or prolonged into points and angles, or gracefully vandyked round the edges, or beautifully cut out into lacelike patterns, or armed at every rib with stout defensive prickles, like many other leaves that you know familiarly. Their outline is quite simple and unbroken ; they preserve for us still the extremely plain ancestral form from which such different leaves as those of the horse-chestnut, the oak, the clover, the milfoil, the parsley, and the holly are ultimately derived. An expanded oval, something like this, is the prime original, the central point from which every variety of foliage first set out, and from which they have all diverged in various directions, according as different circumstances favoured or checked their development in this, that, or the other particular. Just as a single little cartilaginous mud-haunter—a blind and skulking small creature, something like a lancelet, something like a tadpole, and something like the famous ascidian larva—has gradually evolved, through diverse lines, all the existing races of beasts, birds, reptiles, and fishes, so too a single little primeval plant, something like

these two lowest leaves of the goose-grass, has gradually evolved all the oaks and elms and ashes ; all the roses, and geraniums, and carnations ; all the cabbages, and melons, and apples, which we see in the world around us at the present day. And, again, just as the larval form of the ascidian and of the frog still preserves for us a general idea of that earliest ancestral vertebrate, so too these larval leaves of the goose-grass, if I may venture so to describe them, still preserve for us a general idea of that earliest dicotyledonous plant.

Dicotyledonous is a very ugly word, and I shall not stop now to explain it from the top of a turnstile. It must suffice if I tell you confidentially that the little plant we have thus ideally reconstructed was the first ancestor of almost all the forest trees, and of all the best known English herbs and flowers ; but not of the lilies, the grasses, and the cereal kinds, which belong to the opposite or monocotyledonous division of flowering plants. When this sprig of goose-grass first appeared above the ground, it probably represented that typical ancestor almost to the life ; for it had then only the two rounded leaves you see at its base, and none of these six-rowed upper whorls, which are so strikingly different from them. Now, how did the upper whorls get there ? Why, of course they grew, you say. Yes, no doubt, but what made them grow ? Well, the first pair of leaves grew out of the seed, where the mother plant had laid by a little store of albumen on purpose to feed them, exactly as a slightly different sort of albumen is laid by in the egg of a hen to feed the growing chick. Under the influence of heat and moisture the seed began to germinate, as we call it—that is to say, oxygen began to combine with its food stuffs, and motion or sprouting was the natural result. This motion takes in each plant a determinate course, dependent upon the intimate molecular structure of the seed itself ; and so each seed reproduces a plant exactly like the parent, bar those small individual variations which are the ultimate basis of new species—the groundwork upon which natural selection incessantly works. In the case of this goose-grass seed the first thing to appear was the pair of little oval leaves ; and, as the small store of albumen laid by in the seed was all used up in producing them, they had to set to work at once manufacturing new organic material for the further development of the plant. Luckily they happened to grow in a position where the sunlight could fall upon them—a good many seedlings are more unfortunate, and so starve to death at the very outset of their careers—and by the aid of the light they immediately began decomposing the carbonic acid of the air and laying by starch for the use of the younger generation of leaves. At the same time the vigorous young sap carried these fresh materials of growth into the tiny sprouting bud which lay between them, and rapidly unfolded it into such a shoot as you see now before you, with level whorls of quite differently shaped and highly developed leaves, disposed in rows of six or eight around the stem.

Observe that the adult type of leaf appears here suddenly and as it

were by a leap. If we could reconstruct the whole past history of the goose-grass, we should doubtless find that each change in its foliage took place very gradually, by a thousand minute intermediate stages. Indeed, many of these stages still survive for us among allied plants. But the impulsive goose-grass itself clears the whole distance between the primitive ancestor and its own advanced type at a single bound. The intermediate stages are all suppressed. This is not always the case: there are many plants which begin with a simple type of leaf, and gradually progress to a complex one by many small steps; just as the tadpole grows slowly to be a frog by budding out first one pair of legs and then another, and next losing his tail and his gills, and finally emerging on dry land a full-fledged amphibian. The goose-grass, however, rather resembles the butterfly, which passes at once from the creeping caterpillar to the complete winged form, all the intermediate stages being compressed into the short chrysalis period; only our plant has not even a chrysalis shape to pass through. It is in reality a very advanced and specially developed type—the analogue, if not of man among the animals, at least of a highly respectable chimpanzee or intelligent gorilla—and so it has learnt at last to pass straight from its embryo state as a two-leaved plantlet to its typical adult form as a trailing, whorled, and prickly creeper.

And now let us next look at this adult form itself. Here I have cut a little bit of it for you with my penknife, and, if you like, I will lend you my pocket lens to magnify it slightly. The fragment I have cut for you consists of a single half-inch of the stem, with one whorl of six long pointed leaves. You will observe, first, that the stem is quadrangular, not round; secondly, that the leaves are lance-shaped, not oval; and thirdly, that both stem and leaves are edged with little sharp curved prickles, pointing backward the opposite way to the general growth of the plant. Let us try to find out what is the origin and meaning of these three marked peculiarities.

To do so rightly we must begin by considering the near relations of the goose-grass. In a systematic botanical classification our plant is ranked as one of the stellate tribe, a subdivision of the great family of the Rubiaceæ, or madder kind. Now, the stellates are so called because of their little star-shaped flowers, and they are all characterised by two of these goose-grass peculiarities—namely, the square stems and the whorled leaves—while the third point, the possession of recurved prickles on the angles of the stalk and the edges of the leaves, is a special personal habit of the goose-grass species itself, with one or two more of its near relations. It will be best for us, therefore, to ask first what is the origin and meaning of the characteristics which our plant shares with all its tribe, and afterwards to pass on to those which are quite confined to its own little minor group of highly evolved species.

What, then, is the use to the goose-grass of these small, narrow, thickly whorled leaves? Why are they not all and always large, flat,

and oval, like the two seed leaves? The answer must be sought in the common habits of all the stellate tribe. They are without exception small creeping, weedy plants, which grow among the dense and matted vegetation of hedgerows, banks, heaths, thickets, and other very tangled places. Now, plants which live in such situations must necessarily have small or minutely subdivided leaves, like those of wild chervil, fool's parsley, herb-Robert, and starwort. The reason for this is clear enough. Leaves depend for their growth upon air and sunlight: they must be supplied with carbonic acid to assimilate, and solar rays to turn off the oxygen and build up the carbon into their system. In open fields or bare spaces, big leaves like burdock, or rhubarb, or coltsfoot can find food and space; but where carbonic acid is scarce, and light is intercepted by neighbouring plants, all the leaves must needs be fine and divided into almost threadlike segments. The competition for the carbon is fierce. For example, in water only very small quantities of gas are dissolved, so that all submerged water-plants have extremely thin waving filaments instead of flat blades; and one such plant, the water-crowfoot, has even two types of foliage on the same stem—submerged leaves of this lacelike character, together with large, expanded, floating leaves upon the surface something like those of the water-lily. In the same way hedgerow weeds, which jostle thickly against one another, have a constant hard struggle for the carbon and the sunshine, and grow out accordingly into numerous small subdivided leaflets, often split up time after time into segments and sub-segments of the most intricate sort. I do not mean, of course, that each individual leaf has its shape wholly determined for it by the amount of sun and air which it in particular happens to obtain, but that each species has slowly acquired by natural selection the kind of leaf which best fitted its peculiar habitat. Those plants survive whose foliage adapts them to live in the circumstances where it has pleased nature to place them, and those plants die out without descendants whose constitution fails in any respect to square with that inconvenient conglomeration of external facts that we call their environment.

That is why the goose-grass and the other stellate weeds have foliage of this minute character, instead of broad blades like the two seed leaves. But all plants of tangly growth do not attain their end in precisely the same manner. Sometimes one plan succeeds best and sometimes another. In most cases the originally round and simple leaf gets split up by gradual steps into several smaller leaflets. In the stellate tribe, however, the same object is provided for in a widely different fashion. Instead of the primitive leaf dividing into numerous leaflets, a number of organs which were not originally leaves grow into exact structural and functional resemblance to those which were. Strictly speaking, in this whorl of six little lance-shaped blades, precisely similar to one another, only two opposite ones are true leaves; the other four are in fact, to use a very technical term, interpetiolar stipules. A stipule, you know, of

course, is a little fringe or tag which often appears at the point where the leaf stalk joins the stem, and its chief use seems to be to prevent ants and other destructive insects from creeping up the petiole. But in all the stellate plants the two little stipules on each side of each leaf have grown gradually out into active green foliar organs, to supplement and assist the leaves, until at last they have become as long and broad as the original leaflets, and have formed with them a perfect whorl of six or eight precisely similar blades. How do we know that? you ask. In this simple way, my dear sir. The other Rubiaceæ—that is to say, the remainder of the great family to which the stellate tribe belongs—have no whorls, but only two opposite leaves; and we have many reasons for supposing that they represent the simpler and more primitive type, from which the stellate plants are specialised and highly developed descendants. But between the opposite leaves grow a pair of small stipules, occupying just the same place as the whorled leaflets in the goose-grass; and in some intermediate species these stipules have begun to grow out into expanded green blades, thus preserving for us an early stage on the road towards the development of the true stellates. Accordingly, we are justified in believing that in the whorls of goose-grass the same process has been carried a step further, till leaves and stipules have at last become absolutely indistinguishable.

What may be the use of the square stem it would be more difficult to decide. Perhaps it may serve to protect the plant from being trodden down and broken; perhaps by its angularity and stringiness it may render it unpalatable to herbivorous animals. This much at least is certain, that very few cows or donkeys will eat goose-grass. There is another large family of plants—the dead-nettle tribe—all of which have also square stems; and they are similarly rejected as fodder by cattle. Indeed, the very fact that the stellate tribe have become thus quadrangular, while the other and earlier members of the madder kind, like coffee and gardenia, have round stems, in itself suggests the idea that there must be some sufficient reason for the change, or else it would never have taken place; but, as in many other cases, what that reason may be I really cannot with any confidence inform you from my simple professional chair on the stile here. If I were only at Kew Gardens, now—well, that might be a different matter.

And now let us come down to the individual peculiarities of the goose-grass, and ask what is the use of the wee recurved prickles which you can see thickly scattered on the stalk and whorls by the aid of my pocket lens. You observe that they occur all along each angle of the stem, and around the edge and midribs of the leaflets as well. If you try to pull a bit of goose-grass out of the thicket entire, you will soon see the function they subserve. The plant, you notice, resists your effort at once; the little prickles catch securely on to the bushes and defeat all endeavours to tear it away. It is these prickles, indeed, which are the *raison d'être* of the goose-grass as a separate species: they mark it off at

once from almost all the other members of the same genus. There are many allied kinds of galium in England (for galium is the botanical name of the genus), with very similar leaves and flowers, but they all grow in shorter bunches and frequent less thickly populated situations. Goose-grass, however, has survived and become a distinct kind just in virtue of these very hooks. By their aid it is enabled to scramble for many feet over hedges and bushes, though it is but an annual plant; and it thus makes use of the firm stem of yonder hawthorn and this privet bush by our sides to raise its leaves into open sunny situations which it could never reach with its own slender stalk alone. Such an obvious improvement gives it an undoubted advantage in the struggle for life, and so in its own special positions it has fairly beaten all the other galiums out of the field. One of its common English names—Robin Run-the-hedge—sufficiently expresses the exact place in nature which it has thus adapted itself to fill and to adorn.

But how did the goose-grass first develop these little prickles? That is the question. Granting that their possession would give it an extra chance in the struggle for existence, if once they were to occur, how are we to account for their first beginning? In this way, as it seems to me. Viewed structurally, the stout little hooks which arm the stem and leaves are only thickened hairs. Now hairs, or long pointed projections from the epidermis, constantly occur in almost all plants, and in this very family they are found on the edges of the leaflets and on the angles of the stem among several allied species. But such hairs may easily happen to grow a little thicker or harder, by mere individual or constitutional variation; and in a plant with habits like the goose-grass every increase in thickness and hardness would prove beneficial, by helping the festoons to creep over the bushes among which they live. Thus generation after generation those incipient goose-grasses which best succeeded in climbing would set most seed and produce most young, while the less successful would languish in the shade and never become the proud ancestors of future plantlets. Even the less highly developed species, such as the wall galium and the swamp galium, have little asperities on the edge of the stem; but, as they need to climb far less than the hedgerow goose-grass, their roughnesses hardly deserve to be described as prickles. Our own special subject, on the other hand, being a confirmed creeper, finds the prickles of immense use to it, and so has developed them to a very marked extent. The corn galium, too, which clings to the growing haulms or stubble of wheat, has learnt to produce very similar stout hooks; while the wild madder, which I suspect is far more closely related to goose-grass than many other plants artificially placed in the same genus, has prickles of like character, but much larger, by whose aid it trails over bushes and hedges for immense distances.

After the leaves and stem we have to consider the nature of the flower. Look at one of the blossoms on the piece I gave you, and you

will easily understand the main points of structure. You notice that it consists of a single united corolla, having four lobes joined at the base instead of distinct and separate petals, while the centre of course is occupied by the usual little yellow knobs representing the stamens and pistil. Each goose-grass plant produces many hundreds of such flowers, springing in small loose bunches from the axils of the leaves. What we have to consider now is the origin and meaning of the parts which make them up.

I suppose I should insult you, my dear and patient listener, if I were to tell you at the present time of day that the really important parts of the blossom are the little central yellow knobs, which do all the active work of fertilising the ovary and producing the seeds. You know, I am sure, that the stamens manufacture the pollen, and when the pistil is impregnated with a grain of this golden dust the fruit begins to swell and ripen. But the corolla or coloured frill around the central organs, which alone is what we call a flower in ordinary parlance, shows that the goose-grass is one of those plants which owe their fertilisation to the friendly aid of insects. Blossoms of this sort usually seek to attract the obsequious bee or the thirsty butterfly by a drop of honey in their nectaries, supplemented by the advertising allurements of a sweet perfume and a set of coloured petals. So much knowledge on your part about flowers in general I take for granted; you know it well already. The question for our present consideration is this: What gives the goose-grass flower in particular its peculiar shape, colour, and arrangement?

First of all, you will notice that it has a united corolla—a single fringe of bloom instead of several distinct flower leaves. This marks its position as a very proud one in the floral hierarchy; for only the most advanced blossoms have their originally separate petals welded into a solid continuous piece. Once upon a time, indeed, the early ancestors of our little creeper had five distinct petals, like those of a dog-rose or a buttercup; but that was many, many generations since. In time these petals began to coalesce slightly at the base, so as to form a short tube; and, as this arrangement made it easier for the insect to fertilise the flowers, because he was more certain to brush his head in hunting for honey against the pollen-bearing stamens and the sensitive summit of the pistil, all the flowers which exhibited such a tendency gained a decided advantage over their competitors, and lived and flourished accordingly, while their less fortunate compeers went to the wall. So in the course of ages such tubular flowers, like harebells and heaths, became very common, and to a great extent usurped all the best and most profitable situations in nature. Among them were the immediate ancestors of the goose-grass, which had then regular long tubular blossoms, instead of having a mere flat, disk-shaped corolla like the one you see in the goose-grass before you. But, for a reason which I will presently tell you, in the goose-grass tribe itself the tube has gradually become shorter and shorter again, till at last there is nothing left of it at all, and the

corolla consists simply of four spreading lobes slightly joined together by a little rim or margin at the base.

How do we know, you ask, that the goose-grass is descended from such ancestral flowers having a long hollow tube? Why may it not be an early form of tubular blossom, a plant which is just acquiring such a type of flower, rather than one which has once possessed it and afterwards lost it? Well, my dear sir, your objection is natural; but we know it for this reason. I told you some time since that the other great branch of the madder family, which had stipules instead of whorled leaves, was thereby shown to be a more primitive form of the common type than the stellate tribe, in which these stipules have developed into full-grown leaves. Now, all these tropical madderlike plants have large tubular blossoms, perfectly developed; so that we may reasonably infer the ancestors of the goose-grass had the same sort of flowers when they were at the same or some analogous stage of development. Moreover, amongst the stellate plants themselves there are several which still retain the long tubes to the blossom; and these are rather the less developed than the more developed members of the little group. Such are the pretty blue field-madder, which has a funnel-shaped corolla, and the sweet woodruff, which has bell-shaped flowers. But the galiums, which are the most advanced (or degraded) species of all, have the tube very short or hardly perceptible, and the more so in proportion as they are most widely divergent from the primitive type.

Why, however, should a flower which was once tubular have lost its tube? If it was an advantage to acquire such a long narrow throat, must it not also be an advantage always to retain it? That depends entirely upon the nature of the circumstances to which the plant must adapt itself. Now the fact is, the original madder group seems to have had large and showy flowers, which were fertilised by regular honey-sucking insects, such as bees and butterflies and humming-bird hawk-moths. These are tropical shrubs, often of considerable size, and of very different habits from our little goose-grass. But in the temperate regions, since the earth has begun to cool into zones, some of these rubiaceous plants have found out that they could get along better by becoming little creeping weeds; and these are the stellates, including our present friend. Accordingly they have mostly given up the attempt to attract big honey-sucking insects whose long proboscis can probe the recesses of jasmine or woodbine, and have laid themselves out to please the small flies and miscellaneous little beetles, which serve almost equally well to carry their pollen from head to head. Now the flowers which specially cater for such minor insects are usually quite flat, so that every kind alike can get at the honey or the pollen; and that, I fancy, is why the goose-grass and so many of its allies have lost their tubes. They are, in fact, somewhat degenerate forms, descended from highly adapted tropical types, but now readjusted to a humbler though more successful grade of existence.

Closely connected with this question is the other and very interesting

question of their colour. Why is goose-grass white? For the very same reason—because it wishes to attract all sorts of little insects impartially. For this purpose white is the best colour. Almost all flowers which thus depend for fertilisation upon many different species of winged visitors are white. And, indeed, the sort of colour in each kind of stellate flower (as in all others) depends largely upon the sort of insects it wishes to attract. Thus the little field-madder, which has a long tube and is fertilised by honey-suckers of a high type, is blue or pink, as all the family once was, no doubt, before it began to bid for more vulgar aid. Then the woodruff, whose tube is shorter, has white cups tinged with lilac. The lady's bedstraw, which has no tube, depends upon little colour-loving beetles for fertilisation, and, like many other beetle flowers, it is bright yellow. Last of all, the goose-grass and most of its neighbours, whose flowers have undergone the greatest degeneration of any, are simply white, because they wish to please all parties equally, and white is of course the most neutral colour they could possibly assume.

Again, you may have observed that I said just now the primitive ancestor of the goose-grass had five petals. But the present united corolla has only four lobes instead of five, and it is this arrangement, apparently, which has gained for the whole tribe the name of stellate. Now the tropical Rubiaceæ, which we saw reason to believe represent an earlier stage of development than the goose-grass group, have usually five lobes to the corolla; and in this respect they agree in the lump with the whole great class of dicotyledonous plants to which they belong. Therefore we may fairly conclude that to have four lobes instead of five is a mark of further specialisation in the stellates; in other words, it is they that have lost a lobe, not the other madder-worts that have added one. This, then, gives us a further test of relative development—or perhaps we ought rather to say of relative degeneration—among the stellate tribe. Wild madder, whose flowers are comparatively large, has usually five lobes. Yellow crosswort has most of its blossoms four-lobed, interspersed with a few five-lobed specimens. Goose-grass occasionally produces large five-lobed flowers, but has normally only four lobes. The still smaller skulking species have almost invariably four only. In fact, the suppression of one original petal seems to be due to the general dwarfing of the flower in most of the stellate tribe. The corolla has got too small to find room for five lobes, so it cuts the number down to four instead. This is a common result of extreme dwarfing. For example, the tiny central florets of the daisy ought properly to be pinked out into five points, representing the five primitive petals, but they often have the number reduced to four. So, too, in the little moschatel, the outer flowers of each bunch have five lobes, but the central one, which is crowded around and closely jammed by the others, has regularly lost one in every case.

There is just one more peculiarity of the goose-grass blossom which I must not wholly overlook. You see this rough little bulb or ball beneath the corolla, covered with incipient prickles? That is the part which will

finally grow into the fruit, after some friendly insect has brought pollen on his legs from some neighbouring flower to impregnate the ovary of this. Now, what I want you to notice is the fact that the future fruit here lies *below* the corolla—below the flower, as most of us would say in ordinary language. But if you think of a strawberry, a raspberry, or a poppy, you will recollect that the part which is to become the fruit there grows *above* the corolla, and that the petals are inserted at its base. This last is the original and normal position of the parts. How and why, then, has the ovary in the goose grass kind managed to get below the petals? Well, the process has been something like this: When the flowers were tubular they were surrounded by a tubular calyx, and the ovary stood in the middle of both. But in the course of time, in order to increase the chances of successful fertilisation, the calyx tube, the corolla tube, and the ovary in the centre all coalesced into one solid piece—grew together, in fact, just as the five petals had already done. So now this little bulb really represents the calyx and ovary combined; while the corolla, only beginning to show at the top, where it expands into its four lobes, looks as if it started from the head of the fruit, whereas in reality it once started at the bottom, but has now so completely united with the calyx in its lower part as to be quite indistinguishable. Thus the fruit is not in this plant a mere ripe form of the ovary, but is a compound organ consisting of the calyx outside, and the ovary inside, with the tube of the corolla quite crushed out of existence between them.

Last of all, let us look at the prickly fruit itself in its ripe condition. Some small fly has now fertilised the head with pollen from a brother blossom; the corolla and the stamens have fallen off; the embryo seeds within have begun to swell; the mother plant has stocked them with a little store of horny albumen to feed the tiny plantlets when they are first cast forth to shift for themselves in an unsympathetic world; and now the fruit here is almost ready to be detached from the stalk and borne to the spot where it must make its small experiment in getting on in life on its own account. Before I tell you how it manages to get itself transported free of cost to a suitable situation, I should like you to observe its shape and arrangement. It consists of two cells or carpels united in the middle, and each of these contains a single seed. Once upon a time there were several cells, as there still are in some of the tropical Rubiaceæ, and each cell contained several seeds, as is the case with many of the southern species to the present day. But when the stellate tribe took to being small and weedy, they gave up their additional seeds and limited themselves to one only in each cell. This is another common result of the dwarfing process, and it is found again in all the daisy tribe and in the umbellates, such as fool's parsley. To make up, however, for the loss in number of the seeds in each fruit, the number of fruits on each plant is still enormous. How many there are on a single weed of goose-grass I have never had the patience to count, but

certainly not less than several hundreds. You might find it a nice amusement for a statistical mind to fill up this lacuna in our botanical knowledge.

Most of the stellate plants have simple little fruits without any special means of dispersion, but in the goose-grass the same sort of prickles as those of the stem and leaves are further utilised for carrying the seed to its proper place. You know seeds have many devices for ensuring their dispersion to a distance from the mother plant. Some are surrounded by edible pulp, as in the case of the raspberry or the gooseberry; and these are swallowed by birds or animals, through whose bodies they pass undigested, and thus get deposited under circumstances peculiarly favourable to their germination and growth. Others have little wings or filaments, as in the case of the dandelion or the valerian; and these get blown by the wind to their final resting-place. Yet others, again, are provided with hooks or prickles, like the burr and the houndstongue, by whose means they cling to the wool of sheep, the feathers and legs of birds, or the hair of animals, and thus get carried from hedge to hedge and rubbed off against the bushes, so as to fall on to the ground beneath. Now this last plan is especially well adapted for a plant like the goose-grass, which lives by straggling over low brambles and hawthorns, for it ensures the deposition of the seed in the exact place where the full-grown weed will find such support and friendly assistance as it peculiarly requires. Accordingly, we may be sure that if any half-developed goose-grass ever showed any tendency to prickliness on its fruit, it would gain a great advantage over its neighbours in the struggle for existence, and the tendency would soon harden down under the influence of natural selection into a fixed habit of the species. Is there any way in which such a tendency could be set up?

Yes, easily enough, as it seems to me. You remember the outer coat of the fruit is really the calyx, and this calyx would be naturally more or less hairy, like the original leaves. We have only to suppose that the calyx hairs followed suit with the stem hairs, and began to develop into stiff prickles, in order to understand how the burrlike mechanism was first set up. Supposing it once begun, in ever so slight a degree, every little burr which succeeded in sticking to a sheep's legs or a small bird's breast would be pretty sure, sooner or later, of reaching a place where its seeds could live and thrive. It is from this habit of cleaving or sticking to one's legs that the plant has obtained one of its English names—cleavers. Moreover, to make the development of the burr all the more comprehensible, many of the other galiums have rather rough or granulated fruits, while one kind—the wall galium—which in England has smooth or warty fruit, has its surface covered in southern Europe with stiff hairs or bristles. Another English galium besides goose-grass has hooked bristles on its fruit, though they are not so hard or adhesive as in our own proper subject. Thus the very steps in the evolution of

the bristly fruit are clearly preserved for us to the present day in one or other of the allied species.

On the other hand, the very similar little corn galium, which has prickles on its stem and leaves to enable it to cling to the growing straw in the wheat-fields, has no hooks at all upon its fruit. Instead of a burr it produces only little rough-looking knobs or capsules. At first sight this difference between the plants is rather puzzling, but when we come to consider the peculiar habits of the corn galium we can see at once the reason for the change. Like most other cornfield weeds, it blossoms with the wheat, and its seed ripens with the mellowing of the shocks. Both are cut down together, and the seed of the galium is thrashed out at the same time as the grain. Thus it gets sown with the seed corn from year to year, and it would only lose by having a prickly fruit, which would get carried away to places less adapted for its special habits than the arable fields. It has accommodated itself to its own peculiar corner in nature, just as the goose-grass has accommodated itself to the hedgerows and thickets. So, again, in the wild madder, the fruit, instead of becoming rough and clinging, has grown soft and pulpy, so as to form a small blackish berry, much appreciated by birds, who thus help unconsciously to disperse its seeds. Each plant simply goes in the way that circumstances lead it, and that is why we get such infinite variety of detail and special adaptation even within the narrow limits of a single small group.

And now I think you are tired both of your seat on the stile and of my long sermon. Yet the points to which I have called your attention are really only a very few out of all the facts which go to make up the strange, eventful life-history of this little creeper. If you had only leisure and patience to hear me I might go on to point out many other curious details of organisation which help us to reconstruct the family pedigree of the goose-grass. There is not a single organ in the plant which does not imply whole volumes of unwritten ancestral annals; and to set them all forth in full would require not a single hour, but a whole course of ten or twenty sermons. Still, I hope I have done enough to suggest to you the immense wealth of thought which the goose-grass is capable of calling up in the mind of the evolutionary botanist; and I trust when you next get your clothes covered with those horrid little cleavers, you will be disposed to think more tenderly and respectfully than formerly of an ancient and highly developed English weed.

GRANT ALLEN.

Cheap Places to Live in.

It has become a common complaint that prices have been levelled up everywhere, and that an Englishman's quest after a cheap foreign place to live in mostly ends in disappointment. Even the old fiction of a franc going as far as a shilling is getting discredited, for the plateful of meat and vegetables for which a franc used to be charged in railway *buffets* and small French restaurants is now quoted at 1 fr. 25 cent. ; and so it is with many other things. There is no cheapness in Swiss and Italian hotels. A bottle of native wine in Austria costs almost as dear as Bordeaux ; and the tourist who has thought to make a bargain by buying Brussels lace in the Belgian capital, finds that he could have effected his purchase on more advantageous terms at a London co-operative store. Why should a Montreuil peach bought at Montreuil itself cost 50 centimes, when it can be had in London for 3*d.* ? and what is the sense of paying 2*d.* for a bunch of violets at Nice, when a bunch of sister flowers, gathered out of the same field perhaps, can be had for 1*d.* in Paris ? More doleful queries still have been propounded by wretched wanderers who had bought "lovely Tuscan jewelry" at Florence, and thought it both rare and cheap, till they discovered it was manufactured at Birmingham, and could have been obtained for half the price in the Warwickshire city.

These are the grumbles of sore tourists, and there is a grain of truth in them, but no more. There are plenty of cheap places abroad, as is proved by the fact that the Continent swarms with English colonies, which consist for the most part of families who had found it impossible to live respectably in England on their incomes. But these settlers often grumble as loudly as tourists, and one need not wonder at it, for many of them were driven from England by their own improvidence and they have not mended their manners in crossing the Channel. They were shiftless and self-indulgent at home ; they remain so abroad, and spending every penny they possess, cannot own that their circumstances have changed for the better. As a rule, an English family can live much less expensively on the Continent than at home, because in no foreign country, except Russia, are the upper classes so wealthy as in England ; and nowhere, consequently, are the middle classes tempted to such extravagance in trying to imitate them. But whether it be always worth a man's while to expatriate himself because he cannot keep pace with the expenditure of persons richer than himself, is a question which each individual must solve according to his own lights. After all, there are

thousands of families in England who are not rich, but who contrive to live very pleasantly within their means, without losing caste, because they keep their wants under control.

But assuming that a man has made up his mind to emigrate—say that he has about 500*l.* a year and six children—where shall he go? Within a few hours of the English coast Belgium offers its many cities of refuge. Brussels and Bruges are crowded with English; and there are smaller colonies of them at Antwerp, Ghent, Namur, and Liège. A glance at any guide-book will show what are the capabilities of these cities as regards house-room. Ghent once had a population of 300,000, which has sunk to 120,000; Bruges formerly had 200,000 souls within its walls (now destroyed), and was a second London in commercial importance; its population is reduced to 47,000; but more striking than all has been the fall of Ypres, from 200,000 to 18,000. Malines, the seat of an archbishopric, and the city where Charles Quint once held his court, stands in much the same case; while Louvain, again, covers an area and holds a mass of houses quite disproportionate to the number of inhabitants. On the whole, Ypres and Malines would afford most attractions to one of our countrymen seeking a fine, cheap, and healthy city, and willing to live entirely among Belgians. He would not get English society there as at Bruges and Brussels, nor find an English church; but English society, if it have its advantages, has also its drawbacks. It tends to raise prices. House-rent, though cheap at Bruges as compared with home rates, is far dearer than at Ypres and Malines, because there are always plenty of English bidders for the larger and finer class of furnished houses that fall vacant.

At Ypres there are no English, or so few that they make no show and yet the city is really a most eligible one for a residence. Many vestiges of its former grandeur remain. A girdle of fortifications, whose ramparts laid out as public gardens form a picturesque walk of several miles circuit, and a capital playground for children; a noble Cloth Hall and Hôtel-de-Ville, one of the grandest municipal buildings in the world, which fronts a huge Place where fifty regiments might be reviewed; noble churches, and then numbers of houses both handsome and roomy nestling amid their own gardens at the corners of grass-grown streets. Almost any one of these mansions can be had furnished for a rental of from 40*l.* to 70*l.* a year, the owners being often so glad to let that they will cheerfully accept the former price after asking the latter, provided the tenant will sign a three-years' lease. At Malines also there are superb buildings, agreeable walks, and delicious old houses in sequestered nooks. One need not pay so much as 40*l.* to find a good one. An ordinary ten-room dwelling-house without a garden may be had either at Ypres or Malines for 20*l.*

Of course these places are dull. A man must go to them predisposed to make the best of the enjoyment they offer, not to fret and find fault with everything. If he be of a sociable disposition he will soon become

acquainted with the local gentry, officials, and officers of the garrison, who will admit him to their club, where he can play penny whist, and billiards for 5*d.* an hour. Living in a good house with fine airy rooms, once the mansion of a prosperous Flemish burgher, he may have the services of a good cook for about twenty francs a month, and of a housemaid for about fifteen francs. These women will probably speak no French; but one must have a little patience, and in a few weeks an English mistress will pick up enough Flemish to get on quite smoothly. Milk, eggs, poultry, fruit, vegetables, are all thirty per cent. cheaper at Ypres and Malines than in England; and about fifteen per cent. cheaper than at Bruges, for the last-named city being close to Ostend and Blankenberghe, fashionable watering-places, the price of eatables rise there in summer. Beer is good and cheap all over Belgium; tobacco and cigars also; wine is of course dear, as none is produced in the country; furniture and clothes are no cheaper than in England. As to amusements, the Belgians are a gay people who delight in fairs, kermesses, and quaint pageants in commemoration of historical events. In all their towns there are musical societies which give concerts all the year round, and *redoutes* where subscription balls are held in winter. In the Flemish cities archery is held in high honour; and in those of the Walloon country the favourite outdoor game is a *jeu de balle*, which may be described as a kind of lawn tennis played without net or rackets, and with an india-rubber ball as large as a Dutch cheese, which the players strike to and fro over a base with gloved hands.

But one of the chief inducements of a paterfamilias to settle in Belgium will be found in the cheapness and excellence of its schools. The father of a large family does not find education cheap in England, and there are social considerations which may render him unwilling to send his boys to a school which, though fairly good and inexpensive, enjoys no prestige, and confers none on those who are brought up there. In after life a young Englishman is not always proud to acknowledge that he was educated at Smalltown Grammar School; but it is rather gratifying than derogatory to state that one was educated in a historic town of the continent full of ecclesiastical and collegiate associations; especially if such education has conduced to one's becoming an expert linguist. The cost of a first-rate education in any Belgian *Athénée* ranges between 6*l.* and 8*l.* a year for home-boarders; and the prices are about the same in the schools and convents for girls. Boys are thoroughly well grounded in French, German, the classics, mathematics, and natural sciences; and at eighteen might present themselves for any examination in England, knowing quite as much as if they had passed through Eton or Harrow, and in fact more, for they would speak French fluently. There is a capital plan of inculcating practical knowledge upon schoolboys in Belgium by taking them to visit factories, mines, and dockyards; and by getting up excursions in summer to the different cities of historical and archaeological interest. These trips are greatly favoured by the Minister

of Public Instruction, who issues passes at reduced rates on the State railways, and arranges for the hospitable entertainment of the young tourists at the *Athénées* of the towns which they may happen to be visiting; so that these instructive outings cost very little. For girls convents will be found better and cheaper than the lay schools. Protestants are admitted to them as well as Catholics, and the nuns will make no attempt to convert the children of English parents. As there is a great rivalry between the religious and lay schools, and as all the religious orders are on their mettle just now in consequence of the recent passing of an education law which has greatly improved the State schools, the nuns are diligently striving to raise their schools to the highest level, and are much assisted in this purpose by pious donations from the Catholics of the country. Languages, music, and drawing are admirably taught in these convents; and it may be added that the nuns look more carefully after the morals, manners, and deportment of their pupils than do the mistresses of the lay schools, who, though clever enough, often pride themselves overmuch on being freethinkers.

Holland is neighbour to Belgium, but it is not a cheap country nor a pleasant one. The Dutch are an inhospitable people, who care little to cultivate the acquaintance of English settlers, but who have no scruples about overcharging them. The unit of currency being the florin, the commonest articles are charged for according to fractions of that coin and are about 25 per cent. dearer than in countries where the franc and its decimals are used. Dutch houses are absurdly small, and in the principal cities the rent is high; in towns like Dordrecht, Breda, and Nimeguen lodgings can no doubt be had at moderate prices and the general cost of living there will be cheaper than in England; but the difference is not great enough to afford any compensation for residence in a country which possesses such few charms. To get English children educated in Dutch schools would be a senseless proceeding, unless they were likely to remain connected with Holland all their lives, for Dutch is a useless language, and the only foreign tongue thoroughly well taught in Dutch schools is English. Most Dutch ladies talk English, read English novels, and drink tea; but here their resemblance to our countrywomen ceases, and they form a race of women so curiously plain, ungraceful, and frumpish that the application of any such term as "fair sex" to them would be inadmissible flattery. Letters of introduction are of very little use in Holland. The Dutchman to whom you may have been warmly recommended allows you to call on him first, offers you no refreshment, and gives you no invitation, but he asks if you have any money to change, because he will change it for you himself at a discount; and he will bestir himself about suiting you with lodgings in a private house or hotel because he will levy a commission from your landlord for so doing. Once you have settled down, he will furnish you with a list of his tradesmen, on whom he will call the same day to stipulate for a reduction from his own next accounts; and after this he

will wash his hands of you, unless, mayhap, he turns up now and then to try and drive a hard bargain with you over some tea or tobacco, or to borrow some of your English books, which he will never return unless you dun him for them. If you let him keep the books he will sell them and ask you for some more.

In Germany, on the contrary, an English family will find many attractions which are likely to endear the country to them for the rest of their lives. It is a noticeable thing that English people who have lived long in France generally speak of it with disparagement and allude to the French with ridicule, if not with downright hatred: whereas those who have been sojourners in Germany are never tired of praising the country, its customs, and all about it. The reason of this is that simplicity is the rule of German life, and a very winning simplicity it is. The upper classes are not rich, and live unostentatiously; the upper middle classes, comprising professors, lawyers, doctors, and a good many officers, exist upon incomes which according to our notions would seem beggarly, yet they rub along comfortably and merrily, because their women are so versed in economy. In the richest German household the mistress superintends the kitchen and lends a hand to the cook. There are certain dishes which she always makes with her own hands, because her Fritz likes them so. She may boast thirty-two quarterings on her escutcheon and be terribly proud of her lineage, but she has no nonsensical ideas about its being degrading to put on a canvas apron, lard a piece of veal, make jams, or dole out with her own hands the prunes that are to be put into the potato stew. She keeps her best attire for Sundays, and makes it serve on a good many of these festal days, for she does not follow fashion blindly or in a hurry. On ordinary days she dresses with a plainness which would excite the contempt of a Frenchwoman; but then her culinary pursuits do not prevent her from being by far the intellectual superior of her French or Belgian sister. She reads serious books that she may be able to converse as an equal with her well-taught sons; she practises music that she may remain on a level with her daughters who are trained to be brilliant pianists; and she finds time to read the newspaper in order that she may understand what her Fritz has to say about the topics of the day.

The example thus set in high life by the "Frau Gräfin" is copied in lower spheres by the "Frau Doctorin" and the "Frau Professorin." These ladies keep no cooks; they perform most of the household labours with the assistance of a maid-of-all-work, and whenever practicable they do all the washing of the family linen at home, and make their own dresses. Withal they are very hospitable in a homely way. They delight in evening parties at which *café au lait* is served with cakes and sausage-sandwiches. A carpet dance, a little singing and music, round games and a good deal of frank flirtation between the young people, furnish the diversions at these entertainments. In the winter several families club together to hire a large room in which *Dreistemache* (literally

make-bold) assemblies are held once a week. Each family brings a certain quantum of the refreshments, as at old-fashioned picnics, and dancing is carried on within sensible hours, between 7 and 11 P.M. The object of these assemblies is to make young people "bold" to disport themselves at more ceremonious balls should they be called upon to do so; in fact, they are unceremonious dancing parties at which the guests appear in morning attire and expect no costlier beverages at supper than lemonade and beer. Nor must the *Biergartens* of Germany be forgotten, where whole families flock on summer evenings to hear good music as they take their suppers; nor the many musical societies, *Gesangvereins* and *Orpheums*, which give the most pleasant concerts; nor the *Turnvereins* or gymnastic societies, where young men learn to become hardy, and perform surprising feats with their arms and legs. Germany is far from being a dull country, and English families quickly fall into the swing of its customs and amusements. They become intimate with the natives, are received indeed by them almost as countrymen, and intermarriages are frequent. This is an inducement to be found nowhere else, as in almost all other countries the English colonies are separated from the natives by religious differences, which cause intermarriages to be very rare.

The cheapest towns to go to in Germany are the capitals of small Duchies. Berlin has become very dear. Dresden, Leipzig, Stuttgart, Munich, are all cheap in comparison with English cities, and they offer first-rate educational advantages; but they will be found more expensive on the whole than such places as Brunswick, Cassel, Darmstadt, Weimar, and Coburg. Taking Brunswick as a specimen of these second-rate towns, it is a place where a family can live in the utmost enjoyment and dignity on a small income. It is an old-fashioned town of picturesque architecture; but the streets are broad, and the houses large, with spacious and lofty rooms, wide courtyards, and grand staircases. Most of these dwellings are let in flats, each of which has its separate kitchen, with its wooden balcony overlooking the yard and a separate staircase for servants. A ten-room flat furnished can be had on a first floor in the best quarter for about sixty pounds a year; on a second, for forty-five pounds; and on a third, for thirty pounds; but prices are lower in the old streets on the outskirts of the city. It is not the custom to let unfurnished, as almost all the houses contain a stock of old-fashioned furniture dating from the last century, when the court of Brunswick was one of the most brilliant in Germany, and when the city was crowded with wealthy residents. It has all the appearance of a wealthy city still, though the present Duke lives most of the year in Italy, and does little to attract strangers to his handsome palace. It has a university, a gymnasium, a public school for boys, several private schools, and a large academy for girls; a museum, and public library, and a noble theatre. The Duke chiefly helps to support the Theatre, and for this much deserves the thanks of his subjects. For many years the conductor of the orchestra was Franz Abt, the eminent composer,

and at one time he had the best *quatuor* of violinists in Germany under his orders. Performances are given at the theatre four times a week, operas being performed on two nights, and plays on the other two; and the cost of a *Spersitz* or stall is only six thalers, or eighteen shillings a month. All the ducal cities have good theatres, as it is a point of honour with the princelings who rule in them to show that they are enlightened patrons of music and the drama. The theatre of Coburg has a well-deserved reputation.

Tourists will not find German hotels cheap, even in the small towns, for landlords have got into the habit of overcharging Englishmen, and nothing seems likely to cure them of it; but the *restaurations* are very cheap. A substantial dinner with beer can be had for fifteen pence; and in the *braueries*, which officers frequent, a good supper, consisting of a plate of veal cutlets with fried potatoes, or bacon sausage and *sauerkraut*, costs but sevenpence, glass of beer included. Schooling is as cheap as in Belgium, and better, for the disposition of German youth is studious, and the professors are stimulated by the assiduity and sharpness of their pupils. No English boy educated at a German school is likely to come home a dunce.

These are the advantages of Germany; but the country of course has its drawbacks from the English point of view, although these may be less discernible to our countrymen who inhabit the Fatherland, than to their friends at home who notice their peculiarities when they have returned from it. German schooling tends to convert an English boy into a very unpleasant species of young prig, conceited and pragmatical; while it makes a girl tame and dreamy. The dreamy propensities of German maidenhood are counteracted by the hard labour they perform among the dishcloths and saucepans of the paternal kitchen; but as English girls seldom take kindly to culinary tasks, the sentimentalism they acquire at German schools has no checks. Add to this, that German ladies have no taste in dress and set sad examples of dowdiness to the girls who live among them. It would be agreeable to be able to say that the German matron, when she has helped to dish up the family dinner, sits down cool and smart, with hair neatly dressed, to do the honours of her own table; but the truth is, she sits down looking hot and untidy. She may talk finely about culture, but her gown is a very uncultured affair; she may play exquisitely on the piano, but it will be grief to watch her coarse red hands moving over the keys; she may waltz to perfection, but the sight of her large ill-shod feet will be enough to make a sensitive man sit down in a corner and sigh. The best corrective to a girl's education in Germany would be a year's finishing in France.

The English in France may be reckoned by tens of thousands. They are to be found in the smallest towns; and in some of the large cities they form important colonies; but they nowhere amalgamate with the natives. The differences between them and the French in manners,

customs, and modes of thought are so many and so deep as to preclude much intercourse and even friendly feeling. Frenchmen are tolerably fond of the English; but Frenchwomen cannot appreciate Englishwomen, and generally harbour the most irrational prejudices against them and their ways. The "forwardness" and "eccentricity" of English girls form topics on which the French mother is never wearied of expatiating with amazement, and she looks upon these young ladies as dangerous companions for her own daughters; on the other hand, English boys do not get on at all well with French ones, who, taking them all in all, are as precociously depraved and offensive a set of little wretches as one can meet in any country. Thus the English in France are more than elsewhere thrown on their own resources. They may remain a long while in the land without contracting any sincere friendships with the natives, unless indeed they be Roman Catholics, in which case they may get introductions to the best families through the clergy, and will cease to be regarded as semi-barbarians.

One of the most enticing features of life in France is the vast number of *châteaux* dotted over the country. The soil of France is divided among eight millions of proprietors, and whenever a Frenchman has made a little money he proceeds to buy a small estate with a pretty country-house on it, which he styles a "castle." If he be a man of artistic tastes he has a *château* specially built for him with the latest architectural improvements, and expends much money on the furnishing. There is not a retired tradesman, painter, journalist, or actor of any standing in France, but owns his *château*, where he resides only during the summer months; and at his death this mansion almost invariably goes to the hammer. Owing to the French laws of succession, which oblige a man to divide his property equally amongst his children, it is very seldom that a family lives throughout two generations in the same *château*; so that pleasant country houses are continually in the market, and an Englishman with a little capital can make astonishing bargains if he selects the right time for buying or signing a lease.

The seasons propitious for such operations come but too frequently, thanks to the political instability of the country. The effect of every revolution in France is to cast hundreds and hundreds of *châteaux* upon the market, and most of them can be had for a song, furniture included. There is absolutely no ratio between the price of French house-property in times of peace and at periods of turmoil. When a revolution breaks out owners of *châteaux* are smitten with a deadly panic; they imagine that the end of all things has come; that Socialism and Communism are going to confiscate the soil and part it among the rabble; their only thought then is how to realize cash that they may bolt to some less accursed land. During the troubles of 1848, an Englishman came to France and heard of a *château* at Neuilly which was for sale. It was a lovely house, beautifully furnished, and stood in a park of eighteen acres. The owner, a Peer of France, appalled by seeing Louis Philippe's palace

at Neuilly pillaged and destroyed by the mob, accepted 5,000*l.* for the *château*, furniture, park, and all, and thought himself lucky to get that money. Four years later, in 1852, when the Second Empire was established by the *coup d'état*, and property became secure again, the Englishman let his mansion and grounds on a three years' lease for 480*l.* a year; the lease was renewed in 1855 for six years at a rental of 720*l.* a year; and in 1862, when the lease had expired, the Englishman sold his property for 1,200,000 francs (48,000*l.*). Eight years then elapsed; the war with Germany broke out: the Empire was overthrown, Paris was besieged, the Commune supervened; the Three per Cent. Rentes (now quoted at 81) had sunk to 45; and the *château* at Neuilly coming once more into the market, was rebought by its late English owner for 12,000*l.* ready money. This fortunate speculator bided his time, and in 1878, the Exhibition year, resold the estate for 36,000*l.*

These ups and downs have proved boons to many English people besides the gentleman just mentioned. Revolutions are sure to be followed by a return to order, for the fickle character of the French sickens of riot as it does of everything else; so that a man who has money to invest cannot do better than look about him while the disturbance lasts, and buy valuables of any sort in the full certainty that he will resell them at a great profit within a few years. Not only country-houses, but the leases of houses in Paris, furniture, works of art, and family jewels may be had at extraordinary cheap rates while the *canaille* are enjoying themselves at the game of governing; and by such means living in France can be made not only a cheap thing, but a very lucrative business.

From France we may pass to Switzerland. This much-trodden country is dear or cheap according to the season when you visit it. There is no dearer city in Europe than Geneva from May till October; but during the seven other months families may live there in the best hotels at the rate of about seven or eight francs a day, or single men for ten francs. The large hotels are almost empty, and their owners expect to make no profit during the winter season; they are content if they can simply pay their expenses of rent, and the hire of their servants; therefore they vie with one another in trying to attract strangers, and several of them succeed very well. It is much the same at Lausanne and Lucerne, though neither of these towns has so many hotels as Geneva. The last-named city can offer many pleasures to winter and spring residents, and certainly the satisfaction of being lodged in a comfortable room and getting three good meals for ten francs a day, is not the smallest of these. But there are places in Switzerland which remain fairly cheap all the year round if one will seek them out of the beaten track of tourists. There is a little town called Morges on the Lake Lemán, between Geneva and Ouchy. All the steamers stop there, though few passengers alight at the place. It is a clean, bright, and happy-looking little town, with many a fine old house, and abundance of lodgings which can be had

cheap. It is mentioned here as a sample town, but there are plenty of others like it ready to give an hospitable welcome to strangers who have any particular reason for preferring Switzerland as a permanent residence to other countries. Swiss schools are good and cheap ; and, as every one knows, the country is full of attractions for artists. On the whole, however, it cannot be called a cheap country in the same general sense as Belgium, Germany, or Italy.

Italy remains of all countries in Europe the cheapest. Money goes very far there when people spend it rationally ; but English families who want to live economically must be very careful not to let it be suspected that they are rich, else they will be fleeced with a shamelessness hardly to be credited by those who have not witnessed it. An Italian becomes utterly demoralised when he sees a chance of making money out of a simpleton. If he succeeds in one overcharge his only regret will be that he did not ask for more ; and he will move away grumbling, so that the more you give him the less pleased will he appear to be. Partly from ignorance, partly from vulgar ostentation, Englishmen and Americans in Italy pay for many things ten or twenty times more than they ought to do. The basket of fruit which the Marchese living sumptuously for 100*l.* a year in the upper rooms of his ancestral palace, may buy for four soldi, will be sold for as many francs to the Signora Brown, who will declare it cheap, reckoning by Covent Garden prices ; and the same discriminating lady, in bargaining for apartments, will allow her head to be turned by accounts of the distinguished persons who have inhabited those apartments in old times, and will readily pay three times more than the rooms are worth.

People who mean to live in Italy must do business on a very different plan : they must take pattern by the Italians themselves. Most of the Italian gentry, sporting high-sounding titles, are not only poor, but miserly. They dress well out of doors, frequent the theatre (which can be done for a small cost by taking a yearly subscription), and now and then they are to be seen driving about in antiquated barouches ; but in their homes they make no show, and they bargain for every article of food they buy till they reach the lowest sum at which the seller will part with his merchandise. If an Englishman wants to make quite sure of not being cheated, he had better begin by offering one-third of the sum demanded of him for anything, from a house to a bunch of grapes. When he has been a little time in the country he will discover that even in this way he will be made to pay considerably more than a native. It may happen that at first his offers will be refused, as tradesmen will be anxious to prove him ; but if he perseveres he will quickly acquire the reputation of being a sensible man, and will get the fat of the land for its marketable value.

Rome, Naples, Turin, and Florence should be avoided by people with small purses ; but there is only an *embarras de choix* with respect to other cities suitable for settling. There are twenty towns in the

Peninsula which have fallen from a high estate and abound with empty palaces. Genoa, Milan, Venice, Pisa, Ravenna, Ferrara, Modena, Parma, Bologna, Sienna, stand in this case, and the further you go south the more opportunities have you of renting lands as well as houses on low terms. The country wears a look of ruin, but it is wonderfully fertile; very little capital is needed to work its rich soil, and many of our countrymen who carry their money to America or Australia at great risk of getting no return for it, would find a much safer investment in those sunny fields of Italy, where the crops of wheat, grapes, and olives never fail. The Italian climate, moreover, promotes economy, for there is no necessity for taking stimulants there, or for eating meat more than once a day. The natives are strangely abstemious. A cup of chocolate with some pastry in the morning; a dish of meat and vegetables at midday; some fruit and salad, or macaroni in the evening, will form an Italian nobleman's bill of fare for the day; and the only extras will be an occasional ice or cup of coffee at the *café*. The social life of the country is most pleasant, for you get as much society as you please there without its costing anything. The Italians do not, like the French, give elaborate breakfasts and dinners. The richer among them give musical parties at their own houses, serving ices and coffee to their guests; but the majority meet their friends in the open air promenades, in the *cafés*, and at the theatre, which is the chief place for paying visits. Manners are free and easy; morals are not perhaps all that they might be; but English people at least have no reason to complain that they are received with coldness. They are liked and respected all over the peninsula in proportion as the French and Germans are hated. It is an understood thing that the Englishman is an "eccentric" and a "heretic," but he is credited with the possession of all the serious qualities which the Italians themselves lack, and his very oddities are supposed to be amusing.

Spain is another country where the English are held in esteem; but an English family would do well not to settle in that country unless they are Catholics, and carry letters of warm introduction to Spanish families. At their best the Spaniards are not hospitable. They live at home, having no propensities for outdoor life and meetings in *cafés*, as the Italians have; they are bigoted in their religion, and so touchy on the score of their personal dignity that the most magnanimous among them are constantly forgiving you for slights which you had no intention of inflicting. When offended they will sulk for years, treating you with a painfully ceremonious politeness, and never vouchsafing a reason for their displeasure against you. An Englishman who had thus been sent to Coventry by a Spaniard, discovered by accident, after the misunderstanding had lasted two years, that the proud Don had been cut to the soul by hearing the Englishman mimic the arrogant tones of a beggar who had asked alms of him in the street. The Don had imagined that the Englishman

had intended to turn all Spaniards and their language into ridicule, and he was mortally displeased.

In a country where ladies dress in black, where a mess of bacon and pease, called *olla-podrida*, forms the staple diet of rich and poor, and where it is not customary to give dinners or parties, expenditure may be kept within narrow limits. Some things, however, are expensive. Spanish schools, for instance, are both dear and bad. The best of them are under clerical direction, but the priests who teach boys, and the nuns who instruct girls, are alike inefficient in their duties. They consider themselves rather as guardians appointed to keep young people out of mischief than as professors whose mission it is to impart knowledge. There may be exceptions, but this is the general rule, and English families in the Peninsula act wisely when they have their children educated at home. These remarks apply in a more or less degree to the schools of France and Italy. In none of the Latin countries are the schools to be compared with those of Belgium, Germany, and Switzerland.

To sum up these observations about cheap places to live in, it may be laid down that the essentials for economical living abroad are the following:—1, to start with the intention of making the best of things; 2, to select for residence a city of second-rate importance, as yet unspoilt by crowds of English; and, 3, to accommodate oneself to the style of living adopted by the natives. If these conditions are not adhered to, there is no reason why an English family should not squander as much money abroad as at home; but by following the above rules a cheerful, sensible English family are sure to derive some benefits from their expatriation. No mention has been made in this paper of Sweden and Norway, Denmark, Russia, or Hungary as desirable countries for English wanderers; but cheap towns exist in them all, and for commercial purposes of the languages these lands may in certain cases prove valuable to young people. A thorough knowledge of Russian would be no bad stock-in-trade for a young Englishman to set up with in business; for it would enable him to establish relations with a great many Russian towns, where customers might be found for English goods if an Englishman could only get to understand their ways and wants.

The Convent of Monte Oliveto, near Siena.

IN former days the traveller had choice of two old hostelries in the chief street of Siena. Here, if he was fortunate, he might secure a prophet's chamber, with a view across tiled houseroofs to the distant Tuscan champaign—glimpses of russet field and olive-garden framed by jutting city walls, which in some measure compensated for much discomfort. He now betakes himself to the more modern Albergo di Siena, overlooking the public promenade La Lizza. Horsechestnuts and acacias make a pleasant foreground to a prospect of considerable extent. The front of the house is turned toward Belcaro and the mountains between Grosseto and Volterra. Sideways its windows command the brown bulk of San Domenico, and the Duomo, set like a marble coronet upon the forehead of the town. When we arrived there one October afternoon the sun was setting amid flying clouds and watery yellow spaces of pure sky, with a wind blowing soft and humid from the sea. Long after he had sunk below the hills, a fading chord of golden and rose-coloured tints burned on the city. The cathedral bell-tower was glistening with recent rain, and we could see right through its lancet windows to the clear blue heavens beyond. Then, as the day descended into evening, the autumn trees assumed that wonderful effect of luminousness self-evolved, and the red brick walls that crimson after-glow, which Tuscan twilight takes from singular transparency of atmosphere.

It is hardly possible to define the specific character of each Italian city, assigning its proper share to natural circumstances, to the temper of the population, and to the monuments of art in which these elements of nature and of human qualities are blended. The fusion is too delicate and subtle for complete analysis; and the total effect in each particular case may best be compared to that impressed on us by a strong personality, making itself felt in the minutest details. Climate, situation, ethnological conditions, the political vicissitudes of past ages, the bias of the people to certain industries and occupations, the emergence of distinguished men at critical epochs, have all contributed their quota to the composition of an individuality which abides long after the locality has lost its ancient vigour.

Since the year 1557, when Gian Giacomo de' Medici laid the country of Siena waste, levelled her luxurious suburbs, and delivered her famine-stricken citizens to the tyranny of the Grand Duke Cosimo, this town has gone on dreaming in suspended decadence. Yet the epithet which was given to her in her days of glory, the title of "Fair Soft Siena," still describes the city. She claims it by right of the gentle manners, joyous but sedate, of her inhabitants, by the grace of their pure Tuscan speech, and

by the unique delicacy of her architecture. Those palaces of brick, with finely-moulded lancet windows, and the lovely use of sculptured marbles in pilastered colonnades, are fit abodes for the nobles who reared them five centuries ago, of whose refined and costly living we read in the pages of Dante or of Folgore da San Gemignano. And though the necessities of modern life, the decay of wealth, the dwindling of old aristocracy, and the absorption of what was once an independent state in the Italian nation, have obliterated that large signorial splendour of the middle ages, we feel that the modern Sienese are not unworthy of their courteous ancestry.

Superficially, much of the present charm of Siena consists in the soft opening valleys, the glimpses of long blue hills and fertile country-side, framed by irregular brown houses stretching along the slopes on which the town is built, and losing themselves abruptly in olive fields and orchards. This element of beauty, which brings the city into immediate relation with the country, is indeed not peculiar to Siena. We find it in Perugia, in Assisi, in Montepulciano, in nearly all the hill towns of Umbria and Tuscany. But their landscape is often tragic and austere, while this is always suave. City and country blend here in delightful amity. Neither yields that sense of aloofness which stirs melancholy.

The most charming district in the immediate neighbourhood of Siena lies westward, near Belcaro, a villa high up on a hill. It is a region of deep lanes and golden-green oak-woods, with cypresses and stone-pines, and little streams in all directions flowing over the brown sandstone. The country is like some parts of rural England—Devonshire or Sussex. Not only is the sandstone here, as there, broken into deep gullies; but the vegetation is much the same: tufted spleenwort, primroses, and broom tangle the hedges under boughs of hornbeam and sweet-chestnut. This is the landscape which the two sixteenth century novelists of Siena, Fortini and Sermini, so lovingly depicted in their tales. Of literature absorbing in itself the specific character of a country, and conveying it to the reader less by description than by sustained quality of style, I know none to surpass Fortini's sketches. The prospect from Belcaro is one of the finest to be seen in Tuscany. The villa stands at a considerable elevation, and commands an immense extent of hill and dale. Nowhere, except Maremma-wards, a level plain. The Tuscan mountains, from Monte Amiata westward to Volterra, round Valdelsa, down to Montepulciano and Radicofani, with their innumerable windings and intricacies of descending valleys, are dappled with light and shade from flying storm-clouds, sunshine here and there cloud-shadows. Girdling the villa stands a grove of ilex trees, cut so as to embrace its high-built walls with dark continuous green. In the courtyard are lemon-trees and pomegranates laden with fruit. From a terrace on the roof the whole wide view is seen; and here upon a parapet, from which we leaned one autumn afternoon, my friend discovered this *graffito*: "*E vidi e piansi il fato amaro!*"—"I gazed, and gazing, wept the bitterness of fate."

The prevailing note of Siena and the Sienese seems, as I have said, to be a soft and tranquil grace; yet this people had one of the stormiest and

maddest of Italian histories. They were passionate in love and hate, vehement in their popular amusements, almost frantic in their political conduct of affairs. The luxury, for which Dante blamed them, the levity which De Comines noticed in their government, found counterpoise in more than usual piety and fervour. S. Bernardino, the great preacher and peace-maker of the middle ages ; S. Catherine, the worthiest of all women to be canonised ; the blessed Colombini, who founded the order of the Gesuati or Brothers of the Poor in Christ ; the blessed Bernardo, who founded that of Monte Oliveto, were all Sienese. Few cities have given four such saints to modern Christendom. The biography of one of these may serve as prelude to an account of the Sienese monastery of Oliveto Maggiore.

The family of Tolomei was among the noblest of the Sienese aristocracy. On May 10, 1272, Mino Tolomei and his wife Fulvia, of the Tancredi, had a son whom they christened Giovanni, but who, when he entered the religious life, assumed the name of Bernard, in memory of the great Abbot of Clairvaux. Of this child, Fulvia is said to have dreamed, long before his birth, that he assumed the form of a white swan, and sang melodiously, and settled in the boughs of an olive tree, whence afterwards he winged his way to heaven amid a flock of swans as dazzling white as he. The boy was educated in the Dominican Cloister at Siena, under the care of his uncle Cristoforo Tolomei. There, and afterwards in the fraternity of S. Ansano, he felt that impulse towards a life of piety, which after a short but brilliant episode of secular ambition, was destined to return with overwhelming force upon his nature. He was a youth of promise, and at the age of sixteen he obtained the doctorate in philosophy and both laws, civil and canonical. The Tolomei upon this occasion adorned their palaces and threw them open to the people of Siena. The Republic hailed with acclamation the early honours of a noble, born to be one of their chief leaders. Soon after this event Mino obtained for his son from the Emperor the title of Cæsarian Knight ; and when the diploma arrived, new festivities proclaimed the fortunate youth to his fellow-citizens. Bernardo cased his limbs in steel, and rode in procession with ladies and young nobles through the streets. The ceremonies of a knight's reception in Siena at that period were magnificent. From contemporary chronicles and from the sonnets written by Folgore da San Gemignano for a similar occasion, we gather that the whole resources of a wealthy family and all their friends were strained to the utmost to do honour to the order of chivalry. Open house was held for several days. Rich presents of jewels, armour, dresses, chargers were freely distributed. Tournaments alternated with dances. But the climax of the pageant was the novice's investiture with sword and spurs and belt in the cathedral. This, as it appears from a record of the year 1326, actually took place in the great marble pulpit carved by the Pisani ; and the most illustrious knights of his acquaintance were summoned by the squire to acts as sponsors for his fealty.

It is said that young Bernardo Tolomei's head was turned to vanity by these honours showered upon him in his earliest manhood. Yet, after

a short period of aberration, he rejoined his confraternity and mortified his flesh by discipline and strict attendance on the poor. The time had come, however, when he should choose a career suitable to his high rank. He devoted himself to jurisprudence, and began to lecture publicly on law. Already at the age of twenty-five his fellow-citizens admitted him to the highest political offices, and in the legend of his life it is written, not without exaggeration doubtless, that he ruled the State. There is, however, no reason to suppose that he did not play an important part in its government. Though a just and virtuous statesman, Bernardo now forgot the special service of God, and gave himself with heart and soul to mundane interests. At the age of forty, supported by the wealth, alliances, and reputation of his semi-princely house, he had become one of the most considerable party-leaders in that age of faction. If we may trust his monastic biographer, he was aiming at nothing less than the tyranny of Siena. But in that year, when he was forty, a change, which can only be described as conversion, came over him. He had advertised a public disputation, in which he proposed before all comers to solve the most arduous problems of scholastic science. The concourse was great, the assembly brilliant; but the hero of the day, who had designed it for his glory, was stricken with sudden blindness. In one moment he comprehended the internal void he had created for his soul, and the blindness of the body was illumination to the spirit. The pride, power, and splendour of this world seemed to him a smoke that passes. God, penitence, eternity appeared in all the awful clarity of an authentic vision. He fell upon his knees and prayed to Mary that he might receive his sight again. This boon was granted; but the revelation which had come to him in blindness was not withdrawn. Meanwhile the hall of disputation was crowded with an expectant audience. Bernardo rose from his knees, made his entry, and ascended the chair; but instead of the scholastic subtleties he had designed to treat, he pronounced the old text, "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity."

Afterwards, attended by two noble comrades, Patrizio Patrizzi and Ambrogio Piccolomini, he went forth into the wilderness. For the human soul, at strife with strange experience, betakes itself instinctively to solitude. Not only prophets of Israel, saints of the Thebaid, and founders of religions in the mystic East have done so; even the Greek Menander recognised, although he sneered at, the phenomenon. "The desert, they say, is the place for discoveries." For the mediæval mind it had peculiar attractions. The wilderness these comrades chose was Accona, a doleful place, hemmed in with earthen precipices, some fifteen miles to the south of Siena. Of his vast possessions Bernardo retained but this—

The lonesome lodge,
That stood so low in a lonely glen.

The rest of his substance he abandoned to the poor. This was in 1313, the very year of the Emperor Henry VII.'s death at Buonconvento, which is a little walled town between Siena and the desert of Accona. Whether Bernardo's retirement was in any way due to the

extinction of immediate hope for the Ghibelline party by this event, we do not gather from his legend. That, as is natural, refers his action wholly to the operation of divine grace. Yet we may remember how a more illustrious refugee, the singer of the Divine Comedy, betook himself upon the same occasion to the lonely convent of Fonte Avellana on the Alps of Catria, and meditated there the cantos of his Purgatory. While Bernardo Tolomei was founding the Order of Monte Oliveto, Dante penned his letter to the cardinals of Italy : *Quomodo sola sedet civitas plena populo : facta est quasi vidua domina gentium.*

Bernardo and his friends hollowed with their own hands grottos in the rock, and strewed their stone beds with withered chestnut-leaves. For S. Scolastica, the sister of S. Benedict, they built a little chapel. Their food was wild fruit, and their drink the water of the brook. Through the day they delved, for it was in their mind to turn the wilderness into a land of plenty. By night they meditated on eternal truth. The contrast between their rude life and the delicate nurture of Sienese nobles, in an age when Siena had become a by-word for luxury, must have been cruel. But it fascinated the mediæval imagination, and the three anchorites were speedily joined by recruits of a like temper. As yet the new-born order had no rules ; for Bernardo, when he renounced the world, embraced humility. The brethren were bound together only by the ties of charity. They lived in common ; and under their sustained efforts Accona soon became a garden.

The society could not, however, hold together without further organisation. It began to be ill spoken of, inasmuch as vulgar minds can recognise no good except in what is formed upon a pattern they are familiar with. Then Bernardo had a vision. In his sleep he saw a ladder of light ascending to the heavens. Above sat Jesus with Our Lady in white raiment, and the celestial hierarchies around them were attired in white. Up the ladder, led by angels, climbed men in vesture of dazzling white ; and among these Bernardo recognised his own companions. Soon after this dream, he called Ambrogio Piccolomini, and bade him get ready for a journey to the Pope at Avignon.

John XXII. received the pilgrims graciously, and gave them letters to the Bishop of Arezzo, commanding him to furnish the new brotherhood with one of the rules authorised by Holy Church for governance of a monastic order. Guido Tarlati, of the great Pietra-mala house, was Bishop and despot of Arezzo at this epoch. A man less in harmony with cœnobitical enthusiasm than this warrior prelate, could scarcely have been found. Yet attendance to such matters formed part of his business, and the legend even credits him with an inspired dream ; for Our Lady appeared to him, and said : " I love the valley of Accona and its pious solitaries. Give them the rule of Benedict. But thou shalt strip them of their mourning weeds, and clothe them in white raiment, the symbol of my virgin purity. Their hermitage shall change its name, and henceforth shall be called Mount Olivet, in memory of the ascension of my divine Son, the which took place upon the Mount of Olives. I

take this family beneath my own protection ; and therefore it is my will it should be called henceforth the congregation of S. Mary of Mount Olivet." After this, the Blessed Virgin took forethought for the heraldic designs of her monks, dictating to Guido Tarlati the blazon they still bear ; it is of three hills or, whereof the third and highest is surmounted with a cross gules, and from the meeting-point of the three hillocks upon either hand a branch of olive vert. This was in 1319. In 1324, John XXII. confirmed the Order, and in 1344 it was further approved by Clement VI. Affiliated societies sprang up in several Tuscan cities ; and in 1347, Bernardo Tolomei, at that time General of the Order, held a chapter of its several houses. The next year was the year of the great plague or Black Death. Bernardo bade his brethren leave their seclusion, and go forth on works of mercy among the sick. Some went to Florence, some to Siena, others to the smaller hill-set towns of Tuscany. All were bidden to assemble on the feast of the Assumption at Siena. Here the founder addressed his spiritual children for the last time. Soon afterwards he died himself, at the age of seventy-seven, and the place of his grave is not known. He was beatified by the Church for his great virtues.

At noon we started, four of us, in an open waggonette with a pair of horses, for Monte Oliveto, the luggage heaped mountain-high and tied in a top-heavy mass above us. After leaving the gateway, with its massive fortifications and frescoed arches, the road passes into a dull earthy country, very much like some parts—and not the best parts—of England. The beauty of the Sienese contado is clearly on the sandstone, not upon the clay. Hedges, haystacks, isolated farms—all were English in their details. Only the vines, and mulberries, and wattled waggons drawn by oxen, most Roman in aspect, reminded us we were in Tuscany. In such *carpenta* may the vestal virgins have ascended the Capitol. It is the primitive war-chariot also, capable of holding four with ease ; and Romulus may have mounted with the images of Roman gods in even such a vehicle to Latiarian Jove upon the Alban hill. Nothing changes in Italy. The wooden ploughs are those which Virgil knew. The sight of one of them would save an intelligent lad much trouble in mastering a certain passage of the Georgics.

Siena is visible behind us nearly the whole way to Buon Convento, a little town where the Emperor Henry VII. died, as it was supposed, of poison, in 1313. It is still circled with the wall and gates built by the Sienese in 1366, and is a fair specimen of an intact mediæval stronghold. Here we leave the main road, and break into a country-track across a bed of sandstone, with the delicate volcanic lines of Monte Amiata in front, and the aerial pile of Montalcino to our right. The pyracanthus bushes in the hedge yield their clusters of bright yellow berries, mingled with more glowing hues of red from haws and glossy hips. On the pale grey earthen slopes men and women are plying the long Sabellian hoes of their forefathers, and ploughmen are driving furrows down steep hills. The labour of the husbandmen in

Tuscany is very graceful, partly, I think, because it is so primitive, but also because the people have an eminently noble carriage, and are fashioned on the lines of antique statues. I noticed two young *contadini* in one field, whom Frederick Walker might have painted with the dignity of Pheidian form. They were guiding their ploughs along a hedge of olive-trees, slanting upwards, the white-horned oxen moving slowly through the marl, and the lads bending to press the ploughshares home. It was a delicate piece of colour—the grey mist of olive branches, the warm smoking earth, the creamy flanks of the oxen, the brown limbs and dark eyes of the men, who paused awhile to gaze at us, with shadows cast upon the furrows from their tall straight figures. Then they turned to their work again, and rhythmic movement was added to the picture. I wonder when an Italian artist will condescend to pluck these flowers of beauty, so abundantly offered by the simplest things in his own native land. Each city has an *Accademia delle Belle Arti*, and there is no lack of students. But the painters, having learned their trade, make copies ten times distant from the truth of famous masterpieces for the American market. Few seem to look beyond their picture galleries. Thus the great democratic art, the art of life and nature and the people, waits.

As we mount, the soil grows of a richer brown; and there are woods of oak where herds of swine are feeding on the acorns. Monte Oliveto comes in sight—a mass of red brick, backed up with cypresses, among dishevelled earthy precipices, *balze* as they are called—upon the hill below the village of Chiusure. This Chiusure was once a promising town; but the life was crushed out of it in the throes of mediæval civil wars, and since the thirteenth century it has been dwindling to a hamlet. The struggle for existence, from which the larger communes of this district, Siena and Montepulciano, emerged at the expense of their neighbours, must have been tragical. The *balze* now grow sterner, drier, more dreadful. We see how deluges outpoured from thunderstorms bring down their viscous streams of loam, destroying in an hour the terraces it took a year to build, and spreading wasteful mud upon the scanty corn-fields. The people call this soil *creta*; but it seems to be less like a chalk, than a marl, or *marna*. It is always washing away into ravines and gullies, exposing the roots of trees, and rendering the tillage of the land a thankless labour. One marvels how any vegetation has the faith to settle on its dreary waste, or how men have the patience, generation after generation, to renew the industry, still beginning, never ending, which reclaims such wildernesses. Comparing Monte Oliveto with similar districts of cretaceous soil—with the country, for example, between Pienza and San Quirico—we perceive how much is owed to the perseverance of the monks whom Bernard Tolomei planted here. So far as it is clothed at all with crop and wood, this is their service.

At last we climb the crowning hill, emerge from a copse of oak, glide along a terraced pathway through the broom, and find ourselves in front of the convent gateway. A substantial tower of red brick, machico-

lated at the top and pierced with small square windows, guards this portal, reminding us that at some time or other the monks found it needful to arm their solitude against a force descending from Chiùsure. There is an avenue of slender cypresses; and over the gate, protected by a jutting roof, shines a fresco of Madonna and Child. Passing rapidly downwards, we are in the courtyard of the monastery among its stables, barns, and outhouses, with the forlorn bulk of the huge red building, spreading wide, and towering up above us. As good luck ruled our arrival, we came face to face with the Abbate de Negro, who administers the domain of Monte Oliveto for the Government of Italy, and exercises a kindly hospitality to chance-comers. He was standing near the church, which, with its tall square campanile, breaks the long stern outline of the convent. The whole edifice, it may be said, is composed of a red brick inclining to purple in tone, which contrasts not unpleasantly with the lustrous green of the cypresses, and the glaucous sheen of olives. Advantage has been taken of a steep crest; and the monastery, enlarged from time to time through the last five centuries, has here and there been reared upon gigantic buttresses, which jut upon the *balze* at a sometimes giddy height.

The Abbate received us with true courtesy, and gave us spacious rooms, three cells apiece, facing Siena and the western mountains. There is accommodation, he told us, for three hundred monks; but only three are left in it. As this order was confined to members of the nobility, each of the religious had his own apartment—not a cubicle such as the uninstructed dream of when they read of monks, but separate chambers for sleep and study and recreation.

In the middle of the vast sad landscape, the place is still, with a silence that can be almost heard. The deserted state of those innumerable cells, those echoing corridors and shadowy cloisters, exercises overpowering tyranny over the imagination. Siena is so far away, and Montalcino is so faintly outlined on its airy parapet, that these cities only deepen our sense of desolation. It is a relief to mark at no great distance on the hill-side a contadino guiding his oxen, and from a lonely farm yon column of ascending smoke. At least the world goes on, and life is somewhere resonant with song. But here there rests a pall of silence among the oak groves and the cypresses and *balze*. As I leaned and mused, while Christian (my good friend and fellow-traveller from the Grisons) made our beds, a melancholy sunset flamed up from a rampart of cloud, built like a city of the air above the mountains of Volterra—fire issuing from its battlements, and smiting the fretted roof of heaven above. It was a conflagration of celestial rose upon the saddest purples and cavernous recesses of intensest azure.

We had an excellent supper in the visitors' refectory—soup, good bread and country wine, ham, a roast chicken with potatoes, a nice white cheese made of sheep's milk, and grapes for dessert. The kind Abbate sat by, and watched his four guests eat, tapping his tortoise-shell snuffbox, and telling us many interesting things about the past and pre-

sent state of the convent. Our company was completed with Lupo, the pet cat, and Pirro, a woolly Corsican dog, very good friends, and both enormously voracious. Lupo in particular engraved himself upon the memory of Christian, into whose large legs he thrust his claws, when the cheese-parings and scraps were not supplied him with sufficient promptitude. I never saw a hungrier and bolder cat. It made one fancy that even the mice had been exiled from this solitude. And truly the rule of the monastic order, no less than the habit of Italian gentlemen, is frugal in the matter of the table, beyond the conception of northern folk.

Monte Oliveto, the Superior told us, owned thirty-two *poderi*, or large farms, of which five have recently been sold. They are worked on the *mezzeria* system, whereby peasants and proprietors divide the produce of the soil, and which he thinks far inferior for developing the resources to that of *affitto*, or lease-holding.

The contadini live in scattered houses; and he says the estate would be greatly improved by doubling the number of these dwellings, and letting the subdivided farms to more energetic people. The village of Chiusure is inhabited by labourers. The contadini are poor: a dower, for instance, of fifty *lire* is thought something: whereas near Genoa, upon the leasehold system, a farmer may sometimes provide a dower of twenty thousand *lire*. The country produces grain of different sorts, excellent oil, and timber. It also yields a tolerable red wine. The Government makes from eight to nine per cent. upon the value of the land, employing him and his two religious brethren as agents.

In such conversation the evening passed. We rested well in large hard beds with dry rough sheets. But there was a fretful wind abroad, which went wailing round the convent walls and rattling the doors in its deserted corridors. One of our party had been placed by himself at the end of a long suite of apartments, with balconies commanding the wide sweep of hills that Monte Amiata crowns. He confessed in the morning to having passed a restless night, tormented by the ghostly noises of the wind, a wanderer, "like the world's rejected guest," through those untenanted chambers. The olives tossed their filmy boughs in twilight underneath his windows, sighing and shuddering, with a sheen in them as eery as that of willows by some haunted mere.

The great attraction to students of Italian art in the convent of Monte Oliveto is a large square cloister, covered with wall-paintings by Luca Signorelli and Giovannantonio Bazzi, surnamed Il Sodoma. These represent various episodes in the life of S. Benedict; while one picture, in some respects the best of the whole series, is devoted to the founder of the Olivetan Order, Bernardo Tolomei, dispensing the rule of his institution to a consistory of white-robed monks. Signorelli, that great master of Cortona, may be studied to better advantage elsewhere, especially at Orvieto and in his native city. His work in this cloister, consisting of eight frescoes, has been much spoiled by time and restoration. Yet it can be referred to a good period of his artistic activity, the year 1497, and displays much which is specially characteristic of his manner. In Totila's

barbaric train, he painted a crowd of fierce emphatic figures, combining all ages and the most varied attitudes, and reproducing with singular vividness the Italian soldiers of adventure of his day. We see before us the long-haired followers of Braccio and the Baglioni; their handsome savage faces; their brawny limbs clad in the particoloured hose and jackets of that period; feathered caps stuck sideways on their heads; a splendid swagger in their straddling legs. Female beauty lay outside the sphere of Signorelli's sympathy; and in the Monte Oliveto cloister he was not called upon to paint it. But none of the Italian masters felt more keenly, or more powerfully represented in their work, the muscular vigour of young manhood. Two of the remaining frescoes, different from these in motive, might be selected as no less characteristic of Signorelli's manner. One represents three sturdy monks, clad in brown, working with all their strength to stir a boulder, which has been bewitched, and needs a miracle to move it from its place. The square, powerfully outlined design of these figures is beyond all praise for its effect of massive solidity. The other shows us the interior of a fifteenth century tavern, where two monks are regaling themselves upon the sly. A country girl, with shapely arms and shoulders, her upper skirts tucked round the ample waist to which broad sweeping lines of back and breasts descend, is serving wine. The exuberance of animal life, the freedom of attitude expressed in this, the mainly interesting figure of the composition, show that Signorelli might have been a great master of realistic painting. Nor are the accessories less effective. A wide-roofed kitchen-chimney, a page-boy leaving the room by a flight of steps, which leads to the house door, and the table at which the truant monks are seated, complete a picture of homely Italian life. It may still be matched out of many an inn in this hill-district.

Called to graver work at Orvieto, where he painted his gigantic series of frescoes illustrating the coming of Antichrist, the destruction of the world, the Resurrection, the Last Judgment, and the final state of souls in Paradise and Hell, Signorelli left his work at Monte Oliveto unaccomplished. Seven years later it was taken up by a painter of very different genius. Sodoma was a native of Vercelli, and had received his first training in the Lombard schools, which owed so much to Lionardo da Vinci's influence. He was about thirty years of age when chance brought him to Siena. Here he made acquaintance with Pandolfo Petrucci, who had recently established himself in a species of tyranny over the Republic. The work he did for this patron and other nobles of Siena brought him into notice. Vasari observes that his hot Lombard colouring, a something florid and attractive in his style, which contrasted with the severity of the Tuscan school, rendered him no less agreeable as an artist than his free manners made him acceptable as a house-friend. Fra Domenico da Leccio, also a Lombard, was at that time general of the monks of Monte Oliveto. On a visit to this compatriot in 1505, Sodoma received a commission to complete the cloister; and during the next two years he worked there, producing in all twenty-five

frescoes. For his pains he seems to have received but little pay—Vasari says, only the expenses of some colour-grinders who assisted him; but from the books of the convent it appears that 241 ducats, or something over 60*l.* of our money, were disbursed to him.

Sodoma was so singular a fellow, even in that age of piquant personalities, that it may be worth while to translate a fragment of Vasari's gossip about him. We must, however, bear in mind that, for some unknown reason, the Aretine historian bore a rancorous grudge against this Lombard, whose splendid gifts and great achievements he did all he could by writing to depreciate. "He was fond," says Vasari, "of keeping in his house all sorts of strange animals: badgers, squirrels, monkeys, cat-a-mountains, dwarf-donkeys, horses, racers, little Elba ponies, jack-daws, bantams, doves of India, and other creatures of this kind, as many as he could lay his hands on. Over and above these beasts, he had a raven, which had learned so well from him to talk, that it could imitate its master's voice, especially in answering the door when some one knocked, and this it did so cleverly that people took it for Giovannantonio himself, as all the folk of Siena know quite well. In like manner, his other pets were so much at home with him that they never left his house, but played the strangest tricks and maddest pranks imaginable, so that his house was like nothing more than a Noah's Ark." He was a bold rider, it seems; for with one of his racers, ridden by himself, he bore away the prize in that wild horse-race they run upon the Piazza at Siena. For the rest, "he attired himself in pompous clothes, wearing doublets of brocade, cloaks trimmed with gold lace, gorgeous caps, neck-chains, and other vanities of a like description, fit for buffoons and mountebanks." In one of the frescoes of Monte Oliveto, Sodoma painted his own portrait, with some of his curious pets around him. He there appears as a young man with large and decidedly handsome features, a great shock of dark curled hair escaping from a yellow cap, and flowing down over a rich mantle which drapes his shoulders. If we may trust Vasari, he showed his curious humours freely to the monks. "Nobody could describe the amusement he furnished to those good fathers, who christened him *Mattaccio* (the big madman), or the insane tricks he played there."

In spite of Vasari's malevolence, the portrait he has given us of Bazzi has so far nothing unpleasant about it. The man seems to have been a madcap artist, combining with his love for his profession a taste for fine clothes, and what was then, perhaps, rarer in people of his sort, a great partiality for living creatures of all kinds. The darker shades of Vasari's picture have been purposely omitted from these pages. We only know for certain, about Bazzi's private life, that he was married in 1510 to a certain Beatrice, who bore him two children, and who was still living with him in 1541. The further suggestion that he painted at Monte Oliveto subjects unworthy of a religious house, is wholly disproved by the frescoes which still exist in a state of very tolerable pre-

servation. They represent various episodes in the legend of S. Benedict ; all marked by that spirit of simple, almost childish piety which is a special characteristic of Italian religious history. The series forms, in fact, a painted *novella* of monastic life ; its petty jealousies, its petty trials, its tribulations and temptations, and its indescribably petty miracles. Bazzi was well fitted for the execution of this task. He had a swift and facile brush, considerable versatility in the treatment of monotonous subjects, and a never-failing sense of humour. His white-cowled monks, some of them with the rosy freshness of boys, some with the handsome brown faces of middle life, others astute and crafty, others again wrinkled with old age, have clearly been copied from real models. He puts them into action without the slightest effort, and surrounds them with landscapes, architecture, and furniture, appropriate to each successive situation. The whole is done with so much grace, such simplicity of composition, and transparency of style, corresponding to the *naïf* and superficial legend, that we feel a perfect harmony between the artist's mind and the motives he was made to handle. In this respect Bazzi's portion of the legend of S. Benedict is more successful than Signorelli's. It was fortunate, perhaps, that the conditions of his task confined him to uncomplicated groupings, and a scale of colour in which white predominates. For Bazzi, as is shown by subsequent work in the Farnesina Villa at Rome, and in the church of S. Domenico at Siena, was no master of composition ; and the tone, even of his masterpieces, inclines to heat. Unlike Signorelli, Bazzi felt a deep artistic sympathy with female beauty ; and the most attractive fresco in the whole series is that in which the evil monk Florentius brings a bevy of fair damsels to the convent. There is one group, in particular, of six women, so delicately varied in carriage of the head and suggested movement of the body, as to be comparable only to a strain of concerted music. This is, perhaps, the painter's masterpiece in the rendering of pure beauty, if we except his S. Sebastian of the Uffizzi.

We tire of studying pictures, hardly less than of reading about them ! I was glad enough, after three hours spent among the frescoes of this cloister, to wander forth into the copses which surround the convent. Sunlight was streaming treacherously from flying clouds ; and though it was high noon, the oak-leaves were still a-tremble with dew. Pink cyclamens and yellow amaryllis starred the moist brown earth ; and under the cypress trees, where alleys had been cut in former time for pious feet, the short firm turf was soft and mossy. Before bidding the hospitable Padre farewell, and starting in our waggonette for Asciano, it was pleasant to meditate awhile in these green solitudes. Generations of white-stoled monks who had sat or knelt upon the now deserted terraces, or had slowly paced the winding paths to Calvaries aloft and points of vantage high above the wood, rose up before me. My mind, still full of Bazzi's frescoes, peopled the wilderness with grave monastic forms, and gracious, young-eyed faces of boyish novices.

“Poor White Trash.”

CHRONOLOGY is no test of antiquity. Wherever we see progressive, restless men, politicians, artists, men of affairs and society, like our beloved Periklean Greeks, we feel that they are men of to-day, our own inspiring and instructive companions. Wherever we see stationary, contented men, who plough with a stick, and fight with a club, think the earth to be flat and their ancestors gods, there are your ancient, outgrown generations, whatever their date. Thus, the primitive ages of bronze and stone still linger among Patagonian and Oceanic savages; Homeric races exist in Russia and Africa; you can see what feudalism was if you hasten to Japan before the race it there has reared passes away; and yes, you may even see your own ancestors in the heart of the Appalachians of the eastern United States.

I have made personal experience of these truths lately, in a visit of two months to the mountain region of Kentucky. I was there so shut off from the nineteenth century that it was like a dream to think that out beyond the mountain-barrier, existed a contemporaneous world, full of ideas, projects, motion. And now, how like a dream it is, to think that in the heart of *this* world exists that other, of men who have never heard the shriek of an engine, the click of the telegraph, the whirr of machinery; of men who, in many cases, neither read nor write, who never take a newspaper, and who often can barely count ten. These are the “no account” people, the “poor white trash.”

They are attached to the land in two relations: they are either tenants of some large landholder, and pay their rent in produce; or, more rarely, they are independent owners of little “patches.” In either case, they raise an easy living of maize and bacon, and are therewith content. They all live in log-houses, with a great chimney at one end, into which a mighty fireplace, fit for a yule-log, opens from the interior. I was quite startled, a few days ago, by seeing identically such a chimney in the vicinity of Ely. The wide chinks between the badly-fitting logs are plastered up in winter with mud, which is knocked out in summer to let the breezes in. Many of these houses have no window, and depend for light on the door or the fire, according to the season. I once had occasion to need a candle in the night, but I was seventeen miles from a match, and had to send to a neighbouring house, whence my wants were supplied by a pine torch, lit from the embers on the hearth. I have never seen more than three rooms in a house, and frequently there is but one. In this the whole household sleep, and the “stranger within their gates” shares with them the floor and fire.

My Kentucky hostess was the owner of something like three thousand acres of land, and in her company I visited many of the "poor white trash," tenants on her own or neighbouring farms. One Saturday, we went to see a "foot washing" at a little church several miles away. Soon after breakfast, my friend and I were in the saddle and on the way—a charming way, through the bright American air of an October morning; up-hill and down-hill, through woodland and clearing, now by rough and stony paths, now by bits of half-made road, and over the creeks by primitive fords. It needed but a change of costume and one wild bugle-call, to change us all to mediæval times. Rounded mountains stretch away from the rough wooded knolls close by to the soft purple curves in the horizon. Ragged cultivation varies the scene with interest, if not with beauty. Here, the wild verdure of a square of woodland has been all burned away; the tall trunks, stripped and blackened, stand gaunt in the midst of rank, uneven maize or sweet potatoes. There, the whole valley lies open to the sun and rich in corn. Every mile or so, a little log-cabin sits in a varied growth of beans, potatoes, maize and tobacco; over its fence sprangles a squash-vine in ungainly joy, and the precious melon patch has not yet lost all its melons, prime resource of Kentucky hospitality in these autumn days. The cabin has for its roof-tree, perhaps, two or three tall stalks of sorghum, waving about their dried-up, long, yellowish pennons; but more likely it has a high-grown castor-oil bean, whose palmate leaves and dead-red, clustered fruit give a tropical sense to the eye. Doubtless, too, it has a "piazza," emulating the stately pillared coolness of the southern villa by a shaggy roof of bark upheld by crotched saplings, fresh cut from the wood. Under it stands the water-pail, a dried gourd floating about in it to serve as a glass; under it hang the saddles and brooms, the gear of house and cattle; under it, perhaps, an old woman sits spinning or weaving.

Often we pass by groves of young pawpaws, whose long leaves already cover the ground with a yellow carpet. Here and there a solitary fruit clings to the twig, but for the most part they have fallen to the children and pigs, who have a great appetite for this small, insipid, banana-like fruit. The pigs have not given up hope yet, and still haunt about, rustling the dry leaves, and every now and then suddenly running forth into the road, to the terror, which seems half-playful, of our horses, who veer at every appearance of the black little beasts.

Occasionally, we meet a woman slowly jogging along on horseback, a child behind her, lightly holding by her dress, while another sits in her lap. In some mysterious way she seems to manage with perfect ease the horse, the baby, the switch, and the umbrella she holds above her. Passengers are few, however; those we do meet pass us with a bow and an indistinct greeting, unless, as is generally the case, they know my friend, when they say, "How do you make it, Miss Laura?" to which she cheerfully replies, "Very well, thank you."

When we reach the last creek, the horses wade into the deepest

middle, and there stop to drink, while we look up and down. It is a pretty scene—the broad clear stream overhung with rich foliage, sun and shadow and reflection playing in its waters, green mosses glinting brightly here and there where a rough root or boulder lifts them into morning light. And over the stepping-stones down at the turn of the creek, in her brilliant white sun-bonnet, goes a Kentucky maid, barefoot and slender, with a water-melon under her arm.

A pull up the steepish bank, a moment's ride in a noble native avenue of oaks, and we are at the church. It is a rough structure of hewn logs; at one end, a huge outside chimney rises, made of stones picked from the field or the stream, and unshaped by any tool. Just six logs make the side wall. From one of these logs, a longish section has been cut, and into this a rude window fitted, two panes high and several long. Below it flaps a board which serves as a blind at night. Thus Kentucky gains that necessary "dim religious light." The ragweed grows undisturbed up to the walls on every side, and a row of saddled horses stand tied to the "snake-fence" close by. These two facts alone indicate that this rough cabin is a church. It must be admitted, however, that it is built far more solidly and carefully than most houses in this region.

Within, two or three rough benches stand about at every angle, as they may; one or two seats are made of boards, laid across stones that are equal neither in stability nor height. A rough kind of scaffolding serves as a pulpit, on which now stand a water-pail, a rusty tin basin, and two or three straw hats.

Like house, like audience; the women are all in sun-bonnets, the plainest of calico gowns and great aprons—the men in homespun or jeans, and mostly in homespun. They sit about as it chances; a great dog lies sleeping in the middle of the floor; a little boy tries a somersault once in a while over the back of a bench; a bareheaded woman with her hair down her back, sits nursing her child on the floor, with two or three half-grown girls in slouchy sun-bonnets for company; others walk about as the spirit moves them; but as for the preacher—like Tennyson's brook,

"Men may come and men may go, but he goes on for ever."

At last, a short intermission is announced, in which the people sit around on the grass outside and eat great lunches, which they have brought in carpet-bags hung to their saddlehorns. Presently, a sort of discordant wail sounds forth from the church; it is intended for the singing of a hymn, and the people slowly put up their ancient carpet-bags and return to the service. The Communion proper now begins. There is at first nothing unusual about it except its style. During our absence a rough little table, unsteady in the legs, has been set out and covered with a coarse but clean white cloth. Upon this stands a bottle of wine and two glasses, and two plates of unleavened bread. After the latter is passed, what is left is tumbled off upon the table, and a glass

of wine set on each plate. When this returns its remaining contents are carefully poured back into the bottle through a funnel, an operation which absorbs the whole interest of the congregation. Without waiting for the end of the services, nor in fact for anything else, a woman immediately comes up and hustles the whole "plunder" into her carpet-bag. Meanwhile her "back-hair" falls down, but nothing disturbs the preacher, who goes right on, solemnly and regularly.

The peculiar part of the Communion, the foot-washing, now followed, for this sect believes that we are bound to obey the command to wash one another's feet as literally as the other commands given in regard to the sacrament. The preacher, telling them to prepare by taking off their shoes, pulled off his coat, tied a towel about his waist, took the basin and washed the feet of the nearest man; he, in turn, washed his neighbour's feet, and so on, the last man washing the preacher's feet. The women did not join in this part of the ceremony. After it was over, the preacher tried to turn the water out of a broken window-pane, but, not succeeding, he set down the basin with great deliberation as though he had attempted nothing.

Now followed a hymn. There was but one hymn-book in the whole church. This the minister and three men, chosen for their stentorian powers, held between them after the fashion of one of Luca della Robbia's groups. The minister read a line, then everyone sang it independently, coming to a sudden stop at the end and waiting for the next line. Thus they worked their way through to the end of four stanzas; the whole congregation then stood until the minister, with much seriousness, shook hands with each one. The "foot-washing" was over. The women climbed into their saddles with the help of the snake-fence or of the stout hand of some friend, and all were off.

The dignity of these later proceedings had been no less striking than their simplicity. These people had been present at what was, to them, a rare and impressive ceremony, and their feeling for it made an atmosphere which any sensitive visitor must feel, in spite of the dog, the rusty basin, the sun-bonnets and the logs; the human spirit makes its own drama. This had been a sacred place and a sacred time to these hearts; to them there had been no incongruities. To us, doubtless, fresh from Boston Trinity, its congregation and its pastor, this rough cabin, this rude pastor and his ruder flock, seemed foreign enough to all our ideas of worship; but these people had no such standard; church and service alike were in perfect harmony with their whole life and with all their ideas; *we*, indeed, were the incongruous element, with our outside manners and fashions.

As we were leaving the church, the preacher invited us and nearly half his congregation beside, home to dinner. He himself belonged to rather the better class of "poor whites." He had three rooms in his house, sent his children to school, sometimes even taught school himself. The room into which he first introduced us was furnished with two great

feather-beds, a spinning-wheel, and a table; his water-pail had a tin dipper in it instead of a gourd. I laid my hat aside on the bed, when it was speedily, though with some shyness, seized on by the women, who presently began to "try it on." The men meanwhile sat and talked, rocking their chairs back and forth. I was pleased to hear the preacher close a discussion upon the dogma of foot-washing in the following liberal words:—"I read the Book that we should wash feet; the early disciples practised it as much as they did the rest of the sacrament, and ez for those who say we have no recórd of it, neither have we any recórd of the practise of the rest of the sacrament. But if anybody reads the Book differently, let him believe it, and *all be friendly*." He was a man of breadth in his own range. The talk then ran off to politics, the grand question being—if a man might carry "concealed weepsons." The majority of the company were of the decided opinion that he should be allowed to carry them, but be "brought up right smart," if he used them for anything but self-defence.

Dinner was now ready; although about a dozen great water-melons had already been eaten; but the Kentuckian never counts water-melons. On our first arrival, a dog had been sent out to catch the chickens, while the two daughters ground maize for fresh meal, between two millstones! We had for dinner everything that the land and the season could produce—chicken, bacon, green maize, beans, sweet and Irish potatoes, honey and baked apples, biscuit, "cookies," cake, and a jovial apple-pudding. We could barely catch a glimpse of the table-cloth, and we sat crowded up between a door and a bed behind us, and the feast before us. The meat was passed on great platters, from which we helped ourselves, with our own knives and forks; and butter was served in the same style.

But if we had neither napkins nor pie-plates, still we had a fly-flap; for a small boy hovered behind us, wearing the most preposterous hard round hat that civilisation can produce, or barbarism admire—the only thing of the kind I ever saw a "poor white" have—and he waved above us a long pawpaw-switch with the hand that happened to be out of his pocket.

Here again, as at the church, we were struck with a certain dignity arising from self-respect, content, an easy hospitality and unconscious ignorance.

I do not need to multiply proofs of the status of this people in material civilisation; every traveller in the southern United States can tell scores of stories to illustrate it. Their ideas and their morals are co-ordinate with their habits and their manners. Their crimes are not the cool, calculating crimes of the intellect; but the hot, quick crimes of the passions are common—one even hears of murder with startling frequency.

One of the most striking characteristics of the "poor white trash" is content: I mean by that, an utter lack of emulation and ambition.

They care neither for better houses, schools, nor churches, nor even for better clothes or more money. They indeed "let the world wag on as it will," with little care and less thought.

How came men so ancient in their type, so indifferent to progress or "style," to exist in the heart of the nineteenth century, in the United States, at that? Slavery and isolation have done it. They sprang from slavery and will continue, until the railroad breaks the spell of the mountains, their simple, peaceful life. In former times they had no money with which to buy slaves, machinery, and land, and so could not compete as farmers; on the other hand, there was no room for them as farm-labourers. So they settled down on unoccupied lands, and became in time the contented owners of little patches that supported them. Slavery, to be sure, no longer exists; but the habit continues wherever the new life does not penetrate; and the new life does not penetrate readily over roads varied by the deepest of ruts and the largest of stones, and changing their course from season to season, now to get around a fallen tree, and now to avoid the effects of a flood.

So they go on, all by themselves, jogging along on horseback, clad in homespun, content with the primitive plenty of maize and bacon, pleased with the luxuries of water-melons and the entertainments of the "meeting-house," buried at last on the sunny hillside. The world without asks nought of them, nor they ought of the world without.

As soon as the railroads enter, all will change. First of all, they will bring a market; at once with them will come a sense of a wider world, a motive to labour for more than daily bread. Their very existence will carry a motion and a thrill to the heart of every region within hearing-range of their shrieking engines; they will teach what education and business are worth—the ideas of men and the use of the world.

But, one is tempted to ask, why not let these Arcadians alone? Why should we wish them to exchange their simple, easy, assured living, their contented quiet minds, their hospitable hearts, for the complex conditions of a high civilisation, for anxious, driving ambitions, for the hard selfishness of a life-and-death competition?

There is an old saga of a king and queen to whom a fair son was born. Twelve fairies came to the christening, each with a gift. A noble presence, wisdom, strength, beauty—all were poured upon him until it seemed he must excel all mortal men. Then came the twelfth fairy with the gift of discontent, but the angry father turned away the fairy and her gift. And the lad grew apace, a wonder of perfect powers; but, content in their possession, he cared to use them for neither good nor ill; there was no eagerness in him; good-natured and quiet, he let life use him as it would. And at last the king knew that the rejected had been the crowning gift.

The Sun as a Perpetual Machine.

AMONG the problems which have proved most perplexing to astronomers and physicists, there are few which surpass in difficulty the problem of the conservation of solar energy. The mighty orb of the sun pours forth in each second of time as much heat as would come from the burning of 16,436 millions of millions of tons of the best anthracite coal. Yet of all this tremendous radiation of heat all the planets together receive less than one 230,000,000th part. When we consider this it seems at first view as though there were some degree of truth in the saying that in the universe "we find Nature upsetting a gallon to fill a wine-glass."

In company with this great mystery of seeming waste comes the yet more difficult problem, How to explain the apparent continuance of solar light and heat during millions of years. We know from the results of geological research that the earth has been exposed to the action of the solar rays with their present activity during at least a hundred million years. Yet it is difficult to see how on any hypothesis of the generation of solar heat, or by combining together all possible modes of heat generation, a supply for more than 20 millions of years in the past and a possible supply for as long a period in the future can be accounted for.

It is well known, of course, to all who are likely to read these lines that Dr. Siemens is the inventor of what is called the regenerative furnace, in which the heat, which in ordinary furnaces goes up the furnace chimney and is wasted, is carried back and made to do work. His theory of the solar heat seems to have been suggested by this invention of his own. The enormous waste of solar energy which unquestionably takes place if those rays which do not fall on planets do not do their proper work is obviated, he believes, by a contrivance (if one may so speak) which enables them to store up work in interstellar space, which is presently brought back to its source for fresh use. According to this view, and it is this which renders the theory attractive to many who had been appalled by the seemingly wanton waste of all save the minutest fraction of the sun's heat, only those rays which fall on the planets are actually and finally used up, so that, if the theory be true, the supply of solar heat will last 230 millions of times longer than it otherwise would. Moreover, the theory has its retrospective side. The difficulty about the past would be removed as completely as what had seemed a danger in the future. If the theory is correct we may multiply every year during

which it had been calculated that the supply has continued by 230 millions, to obtain a rough approximation to the time during which the sun has actually been at work at his present rate of emission.

In the first place we are to assume that the gaseous atmospheres surrounding the sun and the planets are not limited, as Wollaston and others have supposed, but extend to indefinite distances, though of course in a very attenuated condition. "Following out the molecular theory of gases as laid down by Clerk Maxwell, Clausius, and Thomson," says Dr. Siemens, "it would be difficult to assign a limit to a gaseous atmosphere in space; and further, some writers, among whom I will here mention only Grove, Humboldt, Zöllner, and Mattieu Williams, have boldly asserted the existence of a space filled with matter, and Newton himself, as Dr. Sterry Hunt tells us, has expressed views in favour of such an assumption." He proceeds to notice the evidence in favour of this view derived from the condition in which meteorolites reach the earth. They are known, he says, to contain as much as six times their own volume of gases (taken at atmospheric pressure). In one of these meteorolites recently examined by Dr. Flight, the following percentages of various gases were noted. Of carbonic oxide 31·88, of carbonic acid gas 0·12, of hydrogen 45·79, of olefiant gas 4·55, and of nitrogen 17·66. Here, however, I may note in passing that although it is quite certain these gases were not taken up by the meteorolite during its flight through our air, it by no means follows, and is indeed exceedingly improbable, if not impossible, that they were taken up while the meteorolite was travelling freely through interplanetary or interstellar space. The general belief is that, as the late Professor Graham aptly expressed it, these bodies bring to us the hydrogen of the fixed stars (including our own sun)—that, in fact, they were expelled from bodies in a state resembling our sun, and that during their abode within the intensely hot orb of their parent sun, the hydrogen and other gases which we know to exist in the sun and his fellow stars were forced into (or became occluded in) the substance of the mass which was afterwards to become a meteorolite, and after long and devious wanderings to reach our earth. Thus, and thus only it is believed by chemists, can the enormous quantity of occluded hydrogen in the substance of meteors be explained; for nowhere else, but in the interior of suns, is there either the necessary heat or the necessary pressure. The absence of any trace of aqueous vapour, which Dr. Siemens finds surprising, as indeed it is on his theory, is thus readily accounted for; indeed, no one would expect to find aqueous vapour in the substance of a meteoric mass which had ever had its abode in the interior of a sun.

Dr. Siemens considers the objection that if interplanetary space were occupied by gases, the planets would be seriously retarded, pointing out that, assuming the matter occupying space to be an almost perfect fluid not limited by border surfaces, it can be shown on purely mechanical grounds that the retardation by friction through such an attenuated

medium would be very slight indeed, even on bodies moving with planetary velocities.

He notes also another objection, namely, that if the theory of gaseous interplanetary matter were true the sun should draw to himself the greater part of the heavier gases, such as carbonic acid gas (carbonic anhydride), carbonic oxide, oxygen and nitrogen; whereas spectroscopic analysis indicates at least the much greater prevalence of hydrogen, if not the absolute absence of these gases. Oxygen, indeed, has been shown by Dr. Draper to be present in the sun. Dr. Siemens points out that at the tremendous heat of the sun's mass such compound gases as carbonic oxide and carbonic acid could not exist as such. But he says that there must be regions, outside the intensely heated regions, where the existence of these gases would not be jeopardised by heat; and in these regions accumulation of these comparatively heavy gases would take place "were it not for a certain counterbalancing action."

And here we approach what Dr. Siemens describes as a point of principal importance in his argument, upon the proof of which his further conclusions must depend.

The sun rotates on his axis, completing one revolution in about twenty-five days, and "the sun's diameter being taken at 882,000 miles" (it is really considerably less than this, however), "it follows that the tangential velocity amounts to 1.25 miles per second, or to 4.41 times the tangential velocity of our earth. This high rotative velocity of the sun must cause" (it is Dr. Siemens who speaks) "an equatorial rise of the solar atmosphere to which Mairan, in 1731, attributed the appearance of the zodiacal light." He goes on to consider Laplace's objection to this explanation on the ground that the zodiacal light extends to a distance from the sun exceeding our own distance, whereas the equatorial rise of the solar atmosphere due to its rotation could not exceed 9-20ths of the distance of Mercury." But Dr. Siemens finds in the existence of a medium of unbounded extension an answer to Laplace's objection. "In this case," he says, "pressures would be balanced all round, and the sun would act mechanically upon the floating matter surrounding it, in the manner of a fan, drawing it towards itself upon the solar surfaces, and projecting it outwards in a continuous disc-like stream."

Now it is just at this critical part of the theory, on the proof of which the further conclusions of the theorist must depend, that dynamical considerations throw doubt, and something more than doubt, upon the entire speculation.

We have a supposed fan-like action, by which hydrogen, hydrocarbons, and oxygen, are supposed to be drawn in enormous quantities towards the polar surface of the sun. During their approach they are supposed to pass from their condition of extreme attenuation and extreme cold, to that of compression, accompanied with rise of temperature, until on approaching the photosphere they burst into flame, giving rise to a great development of heat, and a temperature commensurate with their

point of dissociation at the solar density. The result of their combustion is aqueous vapour and carbonic acid or carbonic oxide, according to the sufficiency or insufficiency of oxygen present to complete the combustion, and these products of combustion in yielding to the influence of centrifugal force will flow towards the solar equator. . . . *So much* we may regard as possible, though much would have to be proved before it could be regarded as probable. But Dr. Siemens goes on to say that the matter thus carried towards the solar equator *will be thence projected into space.*

Now there can be nothing simpler than the considerations on which such projection into space would depend. The question whether a body moving in a particular way at any part of the sun's surface will travel outwards into space, or will not travel outwards, can be answered according to certain very definite laws. If the velocity of its motion exceeds a certain amount, the body will recede from the sun; if it falls short of that amount the body will tend to approach the sun's centre; if the body has just that velocity, then the body will neither recede nor approach. Now it suggests the idea of tremendous centrifugal tendency to say that at the sun's equator the velocity is 4.41 times the tangential velocity (at the equator) of our earth. Bodies do not fly from our earth's equator on account of the enormous tangential velocity there (more than a thousand miles per hour); but it is easy to imagine, as Dr. Siemens evidently does, that with the much greater velocity at the sun's equator there may be such a tendency as his theory requires. What is, however, the actual state of the case? Centrifugal tendency varies in the first place as the square of the velocity; and squaring 4.41 we get 19.45; so that if our earth were to rotate 4.41 times as fast as she actually does, the centrifugal force at the equator would be increased 19.45 times. Even that would not be nearly enough to make bodies fly off at the equator. (In fact it can easily be shown that for bodies just to become weightless at the equator the earth should rotate in $1\frac{1}{3}$ hours, or *sixteen* times as fast as at present.) But this is only a small part of the matter. Centrifugal force not only varies as the square of the velocity, but inversely as the distance from the centre of motion. So that as the sun's diameter exceeds the earth's about 108 times, centrifugal tendency at his equator is diminished in this degree so far as this particular circumstance is concerned. Increasing the tendency 19.45 times and reducing it 108 times, means in all reducing it to about two-elevenths of the centrifugal tendency at the earth's equator. Yet even this is not all. Not only is the centrifugal tendency at the sun's equator less than a fifth that at the earth's equator, which diminishes by a very small part the force of terrestrial gravity, but the centrifugal tendency due to the sun's attractive force is very much greater at the sun's surface than terrestrial gravity at the earth's equator. It is roughly about twenty-seven times as great. Thus the centripetal tendency of matter at the sun's equator is very much greater (many hundreds of

times greater) than its centrifugal tendency; and there is not the slightest possibility of matter being projected into space from the sun's surface by centrifugal tendency. Nor is there any part of the sun's mass where the centrifugal tendency is greater than at the surface near the equator. So that whatever else the sun may be doing to utilise his mighty energies he is certainly not throwing off matter constantly from his equatorial regions, as Dr. Siemens' theory requires.

This being so, the theory failing thus in a matter absolutely essential to its validity, we may feel less tempted than perhaps we otherwise might be, to endeavour to overlook other difficulties, though these on careful consideration appear scarcely less decisive. It might perhaps appear a work of supererogation to consider difficulties when we have already noted an impossibility. But some perhaps will consider that although the sun may not, after drawing to himself the matter occupying space, reject it from him in the manner supposed, he may reject it in some other manner. If so there might still be reason for inquiring how far it is likely that the sun's rays may be utilised when falling on the matter occupying space, in the way suggested by Dr. Siemens.

Let us then grant the existence in interplanetary space of those products of combustion which Dr. Siemens supposes to be constantly projected from the sun, and let us inquire with him what would become of them. At a first view it seems as though they must gradually change the condition of the matter which had formed part of stars and suns, by rendering that matter neutral. But Dr. Siemens endeavours to show the possibility, nay, the probability, that solar radiation would under these circumstances step in to bring back the combined materials to a condition of separation by a process of dissociation, carried into effect at the expense of that solar energy which is now supposed to be lost to our planetary system.

Dr. Siemens points out that the temperature at which the dissociation of different compounds is effected depends on the pressure. Thus at a temperature of $2,800^{\circ}$ Centigrade only one half of the vapour of water at atmospheric pressure remains as aqueous vapour, the remaining half being found as a mechanical mixture of hydrogen and oxygen. But with the pressure the temperature of dissociation rises and falls. It is therefore conceivable, he says, that the temperature of the solar photosphere may be raised by combustion to a temperature exceeding $2,800^{\circ}$ Centigrade, whereas in interstellar and interplanetary space dissociation may be effected at a much lower temperature. Some experiments by Dr. Siemens appear to show that at the small pressure which we may conceive to exist in space, the sun's radiation may suffice to produce dissociation either of aqueous vapour or of carbonic acid gas. Employing glass tubes furnished with platinum electrodes, and filled with aqueous vapour, he reduced the pressure to $\frac{1}{1800}$ th of an atmosphere, the temperature being reduced to 32° Centigrade. When so cooled, no electric discharge took place on connecting the two electrodes with a small induction coil.

He then exposed the end of the tube projecting out of the freezing mixture, backed by white paper, to solar radiation on a clear summer's day for several hours, when upon again connecting up to the inductorium, a discharge, apparently that of a hydrogen vacuum, was obtained. "This experiment being repeated, furnished," says Dr. Siemens, "unmistakable evidence I thought that aqueous vapour had been dissociated by exposure to solar radiation." When carbonic acid gas was similarly treated, less trustworthy results were obtained. "Not satisfied with these qualitative results, I made arrangements to collect the permanent gases so produced, by means of a Sprengel pump, but was prevented by lack of time from pursuing the inquiry, which I purpose, however," adds Dr. Siemens, "to resume shortly, being of opinion that, independently of my present speculation, the experiments may prove useful in extending our knowledge regarding the laws of dissociation."

The idea is, then, that solar radiation acting on the aqueous vapour and carbonic acid gas, and other compound gases supposed to occupy interplanetary and interstellar space, may dissociate such compounds, and that solar energy may thus be utilised, instead of being wasted in the enormous degree in which it appears to be, according to what has been shown above.

Now it appears to me somewhat bold to assume that what happens in the case of aqueous vapour or carbonic acid enclosed in a tube and exposed to solar radiation, would happen to such vapour exposed to the same radiation in free space. But there is a more serious objection, I take it, than this, to Dr. Siemens' ingenious system for the utilisation of solar energy. If the rays of heat (and light) are thus utilised within the solar domain, regarding that if we please as extending many times further than the orbit of Neptune, they have either done their work and have been completely utilised, or they have not. If they have done their work, these rays proceed no further, and the sun would therefore be invisible from any point outside his own domain. (For we must not fall into the mistake of supposing that light and heat can be considered separately in this inquiry: those solar rays which give us what we call light, give us also a large quantity of the solar heat, and the mystery of seemingly infinite waste would remain, even if we supposed that only those heat rays which are not also light rays were utilised in the way supposed. Apart from this, Dr. Siemens specially shows how the light rays act in accordance with his views.) Now what is true of our sun is true of the other suns, the stars. They also ought to be invisible outside their several domains. But as a matter of fact they are visible. If, on the other hand, the solar rays have *not* done their work in traversing what may be regarded as the solar domain, the mystery of infinite waste is not removed, scarcely even diminished, by Dr. Siemens' theory. If those other suns, the stars, are able to send across the vast distances which separate us from them, such supplies of light (to say nothing of stellar heat, which Huggins and others have measured) that by measur-

ing it we can say that all of them are suns like our own, but many far larger and giving out much more light than he,—what is the amount of work which we can suppose the stellar rays to have done on their way? If they have done much (in proportion to the total quantity which they are capable of doing), then the stars must be very much larger, brighter, and hotter than we suppose them to be, and already we regard them as the rivals, and something more than the rivals, of our sun. If they have done little, the mystery of infinite waste remains.

But indeed, apart from the considerations last urged, it is certain that even if the whole of interstellar space were filled with matter dissociated by solar rays (that is by the rays which all suns are continually pouring forth), even then those rays would have been to all intents and purposes wasted; for suns never could gather in more than the minutest fraction of the matter thus permeating space. We cannot adopt Dr. Siemens' theory, supposing it otherwise tenable, as a means of utilising solar and stellar energy, unless we supposed the work done by the light and heat of suns to be done close to those orbs, certainly far within the orbits of their outer planets, for otherwise the matter prepared for fuel by the action of the rays could never be gathered in, or the products of combustion expelled, within reasonable time, throughout the domain thus affected. But we know certainly that within such relatively insignificant domains the stellar rays are not used up, for we see the stars shining, though we lie millions of times farther away than any conceivable limits of such domains. We know it in the case of our own sun, because we see the planets Saturn, Mars, and Neptune, shining with light which has reached them from the sun. In the case of the Siemens' regenerative furnace, we know that the heat is utilised in the particular manner intended, not only because we find the heat so saved doing its proper work, but because we find that this heat no longer goes idly up the furnace chimney as before. The heat cannot be doing its full work in the furnace if part goes up the furnace chimney; but also, part cannot be going up the furnace chimney if the heat is doing its full work. This, however, is what Dr. Siemens' theory requires the solar heat to do. It is to be continually utilised in dissociating compound vapours in interplanetary space, although it is continually passing beyond interplanetary space to shine through interstellar space, and to show our sun as a star to worlds circling round his fellow stars the suns. We have in fact the fallacy of the perpetual motion in a modified form.

Parts of Dr. Siemens' reasoning remain tenable, however, even when the centrifugal projective force (which has no existence) is removed, and when the perpetual utilisation of stellar rays is shown to be inconsistent with their perpetual passage with undiminished brightness through interstellar space.

Dr. Siemens' reasoning respecting the zodiacal light, for instance, is sound, though the theory with which it is associated is not so. Astronomers do not and cannot accept the views of Mairan, which are simply

inconsistent with the known laws of dynamics. But there is every reason for regarding the zodiacal as consisting in the main of meteorolithic masses, a sort of cosmical dust, rushing through interplanetary space with planetary velocities. To such matter, assuming, as we well may, that space really is occupied by attenuated vapours, the following reasoning applies with scarcely the change of a word (by which, however, I do not mean that the opinions expressed as probably or possibly true are really and necessarily so). The luminosity of the zodiacal "would be attributable to particles of dust, emitting light reflected from the sun, or by phosphorescence" (this last may be seriously questioned). "But there is another cause for luminosity of these particles, which may deserve a passing consideration. Each particle would be electrified by gaseous friction in its acceleration, and its electric tension would be vastly increased in its forcible removal, in the same way as the fine dust of the desert has been observed by Werner Siemens to be in a state of high electrification on the apex of the Cheops Pyramid. Would not the zodiacal light also find explanation by slow electric discharges backward from the dust towards the sun?"

Take, again, the phenomena of comets which still remain among the greatest of nature's mysteries. We have reason to believe—though Dr. Siemens goes a little beyond the truth in saying astronomical physicists *assert*—that the nucleus of a comet consists of an aggregation of stones similar to meteorolites. Adopting this view, and assuming that these stones have absorbed somewhere (not necessarily "in stellar space," as Dr. Siemens suggests) gases to the amount of six times their volume (taken at atmospheric pressure), we may ask with Dr. Siemens, what will be the effect of such a mass of stone advancing towards the sun at a velocity reaching in perihelion the prodigious rate of 366 miles per second (as observed in the comet of 1843), being twenty-three times our orbital rate of motion? "It appears evident that the entry of such a divided mass into a comparatively dense atmosphere must be accompanied by a rise of temperature by frictional resistance, aided by attractive condensation. At a certain point the increase of temperature must cause ignition, and the heat thus produced must drive out the occluded gases, which in an atmosphere 3,000 times less dense than that of our earth would produce ($6 \times 3,000 =$) 18,000 times the volume of the stones themselves. These gases would issue forth in all directions, but would remain unobserved except in that of motion, in which they would meet the interplanetary atmosphere with the compound velocity and from a zone of intense combustion, such as Dr. Huggins has lately observed to surround one side of the nucleus, evidently the side of forward motion. The nucleus would thus emit original light, whereas the tail may be supposed to consist of stellar dust rendered luminous by reflex action produced by the light of the sun and comet combined." (This assumption respecting the tail is, however, untenable, being based on a misapprehension of the distinction between a comet's tail and its train of meteoric attendants.)

These views respecting the zodiacal light and comets are independent in the main of those parts of Dr. Siemens' views which are manifestly inadmissible. They seem to accord well with possibilities if not with probabilities.

A similar remark applies to two of the fundamental conditions of Dr. Siemens' ingenious theory. We may admit the possibility that the aqueous vapour and carbon compounds are present in stellar or interplanetary space; we may concede, though not perhaps quite so readily, that these gaseous compounds are capable of being dissociated by radiant solar energy while in a state of extreme attenuation. What we cannot admit, simply because it is inconsistent with human laws, is the third condition, "That these dissociated vapours are capable of being compressed into the solar photosphere by a process of interchange with an equal amount of reassociated vapours, this interchange being effected by the centrifugal action of the sun itself." As this condition is essential to the theory itself, we are compelled, regretfully perhaps, but still unhesitatingly, to give up that satisfaction which, as Dr. Siemens remarks, we should gain, could we believe that our solar system need "no longer impress us with the idea of prodigious waste through the dissipation of energy into space, but rather with that of well-ordered, self-sustaining action, capable of perpetuating solar radiation to the remotest future." Yet though not in this way, to this end all thoughtful study of the mechanism of the universe seems unquestionably to tend; not by centrifugal tendencies of the kind imagined, for none such exist; not by work which, viewed in reference to the universe as we know it, means endless production without exhaustion; but in other ways (associating perhaps our visible universe with others, permeating it as the ether of space permeates the densest solids, and in turn with others so permeated by it) there may be that constant interchange, that perpetual harmony, of which Goethe sung—

See all things with each other blending,
 Each to all its being lending,
 Each on all in turn depending:
 Heavenly ministers descending,
 And again to Heaven uptending,
 Floating, mingling, interweaving,
 Rising, sinking, and receiving—
 Each from each, while each is giving
 On to each, and each relieving
 Each—the pails of gold. The living
 Current through the air is heaving;
 Breathing blessings see them bending,
 Balanced worlds from change defending,
 While everywhere diffused is harmony unending.

R. A. P.

Wagner's "Nibelung" and the Siegfried Tale.

By KARL BLIND.

I.

IN a few days Richard Wagner's powerful musical drama—*The Ring of the Nibelung*—will burst upon the London public with all its mythic grandeur and scenic pomp. Siegfried's name will then be on everybody's lips. "Daughters of the Rhine" will sing their spell-songs in the green waves of the gold-glistening river; mocking the love-sick Dark Elf who is to rob them of the glowing hoard. Valkyrs, Virgins of Battle, headed by Brünnhilde, will shake the thunder-clouds with their stormy ride, as heralds of Fate. Giants, the builders of Asgard, who carried away the Goddess of Love in reward for their having reared the Heavenly Hall, will enter into a threatening contest with Wotan and Fricka—a danger from which the divine pair are only rescued by the wiles of the fire-god Loge, who filches the treasure from the Nibelung, and therewith ransoms Freia from the gigantic forces of Nature.

But the curse placed by the irate dwarf, Alberich, upon the Ring—the talismanic symbol of power and most valuable part of the hoard—will work evil for Gods and men. Siegfried, the blameless, is destined to forge the main link in the fatal chain of tragic events. He, the offspring of the forbidden love between Siegmund and Sieglinde—who in their turn both hail from All-father when he had assumed Wölsung shape—will, no doubt, destroy the poisonous Dragon Fafner, that guards the hoard. Siegfried will thus become the owner of the treasure, as well as wonderfully wise by having tasted the Worm's blood. But then, in spite of All-father's decree, he will also free the entranced Shield Maiden from the Blazing Rock, and bind himself to her who had disobeyed the God, by vows of eternal love. Having afterwards been made to forget her, in favour of Gutrune, by a magic potion in a King's Hall on the Rhine, Siegfried will unwittingly be the means of forcing Brünnhilde, his own early love, into an unwished-for wedlock with Gunther. Through such complication the Hero will meet with his death by the weapon of Hagen, who professes to avenge the betrayed Valkyr, whilst being in reality bent upon getting possession of the Ring.

In these fateful struggles, Siegfried's mighty sword, an heirloom from his divine forebear, shatters the once invincible spear of the God, who in Wanderer's guise had crossed the path of his venturesome descendant. Wotan's power is thus sadly crippled. Over the Heavenly Hall a doom is approaching. Overcome with grief at the death of her own Siegfried whom she had wrongfully thought faithless, Brünnhilde resolves to unite

herself with him once more and for aye, by spurring her steed into the flaming pyre on which his body is being consumed. Meanwhile the rapacious Hagen kills her lawful husband Gunther. But as Brünnhilde, before entering the pile, had drawn the charming ring from Siegfried's hand and thrown it into the Rhine to be lost for ever, the greedy murderer of the Hero madly plunges into the stream, when the Rhine Daughters drag him down into the ever-rising flood.

Finally, remembering the injury she once suffered from Wotan, the self-sacrificing Valkyr, seeing All-father's birds rising from the banks of the river, exclaims as she mounts her courser for the death-ride :—

Fly away, ye ravens ! Whisper to your Lord
 What here on the Rhine you have heard !
 By Brünnhilde's rock your road shall lie :
 The love that still burns there, lead up to Walhall !
 For with the Doom of Gods the day is now darkened :
 Thus the brand I throw into Walhall's proud burgh ! *

Such are the outlines, necessarily very incomplete, of Richard Wagner's grand tetralogy : *Rhine-gold* ; *The Valkyr* ; *Siegfried* ; and *The Gloaming of the World of Gods*. A whole array of figures from German and Norse mythology comes up in that tragedy. May I now, without further ado, astonish some of the readers by saying that the hero of this eminently Teutonic drama, Siegfried, or Sigurd, was a Hun, and that as a Hun he is the nearest kinsman of the English ?

II.

This point I will, before all, proceed to make good. In doing so, I begin with the Edda and other Norse records. Their Sigurd tales have by Richard Wagner been combined with the German tradition ; and surely, he had the fullest right to do so ; for in the Edda, also, the Hero is by no means a Scandinavian, but a "southern" (that is, a German) chief whose feats are performed near the Rhine. On the Rhine is the scene of the Icelandic account of the Killing of the Worm ; of Brynhild's fire-encircled Rock of Punishment ; as well as of Sigurd's murder by Högni.

First, then, to settle the question of the Hero's nationality, or tribal origin : Sigurd's fatherland is, in the Edda and in the Volsunga Saga, called the Land of the Huns. He is described as a Hunic ruler. His forefathers were Hunic Kings. Herborg, who comes to console Gudrun at Sigurd's death, is a widowed Queen from Huna-land, whose seven sons, as well as her husband, had been killed in battle, whilst her father and her mother, together with her four brothers, had been whelmed in the waves of the sea. All this—the Hunic Niobe says—had happened within a half-year : none was left to console her ; herself she had to raise the pyre for her kinsfolk's death-ride to Hel. And before the six

* All the poetical quotations contain my own English version.

months even were over, she had become a captive, taken in war, when she had to do humble service, every morning, to the victor's wife; menially adorning the latter's person, and tying her shoes. Thus Hunic Queen conveys sad comfort to the relict of the murdered ruler of Huna-Land.

So we read in the first Lay of Gudrun. In the second we find Sigurd's widow and King Theodric grieving together over losses each has suffered. Telling her first feelings of unutterable woe, Gudrun says:—

No wail I uttered, nor wrung my hands;
No sobs I had, as is women's wont.
When heart-broken I sat at the bier of Sigurd. . . .

From the fell I went forth. After the fifth night
I neared the high halls of Alf.
Seven half-years with Thora I stayed,
Hakon's daughter in Denmark.

In gold she wrought, to soothe my wandering mind,
Southern (German) halls and Danish swans.

With handiwork deft we there embroidered
The warriors' games, the weaponed band—
Red-bucklered heroes of the Hunic home,
A sworded host, a helmèd troop.

Again, "Hunic maidens, skilful in weaving tapestry and golden girdles," are promised to Gudrun by Grimhild, after the former had become reconciled with her brothers for the murder of Sigurd. So also Brynhild speaks of the castle of her kinsmen as the "Hall of the Hunic Folk"; and in connection with her, Hunic Shield-Maidens are mentioned.*

Do, then, these Hunic designations point to the Hunns of the Mongol Attila, the "Scourge of God"?

Most certainly not!

III.

In the Norse texts, the words "Huna Land," "Hun," and "Hunic," as well as "southern," are meant to describe Germany and the Germans. Sigurd was a Rhenish hero, like the one in the Nibelungen Epic. His father ruled in Frank-Land.† In the Rhine-lands, also, according to the Edda, was the original dwelling-place of Völundr, or Wayland the Smith, who, as a mutilated captive in Sweden, speaks thus of his native country, and its gold-carrying river, in comparison with the North:—

No gold is here as on Grani's path; ‡
Far is this land from the rocks of the Rhine.
More of treasures might we possess,
When hale we lived in our own home.

* *Volsunga Saga*; 2, 19.—*The Lay of Sigurd the Dragon Killer*; iii. 4, 8, 18, 63, 64.—*The Lay of Gudrun*; i, 5, 24; and ii. 15, 26.—*The Wail of Oddrun*, 4.—*The Greenland Tale of Atli*; 2, 4, 7, 15, 16, 27, 34, 38, 42.—Comp. Wilhelm Grimm's *Deutsche Heldensage*.

† *Sinfjöll's End*.

‡ Grani is Sigurd's horse, but also one of the appellations of Odin; and, as I have

It was in the Rhine that the Hunic Sigurd whom the Edda sings, proved the sharpness of his sword Grani, which the skilful dwarf Regin had forged for him. Dipping the blade into the river, he let a flake of wool down the stream, when the good sword cut the fleece asunder as if it were water.* With the same sword he afterwards clove Regin's anvil in twain. In the Rhine, Gunnar and Högni (whose names are identical with those of Gunther and Hagen of the German Epic) hide the golden treasure, the "inheritance from the Dragon."† So says Gunnar to Högni, in the third Lay of Sigurd the Fafner's Killer (26) :—

Wilt thou help us, Högni, the hero to rob?
Good 'tis to possess the gold of the *Rhine*,
At ease to rule over many riches;
Right well enjoying them in rest and peace.

But Högni this for answer him gave:
"It beseems us not to do such deed—
With the sword to break the oaths we have sworn,
The oaths we have sworn, and the plighted troth.

We wot than on earth no happier men will dwell,
Whilst we four over the folk will rule,
And the *Hunic* leader with us lives.
Nor will the world ever see a nobler sib,
Than if we five give rise to a chieftains' race:
The very Gods we might throw from their thrones above!"

Thus the scene of the crime plotted against the Hunic chieftain is localised on Germany's great river. The Gnita-Heath, too, on which the Dragon lay, is, in the Norse texts, in the neighbourhood of the Rhine, not far from the "Holy Mountains"‡ over which Sigurd had ridden. We recognise in them the Sieben-Gebirge, or Seven Mountains, whose number is a holy one. To this day, one of those hills is called the Drachen-Fels, the Dragon's Rock. The Seven Mountains lie south of the river Sieg. Its name may be in connection with that of Siegfried; river-names being apt—as we see on Trojan ground—to bear occasionally an heroic or divine meaning.

It is on a hill in the German Frankland that Sigurd frees Sigurdrida (Brynhild) from the magic slumber, into which she had been thrown by Odin, for having killed, as one of his shield-maidens, a Gothic King to whom the Lord of Hosts had promised victory. "In the south, on the Rhine, Sigurd sank down,"—says the "Fragment of a Brynhild Lay" (5), one of the most touching in the weird cycle of Eddic songs. In a prose note, German men (*þýðverskir menn*) are quoted for the report that he had been murdered in a forest, whilst others, in the North, had

explained elsewhere, "Grani's path" probably means the Rhine, conceived under the image of Odin as a divine Water-Horse.

* *The second Lay of Sigurd the Dragon-Killer*; 14.

† *Skalda*: "The Niflungs and Giukungs;" and "The Tale of Atli;" 27.

‡ *The Song of Fafnir*; 26.

laid the scene of his death in his own room, where they said he had been stabbed when asleep in his bed. Again, in the *Vilkinsa Saga*, German men from Soest, Bremen, and Münster, are referred to as sources for the Sigurd tale.

Besides the Holy Mountains, a Black Forest (*Myrkviðr*) is repeatedly mentioned in the Icelandic songs. It stands, no doubt, in most passages, for the vast wood of that name on the Upper Rhine. These references to Germany are scattered all over the Norse Scripture. Franks, Saxons, Burgundians, Goths—even a Swawa-land, or Swabian land, half mythological, half real—meet us in the *Edda*, together with the name of the Huns, or Hunes; which latter (and here we come upon Siegfried's special kinship with the English) we find again among the German tribes that took part in the "Making of England."

IV.

After this, a passage in Baeda's Church History, which I believe has puzzled many readers, will easily explain itself. In chapter ix. of his fifth book, he says that the Angles or Saxons who now inhabit Britain, are known to have sprung from Germany, "for which reason they are still corruptly called 'Garmans' by the neighbouring nation of the Britons." Among the tribes of Germany, which had sent forth war-hosts for the conquest of Britain, Baeda names "Frisians, Rugians, Danes, *Huns*, the Old Saxons, and the Boructuars." The last are unquestionably the same whom Tacitus calls Bructerians. The "Danes" were the aboriginal German inhabitants of Jutland, who only later became replaced by Scandinavian Teutons. The Huns, or Hunes, fully explain themselves as a purely German tribe from what has been stated in the foregoing.

In the Anglo-Saxon "Wanderer's Tale," *Hunas* are among the sibs which the Traveller visited. Now, there are in England not a few places which bear the clear trace of a Hunic settlement. Angles, or *Englas*, have given their name to Anglesey in Cambridgeshire; to Anglesey, the island on the Welsh coast; to Englefield in Berkshire; and to the Englewood Forest. Saxons, or *Seaxas*, have given theirs to Saxthorpe in Norfolk; to Saxham and Saxtead in Suffolk; to Saxby in Lincolnshire; to Saxton in Lincolnshire; to Saxby in Leicestershire. In the same way, Hunes, or *Hunas*, have given theirs to Hunton (Kent); to Hundon (Suffolk); to Hunworth and Hunstanton (Norfolk); to Huncote (Leicestershire); to Huncoat and Hunslet (Lancashire); to Hunmanby and Hunton (Yorkshire); to Hunwick (Durham); to the Head of Hunna and the Isle of Hunie (Shetland),* and so forth.

No wonder we meet with, on English ground, such personal names Ethelhun (Noble Hune) as that of King Edwin's son, or as that of

* Comp. *The Anglo-Saxon Sagas*, by Daniel H. Haigh; where, however, by no means all the Hunic place-names of England are given,

a monk,*—even as we find the German and Norse "Finn" name on the English side of this country, as well as in Ireland, from ancient times.

Turning back once more to Germany where Baeda's English Hunes came from, we meet with the same name in our own tribal sagas, in our history, in our geography, as well as in our martial folk-lore. In *Beowulf*, which dates from before the time of the German conquest of Britain, several personal names occur composed with "Hun." Hunlaf, Hunferd, Hunbrecht are heroic names which turn up among Frisians and Rhinelanders, as among the men of Dietrich von Bern. The Hunsings were a Frisian tribe. The Hunsrück mountain in north-western Germany has probably as little to do with the Mongolic Hunns, as Hüningen on the upper Rhine has. Its meaning must be sought for in Siegfried's kinsmen. Humboldt, too, is a Hunic name; meaning "bold like a giant."

Hüne, or *Heune*, a word of obscure etymology, meant eminently a warrior, a hero. That martial name was assumed, of old, by a German tribe located in the quarters where the Siegfried tale arose. Gigantic grave-monuments are to this day called, in northern Germany, "Hunic Graves," or "Hune-Beds." About Osnabrück, funeral clothes are called "Hune-garments" (*Hünen-Kleid*). Among the Frisians, "Hüne," or "Heune," is even now used for a corpse. It is as if the fatal mark set on a Hüne's, or warrior's, brow had imperceptibly led to a generalisation of the term. From a picked war-band of heroes destined for Walhalla, the Hunes, in course of time, simply became dead men.

V.

So, then, Sigurd was a German Hune, and therefore the closest relation of the founders of England. And quite in harmony with the Edda, we hear in the Nibelungen Lied that Sigmund's son "grew up in the Netherlands, in a castle known far and wide, at Xanten on the Rhine." Only the mother's name is differently given in the Icelandic text; but that is easily accounted for by the transformation of the tale abroad.

All over the Scandinavian North, including the Faroër, this grand and typical saga was once spread. In the Hvenic Chronicle, in Danish hero-songs, we even meet Siegfried (Old German: Sigufrið) as Sigfred, instead of the contracted Norse form "Sigurd;" Kriemhild as "Gremild"—and she is married to the hero at Worms, as in the Nibelungen Lied; whereas, in the Edda, Gudrun is Sigurd's wife, and the remembrance of the town of Worms is lost. So strong was the tradition of the German origin of the Sigurd tale down to the twelfth century, that in a geographical work written in Norse by the Abbot Nicolaus, the Gnita-Heath where Sigurd had killed the Worm was still placed half-way between Paderborn and Mainz.†

* Baeda ii. 14; and iii. 27.

† *Itinerarium*; edited by Werlauff in the *Symb. ad Geographiam Medii Ævi*; Copenhagen, 1821.

In the lays and sagas of the Scandinavians, much of those "most ancient songs" is, in fact, preserved, which the German people, in its heroic age, once possessed, and which Karl (called the Great), the Emperor of the Franks—according to the statement of Eginhard—ordered to be collected. Monkish fanaticism afterwards destroyed the rescued valuable relics. It is an irreparable loss. Fortunately, Icelanders travelling in Germany had gathered some of those tale-treasures. Bringing them home, they presented the Norse bards with a subject which the latter treated in their own way in the form of heroic lyrics, and with a poetical beauty and dramatic power of which the whole Teutonic race may well be proud.

It is in the Sigurd-, Fafnir's-, Brynhild-, Gudrun-, Oddrun-, Atli-, and Hamdir Lays, as well as in some prose fragments of Norse literature, that the subject of the Nibelungen Lied has been saved to us in its older form. It is an earlier, a purer, a wholly heathen version of that noble saga which on its native soil was worked out, in a half-Christianised shape, into an epic similar to the Homeric one. Between the Icelandic poems and the Nibelungen Lied—the Iliad of Germany—there are a number of divergences, the result of the transplantation of the German tales to the North. Thus Kriemhild's name is, in the Edda, replaced by that of Gudrun. Högni plays a part somewhat different from that of Hagen. The heart and root of the story are, however, the same. The fact is, the Nibelungen Lied arose out of the productions of rhapsodists, which on German soil disappeared—just as the original lays referring to the siege of Troy disappeared in Greece. In this way, the Norse poems are to be looked upon as a link between our national epic and our lost Siegfried Lied.

The hold which the story itself has had on the German people through ages, can be gathered from the fact of its having kept its place in the workman's house and the peasant's hut, first by oral tradition, and then by some of those rudely-printed penny books, sold at fairs, under the title of *Die Geschichte vom hörnenen Siegfried*; that is, "The Story of Siegfried made invulnerable by the Dragon's blood." Well do I remember the eagerness with which, as a child—snatching a little time from the too-early Latin lessons—I pored over one of those chap-books, with its clumsy woodcuts and its half-boorish representation of the inspiring tale, at a time when most of our learned men utterly neglected, nay, often scarcely even knew, the national *Helden-Sage*, though the poorest among the masses yet clung to it in their own wretched traditions.

VI.

Now for some of the details of the Nibelung Tale, as contained in the Edda.

In the first Lay of Sigurd the Dragon-Killer—also called Gripir's Prophecy—we find the hero riding to the Hall of the Seer, in order to

learn his own fate. Gripir foretells all that will happen : Sigurd's martial revenge of his father's death ; his victory over the Dragon, and how he thus will gain golden treasures ; his ride to the Rock where a Maiden awaits her deliverance :—

Gripir.

Queenly maiden fair on the mountain sleeps,
 Harness-encased, after Helgi's death.
 With the sword's keen edge thou'lt the corslet sever ;
 Ripping the bonds with Fafnir's bane.

Sigurd.

The armour breaks. Now speaks the bride,
 The fair one, freed from the fettering trance !
 What museful saws will the Maiden utter ?
 What words of wisdom for the Hero's weal ?

All kinds of runic wisdom, and the knowledge of all men's tongues, will she—so Gripir prophesies—confer upon Sigurd. Further questions the Seer seeks to evade. But being pressed to foretell even the darkest and the worst, "because all is ordained before," he predicts that Sigurd, after having been the guest, for a single night, of King Giuki, will forget Brynhild's love and the oath pledge he had given to her, for the sake of a new love—namely, of Gudrun, Giuki's daughter.

Unconscious of fickleness, the alarmed inquirer protests :—

Seest thou such wavering in my will ?
 Shall my word I break to the maiden dear
 Whom with my whole heart I thought to love ?

Gripir, however, explains that the fatal spell will be wrought upon him by the wiles of Grimhild, Giuki's queen. Ay, she will so beguile him as to make him woo Brynhild in the name of Gunnar, the king of the Goths. The magical exchange of shape between Sigurd and Gunnar, through which Brynhild—as we see in the Nibelungen epic and in Wagner's musical drama—is ensnared to become the Gothic ruler's queen, is here foretold by the Seer. Deep sorrow comes over Sigurd at this sad prospect of having to court, for another's sake, her who reigns in his own bosom. He is also pained by the thought of being held to be false in men's opinion, even though Gripir tells him that he will accomplish his mission with such honesty as to "make his name an exalted one as long as the world lasts."

Three nights—the Seer says—the hero will pass on the deceived Brynhild's couch ; but he will do so in blameless purity. After that, Sigurd and Gunnar, having changed back into their own proper forms—"but each retaining his heart"—are to be joined in wedlock, in Giuki's Hall, to Gudrun and Brynhild. Disaster, nevertheless, must come from the fraudulent wooing. Though Sigurd loves Gudrun in honest wedlock, Brynhild thinks herself evilly matched to Gunnar, and basely betrayed. Her love for Sigurd is turned into revengeful hate.

Belying herself, through overwhelming grief, she now falsely accuses Sigurd, before Gunnar, of not having kept faith to him during those three nights.

Sigurd.

Will Gunnar the wise, will Guthorm and Högni,
Be stirred to deeds by her stinging appeal?
Will Giuki's sons in their sib-man's blood
Redden their swords? Gripir! speak!

Gripir.

Gudrun's heart will fret with anguish and fury,
When her brothers with harmful plans shall beset thee.
All joy will flee from her for ever:
Such woeful end is the work of Grimhild.

That solace, however—Gripir lastly says—will remain to the valorous leader of men, who is to be the spotless victim of guile, that a nobler man than he will never be seen under the Sun's abode. "Hail now, and farewell!" answers Sigurd; "Fate cannot be o'ercome!"

In this prophecy, the chief points of the German Siegfried's tale are condensed, with slight variation—less the all-destroying revenge of his death, which forms the final catastrophe in the Nibelungen Lied.

VII.

The second Lay of Sigurd the Dragon-Killer, together with the Song of Fafnir—of which there are corresponding traits in the German epic—furnished Richard Wagner with the essential ideas of his *Rhine-gold* and his *Siegfried*. Still, the composer-poet has so largely altered the subject-matter that in a great measure the invention may be said to be his own. In the Icelandic poems, we find Sigurd as the ward of the Dwarf Regin, who tells him of his forefathers' proud deeds and of the adventures of the Asa Trinity, Odin, Hönir, and Loki. For the killing, by Loki, of Regin's and Fafnir's brother Otur who had changed himself into the shape of an otter, the Aesir had to pay a gold-ransom which was wholly to cover its skin. A gold ring alone was retained by All-father, out of the Asic treasure; but as a single hair of the otter was still visible, the Ring, too—Odin's very symbol of power—had to be added to the ransom. Thereupon, Loki utters a curse upon the whole treasure, foretelling a "future struggle about a woman," as well as "hatred among ethelings on account of the hoard of gold."

The curse becomes true. The two brothers, Regin and Fafnir, after having murdered their father, fall out among themselves for the exclusive ownership of the treasure. We hear of the terrifying Oegir's helmet (the hiding hood of the German epic) by which Fafnir, in Dragon's guise, maintains himself in possession of the hoard, on the Heath of Envy. With the sword forged by Regin, Sigurd, however, kills the giant Worm. Having accidentally tasted its blood, when eating its

heart, he suddenly understands the prophetic language of the birds. Seven eagles tell him that Regin, having got rid, through Sigurd's valour, of his own brother Fafnir, is about to brew mischief against the young Volsung himself; and that, for his personal safety, he must now kill Regin, too. The Dwarf's head being consequently struck off, the eagles counsel Sigurd to take possession of the gold-hoard, and then to ride to Giuki's Hall, where a beautiful woman is to be wooed. On his way, he is to meet, on a high hill, with a warrior-maid entranced by a sleeping-thorn with which Odin stung her. She is surrounded by a fiery charm which no hero may break before the Norns have ordained it.

In the Song of Sigurd-rifa, that Valkyr is freed by Sigurd who rides up to Hindarfiall, in Frank-land. Her vow, on going into the magic sleep, had been, that if ever she were to be wedded to a man, she would only confer her hand upon him who was incapable of fear. Being delivered, she teaches Sigurd much wisdom, and both then pledge troth to each other, for aye and for ever.

In the third Lay of Sigurd the Dragon-Killer, as well as in a fragment of a Brynhild Lay, and in the Volsung Saga, we hear how Sigurd, when wooing Brynhild in Gunnar's name, had placed a sword on the couch between her and himself—"a sword with gold adorned; outward its edges with fire were wrought, with venom-drops covered within." His own love for Brynhild he had been made to forget through a potion of oblivion. But "grim Norns were walking athwart."

Alone she sat when the day sank down;
Aloud she began to herself to speak:—
"Sigurd must be mine; or I must die,
If I cannot enfold him in my arms!

Of the rash words now I again repent:
Gudrun is his wife; and I am Gunnar's!
Oh, the sorrow wrought by the spell of the Norn!"

Often she wandered, filled with wrath,
O'er ice and fells at even-tide,
Thinking where he and Gudrun now were
How the Hunic King his consort caressed.
Thus her vengeful mood to murder she turned.

For a time, Gunnar, being in doubt, hesitates to take revenge upon the wrongfully accused Sigurd. At last, he and Högni induce their younger brother, the half-witted Guthorm, to do the bloody deed. With powerful brevity the Eddic poem says:—

Easy it was his wild spirit to move:
There stood the sword in the heart of Sigurd!

However, strength enough was yet left in the hands of the dying hero—"at whose side," as a Saga has it, "all others looked low in stature"—to fell his murderer by throwing his spear. Gudrun, startled from her

sleep, finds herself swimming in the blood of "Freyr's friend;" that is, of her blameless Sigurd :—

 Loudly moaned the Queen; life ebb'd from the King.
 So heavily she struck her hands together,
 That the beakers on the board responsive rang,
 And shrilly the geese in the court did scream.

 Then laughed Brynhild, the daughter of Budli,
 For once again with all her heart,
 As, up to her bed, there broke through the Hall
 The direful yell of Giuki's daughter.

Then Brynhild resolves to "go forth to the long journey." Stabbing herself, she prophesies that Gudrun will be given in marriage to her (Brynhild's) brother Atli, who will lose his life at Gudrun's hands. With a woman's bitter taunt against her rival, the dying Valkyr cries :—

 More seemly 't would be if our sister Gudrun
 Were to lie on the pyre with her husband and lord—
 Had good spirits to her but given the counsel,
 Or had she a soul resembling mine!

Her own fire-burial she thus orders :—

 One prayer yet I have to pray thee;
 'Twill be the last in this my life:
 A spacious pile build up in the plain,
 That room there be for all of those
 Who came to die together with Sigurd!
 Surround the pile with shields and garments,
 With funeral cloth and chosen suite!
 And the Hunic King burn at my own side! . . .

 Let also lie between us both
 The ring-set sword, the keen-edged steel,
 Again so placed, as when the couch we ascended,
 And were then called by the name of consorts. . . .

 Much have I said. More would I say
 If the God yet time would grant me for speech.
 My voice now falters. My wounds are swelling.
 The truth I spoke. So will I die.

In "Brynhild's Ride to the Nether World," a giant woman, acting as a Judge of the Dead, crosses the path of the self-sacrificed Valkyr-bride of Sigurd, before she nears the gates of Hel, to upbraid her with having longed for the possession of the consort of another. Brynhild nobly defends herself. Of the coming murder of the Nibelungs we learn in the Gudrun Lays as well as in the Tales of Atli; and the details of that struggle are even far more gruesome than in the German epic. It is as if the fierce Hunic spirit had changed, not only for the crueller Norse one, but for Hunnish ferocity.

In the Nibelungen Lied, enraged Kriemhild, who has become Etzel's Queen in the Hunic land, allures her sib-men to that Court, when a

treacherous surprise and frightful carnage follows, at the end of which she holds the bleeding head of her brother Gunther, by the hair, before Hagen in his dungeon; asking him for the indication of the hidden gold-hoard, as the ransom of his life. With a shudder, Hagen looks at the head; but quietly and coldly meeting his death, he says:—

None knows now of the gold-hoard but God and I alone!
From thee, thou demon-woman, 'tis now for ever gone!

These horrors are surpassed in the Eddic lay. There Hialli's heart is first cut from his living body, and brought to the captive Gunnar; and then "Högni laughs aloud whilst his own heart is cut out":—

Calmly said Gunnar the stout Niblung warrior:
"Here have I the heart of Högni the bold;
'Tis unlike the heart of Hialli the fearsome.
It does not quake as in the dish it lies;
It quaked less when in the breast it lay."

So far shalt thou, Atli, be from the eyes of men
As thou from the treasure now wilt be!
Of the hidden hoard of the Niblungs' gold
Alone I now know, since Högni lives not.

In doubt I wavered, whilst we two were breathing.
In fear I'm no longer, since alone I am left.
The Rhine shall be master of the baleful metal;
The stream shall possess the As-known Niblung hoard.
In the rolling waves the golden rings shall glow,
Rather than on the hands of the Hunic sons!

Then follows the ghastly scene of Gunnar's imprisonment in the Serpent's Tower; the murder of Atli, made drunk by Gudrun who had prepared for him a meal of the hearts, dipped in honey, of his own little children, whose skulls she made into beakers, filling them with their own blood;—when all, on hearing it, wept, "but Gudrun alone not." We are told of the letting loose of the pack of hounds for the purpose of carnage; and, as in the German epic, of the Hall gutted by fire. "Upon horror's head horrors accumulate." But the Eddic Atli Song says:—

Blissful is, since, called he who such a bold daughter
Boasts of, as Giuki begat.
In every land will for ever live
This wedlock's tale wherever men can hear.

Unlike the German Kriemhild, upon whom the very foe of Hagen, the hoary-headed Hildebrand, takes revenge for her fiendish cruelty, Gudrun still lives after all these horrors. Though seeking death in the waves, she cannot sink, and is carried ashore, when she enters upon a third marriage. In the course of fresh complications, her dearest daughter from the union with Sigurd, Swanhild—"who had been in her halls as a sunbeam, fair to behold"—is ordered to be trodden under horses' hoofs. At last, Gudrun also seeks death by mounting the pyre,

calling upon her departed husband to turn his swift steed from the other world towards her :—

Remember, Sigurd, what we together said,
When on our bed we both were sitting:
That thou, O brave one, wouldst come to me
From the Hall of Hel, to fetch me back,

Now build, ye Jarls, the oaken pile,
That high it may rise under Heaven's vault!
May the fire burn a breast full of woes,
The flames round my heart its sorrows melt!

May more peace be given to all men's minds,
All women's sorrows be lessened,
If they hear to the end this song of grief!

VIII.

So far the Eddic poems. But the question must now be put: What is the inner significance, the philosophical kernel, of the Nibelung Tale? Or is it, perhaps, simply a fable without a meaning?

The tale centres about the Rhine, that noble river at whose aspect Richard Wagner, in his days of poverty—when seeing it for the first time, on his return from Paris, in 1842—shed tears of joy, making a vow of fidelity for ever to the Fatherland; as he has told us in his Autobiographical Sketch. More especially, it is a Frankish saga—having arisen in that powerful German tribe which once held sway in the greater part of Europe.

In its origin, however, the Nibelungen cycle is by the best investigators rightly held—and is held also by Richard Wagner—to have been a Nature-myth, upon which historical elements became engrafted. Light, the Day, the Sun—the eminent composer says—filled man, in early ages, with the impression that in them is involved the condition of all existence, or, at least, the condition of our knowledge of all that is contained in Nature; whilst Darkness, the Night, the nebulous home of gloomy Mistiness ("Niflheim" among the Northmen), gave rise to feelings of horror. Light thus was looked upon as the creative, the fatherly, or divine spirit, the spirit of Friendliness and All-goodness; and from this, as human refinement went on, moral ideas were evolved, connected with a God of Light. In its most ancient germs, the tribal myth of the Franks appears to have been the individualisation of the God of Light who overcomes the monster of the chaotic aboriginal Night. This is the earliest meaning of Siegfried's victory over the Dragon. It is, on German ground, the overthrow of Python by Apollon.

But even as Day is, in its turn, vanquished by Night; as Summer must yield to Winter: so also Siegfried falls in the end. The God, which he originally was, thus becomes human; the sad fate of so noble a champion gives rise to motives of revenge for what is held to have been

an evil and criminal deed ; and a tragedy is constructed, in which generations appear as actors and victims.

A special feature of the Frankish nature-myth is the hoard, the fatal treasure which works never-ending mischief. It represents the metal veins of the subterranean Region of Gloom. There, as we see from Eddic records, Dark Elves (Nibelungs, or nebulous Sons of the Night) are digging and working, melting and forging the ore in their smithies—producing charming rings that remind us of the diadems which bind the brow of rulers ; golden ornaments, and sharp weapons : all of which confer immense power upon their owner. Such a Nibelung ring of mystic strength was said to embody the mastery over the world.

When Light overcomes Darkness ; when Siegfried slays the Dragon : this hoard is his booty, and he becomes master of the Nibelungs. But the Dragon's dark heir ever seeks to regain it from the victor : so Night malignantly murders the Day ; Hagen kills Siegfried. The treasure, on which Siegfried's power is founded, becomes the cause of his death ; and through death he himself, albeit originally a refulgent God of Light, is turned into a Figure of Gloom—that is, a Nibelung.

Yet each fresh generation, whilst being destined to death, strives for the Dragon's treasure—even as Day and Night, creative warmth and death-bringing cold, succeed each other in a ring-like cycle of contests.

This seems to have been the earliest Nature-myth, as elaborated by the Frankish Germans. In Wagner's view, Karl the Great knew well what he did when ordering the old heroic songs to be carefully gathered ; for in them the title of the supremacy of the Franks must have been contained, at whose head he stood. Richard Wagner even ventures upon the conjecture that, in the Asiatic home of the German race, Nibelung Franks may already have held supreme sway among the Teutonic race. This latter speculation, of course, lacks historical support.

Yet, if powerful "Franks" of an earlier time than those who founded the empire of that name, had to be pointed out, I would draw attention to the great Phrygian nation. Its name meant, according to the Greek interpreters, a free-man, or Frank. Curiously enough, "Frakk" (which comes nearest to Phryg, or Frik) is the Eddic word for the Rhenish Frank in whose land Brynhild lies, surrounded by the flaming charm. As to the Phrygian Franks of classic times, they were a section of that vast Thrakian nation whose Getic, Gothic, Germanic kinship clearly results from Greek and Roman testimony. Noted in antiquity as well for their discoveries and skilfulness in metallurgy, as for their martial and musical spirit, the Phrygians largely modified the religion of the Hellenic and Latin world* by their own rites, among which the cult of Mother Earth stood foremost—truly a Nibelung cult !

Those who idly doubt the fact of a Nature-myth being involved in the Siegfried tale, had better look at once into the account of the Norse

* Grote's *History of Greece* ; iii. 29.

Skalda, concerning the Niblungs and Giukungs. That account begins in a thoroughly mythic manner with Aesir, or Gods, and nebulous Black Elves, or Dwarfs, which latter are the possessors of the golden hoard, and one of whom watches over it, assuming the form of a Dragon. Presently, however, we find ourselves, in the company of one of those Niblung Elves, in the realm of Hialprek, King in Thiodi—which names remind us of the Frankish Chilperich, and of the very root of the word from which the Thiodisk, or *Deutsch* (German) people are called.

In the course of the Skaldic story which contains the essence of the Nibelungen Lied, we hear of the Giukungs that dwell on the Rhine. Giuk is the Norse form for the Frankish, or Rhenish, King Gibich (Gothic: Gibika. Old Saxon: Kipicho). This name—like so many Teutonic chieftains' names, including that of Odin himself—was at one time a divine appellation. Gibich means "the Giver"—him who gives freely. With the Rhenish localisation of the Siegfried story, we seem to tread upon the ground of tribal, historical tales. Nevertheless I believe that passage in the Skalda, which attributes "raven-black hair" to Gunnar and Högni and the other Niblungs, to be a mythological indication of the original abode of the Sons of Darkness in the bowels of the earth.

The name of Siegfried's murderer, Hagen—who is one-eyed, even as Hödur, the God of Night, who kills Baldur, the God of Light, is blind—has also been adduced for a mythological interpretation. Hagen is the Thorn of Death, the Haw-thorn (German: *Hage-dorn*), with which men are stung into eternal sleep. Odin stings Brynhild into her trance with a "Sleeping-Thorn." Hagen, in the sense of Death, still lingers in the German expression "Friend Hain," as a euphemism for the figure which announces that one's hour has come. The haw-thorn, as we know from a mass of testimony, was the special wood used for Germanic fire-burial. Hence the sacredness, almost down to our days, of many old haw-thorn bushes in various localities of this country.

But though a Nature-myth is involved in the Siegfried tale, many historical facts have clustered round it, and at last perhaps even overborne it. Attempts have been made to see in it traces of the hero-songs sung, according to Tacitus, in honour of Armin, the Deliverer of Germany from the Roman yoke; and of the deeds done by Civilis, the leader of the Batavian Germans against Roman dominion. An echo of the overthrow of the Burgundian King Gunther by Attila; of the feats of Theodorich, the ruler of the Eastern Goths; even of the conquest of Britain by Hengest, has been assumed to be contained in these Siegfried tales. Others have pointed to the fate of Siegbert, the king of the Austrasian Franks, who was murdered at the instigation of Fredegunda; and to the powerful Frankish family of the Pipins, from whom Karl the Great himself descended. With these Pipins of "Nivella" we come upon a word in consonance with "Nibelung." Again, the wars which the powerful and in a certain sense patriotically German, but despotic,

Frankish Emperor waged against the Saxons of Witukind, who clung to their independence, their self-government, and their Wodanic creed, have been held to be indicated in the war which the Frankish Siegfried wages against the Saxons in the *Nibelungen Lied*.

But I will not pursue this vast subject any further. Be it enough to say that the ground of the tale was repeatedly shifted; that, from the Franks of the Lower Rhine, its centre was transferred to the Burgundians on the upper course of the glorious river; that German Hunes, once dwelling between the Hunsrück range, the Netherlands, and the Frisian shores of the German Ocean, became confounded, after the Great Migrations, with the Hunns; that the Atli of the Edda, whose name has a corresponding form (*Azilo*, *Ezilo*) on German ground, was misunderstood for Attila; and that, then, the death of Siegfried, the Hune, was fittingly supposed to have been avenged by Kriemhild in the land of the Hunns!

Such confusion of myth and history is not unfrequent in the morning-time of a nation's life. Yet, above all these uncertain shadows of blood-boltered historical figures which flit over the stage, searing our eyes, there towers the image of the Hero who represents Light and Right; whose purity of soul makes him the victim of cunning craft; but whose name and deeds are admiringly held up by each succeeding generation. In town and thorpe, as we know from many a stray allusion in our older literature, Siegfried lays were once sung among an attentive crowd. Hans Sachs, the father of the German drama, tried his inexperienced hand at this subject. And the Mastersinger schools, by whose exertions some spark of poetry, however weak, was kept alive among the burgher class, often turned their thoughts to the "old songs."

With the fall of Germany through the miseries of the Thirty Years' War, when her very life-blood seemed to ebb away in a struggle for religious liberty, the poetical remembrance of our people's heroic past grew dimmer evermore—until, with a national revival dating from the War of Independence against Napoleon I., the ancient tale-treasures were valued anew. It is the great merit of Richard Wagner to have formed the plan for his *Nibelung Tragedy* in the summer of 1848, during a promising political upheaval for national freedom and union. The subject he chose is one that appeals to the heart and to the recollections of the whole Teutonic race—from the Rhine to the Scandinavian fiords, and from the Northern Thule to the white cliffs of England, where Hunic warriors have left the imprint of their once famous name.

No New Thing.

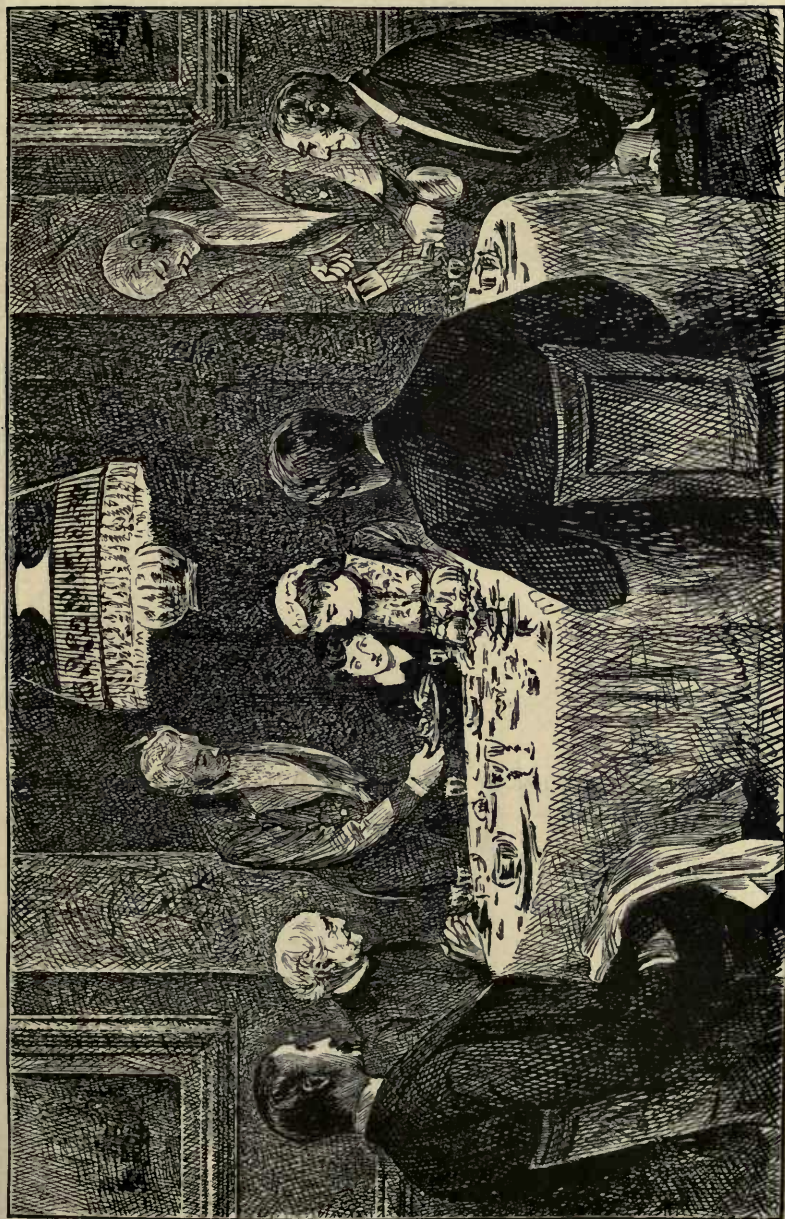
CHAPTER III.

DISTRUST.

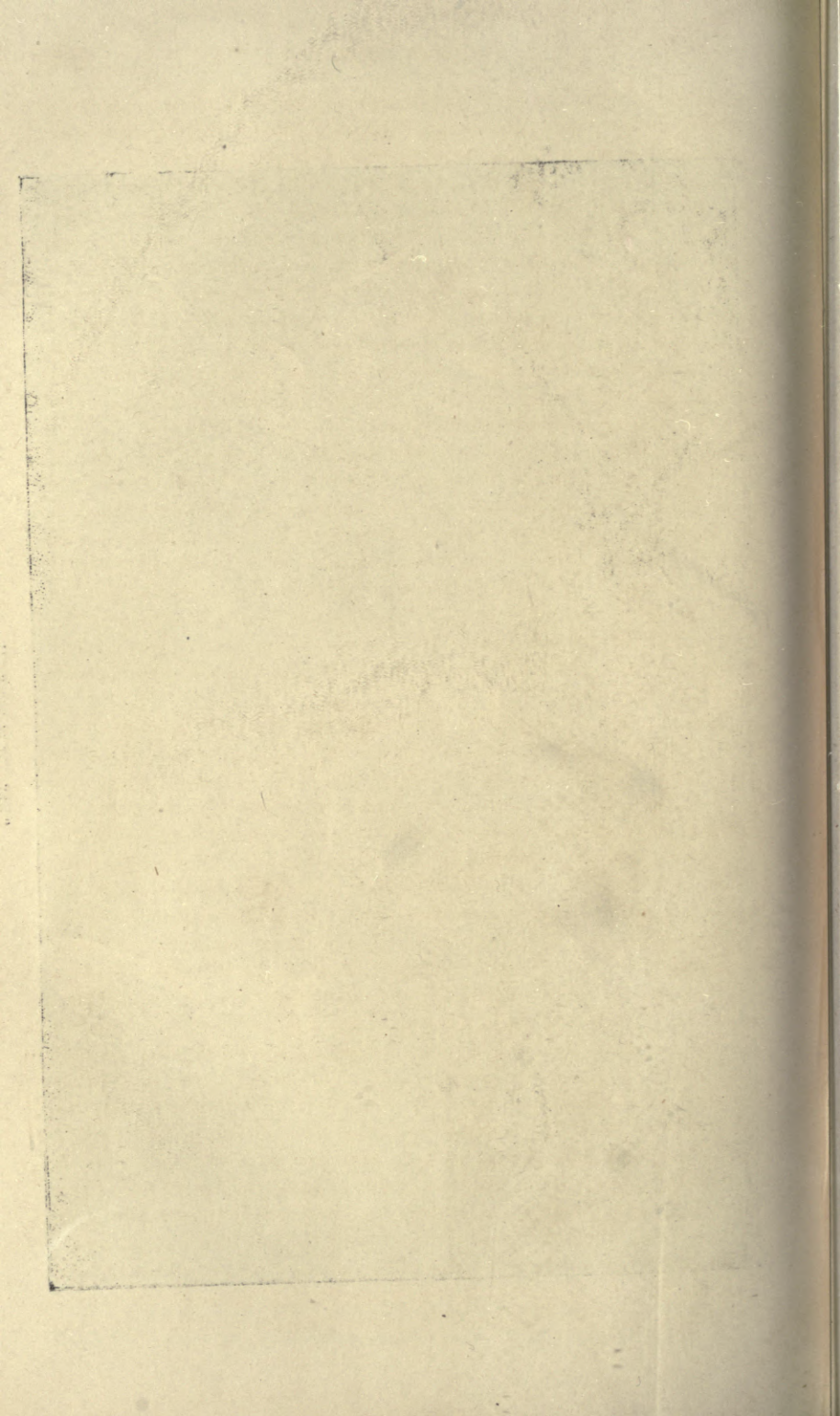


NCE upon a time there dwelt in the East a king so mighty and wealthy that he was the envy of all mankind. He had armies and palaces and treasure-houses, and shady gardens, where fountains rose and fell all the day long, and where neither roses nor bulbuls were lacking; not to mention sherbet, and jewels innumerable, and a plurality of wives—in short, all that the Oriental mind

could find to desire. And this made him sad; for he was a thoughtful monarch, and he soon found out that the fact of having nothing left to wish for is not only insufficient to render kings happy, but is apt to have a precisely opposite effect upon them. Therefore he summoned the wise men of his kingdom, one by one, and demanded of each of them privately how happiness might be gained. And some said one thing, and some said another; but the inquirer could find no suggestion to satisfy him till it came to the turn of a certain dervish to be heard. "Happiness, O King," said this holy man, "belongs not to our world; but I have with me a talisman which, if a man will but consent to wear it next his skin for a twelvemonth, will assuredly confer upon him as near an approach thereto as is obtainable by mortals." And so, permission having been asked and given, he pro-



"HEY, NOT IN BED YET!"



ceeded to place this wondrous charm upon his master's person. It consisted of a collar and a waistband, loosely united by a strip of leather so arranged as to follow the line of the wearer's backbone, and to the middle of this strip was affixed a good stout thorn. The thorn pierced his Majesty's august skin, and he smiled graciously, for he thought he had divined the dervish's meaning. For a year he wore the talisman; and it caused him all the suffering and inconvenience imaginable. He could not bow without receiving a sharp stab which almost caused him to shriek aloud; to lean back upon his throne was out of the question; when he walked, the strip of leather swayed to and fro, leaving a horizontal scratch for every step, and when he rode, it flapped till his back was punctured like a pin-cushion. But all this he bore manfully, knowing that every hour brought him nearer to the end, and looking forward to the time when he should taste the greatest of earthly joys, which is relief from pain. Besides it pleased him to think how heroically he was supporting a torment of which only one man in his dominions suspected the existence. But, when the longed-for day of deliverance came, lo and behold! the poor king was no better off than he had been at starting. Repose indeed he had gained; but that he had had before; and, on the other hand, he had lost a hundred small daily solaces, of which anticipation had not been the least. If the dervish had not prudently made himself scarce at the time, it is probable that he would have had his head cut off for his pains.

The allegory has more than one moral; but the most direct of them lies upon the surface, and there are few men or women who have not had occasion, at one time or another of their lives, to recognise its force. "*Ah! l'heureux temps quand j'étais si malheureux!*"—one hears the cry every day in more or less articulate accents, and there are certain poets whose whole utterances amount to little else. Looking back, in after years, upon the few weeks which he had spent at Nice under the same roof with Margaret Stanniforth—upon their drives along the sunny Cornice, upon their long talks on the balcony, during warm southern evenings, after Mrs. Winington had gone out to the opera, or to a party given by some English friend—upon numberless incidents and speeches remembered only by himself, Hugh Kenyon often sighed for his lost thorn. It is doubtful whether he would have consented to part with it even at the time, although it galled him cruelly; and in truth his lot was not without compensations. Like the Eastern potentate, he wanted what he was very nearly sure that he could never obtain; but, like him, he perhaps got as near an approach to it as was to be had. It was something to see Margaret growing better in health with every day; it was something to be always near her, and to possess her entire confidence. If that confidence usually showed itself after a fashion that made him wince, he accepted the punishment as a just and inevitable one, deriving such consolation as he could from conscious stoicism.

Nice was full of English, as it always used to be in the days when

Cannes was as yet little frequented, and San Remo, Pegli, and other winter resorts all but undiscovered; and among these were, as a matter of course, many of Mrs. Winnington's numerous acquaintances. That lady was persuaded to exhibit her mauve and purple gowns, night after night, at various social gatherings, apologizing a little for going into the world so soon after her daughter's loss; and one, at least, of her fellow-travellers was only too ready to excuse her, and to keep Margaret company through the long evenings.

The intercourse of these two people was of that pleasant and easy kind which can only subsist between old friends who have many tastes and reminiscences in common, and it was but occasionally that Margaret referred to the subject which was always in her thoughts. Hugh noticed with pleasure that she did not shrink from receiving casual visitors, and was able to talk cheerfully; and what pleased him still more was that her cough had almost left her, and that the danger which he had dreaded seemed to have passed away. He could not help telling her as much one evening; and her rejoinder disconcerted him a little.

"Why do you say that?" she asked quietly. "I never thought I was going to die; but if I had died, it would have been the best thing that could have happened to me. You know I have nothing to live for."

"You are too young to talk so; you will feel differently some day, I hope," said Hugh, rather stupidly.

But she went on, without heeding his interruption: "If we could only know a little more! If I could feel quite sure that we should all be together again some day—you, and Jack, and I, and all of us—just as we used to be, it would be easy enough to live through the rest of my time. Do you think it is at all possible that we should meet like that, and talk over old days, and ask one another heaps of questions, as we should do if we had been separated for a time here?"

Hugh had not bestowed much reflection upon this problem. He considered it now for a brief space, pulling his moustache thoughtfully, and then said, "Well, I always think, you know, that the less we bother ourselves about a future state the better."

At this Margaret had a little laugh, which ended in a sigh. "Sometimes I feel quite hopeless," she said; "and it seems to me that in reality everybody else is hopeless too. When people want to comfort me, they all say the same thing, though of course not in the same words: 'You have no business to go on groaning over what can't be helped. Nothing is known about the next world; and all that is certain is that you have lost what you can never by any possibility find again here. The best thing that you can do is to forget all about it, and make a fresh start.'"

This so very nearly expressed Captain Kenyon's own view of the subject that he could only remain silent.

"After all," Margaret resumed, "it is unreasonable, I suppose, to

expect comfort from others. One must bear one's own burden, and fight one's own fight as best one can. I don't mean," she added quickly, "that it isn't the greatest possible comfort to have a friend like you; I am not so ungrateful as that. I often think that life can never become quite unendurable to me so long as I can talk to you or write to you sometimes; for I know I may tell you all my troubles and perplexities and every stupid notion that comes into my head. There can't be many people in the world fortunate enough to have such a friend."

Speeches of this kind went far towards consoling Hugh for many an hour of dejection. There were moments when he almost felt as if the friendship of which she spoke might be sufficient to satisfy him; but then again there were others when he was perfectly sure that friendship would not do at all, that it was dangerous to linger upon these sunny shores, and that prudence and duty alike pointed him northwards. At the end of a month this conviction forced itself upon him so strongly that he struck while the iron was hot, and left for England rather abruptly.

Before Christmas, Mrs. Winnington followed his example. Her daughter, whose health no longer gave cause for anxiety, had plenty of friends in Nice to cheer her solitude; and there were other persons at home who had claims upon Mrs. Winnington's care and supervision. The fact was that the Bishop, if left too long to himself, was apt to get into scrapes, accepting invitations which he ought not to have accepted, allowing his children to make acquaintances which they ought not to have made, and otherwise usurping functions which he was ill qualified to exercise.

Meanwhile the mistress of Longbourne was greatly missed by those who dwelt around her new home, and her movements were discussed as such matters only are discussed in country neighbourhoods. The winter passed away as usual, with gales and rains and frosts; and, as usual, everybody said that there had not been so hard a season for twenty years. Then, when the customary easterly winds of spring had blown themselves out, Mrs. Stanniforth returned; and a welcome stimulus was afforded to local conversation by the circumstance that she did not return alone. It was Mr. Brune's privilege to be the first to acquaint the parish with this bit of intelligence. Trudging across the fields, one sunshiny April morning, he encountered Margaret, accompanied by Hugh Kenyon and by a pale-faced little boy with enormous dark brown eyes, whose hand she held.

"I have brought this little man home with me," said she, as soon as the usual greetings and inquiries had been interchanged, "to make an Englishman of him. Or rather, I have brought him to have an English education; for his father was a countryman of ours, though he has lived all his life with his mother in Italy."

"He looks as if he might have been left to his mother a little longer with advantage," Mr. Brune remarked.

"His mother is dead," answered Margaret, gently. "You are my little boy now, aren't you, Philip?"

A dissentient growl from Hugh Kenyon died away unnoticed.

"And what is your name, my lad?" asked Mr. Brune.

Margaret answered for him, after a momentary hesitation, "His name is Filippo Marescalchi. I am counting upon my friend Walter to take a little care of him just at first, till he learns to fight his own battles."

"I can say on Walter's behalf that he will be proud to obey any commands from Mrs. Stanniforth; and, physically speaking, Walter is all that a fond father could wish him to be. You intend to send this young gentleman to school, then?"

"Yes; at twelve years old it is time, is it not? And he wants to go to school, and he isn't a bit afraid of English boys; are you, Philip?"

The child shrank closer to the side of his protectress with a movement which certainly did not convey the idea of any great natural intrepidity. He was frightened of the wiry little man whose keen grey eyes had been fixed upon him throughout this brief explanation, and if he had been in a position to follow the bent of his own inclinations, he would probably have turned and run back to the house as fast as his legs could carry him. As he will play a principal part in the course of the succeeding narrative, and as the reader will be supposed to be interested in the progress of his career, it may be as well to state, without further delay, so much of his origin and past life as was known to his present patroness.

During the winter which was just over he had been frequently seen wandering all by himself along the Promenade des Anglais at Nice; and Margaret, who loved all children, had soon scraped acquaintance with this one. Through him she had come to know his mother, a certain Countess Marescalchi, who had come to the Riviera in the last stages of consumption, who had apparently neither kith nor kin to look after her, and whose means were evidently of the narrowest. The poor woman was inordinately grateful for such kindnesses as Margaret was able to show her, and, with the communicativeness of her nation, had ere long put this English Samaritan in possession of all the details of a sufficiently sad history. She had, it appeared, been married, some twelve or thirteen years before, to a wealthy Englishman named Brown, who had assumed the title of Count Marescalchi on purchasing an estate in the dominions of King Bomba, which, as a matter of course, carried nobility with it. She had lived happily with him, she said, during the first year of their married life, more or less unhappily during the second, and before the third was at an end he had departed for his native land, and had never returned. She had received from his lawyers the title-deeds of the Italian estate, together with an intimation that she might now regard the same as her own, and that Mr. Brown did not desire to hold any further direct intercourse with her. After that she had had remittances at irregular intervals; but these had soon ceased, and it was her belief that her husband was dead. By her own family she had

not been treated over well. She had two brothers living ; but they had absolutely declined to do anything for her when her funds had begun to run low, alleging that the sale of her property should produce a sufficient income for her to live upon, and declaring that, in any case, it was not their business to support one who had managed her affairs so badly. "What would you have?" she said, with a shrug of her shoulders. "They were terribly disappointed at the disappearance of my husband, whom they had counted upon to make them rich ; and indeed I think it was as much they as I who drove him out of the country, poor man !"

For her own part, she confessed that she had never had any wish to become reconciled with Mr. Brown, whose temper had been of a most trying kind. All the love that was in her had been lavished upon her *bambino* ; and when she thought that she must soon leave him utterly alone in the world, or at best under the care of two uncles from whom he could expect nothing but harsh treatment, she was tempted to take him down to the harbour some night, and let the sea put an end to the troubles of both of them at once.

"What could I say to the poor creature?" Margaret asked, relating all this to Hugh Kenyon. "Of course I told her to set her mind at rest, and that her boy should never want, and that I would do my best to take his mother's place as long as I lived."

"I don't see any of course about it," returned Hugh, who was by no means pleased with Margaret's impulsive behaviour in this matter.

"Well, at all events, I did tell her so ; and I am glad to think that she died more peacefully for knowing that the poor *bambino* would not be uncared for after she was gone. To me he will be the greatest possible blessing ; he has given me the very thing I needed—an object to live for. And he is a pretty child, isn't he ?"

"Oh, I don't know ; a little white thing, all eyes. Yes ; I dare say he's pretty enough, if that's any advantage. The question is whether you haven't saddled yourself with a burden which nothing in the world compelled you to take upon your shoulders. I suppose you never thought of making any inquiries as to the truth of the mother's story. The chances are, you know, that she was never really married to the individual calling himself Brown—supposing that there ever was such a person."

"I am not so imprudent as you would make me out. I wrote to the uncles ; and the elder of these Signori Cavestri came from Florence and saw me. He confirmed all that I had heard from his sister, and was quite willing that I should adopt the boy."

"No doubt he was."

"And we signed an agreement in the presence of witnesses ; so you see everything was quite business-like. My only fear is that Mr. Brown may turn up, some day, and claim his son."

"That, I should think, is in the last degree improbable. By-the-by, what is the young gentleman to be called ?"

"I hesitated a little about that at first; but I came to the conclusion that it would be really too bad to call him Brown when he has a very fair right to the name of Marescalchi. I don't think we need say anything about the Count. Fortunately, he talks English as well as I do; and he is a friendly little fellow. I do hope he will be happy at school."

"I hope he will, I'm sure; but I hope still more that he won't make you unhappy at home—which seems to be quite on the cards. Why did you never consult me about all this?"

"Because, my dear Hugh, I knew you would make all sorts of objections, and, as I was determined to have my own way, it was better to take it, without preliminary fuss. Isn't that a sufficient reason?"

In truth Hugh Kenyon was not alone in raising objections to the adoption of this little waif and stray. Mrs. Stanniforth's relations, one and all, declared themselves against her in the matter. Old Mr. Staniforth wrote from Manchester to say that charity was all very well, but that it was pushing charity beyond its legitimate limits to pick up small Italian boys from the gutter and seat them in your drawing-room. In his opinion, a barrel-organ and a couple of white mice would have met all the requirements of the present case. As for the Bishop, he almost shed tears over it; while Mrs. Winnington was so angry that she reverted to a freedom of language with which her daughters had been familiar in their schoolroom days, and roundly told Margaret that she was a fool. What was to be the future of this imp? she reasonably inquired. Who was to support him, in case anything should happen to his present protectress? Did Margaret remember that it would not be in her power to make any permanent provision either for him or for any other chance object of benevolence? And the good lady's wrath was by no means appeased when her daughter answered quietly that she hoped to be able to lay by several thousands a year, and that, for the rest, she proposed to insure her life in Philip's favour. If one came to talk of insuring lives, Mrs. Winnington thought, it should be the wants of one's own relations that one ought first to consider. She was, however, a woman of some practical good sense, and after her first natural outbreak of indignation, she wisely resolved not to quarrel with accomplished facts and to make the best of a vexatious business.

Nor was Margaret unreasonable. Having carried her point in the main matter of providing herself with an adopted son, she was quite willing to listen to counsel as regarded his education and prospects, and even to follow it, when it coincided with her own views. And harmony was in no small degree promoted by the unanimity with which her advisers decided upon what was the first thing to be done. "Send him to school," cried each and all of them, without a moment's hesitation; and to little Philip, listening eagerly to the discussion, this sentence seemed to be delivered with a certain triumphant ring which was far from being reassuring. Many people imagine, or behave as if they imagined, that children are conveniently deaf, except when spoken to, and that of con-

versation held in their presence they understand only so much as it is desirable that they should understand. Philip Marescalchi heard and understood very well. He understood, for one thing, that all these strange ladies and gentlemen were inclined to be against him ; and, as he had never done any of them an injury, this struck him as an unjust predisposition, and one that reflected little credit upon the English as a nation. Mrs. Stanniforth he loved with all the demonstrative passion of a southern nature ; but by the time that he met Mr. Brune in the manner already described, he had learnt to look upon each fresh face with suspicion, as upon that of a probable enemy ; and, as we have seen, Mr. Brune's greeting had failed to inspire him with any confidence.

Nevertheless, he felt a strong interest in this alarming personage ; for he had found out who Walter was, and that his own destiny was to be sent to Walter's school after Easter ; and when it transpired that Mr. Brune was to dine at Longbourne that night, Philip guessed at once why the invitation had been given. He would gladly, if he had dared, have concealed himself behind the window-curtains during dinner-time, and heard a few particulars as to the mysterious place of discipline whither he was to be despatched ; but this was for various reasons out of the question, and he was fain to console himself with the hope of gleaning some information at dessert.

When the expected guest arrived, Master Philip was lurking on the top landing of the staircase, and, peering beneath the banisters, saw the butler help him off with his coat, after which he was shown into the library. Then the servants went away ; and Philip, stealing down the broad, shallow stairs on tip-toe, approached Mr. Brune's Inverness cape, and began touching it and lifting up the corners of it with a half-frightened curiosity, much as you may see a little dog timidly poking his nose into the empty kennel of a big one. Growing bolder after a time, he proceeded to examine this garment (an altogether novel one to him) more closely, wondering at its weight and thickness, and at the multiplicity of its pockets. Presently it became almost a necessity to discover whether these pockets contained anything, and, if so, what ; and just as he had made up his mind to set these questions at rest, and was fully committed to an investigation, the library door was suddenly flung open, and Mr. Brune himself suddenly strode out into the hall.

"Hullo, youngster !" cried he, "are you looking for oranges ? You won't find any in the pockets of my coat, I'm afraid ; but if you'll come up and see me at Broom Leas, you shall have as many as you can eat ; though we don't pick them off the trees in our country. All I have got here is a letter from your future schoolmaster, which I forgot to take in with me ; and you will soon see as much of his handwriting as you will care about, I daresay."

Mr. Brune did not appear to be angry at the liberty which had been taken with his property ; but the culprit was none the less terrified. He drew back, stammering out :—

"I was not touching your coat, sir. I—I thought I had left my ball here."

"Oh, indeed!" said Mr. Brune, curtly; and, having found his letter, he returned to the library without another word.

This unlucky encounter robbed Philip of any desire to face the company at dessert; but in due time he was sent for as usual, and led into the dining-room, where he stationed himself beside Margaret's chair—a picturesque little figure in his black velvet costume.

There was nothing that should have excited apprehension in the aspect of the five guests who were seated round that well-lighted and prettily decorated table. They were in good humour, as most people are after an excellent dinner, and when the Bishop called out, "Hey! not in bed yet?" he meant to express nothing more than playful amiability. But Philip snuggled under Margaret's wing, and made no reply. To him these good folks were all enemies, and he answered their questions in monosyllables and with downcast eyes; so that they all thought him shy (which he was not), and some of them set him down as sulky into the bargain. As soon as he had disposed of his grapes and biscuits he threw his arms round Margaret's neck, and kissed her on both cheeks; after which, with a funny little old-fashioned bow to the rest of the company, he made his escape. As he was in the act of shutting the door behind him, he heard Mr. Brune say, "He is a pretty little fellow. Don't get too fond of him." But Mrs. Stanniforth's answer, if she made any, was inaudible; and the boy went away, wondering what Mr. Brune could have meant by that rather unkind piece of advice.

Later in the evening this enigma was explained to him after a fashion confirmatory of the old adage that listeners hear no good of themselves. Being wide awake, and hearing a carriage drive up to the door and the sound of voices in the hall, he slipped out of bed and crept to his old post of observation at the top of the staircase, whence he could see the Bishop and Mrs. Winnington enveloping themselves in wraps, and could hear them remarking upon the loveliness of the evening to the others, who had come out to bid them good-night. Presently they took their departure, and were soon followed by Mr. Langley, who had got the good-natured Hugh by the button-hole, and was haranguing him upon the undue facilities afforded to the British private soldier for changing his religion, whenever it might suit the convenience of that ignorant and erratic creature to do so.

"It is a grave scandal," Philip heard him saying, "and one to which the authorities do not seem to be properly alive. Good-night, Mrs. Stanniforth, good-night—most delightful evening—thank you so very much. Such a state of things is a disgrace to the country, Captain Kenyon. I understand that it is an absolute fact that these men will shift about from one denomination to another—Anglicans to-day, Romanists to-morrow, Dissenters next day—simply with a view to attending the place

of worship in which they are likely to be detained for the shortest time. Now, so long as the army chaplains are not backed up——”

“I think I’ll just light a cigar and walk down as far as the gate with you,” Hugh said, resignedly. And so Mr. Brune and his hostess were left alone in the hall, and the proceedings took a turn more interesting to the small watcher overhead.

“What made you tell me not to get too fond of the boy?” Margaret asked, rather abruptly.

“It is a mistake to get too fond of anybody or anything in a world of change,” answered Mr. Brune, sententiously.

“Yes; but that was not what you meant. I wish you would tell me what you did mean.”

“My dear Mrs. Stanniforth, if I were to answer your question honestly, you would only be angry with me, and I should not convince you that I had any good reason for my warning.”

“Having said that much, you must be perfectly aware that I shall not let you go until you have explained yourself.”

“This is what one gets by allowing one’s tongue too much freedom. Well, then, I recommended you not to grow too fond of him because I suspect that he is not likely to prove worth it. There!”

“I did not know it was so easy to foresee what a child of twelve years old was likely to prove worth.”

“It is less difficult than people are willing to allow. Anyone who has had as much to do with the breaking-in of young animals as I have will tell you that they all possess hereditary vices and defects, or the reverse; and, humiliating and puzzling as the fact may be, I fear that we mortals are subject to the same laws. Of course, if you or I were creating a world, we should give everybody a fair start, and little boys and girls would be little lumps of clay, to be moulded by the care and wisdom of their parents or guardians; but even that system might be found open to objections, and it is pretty clear that that is not the system which actually prevails. Therefore, I say that there will always be specimens of the race for whom it is advisable not to care overmuch.”

“What defects and vices have you discovered in my poor little Philip?”

“I have discovered that he is a liar, and I am half afraid that he is a coward too; but I won’t insist upon the latter point. I told you I should make you angry. Come, it is only a question of words, after all. Let us say that he has a highly-strung nervous temperament, and that his intelligence is precocious. How much nicer that sounds! And it means very nearly the same thing.”

“I don’t think it means the same thing at all; and I can’t understand your being unjust and cruel enough to speak so of a child whom you have only seen for a few minutes. You were certainly right in saying that your prejudice would not convince me. And even if he were what you pretend, I should not be the less fond of him, especially as, by your own showing, he would not be to blame for his faults.”

"But I didn't blame him, if you remember. Well, well; don't say I never warned you, that's all."

Mr. Brune had struggled into his Inverness cape by this time, and had got as far as the doorstep, whither he was followed by Margaret.

"I daresay I am unjust," he said; "that is likely enough, goodness knows!—though I won't admit that I am cruel. It was only a little fib that he told me, Mrs. Stanniforth. I caught him with his arm thrust up to the elbow in the pocket of my coat, and he assured me that he had never touched my coat at all. An accomplished liar would hardly have said that, would he? So there's comfort for you. I suppose we have most of us told lies in our time. I am ready to confess that I have, and that if I had no worse sins on my conscience than your young rascal has been guilty of, I should be a happier man than I am. Let us shake hands, and acknowledge that we are all miserable sinners, and say no more about it."

But these last consolatory sentences did not reach the ears of Philip, who stole back to his room, got into bed again, and cried himself to sleep.

CHAPTER IV.

THE RISING AND THE SETTING SUN.

BAD beginnings do not always make bad endings. After the cold welcome which had greeted Philip's entrance into the land of his adoption, he was so fortunate as to earn speedily a general good-will which—if he had rightly understood the case—should have been especially gratifying to him, seeing that it was evidently due to his personal merits alone. As an institution Mrs. Stanniforth's relations and advisers had felt bound to object to him; but as an individual they were quite willing to let him have a fair trial; and further acquaintance showed him to be an attractive little individual enough. His manners, when he got a chance of displaying them, were acknowledged to be charming, albeit a trifle odd and old-fashioned; being accustomed to shift for himself, he had none of the tiresome habits of a spoilt child, and required nobody to entertain him; he was quick at picking up the tone and falling into the ways of those about him; and a select few were privileged to make the discovery that he was an excellent mimic. The guffaws that arose from the region of the servants' hall when he took off Mr. Langley's hurried gait and nasal intonation, caused the grooms in the stable-yard to pause in their work and grin at one another from the mere contagion of merriment; he had caught the good Bishop's trick of murmuring "Oh, my dear friend, my dear friend" so perfectly that a listener with his eyes shut would have been puzzled to distinguish the imitation from the original; and even Mrs. Prosser, the sour-tem-

pered housekeeper, condescended to smile when he sailed across the room, holding up invisible skirts with his left hand, peering here and there through imaginary eye-glasses, and ejaculating, "My dearest Margaret, you ought really to insist upon your servants' doing their work properly!" For Mrs. Prosser did not love her mistress's mother.

But these exhibitions were reserved for those who appreciated them, and were never indulged in in the presence of Mrs. Stanniforth; for, young as he was, Master Philip knew that what is one man's meat is another man's poison, and had learnt the important lesson of how to adapt his demeanour to his company. Mrs. Brune, for instance, thought him a sweet, gentle-mannered child, and wished, with a sigh, that her own rough little mob were more like him; while, if he had failed to ingratiate himself with her husband, it was only because he had made up his mind that any effort to do so would be hopeless, and because (pardonably enough) he entertained for that gentleman a deep-seated aversion, not unmixed with dread. As for the children at Broom Leas, they sat in judgment upon him, for a day or two, after the pitiless and uncompromising fashion of children, and finally pronounced a verdict in his favour. Probably they were influenced in no small degree by his independence and his assumption of certain airs of superiority to which his experience and knowledge of the world entitled him; but, be that as it may, their friendship, once accorded, was given without reserve, and he was immediately admitted into a freemasonry which no parental orders or entreaties could have thrown open to him. He, on his side, was greatly taken with these new companions, and especially with Nellie, to whom he made love so openly that Mrs. Brune actually began to speculate upon what might come to pass in ten or fifteen years' time, and asked her husband privately whether he supposed that Mrs. Stanniforth's *protégé* had anything substantial in the way of expectations.

Philip was strolling across the fields from Longbourne to Broom Leas, one morning, when he was met by a broad-shouldered, fresh-coloured boy of about his own age and about twice his size, who left off whistling on catching sight of the stranger, and presently called out: "I say! is your name Marescalchi?"

Philip said, "Yes."

"Oh, all right! You're going to school with me next half. I'm Brune—Walter, you know: you've heard of me from the young 'uns?"

Philip smiled amiably, said, "I am glad to see you," and held out his hand, which the other took, staring and laughing a little. Walter was not accustomed to so much ceremony.

"I say," he began again, after a pause, "can you play cricket?"

Philip answered in the words of the gentleman who was asked whether he could play the flute, that he didn't know, never having tried.

"Hum! that's a pity. Football?"

Philip had never even seen a football; and his questioner was visibly depressed by this intelligence. It was evidently in no sanguine spirit

that he suggested "Fives?" and a third disclaimer appeared to grieve rather than surprise him. "Well," he said, in a tone of gentle remonstrance, "you'll have to learn, you know." And then, "You don't ride, I suppose."

This time Philip was able to nod affirmatively. "I have got a new pony," he said.

"Have you though?" cried the other, brightening. "Where is he? Up at the Longbourne stables? Come along, and let's have a look at him."

So Walter was taken to admire the purchase which Hugh Kenyon had made, a short time before, at Mrs. Stanniforth's desire; and after that, the two boys visited the other stalls and loose-boxes together, and were very knowing upon the subject of horseflesh, and in that way made friends. Philip could stick to his saddle as well as most boys of his age; for his mother had had him taught to ride, just as she had been careful to provide him with an English nurse, so long as that extravagance had been possible to her. No one could tell what might happen, she used to say to herself, when in a hopeful mood, and there was no harm in being prepared for all contingencies. In her heart she had always cherished a notion that, one day or another, Mr. Brown's relatives might claim their kinsman, and bear him away to wealth and honours in that far-off northern island which she well knew that she herself would never see. Her pains and forethought had their reward now; though not under such circumstances as she had anticipated.

"I think he'll do," Walter announced confidentially to his father some days later. "I should not wonder if he was to get just a little bit kicked at first——"

"If you are quite sure that it will be only just a little bit, Walter, I should be inclined to doubt whether that would be an altogether unmixed evil."

"Oh, there's no such thing as bullying nowadays," answered the boy, who was not himself made of the stuff which is easily bullied; "he'll get on all right. The only danger is—he's awfully clever, you know—the danger is that he may turn out a sap, and stick indoors all day."

"I am convinced, my dear boy, that we may rely upon you to do your utmost, both by precept and example, to avert such a calamity. Judging by the report which you were kind enough to hand to me on your return, the disgrace of being known as a 'sap' is one which you are in no danger of incurring. Can you conjugate *vapulo*, for instance?"

"Yes," answered Walter, "I can; but I'd rather not; because——"

"Quite so. I respect your feelings, and have no desire to stir up painful memories during the holidays. But mind you, if this youngster is promoted over your head, there shall be no Eton for you. I can't afford to send more than one of you to the old school; and if you won't learn, why Dick must take your place; and I shall—well, I think I shall ship you off to the colonies, and make you work your passage out as cabin-boy."

Walter grinned, knowing that there was no likelihood of this threat being carried into effect, though he considered it quite upon the cards that the supposition which had given rise to it might be fulfilled. For he had discovered, to his astonishment, that little Marescalchi could do Latin verses, not to speak of construing a page of Virgil without the aid of a crib; and he had the best reasons for thinking modestly of his own classical attainments.

Meanwhile, it was indispensable that this benighted foreigner should gain some elementary knowledge of how to hit and how to throw up a ball, before being sent to school. Therefore Walter, who was the most good-natured soul alive, spent a large portion of his three weeks' holidays in bowling lobs to the stranger, while Nellie long-stopped; and at the end of the time he was able to speak with qualified approbation of his pupil's progress. The last day was a trying one for Philip—and not for Philip alone—but it passed away without any unseemly exhibition; and if there were tears in anybody's eyes when the moment of parting came, they were resolutely winked away.

"Oh dear! I almost wish he had been a girl," sighed Margaret, as she stood looking after the carriage which was bearing away her adopted child and his juvenile protector.

"It would have been much better in all respects if he had been," agreed Mr. Brune; "but, my dear Mrs. Stanniforth, why didn't you think of that before? Boys are a nuisance even when they come into one's possession in the ordinary course of nature; but nothing compels one to adopt other people's boys. Considering the vast preponderance of the female over the male population, it does seem odd that, when you had made up your mind to relieve the destitute, you should have fixed upon one of the wrong sex."

"The destitute females did not happen to come in my way, you see; and Philip belongs to me now as much as your boys belong to you. I am sure I have no right to grumble. He has been a godsend to me already, and I don't doubt but that he will be the joy of my life and the prop of my old age."

"Unless he comes to the gallows in the meantime. Now, Mrs. Stanniforth, don't look so reproachfully at me; I did not really mean that. Set it down to jealousy of your boy, who is so much better-looking and cleverer than mine, you know. I foresee how you will crow over me for the next three months, and I can't help feeling sore in anticipation."

It must be confessed that, if Margaret did not actually crow over Mr. Brune, she was very exultant when the first reports from Philip's school reached her, and that she talked about him and his triumphs a little too much for the patience of her mother, who was at that time spending a few days with her.

"Now I do think there are very few boys of twelve years old who could produce anything so good as that," she exclaimed, one morning,

throwing across the breakfast-table a letter which, in truth, was not ill written and was disfigured by no blots.

Mrs. Winnington picked it up, and surveyed it through her glasses. "My dearest Meg," it began.

"Really," cried Mrs. Winnington, laying down the sheet, "I am surprised at your encouraging the boy to address you in that disrespectful way. 'Meg,' indeed! Why, I should never have allowed even your brothers and sisters to make use of such a vulgar nickname."

"But 'Mrs. Stanniforth' would be so formal. He always used to call me Meg at Nice, and I rather liked it. I don't think it sounds disrespectful."

"Oh, very well! I suppose the young gentleman will be addressing me as Sukey next," said Mrs. Winnington, whose christian name was Susan. And then she raised her eye-glasses again, and went on with the letter.

"My dearest Meg,—This is a half-holiday, so I am going to write to you as I promised. We have two half-holidays a week. I like it very much, only I want to go to Eton at Christmas when Walter goes. Please dear Meg let me go. Walter says he is sure I should take middle fourth, which is Upper School you know. I play cricket every day. I never cry, and I say my prayers as you told me. All the boys say their prayers here because one of the masters comes into the dormitory in the morning and then we have to do it while he is there and then we dress and then we go into school. We don't get much *butter* with our bread at breakfast. Walter says all the boys at Eton have rooms of their own and buy what they like for breakfast. I should always buy *soissiges*. I wish I was there. But I am very happy here. Please send me ten shillings as I have got no money left. I must stop now for I have no more to say. Give my love to Prosser and Wilson and James and Thomas and all the animals and Mrs. Winnington, and

"Believe me

"Ever your loving
PHILIP."

"There are a few mistakes in spelling," Margaret observed in an apologetic tone.

"A few," said Mrs. Winnington drily. "It is a comfort to think that Philip is not likely to fail in life through any foolish feeling of delicacy as to asking for what he wants. I suppose you have already begun to make inquiries about a house at Eton."

"Well, it would be a great thing if he and Walter could go there together, would it not? And you know, mother, it is one of your maxims that those who won't ask don't deserve to receive."

Mrs. Winnington, who had consistently acted in accordance with this principle for many years, did not find it convenient to make any direct rejoinder, and merely remarked: "Eton was thought too expen-

sive a school for your brothers : but I dare say I had better not interfere. I hope you will thank your young prodigy for his polite mention of me when you write."

"Oh, yes; I will certainly," replied Margaret, quite seriously. And she despatched an answer to Philip's letter that same afternoon, enclosing the ten shillings, as requested, and promising that if he continued to be good, and was careful about the orthography of "dormitory" and other recondite words, the propriety of sending him to Eton in eight months' time should be considered.

The boy had not told the truth in asserting that he was happy at school. But what boy ever does tell the truth in such matters? He was physically weak, nervous, and sensitive, and he experienced the inevitable fate of those who possess such organisations. This private school, which was neither better nor worse than other establishments of its kind, did him some good and some harm. It taught him a respect for discipline; it gave him a rough notion of what commonly passes for justice in this world; and it confirmed his previous impression that the English, with a few bright exceptions, were a thick-headed and hard-hearted race. Probably he would not have pulled through as well as he did had he not had a powerful friend in Walter Brune. With the help of that good-natured son of Anak, he just managed to hold his own among his companions, and, although he did not achieve popularity, he was not much tormented after the first few weeks. To set against this mediocre social success, he had the good word of all his masters, and he returned to Longbourne at Midsummer with a pile of prizes under his arm and a highly eulogistic letter, addressed to Mrs. Stanniforth, in the pocket of his jacket.

Perhaps, if Philip had known it, that first day of his first holidays was the happiest of his life. The joy of regained liberty; the joy of being surrounded by none but friendly faces; and the joy of once more embracing his beloved Meg—the only person in the world in whom he had complete confidence: these would of themselves have satisfied him. But when to such delights was joined the supreme one of returning to them in the character of a conquering hero, the measure of his contentment was filled up to overflowing; for it was a part of his nature to adore applause. Margaret was not alone when he arrived; she had Captain Kenyon and two of her young brothers, schoolboys like himself, staying with her. But Hugh was so kind and complimentary that his presence could hardly be considered as a drawback; and the Winnington boys had the pleasant, soft manners of their father's family, and did not look askance at Philip, as at an intruder, after the fashion of certain other people whom he had met at Longbourne earlier in the year.

In the afternoon Walter came up; and then there were the stables to be visited, and various plans for the employment of eight blissful weeks to be concocted; after which came late dinner, to which—the occasion being so auspicious a one—the juveniles sat down with their

elders. But what pleased Philip more than all this, more even than the news that his hopes were to be fulfilled, and that he was to go to Eton after Christmas, was the footing upon which he felt himself to stand with regard to those about him. He was no longer the little Italian waif, picked up nobody knew whence, and eyed from every quarter with curiosity and suspicion; he was a recognised member of the family, and one who was acknowledged to have brought credit upon it in the shape of those gilded volumes which were lying in a conspicuous place upon the drawing-room table.

Thus it was, in all respects, a day to be marked with a white stone; but, somehow or other, Margaret's spirits did not seem to be as high as they ought to have been under the circumstances; and Philip, who was an observant little person, was not slow to detect this deficiency. He noticed also that Captain Kenyon was not himself. That ordinarily quiet and taciturn gentleman was so talkative and so laboriously jovial that a far less shrewd listener than Master Marescalchi must have suspected that something was amiss. Taking one thing with another, and remarking that no direct interchange of words took place between the head and the foot of the table, our young friend came to the conclusion that Captain Kenyon had been misbehaving himself in some way, and that Margaret was displeased with him; and this impression was confirmed by what took place subsequently in the drawing-room. Hugh began talking about Eton, and, mentioning as a curious circumstance that he himself had never seen the place, added that he would now have a pretext for running down there occasionally.

"Have you ever seen Oxford?" asked Margaret, looking up for an instant from her embroidery.

"Well, no; oddly enough, I never have. Why do you ask?"

"Only because your pretext will most likely have moved there before you come back."

"Oh, I hope it will not be so bad as that," answered Hugh, laughing in an uncomfortable, nervous sort of way.

"I thought," said Mrs. Stanniforth, rising slowly, and gathering up her skeins and scissors and needles, "that you told me you would not be in England again for another five or six years at least."

And with that she walked to the other end of the room, and engaged one of her young brothers in a game of backgammon, disregarding Hugh's confused murmurs about getting leave, he hoped, and distance being nothing in these days, and more to the like effect. Whereupon the latter thrust his hands into his pockets, stretched his long legs out before him, and became lost in frowning meditation.

It was Margaret's custom to peep into Philip's room, before retiring to rest, for a last look at her boy, who was generally sound asleep at the hour of these visits. Upon this occasion, however, she found him sitting up in bed, and eager for conversation; and one of the first things he asked was—

"Meg, is Captain Kenyon going away?"

Margaret said yes; Captain Kenyon was going to India very soon.

"What for?" Philip inquired.

"He is sent there, my dear. Soldiers are sent to India sometimes."

"Is India a long way off?"

"Yes; a long way. I dare say you won't see Captain Kenyon again until you are almost a man. Aren't you sorry?"

Philip did not feel that the prospect was one which affected him very greatly; but he expressed a proper amount of civil regret, and then went on with his inquiries.

"Why are soldiers sent to India, Meg? For a punishment?"

"Oh dear, no! many of them don't think it a punishment at all. There are tigers to be shot in India, and pigs to be stuck, and other excitements which are not to be had in this country. Of course those who go leave their friends behind them, which some might consider a drawback."

"And are they obliged to go?"

"Well, I believe they can generally arrange to remain at home if they wish it."

"Captain Kenyon doesn't wish it then?"

"I suppose not. But we must not talk any more now; it is high time for you to lie down and go to sleep."

So Margaret went away, leaving Philip still a victim to baffled curiosity. He perceived that Captain Kenyon's departure was arousing no small amount of resentment; but he did not clearly understand why that officer should not go and kill tigers, or be killed by them, if the current of his ambition set that way. If it had been a question of the Bishop's or of Mrs. Winnington's incurring such perils, that would of course have been another thing; but what, after all, was Captain Kenyon to Margaret? Only a friend—and not a very interesting friend either, in his (the speculator's) opinion. It will be seen that Philip was not too young to be jealous.

Poor Hugh was innocent enough of any desire to quit his native shores, and not all the tigers in Bengal would have tempted him away, had he felt at liberty to consult his own inclinations; but there were more considerations than one which weighed with him when his battery, somewhat unexpectedly, received orders to hold itself in readiness to proceed on foreign service. In the first place, he was a poor man, and could not well have afforded the expense of an exchange; secondly, he had a mother and sisters whom he had accustomed to look for occasional remittances from him, and to whose comforts the double pay of the Indian establishment might be expected to minister considerably; thirdly—and this, it must be confessed, was what he thought of most—he had convinced himself that it would be better for him to dwell no longer than was necessary in the same quarter of the globe as Margaret.

The first two of these reasons were such as, in an ordinary man,

might have been held to be sufficient, not to say creditable; but those who choose habitually to study the convenience of others rather than their own must be prepared to pay the penalty which such an imprudent rule of conduct entails. Hugh, having cheerfully served his fellow-creatures all his life long, had ceased, in the eyes of most of them, to be a free agent; and Margaret, for one, though she was not unreasonable enough to desire that he should sacrifice his career in order that she might have an adviser and confidant always at her elbow, yet thought that friendship demanded of him some expression of regret and some explanation of the causes that were leading him to abandon her at a time when she stood so much in need of support. When, therefore, he announced in a brisk, off-hand manner that he was about to sail for India, and might be absent for a matter of half-a-dozen years or so, she felt that she had every right to be hurt and offended; and so it was that she treated the delinquent with marked coldness, and made the sarcastic allusions above-mentioned to tigers and pigs.

The next morning, Philip espied Hugh smoking his pipe pensively on the lawn before breakfast, and attacked him point-blank with—

“Captain Kenyon, why are you going to India?”

“Why am I going, my boy?” echoed Hugh, looking down at the inquisitive little face which was turned up to his. “Well, I am going because it comes in the way of my duty to go, if you understand what that means.”

“But Meg said you could stay at home if you liked.”

“Did she say that?” exclaimed Hugh, in an altered voice; and for a moment Philip experienced the uncomfortable sensation of one who has trodden upon a sleeping lion’s tail. But it presently appeared that Captain Kenyon was not going to be angry.

“Ah,” said he, “ladies won’t understand that a man can’t always do as he likes. Don’t you let them put any notion of that kind into your head, my young friend, or you’ll come to grief one of these fine days. One of the first lessons that men and boys have to learn is that they will very seldom be able to do as they like, and the next, that they may as well grin and bear it.”

Hugh, however, was not allowed to beg the question in that way.

“But you can do as you like about going to India,” persisted his cross-examiner. “Meg said so.”

“Perhaps neither you nor Margaret know much about that,” answered Hugh, good-humouredly. “At all events, I am not going to be bullied by any of you; and you’ll see me back sooner than you want me, I have no doubt. That’s enough said about me. What *you* have to do is to grow into a big boy as soon as you can, and to try to be some comfort to—to—to—the person to whom you owe pretty well everything. You have made a good start: keep it up. And mind you, it isn’t enough to get prizes, and be at the top of your class, and all that. Not that study isn’t a very fine thing in its way; still, it’s not all that’s wanted. You

are sent to school, I take it, not only to learn Latin and Greek and a smattering of mathematics, but to learn to be a gentleman and a good fellow. At Eton you will fall in with companions of all ranks and fortunes, just as you will in the world later on, and the chances are that you will have as much pocket money as any of them; but don't let that make you forget that you will have to earn your own bread some day. Never pretend that you are anything but what you really are; never shirk either your work or your play; and never say a word behind a fellow's back that you wouldn't dare to say to his face. That isn't an impossible system to follow; though it's a hard one, I grant you. You stick to it, and you'll have your reward in due time."

In this strain Hugh went on, expounding his simple theory of ethics between the whiffs of his pipe, and the boy listened to him with about as much attention as boys usually vouchsafe to the wisdom of their elders. The speaker's words gained something in impressiveness, it is true, when it transpired that this was a valedictory address, and that Captain Kenyon proposed to leave for Aldershot within a few hours. He would not actually sail for some time to come; but the little leave that he could hope to obtain after this must, he explained, be spent with his own family, and it was unlikely that he would be able to visit Longbourne again. "So you see," he concluded, "this will be my last opportunity of lecturing all you good folks and telling you your duty; and I am making the most of it."

But, although Hugh could be fluent enough in the presence of this small member of the household, he became a changed man under the eye of its mistress, and his eloquence entirely deserted him when the time came for him to hold his farewell interview with her. They sat facing, but not looking at one another, in the library, she stitching at her embroidery, and he pulling his moustache and studying the pattern of the carpet; and, like the sentimental couple in the ballad,

They spoke of common things,
But the tears were in their eyes.

At length Hugh could stand this absurd constraint no longer, and broke out with—"I hope you don't think I am going to India for my own amusement. The boy said something to me just now which—he told me you had said I need not go unless I liked."

"I fancied," said Margaret, "that exchanges were not difficult to obtain. But I don't know why you should not wish to go."

"Ah, that is not like you! that is not quite honestly said. You must know that it can be no pleasure to me to leave—all that I shall have to leave, and that I should not go, unless I had a good reason for doing so. I *have* a good reason—several good reasons."

He broke off, and looked at her half apprehensively. He was undecided whether to hope that she would understand him or to hope that she would not. But she looked up with a pleasant smile, and an evident

unconsciousness of any deeper meaning than his words seemed to imply.

"Dear old Hugh!" she said, "I know you have reasons, and I suppose I can guess what some of them are. I ought to know, if anyone does, that your own pleasure is about the last thing that you ever think of; and I beg your pardon for having been so disagreeable to you. But I confess that the way you spoke yesterday made me unhappy, and vexed me. I thought you seemed glad to go."

"No," said Hugh, in a low voice; "I was not glad."

"Of course you were not; and even if you had been, one has not so many friends in the world that one can afford to quarrel with the best of them."

"Quarrel!" cried Hugh, aghast. "My dear Margaret!"

"Well, I won't say anything about quarrels; it takes two to make one, doesn't it? But I dare say you don't know what a loss you will be to me. It seems as if I must lose everyone I cared for."

Hugh was perfectly well aware that if she had cared for him in the way that he wished her to do she would never have said that. "You won't lose me, if I can help it," he answered, cheerily; "and you have the boy, remember. He will very soon take my place—and more than my place, I'm afraid. His sun is rising, and mine is setting; and that is quite as it should be. Only don't let him put me altogether out of your memory."

From which it may be inferred that, if Philip was inclined to be jealous of Captain Kenyon, his sentiments were not far from being returned.

"I don't know why you should say that," cried Margaret, with some warmth. "Is one only to care for one person in the world? You are not the less my friend because I have found a son in Philip. If Jack were alive, you don't think, do you, that I should care less to see you and hear from you?"

"Yes, I do," answered Hugh. "Why it stands to reason that you would."

"Then you don't know the meaning of friendship, that's all."

"Don't I?" said Hugh, meekly. And then she begged his pardon again, and they both laughed, and Margaret cried a little; and before much more could be said, the butler came in to announce that the dog-cart was at the door. One of them was not sorry to have his adieux cut short. He promised to write often; and they shook hands, saying that they would certainly meet again soon.

So they two parted; and did not meet again for many a long day.

CHAPTER V.

THE YOUNG GENERATION.

TEN years make up a very respectable slice to take out of any man's life. Ten years advance the restless world so far in its eternal task of waste and renewal, bring such a vast accumulation of announcements to the first column of the *Times*, and witness so much laughing and weeping, learning and forgetting, that they cannot but leave perceptible traces upon bodies which at best are only constructed to endure through six or seven of such periods. Yet when, after protracted wanderings, we revisit familiar scenes, it is seldom change so much as the lack of it, that astonishes us. The houses are where they were; the church steeple maintains its position, looking down upon the well-known tombstones, with but a few additions to their number; everywhere are evidences of the mortifying fact that summer and winter, seed-time and harvest, have succeeded one another quite in the usual fashion, in spite of our absence. It takes nothing less than an earthquake, a conflagration, or a deluge, to give us the shock which we had half looked forward to. In individuals, too, as in places, the work of a twelvemonth is often more destructive than that of a dozen. We return, after ten years of not more than ordinary vicissitude, to find our friends a little greyer perhaps, a little stouter, a little less active, but otherwise scarcely altered. They are busied with the same employments as of yore; they are absorbed in the same petty cares and amusements; we recognise the old tricks of speech and gesture, the old virtues and failings, and too often, alas! the old jokes. The only startling sensation we are likely to experience is the discovery that those whom we left in the nursery have in some unaccountable manner been replaced by young men and women. The reader must now be asked to renew acquaintance, after a supposed interval of ten years, with the personages parted from at the end of the last chapter; some of whom, as will be seen, have grown almost out of recognition in that lapse of time, while others have remained as nearly stationary as the laws of nature will permit, and two have quietly slipped off the stage altogether, and have already been all but forgotten by the survivors.

To Margaret this decade has given what, in the common course of things, it could hardly fail to do—a less impatient acquiescence in her lot as a rich woman to whom money is no blessing and a lonely woman who is seldom allowed to be alone; a clear understanding of the uses and drawbacks of wealth; and, in addition to these advantages, a considerable increase of employment for body and mind in the shape of certain responsibilities which shall be more fully dwelt upon by-and-by. Upon Hugh Kenyon, earning distinction, unaccompanied by notoriety, in desultory frontier warfare, and groaning over uncongenial office work as holder of a staff appointment in the sweltering heat of Madras, it has

bestowed a fine crop of grey hairs, a heartfelt detestation of the East, and a brevet-colonelcy. To Mrs. Winnington it has brought a change of circumstances which, anticipated and discounted as it might have been by so far-seeing a lady, has not the less contributed towards souring a temper which was never of the sweetest. The truth is that, after the poor old Bishop of Crayminster's death and burial, his savings were found to fall far short of the amount which he had always led his wife to imagine that she might trust to inheriting; and Mr. Brune declared that, in the first agony of so cruel an aggravation of her bereavement, the widow was for countermanding that handsome marble effigy which adorns the north transept of the cathedral and keeps the virtues of Bishop Winnington before the eyes of a too forgetful public. Possibly, however, it was not Mrs. Winnington who defrayed the cost of the monument.

When these lamentable events occurred, Mr. Brune had himself been for some time a widower. The fragile mistress of Broom Leas shivered out of the world one bitter January morning, and was regretted as much as, and missed perhaps rather more than, she deserved. Her place was supplied, so far as a mother's place can be supplied, by Margaret, who took almost entire charge of little Nellie, saw that the boys had buttons on their shirts and jackets on their backs, and in numberless other ways proved herself of invaluable service to a distressed elderly gentleman whose notions on the subject of household economy were of a most elementary kind.

That Mrs. Winnington and her only unmarried daughter Edith should take up their abode for a time with Mrs. Stanniforth, after circumstances obliged them to vacate the Palace, was but natural and proper. It was only a temporary arrangement, Mrs. Winnington was careful to explain. She herself disapproved on principle of joint establishments; and, although she was willing so far to comply with dear Margaret's wishes as to remain where she was until a suitable home could be found for her elsewhere, it must be clearly understood that she could never consent to inhabit Longbourne upon any other footing than that of a guest. Nevertheless, time went on, and, somehow or other, the suitable home could not be discovered. Sometimes Mrs. Winnington took lodgings in London for a month or so, sometimes she allowed herself a brief period of rest and relaxation at the sea-side, and her interviews with house-agents were constant; but nothing came of it all; and Mrs. Prosser, the housekeeper, respectfully begged to be informed whether she was expected to take her orders from visitors; because, in that case, she should be wishful to give up the situation, not having been accustomed to serve two mistresses.

Perhaps Mrs. Prosser was not the only person who would fain have sped the parting guest; for in ten years' time there had sprung up a generation of young people, whose views were clear and decided, as the views of young people generally are, and who did not hesitate to give

expression to them among themselves. It is with this younger generation that we shall henceforth principally have to deal; and probably the best day on which to bring them under the reader's notice will be that of the Oxford and Cambridge cricket match, a day memorable on various grounds—memorable in the annals of cricket as having witnessed the defeat of Cambridge in a single innings; memorable to the Brunes and Stanniforths as being the crown and finish of their respective representatives' Oxford career; memorable, above all, as the day on which Walter carried out his bat, after having put together a score of 182, without giving a single chance from beginning to end.

Of the many thousands who strolled round and round Lord's ground during the two days of the match, not a few stood still to stare at a remarkably pretty girl, who, perched upon the box of a carriage, with her eyes fixed intently upon the players, was evidently unconscious of the admiration which she was exciting. A very small proportion of them—one in a thousand, perhaps—knew her name; for Miss Brune's visits to London were few and far between, and her acquaintance with fashionable society was confined to such members of it as dwelt within the limits of her own county. Nor, indeed, had she any present desire to enlarge that acquaintance, or to scrutinise the throng of celebrities and beauties collected in her neighbourhood, having little in common with the ladies who frequent Lord's rather with a view to be seen than to see. Everything at its proper time. Miss Brune had no objection to the pleasures of social intercourse as obtainable at the half-dozen or so of balls to which she was taken in the course of the year, or at the garden-parties which were the form of entertainment most in favour round Crayminster; but she went to Lord's to look at cricket, and it is certain that she was as capable a judge of the game as any man in the Pavilion. It was not for nothing that she had had her shins bruised and her finger-nails cracked by the bowling of a succession of brothers, all of whom had subsequently achieved renown on better-known fields than that of Broom Leas; and, although long skirts and conventional prejudices forbade her any longer to handle the bat and ball on her own account, there were few of the great annual contests in which she did not take a vicarious part. This particular University match—the last in which Walter was to figure—had occupied all her thoughts for weeks beforehand, and during the earlier part of it she had sat motionless upon her perch, her right hand supporting her chin and her left holding up her parasol, as inattentive to the ceaseless babble of her younger brothers as she had been unconscious of the flattering remarks to which her small regular features, her abundant dark hair, and her blue eyes were giving rise among the ranks of the bystanders.

But now the first day was past and gone, the morning of the second was wearing away; Cambridge, having followed their innings, were making a bad fight of it; the result of the game was a foregone conclusion,

and Miss Brune was able to bestow some notice upon the outer world, and to nod in a friendly way to a strikingly handsome and well-dressed young man, who lounged up to the side of the carriage and took off his hat to her.

"Rather poor fun," he remarked, with a backward jerk of his head towards the field.

"Yes; isn't it horrid? I do hate a follow-on."

"It is better than a draw, though, I suppose."

"Oh, of course; but it's disappointing all the same. I wanted to see Walter go in again."

"How inconsiderate of you to wish for such a thing on a blazing hot day like this! If I were Walter, I should be very well satisfied to rest upon my laurels."

"Ah, but you don't care about cricket," said Miss Brune, looking down pityingly upon her interlocutor, who had drawn a mat over the top of the wheel to protect his coat-sleeves, and was resting his elbows upon it, while he contemplated her with a sort of lazy complacency and approbation.

"I beg your pardon; I like cricket very well—in a mild way. I don't think it quite the only thing in the world worth living for, I confess."

"No more does Walter," retorted Miss Brune, with quick resentment.

"Who said he did? Don't be so peppery, Nell! Perhaps I wasn't thinking of Walter at all."

"You meant me, then, I suppose. Now, Philip, if you are going to say disagreeable things, you had better take yourself off."

"I shall do nothing of the sort," answered the other, climbing deliberately into the carriage, which was empty at that moment, and kneeling upon the seat, so that his face was close to Miss Brune's elbow. "I shall stay as long as I please, and say as many disagreeable things as I like."

"You cannot force me to listen to you, at all events," cried the girl, resolutely turning her back upon him.

"Very well; I'll endeavour to be amiable. I think cricket a glorious national pastime; and if I could play as well as Walter, I should think it more glorious still. Will that satisfy you? You'll allow that it isn't a game for a bad player."

"You could play well enough, if you chose to take the trouble," answered Nellie, seriously; "it's no use attempting to do anything without practice. But, I suppose," she added presently, "you like private theatricals and dancing and flirtation, and all that sort of amusement better."

"Who's saying disagreeable things now? I never knew anybody so quarrelsome as you are. One would have thought that you would have been on your good behaviour for the first two or three days after meeting an old friend whom you haven't seen for so many months—but

no ! However, I don't mean to quarrel with you. In the first place, it is too hot ; in the second place, we have the whole summer before us ; and in the third place, public wrangling is unseemly,"

Nellie turned her dark blue eyes upon the speaker with a look of some alarm and contrition. "I didn't mean to be disagreeable really, Philip," she said.

"I forgive you," replied the other, gravely. "Try not to do it again, that's all. Now tell me all the Longbourne news. Between ourselves, I am sick of Oxford and sick of private theatricals ; and, as for dancing and flirtation, I should imagine you were more proficient in those arts than I can pretend to be."

But Miss Brune was not listening to him. "Oh, what was that ?" she exclaimed. "Eight wickets down ! How did he get out ? I didn't see it at all, did you ? This comes of talking, instead of looking at the game."

"Oh, bowled, or caught, or run out, or something ; I don't know. Anyhow, there's an end of him ; and there will be an end of the whole business presently. Tell me about Longbourne !"

"There is no Longbourne news to tell. Nothing ever happens in our part of the world, you know ; at least, nothing that you would care to hear about. Mrs. Stanniforth is looking tired and ill, I think. I wanted her to come up with us and see the match ; but she said she could hardly manage it. Of course, if you had been in the eleven, it would have been another thing. How glad she will be to have you back again !"

"Dear old Meg ! Any prospect of Mrs. Winnington's finding a house ?"

Nellie shook her head and sighed. "Papa says the only chance of getting rid of her would be for Mrs. Stanniforth to let Longbourne, and go away until she was settled somewhere. But, unfortunately, Mrs. Stanniforth doesn't want to get rid of her."

"I wonder now," said Philip, musingly, "whether somebody couldn't be found to marry Mrs. Winnington ?"

"Oh, I'm afraid not. Oh no ; I should think there could not be the faintest shadow of a hope of that."

"Well, one never can tell ; a fool is born every hour. Do you know that Colonel Kenyon is expected home from India ?"

"Yes ; Mrs. Stanniforth told me. You are not thinking of him as a husband for Mrs. Winnington, are you ?"

"No ; hardly. Though, now you mention it, I don't know that he mightn't do. Perhaps it wouldn't be an altogether unsuitable match. He must be some years younger than the dear old lady, certainly ; but I should imagine him the sort of man who would look about twice his age, whereas our beloved Winnington is still quite blooming by candlelight ; and, at all events, they would have one point of resemblance, they are both bores."

"Why do you think Colonel Kenyon a bore? Mrs. Stanniforth says he is one of the best men that ever lived."

"You give me question and answer in the same breath. However, I admit that I am prejudiced. I daresay he isn't a bad sort of old fogey, when you know him. I don't remember much about him myself; only I can answer for the fact that he writes uncommonly long-winded letters, and then he has been held up before me all my life as a bright example. One can't feel very amiably towards people of that stamp. He is such a very, very white sheep, that I, who have a tuft or two of black on my fleece, have some difficulty in recognising him as a brother. Speaking honestly now, don't you think that, if it were literally true that the King could do no wrong, it would be about time to cut off the King's head, and despatch him into a world where he could feel himself more at home than in this one?"

But Nellie was spared the necessity of making any reply, for at this juncture one of the players hit the ball well up into the air, and the next moment a roar ran round the ground, to which Philip contributed his share by singing out, "Well caught!"

"Well caught!" echoed Miss Brune, rather contemptuously; "why, my dear Philip, how could he help himself! He might have caught it in his mouth."

"Perhaps so; but I never saw the catch yet that did not fill me with admiration and amazement. If I had been in that man's place, the ball would inevitably have slipped through my fingers, and you would be inwardly joining in the hooting at this moment. I tremble when I think of the number of times that I shall be disgraced in your eyes before the autumn."

"I don't believe you will play in a single match, unless Walter absolutely drags you on to the ground," said Nellie.

And then Mr. Brune came up, followed by a small phalanx of young sons, and Philip descended from the carriage, and presently sauntered away.

He met with many greetings, and had to remove his glossy hat over and over again, as he made his way through the crowd; for Mr. Marescalchi was tolerably well known in London as one of the best amateur actors of the day, and his pleasant address had recommended him to the favour of a few great ladies, and consequently to that of numerous others who aspired to be great. At Oxford he had been in a good set; that is to say, that he had associated principally with youths of noble birth or noble fortunes; and as he had adapted himself to their manners and customs, had spent money freely and had always been cheery and in good spirits, he had ended by acquiring a popularity extending beyond University circles. Through the medium of his college acquaintances he had made his way into houses the portals of which Mrs. Winnington, for instance, with all her superior claims to recognition, had never succeeded in forcing: hence some severe observations about snobs and

toadies were occasionally heard in the vicinity of Longbourne. Mrs. Winnington did not love this upstart; but society at large, which naturally did not care a pin whether he were an upstart or no, liked him very well, and petted him as much as his heart could desire.

He threaded his way among the carriage-wheels and luncheon-baskets and bright-coloured parasols and attendant flunkeys, basking in the moral and material sunshine, smiled upon by the world, and smiling back in return—a faultlessly appointed little figure, from the bouquet in his button-hole to the tips of his shiny boots; and doubtless many of those who watched his progress thought him much to be envied. There is a certain combination of youth, health, prosperity, good looks, and fine clothes upon which even the sternest philosopher can hardly help casting just one longing, lingering look. When the match and the shouting were over, and the released spectators were rushing towards the gates, jostling one another in accordance with the custom of all assemblages after a show, Mr. Marescalchi loitered on the ground, and let the stream pass by. He himself was seldom in a hurry, and disliked being pushed about and elbowed. And while, half-sitting upon his stick, he surveyed with placid compassion the foolish people who were making themselves so unnecessarily hot, a tall, broad-shouldered young man came striding across the grass behind him, and clapped him on the shoulder, with—

“Hullo, Philip! you’re the very fellow I wanted to see. What train are you going down by?”

Marescalchi turned round, rubbed his shoulder, and looked up reproachfully at the new-comer. “How you made me jump!” he exclaimed.

The other burst into a great laugh. “Made you jump, indeed! one would think you were an old woman. This comes of ruining your nerves by smoking all day and sitting up all night. Perhaps you thought I was going to serve a writ upon you, though?” he added, in a more sober tone.

“My dear, good fellow, don’t talk about such horrid things! So you never got a second innings, after all. Nellie was quite plaintive over it, and snubbed me savagely because I suggested that the weather was hardly suitable for athletics.”

“What a lazy little beggar you are! Well, you haven’t answered my question yet. Are you going down by the 3.45 or the 6.20? Nellie and the others have gone off to look at the pictures, so I don’t suppose we shall catch the express.”

Marescalchi had put a cigarette between his lips, and was stooping down to scrape a match upon the sole of his boot. “I don’t think I can manage to get down to Longbourne this evening,” he said; “I’ve got a lot of things to do in town.”

“Oh bosh!” returned his friend; “what can you want to do in London at this time of the year? You had much better come down with

us." He added, after a momentary hesitation, "It'll be an awful sell for Mrs. Stanniforth if you don't turn up."

Walter Brune the man was an enlarged duplicate of Walter the boy. Fair-haired, blue-eyed, fresh-complexioned, he bore no trace of resemblance to the Brunes, who were a small, dark, and wiry race. "Walter is a Boulger from crown to heel," his father used to say, "and if I were not afraid of his giving me a thrashing, I'd disown him." Walter, indeed, could have thrashed most men. He was not handsome, except in so far as he had the beauty of glowing health and a splendid physique; but his face was the embodiment of honesty and good humour, and he was certainly pleasant to look at.

Marescalchi, for reasons of his own, did not look at him now, but answered in an off-hand way: "Oh, I shall turn up all right some time to-morrow. No; not to-morrow, by-the-by, but next day. I remember now that I promised to dine with Salford to-morrow."

Walter looked dissatisfied. "Throw him over, then," he said, curtly. "He won't miss you, I'll be bound; and Mrs. Stanniforth will."

"My dear Walter," began Marescalchi, still smiling, but with eyebrows slightly raised, "don't you think——?"

"Don't I think I had better mind my own business, eh? No; I don't. After dry-nursing you for so many years, I have a right to lecture you occasionally; and you can't say I claim it very often now-a-days. I have never said a word against any other of your great swell friends—have I?—though I don't think you have got much good from some of them; but I do wish you would drop that fellow Salford. He's as thorough a blackguard as ever stepped."

"Dear, dear! what has he been doing?" asked Philip, with an air of innocent wonder.

"You know well enough. For one thing, he is never quite sober, and I hate a sot. But that's not the worst of him. I don't think I'm particularly straitlaced, but there are some things that I can't get over. I have never seen Salford without longing to break his neck since that poor little girl from the pastrycook's disappeared. She was a silly little giggling thing; but there wasn't a bit of harm in her till you fellows chose to amuse yourselves by turning her empty head; and now she is irretrievably ruined, poor wretch! If you or I had done such a thing, we should have been called infernal scoundrels; but Salford is a marquis; so he's a fine fellow, and Miss Fanny is a deuced lucky girl. That's the way you look at it, isn't it?"

"There is one thing," remarked Philip, imperturbably, "that I have always noticed about people who go twice to church on Sunday; they get so puffed up that they can't believe in their neighbours' possessing a comparative degree of virtue. It's a proud boast, I know, to be able to sit out two sermons in a week; I couldn't do it myself, and I look with awe and reverence upon those who can; but it doesn't exactly confer upon you a monopoly of righteousness. Where's your Christian

charity, my dear Walter? How do you know that Salford was the culprit? For anything he has ever said to me about it, he may be as innocent of spiriting Fanny away as I am myself. I wish the man, whoever he was, could have made it convenient to wait a few months, I know; for her successor was ugly enough to frighten one out of the shop."

"I didn't think Salford made much of a secret of it," said Walter. "At all events, everybody put it down to him."

"And do you believe what everybody says?"

"If you ask me, I do in the present instance. And I do not believe in Salford's possessing even what you call a comparative degree of virtue. And here he comes, blind drunk, as usual. Well; I shall be off."

But Lord Salford had joined the two friends before Walter could effect his escape, and was offering civil congratulations to the latter, who received him as a badger receives a terrier. "Never saw you in such form before, Brune; you made their bowling look pretty foolish. That's what I call real cricket, you know."

"Do you?"

"I do, upon my word—first class. I mean to say, it was the *game* you know."

Walter growled out something about hoping he always played the game.

"Oh Lord, yes, my dear fellow, I know you do; but everybody gets careless and makes mistakes sometimes—everybody, except you, that is. You never make mistakes, by George!"

Lord Salford was certainly not blind drunk, nor perhaps was he what a policeman would have called drunk at all; but it would be saying too much to assert that he had not been drunk the night before, and it is probable that he had been refreshing himself with liberal draughts of brandy and soda in the course of the morning. He was a red young man—red as to his hair, his complexion, his eyes and his hands; and he was so singularly ugly that it must have required all the added halo of his marquissate to touch the heart of any pastrycook's assistant. As he stood talking, with his thumbs in his trousers' pockets, and his stick tucked under his arm, Walter looked him slowly all over, from head to foot, with an undisguised contempt which he could hardly have failed to notice, if he had been at all an observant person. But he was not very observant. He went on, in blissful unconsciousness of these withering glances:—

"Well, Marescalchi, what's going to become of you now? Going down the country? Devilish slow work down in the country at this time of the year. I'm off to Norway to-morrow morning. Fishing, fresh air, early hours—all that sort of thing, you know. Doctor says I must go easy for a bit."

Oddly enough, it was not Philip, but Walter who looked confused by this embarrassing announcement. That artless giant turned as red

as Lord Salford himself, fidgeted, cast his eyes down, and altogether presented much more the appearance of a detected liar than of one who has detected his neighbour in a lie. Marescalchi's calm was not in the least disturbed.

"Going to Norway, are you?" said he; "I'm very glad you mentioned it. When you came up, I was just telling Brune that I was going to dine with you to-morrow evening; and I should certainly have gone to your club at eight o'clock, if I hadn't happened to meet you now. Are you quite certain you didn't ask me?"

Lord Salford stared. "No, I ain't quite certain," he answered. "I don't remember anything about it; but I wouldn't take my oath I didn't ask you. Beg your pardon if I did, I'm sure."

"Oh, never mind," said Philip magnanimously; "I dare say it was my mistake: I'm always getting my engagements all wrong." And when Lord Salford had passed on, he added: "I believe he did ask me, all the same; but perhaps I haven't lost much. After all, Walter, I think you're not far wrong about him; he *is* a drunken sort of sweep."

"Anyhow," remarked Walter, who had recovered his cheerfulness, "you have not got to dine with him now; so you may as well come home with me."

But Philip explained that he really couldn't do that. Upon further reflection, he felt sure that he had some engagement or other for the following evening. If it wasn't Salford, it must have been somebody else who had asked him to dinner. He couldn't speak with any certainty upon the point until he should have been to his hotel and glanced over his notes.

"Well, then, go back to your hotel," persisted Walter, "and if you find you are free, you will have plenty of time to pack up and join us at the station."

Philip said, "All right, old man"; and so Walter went away, knowing full well that he would search the platform in vain for his friend's figure, when the hour of departure arrived.

As soon as he was quite out of sight, Philip heaved a sigh of relief and walked off, humming an air from an opera.



PHILIP WAS AUDACIOUSLY MINICKING MRS. WINNINGTON TO HER FACE.

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No New Thing.

CHAPTER VI.
THE WANDERER'S RETURN.



HAT Colonel Kenyon should make for Longbourne immediately after landing upon his native shores was quite natural and proper. Mrs. Winnington conceded as much, and Mrs. Winnington was admitted to be an authority upon matters of propriety. "I think, my dear," said she, "that you ought to have Hugh here for a time, when he comes back. Now that his mother is dead, he has no home of his own to go to, and perhaps you owe it to him to show him a little civility. You might send a note to Portsmouth to await his arrival, inviting him to come and stay with you for ten days or a fortnight. It would be as well just to mention the dates, because people who have been in

India get such very queer notions of hospitality, and poor dear Hugh was always a little dense about knowing when to take himself off. I remember, in days gone by, when he used to call upon us at the Palace, how much help he required to get out of the room. Upon one occasion I actually had to pick up his hat and umbrella, and thrust them into

his hand. Quite in a friendly way, you know, making a sort of joke of it; but if I had not done something of the kind he would never have moved at all. Yes; I think you should let him find an invitation waiting for him. He would feel it as a very kind piece of attention, I am sure."

And Margaret did not consider herself called upon to state that such an invitation, minus the time-limit, as her mother described, had been written and despatched to Madras some months before.

Various circumstances had prevented Colonel Kenyon from breaking his long spell of foreign service by a return to England on leave. The battery of horse artillery to which he had been attached had been ordered home long ago, directly after the first of the little wars in which he had been engaged; but he had not accompanied it, as at that time he had had an opportunity of seeing some further service. Then had come in quick succession the marriage of his two sisters and the death of his mother, entailing a disruption of all direct home ties; and, although when the fighting was over, and he had gained a brevet-colonelcy, a C.B., and a bullet in his left shoulder as his share in the results of the same, he might have got away for a time from a country that he hated, he chose rather, upon mature consideration, to accept the offer of a well-paid staff appointment, to serve out his five years, and then to turn his back upon India for good and all. To lay by money and provide himself with something like a competency was the chief object of his life; for he had ever before him a distant, bright ideal, towards the realisation of which this prosaic achievement was a small, yet absolutely necessary, step. A journey from Madras to London and back is not to be performed without a considerable outlay; therefore he had stoutly resisted his own longings and Margaret's frequent entreaties, and had patiently bided his time, comforting himself in moments of depression with an altogether illogical conviction that so much labour and self-denial must surely obtain their reward at last.

A more ardent lover might perhaps have acted differently, but a more ardent lover might have been less consistently faithful. Fidelity to a dream would appear to be about the toughest sort of fidelity of which we mortals are capable; and, according to enlightened students of human nature, all love, in the romantic acceptation of the term, partakes of the character of dreams. Nothing, say they, is so inevitably certain to dispel its illusions as daily intercourse with the adored creature; and in those rare cases in which men have remained true to their first love for a matter of ten years or more, it is almost invariably absence that has kept them so. Be that as it may, Hugh Kenyon was as much in love with Margaret Stanniforth all through his Indian career as he had been at the beginning of it. His love, it is true, was of a sober kind, as became a grey-headed man whose acquaintance had been chiefly with the seamy side of life; but it may have been to that very attribute that it owed its constancy. For the rest, nobody knew better than he did that his vision

of happiness rested upon no more solid foundation than strength of will and a vague faith in poetical justice. Margaret's long letters, in which the cares and interests of her daily life were fully treated of, and most of the episodes of Philip Marescalchi's school and college career were duly set forth, had convinced him that time had passed a healing hand over her wounds; and he no longer feared, as he had once done, that in asking her to be his wife he might seem to outrage the memory of her husband and his friend. This was a comfort, so far as it went, but it did not go very far. He perceived that, if she was less forlorn, she stood in the less need of a protector; nor could he disguise from himself that his prediction was in course of fulfilment, and that Marescalchi already stood, to some extent, in the position which he had once occupied.

All this being so, it is scarcely to be wondered at that Colonel Kenyon should have made few new friends during the lengthy period of his exile, nor that he should have passed for a rather dull and morose fellow in the Madras Presidency. He possessed a photograph of Margaret, taken years before by the one Crayminster photographer, which, in the absence of its original, served him as companion and friend. This work of art represented a simpering girl of sixteen, standing beside a top-heavy table, and dragging a wreath of paper flowers out of a leather-work basket. It did not even remotely resemble Margaret Stanniforth; but its owner considered it, upon the whole, a very satisfactory likeness—not complimentary, to be sure, still quite pleasing. It accompanied him through all his campaigns, it was gazed at with religious fervour every morning and evening, and Hugh never sat down to indite one of his voluminous epistles to Longbourne without propping it up on the desk before him to lend inspiration to his ideas. Sometimes he even stopped writing to talk to it for a few minutes, for the wisest and most sober of men will do silly things when nobody is looking on.

When at length the time came for our love-lorn warrior to exchange letters for speech, and doubt for certainty, he was by no means so overjoyed as he had expected to be. In his patient, matter-of-course sort of way, he had been rather unhappy for ten years; but his condition had not been so bad but that it might easily become worse, and at forty-five a man takes such possibilities into consideration. Perhaps he feared his fate too much: it cannot be said that his deserts were small. He did not rush home overland—there being really no need for hurry—but economically took passage in a troopship, and in due time disembarked at Portsmouth, accompanied by a few comrades in arms who, like himself, had been away long enough to look for no very enthusiastic welcome on their return to the mother-country.

Colonel Kenyon was so far more fortunate than they that he found at his club in London a very kind and cordial note, informing him that his Longbourne friends were anxiously expecting his arrival. Having despatched a postcard in answer to this, he took his ticket, on the following afternoon, for Crayminster, where a further and a wholly unanticipated

compliment awaited him. For the first thing that he saw, when the train entered the station, was a tall lady, dressed all in black, who was eagerly scanning the carriages as they passed her, as if in search of some one whom she could not discover, and whose features and figure he would have recognised among a thousand.

Hugh's heart came up into his mouth. He had never supposed that Margaret would think of coming down to Crayminster to meet him, and her having done so filled him with an absurd delight and elation. When her eyes rested upon him for a second, and then passed on, he was not hurt. "No wonder she doesn't know my yellow cheeks and grey hair," he thought to himself. Her own hair, as he noticed, in that momentary glimpse, had a streak of silver in it here and there; but her face—that pleasant, kindly face, which was to him the most beautiful the world could show—was unaltered, or had altered only for the better. She had a bright colour, and had the appearance of being in good health and good spirits; and he could not help being a little glad to see that her widow's cap had disappeared, though she still wore mourning. All these details he took in at one glance, and then the train glided on, and he lost sight of her. But, before it came to a standstill, Colonel Kenyon's head was thrust out of the window, his right hand was fumbling for the door-handle, and he was waving a greeting with his left, while he called out cheerily, "This is really too good of you."

The next instant he was thanking his stars that Mrs. Stanniforth's back had been turned towards him, and that she had neither seen his signals nor heard his joyous hail. For lo and behold! a very good-looking young man had jumped down on to the platform and was embracing her publicly, in total disregard of the customs of a self-restrained nation, and Hugh heard her cry, "At last! I am so glad! I was afraid you were not coming after all."

Colonel Kenyon collected his coats and umbrellas with the saddened and humiliated feelings of a man who has answered when he has not been spoken to. Fain would he have sneaked out of the station without making himself known; but this was hardly practicable, so he advanced, putting as good a face upon things as he could assume; and as soon as Margaret caught sight of him she knew him, and bade him welcome with a warmth which left nothing to be desired.

"Oh, Hugh!" she exclaimed, holding out both hands; and with that brief ejaculation her hearer was satisfied, understanding by it all that he was intended to do. He himself could find no more striking rejoinder than, "Here I am, you see."

"Yes; but why did you not tell us that you were coming by this train? You only said you would be down in time for dinner, and I was just thinking of asking Philip to wait in the town, so as to meet you. I needn't introduce you to Philip, need I?"

Colonel Kenyon intimated that no such introduction was necessary; and, as the two men shook hands, each inwardly passed a hasty judgment

upon the other. Colonel Kenyon set Philip down as a swaggering young puppy ; and Marescalchi said to himself that the new-comer was a solemn old bore, who looked as if he would be certain to make himself obnoxious in one way or another before very long. Of course, however, they smiled upon one another amicably, and said what the occasion appeared to call for ; the younger man, who was the more at his ease, showing to greater advantage than the elder in this interchange of civilities. Marescalchi, indeed, prided himself upon always knowing the proper thing to say and do, and presently he gave evidence of his nice perception by a truly magnanimous offer.

"You two will have lots to talk about," he remarked, when they had passed out of the station, and were standing beside the open carriage which was waiting for them. "You had better drive up together, and I'll walk."

"But it is such a long walk, Philip, and it is so hot," said Margaret irresolutely.

"Never mind," answered Philip, with a rather plaintive look at the long stretch of sunny landscape that lay before him.

And then a bright idea occurred to Margaret. "Suppose *we* were to walk?" she suggested to Hugh. "We might go across the fields, you know, and it would be quite like old times. Would it be too much for you?"

Hugh said he should enjoy the walk of all things, and it certainly would not be too much for him. "But will not you be tired yourself?" he asked. "You said something about the heat just now, and it is a good three miles, as I well remember."

"You must have forgotten other things if you think I am afraid of a three-mile walk. I like walking much better than driving ; and, besides, I mean to go very slowly, so as to have as long a time as possible to talk to you in."

Hugh could say no more ; and the arrangement evidently met the views of Mr. Marescalchi, who got into the carriage without more ado, and was speedily driven away, leaning back luxuriously, and blowing a cloud from the cigarette which he had just lighted.

The two friends who were thus left to themselves had, no doubt, a great deal to say to one another ; but they experienced the common difficulty of friends who have been long separated in not knowing exactly where to begin. During the first quarter of a mile of their walk, which led them across pasture-land and through hop-gardens, little passed between them save questions and answers referring to the productiveness of the soil and the changes which time had wrought in the ownership thereof, occasional allusions to bygone years, and comparisons between the climate of England and that of India. Mrs. Stanniforth led the way, and did most of the talking. Hugh was contented to listen, to steal furtive glances at his companion while she walked beside him, and to study her full-length figure when, as sometimes happened, the

narrowness of the path forced them to advance in single file. But when they reached a certain stile, beyond which stretched sloping fields of oats and barley, Mrs. Stanniforth, instead of getting over it, wheeled round, and, resting her elbows upon its topmost bar, attacked Hugh point-blank with :—

“Well; what do you think of him?”

There was no need to particularise the individual to whom her question referred. Hugh laughed and said, “I think he has a very pretty suit of clothes on, and his hair is nicely brushed, and his moustache promises well. Also, I am glad to observe that he does not suffer from shyness, and that he pronounces the English language after the most fashionable style.”

Margaret looked a little annoyed. “You know that is not what I mean,” she said.

“What do you want me to say? I only saw the young man for five minutes, and, considering that during those five minutes I was a great deal more anxious to examine you than him, I think I made a pretty good use of my opportunities. It seemed to me that I noticed all about him that there was to notice.”

This was so undeniably true that Margaret was silenced for a few minutes. Presently, however, she felt constrained to add, “Some people attach a good deal of importance to first impressions. You don’t, I dare say, because you are so sensible; still, I suppose you do have them.”

“I seldom take to strangers,” answered Hugh evasively.

“Ah! I know what you think; you think him conceited. Well, perhaps, he may be a little conceited, but what of that? Almost all young men are so, and it soon wears off. And Philip has—I won’t say more reason, but certainly more excuse—for being conceited than most of them. You have no idea how he is run after. I wrote to you, you know, about his wonderful acting, and the quantity of engagements that he always has in consequence; and latterly his acquaintance seems to have grown larger. He has only just managed to escape from London, though he wanted very much to come down on the afternoon of the match. He has declined I don’t know how many invitations for the next two months. It would not be very surprising if all that attention had turned his head just a little bit, would it?”

Hugh admitted that such a result was only what might be expected.

“But it hasn’t done so really; to me he is just the same as he always was. You won’t allow yourself to be prejudiced against poor Philip, will you, Hugh? I can’t tell you what a disappointment it will be to me if you do not like him. He has had to fight against so much prejudice; and I sometimes think that, with the exception of myself and Walter Brune, he has no real friends in the world.”

“I thought you said he was so popular.”

“So he is; but popularity of that kind is a poor substitute for the family affection which other young men have to fall back upon; and,

although you might not suppose it until you knew him well, Philip is very affectionate and very sensitive. I don't think I should ever have cared for him so much as I do if all my friends had not set their faces against him so in the beginning. He is my ugly duckling," she added with a smile.

"Oh, I don't think you could call him ugly!" said Hugh generously. The truth is that esteem was the measure of Colonel Kenyon's notion of comeliness. He honestly believed all the persons whom he was fond of to be well-looking, and could never be brought to acknowledge that there was anything to admire in those whom he disliked.

Margaret laughed. "No," she said; "his worst enemies could hardly bring that accusation against him. He isn't an ugly duckling any more now; he is a full-grown swan, and I am not afraid of any one's failing to do justice to his plumage. But after all, as good-natured people used to say to me in the days when I was a lanky girl and painfully conscious of my lankiness, beauty is only skin-deep."

"Oh dear, yes! what does it signify whether a man's nose is straight or crooked? So Philip has made up his mind to be called to the bar, has he?"

"Yes; he is eating his dinners."

"And working?"

"I believe so. At least he is a pupil in a barrister's chambers; of course he could not do much in that way while he was at Oxford. Shall we walk on?"

They passed upwards, brushing their way against the whispering barley that clothed the hill-side. It was a lovely summer afternoon; shadows of light clouds were creeping over the woods; the pleasant English landscape was at its best. In the universal greenness, in the softness of the atmosphere, in the hazy blue distances, there was infinite refreshment for eyes that had ached under a tropical sun and had grown weary of gazing upon palms, and rice-fields, and parched yellow plains. Hugh soon ceased to think about Marescalchi and his prospects—a subject with which his correspondence for the past few years had dealt pretty exhaustively—and began building castles in the air on his own account. But his companion's thoughts, it appeared, were still running in the same channel. On the edge of the woods which bounded the Longbourne estate she halted again, and said abruptly:—

"Don't you think it is much the best and wisest plan to let a young man have perfect liberty of action?"

Hugh considered for a moment, as his habit was, before replying, "Well; if I had a son of my own, I think I should be inclined to see what use he was likely to make of his liberty before I quite gave it up to him."

"Yes, in theory that is all very well; but practically there are difficulties in the way of setting limits, especially for a woman. I doubt whether it would be wise to tie your son to your apron-string, if you

could; but, as a matter of fact, you can't. Supposing you do establish a sort of surveillance over him, and make him understand that he must never absent himself for two or three days without some excuse, and ask him questions about where he has been and what he has been doing—what is the good? You only make him dislike you, and he takes his own way all the same."

Hugh said there was something in that certainly. "Has any one been advising you to establish a surveillance over Philip?" he asked.

"Oh, I am always being inundated with good advice; that is the inevitable fate of a lone, lorn woman," she answered laughing, and walked on into the wood.

"What a treat it is to see oaks and beeches again!" Hugh exclaimed. "Dear old country! I should like to go upon half-pay, and buy a cottage near Crayminster, and end my days there."

"Oh, how I wish you would! Only of course you would hate it before a year was over. I have missed you so dreadfully, Hugh. Now that I have got you again, I intend to keep you for a long, long time. You do owe me a proper visit, don't you?"

"I'll stay as long as you'll keep me," answered Hugh, smiling; "and look here, Margaret, don't you let yourself be worried about Philip. We'll make a man of him between us; and if ever he should want a friend, he may count upon finding one in me—for your sake."

Her face lighted up with pleasure. "How good you are!" she cried. "But I need not have doubted you. I might have known that you would at least give him a fair trial. Some people seem as if they could only see his faults. They might remember that we are not all faultless ourselves."

"Tell them to mind their own business," said Hugh. A natural association of ideas prompted him to add, after a short pause, "Mrs. Winnington is still with you, I suppose."

Margaret turned her head quickly, and gave him a half-deprecatory, half-suspicious glance. "Yes," she answered; "and I hope to be able to induce her to remain with me permanently. At present she won't hear of it; but I think, little by little, I may accustom her to the idea. Of course it is a great thing for me to have her and Edith in the house, instead of living quite alone, as I used to do."

"I am sure it must be," said Hugh in perfect good faith.

"And in some ways it is an advantage to them too. There is really no house in this neighbourhood that would do for them; and if they go away, there seems nothing for it but settling in London, which neither of them would like, or else in some watering-place or other. My mother, I know, dreads the society of a watering-place on Edith's account; and she is always so anxious to do the best she can for us all, that I quite hope she will come round to admitting that Longbourne is the only possible home for her."

("Our dear Mrs. Stanniforth," Mr. Brune remarked, on a subsequent

occasion, to Hugh, "expends an immense amount of wasted energy in the effort to persuade herself and others that her mother is not an infernally disagreeable old woman.")

Colonel Kenyon, as the reader may have noticed, was not very quick at receiving ideas, and he pondered over Margaret's last observation for some minutes before he came out with the following brilliant discovery: "By Jove! Mrs. Winnington must be looking out for a husband for Edith. Dear, dear, how time does go on!"

"Well," returned Margaret; "and if she does want her daughters to marry, and to marry well, do you suppose all mothers don't wish the same thing? I can't see what there is to be ashamed of in such a very natural ambition."

"No, to be sure," acquiesced Hugh hastily; "in fact, she would be neglecting her duty if she didn't look after her daughter's prospects. Only I should have thought London would have been a better place than Longbourne. Seeing so few people as you do——"

"Ah, but I see more people nowadays! The house is often full of visitors—friends of my mother's, you know—and I dare say it is very good for me to be obliged to come out of my shell. By-the-bye, I have a friend of my own coming down next week whom I particularly want you to meet—Tom Stanniforth. I think I wrote to you about him, did I not?"

"You told me in one of your letters that you had met him in London, and that you thought him a very good fellow."

"I don't think I used those words, but they describe him accurately enough. He is exactly that—a thoroughly good fellow. Isn't it odd that with all his riches, and amiability, and love of society, he should have remained a bachelor for so many years?"

This time Colonel Kenyon's mother-wit showed itself more acute. He assumed an air of extreme knowingness, and ejaculated, "Oho!"

And then Margaret laughed a little, and said, "Well, it would be a good thing; don't you think so now? But most likely nothing will come of it."

"H'm! I don't know," said Hugh, meditatively; "I wouldn't give much for his chance if Mrs. Winnington means——"

"What?"

"I say there is every chance of his falling in love with Miss Winnington if she at all resembles her sisters. But what about young Marescalchi? Isn't he rather a dangerous sort of customer to have in the house?"

"Philip? oh, no! I am glad to say that there is no fear of any complication in that quarter. You will think I am becoming a confirmed match-maker in my old age; but, to tell you the truth, I have a plan in my head for Philip's future also. You remember Nellie Brune—or perhaps you don't remember her, for she was a very small child when you went away. Well, she has grown up into quite the prettiest

girl in the county ; and I feel in a sort of way as if she were a child of my own, for, since her mother's death, she has lived almost as much with me as at home. And so, in the nature of things, she and Philip have been a good deal thrown together."

"I see. But hadn't Philip better be earning an income for himself before he thinks about taking a wife?"

"Oh, of course! They are both very young yet, and this is only a dream of mine, you must understand; I have never mentioned it to any one but you, and I don't even know that there is anything more than a brotherly and sisterly affection between them. Sometimes I have fancied that there might be, that is all; and perhaps the wish was father to the thought."

By this time they had traversed the Longbourne park, and were in sight of the great house, rising square and red from among its surrounding lawns and flower-beds, its windows blazing with the light of the sinking sun.

"What a fine old place it is!" said Hugh admiringly. "After all, there is nothing in the world to beat an English country-house."

"It is thrown away upon me," said Margaret with a sigh. "I want a roof of some kind to shelter me, but I had rather it had been any but this one. I have never become reconciled to the idea of living at Longbourne, and I never shall. Unfortunately, too, the Brunes feel quite as strongly upon the subject as I do. They don't object to me, because they know that it is by no fault of my own that I am here; but they do object very much to my successor. I told Nellie, the other day, that we were expecting Tom Stanniforth, and she begged me at once not to ask her to come to the house until after he had gone. I only wish it were really my own property; for then I should leave it to Walter."

"No, you wouldn't," said Hugh with a perspicuity which did him credit; "you would leave it to Philip, and that would make things worse than ever."

"Perhaps I might; I don't know. While I am wishing, I might as well wish that I were a capitalist, instead of a pensioner. Nature never intended me to be a rich woman, but sometimes I am afraid that she did cut out Philip for a rich man."

And then they entered the house, and this prolonged dialogue came to an end.

Colonel Kenyon thought it over while dressing for dinner, and made a mental note of two things: firstly, that Jack's name had not once been mentioned in the course of it; and secondly, that Mrs. Stanniforth no longer desired to be rid of her wealth, but, on the contrary, would gladly have gained a firmer grasp of it, had that been practicable. Balancing the one consideration against the other, he was forced to conclude that a ten years' sojourn in foreign parts had been rather prejudicial than favourable to his personal chances of happiness.

CHAPTER VII.

COLONEL KENYON LOOKS ON.

COLONEL KENYON was not the only guest at Longbourne. There were other people staying in the house : people with high-sounding names ; people whom he did not know, and for that matter—as he said to himself with a touch of ill-humour—did not want to know. He had caught sight of some of them playing lawn-tennis in the garden ; he had heard the voices of others in the library, whither he had declined to follow his hostess, alleging that he was too dirty and dusty after his journey to face an introduction to strangers. There was something in the discovery that he was only to be one in a crowd, which chilled and disappointed him a little. Not that he had anything to urge in the abstract against Mrs. Stanniforth's filling her house with her friends, if she were so minded ; still, he wished she had not chosen to do so at this particular time ; and the contrast between her life as it appeared actually to be, and the secluded, charitable, uneventful sort of existence which he had always pictured her to himself as leading, struck him somewhat disagreeably. He shut himself up in his room ; sat there, doing nothing, for an hour or more ; and was dressed for dinner long before eight o'clock.

Mrs. Winnington was alone in the drawing-room when he went downstairs, and was very glad to see him, or, at all events, was kind enough to say that she was so.

"You are looking very old," she remarked at once, with the pleasing candour of a friend of many years' standing ; "very old and worn out. I suppose India is quite fatal to health and appearance, especially in the case of officers, who always drink more than they ought to do in those hot climates, I believe. It must be a detestable country. I was talking about it this morning to Lady Laura Smythe, who is staying with us for a few days. She spent a year out there, at the time when her brother was Viceroy, you know, and she describes the society of Calcutta as something too dreadful. Isn't there a place called Simla, where everybody goes in the summer months ?—I don't pretend to be well up in the geography of those regions. She told me some odd stories of the things that went on there—very amusing, but really very shocking. From all that I could make out, the vulgarity of those people is only equalled by their immorality. No wonder you are such a wreck."

"I don't think it is either drink or the vulgarity of Anglo-Indian society that has turned my hair grey," Hugh said. "You don't look a day older, Mrs. Winnington."

"Oh, my dear Hugh !" cried Mrs. Winnington, not ill-pleased, "that is absurd. After all that I have gone through, it would be strange indeed if I were not more wrinkled than I used to be ; and I have

grandchildren growing up fast, as you know. Now tell me, how did you think dear Margaret looking? Better than when you left her? Rather brighter and more cheerful? Ah! I am very glad to hear you say that, for I take it as a compliment to myself."

"She said it was a great comfort to her to have you with her," Hugh remarked.

"Poor dear! I do what I can, and I try to be with her as much as possible; but I have other duties; I cannot always be here, you understand."

"I suppose not."

"No; and now I shall look to you to help me out in my task and to take my place sometimes, when I am away," said Mrs. Winnington very graciously. "Between ourselves, dear Margaret ought never to be left long without some trustworthy adviser and protector at her elbow."

"Why?" asked Hugh curtly.

"Oh! you will soon find out why; I had rather you made the discovery for yourself. You remember my old weakness; I can't bear speaking against anybody who is absent. But you can easily imagine the sort of dangers to which a woman of her generous and unsuspecting nature is exposed. Her servants, of course, rob her right and left; that I cannot help, for I make it a rule never to interfere in household matters. But, unfortunately, it is not only her servants who live upon her. Servants, one knows, have not very exalted ideas of honesty, and one is prepared to take them as one finds them; but from people of one's own class one does expect a certain degree of pride and delicacy; and when it comes to giving a girl literally *all* her dresses—— However, if Mr. Brune does not object, I am sure it is no business of mine. You met young Marescalchi at the station, I hear."

"Yes; I saw him for a few minutes."

Mrs. Winnington shook her head and sighed so profoundly once or twice that all the garments in which her ample form was enveloped rustled and groaned, as in a soft chorus to their wearer's unspoken eloquence. Colonel Kenyon, however, expressing no curiosity as to the signification of these portentous heavings, the good lady was constrained to express herself with more distinctness.

"I greatly fear," said she, "that poor Margaret will have cause to rue the day when she set that beggar on horseback. One might have foreseen what would happen; in fact, I did foresee it; but that is a poor consolation. He is going to the dogs as fast as he can."

"I hope not," said Hugh.

"Oh! I don't ask you to take my word for it: use your own eyes and ears, and I have very little doubt as to what your conclusion will be. I should feel sorry for the young man, if he were not so absurdly self-satisfied. Nothing could have been more foolish and fatal than launching him into all the temptations of Oxford; but Margaret would take her own way."

"Why, what would you have had her do?" asked Hugh. "What alternative had you to suggest?"

"That is not the question," answered Mrs. Winnington, employing a phrase which she had found very effective in controversies with the late Bishop, and which still rose instinctively to her lips in moments of embarrassment; "that is not the question. And pray do not suppose that I am blaming poor Margaret for her infatuation; it has brought its own punishment, I am sorry to say. I happen to know," she continued impressively—"this is between ourselves, and you need not mention that I spoke to you about it—but I happen to know that Margaret has paid his debts upon three separate occasions. Heavy debts; and that notwithstanding the fact that he has a most unwisely liberal allowance."

"You don't say so! Well, that is very bad of course; but such things have happened before now. I mean to say that it don't follow that, because a young fellow runs up bills at college, he must go to the dogs. Depend upon it, Philip will sow his wild oats, like other boys, and turn out no worse than the generality of them."

Mrs. Winnington, however, was not disposed to entertain this sanguine view of the case. "Mark my words," she was beginning solemnly; but she had to withdraw the conclusion of her sentence under cover of a cough, for at this moment Marescalchi himself appeared upon the scene, and was closely followed by Margaret.

Then the remainder of the house party began to drop in, singly and in couples: A fat countess, who was immediately engaged in confidential conversation by Mrs. Winnington; Lady Laura Smythe, a dowdy little woman married to a resplendent stockbroker; a pompous colonial governor and his wife; the senior partner of a well-known firm of solicitors; and sundry Winningtons of both sexes—uncles, aunts, and cousins—whose faces Hugh dimly remembered to have seen round the Bishop's table at the Christmas gatherings of long ago. It was Mr. Marescalchi who was obliging enough to join the stranger on the ottoman where he was sitting apart, and to classify for his benefit the people who were forming themselves into groups in different parts of the long room.

"A queer, incongruous sort of crew, are they not?" said he. "Mrs. Winnington asks them down here, and she doesn't understand mixing her people any better than she understands mixing her colours, poor old thing! However, her intentions are good, and she has a reason for inviting every one of them. Lady Flintshire and Lady Laura Smythe entertain a good deal in London; they will be good for at least two balls apiece next season, and perhaps for an invitation to the country in the autumn. Sir Benjamin Wilkinson is here because Charley Winnington thinks he would like to be the old fellow's aide-de-camp when he goes back to the Cannibal Islands, or wherever it is that he hangs out. Hobson, the solicitor, has been asked in order that he may help Harry out with a brief or two some day. That is a piece of hospitality

thrown away; Hobson stays longer than he is wanted, contradicts everybody, makes a horrible noise over his soup, and will see Harry further before he'll bother himself about him. It is rather hard upon poor Meg, who has to make all these people talk to each other, and to keep them from quarrelling. Half of them are furious at having been asked to meet the other half; and one and all are wondering what the dickens made them come here. Most likely they will grow mellow and make friends after dinner; but then there is always just a hope of a free fight at one of these gatherings, and that enables one to bear up under the dreadful wearisomeness of it all."

Hugh hardly listened to his neighbour's easy flow of talk. He was watching Margaret, as she moved hither and thither in the fading light, discharging her duties after a quiet, perfunctory fashion; and presently he rose unceremoniously and walked off to renew his acquaintance with Edith, whom he had recognised, not so much by anything about her that could remind him of the child whom he had once known, as by her remarkable resemblance to her eldest sister, Lady Travers. When he drew near enough to her to distinguish her features, he was still more struck with this family likeness, as well as with the girl's beauty, which quite surpassed what he had been led to expect. Edith Winnington—tall, slight, and extremely fair, with delicate, refined features, and eyes of a forget-me-not blue—represented the family type raised to its ultimate expression. Hugh, who remembered Lady Travers in the days of her youthful triumphs, and who remembered also that Lady Travers's marriage had turned out a notoriously unhappy one, felt a pang of pity for this victim unconscious of her doom. While he was shaking hands with her, he was thinking to himself, "Poor girl! I wonder her mother is satisfied with Tom Stanniforth. With such a face and figure as that, she might have been made to aim at something higher, I should have thought. I hope he'll marry her, though, for he is a decent sort of man, by all accounts, and at least he won't beat her."

"You have been a long time away," said Edith; "you must be very glad to be at home again; I suppose it must be very hot in India. No; I am afraid I do not quite know where Madras is. I could find it on the map, I think."

Her manner had a touch of shyness and hesitation which was not unbecoming; her colour kept coming and going while she spoke, and her eyes wandered over the room. She seemed to lend an only half-attentive ear to Hugh's geographical information, and answered his questions a little at random. From all of which signs that astute observer was led to conclude that the young woman was looking for somebody. Could it be Marescalchi, he wondered, whom she missed?

Presently Philip joined them, saying in a confidential undertone that all these old ladies and gentlemen frightened him. "I daren't speak to them; they are getting hungry; they are snapping and growling already; and if diuner isn't announced in a few minutes they will begin devouring

one another. Where is Walter, by-the-bye? Meg said she had asked him to come up."

Edith said that there had been a cricket-match at Craybridge that day; very likely Walter had not been able to get away in time. But at this moment the defaulter hurried in to answer for himself; and after that, Miss Winnington's eyes became perceptibly less restless.

"I wonder which of them it is," Hugh speculated within himself. "I would bet any money that it's one or the other. That's the way with your over-clever people, they never see what is going on under their noses. Now, if I were an ambitious old woman, I should take precious good care to keep my daughter out of the way of those youngsters; but I suppose it comes to much the same thing in the long run. If there is a difference of opinion between that poor girl and her mother, it is easy to see who will go to the wall."

"Will you take in Lady Wilkinson, please, and sit on the left side of the table?" whispered Margaret, interrupting his meditations.

He had ample leisure to resume and pursue them in the dining-room, for Lady Wilkinson was sulky, and did not choose to respond to his well-meant efforts at starting a conversation. Poor Lady Wilkinson had played at royalty for so many years, and had grown so accustomed to taking the chief place at feasts that it pained her to walk out of the room behind a Lady Laura Somebody, and to be herself escorted by a mere colonel of artillery. The treatment by the mother-country of its returned colonial governors seemed to her to be wanting in all propriety and decency; and, by way of vindicating the slighted dignity of the class which she represented, she thought fit to reply to her neighbour's advances with haughty "Ohs" and "Indeeds" and a liberal display of the cold shoulder. Colonel Kenyon accepted his lot with fitting philosophy. He had no anxiety to talk or to be talked to. The scene and the personages affected him with a vague bewilderment, being so unlike those shadowy visions of Longbourne and its inmates which had haunted his fancy in the East, and he wanted to familiarise himself with them. He ate his dinner (which was a very excellent and well-served one), and gazed about him at surrounding objects—at the oval table, with its load of flowers and old Chelsea china, upon which a flood of light was thrown down from the shaded hanging-lamps; at the servants, flitting noiselessly to and fro in the vast space of semi-obscurity beyond; at Margaret, leaning back in her chair between Lord Flintshire and Sir Benjamin Wilkinson, with a look of cheerful resignation upon her face; at Mrs. Winnington, voluble and smiling, playing the part of hostess rather too ostentatiously; at Mr. Hobson, eating voraciously, with his head bent down over his plate and his elbows on a level with his red ears; at Philip, making open and undisguised love to Edith; and at Walter, watching this couple with an inexplicable broad grin upon his honest countenance. Times were changed indeed since Margaret had complained of the misery of solitary repasts. Here was company enough to satisfy

anybody ; company, too, which, if not wildly hilarious, appeared to an outsider quite sufficiently animated. As Marescalchi had predicted would be the case, the guests were growing mellow under the influence of good cheer ; and, with the exception of Lady Wilkinson, who still maintained a proud reserve, and of Mr. Hobson, who was otherwise engaged, everybody was contributing his or her share to the general buzz of speech.

"The island of Semolina," Sir Benjamin was saying in a loud voice, "requires only to be left to itself. All the troubles that have taken place there have arisen out of injudicious interference on the part of the home government. I was talking to the Secretary of State the other day, and I said to him, '*La Semolina farà da se.*' Many men have found the island a difficult one to govern—my predecessor, as you know, made a sad hash of it—but I have always got on perfectly well with the planters myself. The whole question is one of cheap labour, and is not at all understood in this country. You will recollect the agitation that was got up, a few years back, about the supposed wrongs of the coolies ?"

Lord Flintshire, a mild-mannered little man, to whom these remarks were addressed, answered hazily, "Oh, yes ; to be sure. Niggers—slave trade—that sort of thing, eh ?" and had to be set right at some length.

Lady Laura Smythe was shrilly advocating the claims of a Home for Adult Idiots which had lately been established under her patronage. "We are terribly in need of funds to carry us on just now. No ; I don't want donations, I want annual subscriptions. Let me enter your name among the ten-guinea subscribers ; I am sure that won't ruin you. Mr. Hobson, I am going to put you down as a subscriber to my Home for Adult Idiots. You shall have a prospectus to-morrow."

"Don't trouble yourself, Lady Laura," says Mr. Hobson resolutely, with his mouth full. "Very sorry, but I must decline. I have never felt any interest in idiots. Don't like 'em. Don't sympathise with 'em."

"How unnatural !" ejaculates the lady in an audible aside. "Oh ! but you must sympathise with them, you know ; you must be made to sympathise with them. Mrs. Winnington, your daughter has most kindly promised me a twenty-five guinea subscription ; I hope you'll allow me to put you down for a like sum."

"Oh, no, dear Lady Laura !" cries Mrs. Winnington, with a piteous face. "Five guineas, please ; I really cannot do more. You forget what a wretched pauper I am, and there are so many calls that one cannot turn a deaf ear to. Where did you go for your drive to-day ?"

Mrs. Winnington was a trifle flushed, and exhibited symptoms of uneasiness and absence of mind. Every now and again her eye-glasses went up to her nose, and were furtively directed at the other side of the table, where Philip's dark head was in close proximity to Edith's blonde one. At last she could keep silence no longer, and called out, in a sharp

voice, "Edith, my dear, Lady Laura is very anxious to be shown the cathedral. Will you go with her to-morrow?"

"Quite out of the question, Mrs. Winnington," answered Philip gravely. "Your daughter has a previous engagement; she has promised to ride with me."

Mrs. Winnington scowled so fiercely at this that the girl looked frightened, and exclaimed hastily:—

"Nonsense, Philip! you know I never promised any such thing. Of course I can go, mamma."

"Very well," said Philip placidly; "we'll all go. Mrs. Winnington, why shouldn't you come too? You could sit down with Lady Laura and rest, while Edith dragged me to the topmost pinnacle of the temple. I have always meant to climb up there some day, but one wants a strongish inducement to overcome one's constitutional laziness."

"We will keep to our original plan, if you please," answered Mrs. Winnington loftily. "As for what you are pleased to call your constitutional laziness, I suppose that if Dr. Goodford could not cure you of that, Edith is not very likely to be able to do so. In any case, the task is not one which I should think it worth while to confide to her. Your laziness would have been whipped out of you many years ago, if I had had anything to do with your education."

To this Philip only replied, "Now, now, Mrs. Winnington," in a soothing voice, which had the effect of causing that lady's cheeks to assume a fine rich hue, and of eliciting an abrupt and startling chuckle from Walter, who looked very much abashed when everybody turned and stared at him.

After this little passage of arms there was a hollow truce, which lasted up till the time when the ladies left the dining-room; but later in the evening hostilities were resumed, and several sharp encounters took place; the advantage remaining in every instance with the younger and cooler combatant. Philip had dropped into a reclining attitude upon the sofa where Edith was seated, and for a quarter of an hour or so he amused himself by baffling Mrs. Winnington's attempts to force him or her daughter from this position; but at length, growing weary, apparently, of that form of provocation, he voluntarily changed his ground, strolled deliberately up to his enemy's arm-chair, and, leaning back against the wall with folded arms, struck into the middle of the conversation which she had been keeping up under difficulties with Lady Flintshire. Mrs. Winnington at first endeavoured to ignore him altogether; but he did not choose to be ignored, and very soon he had drawn upon himself as brisk and well-sustained an attack as he could have wished for.

Hugh, who had vainly attempted to get near to Margaret, and who had now nothing to do and no one to talk to, listened with some entertainment to Mrs. Winnington's onset, which certainly did not lack vigour. He heard Philip accused by no obscure implication of being a coxcomb,

an adventurer, a spendthrift, and a libertine, and he could not help admiring the perfect good humour with which the young fellow met these charges. Not for some time did he realise what was actually going on, and why the little knot of silent spectators who had gradually come together in the neighbourhood of the unconscious lady's chair were exchanging looks of keen appreciation and amusement. Philip was audaciously mimicking Mrs. Winnington to her face. He had caught the exact pitch of her voice, the droop of her eyelids, the emphatic tapping of her left palm with the first and second fingers of her right hand, and the phrases with which she was in the habit of embellishing her discourse. When he ejaculated, "That is not the question," any one whose back had been turned might have sworn that it was Mrs. Winnington herself who was speaking. It was undoubtedly a very clever performance, and the more so because Mrs. Winnington's speech and demeanour did not, after all, afford any specially salient points for a caricaturist to seize upon. Philip's rendering of her was strictly faithful, free from any exaggeration, and, when taken in conjunction with the severe castigation which he was ostensibly undergoing, inexpressibly ludicrous. Fat Lady Flintshire was quivering with suppressed laughter from head to foot; Lady Laura Smythe was grinning sardonically; Mr. Hobson at one moment was threatened with an apoplexy, and had to walk away hastily to recover himself in the background; and the victim herself never suspected from first to last that she was being made a fool of, but was only uneasily conscious that she was not getting the best of it, when, by all rights, she ought to have been doing so.

The exhibitor knew better than to fatigue his audience with too protracted an entertainment. He desisted in due time, and, as he moved away, Mrs. Winnington had the mortification of hearing Lady Flintshire say:—

"Oh, Mr. Marescalchi, I hope you will be able to come to us for a week in September. We shall have a good many of your friends with us, and we are thinking of getting up a little acting for the young people."

Philip civilly declined the invitation which his late antagonist had been angling for all day, excusing himself upon the plea of other engagements, and so his triumph was complete; and the initiated among those who had been listening to him no doubt felt that talent had met with its just reward. Perhaps, however, they had missed the best part of the joke, after all; for it was only Hugh who had noticed that, under cover of the encounter above described, Walter Brune and Edith had quietly withdrawn into a secluded corner, and were enjoying a long and unmolested *tête-à-tête*.

"*Sic vos non vobis*," muttered Colonel Kenyon, whose stock of classical quotations was somewhat limited. "I suppose Walter must be the man; I knew it was one of them." And he walked away, quite pleased with his penetration.

He strolled to one of the open windows, and looked out. The night was warm and still; the silent lawns lay bathed in a soft and inviting moonlight. The wainscot was not a high one, and nobody was looking. Hugh yielded to temptation, swung his legs over the sill, dropped on to the ground, and, walking round to the front door, got his hat and a cigar. Soon he had forgotten all about the little comedy which was being enacted within, and had reverted to the thought of his own love troubles. As he paced to and fro, he could hear the continuous murmur of talk rising and falling in the drawing-room; puffs of heated air escaped through the open windows; somebody was singing French songs in an absurd, cracked voice.

"How she must hate all this!" Hugh thought. "How she must wish that she could give up her house to that confounded old mother of hers, and get away, and live her own life! But she can't give it up to her mother, and she won't give it up in the only way that it can be given up. Her pleasure is to sacrifice herself for others; no woman ever surrenders a pleasure of that kind. What is the good of my speaking? I had better hold my tongue, and go on hoping against hope, like the superannuated ass that I am, to the end of the chapter. It isn't very delightful staying at Longbourne under existing circumstances, but it is just a shade better than being sent away with a flea in my ear."

"*Si vous n'avez rien à me dire,*" shrieked the invisible songstress; "*pourquoi venir auprès de moi?*"

"Oh, you damned old screech-owl!" muttered Hugh; and with that profane and improper apostrophe he turned on his heel, and sought a more sequestered place for meditation.

After a time, two dark figures came striding down the drive, talking and laughing; and one of them called out, "Hullo! here's Colonel Kenyon; I thought he wouldn't be able to stand those delightful people much longer. Are you inclined for a walk this fine night, Colonel Kenyon? I'm going to see Walter home."

When we are young, it flatters us to be asked to join our elders, but when we have reached middle age it flatters us a great deal more if our juniors express a wish for our company. Little as Hugh was disposed to like Marescalchi, he yet began to think that there might be good points about that very self-satisfied young gentleman, as he walked beside him across the long stretches of moonlit grass. Walter he did like. Walter was a youth after his own heart; a youth of thews and sinews, of fair average intelligence—Colonel Kenyon had no great love for very clever people—of obvious honesty and sincerity. He was a sportsman, too, and was deeply interested in hearing about the pursuit of the big game in India. It was a thousand pities that such another had not chanced to be stranded on the Riviera at the time when Margaret had taken it into her head to go in for orphans.

Two out of the three men hit it off together excellently well; and as the third was of so pliant a character that it came naturally to him to fall

in with any one's and every one's humour, their conversation did not flag until they reached the confines of the Broom Leas paddocks, where, notwithstanding the lateness of the hour, Miss Brune was leaning over a fence, waiting for her brother.

"Whom have you got with you, Walter?" she called out, while they were still under the shadow of a hedge and she was in the full light of the moon. "Has Philip actually exerted himself to walk all this way with you? What condescension! How did you get on at dinner? It was awfully heavy, I suppose. Did Colonel Kenyon turn up? and what do you think of him?"

"Colonel Kenyon," answered Philip, gently holding Hugh back in the shade, "turned up, as per arrangement, and he is all that your fancy painted him."

"Ah, he has been snubbing you! I knew that at once by your voice. Come out of the dark, and tell me all about him. What sort of a looking person is he?"

"Well," answered Philip, "it's a matter of opinion. Here he is, so you can form yours as soon as you like."

Hugh stepped forward, taking off his hat and looking a little foolish; while Nellie murmured, "I beg your pardon," and looked rather foolish too. There was a spice of the monkey in Philip's composition. He was not ill-natured; but he was himself a total stranger to false shame, and the spectacle of two full-grown fellow-creatures demeaning themselves towards one another after the fashion of a couple of shy children was to him so queer and entertaining a one that he could seldom deny himself the pleasure of bringing it about, when a good opportunity offered. He did not get much amusement for his pains upon the present occasion; for his indiscretion had the effect of causing Miss Brune to beat a hasty retreat, and in a very few minutes he and Colonel Kenyon were wending their way homewards.

"What a pretty girl Nellie—or perhaps I ought to say Miss Brune—has turned out!" the latter remarked.

"The prettiest girl in England," said Marescalchi with decision. "You couldn't judge of her properly just now; but when you see her by daylight, you will understand at once why the whole county raves about her. She is the only woman I know who has really dark blue eyes. Edith is pretty, very pretty; but she can't hold a candle to Nellie."

"Upon my word," cried Hugh, half amused, half angry at this dispassionate criticism, "you are a very lucky fellow. Many a man would give his ears to be allowed to call two such charming young ladies by their Christian names."

"People are always telling me I am a lucky fellow," Philip remarked. "I gave up protesting against the accusation—for it is a sort of accusation, you know—long ago. But only the wearer knows where the shoe pinches."

Hugh made no rejoinder, for it flashed across him that there could

hardly fail to be a dash of bitterness in the lot of a waif and stray ; and so the remainder of the walk was accomplished in silence. Philip, like many other persons who shine in society, was subject to occasional fits of depression when off the stage. One of these fits fell upon him now, and Hugh was quite startled to see how pale and haggard he looked when he bade him good-night in the hall.

"Owes money, I expect," the Colonel thought, as he went upstairs ; "I wonder what Margaret allows him."

And then this good-natured and foolish gentleman actually began calculating the amount that stood to his credit in the hands of Messrs. Cox and Co. Hugh had felt the pinch of poverty so often himself that all his sympathies were stirred by a suspicion of embarrassed circumstances in others, and he had never in his life been able to refuse a loan when asked for one. It was to this unfortunate weakness that he owed the loss of more than one old friend.

A French Assize.

I.

THE entrance of two judges into an English assize town is, weather favouring, an impressive sight; or at least it can be made so. It is not often that a sheriff evinces his parsimony after the manner of a certain official of that rank, who went out to receive Lord Chief Justice Cockburn in a hansom cab, and was straightway fined 500*l.* for his impudence. Most sheriffs are anxious to acquit themselves creditably of the task which the law imposes upon them, and some would no doubt go to extremes in the matter of pageantry had not an etiquette arisen which informally regulates to what extent the ceremonial of receiving the judges shall go. The judges must have fine carriages with four horses, servants in livery, javelin men; a comfortable house to lodge in, and the sheriff, who houses and feeds them at his own expense, must attend them into court daily attired in uniform. If the calendar at the assizes be a heavy one, the sheriff's expenses in entertaining the judges for several days must often be considerable. In France, where the calendars are always heavy, the assize judges have not only to defray all their own expenses, but they are expected to give at least one dinner to the local officials. By way of indemnity they receive from the state a fee of 500 francs, or 20*l.* The regular salaries of these assize judges, who are councillors of the District Court of Appeal, specially commissioned, vary between 240*l.* and 360*l.*; but never exceed this last figure.

This is only another way of saying that French judges are as a rule men of private means who have accepted judicial office for the honour of the thing. The Republican party now in power have resolved to effect a radical reform in the judicature, and to bestow the highest offices on the Bench, as they are conferred in England, on successful barristers whom they will attract by the offer of salaries twice and three times larger than those now paid. Thus it is proposed to give councillors of Appeal Courts (whose numbers will be diminished) from 600*l.* to 1,000*l.* a year, and presidents of Appeal Courts from 1,200*l.* to 2,000*l.*; under the new system also, should it ever come into force, the judges of assize will have all their expenses paid for them and receive a fee of 4*l.* a day into the bargain. These reforms must altogether change the organisation of the French judicature; but speaking of French judges as they are now, one must say of them that, if not always intellectually brilliant, they are without exception a highly dignified, honourable

and well-trained body of men. Those of them who are commissioned to hold assizes have generally sat for many years on the Bench. They belong in most cases to the provincial *noblesse* and commenced their career in the *Magistrature Assise*, at the age of twenty-six, or twenty-seven, by being appointed assistant judges in the tribunals of Correctional Police; after which they became assessors in those tribunals, *juges d'instruction* (examining magistrates), and finally councillors of a Court of Appeal. There are twenty-one of these Appeal Courts, formerly called Royal or Imperial Courts, and the staff of each includes a president and an indefinite number of councillors. Some courts have but six or eight councillors, others more than twenty. A councillorship is the supreme dignity to which a judge can claim to rise by length of service, though by Government favour he may be promoted to the higher functions of president of a Court, or councillor of the Court of Cassation in Paris. The presidentships, however, are very often conferred on the most distinguished members of the *Magistrature Debout*, the Procurator General, or Chief Public Prosecutor of Appeal Courts; and it may be mentioned that councillors seldom care to accept these high posts unless they are quite rich men. The president of a *Cour d'Appel* gets 600*l.* a year, but he is required to keep up so much state and to give so many dinners and parties that he spends his salary two or three times over. The councillorships of the Court of Cassation, which involve a residence in Paris, are likewise sought only by the most affluent. As for the highest judicial office of all, that of President of the Court of Cassation or Supreme Court of Civil and Criminal Appeal, the salary is 1,200*l.*; but the holder of this most venerated office has to pay for his dignity on a scale which only an income of several thousands of pounds will suffice to meet.

Assizes are held twice, or if needful three times a year, in the chief towns of each department, and three councillors of the district *Cour d'Appel* are commissioned to hold them. The senior councillor takes the temporary title of President of the Assizes, and on him devolve all the principal duties, ceremonial and other. The judges arrive in the town without any display, but as soon as they have alighted at the chief hotel in the place they must begin paying their official visits in a carriage and pair. They are bound to call first on the prefect, on the commander of the garrison if he be a general of division, and on the diocesan if he be an archbishop, and the visits in such cases must be paid in their scarlet robes. If, however, the garrison commander be a general of brigade, and the diocesan only a bishop, the Assize President and his assessors return to their hotel after calling on the prefect, for they rank higher for the nonce than all other officials, and are entitled to receive first visits from them. The prefect, accompanied by his secretary and the councillors of *préfecture*, all in full uniform, speedily arrives at the hotel to pay his return visit, and after him come, in what order they please, the general, the bishop, the mayor of the town, the president,

assessor, and public prosecutor of the local tribunal, the Central Commissioner of Police, and divers other functionaries. They make but a short stay, and as soon as they are gone the judges divest themselves of their robes, and set out to pay their return visits in evening-dress. The etiquette in all these points is strictly defined. It was originally regulated by Napoleon, and has been adhered to with but little variation ever since. At times attempts have been made to condense the whole formality into a mere exchange of cards; but the French love ceremony, and of late the secret antagonism between aristocratic judges and the Republican government has induced Republican prefects to stickle most punctiliously for the observance of all official courtesies due towards them. Not long ago an assize president who was by birth a marquis called upon a prefect, and made him the stiffest of bows, saying, "Sir, I have come to pay you the visit which the law requires." The prefect was a good fellow, and returning the call an hour afterwards, said with the blandest of smiles, "Sir, I come to pay a visit which in some cases might be a mere duty, but which in this instance is a real pleasure." The interviews between judges and bishops are generally more genial than this.

While the judges have been getting through their visits, the Avocat-Général appointed to act as Public Prosecutor at the assizes has also been exchanging civilities with the local authorities; but in his case card leaving is held to be sufficient. The Avocat-Général is one of the assistants of the Procureur Général or chief Public Prosecutor of the district over which the Appeal Court has jurisdiction. He sits in the assize court in red robes, and conducts the prosecution of all the prisoners: it is only in cases where private prosecutors want to get pecuniary damages out of a prisoner, besides seeing him punished according to law, that they are represented by counsel of their own. They are then said to constitute themselves civil parties to the suit. They may do this even when a prisoner is on his trial for murder, and indeed pecuniary damages are almost always claimed when a prisoner is supposed to be able to pay them. It has not unfrequently happened that a murderer, besides being sentenced to death, has been made to pay a heavy fine to the relations of his victim. These fines are inflicted, not by the jury, but by the Bench. A few years ago a gentleman named Armand, of Bordeaux, was put upon his trial for trying to murder his servant, Maurice Roux. The jury acquitted him, but the Bench, having their doubts about the matter, sentenced him to pay 20,000 francs damages to Roux, and the Court of Cassation upheld this curious decision. Prince Pierre Bonaparte, when acquitted of the murder of Victor Noir, the journalist, in 1870, was also made to pay 20,000 francs damages to his victim's mother; and only a few months since a country gentleman, who was convicted of having killed an antagonist in a duel, was sentenced to pay 4,000*l.* compensation to the deceased's widow, in addition to undergoing a year's imprisonment, and paying a fine of 40*l.* to the State with all the costs of the trial.

II.

French assizes are only held to try criminal causes. All civil suits are heard at the Courts of Appeal, which are stationary, and whose presidents never figure in assize commissions. When a calendar is unusually heavy, the judges arrive two or three days before the proceedings commence; but in any case they come one clear day beforehand, in order that they may have ample time to examine the *dossiers* of all the causes. This is always done with the utmost care. The *dossier* is a compilation which includes not only the indictment and the depositions of witnesses before the examining magistrate, but all the facts and rumours which the police have been able to collect concerning the antecedents of the accused. A copy of each *dossier* handed to the judges is laid before the *Chambre des Mises en Accusation*, which performs the same functions as an English grand jury. The members composing it are specially delegated judges or magistrates of a lower rank than councillors, and it rests with them to determine whether prisoners shall be put upon their trial. They are not limited, however, to the two alternatives of finding a true bill or ignoring the bill altogether. They may order a *supplément d'instruction*, that is, send back the case to the examining magistrate for further inquiry. It is the main principle of French procedure that a case should come up to a criminal court complete in all its details, and this throws upon examining magistrates an amount of labour and responsibility almost incredible.

Four categories of offences are tried at the assizes: firstly, crimes involving sentences of death or penal servitude; secondly, political offences; thirdly, by the Act of 1881, press offences; and fourthly, man-slaughters caused by duelling. The offenders in the last three categories are generally, though not always, treated with courtesy. They have been at large on their own recognisances; they are not required to surrender themselves into actual custody, and they do not sit in the dock during trial. All other offenders, however, even when they have been admitted to bail, must surrender at the House of Detention on the day before the assizes open, and must be brought up in custody. It is the public prosecutor, and not the bench, who decides to what extent accused persons shall be enlarged before and during trial. He may if he pleases keep a political offender or a journalist or duellist as strictly confined before trial as an ordinary felon; and he may at his discretion stay the execution of a sentence, and allow the convicted man to walk freely out of court. Political offenders, journalists and duellists, who get sentenced to a few months' imprisonment only, are seldom detained immediately after their conviction. Except in very serious cases, or in cases where the government harbours a special animosity against the culprit, the latter leaves the court free, and does not surrender to undergo his punishment until he receives a summons to do so from the public prosecutor. And some-

times, as for instance when a sudden change of ministry brings the friends of a political offender to power, the summons is never sent at all. It may be remembered that during the last days of the Duke de Broglie's administration in 1877, M. Gambetta was sentenced to four months' imprisonment for an attack on Marshal MacMahon, but the order to surrender was never communicated to him.

The first business of the assizes is to draw the juries. A panel of forty jurymen is summoned, and the prisoners are all brought up one by one into the president's room to see the drawing done. For each trial fourteen names are drawn by lot, that is, twelve to form the jury and two others to act as *suppléants* in case one of the jury should fall ill. These *suppléants* are sworn like the rest, and they sit in the jury box, but take no part in finding the verdict unless they are required to fill up vacancies. This system of having a couple of extra men on a jury is evidently more sensible than the English plan of empaneling just the number needed. How absurd this system would have seemed if one of the jury in the Tichborne case had died on the 150th day of the trial, thereby rendering it necessary that the whole trial should be recommenced! In France, if a trial bade fair to last a hundred days, it is probable that the Bench would order six *suppléants* to be empaneled in order to guard against all chance of a miscarriage of justice.

Every prisoner is attended at the drawing by his counsel, and it is a merciful provision of French law that no prisoner shall be arraigned at the assizes without having a barrister to defend him. A few days before the assizes a notice is sent to the House of Detention requesting that all prisoners unable to pay for counsel shall forward their applications to be defended at the expense of the State; and the judges appoint a counsel for each prisoner as soon as they have taken cognisance of the *dossiers*. The *avocat* may not always be of much use to a prisoner, but there he is, and he seldom fails to exercise his privilege of challenging some of the names called for the jury. This is done by merely lifting up his *toque* or headdress when the name is called. The public prosecutor may also challenge, and challenges coming from either side are always allowed without question.

The administration of justice in France is never rendered undignified by sordid surroundings, such as small, frowsy courts. All the courts of assize are spacious and handsome; there is plenty of room for all who have business there, and it is always possible to accommodate a good many sight-seers. The public prosecutor sits in a rostrum to right or left of the bench according to the position of the windows, the dock being always opposite the light so that the prosecutor may enjoy a full view of the prisoner's face. The three judges in their robes of scarlet and ermine sit in armchairs at a long table on a dais. Behind them hangs a life-size painting of the Saviour on the Cross, and there is a crucifix on the table fronting the president's chair. These emblems of mercy and redemption form part of the furniture of all assize courts. No freethinking judge

has yet ordered their removal, though judges must be pretty well tired by this time of hearing young *avocats* adjure them by the crucifix not to slay the innocent. This is a piece of rhetorical flourish which may have been effective sometimes, but it has been sadly overdone and misused.

III.

"Bring in the accused," says the president, as soon as the judges have taken their seats; and the prisoner is introduced into the dock between a couple of gendarmes heavily armed, who sit on either side of him and keep their cocked hats on throughout the proceedings. From this time and until the end of the trial it may occur to the prisoner to wonder why three judges have been put to the trouble of trying him, seeing that it is the president who does all the work. It is said that the two assessors have a voice in the infliction of the sentence, but they take no ostensible part in the trial, and sit all the while as dumb as fish. The president, on the contrary, has a great deal both to say and to do.

The procedure of the French assize court differs totally from the English. The proceedings commence with the reading of the indictment in a sing-song voice by the clerk of the court, and this usually lasts more than an hour, for the indictment is of portentous length, touching upon almost every incident in the accused's life. The prisoner, who remains seated during this reading, is then told to stand up, and the president begins to interrogate him. Now the bias of French judges against accused persons is always so strong as to have become proverbial, and any Englishman hearing a judicial interrogatory is shocked by perceiving that the president speaks as if the prisoner's guilt had already been made manifest. He says to him, "Now don't deny your guilt. Don't equivocate. You know very well that you are telling lies. You seem to have been a bad character from your youth up;" and so on. This kind of thing quite unsettles a nervous person, or makes a bold one saucy, and it produces a bad effect on juries. It is a marvel that judges should not yet have discovered how bad an effect it produces. Many of the scandalously lenient verdicts which have disgraced French courts of justice of late years may be ascribed entirely to the irritation caused in the minds of jurymen by the bullying tone adopted by judges towards prisoners. A wretched man driven to exasperation one day exclaimed, "You are not judging my cause; you have made up your mind about it without hearing me. What is the use of my answering you?" and he was acquitted for this speech, though in truth he was guilty. A judge who believes in a prisoner's guilt and wants to see him punished cannot do better than speak to him in the most moderate tone, as the jury will probably do their duty if their vanity is not ruffled by the feeling that they are being cowed. By an Act passed in 1880 the summing up of judges was abolished. This Act may be said to have been a very severe vote of censure passed by the Parliament upon the Judicature, and it

ought to have had a sobering and somewhat humiliating effect upon presidents of assize. But it has apparently had none. The truth is, judges come into court with their minds utterly saturated with the facts accumulated in most cleverly drawn indictments, and it should be added that the preliminary investigations conducted before the examining magistrates are generally so long, so minute, and painstaking that it is very seldom indeed that an innocent man is committed for trial. Innocent men frequently remain for months and months in gaol while the charge against them is being investigated by examining magistrates; but as it is the *juge d'instruction's* business to frame a perfect indictment, and not merely to establish a *primâ facie* case, he will end by discharging a prisoner if not fully satisfied of his guilt, sooner than risk a snub from the *Chambre des Mises en Accusation* by sending up an incomplete case. Nevertheless innocent men do get committed and convicted sometimes in France; and rare as such occurrences may be, they ought, one would think, to render presidents of assize more dispassionate. When the prisoner has been questioned and harried till he is faint and despairing, he is allowed to sit down again. The president has done his duty, according to his lights, in endeavouring to wring a confession from the man, and, having failed, he is content to let him alone thenceforth. Now comes the time for the witnesses to be heard. They are not sworn upon a Testament, but are enjoined to lift up their right hand and swear to tell "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth." A rather needless question is asked them to start with, "How old are you?" After this they have to say whether they stand in any degree of relationship towards the accused. There is no cross-examination by the counsel for the defence as in England. It is the president who does all the interrogating. The prosecution and the defence may from time to time interpolate a question, but this is not done on any systematic plan, and the questions are always put through the president with his leave. In the newest built assize courts the witnesses sit while giving their evidence.

After the witnesses for the prosecution have been heard, those for the defence come forward, without any interposition in the shape of a speech from the prisoner's counsel. This is another point of difference from English procedure. The speeches are all delivered at the close of the evidence. The Public Prosecutor leads off with his *requisitoire*; if there be a claim for damages, the *avocat* of the civil parties to the suit follows, and then the counsel for the defence makes his harangue. One must call it a harangue, for whether the orator be one of the foremost men at the Bar, or a mere forensic tyro, he is sure to indulge in a set declamation with a great deal of what is on this side of the Channel contemptuously termed 'gush.' As there are no juries in civil causes or in correctional courts, *avocats* gladly avail themselves of the chances furnished by the assizes to try their lurking powers of humour, pathos, or sophistry on "twelve honest and intelligent jurymen." One of the most consummate jurists, the late M. Chaix d'Est Ange, whose practice

lay entirely in the civil courts, used to say that it "refreshed" him to defend a prisoner now and then at the assizes. "It is good exercise for the whole body," he added naïvely. "To a judge one must talk with the head, but to a jury one may speak with head, heart, eyes, hands, and legs."

Let us not make too light of assize court oratory. It is of an infinitely higher quality than that so met with at the Old Bailey. To begin with, the French are born talkers; they are, moreover, warm-hearted, quick-willed, and æsthetic. You can appeal to the feelings of the least cultured among them by lofty theories upon humanity, and you may captivate the minds of the most intelligent and highly educated by ingenious paradoxes. Jurymen are for the most part plain men of square sense; but one or two "thinkers" among the twelve will leaven the whole lump. The others will undergo the influence of their superior minds, and while not comprehending their theories perhaps will feel secretly ashamed of their own dulness, and will be anxious to prove that they, too, comprehend a "*grande idée*." The "*grande idée*" may happen to be this, that a man is justified in slaying his mother-in-law if she interferes too perseveringly with his domestic arrangements; but what matter if the verdict which consecrates this doctrine be received by the public with loud cheers?

In England we have by our sneers at "gush," "humbug," "clap-trap," "sentimentalism," &c., made our barristers ashamed to talk nobly. Very few of them, indeed, would care to risk that reputation for good sense which is so valued amongst us by launching hazardous theories in justification of great crimes. In cases of murder especially the plea of provocation can only be urged with the extremest caution. Neither judges nor juries will stand much of it, and some of the theories occasionally advanced in French courts of justice to save the necks of desperate scoundrels would be received in England not only with indignation, but with contemptuous laughter. Some time ago a Parisian tradesman named Martin, being on the verge of bankruptcy, was moved to right his affairs by murdering and robbing one of those messengers of the Bank of France who may be seen going about the streets on the first and fifteenth of every month to collect payment of bills. These messengers are very conspicuous from wearing a grey uniform and carrying their satchels full of notes and go'd slung by a chain to their sides. Martin decoyed one of these poor fellows into his shop under pretence of wanting change for a thousand franc note, and while the messenger was stooping over his counter to spread out the gold, he clove his head open with a hatchet. The murder had been craftily planned, and might well have gone undetected, for Martin was alone in his shop; he had littered the floor thickly with saw-dust, and he had made all his arrangements for dragging his victim down to the cellar and there burying him. Unfortunately for him the messenger was not killed

outright. He had just strength enough left to wrench open the shop door and stagger into the street, where he died on the pavement.

How promptly an English judge and jury would have sent Martin to the gallows need not be insisted upon; but M. Lachaud, who defended the ruffian before a Parisian jury, did it with such skill that he moved them to tears. He drew a touching picture of the honest tradesman, the good husband and father, driven to despair by seeing himself on the point of ruin. He implored the jury to have mercy on a man who wanted to save his "commercial honour." No doubt it was wrong to try and save one's honour by murder and robbery, but such a wild design only proved the extent of mental aberration to which poor Martin had been brought by the prospect of seeing his credit broken. The jury, taking this kindly view of the matter, found "extenuating circumstances" in favour of Martin, who was consequently saved from the guillotine, and sentenced to transportation for life. As he has now undergone five years of his time, he is probably living as a free colonist in New Caledonia.

Such miscarriages of justice may seem to us monstrous, but they may be matched by plenty of others from recent judicial annals. M. Lachaud, who exercises a magical influence over juries, was three years ago called upon to defend a girl named Marie Bière, who had shot at her paramour with a revolver and wounded him so dangerously that for weeks he lay at the point of death. Marie Bière was not an artless girl wreaking frantic vengeance on a man who had seduced her, but a person of worthless antecedents, who, having formed a *liaison* with a young gentleman of property, wished to induce him to marry her, and shot him because he was going to marry somebody else. It ought to have been regarded as an aggravating circumstance in her crime that her paramour had not sought to cast her off penniless, but had liberally settled an income of 144*l.* a year on her for life; and yet it was precisely on this fact that M. Lachaud based his most masterly defence of the girl and obtained her acquittal. He fully admitted how bad Mdle. Bière's antecedents had been; "but," he asked, with his fiery eloquence, "what has that to do with it? If this poor creature conceived a true and tender feeling of love for this man, if she had cherished the dream of becoming his wife and leading a life of purity thenceforth, was it not a most pitiable thing that her hopes of redemption should have been destroyed? You saw how she spurned his money—her love had purified her—he had won her heart and his desertion made her desperate. Are you going now by your verdict to affirm that women who have once fallen shall never be allowed to love, shall never blot out the past, shall be subject all their lives to the degradation of offers such as this by which Marie Bière's lover sought, as he cynically said, to compensate her? Compensation at the rate of three hundred francs a month for a broken heart! Compensation by insult for a wrong most cruel, most worthy of good men's compassion?"

There were numbers of fine ladies, actresses, authors—the author of the *Dame aux Camélias* among them—who wept in court during this stirring address; and the bewildered jury brought in a verdict of Not Guilty, which was hailed with tremendous applause, waving of handkerchiefs and hats. Marie Bière, in leaving the court, received an enthusiastic ovation from the crowd in the Salle des Pas Perdus, and for several days afterwards the girl's lodgings were beset by warm-hearted people, who brought her bouquets, cards, and more substantial gifts. But her acquittal produced most disastrous consequences. It led in fact to a very epidemic of shooting and vitriol-throwing. In the course of the last two years, at least twenty girls have been arraigned at the assizes for seeking reparation for their blighted hopes *vi et armis*, and M. Lachaud's famous speech, repeated with every kind of variation suitable to particular circumstances, by barristers great and small, has always led to acquittals. In one of these cases M. Georges Lachaud, nephew of the great Lachaud, had to meet the remonstrances of the Public Prosecutor, who plainly pointed out that the constant acquittal of adventuresses who had no object but to bring themselves into notoriety by committing murder was really a public scandal and a danger to society. "I contend, on the contrary, that such acquittals are tending unmistakably to moralise society," answered M. Georges Lachaud. "By proving that you have no sympathy with young men of loose morals you are making them cautious. All laws have failed to make them virtuous, but one such verdict as you may render can frighten them into becoming so."

Such appeals to juries to judge a case on higher grounds than those of mere law seldom miss their effect; and it has gradually come to be accepted as a doctrine in France that the jurymen need not feel themselves tethered by the letter of the oath which they swear. They are representatives of the people rendering popular justice, not according to the hard, unelastic texts of the law, but according to the highest dictates of abstract equity, common sense, and mercy. M. Lachaud, who is a truly great orator, and has done more than any man alive to educate juries into the notion that they must judge with their hearts and not with their heads, is ably seconded in his theories by his son, and his nephew, and by MM. Allon, Nicolet, Demange, Carraby and others. All these *avocats* are arch blarneyers. Their fantastic arguments and hysteric declamations make judges to moan, but they cause juries to weep, and all the gain is for the prisoners. A curious result of this state of things is this, that if a man have a quarrel with his enemy he had far better for his own sake kill him outright than maim him. For an aggravated assault he will be tried before three judges without a jury in the Correctional Court, and stands a good chance of getting five years' imprisonment; but if he kills his man, he will be tried before a jury, and if it be proved that he acted in hot blood without premeditation, an acquittal will very likely follow. It will certainly follow if the murder

in hot blood have been the upshot of a quarrel between husband and wife in consequence of some infidelity on one side or the other. Juries never will punish the betrayed husband or wife who takes the law into his or her own hands. Lately a husband who had an unfaithful wife gave her a tremendous thrashing and broke her arm, for which he was sentenced to a year's imprisonment by a Correctional Court. As he left the dock he exclaimed ruefully, "*Mon Dieu, voilà ce qu'on gagne à se montrer trop doux !*"

IV.

When the counsel for the defence has finished his speech, the public prosecutor replies; but this privilege will probably be taken from him before long, on the same principle as that which made the Legislature suppress the summing up of the judge. Humanitarians think that the last word in a trial should be spoken by the defence, so that the jury may retire with cries for mercy still ringing in their ears.

French jurymen are not detained, as in England, throughout the whole duration of a trial for felony. They may return to their homes in the evening, and go where they please, and speak with whom they please during the adjournments for lunch. Once they have retired to consider their verdict, however, they are locked up until they have come to a decision. The only person with whom they may communicate is the President of the Court; and if they desire to see him he is summoned to their room. Their verdict has to be given under the form of answers by "Yes" or "No" to a number of questions stated for them in writing by the president. These questions sometimes exceed a hundred, and cover several pages of foolscap in the Clerk of Arraign's handwriting. Unanimity is not required for the finding of a verdict, but there must be a majority of eight to four to carry a full conviction. If the votes are equally divided the prisoner is acquitted; if five pronounce for an acquittal and seven for a conviction, the prisoner gets the benefit of what is called *minorité de faveur*, and the Bench by adding their three votes to the five given in his favour may acquit him if they think fit. A verdict delivered without any finding of "extenuating circumstances" carries with it the maximum penalty; but the maximum can never be inflicted when "extenuating circumstances" are allowed. Thus murderers tried for their lives always escape the guillotine when the judges find *circonstances atténuantes*. Verdicts of this description are often delivered simply because the majority of a jury may object to capital punishment. They none the less produce a painful and startling effect upon the minds of right-thinking persons when the recipient of clemency happens to be a villanous scoundrel for whose crime, humanly speaking, there should be no mercy at all. It shocks people to hear a jury find extenuating circumstances in favour of a brute who has murdered his aged parents to rob them of their savings; or of a monster, like that man in the Ain,

who last year blew up a house, and killed three people, because he wanted to destroy at one stroke five relations who stood between him and some property. The inmates of the house were nine in number, and the murderer had coldly planned to kill them all. It was by a sheer miracle that six of them escaped death. Nevertheless, the jury found "extenuating circumstances," and the judges were so indignant at this scandalous verdict that they marked their sense of it in a rather odd fashion by sentencing the prisoner to twenty years' transportation only, instead of to transportation for life. The effect of this would be that the convict might in ten years obtain a pardon and return to France; whereas, if sentenced for life, he would have to spend the remainder of his days in New Caledonia, even if discharged from the penal colony there on ticket-of-leave. The judges practically said to the jury:—"Since you take an interest in this malefactor, you shall have the pleasure of seeing him among you again in a few years."

It must be remarked that juries who are so compassionate towards the perpetrators of violent murders are seldom tender towards forgers, burglars, and other offenders against property; they are not lenient towards poisoners either. Murder with a knife, revolver, or bludgeon is all very well, but treacherous poisoning strikes even the most opaque-minded juryman as a thing to be discouraged. Even M. Lachaud has often expended his eloquence quite vainly in the attempt to enlist pity for wives who put lucifer matches into their husband's soup, or sons who drugged their father's coffee with laudanum. Since M. Grévy's accession to the presidency of the Republic, however, capital punishment has been suffered to fall into disuse, so that murderers of the most unpopular categories, though sentenced to death, are no longer executed.

When the jury have found their verdict they return into court, and the foreman delivers the finding in an impressive manner. He lays his hand upon his heart and says, "On my honour and conscience, before God and men, the verdict of the jury is unanimously (or by a majority, as the case may be) on the first question "Yes"; on the second question "Yes"; and so on. The prisoner is not in court either when the verdict is delivered or when sentence is pronounced. He has been led out when the jury retired, and he is not brought into the dock again until the court have publicly pronounced sentence. The object of this arrangement is to prevent the judges being disturbed in their calm deliberations by the prisoner's shrieks and entreaties for mercy. When the prisoner is brought into court he knows that mercy is past praying for. He is informed of his conviction and doom by the clerk of the court, who reads him the sentence which has been drawn up on paper; and he is then told that he has three days before him in which to appeal to the Court of Cassation.

Every prisoner appeals as a matter of course; but the Court of Cassation is only a Court of Appeal after a fashion. It does not enter into the rights or wrongs of an appellant's cause; it has simply to determine

whether his trial was conducted with all the requisite legal formalities. If there have been an informality of the most trivial kind, the proceedings are quashed, and a new trial is ordered. It is this that makes French judges and procurators so minutely careful in framing indictments and wording sentences. If there have been the omission of a single letter in the prisoner's name, or a misstatement about his age, it is enough to form *un cas de cassation*. The barristers who plead before the *Cour de Cassation* practise in no other courts. They are a special class of hair-splitters who apply all their acumen to the detection of little flaws in masses of documents. So thoroughly impersonal are their pleadings that, in a famous case of murder, where a whole day was spent in arguing on the appeal for a new trial, the name of the convict was never once mentioned.

To return to the Assize Court. It is a good practice in France to carry on a trial once commenced uninterruptedly to its conclusion. If it cannot be terminated on a Saturday night, the court sits on Sunday; and from the moment when the counsel for the defence has begun his speech there is no more break in the proceedings, even though that speech be finished very late in the evening. No case has yet occurred in France of a speech in a criminal case lasting more than one day; but it often happens that juries are not dismissed to consider their verdicts till past midnight, and only return into court in the small hours of the morning. There is no law to prevent judges from adjourning their courts at the conclusion of the defence if the hour be late; but it is not customary for them to do so now that the summing-up has been abolished. On ordinary days the court opens at 10 A.M. and rises at 6 or 7 P.M. There is always on the part of French judges a laudable desire to consult the convenience of witnesses by keeping them as short a time as possible in attendance at the court; and barristers assist this object by consenting without a murmur to remain in court as late in the evening as may be necessary to expedite business.

This does not prevent Bench and Bar from enjoying themselves in the usual festive manner at the close of each day's proceedings. The assizes furnish occasion for a round of dinners. The local authorities each give one, turn by turn; and after the assizes are over the president generally entertains all his late hosts at a banquet. This repast is followed by a grand reception which is attended by all public or private persons who desire to pay their respects to the judges. It is a matter of etiquette that the forty members of the jury panel should always come.

As for the prisoners, it may be remarked of those sentenced to death that they stand in quite a different position to that of English convicts in the same case. They receive no intimation of the date when their execution will take place. The Court of Cassation to which they have appealed may perhaps not call up their case for a couple of months; and after that some more days will be occupied in forwarding a *recours en grâce*, or petition for mercy, to the President of the Republic. M. Grévy is opposed to

capital punishment; but not so determinedly opposed to it as never to have signed a death warrant. He has allowed three men to be guillotined out of about sixty who have been sentenced to death since his accession, and this proportion, small as it is, is sufficient to prevent murderers from feeling absolutely reassured as to the fate awaiting them. They hear nothing of what is being done for or against them outside the prison walls. The *avocats* who defended them draw up the *recours en grâce*, but the convicts are not supposed to know what chances there are of these petitions being entertained or rejected. If a convict is to be executed, the first certain intimation which he receives of the painful fact comes about a quarter of an hour before his head drops into the sawdust basket of the guillotine. Some morning—it may be two or three months after his trial—he is aroused at break of day by the governor of the prison entering his cell and saying kindly:—"A——, your appeal has been rejected, and your petition dismissed: the moment has arrived . . ." The unhappy man, rolling out of bed and staggering to his feet, sees the gaol chaplain, who has walked in behind the governor, and two or three warders who assist him hastily to dress. From this moment everything is done with the utmost celerity. The prisoner has wine pressed upon him; three minutes are allowed him to make his shrift, then he is led out and pinioned. Next moment he is half conducted, half pushed, into the open air, where the guillotine stands surrounded by dense squares of mounted troops and police, behind whom are massed large crowds straining their eyes, with not much effect, to see what is about to take place. The modern guillotine is not erected on a platform, but is placed on the ground. The convict makes half a dozen steps; the executioner's assistants seize him, push him roughly against an upright board, which falls forward, pivoting under his weight, and brings him in a horizontal position with his neck between the grooves, above which the knife is suspended. The executioner touches a spring; the knife flashes as it falls; and all is over. Watch in hand it has been reckoned that when all the preliminaries of execution are smartly conducted, no more than fourteen minutes ought to elapse from the time when the convict is startled out of sleep to the instant when his head and body part company.

From the Christian point of view it is certainly deplorable that a convict having a sure knowledge of his impending death should never be able seriously to prepare his mind for it. But the French act upon the principle of making things as easy as possible for the doomed man. Even the prison chaplain thinks it his duty to hold out hopes of a commutation, though he may have no good reason for feeling that the sentence will not be carried out. The convict then passes his last weeks of existence in a fool's paradise. He is encouraged to smoke, he is allowed enough wine to make him, if not drunk, at least merry—that is a quart a day—and the warders in his cell play cards with him as much as he likes—it being their chief care to keep the man from moping and giving them trouble.

The Merry Men.

CHAPTER I.

EILEAN AROS.

IT was a beautiful morning in the late July when I set forth on foot for the last time for Aros. A boat had put me ashore the night before at Grisapol; I had such breakfast as the little inn afforded, and, leaving all my baggage till I had an occasion to come round for it by sea, struck right across the promontory with a cheerful heart.

I was far from being a native of these parts, springing, as I did, from an unmixed lowland stock. But an uncle of mine, Gordon Darnaway, after a poor, rough youth, and some years at sea, had married a young wife in the Islands; Mary Maclean she was called, the last of her family; and when she died in giving birth to a daughter, Aros, the sea-girt farm, had remained in his possession. It brought him in nothing but the means of life, as I was well aware; but he was a man whom ill-fortune had pursued; he feared, cumbered as he was with the young child, to make a fresh adventure upon life; and remained in Aros, biting his nails at destiny. Years passed over his head in that isolation, and brought neither help nor contentment. Meantime our family was dying out in the lowlands; there is little luck for any of that race; and perhaps my father was the luckiest of all, for not only was he one of the last to die, but he left a son to his name and a little money to support it. I was a student of Edinburgh University, living well enough at my own charges, but without kith or kin; when some news of me found its way to Uncle Gordon on the Ross of Grisapol; and he, as he was a man who held blood thicker than water, wrote to me the day he heard of my existence, and taught me to count Aros as my home. Thus it was that I came to spend my vacations in that part of the country, so far from all society and comfort, between the codfish and the moorcocks, as I used to say; and thus it was that now, when I had done with my classes, I was returning thither with so light a heart that July day.

The Ross, as we call it, is a promontory neither wide nor high, but as rough as God made it to this day; the deep sea on either hand of it, full of rugged isles and reefs most perilous to seamen—all overlooked from the eastward by some very high cliffs and the great peak of Ben Ryan, *the Mountain of the Mist*, they say the words signify in the Gaelic tongue; and it is well named. For that hill-top, which is more than three thousand feet in height, catches all the clouds that come blowing from the seaward; and, indeed, I used often to think that it must

make them for itself; since when all heaven was clear to the sea level, there would ever be a streamer on Ben Ryan. It brought water, too, and was mossy to the top in consequence. I have seen us sitting in broad sunshine on the Ross, and the rain falling black like crape upon the mountain. But the wetness of it made it often appear more beautiful to my eyes; for when the sun struck upon the hill sides, there were many wet rocks and watercourses that shone like jewels even as far as Aros, fifteen miles away,

The road that I followed was a cattle-track. It twisted so as nearly to double the length of my journey; it went over rough boulders so that a man had to leap from one to another, and through soft bottoms where the moss came nearly to the knee. There was no cultivation anywhere, and not one house in the ten miles from Grisapol to Aros. Houses of course there were—three at least; but they lay so far on the one side or the other that no stranger could have found them from the track. A large part of the Ross is covered with big granite rocks, some of them larger than a two-roomed house, one beside another, with fern and deep heather in between them where the vipers breed. Anyway the wind was, it was always sea air, as salt as on a ship; the gulls were as free as moorfowl over all the Ross; and whenever the way rose a little, your eye would kindle with the brightness of the sea. From the very midst of the land, on a day of wind and a high spring, I have heard the Roost roaring like a battle where it runs by Aros, and the great and fearful voices of the breakers that we call the Merry Men.

Aros itself—Aros Jay, I have heard the natives call it, and they say it means *the House of God*—Aros itself was not properly a piece of the Ross, nor was it quite an islet. It formed the south-west corner of the land, fitted close to it, and was in one place only separated from the coast by a little gut of the sea, not forty feet across at the narrowest. When the tide was full, this was clear and still, like a pool on a land river; only there was a difference in the weeds and fishes, and the water itself was green instead of brown; but when the tide went out, in the bottom of the ebb, there was a day or two in every month when you could pass dryshod from Aros to the mainland. There was some good pasture, where my uncle fed the sheep he lived on; perhaps the feed was better because the ground rose higher on the islet than the main level of the Ross, but this I am not skilled enough to settle. The house was a good one for that country, two stories high. It looked westward over a bay, with a pier hard by for a boat, and from the door you could watch the vapours blowing on Ben Ryan.

On all this part of the coast, and especially near Aros, these great granite rocks that I have spoken of go down together in troops into the sea, like cattle on a summer's day. There they stand, for all the world like their neighbours ashore; only the salt water sobbing between them instead of the quiet earth, and clots of sea-pink blooming on their sides instead of heather; and the great sea conger to wreathe about the base

of them instead of the poisonous viper of the land. On calm days you can go wandering between them in a boat for hours, echoes following you about the labyrinth; but when the sea is up, Heaven help the man that hears that caldron boiling.

Off the south-west end of Aros these blocks are very many, and much greater in size. Indeed, they must grow monstrously bigger out to sea, for there must be ten sea miles of open water sown with them as thick as a country place with houses, some standing thirty feet above the tides, some covered, but all perilous to ships; so that on a clear, westerly-blowing day, I have counted, from the top of Aros, the great rollers breaking white and heavy over as many as six-and-forty buried reefs. But it is nearer in shore that the danger is worst; for the tide, here running like a mill race, makes a long belt of broken water—a *Roost*, we call it—at the tail of the land. I have often been out there in a dead calm at the slack of the tide; and a strange place it is, with the sea swirling and combing up and boiling like the cauldrons of a linn, and now and again a little dancing mutter of sound as though the Roost were talking to itself. But when the tide begins to run again, and above all in heavy weather, there is no man could take a boat within half a mile of it, nor a ship afloat that could either steer or live in such a place. You can hear the roaring of it six miles away. At the seaward end there comes the strongest of the bubble; and it's here that these big breakers dance together—the dance of death, it may be called—that have got the name, in these parts, of the Merry Men. I have heard it said that they run fifty feet high; but that must be the green water only, for the spray runs twice as high as that. Whether they got the name from their movements, which are swift and antic, or from the shouting they make about the turn of the tide, so that all Aros shakes with it, is more than I can tell.

The truth is, that in a south-westerly wind, that part of our archipelago is no better than a trap. If a ship got through the reefs, and weathered the Merry Men, it would be to come ashore on the south coast of Aros, in Sandag Bay, where so many dismal things befel our family, as I propose to tell. The thought of all these dangers, in the place I knew so long, makes me particularly welcome the works now going forward to set lights upon the headlands and buoys along the channels of our iron-bound, inhospitable islands.

The country people had many a story about Aros, as I used to hear from my uncle's man, Rorie, an old servant of the Macleans, who had transferred his services without afterthought on the occasion of the marriage. There was some tale of an unlucky creature, a sea-kelpie, that dwelt and did business in some fearful manner of his own among the boiling breakers of the Roost. A mermaid had once met a piper on Sandag beach, and there sung to him a long, bright midsummer's night, so that in the morning he was found stricken crazy, and from thenceforward, till the day he died, said only one form of words; what

they were in the original Gaelic I cannot tell, but they were thus translated : " Ah, the sweet singing out of the sea." Seals that haunted on that coast have been known to speak to man in his own tongue, presaging great disasters. It was here that a certain saint first landed on his voyage out of Ireland to convert the Hebrideans. And, indeed, I think he had some claim to be called saint ; for, with the boats of that past age, to make so rough a passage, and land on such a ticklish coast, was surely not far short of the miraculous. It was to him, or to some of his monkish underlings who had a cell there, that the islet owes its holy and beautiful name, the House of God.

Among these old wives' stories there was one which I was inclined to hear with more credulity. As I was told, in that tempest which scattered the ships of the Invincible Armada over all the north and west of Scotland, one great vessel came ashore on Aros, and, before the eyes of some solitary people on a hill-top, went down in a moment with all hands, her colours flying even as she sank. There was some likelihood in this tale ; for another of that fleet lay sunk on the north side, twenty miles from Grisapol. It was told, I thought, with more detail and gravity than its companion stories, and there was one particularity which went far to convince me of its truth : the name, that is, of the ship was still remembered, and sounded, in my ears, Spanishly. The *Espirito Santo* they called it, a great ship of many decks of guns, laden with treasure and grandees of Spain, and fierce soldadoes, that now lay fathom deep to all eternity, done with her wars and voyages, in Sandag bay, upon the west of Aros. No more salvos of ordnance for that tall ship, the " Holy Spirit," no more fair winds or happy ventures ; only to rot there deep in the sea-tangle and hear the shoutings of the Merry Men as the tide ran high about the island. It was a strange thought to me first and last, and only grew stranger as I learned the name of Spain, from which she had set sail with so proud a company, and King Philip, the wealthy king, that sent her on that voyage.

And now I must tell you, as I walked from Grisapol that day, the *Espirito Santo* was very much in my reflections. I had been favourably remarked by our then Principal in Edinburgh College, that famous writer, Dr. Robertson, and by him had been set to work on some papers of an ancient date to rearrange and sift of what was worthless ; and in one of these, to my great wonder, I found a note of this very ship, the *Espirito Santo*, with her captain's name, and how she carried a great part of the Spaniards' treasure, and had been lost upon the Ross of Grisapol ; but in what particular spot, the wild tribes of that place and period would give no information to the king's inquiries. Putting one thing with another, and taking our island tradition together with this note of old King James's perquisitions after wealth, it had come strongly on my mind that the spot for which he sought in vain could be no other than the small bay of Sandag on my uncle's land ; and, being a fellow of a mechanical turn, I had ever since been plotting how to weigh that good

ship up again with all her ingots, ounces, and doubloons, and bring back our house of Darnaway to its long-forgotten dignity and wealth.

This was a design of which I soon had reason to repent. My mind was sharply turned on different reflections; and since I became the witness of a strange judgment of God's, the thought of dead men's treasures has been intolerable to my conscience. But even at that time I must acquit myself of sordid greed; for if I desired riches, it was not for their own sake, but for the sake of a person who was dear to my heart—my uncle's daughter, Mary Ellen. She had been educated well, and had been a time to school upon the mainland; which, poor girl, she would have been happier without. For Aros was no place for her, with old Rorie the servant, and her father, who was one of the unhappiest men in Scotland, plainly bred up in a country place among Cameronians, long a skipper sailing out of the Clyde about the islands, and now, with infinite discontent, managing his sheep and a little 'long-shore fishing for the necessary bread. If it was sometimes weariful to me, who was there but a month or two, you may fancy what it was to her, who dwelt in that same desert all the year round, with the sheep and flying sea-gulls, and the Merry Men singing and dancing in the Roost!

CHAPTER II.

WHAT THE WRECK HAD BROUGHT TO AROS.

It was half-flood when I got the length of Aros; and there was nothing for it but to stand on the far shore and whistle for Rorie with the boat. I had no need to repeat the signal. At the first sound, Mary was at the door flying a handkerchief by way of answer, and the old, long-legged serving-man was shambling down the gravel to the pier. For all his hurry, it took him a long while to pull across the bay; and I observed him several times to pause, go into the stern, and look over curiously into the wake. As he came nearer, he seemed to me aged and haggard, and I thought he avoided my eye. The coble had been repaired, with two new thwarts and several patches of some rare and beautiful foreign wood, the name of it unknown to me.

"Why, Rorie," said I, as we began the return voyage, "this is fine wood. How came you by that?"

"It will be hard to cheesel," Rorie opined reluctantly; and just then, dropping the oars, he made another of those dives into the stern which I had remarked as he came across to fetch me, and, leaning his hand on my shoulder, stared with an awful look into the waters of the bay.

"What is wrong?" I asked, a good deal startled.

"It will be a great feesh," said the old man, returning to his oars; and nothing more could I get out of him, but strange glances and an ominous nodding of the head. In spite of myself, I was infected with a

measure of uneasiness ; I turned also, and studied the wake. The water was still and transparent, but, out here in the middle of the bay, exceeding deep. For some time I could see nought ; but at last it did seem to me as if something dark—a great fish, or perhaps only a shadow—followed studiously in the track of the moving coble. And then I remembered one of Rorie's superstitions : how in a ferry in Morvar, in some great, exterminating feud among the clans, a fish, the like of it unknown in all our waters, followed for some years the passage of the ferry-boat, until no man dared to make the crossing.

"He will be waiting for the right man," said Rorie.

Mary met me on the beach, and led me up the brae and into the house of Aros. Outside and inside there were many changes. The garden was fenced with the same wood that I had noted in the boat ; there were new chairs in the kitchen, covered with strange brocade ; curtains of brocade hung from the window ; a clock stood silent on the dresser ; a lamp of brass was swinging from the roof ; the table was set for dinner with the finest of linen and silver ; and all these new riches were displayed in the plain old kitchen that I knew so well, with the high-backed settle, and the stools, and the closet bed for Rorie ; with the wide chimney the sun shone into, and the clear-smouldering peats ; with the pipes on the mantelshelf and the three-cornered spittoons, filled with sea-shells instead of sand, on the floor ; with the bare stone walls and the bare wooden floor, and the three patchwork rugs that were of yore its sole adornment—poor man's patchwork, the like of it unknown in cities, woven with homespun, and Sunday black, and sea-cloth polished on the bench of rowing. The room, like the house, had been a sort of wonder in that country-side, it was so neat and habitable ; and to see it now, shamed by these incongruous additions, filled me with indignation and a kind of anger. In view of the errand I had come upon to Aros, the feeling was baseless and unjust ; but it burned high, at the first moment, in my heart.

"Mary, girl," said I, "this is the place I had learned to call my home, and I do not know it."

"It is my home by nature, not by the learning," she replied ; "the place I was born and the place I'm like to die in ; and I neither like these changes, nor the way they came, nor that which came with them. I would have liked better, under God's pleasure, they had gone down into the sea, and the Merry Men were dancing on them now."

Mary was always serious ; it was perhaps the only trait that she shared with her father ; but the tone with which she uttered these words was even graver than of custom.

"Aye," said I, "I feared it came by wreck, and that's by death ; yet when my father died, I took his goods without remorse."

"Your father died a clean strae death, as the folk say," said Mary.

"True," I returned ; "and a wreck is like a judgment. What was she called ?"

"They ca'd her the *Christ-Anna*," said a voice behind me; and, turning round, I saw my uncle standing in the doorway.

He was a sour, small, bilious man, with a long face and very dark yees; fifty-six years old, sound and active in body, and with an air somewhat between that of a shepherd and that of a man following the sea. He never laughed, that I heard; read long at the Bible; prayed much, like the Cameronsians he had been brought up among; and indeed, in many ways, used to remind me of one of the hill-preachers in the killing times before the Revolution. But he never got much comfort, nor even, as I used to think, much guidance, by his piety. He had his black fits when he was afraid of hell; but he had led a rough life, to which he would look back with envy, and was still a rough, cold, gloomy man.

As he came in at the door out of the sunlight, with his bonnet on his head and a pipe hanging in his button-hole, he seemed, like Rorie, to have grown older and paler, the lines were deeplier ploughed upon his face, and the whites of his eyes were yellow, like old, stained ivory, or the bones of the dead.

"Aye," he repeated, dwelling upon the first part of the word; "the *Christ-Anna*. It's an awfu' name."

I made him my salutations, and complimented him upon his look of health; for I feared he had perhaps been ill.

"I'm in the body," he replied, ungraciously enough; "aye, in the body and the sins of the body, like yoursel'. Denner," he said abruptly to Mary, and then ran on to me: "They're grand braws, this that we have gotten, are they no? Yon's a bonny knock (clock), but it'll no gang; and the napery's by ordnar. Bonny, bairnly braws; it's fur the like o' them folk sells the peace of God that passeth understanding; it's fur the like o' them, an' maybe no even sae muckle worth, folk dauntin' God to His face and burn in muckle hell; and it's fur that reason the Scripture ca's them, as I read the passage, the accursed thing. Mary, ye girgie," he interrupted himself to cry with some asperity, "what for ha'e ye no put out the twa candlesticks?"

"Why should we need them at high noon?" she asked.

But my uncle was not to be turned from his idea. "We'll bruik them while we may," he said; and so two massive candlesticks of wrought silver were added to the table equipage, already so unsuited to that rough sea-side farm.

"She cam' ashore Februar' 10th, about ten at nicht," he went on to me. "There was nae wind, and a sair run o' sea; and she was in the sook o' the Roost, as I jaloose. We had seen her a' day, Rorie and me, beating to the wind. She wasnae a handy craft, I'm thinking, that *Christ-Anna*; for she would neither steer nor stey wi' them. A sair day they had of it; their hands was never aff the sheets, and it perishin' cauld—ower cauld to snaw; and aye they would get a bit nip o' wind, and awa' again, to put the emp'y hope into them. Eh, man! but they

had a sair day for the last o't! He would have had a prood, prood heart that won ashore upon the back o' that."

"And were all lost?" I cried. "God help them!"

"Wheesht!" he said sternly. "Nane shall pray for the deid on my hearth-stane."

I disclaimed a Popish sense for my ejaculation; and he seemed to accept my disclaimer with unusual facility, and ran on once more upon what had evidently become a favourite subject.

"We fand her in Sandag Bay, Rorie an' me, and a' thae brows in the inside of her. There's a kittle bit, ye see, about Sandag, whiles the sook rins strong for the Merry Men; an' whiles again, when the tide's makin' hard an' ye can hear the Roost blawin' at the far-end of Aros, there comes a back spang of current straucht into Sandag Bay. Weel, there's the thing that got the grip on the *Christ-Anna*. She but to have come in ram-stam an' stern forrit; for the bows of her are aften under, and the back-side of her is clear at hie-water o' neaps. But, man! the dunt that she cam doon wi' when she struck! Lord safe us a'! but it's an unco life to be a sailor—a cauld, wan chancy life. Mony's the gliff I got mysel' in the great deep; and why the Lord should ha'e made yon unco water is mair than ever I could win to understand. He made the vales and the pastures, the bonny green yaird, the halesome, canty land—

And now they shout and sing to Thee,
For Thou hast made them glad,

as the Psalms say in the metrical version. No that I would preen my faith to that clink neither; but it's bonny, and easier to mind. 'Who go to sea in ships,' they ha'e't again—

And in
Great waters trading be,
Within the deep these men God's works
And His great wonders see.

Weel, it's easy sayin' sae. Maybe Dauvit wasnae very weel acquaint wi' the sea, though I'm no misdoobtin' inspiration. But, troth, if it wasnae prentit in the Bible, I wad whiles be temp't to think it wasnae the Lord, but the muckle, black deil that made the sea. There's naething good comes oot o't but the fish; an' the spectacle o' God riding on the tempest, to be shüre, whilk would be what Dauvit was likely ettling at. But, man, they were sair wonders that God showed to the *Christ-Anna*—wonders, do I ca' them? Judgments, rather: judgments in the mirk nicht among the draggons o' the deep. And their souls—to think o' that—their souls, man, maybe no prepared! The sea—a muckle yett to hell!"

I observed, as my uncle spoke, that his voice was unnaturally moved and his manner unwontedly demonstrative. He leaned forward at these last words, for example, and touched me on the knee with his spread

fingers, looking up into my face with a certain pallor, and I could see that his eyes shone with a deep-seated fire, and that the lines about his mouth were drawn and tremulous.

Even the entrance of Rorie, and the beginning of our meal, did not detach him from his train of thought beyond a moment. He condescended, indeed, to ask me some questions as to my success at college, but I thought it was with half his mind; and even in his extempore grace, which was, as usual, long and wandering, I could find the trace of his preoccupation, praying, as he did, that God would "remember in mercy fower puir, feckless, fiddling sinful creatures here by their lee-lane beside the great and dowie waters."

Soon there came an interchange of speeches between him and Rorie.

"Was it there?" asked my uncle.

"Oh, aye!" said Rorie.

I observed that they both spoke in a manner of aside, and with some show of embarrassment, and that Mary herself appeared to colour, and looked down on her plate. Partly to show my knowledge, and so relieve the party from an awkward strain, partly because I was curious, I pursued the subject.

"You mean the fish?" I asked.

"Whatten fish?" cried my uncle. "Fish, quo' he! Fish! Your een are fu' o' fatness, man; your heid dozed wi' carnal leir. Fish! it's a bogle!"

He spoke with great vehemence, as though angry; and perhaps I was not very willing to be put down so shortly, for young men are disputatious. At least I remember I retorted hotly, crying out upon childish superstitions.

"And ye come frae the College!" sneered Uncle Gordon. "Gude kens what they learn folk there; it's no muckle service onyway. Do ye think, man, that there's naething in a' your saut wilderness o' a world oot wast there, wi' the sea grasses growing, an' the sea beasts fechtin', an' the sun glintin' down into it, day by day? Na; the sea's like the land, but fearsomer. If there's folk ashore, there's folk in the sea—deid they may be, but they're folk whatever; and as for deils, there's nane that's like the sea deils. There's no sae muckle harm in the land deils, when a's said and done. Lang syne, when I was a callant in the south country, I mind there was an auld, bald bogle in the Peewie Moss. I got a glisk o' him mysel', sittin' on his hunkers in a hag, as gray's a tombstone. An', troth, he was a fearsome-like taed. But he steered naebody. Nae doobt, if ane that was a reprobate, ane the Lord hated, had gane by there wi' his sin still upon his stomach, nae doobt the creature would ha'e louped upo' the like o' him. But there's deils in the deep sea would yoke on a communicant! Eh, sirs, if ye had gane doon wi' the puir lads in the *Christ-Anna*, ye would ken by now the mercy o' the seas. If ye had sailed it fur as lang as me, ye would hate

the thoct of it as I do. If ye had but used the een God gave ye, ye would have learned the wickedness o' that fause, saut, cauld, bullering creature, and of a' that's in it by the Lord's permission: labsters an' partans, ane sic like, howking in the deid; muckle, gutsy, blawing whales; an' fish—the hale clan o' them—cauld-wamed, blind-eed uncanny ferlies. Oh, sirs," he cried, "the horror—the horror o' the sea!"

We were all somewhat staggered by this outburst; and the speaker himself, after that last hoarse apostrophe, appeared to sink gloomily into his own thoughts. But Rorie, who was greedy of superstitious lore, recalled him to the subject by a question.

"You will not ever have seen a teevil of the sea?" he asked.

"No clearly," replied the other. "I misdoobt if a mere man could see ane clearly and conteenue in the body. I ha'e sailed wi' a lad—they ca'd him Sandy Gobart; he saw ane, shüre eneuch, an' shüre eneuch it was the end of him. We were seven days oot frae the Clyde—a sair wark we had had—gaun north wi' seeds an' braws an' things for the Macleod. We had got in ower near under the Cutchull'ns, an' had just gane about by Soa, an' were off on a lang tack, we thoct would maybe hauld as far's Copnadow. I mind the nicht weel: a mune smooored wi' mist; a fine gaun breeze upon the water, but no steady; an'—what nane o' us likit to hear—anither wund gurlin' owerheid, amang thae fearsome, auld stane craigs o' the Cutchull'ns. Weel, Sandy was forrit wi' the jib sheet; we couldnae see him for the mains'l, that had just begude to draw, when a' at once he gied a skirl. I luffed for my life, for I thoct we were ower near Soa; but na, it wasnae that, it was puir Sandy Gabart's deid skreigh, or near hand, for he was deid in half an hour. A't he could tell was that a sea deil, or sea bogle, or sea spenster, or sic-like, had clum up by the bowsprit, an' gi'en him ae cauld, uncanny look. An', or the life was oot o' Sandy's body, we kent weel what the thing betokened, and why the wund gurled in the tops o' the Cutchull'ns; for doon it cam'—a wund do I ca' it? It was the wund o' the Lord's anger—an' a' that nicht we foucht like men dementit, and the niest that we kenned we were ashore in Loch Uskevagh, an' the cocks were crawin' in Benbecula.

"It will have been a merman," Rorie said.

"A merman!" screamed my uncle with immeasurable scorn. "Auld wives' clavers! There's nae sic things as mermen."

"But what was the creature like?" I asked.

"What like was it? Gude forbid that we suld ken what like it was! It had a kind of a heid upon it—man could say nae mair."

Then Rorie, smarting under the affront, told several tales of mermen, mermaids, and sea-horses that had come ashore upon the islands and attacked the crews of boats upon the sea; and my uncle, in spite of his incredulity, listened with uneasy interest.

"Aweel, aweel," he said, "it may be sae; I may be wrang; but I find nae word o' mermen in the Scriptures."

"And you will find nae word of Aros Roost, maybe," objected Rorie, and his argument appeared to carry weight.

When dinner was over, my uncle carried me forth with him to a bank behind the house. It was a very hot and quiet afternoon; scarce a ripple anywhere upon the sea, nor any voice but the familiar voice of sheep and gulls; and perhaps in consequence of this repose in nature, my kinsman showed himself more rational and tranquil than before. He spoke evenly and almost cheerfully of my career, with every now and then a reference to the lost ship or the treasures it had brought to Aros. For my part, I had listened to him in a sort of trance, gazing with all my heart on that remembered scene, and drinking gladly the sea-air and the smoke of peats that had been lit by Mary.

Perhaps an hour had passed when my uncle, who had all the while been covertly gazing on the surface of the little bay, rose to his feet and bade me follow his example. Now I should say that the great run of tide at the south-west end of Aros exercises a perturbing influence round all the coast. In Sandag Bay, to the south, a strong current runs at certain periods of the flood and ebb respectively; but in this northern bay—Aros Bay, as it is called—where the house stands and on which my uncle was now gazing, the only sign of disturbance is towards the end of the ebb, and even then it is too slight to be remarkable. When there is any swell, nothing can be seen at all; but when it is calm, as it often is, there appear certain strange, undecipherable marks—sea-runes, as we may name them—on the glassy surface of the bay. The like is common in a thousand places on the coast; and many a boy must have amused himself as I did, seeking to read in them some reference to himself or those he loved. It was to these marks that my uncle now directed my attention, struggling, as he did so, with an evident reluctance.

"Do ye see yon scart upo' the water?" he inquired; "yon ane beneath the gray stane? Aye? Weel, it'll no be like a letter, wullit?"

"Certainly it is," I replied. "I have often remarked it. It is like a C."

He heaved a sigh as if heavily disappointed with my answer, and then added below his breath: "Aye, for the *Christ-Anna*."

"I used to suppose, sir, it was for myself," said I; "for my name is Charles."

"And so ye saw't afore?" he ran on, not heeding my remark. "Weel, weel, but that's unco strange. Maybe it's been there, waitin' as a man wad say, through a' the weary ages. Man, but that's awfu'." And then, breaking off: "You'll no see anither, will ye?" he asked.

"Yes," said I. "I see another very plainly, near the Ross side, where the road comes down—an M."

"An M," he repeated very low; and then, again after another pause: "An' what wad ye make o' that?" he inquired.

"I had always thought it to mean Mary, sir," I answered, growing somewhat red, convinced as I was in my own mind that I was on the threshold of a decisive explanation.

But we were each following his own train of thought to the exclusion of the other's. My uncle once more paid no attention to my words; only hung his head and held his peace; and I might have been led to fancy that he had not heard me, if his next speech had not contained a kind of echo from my own.

"I would say naething o' thae clavers to Mary," he observed, and began to walk forward.

There is a belt of turf along the side of Aros Bay where walking is easy; and it was along this that I silently followed my silent kinsman. I was perhaps a little disappointed at having lost so good an opportunity to declare my love; but I was at the same time far more deeply exercised at the change that had befallen my uncle. He was never an ordinary, never, in the strict sense, an amiable, man; but there was nothing in even the worst that I had known of him before, to prepare me for so strange a transformation. It was impossible to close the eyes against one fact; that he had, as the saying goes, something on his mind; and as I mentally ran over the different words which might be represented by the letter M—misery, mercy, marriage, money, and the like—I was arrested with a sort of start by the word murder. I was still considering the ugly sound and fatal meaning of the word, when the direction of our walk brought us to a point from which a view was to be had to either side, back towards Aros Bay and homestead, and forward on the ocean, dotted to the north isles and lying to the southward, blue and open to the sky. There my guide came to a halt, and stood staring for awhile on that expanse. Then he turned to me and laid a hand upon my arm.

"Ye think there's naething there?" he said, pointing with his pipe; and then cried out aloud, with a kind of exultation: "I'll tell ye, man! The deid are down there—thick like rattons!"

He turned at once, and, without another word, we retraced our steps to the house of Aros.

I was eager to be alone with Mary; yet it was not till after supper, and then but for a short while, that I could have a word with her. I lost no time beating about the bush, but spoke out plainly what was on my mind.

"Mary," I said, "I have not come to Aros without a hope. If that should prove well founded, we all leave and go somewhere else, secure of daily bread and comfort; secure, perhaps, of something far beyond that, which it would seem extravagant in me to promise. But there's a hope that lies nearer to my heart than money. All my days I have loved and honoured you; the love and the honour keep on growing with the years; I could not think to be happy or hearty in my life without you. Do you think you could take me for a husband?"

"I would not ask a better," she replied.

"Well then," said I, "shake hands upon it."

She did so very heartily; and "That's a bargain, lad," said she, which was all that passed between us on the subject, for though I loved her, I stood in awe of her tranquillity of character.

About her father she would tell me nothing, only shook her head, and said he was not well and not like himself, and it was a great pity. She knew nothing of the wreck. "I havenae been near it," said she. "What for would I go near it, Charlie lad? The poor souls are gone to their account lang syne; and I would just have wished they had ta'en their gear with them—poor souls!"

This was scarcely any great encouragement for me to tell her of the *Espirito Santa*; yet I did so, and at the very first word she cried out in surprise. "There was a man at Grisapol," she said, "in the month of May—a little, yellow, black-avised body, they tell me, with gold rings upon his fingers, and a beard; and he was spearing high and low for that same ship."

It was towards the end of April that I had been given these papers to sort out by Dr. Robertson: and it came suddenly back upon my mind that they were thus prepared for a Spanish historian, or a man calling himself such, who had come with high recommendations to the Principal, on a mission of inquiry as to the dispersion of the great Armada. Putting one thing with another, I fancied that the visitor "with the gold rings upon his fingers" might be the same with Dr. Robertson's historian from Madrid. If that were so, he would be more likely after treasure for himself than information for a learned society. I made up my mind, I should lose no time over my undertaking; and if the ship lay sunk in Sandag Bay, as perhaps both he and I supposed, it should not be for the advantage of this ringed adventurer, but for Mary and myself, and for the good, old, honest, kindly family of the Danna-ways.

CHAPTER III.

LAD AND LEO IN SANDAG BAY.

I WAS early afoot next morning; and as soon as I had a bite to eat, set forth upon a tour of exploration. Something in my heart distinctly told me that I should find the ship of the Armada; and although I did not give way entirely to such hopeful thoughts, I was still very light in spirits and walked upon air. Aros is a very rough islet, its surface strewn with great rocks and shaggy with fern and heather; my way lay almost north and south across the highest peak; and though the whole distance was inside of two miles, it took more time and exertion than four upon a level road. Upon the summit, I paused. Although not very high—not three hundred feet, as I think—it yet outtops all the neighbouring lowlands of the Ross, and commands a great view of sea

and islands. The sun, which had been up some time, was already hot upon my neck; the air was listless and thundery, although purely clear; away over the north-west, where the isles lie thickest congregated, some half-a-dozen small and ragged clouds hung together in a covey; and the head of Ben Ryan wore, not merely a few streamers, but a solid hood of vapour. There was a threat in the weather. The sea, it is true, was smooth like glass: even the Roost was but a seam on that wide mirror, and the Merry Men no more than caps of foam; but to my eye and ear, so long familiar with these places, the sea also seemed to lie uneasily; a sound of it, like a long sigh, mounted to me where I stood; and, quiet as it was, the Roost itself appeared to be evolving mischief. For I ought to say that all we dwellers in these parts attributed, if not prescience, at least a quality of warning, to that strange and dangerous creature of the tides.

I hurried on, then, with the greater speed, and had soon descended the slope of Aros to the part that we call Sandag Bay. It is a pretty large piece of water compared with the size of the isle; well sheltered from all but the prevailing wind; sandy and shoal and bounded by low sand-hills to the west, but to the eastward lying several fathoms deep along a ledge of rocks. It is upon that side that, at a certain time each flood, the current mentioned by my uncle sets so strong into the bay; a little later, when the Roost begins to work higher, an undertow runs still more strongly in the reverse direction; and it is the action of this last, as I suppose, that has scoured that part so deep. Nothing is to be seen out of Sandag Bay but one small segment of the horizon and, in heavy weather, the breakers flying high over a deep-sea reef.

From half-way down the hill, I had perceived the wreck of February last, a brig of considerable tonnage, lying, with her back broken, high and dry on the west corner of the sands; and I was making directly towards it, and already almost on the margin of the turf, when my eyes were suddenly arrested by a spot, cleared of fern and heather, and marked by one of those long, low, and almost human-looking mounds that we see so commonly in graveyards. I stopped like a man shot. Nothing had been said to me of any dead man or interment on the island; Rorie, Mary, and my uncle had all equally held their peace; of her at least, I was certain that she must be ignorant; and yet here, before my eyes, was proof indubitable of the fact. Here was a grave; and I had to ask myself, with a chill, what manner of man lay there in his last sleep, awaiting the signal of the Lord in that solitary, sea-beat resting-place. My mind supplied no answer but what I feared to entertain. Shipwrecked, at least, he must have been; perhaps, like the old Armada mariners, from some far and rich land oversea; or perhaps one of my own race, perishing within eyesight of the smoke of home. I stood awhile uncovered by his side, and I could have desired that it had lain in our religion to put up some prayer for that unhappy stranger, or, in the old classic way, outwardly honour his misfortune. But I knew,

although his bones lay there, a part of Aros, till the trumpet sounded, his imperishable soul was forth and far away, among the raptures of the everlasting Sabbath, or the pangs of hell; and my mind misgave me, even with a fear that perhaps he was near me where I stood, guarding his sepulchre, and lingering on the scene of his unhappy fate.

Certainly it was with a spirit somewhat overshadowed that I turned away from the grave to the hardly less melancholy spectacle of the wreck. Her stem was above the last circle of the flood; she was broken in two a little abaft the foremast—though indeed she had none, both having broken short in her disaster; and as the pitch of the beach was very sharp and sudden, and the bows lay many feet below the stern, the fracture gaped widely open, and you could see right through her poor hull upon the further side. Her name was much defaced, and I could not make out clearly whether she was called *Christiania*, after the Swedish city, or *Christiana*, after the good woman, Christian's wife, in that old book the *Pilgrim's Progress*. By her build she was a foreign ship, but I was not certain of her nationality. She had been painted green, but the colour was faded and weathered, and the paint peeling off in strips. The wreck of the mainmast lay alongside, half buried in sand. She was a forlorn sight indeed, and I could scarce look without tears at the bits of rope that still hung about her, so often handled of yore by shouting seamen; or the little scuttle where they had passed up and down to their affairs; or that poor voiceless angel of a figure-head that had dipped into so many running billows.

I do not know whether it came most from the ship or from the grave, but I fell into some melancholy scruples, as I stood there, leaning with one hand against the battered timbers. The homelessness of men and even of inanimate vessels, cast away upon strange shores, came strongly in upon my mind. To make a profit of such pitiful misadventures seemed an unmanly and a sordid act; and I began to think of my then quest as of something sacrilegious in its nature. But when I remembered Mary, I took heart again. My uncle would never consent to an imprudent marriage, nor would she, as I was persuaded, wed without his full approval. It behoved me, then, to be up and doing for my wife; and I thought with a laugh how long it was since that great sea-castle, the *Espirito Santo*, had left her bones in Sandag Bay, and how weak it would be to consider rights so long extinguished and misfortunes so long forgotten in the process of time.

I had my theory of where to seek for her remains. The set of the current and the soundings both pointed to the east side of the bay under the ledge of rocks. If she had been lost in Sandag Bay, and if, after these centuries, any portion of her held together, it was there that I should find it. The water deepens, as I have said, with great rapidity, and even close alongside the rocks four or five fathoms may be found. As I walked upon the edge I could see far and wide over the sandy bottom of the bay; the sun shone clear and green and steady in the

deeps ; the bay seemed rather like a great transparent crystal, as one sees them in a lapidary's shop ; there was naught to show what it was, but an internal trembling, a hovering within of sun-glints and netted shadows, and a faint lap, and now and then a dying bubble round the edge. The shadows of the rocks lay out for some distance at their feet, so that my own shadow, moving, pausing, and stooping on the top of that, reached sometimes half across the bay. It was above all in this belt of shadows that I hunted for the *Espirito Santo* ; since it was there the undertow ran strongest, whether in or out. Cool as the whole water seemed this broiling day, it looked, in that part, yet cooler, and had a mysterious invitation for the eyes. Peer as I pleased, however, I could see nothing but a few fishes or a bush of sea-tangle, and here and there a lump of rock that had fallen from above and now lay separate on the sandy floor. Twice did I pass from one end to the other of the rocks, and in the whole distance I could see nothing of the wreck, nor any place but one where it was possible for it to be. This was a large terrace in five fathoms of water, raised off the surface of the sand to a considerable height, and looking from above like a mere outgrowth of the rocks on which I walked. It was one mass of great sea-tangles like a grove, which prevented me judging of its nature, but in shape and size it bore some likeness to a vessel's hull. At least it was my best chance. If the *Espirito Santo* lay not there under the tangles, it lay nowhere at all in Sandag Bay ; and I prepared to put the question to the proof, once and for all, and either go back to Aros a rich man or cured for ever of my dreams of wealth.

I stripped to the skin, and stood on the extreme margin with my hands clasped, irresolute. The bay at that time was utterly quiet ; there was no sound but from a school of porpoises somewhere out of sight behind the point ; yet a certain fear withheld me on the threshold of my venture. Sad sea-feelings, scraps of my uncle's superstitions, thoughts of the dead, of the grave, of the old broken ships drifted through my mind. But the strong sun upon my shoulders warmed me to the heart, and I stooped forward and plunged into the sea.

It was all that I could do to catch a trail of the sea-tangle that bloomed so thickly on the terrace ; but once so far anchored I secured myself by grasping a whole armful of these thick and slimy stalks, and, planting my feet against the edge, I looked around me. On all sides the clear sand stretched forth unbroken ; it came to the foot of the rocks, scoured like an alley in a garden by the action of the tides ; and even behind me, for as far as I could see, nothing was visible but the same many-folded sand upon the sun-bright bottom of the bay. Yet the terrace to which I was then holding was as thick with strong sea-growths as a tuft of heather, and the cliff from which it bulged hung draped below the water-line with brown lianas. In this complexity of forms, all swaying together in the current, things were hard to be distinguished ; and I was still uncertain whether my feet were pressed upon the natural

rock or upon the timbers of the Armada treasure-ship, when the whole tuft of tangle came away in my hand, and in an instant I was on the surface, and the shores of the bay and the bright water swam before my eyes in a glory of crimson.

I clambered back upon the rocks, and threw the plant of tangle at my feet. Something at the same moment rang sharply, like a falling coin. I stooped, and there, sure enough, crusted with the red rust, there lay an iron shoe-buckle. The sight of this poor human relic thrilled me to the heart, but not with hope nor fear, only with a desolate melancholy. I held it in my hand, and the thought of its owner appeared before me like the presence of an actual man. His weather-beaten face, his sailor's hands, his sea-voice hoarse with singing at the capstan, the very foot that had once worn that buckle and trod so much along the swerving decks—the whole human fact of him, as a creature like myself, with hair and blood and seeing eyes, haunted me in that sunny, solitary place, not like a spectre, but like some friend whom I had basely injured. Was the great treasure ship indeed below there, with her guns and chain and treasure, as she had sailed from Spain; her decks a garden for the seaweed, her cabin a breeding place for fish, soundless but for the dredging water, motionless but for the waving of the tangle upon her battlements—that old, populous, sea-riding castle, now a reef in Sandag Bay? Or, as I thought it likelier, was this a waif from the disaster of the foreign brig—was this shoe-buckle bought but the other day and worn by a man of my own period in the world's history, hearing the same news from day to day, thinking the same thoughts, praying, perhaps, in the same temple with myself? However it was, I was assailed with dreary thoughts; my uncle's words, "the dead are down there," echoed in my ears; and though I determined to dive once more, it was with a strong repugnance that I stepped forward to the margin of the rocks.

A great change passed at that moment over the appearance of the bay. It was no more that clear, visible interior, like a house roofed with glass, where the green, submarine sunshine slept so stilly. A breeze, I suppose, had flamed the surface, and a sort of trouble and blackness filled its bosom, where flashes of light and clouds of shadow tossed confusedly together. Even the terrace below was obscurely rocked and quivered. It seemed a graver thing to venture on this place of ambushes; and when I leaped into the sea the second time it was with a quaking in my soul.

I secured myself as at first, and groped among the waving tangle. All that met my touch was cold and soft and gluey. The thicket was alive with crabs and lobsters, trundling to and fro lopsidedly, and I had to harden my heart against the horror of their curious neighbourhood. On all sides I could feel the clefts and roots of hard, living stone; no planks, no iron, not a sign of any wreck; the *Espirito Santo* was not there. I remember I had almost a sense of relief in my disappointment, and I was about ready to leave go when something happened that sent

me to the surface with my heart in my mouth. I had already stayed somewhat late over my explorations; the current was freshening with the change of the tide, and Sandag Bay was no longer a safe place for a single swimmer. Well, just at the last moment there came a sudden flush of current, dredging through the tangles like a wave. I lost one hold, was flung sprawling on my side, and, instinctively grasping for a fresh support, my fingers closed on something hard and cold. I think I knew at that moment what it was. At least I instantly left go, leaped for the surface, and clambered out next moment on to the friendly rocks with the bone of a man's leg in my grasp.

Mankind is a material creature, slow to think and dull to perceive connections. The grave, the wreck of the brig, and the rusty shoe-buckle were surely plain advertisements. A child might have read this dismal story, and yet it was not until I touched that actual piece of mankind that the full horror of the charnel brean burst upon my spirit. I laid the bone beside the buckle, picked up my clothes, and ran as I was along the rocks towards the human shore. I could not be far enough from the spot; no fortune was vast enough to tempt me back again. The bones of the drowned dead should henceforth roll undisturbed by me, whether on tangle or minted gold. But as soon as I trod the good earth again, and had covered my nakedness against the sun, I knelt down over against the ruins of the brig, and out of the fulness of my heart prayed long and passionately for all poor souls upon the sea. A generous prayer is never presented in vain; the petition may be refused, but the petitioner is always, I believe, rewarded by some gracious visitation. The horror, at least, was lifted from my mind; I could look with calm of spirit on that great bright creature, God's ocean; and as I set off homeward up the rough sides of Aros, nothing remained of my concern beyond a deep determination to meddle no more with the spoils of wrecked vessels or the treasures of the dead.

I was already some way up the hill before I paused to breathe and look behind me. The sight that met my eyes was doubly strange.

For, first, the storm that I had foreseen was now advancing with almost tropical rapidity. The whole surface of the sea had been dulled from its conspicuous brightness to an ugly hue of corrugated lead; already in the distance the white waves, the "skipper's daughters," had begun to flee before a breeze that was still insensible on Aros; and already along the curve on Sandag Bay there was a splashing run of sea that I could hear from where I stood. The change upon the sky was even more remarkable. There had begun to arise out of the south-west a huge and solid continent of scowling cloud; here and there, through rents in its contexture, the sun still poured a sheaf of spreading rays; and here and there, from all its edges, vast inky streamers lay forth along the yet unclouded sky. The menace was express and imminent. Even as I gazed, the sun was blotted out. At any moment the tempest might fall upon Aros in its might.

The suddenness of this change of weather so fixed my eyes on heaven that it was some seconds before they alighted on the bay, mapped out below my feet, and robbed a moment later of the sun. The knoll which I had just surmounted overflanked a little amphitheatre of lower hillocks sloping towards the sea, and beyond that the yellow arc of beach and the whole extent of Sandag Bay. It was a scene on which I had often looked down, but where I had never before beheld a human figure. I had but just turned my back upon it and left it empty, and my wonder may be fancied when I saw a boat and several men in that deserted spot. The boat was lying by the rocks. A pair of fellows, bareheaded, with their sleeves rolled up, and one with a boathook, kept her with difficulty to her moorings, for the current was growing brisker every moment. A little way off upon the ledge two men in black clothes, whom I judged to be superior in rank, laid their heads together over some task which at first I did not understand, but a second after I had made it out—they were taking bearings with the compass; and just then I saw one of them unroll a sheet of paper and lay his finger down, as though identifying features in a map. Meanwhile a third was walking to and fro, poking among the rocks and peering over the edge into the water. While I was still watching them with the stupefaction of surprise, my mind hardly yet able to work on what my eyes reported, this third person suddenly stooped and summoned his companions with a cry so loud that it reached my ears upon the hill. The others ran to him, even dropping the compass in their hurry, and I could see the bone and the shoe-buckle going from hand to hand, causing the most unusual gesticulations of surprise and interest. Just then I could hear the seamen crying from the boat, and saw them point westward to that cloud continent which was ever the more rapidly unfurling its blackness over heaven. The others seemed to consult; but the danger was too pressing to be braved, and they bundled into the boat carrying my relics with them, and set forth out of the bay with all speed of oars.

I made no more ado about the matter, but turned and ran for the house. Whoever these men were, it was fit my uncle should be instantly informed. It was not then altogether too late in the day for a descent of the Jacobites; and may be Prince Charlie, whom I knew my uncle to detest, was one of the three superiors whom I had seen upon the rock. Yet as I ran, leaping from rock to rock, and turned the matter loosely in my mind, this theory grew ever the larger the less welcome to my reason. The compass, the map, the interest awakened by the buckle, and the conduct of that one among the strangers who had looked so often below him in the water, all seemed to point to a different explanation of their presence on that outlying, obscure islet of the western sea. The Madrid historian, the search instituted by Dr. Robertson, the bearded stranger with the rings, my own fruitless search that very morning in the deep water of Sandag Bay, ran together, piece by piece, in my memory, and I made sure that these strangers must be Spaniards in quest of ancient

treasure and the lost ship of the Armada. But the people living in outlying islands, such as Aros, are answerable for their own security; there is none near by to protect or even to help them; and the presence in such a spot of a crew of foreign adventurers, poor, greedy, and most likely lawless, filled me with apprehensions for my uncle's money, and even for the safety of his daughter. I was still wondering how we were to get rid of them when I came, all breathless, to the top of Aros. The whole world was shadowed over; only in the extreme east, on a few hills of the mainland, one last gleam of sunshine lingered like a jewel; rain had begun to fall, not heavily, but in great drops; the sea was rising with each moment, and already a band of white encircled Aros and the nearer coasts of Grisapol. The boat was still pulling seaward, but I now became aware of what had been hidden from me lower down—a large, heavily-sparred, handsome schooner, lying to at the south end of Aros. Since I had not seen her in the morning when I had looked around so closely at the signs of the weather, and upon these lone waters where a sail was rarely visible, it was clear she must have lain last night behind the uninhabited Eilean Gour, and this proved conclusively that she was manned by strangers to our coast, for that anchorage, though good enough to look at, is little better than a trap for ships. With such ignorant sailors upon so wild a coast the coming gale was not unlikely to bring death upon its wings.

Morgante Maggiore.

AMIDST the dusty confusion of intellectual furniture, set aside and almost forgotten in the dark lumber-room of old Italian wit and imagination, lies a large quarto, with double columns, without pagination or number of canto—the commencement of which is distinguished by a small letter followed by a capital—or of stanza; full of peculiar figures and abbreviations of the printing press, and bearing the following subscription: “The end of the book called *Morgante Maggiore*, made by Luigi dei Pulci, at the request of the most excellent Mona Lucrezia di Piero di Cosimo de’ Medici; set in type by me, Francesco di Dino di Jacopo di Rigaletto, the young Florentine bookseller. Printed in the city of Florence, on the seventh day of February, hard by the convent of Foligno, in the year 1482. Drawn from the original, and reviewed and corrected by the author himself, whom may God happily preserve, and give pleasure to him who reads, with health of soul and body. Amen.”

This volume, which by good fortune escaped the religious zeal of the inquisitorial Savonarola, at the conclusion of the Carnival of 1497, when that unlucky apostle did excellent service to the cause of literature and science by burning, in the public square, such abominations of vanity as were the best editions of the *Decameron*, and other books of a like kind, is supposed by Audin to be the first complete edition of Pulci’s *Morgante*. Audin is of opinion that it was not wholly set up by Francesco di Dino, hard by the Convent of Foligno, but that at a neighbouring convent of Ripoli, divided only by a garden wall, a certain Suor Marietta assisted in setting up such parts of the poem as were not calculated to shock maiden modesty or claustral reserve. In those old days were certain Hercules pillars of propriety, long since sailed past by ladies who, having been at finishing schools, have nothing left them to learn.

Luigi di Jacopo Francesco dei Pulci was born in Florence, about 1430. His life was literary and uneventful. The *fallentis semita vitæ* suited him. He preferred the cool shadows of speculative philosophy to the garish heat of political discussion. Perhaps the only piece of information about his personal appearance is to be found in the Poem on Hawking, composed by his father, Lorenzo de’ Medici, surnamed the Magnificent. Therein posterity learns that he had a huge nose, which overshadowed the dogs and made the horses restive, “so that none of us,” says the Magnificent, “cared for his presence at the hunt.” Even the date of his death is uncertain. From the internal evidence of his poem, it probably occurred late in the fifteenth century. The favourite date is 1486. There is a story that his excommunicated carcass was

buried, without the customary religious patter, in a ruined well. Pulci certainly behaved very badly to the Church; but the story militates against all our ideas, based on a long and wide experience of ecclesiastical charity, long-suffering, and forgiveness.

For the amusement of their common Mæcenas, Lorenzo Pulci agreed with a certain canon of Florence, Matteo Franco, to write a series of mutually abusive sonnets. In them each gives the other a Roland for his Oliver, *pan per focaccia*, in the way of personal insult, cynical ribaldry, and gross invective. Becoming at last sick of this solace, Pulci took to investigating the nature of the soul. After rejecting the opinions of Plato and Aristotle on the subject, he says he regards the soul as a mere piece of pine-kernel paste wedged in a hot white loaf, or a pork sausage set in a split roll. It cannot, he continues, reach easily, even with the assistance of a ladder, that other life, where some folk fancy they will find beccafichi and ortolans all ready picked, and fine sweet wines, and well-made feather beds, and so follow the curate. "I, however," concludes Pulci, "shall depart into the valley of darkness, and never hear the song of Hallelujah." Upon this the Inquisition stepped in to defend the holy faith with such effect that Pulci soon after composed *A Confession to the Virgin*, a most orthodox and pious poem, equally pure and pointless, teeming with devotion, but terribly dull. It may have made his peace with the "pulpit-parrots," but it must have set him at variance with all true lovers of verse.

Pulci's romantic epopee, known as the *Morgante Maggiore*, is written in twenty-eight cantos, composed in the ottava rima of the *Teseide* of Boccace, who is supposed to have invented that metre. The first part of the material is taken chiefly from the *Real di Francia*, which gives the history of Orlando, or Rotolando, so named from his rolling himself about the room, apparently without reason, the instant he was born. Only the last four cantos are taken from that ancient compilation ascribed to Turpin, or rather Tilpin—a church dignitary, not sufficiently venerated by our author, who quotes him as an authority for audacious extravagances of which he was as innocent as Ptolemy; and on one occasion represents him as a candidate for the office of public hangman. Moreover, he abuses his work. "The story of this Charles is," says Pulci, "for all I see, ill understood and worse expressed."

The most excellent Mona Lucrezia, the mother of Lorenzo, who sent her poet into the deep sea of mock-heroic verse, did not live to see how he came out of it. Her he addresses, at the end of his work, as a blessed spirit of defence, his star, and his St. Elmo, observing incidentally that if anyone attacks him, she, being in heaven, will well know how to card that person's wool. This is a sample of that confusion of the serious and the comic which, like that of the customary conditions of space and time, pervades Pulci's poem.

Its chief ingredients are the conquests of Charlemagne over distant disbelievers, the memorable prowesses of his peers, only comparable with

those of Jashobeam the Hachmonite, that mighty man of David, who lifted up his spear against three hundred, slain by him at one time, and the hatred of Gan, the perfidious knight of Maganza or Mayence, a traitor before his birth, for Orlando. Gan's deceit and covin, confronted with the *raisons d'Etat* of the present century, are indeed as a midge to a mammoth; but it is scarcely fair to examine them in this pure and perfect light of European civilisation. The poem is stuffed full—a *bizzeffe*, as the Italians say—of giants and dragons and unicorns. There is a pretty sprinkling of devils, and ladies of royal lineage are as plentiful as religious tracts on a Sunday afternoon. The whole is spiced with love and magic, fasts—dream-feasts, as Pulci calls them—duels, battles, and kingdoms conquered in a single day. The chances of the fight are commonly, if not always, in favour of the militant Christian. The defeated Pagan usually curses Mahomet. Even the orthodox Rinaldo can curse Heaven devoutly, on occasion of any *contretemps*. “Few men,” says Epictetus, “love anything, even their God, so much as their own interest. As Alexander burnt, at the death of Hephæstion, the temple of Æsculapius, so we are ready to abuse our divinities and overturn their statues at the least obstruction of our desire.” The giant Morgante, from whom the work borrows its name, plays in it comparatively a minor rôle. Orlando kills Morgante's brothers for interfering with the repose of a certain abbey, and takes Morgante, after his conversion to the only true faith, for his companion. Attired in a broad steel headpiece, the giant is compared by the Paladin to a mushroom with an abnormally extended stalk. He does execution on infidels with a bell-clapper, afterwards studded with the teeth of a crocodile. His appetite is good. One day he unfolds the wrinkles of his belly by eating an elephant, all but the head and the feet. This exact minuteness of detail in narration materially assists in supporting the authenticity of the account. On another day he disposes, with one bite, of the hump of a camel. He eventually dies, eight cantos before the end of the poem, from the nip of a small crab—*granchiolino*—freely rendered by a French translation, hereafter to be considered, in one place a fish, and in another an aquatic serpent!

In the *Morgante* is nothing of what is now understood by plot. If Pulci had any other end than that of his own diversion and possible profit in composing it, it was probably to set people free from the pitfalls of sacerdotal chicanery and imposture. Many episodes are introduced, perhaps to allay the weariness of the audience, for Pulci probably sang his own poem at the table of the Medici, as Bojardo at that of the family of Este. These episodes are seldom concluded with the canto, and there is always a polite promise of their continuation. Thus the attendance of the audience on the morrow was secured as deftly as the prosaic “To be continued” of our present serials insures a crop of readers for the next month.

Each canto commences with a pious invocation, taken usually from the offices of the Roman Catholic Church. So we find the *Gloria in excelsis Deo*,

the *Magnificat*, the *Te Deum laudamus*, and an address to Christ as "O highest Jove, for us crucified," all of which have as little to do with the subject of the poem as its concluding paraphrase of *Salve Regina*. These familiar formulæ, the fashion of the time, were of avail in fastening the attention of a bird-witted audience. Even in Dante's comedy and the amorous ditties of Petrarch, they are not found wanting, and they abound in the rarely read romances of the *Queen Ancroja* and *Buovo d'Antona*. Ancroja, by the way, is the name of a reprobate Pagan, who dies unconverted, and Buovo or Beuves was Orlando's grandfather. The names of the authors of the poems are unknown. In favour of these invocations it may be said, they are at least more in accordance with Christian propriety than the modern addresses of Protestant poets to Apollo and the Muses. With these the satirist of Ferney, who gave Pulci the credit of being a canon, defended his *Pucelle*. "There are no such liberties," says he, "in my discreet work, as those which the Florentine doctor has taken in his *Morgante*." From these the whole poem has been regarded by some as a rich satire on Christianity, and even Hallam went so far as to say he considered Pulci intended to bring religion into contempt. Probably he cared rather to expose the true character of its priests and professors. About religion itself he was apparently in much the same condition as Margutte, a species of Panurge, whom Morgante met one day at a cross road. This hero wished to be a giant, but, repenting when half-way there, remained only some twenty hands high as a result. Morgante asks him to take a drink, with the politeness of one gentleman to another in the present generation, and then proceeds to examine him straitly as to his religious belief. But the miserable Margutte has no settled creed whatever. He is neither Saracen nor Christian, believes neither in Christ nor Apollo; "but," says he, "I believe in a boiled fowl, or roast if you will, and occasionally I believe in butter, in beer too; but, above all, in good wine; and I believe he will be saved, whosoever believes therein. The only true Paternoster is a piece of roasted liver. Faith is like tickling, it affects men in different ways and degrees. I am myself the son of a Greek nun and a Turkish priest, and bear with me the sins of both countries. Twenty-and-seven mortal sins have I, which never leave me, summer or winter. Whilst I have money, I am ready to gamble at any time and in any place. As to gluttony, if you could only see the manner in which I baste! To watch in how many ways I can hash a lamprey would make your hair stand on end. If one ingredient fail, the whole dish is spoilt; heaven itself could not remedy the matter afterwards. I could teach you secrets of cookery till to-morrow. But hear another cardinal virtue of mine. What I have told you already does not come to F.; imagine what it will be when we arrive at R. I care no more for relations than strangers. I can make augers, and crowbars, and soft files, and wimbles of every kind, and picklocks, and ladders of rope or wood, and levers, and felt shoes. In a church I always fly first to

the sacristy. I have a great affection for crosses, chalices, and crucifixes; after that I spoil the virgins and saints. There is no *meum* and *tuum* for me. Everything in the beginning belonged to God. I should strip the finest saint, if saints in heaven there be, for a farthing. The theological virtues yet remain. Perjuries slip through my mouth like ripe figs. For alms, prayer, and fasting, I meddle not with any of them. I have omitted to mention some thousand other sins of mine, but will conclude with this—I was never a traitor."

In this short specimen of Pulci's style much of Margutte's creed and many of his virtues are omitted. They could not be read now, and they could only have been written in that abandoned time before the Holy Council of Trent had confined the liberty of unlicensed speech. To get rid of this Margutte as soon as possible, it may be here added that after laughing at everybody and everything, man, woman, child, saint and devil, he at last sees a monkey putting on a pair of boots, and, his usual fit of merriment attacking him too suddenly, he is unable to unbutton himself, and with one loud and final bellow, bursts.

An awful amazement must possess the soul of Pulci, if still cognisant of mundane matters, to find his *Morgante* considered as a serious work, and almost labelled with a purpose like a modern *Tendenzschrift*. In spite of his saying that the impossibility of saving Orlando will turn his comedy into a tragedy; in spite of the popular style of his poem and its vast number of vulgar proverbs and forms of speech; in spite of a geography widely removed from that of Pinnock, which transports his heroes to Paris from Persia or Egypt as easily as from Lyons or Toulouse; in spite of works of many years being ended in one day; in spite of an utter disregard of all conditions of space and time; in spite of the notice of Milton, who may be supposed an excellent judge, and yet speaks of the *Morgante* as a sportful poem, much to the same purpose as the *Margites*; in spite of the comic deaths of *Morgante* and *Margutte*, and a thousand other absurdities sufficient to make even Heraclitus laugh, such men as Foscolo and Panizzi have found in their compatriot's monument a corner stone of gravity and momentous significance.

It is true that many lines of the old poets, written by them in all sad and sober seriousness, have now a somewhat comic character. Dante, for example, whom few would accuse of mirth, makes Minos to deliver his sentences by the motions of his tail, each curl of that member round the accused condemning him to a lower depth,

Giudica, e manda secundo che arvinghia :

but the *tout ensemble* of Pulci's poem—his laughter alike at Christian and Pagan heroes, the former of whom his predecessors as well as successors loved to elevate and idolise—can leave little doubt of his merry purpose, which was so apparent to Gravina and Corniani, to Hallam and Ginguené. Indeed, one great defect in Pulci is his want of continued sobriety, the pathos and occasional grandeur in the concluding

scene of the dolorous rout at Roncesvalles is over and over again interrupted by farcical incident and sardonic comment. Thrice the sound of the weird ivory horn of Childe Rowland wails through the wood, but the child makes his nose bleed by blowing it. He takes an affecting farewell of Vegliantín, his horse, begging his pardon; but then the dead beast accords it, winking his eye the while. Determined, as Arthur in the case of Excalibur, that none shall hereafter hold his famous brand, he smites Durlindana, so called, says Turpin, *quia durum dabat ictum*, against a rock to break it, but Durlindana divides the rock in twain as it were a splinter. He is told by the angel Gabriel that Aldabella his wife—of whom, by the way, he sees as little as he well can while on earth—shall wear widow's weeds till she rejoins him in heaven; but then he is also told by the same angel that Morgante shall be of the heavenly party, and that Margutte is already herald of Beelzebub, and amusing with his wonted laughter all the hosts of hell. Pulci adds to this, that the sun stood still at the prayer of Charlemagne, though he will not believe, as some lying writers, soon to be neglected, affirm, that the mountains became a level plain. Also, that at the request of his liege lord, the defunct Orlando rose, and with due respect, stretching out his hand, offered Charles his sword—no marvellous matter, says the incorrigible Pulci, when we consider that for him the sun stopped its course through the firmament.

In a conversation between Rinaldo and Ashtaroth, one of the chief of the fallen angels, there is a mixture of a vulgar verbal delivery with a very sublime despair. Rinaldo expresses his hope of a remission of Ashtaroth's punishment. Ashtaroth replies: "For me the keys are lost for ever. For you, O lucky Christian! a single tear, a punch on the breast, a *Domine, tibi soli peccavi*, will wash away all your peccadilloes. I sinned but once, and am packed off to hell till the end of time. If but after a million ages I might hope to see the faintest spark of that Light, my yoke would then be easy. But of what avail are words? What cannot be, one should not wish for. I prithee let us change the subject."

Perhaps the only piece of pure pathos of any extent in the whole poem is that of the death of Baldwin. This hero is protected at Roncesvalles by a garment which Gan, his traitorous father, induces him to wear. Baldwin's friend Orlando hears about this garment, and accuses Baldwin of treachery. Baldwin tears it off, and rushes into the battle, crying, "I am no traitor, God help me! but you shall not see me again alive. You have wronged me, Orlando, but I followed you with perfect love." Soon after, Orlando finds him with two lance thrusts through his breast dying. Then Baldwin rose and cried, "Now am I no more a traitor," and as he said it, fell back upon the ground, dead.

The amount of baptisms into the only true faith in the *Morgante* puts to shame the present poor results of the spirit of conversion, and is such as would fill the heart of any decent missionary with delight. Indeed, it may be said of the Paladins that their life was pleasantly

divided between baptism and butchery. Rinaldo, a devout hero on the whole, though he sometimes says things not to be found in the Mass, murders under circumstances of peculiar atrocity the innocent wife and helpless children of Fieramonte. Fieramonte's people, thus finding out the tender loving-kindness of the only true faith, become at once believers and are baptised. But the reader must not forget that their conversion agreed with their interest, and may therefore be justly suspected. Had they not become Christians, they had all been massacred as surely and completely as the unhappy heathen who held unfortunately, once on a time, the promised land. So, too, Corbante, king of the city of Carrara, escapes, under a like dilemma, with all his people, by the sprinkling of enchanted water. But the most interesting case of a sudden conversion to Christianity is that of Meridiana. This is the lucky mistress of the swift horse with the serpent's head, which bellowed like a bull. She is informed by Oliver of the mystery of the Holy Trinity, under the image of a candle which lights a thousand others and yet itself suffers no diminution of splendour. So Orlando endeavours to elucidate to Ancroja the same cardinal difficulty by various comparisons; but as the Pagan queen still continues unable to understand it, the Paladin supposes her to be possessed by a devil, and despatches her out of hand. Oliver, however, is more successful, and after the mention of Lazarus and a miracle or two, Meridiana is satisfactorily anointed with the sacred chrism. But the good Paladin, as we find a few lines farther on, is not contented with making Meridiana a Christian, he has made her a mother also.

The readiness with which the dutiful Meridiana becomes a Christian without any regard to her father or family, is common in romance. Infidel daughters almost invariably lose at least their piety on their conversion. They think nothing of assisting an orthodox lover to cut up a pagan parent. Too often they lose more than their piety, as was the case with our heroine, who, like Chaucer's Soudan of Surrie, "rather than lese Custance wold be cristened douteles," and "reneged Mahound her creance" only to gratify her amorous passion. With this naïve account of Meridiana's amour with Oliver may be compared a passage in the old tale of *La Culotte des Cordeliers*, in which the fair Orléanoise and her lover, before the fearful mistake of the breeches is found out, vary devotion with delight after much the same bizarre fashion;

. . . . puis s'entrefont
Le geu porçoi assanblé sont,
Et quant il orent fet lor gien,
Si s'entrecommandent à Dieu.

Even Gan is seized with the epidemic of proselytising. He is not satisfied with making Marsilio, the Saracen king of Spain, a traitor, he must needs have him, to complete his character, a Christian. "If you believe the true gospel, you will," quoth Gan, "be happy in this world and the next." Whereunto Marsilio responds with a singular

story. "In a certain wood," says he, "near Saragossa, is a large cloister with a small opening, wherein are six tall pillars guarded by gentle spirits in varied vestments. The pillars are made respectively of gold, silver, copper, iron, tin, and lead, and signify the six religions with their proper relative values. Every soul before entering the body must here make choice of a religion, and be marked with the characters convenient. Each guardian spirit, as a soul passes by, prays it to select its own particular pillar. The simple soul, as yet without intelligence, flies like a bird into the snare. It turns whithersoever desire directs it. Whichever pillar it embraces becomes its faith for the future. Each soul has freedom of choice, but 'blessed is that soul which embraces the pillar of gold!'" Many of the untranslated tales in the *Arabian Nights* show a zeal for conversion as ardent as that in the *Morgante*, though of course in an opposite direction, from Christ to Mahomet. But we find in them no philosophic fable like that of Marsilio.

Oliver, who is represented as a staid married man with two grown-up sons in the *Furioso*, plays an entirely different part in the *Morgante*. He is a gay Lothario, flitting from flower to flower in the garden of girls, and not infrequently caught in amatory birdlime, out of which, however, he soon manages to escape. He admires the sex too much to devote himself to any individual. Moreover, he seems to have been a man of little faith in feminine fidelity. Like Farquhar's Inconstant, he thought "till they're key-cold dead, there's no trusting them." Meantime over every maiden's portal he hangs his may, and halts at every woman's door *come l'asin del pentolaio*, like the potter's donkey, but without professing himself to be an Oroondates or an Amadis. His character is somewhat repulsive to the feelings of the present age, for inviolable and eternal constancy was not his virtue. Nor was Rinaldo much superior to Oliver in fidelity. He plays as ill a part to Luciana, who presents him with a wonderful pavilion, and to Anthea, that most beautiful Sultan's daughter, as Oliver to Meridiana, the lady we wot of, subsequently deserted, and to Forasene, who, for his unworthy sake, throws herself out of the window. Once upon a time this same Rinaldo had promised to marry an innkeeper's daughter, but after, as is customary, thought better of it. Then he addresses the luckless lady thus: "Listen. I promised to marry you, but this is indeed impossible, for I have already a wife in France. However, Greco here may be your husband!" And she marries Greco accordingly. This is quite in the style of old Spanish romance. A little before Rinaldo had distinguished himself after another fashion by turning highwayman, professing his readiness to rob and murder even St. Peter.

Of the other chief characters of the poem, the magician Malagigi seems to enter like a harlequin only to cause confusion. On one occasion he nearly engages the cousins Orlando and Rinaldo in a desperate battle, by a *ruse* which in the end leads to nothing. Pepin's son is made a tool and a fool throughout by his intimate friend Gan. This great defender

of the Christian creed becomes in the *Morgante* a despicable idiot. One after another the mighty emperor insults and exiles all his faithful followers, blinded like a buzzard by the wiles of his cunning and impudent confidant. Sobbing like one of the heroes of Homer at intervals, when he is awaked into sanity from illusion, he very soon nods again and falls back into the snare. Pulci endeavours in more than one instance to account for the emperor's extraordinary dullness, by saying that the divinity interfered. By heaven's permission what Gan said to him appeared to be Gospel. Some suppose that Pulci meant to satirise that idle reliance of a king on a favourite courtier, which has too often involved a kingdom in discontent or worse. Others, that there was historic foundation for this credulity in the potentate's excessive jealousy of his own Paladins. But, however that may be, it seems to the reader, who finds him for ever falling into the pit which Gan has dugged for him, that Rinaldo had good reason, though he lacked reverence, in calling him in his wrath, "a childish, ridiculous old rascal."

The character of Gan is perhaps the most artistically contrived and executed. His envy, obstinacy, falsehood and dissimulation are painted admirably. We see him in his proper light sitting by the carob tree, under which is concocted the conspiracy with Marsilio which leads to the rout at Roncesvalles, and on which, by a retribution as rare and remarkable as it is just, Marsilio is ultimately hanged. This tree—the tree on which Judas, as men say, ended his unlucky life—sweats drops of blood, and moults the leaves from its suddenly withered branches in horror of the wickedness which is being weaved under its shadow. A fruit falling on Gan's head raises his fell of hair. The description is graphic and impressive; but, Pulci, of course, ruins it after his wont by a final piece of raillery. "I must not foist in a falsehood, for this is no history of lies." Gan has his reward. He is torn with red-hot pincers, and after this life Dante places him in a suitable situation in the next.

Orlando is neither furious nor enamoured. He is a mean between Charlemagne, who believes too much, and Rinaldo, who believes too little. Being a Paladin, he is, of course, moderate in neither word nor deed. When asked to blow his horn he at first refuses to do so, though attacked by Cæsar, Scipio, Hannibal, Marcellus, Darius, Xerxes, Alexander, and Nebuchadnezzar with all their armies. A minor, but a well-drawn character, is that of Terigi, Orlando's squire. To him a remarkable vision is accorded. The giant Marcovaldo lying slain by his master, and, of course, baptised, Terigi sees the giant's soul in heaven singing a sweet melody with multitudes of angels.

It has been said by those who will say anything that the whole of the *Morgante* was written by a famous friend of Pulci's, Angelo Politian. Pulci says in his poem, that his dear little angel (Politian) had shown him the way out of a dark wood by giving him notice of the works of Arnaldo, the Provençal troubadour, and of Alcuin, Charlemagne's earliest historian, who received in his cradle the special grace of the strictest veracity. It is sufficient to read half a dozen pages of the two poets to

be satisfied of their widely different styles. Nor could the complimentary lines in the last canto and elsewhere, touching Politian, be well addressed by that poet to himself.

But a high authority, Torquato Tasso, has affirmed that Marsilio Ficino, another friend of Pulci's, composed that part of the poem wherein Malagigi having by enchantment constrained the very wise and terrible devil Ashtaroth to possess the body of Bayard, and bring Rinaldo in three days from Egypt to Roncesvalles, a conversation takes place on the way between the devil and his rider. The astounding theological acuteness displayed in the arguments of Ashtaroth induced Tasso to ascribe this portion of the work to Ficino, the celebrated neo-Platonist, who held Socrates to be a type of Christ, and considered divine revelation only intelligible through his favourite author. But there seems nothing more in the dialogue than Pulci, who lived in familiarity with the chief theologians, might of himself have written. Ashtaroth first distinguishes himself as a geographer, by telling Rinaldo it is possible to pass the pillars of Hercules, that this hero ought to be ashamed of himself for his ignorance, that the earth hangs sublime by a divine mystery amidst the stars dim in the intense inane, that it is round and inhabited by antipodes, who pray and fight like other mortals. All this it must be recollected was written before Columbus's discovery, and while Copernicus and Galileo were names unknown. One of Petrarch's lines may here be quoted :—

E le tenebre nostre altrui fan alba.

But the devil is no less of a theologian than of a geographer. As these antipodes adore Mars and Jupiter, a fearful doubt strikes Rinaldo about the possibility of the future salvation of the poor folk. Ashtaroth replies virtually that every man shall be saved by the law or sect which he professeth—

Sicche non debbe disperar merzede
Chi rettamente la sua legge tiene.

For which damnable and dangerous heresy, however, he afterwards compensates by saying that the only true faith is that of the Christians. In a previous talk with Malagigi he advances a position somewhat strange in the mouth of a devil. "Free will," he says, "was the cause of the fall of Lucifer, and God, though foreknowing, is not unjust." The reader of *Paradise Lost* is irresistibly reminded of that dialogue between the Father and the Son, in which the former, as Pope says, speaks like a school divine :

Libero arbitrio e l' uno e l' altro danna,

is exactly,

I formed them free . . . they themselves ordained their fall.

And Milton's reason of the difference in fate between the erring men and erring angels is Pulci's, word for word.

Man falls deceived

By the other first: man therefore shall find grace;

The other none.

Ashtaroth goes on to tell Malagigi that he was one of the principal seraphim of heaven, and yet knew not what Gregory and Dionysius have ventured to proclaim on earth. This is a piece of excellent satire. He concludes *à la Pulci*, by saying, "Never put faith in fiends, for they can affirm nought but falsehoods." Ashtaroth amuses himself during the battle by sitting on the top of a church belfry, where he catches Pagan souls and presents them to the infernal judge. Here he keeps a sharp look-out like a sparrow-hawk, and finds plenty to occupy his hands. "You can imagine," says the sober Pulci, "how Satan enjoyed himself on that occasion, and how Charon sang in his boat and patched up his old sails and set his sculls in order, and what a dance and a hurly-burly there was down there in hell. However, heaven too is preparing for the souls of the Paladins, carried up by the angels, nectar, manna, and ambrosia. Peter, poor old fellow, waxes something weary of unlocking the gate—a strong ear, too, he must have had, so loudly did those souls cry Hosanna, so that all his beard and his hair sweated."

Palmieri, called by Ficino the theological poet, awoke the anger of the Inquisition by opining that men's souls are those spirits which remained neutral in the great rebellion, those which Dante sets in the suburbs of hell, as too good for that great metropolis, and yet too bad for heaven. "As bees in summer-time buzz about violet buds, so these spirits," says Palmieri, "flit eagerly about men's bodies in which they are to have one chance more before they meet with eternal happiness or misery." To this opinion of Palmieri, Pulci seems from one of his sonnets himself inclined, but in the *Morgante* the theological poet is quoted as an advocate of metempsychosis.

Pulci's style is said to have been cited by Macchiavelli as a model of elegance and purity. The Virgin certainly accorded him many of those sweet cadences and gracious words which he begs of her at the beginning of his poem. His rhyme is easy, and his expression simple and natural. He boldly nominates a spade a spade. But his phrases are often disconnected, his ideas abrupt, and his grammar not always accurate. His strength leads him occasionally into harshness, and his love of conciseness makes him sometimes obscure. Like Antony, he speaks right on, and seldom stays to illustrate or adorn by any trope of rhetoric. A want of unity is the dominant fault in all heroic romance. The reader soon becomes callous to these cruel and sudden departures. "Let us leave Orlando and return to the Peers. . . . Let us leave the Peers in Christ's care and turn to the giant," and so on. But Pulci is in particular blameable for such repetitions of incident as the love of the great Marcovaldo for Chiariella, the daughter of the Amostante of Persia, which is the exact counterpart of that of Manfredonio for Caradoro's daughter Meridiana.

Imitations of Pulci are frequent. It has been seen how Milton was indebted to this "sportive poem." Tasso and Ariosto took a liberal share of it, and Berni probably found therein that inspiration of subtle

humour which produced his *rifacimento* of Bojardo. Una's *aide de camp* in the "Faery Queen" has its prototype in the *Morgante*. A fierce green and yellow dragon is battling with a large lion by moonlight. The fire of the dragon's mouth fills all the wood with splendour, but, says Pulci, this fire seemed no joke to the lion. Rinaldo kills the dragon, and the lion is extremely grateful. He refrains, indeed, from shedding tears, like the horses of Achilles, but he follows his deliverer for some time after as a faithful body-guard. Pulci in his turn copied other poets. His imitations of Dante are numerous. In one of his pious preliminary petitions he addresses God as the uncircumscribed, reminding us of the *Paradiso* :

That one and two and three, that ever lives,
Uncircumscribed but circumscribing all.

The wondrous pavilion, the work of Luciana and by her presented to Rinaldo, is all of silk and gold. Some fifty stanzas are occupied in detailing its magnificence. It is divided into four parts, figuring the four elements and all that in them is, or at least very little short of it. In the aqueous division is a description of many ships and marine gods. The laborious Luciana, amidst oysters, sea-calves, cuttles, mullets and fish equally unknown to dictionaries and aquariums, displayed dolphins showing their backs, and so teaching the sailors to bring their vessels into safety. This is exactly the conduct of these excellent beasts in Dante's *Inferno* :

Come i delfini, quando fanno segno
A' marinar con l' arco della schiena
Che s' argomentin di campar lor legno.

So, too, Dante in his *Paradiso* speaks of St. John the Evangelist as the apostle who lay on the breast of our pelican, using the bird in the same sacred sense as Pulci.

None but the student of the *Inferno* can understand that allusion in Gan's conspiracy with Marsilio to the bitter fruits of Friar Alberic. This member of the Frati Godenti devised a feast like that of Lucrezia Borgia, in which at a given signal—his call for the fruit—the guests were to be assassinated. Hence one who had been stabbed is said proverbially to have eaten of the fruit of Friar Alberigo. Pulci also quotes Laura's lover, and puts on one occasion a line of that poet into Rinaldo's mouth :

Oh sommo amore! oh nuova cortesia!

Adding that some might believe this line to be Petrarch's, and yet Rinaldo spoke it all that time ago. This reminds us of the Fool in *King Lear*—"This prophecy shall Merlin make, for I live before his time."

Apart from its other merits, the *Morgante* possesses no small amount of philologic interest. Its linguistic is by no means its least attraction. Old Tuscan forms of expression known as *riboboli*, and

Florentine proverbs long ago passed into desuetude, not such hard meat as asks more pain in chewing than it can give nutriment, abound everywhere. To dig these out of their quiet graves in dusty dictionaries is to the student of ancient Italian a labour of long delight. Familiarity is expressed by being more at home than the hearth-broom. To sleep in the open air is to make your ears whistles for the wind. To attempt a difficulty is to shoe geese. To go away without settling your account is to pay the priest's reckoning. And we have a proverb against inadvertence in "Keep one eye on the puss and the other on the frying pan." Rinaldo on one occasion passes the night in the house of a certain hermit. The description of this abode presents a piece of word-play not easily surpassed for sustained ingenuity. The *bisticcio* as it is called, arising from the assemblage of terms, diverse in signification but similar in sound, cannot well be translated without a loss :

La casa cosa pareva bretta e brutta,
 Vinta dal vento, e la natta e la notte
 Stilla le stelle, ch' a tetto era tutta :
 Del pane appena ne dette ta' dotte ;
 Pere avea pure e qualche fratta frutta,
 E svina e svena di botto una botte ;
 Poscia per pesci lasche prese all' esca,
 Ma il letto allotta alla frasca fu fresca.

A like piece of verbal conceit may be seen in the epistle of Luca Pulci which Circe writes to Ulysses :—

Ulisse, o lasso, o dolce amore, io moro,

There is another affectation of language frequent amidst early Italian poets, known to Rhetoric as anaphora, which consists in beginning a series of lines, sometimes extended into stanzas, with the same word or words. The afflicted Florinetta afflicts the reader in her turn with such symmetrical sorrow as this : "O father ! O mother ! O brothers ! O sisters ! O sweet friends ! O companions ! O kinsfolk ! O wearied limbs !" and so on, with "O's" to the end of the stanza. Then comes—"Is this the country of my birth ? Is this my palace ? Is this my nest ? Is this my people ?" and so with notes of interrogation to the end of that stanza. Then, "Where are my purple robes ? Where are my jewels ? Where are my nightly feasts ?" and so for two stanzas more. Here indeed is a case of exceptional length, but short fits of the same fever occur at intervals through all the poem. One can scarcely fail on reading them to be reminded of that famous soliloquy of Henry VI. in the battle which decided the fate of the House of Lancaster :

O God ! methinks it were a happy life

To see the minutes how they run,
 How many make the hour full complete,
 How many hours bring about the day,
 How many days will finish up the year,
 How many years, &c.

But Shakespeare knew better than to repeat this style of thing too often.

The *Morgante* has been seldom rendered in any other language. Byron's translation of the first canto was not a success in public estimation. Though Byron thought it the best thing he ever wrote, and would not allow a line to be altered, the British public decided that he should not continue his labour. Its chief merit, a rare one, as affording no cover for a translator's ignorance, is its close rendering of the original. In a more flowery or flowing version, one might not have detected that Byron thought *gambellava* adequately represented by "lay tripped up," *per chi m'aveva scorto* by "why did I fight," and *pettignon* by "bosom." Nor indeed does the facility of rhyme formation which distinguished that *soi-disant* misunderstood and miserable being appear to advantage in such a couplet as—

He kept upon the standard, and the laurels
In fact and fairness are his earning, Charles ;

which forces us to defame Charlemagne by speaking of him as a certain *Charrels*.

The *Morgante* has also been reproduced in French. A book entitled *L'Histoire de Morgant le Géant* was published at Troyes, in 1625, by Nicholas Oudat, living in the street of Notre-Dame by the golden-crowned capon. It is a prose version, giving no idea of the style and very little of the wit of the original. It is indeed rather an analysis than a translation. The commencement differs entirely ; the old idiomatic forms are omitted generally or misconstrued ; and most of Pulci's peculiar humour is lost. The episodes of Margutte, and the destruction of the Tower of Babylon compared by Pulci to the destruction of the Philistine theatre by Samson, are entirely cut out. "The ancient fathers in the desert," says the Abbot to Orlando, when complaining of the stones thrown upon his abbey by the giant, "had some reward for serving God. I don't think they lived on locusts alone ; manna rained from heaven, that's certain ; but our manna rained from yonder rock we find a trifle hard." All this is excluded from the French version, as is the putting to sleep of the breviaries and utter oblivion of fast days by the monks when Morgante brings them the wild boar which needs no salting ; and the advice of Orlando to the giant to feel no pity for his murdered brothers in hell, since a righteous person is content with divine judgment, and does not "disturb himself even though his father and mother be condemned to everlasting damnation."

Names of Flowers.

THERE is a favourite legend in Germany of a certain luck-flower, which admits its fortunate finder into the recesses of a mountain or castle, where untold riches invite his grasp. Dazzled by so much wealth, with which he fills his pockets and hat, the favoured mortal leaves behind him the flower to which he owes his fortune; and as he leaves the enchanted ground, the words "Forget not the best of all" reproach him for his ingratitude, and the suddenly closing door either descends on one of his heels and lames him for life or else imprisons him for ever.

If Grimm is right, this is the origin of the word Forget-me-not, and not the last words of the lover drowning in the Danube, as he threw to his lady-love the flower she craved of him. The tradition, however, that the luck-flower, or key-flower, was blue is inconsistent with the fact that the primrose is the *Schlüsselblume* (key-flower). However this may be, there exist in Germany many subterranean passages under hill-sides, dating from heathen times and associated with legends of former treasures there;* and it certainly seems more likely that the flower was simply adapted to the legend as readily occurring to the story-maker's mind, than that it really signifies the lightning which opens the clouds, that "primal wealth of the pastoral Aryans, the rain that refreshes the thirsty earth, and the sun that comes after the tempest."†

This method of explaining in poetical language every fanciful belief of past times, by referring it to some common phenomenon of the skies, is happily less common than it was; it being obvious that, if the early Aryans really thought of the lightning opening the clouds as of a flower opening a mountain, their minds must have been so confused as to make one sorry to think of them as the progenitors of our race. Some of the names and some of the legends which belong to our commonest flowers perhaps go back to an antiquity too remote ever to furnish their explanation; but by reference to others of them, as we know them to have been made within historical memory by Catholic monks in their gardens, or by poets in country lanes, we may perhaps guess with some correctness as to how they were formed in times when the Indo-Germanic races lived in their supposed common home.

In the flax-fields of Flanders there grows a plant called the *Rood-selken*, the red spots of which on its bright green leaves betoken the blood

* Panzer, *Beitrag zur Deutschen Mythologie*, 21, 40, with plans of the passages at the end of the volume.

† Kelly, *Curiosities of Indo-Germanic Tradition*, 173.

which fell on it from the Cross, and which neither snow nor rain has ever since been able to wash off.* In Cheshire the same account is given of the spots on the *Orchis maculata*, and in Palestine of the colours of the red anemone.† The fancy is perhaps more intelligible than that which saw in the passion-flower of Peru the resemblance of nails,‡ or that which believes the St. John's-wort to show red spots on the day the Baptist was beheaded. The Crown of Thorns has given to the holly (holly-tree) in Germany the name of *Christ-dorn*, whilst in Italy it has ennobled the barberry, and in France given to the hawthorn the name of the "noble thorn" (*l'épine noble*).

The similarity of these legends, applied as they are to different flowers, illustrates the tendency which exists to seek to give greater reality to beliefs by leaving no part of them unprovided with details, and to resort for such details to the commonest objects of daily experience. They also show how the general philosophy of a people imprints itself on everything for which they need and seek an explanation. Many of our plant-names to this day are a proof of this mental tendency. A Catholic writer has complained that at the Reformation "the very names of plants were changed in order to divert men's minds from the least recollection of ancient Christian piety;"§ and the Protestant writer Jones of Nayland, in his *Reflections on the Growth of Heathenism among Modern Christians* (1798), equally complains that "Botany, which in ancient times was full of the Blessed Virgin Mary, . . . is now as full of the heathen Venus."|| But the meaning of many of the monkish names of flowers had been lost before the new nomenclature began; neither is it easy to see how the interests of piety were subserved by calling the holyhock a holy oak, the pansy herb Trinity or the daffodil a Lent-lily. No one is morally better when he uses the old name herb-Robert as a synonym of the cranesbill, if he think of St. Robert, Abbot of Molesme in the eleventh century, and founder of the Cistercian order. Every flower became connected with some saint of the Calendar, either from blowing about the time of the saint's festival, or from being connected with him in some long-lost legend. It is difficult to think that such name-giving had any distinct pious purpose. The name of Canterbury-bells for the campanula was given to it in memory of St. Augustine; but something more than mere commemoration must have given to the common dead nettle the name of the red archangel, or to the cowslip that of Our Lady's bunch of keys.

Of a similar nature to these extravagant fancies of the monks is the

* Thorpe's *Northern Mythology*, iii. 268.

† *Flower Lore*, 14, an excellent work on the subject, published anonymously, to which the present writer is much indebted.

‡ In René Rapin's *Hortorum*. Nam surgens flore e medio capita alta tricuspidis Sursum tollit apex, clavos imitatus aduncos.

§ T. Foster, in *Prologomena to Catholic Annual* for 1831.

|| *Works*, iii. 433.

Turkish explanation of the geranium as a mallow that was touched by the garments of Mahomet; or the Chinese legend that tea-leaves are the eyelids of a pious hermit, who, being too frequently overcome by sleep, cut them off in despair and threw them from him.

Names of plants, even if given only in commemoration at first, obviously tend to suggest legends; and if there were no legend before, it is easy to imagine how easily they might arise from calling a plant after St. Robert or St. Christopher. Whether in any given case the name or the legend came first it is generally impossible to say. But the name herb-Margaret for the daisy (the eye of the day, according to Chaucer) illustrates the tendency of a name to attract a legend to it. Chaucer refers the name Margaret, as applied to the daisy, to St. Margaret of Hungary, who was martyred in the thirteenth century; whilst another legend refers it in the following verses to St. Margaret of Cortona, whose penitence edified the world about the same period:—

There is a double flowret, white and red,
That our lasses call herb Margaret,
In honour of Cortona's penitent,
Whose contrite soul with red remorse was rent;
While on her penitence kind Heaven did throw
The white of purity surpassing snow;
So white and red in this fair flower entwine,
Which maids are wont to scatter at her shrine.

The flower, however, was really so called from its supposed resemblance to a pearl, and had nothing to do with any St. Margaret. The Greek for pearl was *μαργαρίτης*, which, passing into Latin as *Margarita*, remained in Italian the same word, and in French became *Marguerite*, the same word in either language serving both for the pearl and the flower. Had the name really come from the saint and not from the pearl, it would surely have been also called after her in Germany, instead of being there the *Gänseblume*, or goose-flower, and actually having for one of its synonyms the name meadow-pearl.*

The peculiarities of flowers in colour, form, or smell have given birth to poetical fancies about them which are more remarkable for monotony of invention than for beauty of feeling. As a general rule, flowers spring from tears if they are white, from blushes or from blood if they are red. Lilies-of-the-valley are in France the Virgin's tears; anemones in Bion's idyl are the tears of Venus for Adonis; and the Helenium, which, according to Pliny, was supposed to have sprung from the tears of Helen, was probably a white flower. If we may believe Catullus, the rose is red from blushing for the wound it inflicted on the foot of Venus as she hastened to help Adonis. But if Stephen Herrick is right, who of all our old poets deals most fancifully with flowers, roses were originally white, till, after being worsted in a dispute as to whether their whiteness excelled that of Sappho's breast, they blushed and "first came

* Perger, *Deutsche Pflanzensagen*, 62.

red." This is very like Ovid's account of the mulberry-fruit having been originally white, till it blushed for ever after witnessing the tragedy enacted beneath it of the sad suicides of Pyramus and Thisbe. In German folk-lore the heath owes its colour to the blood of the slain heathen,* apparently in recollection of Charlemagne's method of converting the Saxons, the two words being connected in the same way as are *pagus* and *paganus*; for as in Latin the inhabitants of the country villages far from the Christian culture of the towns came to be called pagans, so in German the inhabitants of the uncultivated fields where the heath (or *heide*) grew came to be known as heathen (or *heide*).

The blueness of the violet is interpreted in a similar strain to the foregoing. In one of the poems of Herrick's *Hesperides*, violets are said to be girls, who, having defeated Venus in a dispute she had with Cupid as to whether she or they excelled in sweetness, were beaten blue by the goddess in her wrath. But according to the Jesuit René Rapin, whose once famous Latin poem *Hortorum* contains so many references to the flower-lore of his time, the violet was once a nymph, who, unable to escape the love of Phœbus, exclaimed at last in despair:—

"Formosæ si non licet esse pudicam,
Ah! pereat potius quæ non fert forma pudorem."
Dixit, et obscura infecit ferrugine vultum.

Phœbus being a synonym for the sun, it would of course be easy to interpret this voluntary transformation of a nymph into a violet as the daylight changing into the purple twilight to escape the sun that has followed it all day. So also of the marsh marygold, or *Caltha*, which, according to Rapin, was once a girl who, from constant gazing on the sun that she adored, attracted the colour which the flower now wears:—

*Calthaque, Solis amans, Solem dum spectat amatum,
Duxit eum, quem fert, ipso de Sole colorem.*

Its modern Italian name is actually *sposa di sole*. What is more evident than that the marigold really means the moon, which derives the light she wears from the sun that she adores and follows!

The sun also plays a part in Rapin's account of the origin of the rose, which is worth noticing for the general resemblance it bears to the story of the rose springing from the ashes of a girl burnt alive at Bethlehem, which Sir John Mandeville found in the fourteenth century, and which Southey commemorated in his poem on the Rose in the following words:—

The stake
Branches and buds, and spreading its green leaves
Embowers and canopies the fair maid,
Who there stands glorified; and roses, then
First seen on earth since Paradise was lost,
Profusely blossom round her, white and red,
In all their rich variety of hues.

* Warnke, *Pflanzen in Sitte*, 212.

The Rose, in Rapin's verse, was once Rhodanthe, a beautiful Greek maiden, of whose many suitors the principal were Halesus, Brias, and Orcas. Entering the temple with her father and people, and being still pursued by her suitors, the excitement of the contest so enhanced her beauty that the people shouted, "Let Rhodanthe be a goddess, and let the image of Diana give place to her!" Rhodanthe being thereupon raised upon the altar, Phœbus, Diana's brother, was so incensed at the insult to his sister, that he turned his rays against the new-made goddess. Then it soon repented Rhodanthe of her divinity; for her feet became fixed to the altar as roots, and the hands she stretched out became branches, whilst the people who defended her became protecting thorns, and her too-ardent lovers a convolvulus, a drone, and a butterfly.

Rapin's poem is full of similar transformations. The anemone was a nymph changed by the jealous Flora into a flower; the peony (from Παιών, the god of medicine) a nymph whose deep red is not the blush of modesty, but the proof of her flagrant sin; and the daisies were once nymphs. The nasturtium and cytisus were in their origin beautiful youths; the tulip was a Dalmatian virgin beloved by the good Vertumnus. How far these transformations were Rapin's own fictions, or traditions of his time, cannot easily be decided. They are not to be found in Ovid, though they closely follow that poet's fancy, and remind us of Daphne being changed by her father Peneus into a laurel, to escape the attentions of Phœbus; of Clytie, deserted by Phœbus, following him as the sunflower; of the sisters of Phaethon turning into poplars; of Cyparissus, grieved for the stag he killed, and wishing for death, being changed by Apollo into a cypress; of the Apulian shepherd becoming an oleaster; or of the origin of the narcissus and hyacinth from beautiful youths of the same name;—with all which metamorphoses we may compare Herrick's account of the origin of the heart's-ease as having been formerly

Frolic virgins, ever loving,
Being here their ends denied,
Ran for sweethearts mad and died.
Love, in pity of their tears,
And their loss in blooming years
For their restless here-spent lives,
Gave them *heart's-ease* turned to flowers.

So similar in conception to these stories of Rapin or Ovid is the story told in Malaca, of a flower growing there, that it is worth quoting it as it is given by Argensola in his *History of the Conquest of the Molucca Islands*. The tree has the peculiarity of flowering at night and drooping in the day-time, so that the Portuguese gave it the name of the "sad tree," like the appellation given by Linnæus to night-flowering plants (*flores tristes*). "The idolaters pretend, or believe to," says the writer, "that in older days a person of singular beauty, daughter of the Satrap Parizatico, fell in love with the Sun, who, having at first responded to

her affection and become engaged to her, changed his mind and gave his love to another ; that the first lover, seeing herself despised, could not bear it, and killed herself. In those countries it is still the custom to burn the dead body, and they say that hers was burnt, and that from her ashes sprang this tree, the flowers of which still retain the memory of her grief, and so abhor the sun that they cannot bear its light. This plant is called in some places Parizatico, from the name of the father of this metamorphosed Indian girl." *

This story is a good illustration of the extreme crudity of thought out of which such legends seem to rise—a state of thought in which there is nothing absurd in the Sun actually loving and pledging his troth to a human maiden, and in which the story so appeals to men's sense of the probable that they actually trouble to remember the name of the girl's father, in order to apply it to the flower. Plants are mentioned by De Gubernatis whose Sanskrit name also means the "sun-lover," or the "sun-beloved." † He also mentions one called "moon-beloved." Such names, or such flower traditions as those preserved by Ovid or Raps, have less to do with solar myths than with the common notion of primitive or savage philosophy that there is nothing inconceivable in the heavenly bodies possessing human attributes. They arise from no forgotten metaphors, but from a belief, once real and vivid, that everything in nature is inter-convertible ; and they go back to a time when the changes of men, animals, plants, and stars into one another expressed not merely poetical metamorphoses, but the common possibilities of nature : as in the Bushmen myth of the bits of red root, thrown up in the air by an angry girl, becoming stars, or in the Kasias' explanation of the stars as men from whom, after they had climbed to the skies, the tree they had climbed by was cut down. Even Ovid seems really to have believed that Philemon and Baucis, the poor cottage couple who, unaware, entertained Jupiter and Mercury in the guise of men, were really changed into a shrub and lime-tree that stood before a temple ; for he says :—

Hæc mihi non vani (neque erat cur fallere vellent)
Narravere senes.

Fantastic as are most of the foregoing legends, or the comparisons out of which they arose, it would be unfair to the reader to pass over the most extraordinary fancy of this kind that has perhaps ever crossed the brain of a poet, and is to be found in Hurdis' poem called "The Village Curate," published early in the nineteenth century. Everybody knows the difference between the dandelion in all the glory of its full blossom and the same flower in the gravity of its decay ; but it was reserved to Hurdis, in the following lines, to see in these two stages of the dandelion the contrast between the grave divine and the flashy undergraduate of earlier years :—

* Argensola, *Hist. de la Conquête des Iles Moluques*, i. 85-6.

† *Mythologie des Plantes*, 289.

Dandelion this,
 A college youth, that flashes for a day
 All gold : anon he doffs his gaudy suit,
 Touched by the magic hand of some grave bishop,
 And all at once becomes a reverend divine—how sleek!

 But let me tell you, in the pompous globe
 Which rounds the dandelion's head, is couched
 Divinity most rare.*

In the same way, then, that the peculiarities of flowers and shrubs have been connected with transformations of men, or with the chief personages of Christian theology, we may assume that they were connected with the gods of the Hindu, Greek, or Norse Pantheon, and that they are sometimes called after Indra or Zeus, Jupiter or Thunar, not on account of any remote symbolical relation to those deities, but because there existed nothing so lowly on earth as not to be worthy of playing a part in their history. The connection of those powers with the humble plants of earth is a great obstacle in the way of that popular mode of explanation which refers every legend of Zeus or Jupiter to some feature of the skies, or some common episode in the history of a day.

In a learned German work, in which the resemblance between the Hindu storm-god Indra and the god Thor of Thunar, of Norse mythology, is worked out in great detail, the naming of many Indian plants after Indra is shown to have its parallel in Germany in the number of plants called after Thunar, or rather after its synonym Donner, "the Thunder."† The naming of plants after Indra is quite in accordance with naming them after Our Lady, or the saints of the Calendar; but the naming of such plants as the *Johanniskraut* or *Sedum Telephium* after the thunder, as in the words *Donnerkraut*, *Donnerbart*, &c., admits of an easier explanation than a fanciful relation to Thor. Pliny mentions the *vibro*, which he calls *herba Britannica*, as a plant which, if picked before the first thunder was heard, was supposed to be a safeguard against lightning. To this day, in the Tyrol, the Alpine rose is placed in the roofs of houses to ensure them from lightning,‡ and the *Donnerkraut* (the English orpine, or live-long) may be seen in the houses of Westphalia as a preservative from thunder.§ In England the same function was subserved in the same way by the houseleek, or stonecrop; whilst in the Netherlands St. John's-wort, gathered before sunrise, effects the same purpose. For what reason the old Aryan medicine-men, or their successors in Europe, attributed storm-proof virtues to this plant or to that speculation will perhaps never discover, nor need perhaps trouble to inquire.

* *The Village Curate*, 36.

† Mannhardt, *Germanische Mythen*, 136-8.

‡ Zingerle: *Sitten, &c. des Tirolen Volkes*, 100.

§ Kuhn: *Sagen aus Westfalen*, ii. 90.

The necessity of gathering certain plants before sunrise, as in the case of the St. John's-wort, or in the gathering of May-day garlands, seems to go back at least as far as the days of Pliny, who mentions that some flowers, as the lily-of-the-valley, had to be gathered in secrecy, and therefore before daybreak, to ensure their efficacy. It is perhaps no loss that the purpose for which the wizard-world employed these flowers have passed into oblivion; but it is probable that without some such knowledge the explanation of the names or superstitions attached to many of our plants must remain impossible. Poppies are said to have once been offered to the dead to appease their manes, which may account for their surviving as a funeral flower, in spite of their brightness of colour. The use of the vervain, or holy-herb, in the Tyrol worn in the shoe to keep off fatigue, may point to the origin of our own word *speedwell*; and there are other English names of plants which are capable of explanation by a studied comparison with their names in other countries or in earlier times.

Some of the names of flowers are simple enough, being suggested by some obvious characteristic, or by some comparison to something rather like it. The sage, or *Salvia verbenaca*, owes its synonym "clary" to its old use as an eye remedy, or clear-eye; and the comparison of the *Adonis autumnalis* (which in most languages of Europe still retains in its name its old connection with the blood of the slain Adonis, and in popular German is still *Blutströpfchen*)* to the eye of a pheasant leaves no mystery about its name. But sometimes the explanation of names, founded on the principle of comparison, seems somewhat absurd. Of course we all know that we call the dandelion from the French *dent de lion*, and we are asked to see in the plant's indented leaf a resemblance to the tooth of a lion, little as we can explain how the French became so conversant with lions as to compare their teeth with the leaf of a dandelion. Is it not more likely that this plant derived its name from its supposed efficacy, in some country or time, as a protection to a man from a lion's tooth, just as in Lower Bavaria, at this day, a certain plant carried on the person is thought to be a safeguard against a dog's bite?† Or take the honeysuckle, which in French, Italian, and Spanish, and in the English of Spenser and Shakespeare, is the *caprifole*, or goat-leaf. Are we seriously to believe, what all the botanical books gravely tell us, that it was so called because it seemed to climb rocks like a goat, when a hundred other climbing plants might as readily suggest that animal's activity? May it not be that the goat, which is fond of the leaves of shrubs, shows a particular partiality to those of the honeysuckle? The zoologist here might come to the aid of the botanist.

Any flower-name, the meaning of which at any period of its existence became obscure or passed out of memory, would naturally invite reflection and excite ingenuity; and in this way doubtless many of the

* Dierbach: *Flora Mythologica*, 153.

† Panzer: *Deutsche Mythologie*, 249.

legends relating to them arose, the interpretation being either rationalistic, as in the case of a dandelion or goat-leaf, or poetical, as in Herrick's derivation of heart's-ease, according to the nature of the mind brought to bear on it. The application of different stories to the same flower is consequently almost inevitable, and the cause of some confusion in floral mythology. Thus the Greek letters *αἶ αἶ*, supposed to be discernible in the hyacinth,* were interpreted in Ovid either as the wail of Apollo for Hyacinthus, or as the first letters in the name of Ajax, with whom also the flower was connected. So with the forget-me-not, for which, besides the two derivations already mentioned, or the derivation which explains it as a souvenir given by Henry of Lancaster when in exile to the Duchess of Bretagne, there is yet a fourth interpretation which, as it is less generally known, may be worth repeating. According to this version, Adam, as he named the plants in Paradise, bade them all remember what he called them. One little flower, ashamed of not having heeded its name, asked the father of men, "By what name dost thou call me?" "Forget-me-not," was the reply; and ever since that humble flower has drooped its head in shame and ignominy.

Such a profusion of explanations throws discredit upon each one of them; and we shall perhaps be quite as correct if we imagine the forget-me-not to have once been a flower most important in some medicine-man's prescriptions, and on that account never to be forgotten in the search for more imposing magic-flowers. So, perhaps, also with the pansy (*pensée*) which in Dutch is also called forget-me-not.

From the magical use of flowers in the hands of the primitive medicine-men to the scientific knowledge and use of them in modern botany or pharmaceutics, the general progress is clearer than of course are the successive steps. The veriest savages have been often found to possess a knowledge of plants far in advance of their development in other respects; and this knowledge must have arisen from the greater attention which flowers naturally attracted from their sorcerers than any of the less common products of nature. For their clients who might wish to be cured of any sickness, to gain another's love or avert it from a rival, to keep off evil spirits from their dwellings, herbs would naturally suggest themselves as the readiest kind of cure or charm to all who aspired to enjoy the prestige and practice of a sorcerer.

In this way some positive knowledge would be gradually collected, similar to that which abounds in the old herbals of Turner or Gerard, and which causes one to wonder that, if plants possessed half the virtues therein ascribed to them, any such thing as illness should be left in the world.

Whilst in this manner some knowledge would be gained of what herbs could really effect for the human body, the belief of the efficacy of some of them against thunder or witchcraft would not be

* The *Gladiolus byzantinus* is said to have most claims to represent the classical hyacinth. Dierbach, *Flora Mythologica*, 137.

lessened; and thus it would come to pass that floral magic would long survive the transition of botany into a real science, bearing indeed to the latter, both in its origin and history, very much the same relation that astrology bears to astronomy. Floral magic dies hard. In the Tyrol they can still point out by name the flowers which are good against witchcraft or curses, against lightning, or against fatigue,* and in Wales it is still lucky to have a house covered with stonecrop to keep off disease,† as it also is in Germany and Scandinavia to keep off the lightning.‡ Albertus Magnus mentions plants that were efficacious to restore peace between combatants or harmony between husband and wife; and there is still a plant used for matrimonial divination in Italy called *Concordia*, as well as one with contrary attributes, *Discordia*.§ The old name for the *hypericum*, or St. John's-wort, was *Fuga dæmonum*, dispeller of demons,|| and in Russia a plant called the devil-chaser is still shaken against the arch-fiend if he come to trouble the grief of a mourner.¶ In the same country there is a plant that is useful to destroy calumnies spread abroad for the hindrance of marriages.**

If, then, certain flowers have retained even to this day such belief in their magical efficacy, we may imagine with what feelings they were regarded when they first gained their reputation for magical properties, and when no science interposed to correct the delusion. We may fancy how the most famous flowers would commend themselves to the minds of the first human beings who felt the need of explaining some of the things that puzzled them in nature. Already used for so many mysterious purposes in human life, they would naturally occur as the best key to many of the mysteries which occurred beyond it. If Goethe called the flowers the stars of earth, the earlier process would have been to regard the stars literally as flowers, as they were regarded together with the sun and moon, in the Indian cosmogonies; †† and thus we may understand how in German mythology admission to the skies was also an entrance to a paradise of flowers; and allusions to the garden of the sun become more intelligible. We see how flowers would naturally mix themselves with stories of the gods, such as Zeus, Hercules, Indra, or Isiris, when we consider how they have mixed themselves with legends of the Virgin, or St. John the Baptist. As in the Vedas one plant is called Indra's drink, another his food, so the caroub-bean is St. John's bread, gooseberries are his grapes, and the wormwood his girdle. As

* Zingerle, *Sitten &c. des Tirolen Volkes*, 160-111.

† Dyer, *English Folklore*, 12.

‡ *De Gubernatis*, 195.

§ *Ibid.* 99.

|| Bauhinus, *De plantis a divinis sanctisve nomen habentibus*, 35.

¶ *De Gubernatis*, 109, 110.

** *Ibid.* 87.

†† *Ibid.* 145. "Le soleil et la lune, les étoiles sont des fleurs du jardin céleste."

four distinct plants lay claim to the title of Our Lady's tears (to say nothing of those which are her smock, her mantle, or her tresses), so in Roman times numerous plants took their names from Hercules. We gain insight into the origin of Aryan mythology when we remember that it was with the help of a herb that Indra fought with demons; and that in the Vedic hymns plants are invoked to destroy evil, to avert curses, or to act as love-philtres. The soma plant, by which Indra conquers Vritra, or puts to flight demons, does for him exactly what the St. John's-wort or *Fuga daemonum* did for Europeans a few centuries ago. The *moly*, by which the god Hermes enables Ulysses to conquer the charms of Circe, does for him what any Tyrolese sorcerer could do now for a man with a sprig of juniper. And the lotus or nepenthe, which confers forgetfulness, give what any old herbalist could have readily supplied from his herbarium.

The great extent therefore to which plants are mixed up with the gods of old mythology, doing for them exactly what they would do for sorcerers on earth, shows under how human an aspect those deities were originally regarded, and how much more nearly related they were with this world than with the phenomena of the storms and sunshine.

This, however, is heresy; and the names and legends of plants have also another interpretation, which traces their place in mythology, not to their great use in sorcery, but to their symbolical application to the phenomena of the solar system. It would be unfair to pass unnoticed the wealth of explanation which this other theory affords; for which let us refer to De Gubernatis' book on *La Mythologie des Plantes*, from which so many facts of interest have already been taken.

To begin, then, with that large class of plants which in India or Europe take their name from different parts of the lion. "The lion," says De Gubernatis, "represents the sun; the plants which owe their name to him are essentially solar. Such is visibly the character of the Löwen-zahn, or Dent de Lion." (Yet we are not told how Indian plants called after the elephant are related to the sun.) The humble stonecrop or *sempervivum* (*aizoon*), once called by the Romans *occhio di Dio*, and still in French retaining its name of Jupiter's beard, or Joubarbe, must refer either to the sun or moon as the "everlasting" of the heaven. The grass-destroying demon of German folk-lore, called the grass-wolf, is the dog Sirius, the sun at the end of July that destroys the vegetation, seemingly because in Sanskrit the word "*vrika*" meant both dog and sun.

Next to the sun the moon is most strongly represented in the plant world. The herb which opens or discloses treasures is evidently the moon, the herb *par excellence*, the queen of herbs, which discovers the hiding-places of robbers. The *moly*-plant that frees Ulysses from Circe is the lunar herb, or the moon which enables the sun to continue its course. The plant mentioned by Ælian as a cure for the eyes, like our clary, can be explained mythologically as the moon or dawn chasing the

darkness which blinds us all. The selenite (from *σελήνη*, the moon), mentioned by Plutarch as used by shepherds to keep their feet safe from snake-bites, is connected with the moon that slays the serpents or monsters of the sky. The *aglaophotis*, spoken of by Pliny as also called *marmorites* from its resemblance to Persian marble, refers to that luminous plant of the East, the dawn, or the white. And, lastly, the flower of the fern, by aid of which, in Russian legend, the shepherd finds his hidden cattle, and is also shown where treasure lies, is either the thunderbolt or the sun itself, which with its light tears open the darksome caverns of the cloud.

Enough illustrations have perhaps been given to enable the reader to estimate the value of the solar method of interpreting plant-legends. It may occur to him that in the above cases the imagination of science has let itself go too far; and has resorted for an explanation, when quite a simple one was at hand, to a theory of the human mind which has nothing analogous to it in the mental condition of any known race of men, and can only be adapted to facts by a most painful distortion of the most obvious meaning of the stories themselves. Should he think so, let him weigh the merits of the other theory, which makes less of the sun and more of the sorcerer and magician.

J. A. F.

Recollections of a Tour in Brittany.

IN one of those charming letters addressed by the late Bishop Thirlwall to a young lady friend, he asks his fair correspondent whether she is aware of the "atrocious Vandalism, worse than that of the Bande Noire," which is being perpetrated by the Breton farmers, who "are actively engaged in removing all the Druidical remains for some 'useful' purpose, so that, if nobody interferes, they will before long have entirely disappeared."* The letter is dated just thirteen years ago, and what attempts may have since been made to arrest the progress of this utilitarian Vandalism I am unable to say, but it is currently reported that above 2,000 Celtic monuments have been thus wantonly destroyed since the beginning of this century in the neighbourhood of Carnac. The Romans had used many of them in constructing their works of defence some eighteen centuries before. And certainly no traveller at the present day can fail to detect frequent traces of dilapidated menhirs or dolmens in the courtyards and out-buildings of farmhouses at Carnac, Locmariaker, Troguer, and elsewhere, though the danger of their total disappearance is still happily a remote one. It might perhaps be a wise precaution to protect at least the principal of them, as Benedict XIV. secured the Coliseum—which had been used for a common quarry by the Roman nobles in the Middle Ages—against further maltreatment, by a religious consecration, which in Brittany would certainly be respected. Meanwhile, it may be feared that in other matters besides dolmens and menhirs—to which we shall have to return presently—the advancing tide of modern civilisation is sweeping away the old landmarks in a country which enjoyed till lately a quite unique reputation for its curious survivals both of pagan and mediæval usage, and was therefore denounced by Parisian *savans* as "le pays le plus arriéré de la France;" or, according to Michelet's angry sneer, "so Gaulish that it is hardly French." M. Souvestre, himself a native of Brittany, and a far more sympathetic observer of its specialities, speaks regretfully of "a race almost extinct even there, among whom the strong and simple faith of another age still survives." And he has strange stories to tell of phantom mules and tinkling fog-bells which lure the unwary midnight traveller to his destruction; of dragons watching treasures hidden under the menhirs; of the ceaseless throbbing of the blue waters in the Bay of Douarnenez, where the wicked city of Ys, from which King Gradlon fled to Quimper in obedience to a

* Thirlwall's *Letters to a Friend*, p. 180.

heavenly warning, lies buried like a second Sodom, and whence, on All Souls' Day, the pale ghosts may be seen rising on the crest of the wave, while at mysterious Carnac the skeletons come forth from their graves and kneel by thousands in the dimly-lighted church; of the half scornful, half jubilant familiarity which nicknames the evil spirit "Old William," perhaps from a forgotten play on the name of the Conqueror;* and of many other old-world legends and customs peculiar to Brittany, or common to the whole Celtic race.

Souvestre tells us again of the *cantiques*, which hold the first place among Breton songs, and are "utterly unlike the wretched French rhapsodies sung in our churches," for there "poetry has preserved its primitive religious character, and is chiefly remarkable for the ardent faith it reveals." It is true, of course, that the belief must first exist before such poems can be composed; but, on the other hand, the popularity of the songs sustains and kindles the ardour of the belief; "children are born and grow up to the music of these songs; from the time they can speak they learn them, they are possessed by them, till they come at last to sing them unconsciously, as they breathe or walk or look around them." And not only are the most popular songs in Brittany religious, but the best-known tragedies, too, begin in the name of the Holy Trinity, and deal with sacred themes, as may be inferred from the very titles of those still extant, such as "St. William," "St. Barbe," "St. Triffine," "Jacob," "Pharaoh," the "Creation of the World." Nor is the Breton tongue itself merely one of the thousand dialects of Europe, or, as others have supposed, "a Punic dialect," but the ancient Celtic or Gaulish, as Strabo says, *Nomen Celtarum universis Gallis inditum ob gentis claritatem*. According to Souvestre, this Celtic or Gaulish language was originally spoken throughout Gaul with slight variation of dialect, and in Great Britain, which was peopled from Gaul; and thus the Bretons, who came from England, found their own language in the country, where it has been preserved with some modifications to the present day. Certainly the language now spoken in Breton villages is quite unlike ordinary French, of which the natives—the women especially—do not understand a word, and sounds much more like German or Welsh. It need hardly be said that the very names of Wales and Cornwall—the latter corresponding to the old Breton district of Cornouaille—bear witness to the identity of race of those who in all those regions alike have left indelible traces of their common origin as well on the material structures as in the blood and language and traditions of the people. The coast line between Lannion and Tréguier is the home and centre of Arthurian legend, and Merlin had his birthplace in an island on the Bay of Trépassés.

Souvestre was describing forty years ago a Brittany which, even then, was becoming a thing of the past; and a generation of railways and cheap newspapers has done much since his death to modify still further

* He is, however, also called "Spountus," the Terrible One.

the quaint anachronisms of thought, of habit, and of outward costume so long characteristic of the denizens of that mystic land. What an English traveller said less than forty years ago could hardly be repeated now, that within a day's journey of Paris or Southampton, in the midst of English manufactories and French Revolutions and wars of the Empire, stretching out its granite base into a sea ploughed by steamships, "dark old Brittany goes on unmoved, unsympathising, believing and working as it and its fellow nations did five hundred years ago." The very names are changing, and the old divisions—corresponding to the four ancient bishoprics—of Léon, Cornouaille, Tréguier, and Vannes are merged in the modern "departments" of Finistère, comprehending the two first, Côtes-du-Nord, and Morbihan. Of the nine episcopal sees existing before the French Revolution four, including St. Pol-de-Léon and Tréguier, were suppressed by the Concordat of 1801, though the unmitred cathedrals survive to recall the old ecclesiastical order.* The stone cross or crucifix still guards the entrance of every town or village, and the quaintly-carved Calvaries stand in many churchyards, though the peasants seldom remember now, as is still customary in the Tyrol, to doff their caps in passing. And the picturesque Breton costume which once attracted the gaze of travellers of a former generation, and of which splendid specimens are preserved in the museum at Quimper, is no longer to be seen in ordinary wear, except in a few out-of-the-way places like Pont l'Abbé. It should be said, however, that I had not, unfortunately, an opportunity of witnessing one of the famous *pardons* or pilgrimages solemnised annually at certain sacred spots, when the old dresses are still, I believe, often worn. The common dress of the women is more distinctive than that of the men, though not so picturesque as the tall white caps worn on Sundays and festivals in Normandy; it is, in fact, very like the religious habit of nuns, and as female attendants are usually employed at Breton hotels, it is difficult at first to get rid of the impression that you are being waited on at dinner by the lay sisters of a convent. If the old costumes, however, are passing away, there is a marked character in the physiognomy and tone of voice of the Breton peasantry. The men, as a rule, are decidedly better looking as well as more intelligent than the women, whose faces acquire very early a kind of wizened parchment-like appearance, but still there is often something weird about their look. And the Breton peasant retains the strong local attachments, and absence of the spirit of enterprise and ambition, we are wont to associate with the Irish; the distinction of language, of course, helps to keep him apart, in temper as in place, from the generality of Frenchmen. "Il ne court après la fortune ni ne l'attend; c'est la seule superstition populaire à laquelle il soit demeuré étranger . . . Il y a dans la nature du Breton quelque

* The four sees suppressed are Dol, St. Pol-de-Léon, Tréguier, and St. Malo; the five remaining ones being Rennes, Nantes, Quimper-Corentin, St. Brieuc, and Vannes. They are suffragan sees of the Archbishopric of Tours.

chose d'antipathique aux vastes entreprises. Il ne peut pas disperser ainsi son activité sur un large espace ; il aime à la resserrer, à concentrer toute son énergie sur un seul point.* But with this narrow and somewhat melancholy temper of stern resignation is combined a simple piety and trust which the modern "march of intellect" has not yet stamped out. The cathedrals and churches of Brittany, unlike those in other parts of France, are crowded with men at the early masses on Sundays, and even on weekdays men and boys constitute an appreciable element in the congregations. The simplicity of Breton faith is curiously exemplified in the reverence long paid to idiots, and which has found abiding expression in the most splendid and most famous of the parish churches in the country, Notre Dame de Folgoet. A childlike instinct of devotion recognised in the extremity of mental as of physical degradation—for leprosy, too, in the middle ages was surrounded with special ministries of mingled awe and tenderness—the tokens of His merciful visitation who chastens those He loves.

The church of Folgoet is, in truth, a magnificent edifice, but it offers no exception to the rule that in Brittany "the well-known forms of church architecture reappear, but with altered proportions, and a peculiar grotesque stamp." It is built of the sharp dark grey Kersanton stone, much used in Brittany, and the general effect both without and within is solemn and impressive. The carving on the western porch, with its delicate wreath of thistles and vine leaves, and on the larger and more elaborate porch in the south transept, attributed to Anne of Brittany, as well as the sculpture on the *jubé* or roodloft, and the exquisite tracery of the windows, will reward a minute inspection. This long south transept projects like an aisle turned at right angles from the choir which, according to a plan not uncommon in Breton churches, does not extend eastwards beyond it. Against the eastern wall stand five altars, three in the transept to the south of the high altar, which is beautifully sculptured in stone. The noble tower and spire at the north-western end, about 170 feet high—the southern tower is lower, and terminates in a dome—adds much to the dignity and grace of the building. A basin under an arched niche outside the eastern wall receives the water flowing from the miraculous fountain beneath the high altar, to which pilgrims still resort. At the west end of the nave, on the right of the entrance, is the chapel dedicated to the canonised idiot boy, Salaun, covered with mouldering frescoes. But the leading incidents of his life are depicted in bright colours on the wooden panels of the new pulpit ; and the story, which explains how the church came to be built, may be read at length on a board suspended from one of the pillars. It will not be out of place to cite here the main points of a tradition which supplies so striking an illustration of native habits of belief.

* Souvestre. A curious memento of the old isolation of Brittany is found in a petition retained up to the present century in the Litany, as sung in the Breton churches "A furore Normanorum libera nos, Domine."

"On the Sunday before All Saints 1370 died the blessed Salaun or Solomon, commonly called the fool, because he was thought naturally foolish and destitute of reason, never having been able to learn anything but these two words, *Ave Maria*, which he would continually repeat. This poor innocent had made himself a wretched abode under a tree with very low branches, which served him for roof and walls, and there he lived by himself, lying on the bare ground. When he was hungry, he would go to Lesneven (about a mile off) and ask for bread, saying '*Ave Maria*, Salaun a de pre bara'—which means, 'Solomon would fain eat bread'—and then he returned to his home and dipped his bread in a fountain close by, nor could he ever be induced to eat anything else or to sleep elsewhere. When he was cold in winter, he used to climb the tree and warm himself by swinging backwards and forwards from the branches, singing in a loud voice, *O Maria*. And so, from his simplicity, he came to be called 'the fool.'"

The record goes on to tell how, at last, when he died, he was refused Christian burial in consecrated earth, and laid by some peasants under his tree, "like a beast," without the rites of the Church.

"But the good and merciful God, to whom alone it belongs to judge of the end of all men, whether happy or miserable, made it plain, for the consolation of the poor and simple-minded, that Paradise is not only for those whom the world calls wise and understanding, and that the invocation of His Holy Mother is indeed a mark of predestination. For on the night after the burial of this innocent, there grew up miraculously from his grave a lily covered with flowers, though it was near winter time, and on the flowers and leaves were seen these words, as it were, traced and graven, '*O Maria*' and '*Ave Maria*,' which remained till the leaves and flowers fell off. And the fame of this marvel brought together an immense multitude of clergy, nobility, and other folk from all quarters, who resolved to build on the site consecrated by so evident a miracle a church in honour of the glorious Virgin, the invocation of whose Holy Name had proved so effectual."

The church of Folgoet, making allowance for its exceptional splendour, may be taken in some respects as a typical, though a peculiarly beautiful, specimen of the native style of church architecture in Brittany; the granite walls, the perforated towers and spires, the cross transept at the east end without any projecting chancel, are features that recur again and again elsewhere. And this arrangement of the east end, giving the building the form of a T rather than a cross, adds much generally—though at Folgoet it does not offend the eye—to that heaviness of outline so often noticeable in the older parish churches of Brittany, which is also partly caused by the same unbroken line of long low roof extending over nave and chancel, where there is one, and overlapping the side aisles—there are none at Folgoet—without any clerestory. Even the grand old collegiate church of Pont Croix, with its tapering spire, over 200 feet high, visible for miles round, suffers in grace and

dignity of appearance from this defect. It must be said, on the other hand, that these pierced granite spires, of which Ploaré, near Douarnenez, may be cited as an exceptionally perfect specimen, are very common even in little village churches not otherwise at all remarkable, and deserve high praise. No such commendation can be bestowed on the familiar whitewash which imparts a cold and dreary look to the interior of the empty churches; they stand open all day, and the sound almost invariably heard in them of a loud-ticking clock seems to deepen the unearthly silence, which for hours is not otherwise disturbed, except by the intermittent clattering of the *sabots* of a few old women; in the early morning, however, as was observed before, and often in the evening, groups of worshippers of both sexes may be seen kneeling before the different altars. Closely connected, both in site and in character, with the churches are the quaintly-sculptured Calvaries still remaining, sometimes in a mutilated condition, in many of the churchyards, of which that at Plougastel-Daoulas, approached by a very pretty drive along the estuary of the Elorn from Landerneau, is the most elaborate extant example, though it dates only from 1602, and has been allowed to fall into a somewhat dilapidated state. An English gentleman whom I met at Morlaix told me that an antiquarian society, to which he belonged, had undertaken its restoration. It is constructed of the Kersanton stone found in the neighbouring quarries, and raised on a lofty pedestal with scenes from the Life and Passion of our Lord sculptured round the base. Its rude mediævalism of form is strangely out of keeping with the spacious modern church which overshadows it, with a tower commanding an extensive view over the Bay of Daoulas.

If from the parish churches of Brittany we turn to the cathedrals, we shall find that, while retaining many points in common, they are distinguished by a certain stern and stately simplicity of their own from the general type of French cathedrals; the contrast perhaps impressed me the more just after visiting Chartres and Le Mans. Quimper, or as it is properly named from St. Corentin its first bishop, Quimper-Corentin, which is the largest, as St. Pol-de-Léon is the most antique and unworldly-looking of them, bear a strong family likeness to each other. Quimper is rich, though not so rich as Chartres, in painted glass, and both Quimper and Léon have that double cincture of choir aisles which adds so much to the effect both of Chartres and Le Mans, but neither of them can rival the unique and marvellous grace of the latter as viewed from the broad open space beyond the east end. The lofty roof of Quimper Cathedral, which is 120 feet high, with its twin spires rising to more than double that height, as well as the rich sculpture of the western front beneath them, with the equestrian statue of King Gradlon, reputed founder of the see, over the central porch, give it an imposing dignity. The solemnity of the interior is enhanced by the absence—which is happily characteristic of Breton cathedrals—of the tawdry and incongruous ornamentation which disfigures too many

French churches elsewhere. The choir inclines perceptibly towards the north, as is not unusual in Brittany; both high altar and font stand under a massive baldachino, the former of wood richly carved, the latter of stone. Quimper is still an episcopal see, and the bishop was present at high mass and vespers the Sunday we were there. At St. Pol-de-Léon, on the other hand, may be seen in the north choir aisle of the cathedral the kneeling figure of John Francis de la Marche, the last bishop and count of Léon, who died in London in November 1806, five years after the suppression of his see, and after fourteen years' residence in England, from whence his body was removed in 1866 to its present resting-place in his own cathedral. A long Latin inscription records his ancient lineage and many virtues, and how he was employed in the administration of the funds provided, partly by the English Government partly by private benevolence, for the relief of the French *émigré* clergy in this country. He declined, in common with the other exiled bishops in England, to resign his see in obedience to the Papal Brief *Tam multa*, and adhered to what was termed *la Petite Eglise*. The graceful spires of Léon Cathedral, lofty as they are, are somewhat dwarfed by the near neighbourhood of the gigantic Creisker spire, nearly 300 feet high, said to be the work of an English architect, which looks even higher than it is from being attached to a comparatively small chapel, not otherwise remarkable, except for the perceptible inclination of the nave, if I remember right, in a southerly direction. The cathedral, the west end especially, reminds one of Quimper on a smaller scale, but all the stained glass is modern, though mostly good; there is a fine rose-window in the south transept. But, apart from the interest of its separate buildings, "the sacred city" of Léon, in olden times the chief see of Brittany, has a speciality of its own; an atmosphere of unearthly repose, which may be called unique, broods over its desolate granite streets and square and solemn cemetery on the shore of the silent sea. It has been compared to St. Andrew's, the primatial city of Scotland; but even more than St. Andrew's in vacation time—and I have never seen it during the university term—St. Pol-de-Léon looks like a city of the dead.

The other Breton cathedrals which we saw, though possessing each of them a distinct character and history, are inferior in size or in general effect to Quimper and Léon. The abbey of Tréguier was founded in the sixth century, and the episcopal see—now suppressed—in the ninth. The quiet old cathedral in the market-place has a fine triforium and a cloister of the twelfth century opening out of the north transept; none of the old glass has been preserved. There is a still more sombre and antique air about the cathedral of Dol, also now dethroned, which stands at the outskirts of the forlorn looking little town. Its most distinctive feature, which contributes to the stern quaintness of the exterior, is the square ending of the choir and choir-aisles, beyond which extends a small Lady Chapel; the choir-aisles are flanked by side chapels project-

ing laterally as far as the transepts; there is some fine old glass in the east window. Dol, like many other Breton churches, is said to be the work of an English architect, and the style tells in favour of this tradition. Here, as elsewhere, the suppression of ancient sees, once the centres of ecclesiastical life, serves to deepen the actual, and still further, perhaps, the sentimental, air of deathlike stillness and melancholy in these deserted cities, where one is tempted instinctively to whisper to oneself, *Reliquiæ mortis hic inhabitant*. The cathedral of Nantes, which is still the seat of a bishopric, does not certainly deserve Murray's indictment of "an unsightly pile;" but the incomplete state of the two western towers, hardly raised above the lofty roof of the nave (120 feet), is, of course, a drawback to the external effect; still the *tout ensemble* of the nave, with its stately western front, is imposing, though marred internally by the walling off of the unfinished choir. There are one or two good modern churches in the city, but the chief interest of Nantes must always remain the historical one. The castle, formerly the residence of the Dukes of Brittany, does not equal in extent and massive grandeur of proportions that of Angers, built by St. Louis and said to be the finest mediæval castle left standing in France. But it is memorable as the birthplace and early home of Anne of Brittany, who was married there—in a chapel now destroyed—to Louis XII., as also for the hall where Henry IV. signed the Edict of Nantes, and the prison from which Cardinal de Retz effected his escape, and where a century and a half later the Duchess of Berry was for a time immured.

But a deeper and darker interest than any connected with the castle of Nantes attaches to the gloomy Salorges, a long low building about a mile off from it on the right bank of the Loire, opposite the island of Gloriette, originally designed and still used for a warehouse, but converted in 1793 by the infamous Carrier into a temporary prison for the royalist victims of his inhuman cruelty. It was from thence they were drafted off in batches of twenty or thirty at a time, at first by night, but afterwards in broad daylight, to be towed out into the middle of the stream in barges, which were then sunk by opening a trapdoor at the bottom, in what he was pleased to designate *La Baignoire Nationale*. The first victims were twenty-four priests, condemned to transportation, on whom, to cite Carrier's brutal jest, "le décret de déportation a été exécuté verticalement," and some 9,000 persons, including a large proportion of women and children—"louvetaux" and "vipères" he called them—perished in the course of three or four months in these hideous *noyades*; the whole number sacrificed during the year at Nantes—by drowning, guillotine, fusillades, and nameless butcheries of all kinds—amounted to about 30,000. There is a famous saying of his on record, "We will make France a burial-ground sooner than not regenerate the country after our own fashion." And as their fashion happened to be one to which "the most backward district of France," with its old-world notions of loyalty and religion, was obstinately opposed, it had to take

the consequences. But Carrier, too, fell, like Domitian, *postquam cædonibus esse timendus cœperat*. And when, at the next turn of the tide, his masters of the Convention found themselves compelled to arraign the too willing instrument of their sanguinary despotism, his demand for proofs of his guilt was answered, aptly enough—only that his judges had no right to the retort—"Vous demandez des preuves ? faites donc refluer la Loire." The reflux tide of the river had, in fact, vomited out its ghastly burden on the shore, till the putrefying corpses bred a pestilence.

It is "a far cry," not in point of distance or of sentiment, but of outward surroundings, from the Salorges, close to the railway and river on the busy quay of Nantes, where it is difficult to realise, as you gaze on the sunny surface of the waters, that within less than a century so frightful a tragedy was veritably there enacted, to the still seclusion of the *Champs des Martyrs* near Auray, the scene of a yet more treacherous massacre. A double row of pines stretching from the tall memorial cross by the roadside to the little Grecian chapel at the further end of the now disused cemetery marks the spot where, in 1795, about a thousand French soldiers sent from England on the fatal Quiberon expedition, and who had surrendered to General Hoche on a promise of their lives being spared, were shot down in cold blood by order of the Convention, and where for twenty years their bodies lay, till after the Restoration they were removed to their present resting place in a crypt under the *Chapelle Expiatoire* attached to the neighbouring church of the Chartreuse. St. Anne of Auray, about four miles from the town itself, is a more cheerful and popular, but certainly not a more impressive, spot. It is even reported, though the cult only dates from the middle of the seventeenth century, to be the most popular pilgrimage place in Brittany, and on the feast of the patron saint (July 26) a vast throng of votaries from all the country round is poured along the broad dusty road from Auray to St. Anne's. But the place appeals exclusively to the devotional, not at all to the æsthetic, sentiment. There is not much to impress the casual observer in the sacred spring enclosed in a carved stone basin, and still less in the spacious brand-new church, a respectable but rather staring specimen of modern Gothic. Nor is there any beauty in the square paddock at one end of the village, where it is reckoned that from 20,000 to 25,000 persons can hear mass said in the open air at an altar raised on a lofty platform, and approached by two broad flights of steps, one of which—like the *Scala Santa* at Rome—nobody is allowed to mount except on his knees. Three or four pilgrims were thus engaged the Sunday afternoon I was there, and multitudes, I believe, are accustomed to make the slow ascent at the time of the annual *pardon*. But for picturesque effect, both natural and architectural, St. Anne must yield the palm to the lovely but comparatively unfrequented shrines of St. Fiacre and St. Barbe, both of them within easy reach of Quimperlé. The chapel of St. Fiacre, indeed, was sadly mauled during the Revolution, and remains in a very neglected state,

though mass is still sometimes celebrated there ; but the architecture is good, and the fine old roodloft of carved and painted oak is well preserved. The chapel of St. Barbe, perched on a rocky ledge overlooking the Ellé, about a mile from the village of La Faouet, is more striking in construction and in site, but seems to be little cared for by any but the old woman who inhabits an adjoining cottage and keeps the key, who betrayed a laudable anxiety to make up by her enthusiastic devotion during the few minutes we spent in the church for the paucity of worshippers.

These rural shrines, if they have lost something of their former religious prestige, serve at least to recall an aspect of the country too apt to be lost sight of by those whose interest is absorbed in the mysterious charm of its Celtic and mediæval monuments. Quimperlé, situated on the confluence of "the two rivers which flow as harmoniously as their Hellenic names, the Isole and the Ellé," is justly called by Souvestre "the Arcadia of Lower Brittany;" but it receives very scant notice in the guide-books—even in Joanne's, which is much more reliable than Murray—and had we trusted to such authorities alone, we should probably never have visited it at all. The little town itself is very prettily situated on the slope of a hill, and both the churches, of St. Michael on the summit, and St. Cross by the river banks, are in their way remarkable, especially the latter, rebuilt on the model of an older one of the eleventh century, in a style closely resembling the round churches of the Templars in England, only that the choir, raised on several steps over a crypt, is under the central dome, with a nave, Lady Chapel, and apsidal transepts, forming together an equilateral cross round it. But the chief attraction of Quimperlé is the "Arcadian" one. You may roam for miles along the steep mossy banks of the Isole or Ellé, which strongly reminded me of our Devonshire mountain streams, and find fresh beauties at almost every turn ; or, if you pursue your way further up the stream to St. Barbe, already mentioned, or the *Rochers au Diable*, there is much in the general aspect to suggest recollections of Dartmoor. And if Quimperlé and its neighbourhood form the Arcadia of Lower Brittany, scenery no less charming and unlike the average monotonous dead level of northern France may be found in the long reaches of wood and moorland between Carhaix and Huelgoet, or further north on the banks of the sparkling Guier, as it speeds its foaming course from the once impregnable castle of Tonquédec—dismantled by Richelieu—by the narrow tortuous streets, and under the old Gothic bridge of Lannion, and on seawards through a region which is the very cradleland of Arthurian romance. The rocky streams with their deep pools and roaring cataracts and varied fringe of fern, the narrow lanes fenced in with high banks and hedges, or roughly constructed walls of the granite sprinkled far and wide over wood and heathery moor—all these are features of the landscape we associate rather with England than with France, and especially with Devonshire and the Lake district. And thus the old

Armorica * may fairly claim, no less from the character of the soil than of its denizens, the name of Little Britain. For, while there is much to arrest the traveller's attention, as well on antiquarian as on æsthetic grounds, in the ancient Breton towns like Morlaix, Quimper, Dinan—with its mouldering Gothic gateway and long precipitous Rue de Jerzual, once, in an evil day for man and beast, the sole approach from the East—it yet remains true that the main interest of the country, moral and material, lies elsewhere. Old Brittany, it has been truly said, is outside the towns.

The presence of Celtic or, as they are vaguely termed by most writers, "Druidical" monuments—which is, in truth, only a phrase to disguise our ignorance, for of the Druids and their worship we know next to nothing—may be said to be almost universal throughout Brittany. But the most famous and striking of the "dolmens" are congregated near Locmariaker (the place of Mary), and on the adjacent islands of the little Morbihan archipelago, at the mouth of the Auray, while the largest collective groups of "menhirs" are found in the neighbourhood of Carnac (the place of cairns) on the opposite side of the gulf. These menhirs or monoliths—the word *menhir* means a long-standing stone—are single upright stones of various heights, the smaller ones being properly called "peulvans;" and as they could not well be uprooted, some of them have been "christianised by surmounting them with a cross," for, as Souvestre puts it, "the dweller in Morbihan is a baptized Celt";† but this incongruous combination is comparatively rare. The dolmens, or cromlechs, as similar monuments are designated in Cornwall—Souvestre uses the latter term for "Druidic circles" of menhirs—consist of two or more upright stones with others laid over them so as to form a kind of table, the word *dolmen* meaning stone table; but they cannot ever have served for altars, as is supposed by some, though one on the Monks' Island now goes by the name of the Altar of Sacrifice; apart from other objections, they are generally much too high for that. Moreover, there can be little doubt that all of them were originally covered with a barrow or tumulus, as several still are, while from others the earth has been removed, or has fallen away in the lapse of ages, and that they were designed for burial places; recent researches have indeed led in every case to the discovery of human remains under them. The most interesting dolmen, perhaps, is that under a tumulus, on the little islet of Gavv' Innis, about two miles' sail from Locmariaker. The granite walls of the inner cave, which you have to creep into through a narrow passage on hands and knees, are covered with quaint devices, including the S pattern, commonly taken to denote serpent-worship, and which is also found sculptured in similar grottoes in Ireland. This interpretation, however, is not now so generally admitted by

* Armorica is the Latinised form of *Ar-mör-ik*, "the little sea," having thus the same meaning as Morbihan, from *mör*, "sea," and *bihan*, "little."

† It is curious that the Celtic name for the Druids, "Bellec'h," is still applied to Catholic priests in Brittany.

experts, and it is anyhow a point on which antiquarian science has not yet spoken its last word. The Butte du César, on the mainland near Locmariaker, is about the same size as the tumulus on Gavr' Innis, but the sculpture on the walls is scantier and of less curious workmanship. Another large dolmen in the neighbourhood called "The Merchants' Table" has no tumulus over it. The largest known menhir, nearly sixty feet long, is in close proximity to this dolmen, but it is unfortunately broken into four separate fragments lying on the ground.* There is one, however, standing erect near Concarneau, which I did not see myself, reported to be of about equal dimensions.

It is by no means easy to ascertain the original purpose of these menhirs, which have been too hastily assumed to mark, like the dolmens, a place of sepulture; but the late Mr. Miln, who adopted this view, and had spent several years in making excavations at Carnac, was not able to produce a single instance of the discovery of human remains under menhirs, whereas they are constantly found under dolmens, sometimes incinerated and sometimes not. Souvestre speaks of the eleven lines of colossal stones at Carnac, extending for above two leagues, but this, begging his pardon, is an inexact or exaggerated representation. The eleven rows or "alignments" of menhirs at one extremity of the line at Mœnac do not extend for any great distance, and there is rather a recurrence of frequent groups than a continuous succession between Mœnac and Kerlescant at the opposite extremity; nor is there anything to show that the line ever was continuous. These parallel streets or aisles, so to call them, of rude granite columns, averaging from four to eighteen feet in height, do not suggest either to the eye or to the mind a sepulchral or a sacred use; there is nothing to present any resemblance of temple or altar, which has been held to offer a possible explanation of Stonehenge. The appearance, indeed, of this army of stones, as though drawn up in regiments, is not ill represented in the local traditions still current on the spot, that they are the pagan soldiers who pursued St. Corneille, the patron saint of the village, to the seashore, where he turned and changed them into stones. But the original destination of the menhirs, in spite of Mr. Miln's protracted and minute investigations, is a problem that still remains unsolved. His arguments for their sepulchral character appear to me partly irrelevant and wholly inconclusive, and it must be remembered that he did not live to complete his intended work. Their antiquity, indeed, is sufficiently attested by his discovery of three Roman camps near Carnac, in the ramparts of which menhirs were embedded, bearing traces of previous exposure to the weather, in some cases for many centuries. But, so far as we can at present judge, they are at least as likely to have had a civil or military object as a religious one. It would be clearly premature and probably untrue to affirm of the

* Souvestre speaks of it as "*le menhir gigantesque qui s'élève à plus de soixante pieds, et sous lequel des troupeaux se mettant à l'ombre,*" as though it was still erect at the time.

unknown architects of these mysterious dolmens and alignments, what Ruskin says with characteristic grace of the builders of our old Gothic cathedrals, that, while they have carried with them to the grave their powers, their honours, and their errors, "they have left us their adoration." Joanne informs us that Canon Moreau in the sixteenth century counted from 12,000 to 15,000 menhirs at Carnac, the great majority of which must since then have disappeared in the way already explained, if it is correctly estimated that only about one thousand remain standing now. It may be wise therefore for those who are interested in such matters not to run the risk of delaying their exploration till further mischief has been done.

But, if there is reason for urging the English tourist who has never yet been there not to defer his visit to Brittany till modern utilitarianism has made further havoc of its Druidical remains, there is stronger ground for cautioning him against needless delay in the corrosive influences already beginning to work, surely if slowly, on that seemingly fixed and impassive type of mediævalism stamped on the native mind as unmistakably as the life of two successive epochs, social and religious, is impressed on the Celtic monuments of Carnac and the Christian shrines of Folgoet or St. Pol-de-Léon. It has been justly observed by friend and foe alike that "the ideas of '89" involved not merely a new departure in politics, but a new way of understanding life altogether, or, as De Maistre expresses it, "a new religion." To that religion Brittany till of late has remained entirely a stranger. It is still a religious country in the old sense of the word, or, as hostile critics have bitterly complained, "it still believes in its priests." *Quel torrent révolutionnaire que cette Loire!* exclaimed Carrier as he gazed on the *noyades*, "enraptured," says Michelet, "with the poetry of his crime." But the revolutionary torrent engulfed the bodies, not the souls, of the Bretons. "It was a murderous war," to cite Souvestre once more, "between the guillotine and belief, in which the guillotine used its knife, and was beaten." When Jean Bon-Saint-André said to the maire of a village, "I will have your church tower pulled down, that you may have no visible object to remind you of your old superstitions"—my readers will recollect what has been said of the village towers and spires in Brittany—he replied, "You will at least have to leave us the stars, and we can see them further off than the church tower." Even the monarchical sentiment of Brittany is not yet dead, as was shown at the last elections. The first Napoleon changed the name of Pontivy—so called after Ivy, an English monk from Lindisfarne, who founded a monastery there in the fourth century—to Napoleonville, and wanted to make it the capital, but it returned at the Restoration to its old name, and has kept it ever since. What, however, *noyades* and *fusillades* wholly failed to accomplish, may, according to the old fable of the wind and the sun, be brought about by the subtler and more penetrating influence of railways, telegraphs, and a cheap press, from which no region of modern France can permanently isolate itself. I do not say that the

change will be rapid, or that it will be complete, and still less do I desire it. The Breton peasant may never succeed in mastering the lesson of combined religious and political Liberalism, taught with an exquisitely French *naïveté* in a popular *Catéchisme du Libre Penseur*, recently published for the express edification of "the masses," who are instructed therein that the superfluous interposition of a Creator and Moral Governor of the Universe may be dispensed with, because "Nature always has been, is, and always will be, *republican*, and therefore fitted to govern herself." But still a change there must and will be, and indeed it is already in progress, though it may fail after all to satisfy the aspirations of Parisian *savans* or politicians of the type of M. Paul Bert. And whatever other effects it may produce, beneficial or the reverse, it must inevitably tend to modify or obliterate what for many centuries have been the distinctive idiosyncrasies of Breton thought and life. The country, as it advances in this direction, will become more civilised, wealthier, possibly happier; but, in proportion as it ceases to deserve the reproach of being "so Gaulish that it is hardly French," it will certainly become less interesting than before.

H. N. O.

Damocles.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "FOR PERCIVAL."

CHAPTER VIII.

GOODBYE.

"Swift from her life the sun of gold declined;
Nothing remained but those grey shades that thicken."



MEANWHILE Miss Whitney was saying to Rachel, "It would be best, perhaps, not to tell Mr. Eastwood that Mr. Lauriston and his cousin have been here."

Rachel looked at her in astonishment.

"I don't want to be untruthful," the elder lady hastened to explain. "But perhaps he might think that if you could see Mr. Lauriston——"

"But it's Charley's own doing," said Rachel. "You said he wasn't to come for two or three days, didn't you? And

he fixed to-morrow afternoon. If he had fixed this afternoon I should have seen him and not Mr. Lauriston."

"I don't know whether it was right that they should have come to-day, I really don't," said Miss Whitney. "It is unfortunate that your great-aunt happened to die abroad. A funeral in the house is very distressing, of course, but it settles all such matters. You keep the blinds down, and you don't see anybody but the dressmaker till it's over. Ah! well," she went on, rousing herself from the contemplation of an imaginary hearse, "I don't suppose Mr. Eastwood will find much fault; I only thought I would warn you in case there might be some little irritation. But I am sure I may safely leave him to you." She nodded, and there was a faint remembrance of archness in her smile.



"GO NOW, PLEASE,"

"It won't make any difference to him; he has his own day," Rachel repeated. "It will be all the same." She turned quickly away, and looked out of the window at the sultry griminess of the London street. It led into a square, and she had a glimpse of two or three trees which displayed their thin, seared foliage against a grey-blue sky.

"I thought Mr. Lauriston would have gone away before this," said Miss Whitney. "I thought nobody stayed in London at this time of year. There *seem* to be some respectable people in the streets; I don't understand it."

The black-clothed figure by the window stirred a little. "Mrs. Latham is here, you see."

"Yes, but didn't you hear? She didn't like her house, she said, and she had a chance of getting rid of it at the half-quarter, so she came up to see about it, two days after she went to Brighton. And she has been kept a fortnight or more, what with one thing and another. She seems pleasant," said Miss Whitney doubtfully.

"Very pleasant," said the listless watcher. "I like her."

"We must mind we are in good time to-morrow," Miss Whitney continued as she came to the window. "Better too early than too late, as I always say. Now, there's a very gentlemanly young man just gone by; I wonder how he happens to be in town towards the end of August. Though, to be sure," she added, slipping her hand under Rachel's arm, "anybody might say the same of Mr. Eastwood. Perhaps our friend just going round the corner has as good a reason for staying."

Rachel turned her head and looked at Miss Whitney with a smile, as in duty bound. She longed to speak out bluntly, and say what it was that Charles Eastwood would hear from her the next day, but experience taught her the price she must pay for such frankness. The moment's gratification would be followed by four-and-twenty hours' endurance of Miss Whitney's surprise, bewilderment, questioning, doubt, mixed up together or following each other, till her head was swimming and her heart sick. If she wished to face Charley with any degree of strength and calmness, she must keep her secret till within a quarter of an hour of his coming, and then avow it with the utmost distinctness, since otherwise Miss Whitney would probably lie in wait on the stairs, to congratulate the young man as he was going away.

It seemed to Rachel, as she stood looking out on the dusty pavement and the glaring sunshine, that the terrible time which Charley had fixed would never come. A minute's thought sufficed to range over all the years that she had ever known, to pass from the madwoman's home by the clump of twisted fir-trees, to the garden where she stood with Charley, to Bucksmill Hill, to Redlands Park, to the hot slope at the cliff's edge where the rest-harrow grew. What lifetimes of weariness and dread might await her in that long procession of chiming hours which must pass her by before Charley's turn would come! Things rose up with strange clearness before her, and became oddly and overpoweringly

visible. The lapse of a day and a night suddenly revealed itself as the turning of the whole world to bring Charley to her side, and she seemed to see the vast ball, with all its seas and continents, swinging round, as if with a gigantic effort, for no other end. She was gazing dizzily at it when Miss Whitney's hand tightened on her arm. "Look, there's a carriage and pair, really very nice. I do wonder at that, unless it's a doctor. I never thought of that. Of course if it's a doctor it doesn't prove anything, does it?"

Rachel agreed that if it happened to be a doctor it proved nothing at all.

In spite of all her forebodings the moments slipped away, dusk deepened into darkness, which gave place in its turn to dusk and daylight again, the sun brightened the opposite windows, and glided imperceptibly from them to shine on hers once more, till she was startled to find that she must speak to Miss Whitney at once, or Charley's knock would be sounding at the door. How she spoke, or indeed what she said, she had the vaguest possible idea, but she saw the gathering perplexity, horror, and doubt on the pale face at which she was looking. "I shall not marry him—I shall never marry," she said, when Miss Whitney threw up her hands suddenly.

"Don't! don't! Listen! There he is! Oh, Rachel, this is dreadful! but don't you think you may be mistaken? Pray consider what you are going to do! Oh, why didn't you tell me before?—we might have talked it over. Oh, I hear them going to the door!—what *will* you say to him? Pray, *pray*, don't be rash! Oh, I can't stop and meet him!" And the poor lady fled with the greater haste, because, as she passed the top of the stairs, she glanced downwards into a dingy passage, rather like a dry well, and saw the maid opening the door to a tall young fellow, who stood with a blaze of yellow sunlight shining on his fair hair and light coat. Charley stepped in, looking hopeful and bright. The sudden shadow bewildered him, so that he nearly fell over the umbrella-stand, and uttered an impatient exclamation under his breath. He was, perhaps, a little more nervous than he would have cared to own, even to himself, and an umbrella-stand is an irrational and trying thing at the crisis of one's life. He recovered himself, however, and followed the servant upstairs to the drawing-room, where he looked round for Miss Whitney, and then saw Rachel standing in her long black dress, with her back to the window.

"Rachel!" he exclaimed, and went quickly towards her, with both hands extended.

She drew back a little. "Don't!" she said. "Please wait a moment."

Charley, with all his faith in Rachel, was quite prepared for a whim or two. Her whims were often rather incomprehensible to him, but he would not contest her right to a few, especially under present circumstances. He stopped short, smiling. "Why am I to wait?" he asked

as he took the chair to which she pointed. "I've been waiting ever so long already, don't you know?"

"Yes. Since last week. Miss Whitney thought——"

"Oh, I daresay Miss Whitney was quite right. Only, you see, I was counting on that Sunday by the seaside when the telegram came. By Jove, I haven't congratulated you yet! I do, with all my heart."

"No, don't congratulate me; I would rather you didn't."

"No? What, isn't it right to congratulate you on anybody's death? I don't mean any harm," said young Eastwood. "I wouldn't wish any one to die; but when it is only a great-aunt, and she *is* dead, and you did not know her—surely there isn't any harm, is there?"

"It isn't that, but I wanted to tell you something about her," said Rachel.

Charley smiled with a slightly perplexed expression. "All right," he replied. "Tell away. But I'd much rather you'd tell me something about yourself. You don't look well."

"Oh, I'm well enough."

"You don't look it, then. Is that all that the sea air has done for you?" He drew his chair a little nearer. "I say, you remember my last letter?"

The girl was growing desperate. What she had to say pressed upon her like an intolerable load, and she could find no words. She looked straight at Charley, put her hand into her pocket, pulled out his letter, and held it towards him.

"Oh, I say! That's very good of you, but wasn't it awfully stupidly written?" he exclaimed, colouring with both shame and satisfaction. "I think you'd better put it on the fire. I never could write letters properly; but I'm glad you got it, and kept it! I had to keep Miss Whitney's," he said with a little laugh. "That was all I got; but there was a message from you in it, that you'd be glad to see me, and so long as that was all right, it was enough for me."

Rachel's white hand, with the letter in it, dropped and rested on the dusky folds of her gown. "That wasn't worth keeping," she said.

"Not for the handwriting," Charley answered, still smiling. "But if you said it, and meant it—you did, didn't you?" he questioned with a sudden anxiety in his voice.

"Yes; I said it, and I meant it."

"Then it was worth keeping if the biggest scoundrel on earth had written it! I knew you would say so—I knew it would make no difference to you. People talk, but Effie and I were sure you would be just the same." He had drawn his chair a little nearer yet, and was leaning forward with his elbows on his knees, looking eagerly at Rachel. "Effie knew you," he said. "And so did I."

"Yes," she answered confusedly.

"I'm poor, I know," said Charley. "And I don't profess to be one of your clever people. But since you were going to let me say what I

could for myself, down by the seaside—on that Sunday I didn't have—I knew you would let me say it now. For you were going to let me say it, weren't you? You knew what my letter meant."

There was no attempt at evasion in her answer. "Yes; I knew what it meant."

"And you said you would see me."

She drew back, feeling that in a moment she would be in Charley's arms, with his lips on hers, unless she could find the words which would not come. "Oh, you are making it so hard!" she said. "There is something I must tell you."

He stopped, looking wonderingly at her. It had seemed to Charley that he was getting on remarkably well, and he did not understand this obstacle. The sense of her first exclamation altogether escaped him, but the "something I must tell you" had a familiar sound.

"Oh, I remember!" he said. "Something about the great-aunt. And I interrupted you; I beg your pardon." He sat up, ready to hear what she had to tell him, a little impatient, yet determined to control himself.

Rachel half started, as she began to speak, at the sound of her own words, but Charley took no notice. She said nothing about her childish fears, nor about the house by the fir-trees and the grey lady. She simply told him what little she knew about the Rutherfords and their unhappy history, in a voice, tremulous at first, which, as she went on, grew almost hard with the effort she made to keep it steady. He listened, respectfully enough, to the misfortunes of her wealthy relations, and when she paused, he sighed.

"By Jove!" he said sympathetically, "they *were* an unlucky lot!" And with that he was prepared to dismiss the Rutherfords from his mind, and return to the more important business of his courtship.

She looked at him with incredulous eyes. The great revelation was a failure. She had been under the impression that she was saying everything, and she had said nothing—nothing at all. It is true that Charley had not been prepared for her tidings as Mr. Lauriston was, but with what intuitive sympathy Mr. Lauriston had divined her first fear! The blankness of her gaze arrested the words on young Eastwood's lips, and he looked questioningly at her, with a faint, half-amused irritation. He did not like to be checked in this mysterious fashion, and yet he felt himself so much stronger than Rachel that he was bound to be patient with her inscrutable fancies. "What now?" he asked, after a pause.

"Charles," she said, "don't you see what difference this must make to me—and to you?"

Even then the first thing which struck him was her use of his name. The unaccustomed "Charles" roused his attention, and rightly, for there was a subtle meaning in it. Not "Mr. Eastwood," as if she held him a stranger and denied his claim upon her, but not the familiar home-

name of "Charley," since she had nothing more to do with his home-life.

"Difference!" he repeated. "That is what everybody said—that it would make a difference."

She started. Was this dread of hers common talk already? In a moment, however, she understood, even before he went on.

"But we were sure it wouldn't—Effie and I. What do you mean? You wouldn't have let me come here to-day if you meant it to make any difference—it wouldn't be fair. And you said just now you knew what I meant." He was evidently growing uneasy, and was speaking as much to himself as to her. "What difference?" he said again.

"Didn't you understand? These Rutherfords were mad."

"Well, what then?"

"And I am a Rutherford, though my name happens to be Conway. At least I have their blood in my veins."

"What then? You may be a Rutherford, but you are not mad."

"No, I hope not. Not at present. I can't tell what I may be."

Charley laughed, but the laugh was not quite spontaneous. "Are you trying to frighten me?" he asked.

"No. Why won't you understand? If this madness is in my blood——"

"Oh, that's all nonsense!" said Charley. "You don't frighten me so. I know all about that. That's the sort of trash doctors talk when they want to get a man off who richly deserves to be hanged. We're all mad, when it's convenient, according to them. You shouldn't think about such things."

"I know I shouldn't," she answered meekly and seriously. "And I shall try not to think about them after to-day. But to-day I must—I have all my life to settle to-day. You must forgive me." She leaned forward, and stretched out her hands in deprecating tenderness. "You know I would have been true to you—you and Effie were right. But now," she fixed her eyes earnestly on his face, "now I can never marry."

Charley stared at her in honest amazement, and threw himself back in his chair. "What do you mean?" he exclaimed. "Never marry, because some people you never saw were cracked? Good heavens! what idiotic folly! Rachel, you don't mean it—you cannot seriously mean that you would sacrifice my love and all my hopes to such nonsense as that!"

"Oh, but I must! I must! Don't you understand? If I could take all the pain, I would——"

"Rubbish!" said Charley, leaning forward in his turn, and catching her hands in his. "You have been letting your thoughts dwell on these miserable fancies till you don't know what you are talking about—you want me to take care of you. My dearest girl, since you are true to me, as I always knew you would be, do you think I am going to let this foolish notion of yours stand between us?"

She tried to draw her hands away, but could not. Then she yielded her hands, and suffered them to lie passively in his, but her eyes withstood him. Yet they were full of the tenderest compassion.

"It is no notion of mine stands between us, it is Fate," she said. The tone as well as the words told of her sad certainty. "I cannot help what I am doing. It breaks my heart——"

"I suppose it is welcome to break mine!" he retorted. "Oh, Rachel, how can you torture me with this nonsense? I never heard anything so absurd in my life. You love me—you have said so—and I am to lose you because your great-aunt wasn't right in her head! You think I'm going to be robbed of my happiness for no better reason than that! Rachel, you can't! Either you are laughing at me, or you must be cracked!" The singular infelicity of this line of argument struck even Charley as soon as the words had passed his lips. "No! I didn't mean that!" he said, colouring, and releasing one of Rachel's hands in his embarrassment. "You know I didn't!"

"Of course you didn't," she answered gently, "and it doesn't matter. You didn't hurt me. It was a very natural thing to say." She looked at him appealingly, humbly, as if she entreated him to understand, and spare her. And yet in her inmost heart she was proud of Charley's incapacity to enter into her feelings, proud of that fearless sanity which was unable to imagine that she could be moved by such morbid fancies. As she looked at the handsome boyish face, confronting her with a perplexed and incredulous expression, she had no contempt for Charley's obtuseness. He had called her shuddering terror "idiotic folly," and she preferred his healthy scorn to Mr. Lauriston's delicate sympathy. It seemed to her that, if Fate had not forbidden it, she, too, might have learned to scorn her fears, with her hand in her young lover's clasp.

Suddenly a light flashed in Charley's eyes, his whole face softened and grew brighter. "Rachel," he said, "what does it all matter so long as I am not afraid? My dearest, I'll face the chance with you, and would, with all my heart, if it were fifty times worse. Only trust yourself to me and I will take care of you. And if the worst came to the worst, do you think I wouldn't take care of you then? It won't come; but trust me, and we'll face the chance together."

She smiled proudly. "I know you would take care of me," she said. "I could trust you if that were all, and I thank you. But I can't marry you. It is impossible." She drew her hand quickly out of his, and rose to her feet. "Oh," she said, "if this pains you, think how it pains me too, and forgive me!"

He got up when she did, and stood obstinately before her, as if he feared she would leave him then and there. "But if you could trust me, and I am not afraid"—he began.

"Yes, I could trust you," she repeated. "It isn't that." She hesitated, looked up at him, and then spoke with sudden resolution. "Do you not see that this is not a question for you and me only, but for those

who are to come after us? I will never marry. I must bear my own fear; it has haunted me all my life, and I suppose it must haunt me to the last. But it shall end with me. Now you understand," she said, turning quickly away. "And you are not angry with me?"

Eastwood stood as if rooted to the ground, unable to find an argument, and yet more unable to believe that his prize was literally escaping from his grasp. He had taken it for granted that Rachel would have her whims and fancies; but then he had always supposed that they would yield, if necessary, to masculine common sense as the one reality. Now he found himself face to face with an obstacle which he could not remove, and yet which seemed to him incredible and unreal. After a moment his mind went back to the words she had uttered, which at the time he had only partially understood.

"You have been afraid all your life? But you never know of these Rutherfords till just now—you said so."

"No," said the girl, "I didn't. But I was afraid before I knew of them; I have always been afraid. I was frightened by a madwoman when I was a child, and I have dreamed of madness ever since. Only I thought there was no cause for it. I hoped I should forget it with Effie and you." Charley stood, moodily thoughtful. She looked at him and then went on. "That is partly what frightens me now, the instinctive fear I had when I knew no reason for it."

"Why, you were frightened," he said.

"Yes, but I don't think most children would have been frightened by such a little thing. It has made my life very sad," she said, with a glance that asked his pity. "Sometimes I hardly knew how to bear it."

"But this is all nonsense!" he exclaimed. "You are worried and tired; you are fancying all this. Why, you never said a word of it to me!"

"No, I didn't think of it so much with you."

"Nor to Effie? Nor to Miss Whitney?"

"No."

"And you expect me to believe that you were afraid all your life and never breathed a word to anybody! Oh, you are exaggerating; you don't think so, but you are. Now that you know of these mad Rutherfords, they have reminded you of your fright when you were a child. If you had ever spoken of it to anybody before you knew of them, it might be a different thing——"

Loathing of the lie which would have been implied by silence, drove Rachel to interrupt him, heedless of consequences. "I never did speak to any one about it," she said, "till last spring."

"Till last spring?" Eastwood's attention was awakened. "Who heard of it then?"

Rachel did not know how pale she was. "I told Mr. Lauriston," she said in a clear voice.

He stared at her for a moment. "Lauriston! you told Lauriston!"

he repeated. Then he stepped backward with a laugh. This was something he could understand, not like all that vague talk of insanity. Charley felt as if he had reached firm ground, and encountered a face he knew, with a familiar smile, mocking him. "So Lauriston is at the bottom of all this!" he said. "I might have guessed it. I beg your pardon, Miss Conway. I've very been dull, but I see now—oh, I quite understand now!"

Rachel blushed, not that she fully understood what Charley meant, but the mere sound of his laugh brought the blood to her cheeks. To him a blush was a confession, quickening his jealousy.

"I might have guessed it!" he said again. "What a fool I've been! So Lauriston was the confidant, and we told him our little secrets last spring? Was he very sympathetic? It must have been a touching scene. He can keep his face straight, can Lauriston."

"What has Mr. Lauriston to do with it? What do you mean? I don't understand you!"

"You needn't ask me, we both know what he has to do with it. At least you know, and I guess—it comes to much the same thing. So my mother was right after all; she told me he was hatching some mischief—damn him! I wouldn't believe her; I said he might do his worst, if only you were true. And so he might!"

"If I were true! *If!* Do you mean that I am not?"

"Better not ask me that either," said Charley. "So you told him last spring, down at Redlands. Good Lord! how blind I was! How did you manage it?" A sudden remembrance flashed across his mind. "What?" he said. "That afternoon when I was safely out of the way, and you met him so unexpectedly?" Rachel, silent in utter bewilderment and horror, looked blankly at him, and he hurried on. "That must have been good fun for Lauriston. I told him down at Redlands how I worshipped you. He must have laughed when he found you were ready for a bit of flirtation the moment my back was turned!"

By a mere instinct the girl faced him, as he pelted her with his angry words. She did not attempt to defend herself. She was scared by the signs of Charley's passion, the veins swelling on his forehead, and the furious indistinctness of his utterance. "You must be mad!" she said in a low voice, "you must be mad!"

"Mad? Yes, very likely. But *you* are sane enough, never fear. Sane enough, and clever enough. I'm no match for you—I only loved you," said Charley, with something that was almost a sob in his voice. But in an instant his anger flared up again. "I understand all that," he cried. "What I don't understand is why you didn't throw me over at once down at Redlands. What was the good of keeping me hanging on all this time? Why did you tell me I might come to you down by the sea? Didn't Lauriston come forward quickly enough? Did you think you could use me to bring him to the point, eh? Or was I just the second string to your bow, if he should fail you after all? Was

that it? And so you let me come here this afternoon, thinking—fool that I was!—that you cared for me; you let me come that you might tell me all that humbugging story about the Rutherfords, which you had settled beforehand with him! Is he here?" said Charley fiercely. "Is he waiting behind the scenes till you have got rid of me?"

Then at last Rachel was driven to find words. "Why do you say such wicked, hateful things?" she said. "You cannot think there is a word of truth in it all—you must know that it is a lie!"

"A lie! No! The lies are on Lauriston's side and yours!"

For a moment there was silence. Rachel stood, resting her hand on the back of a chair to steady herself, and looked up at the young man. "Go now, please," she said in a voice hardly above a whisper. "I cannot listen to this, and I will not answer you—I will not!" With her other hand she made a gesture of dismissal.

Something in the expression of her white lips and dilated eyes sobered Charley. Suddenly, before she knew what he was doing, he was kneeling on the seat of the chair on which she leaned, and had caught her hand. His face was on a level with her own.

"You madden me!" he said. "I don't know what is true if you are not! I frightened you; I saw it in your face, but you will forgive me? Say you will forgive me! You don't know how I loved you; you don't know how I felt when I knew that Lauriston had come between us! How could I tell what I said or did? Rachel, I don't believe you are false. I was mad when I said it. It is all his doing. He has deceived you; he has frightened you with these stories just to part us——"

"No!" said Rachel, trying to draw back.

"Yes!" said Charley. "But he shall not! You will forgive me; I was angry because I loved you so!" His tone, his nearness to her, the unconscious strength with which his hand closed on hers, sent a thrill of troubled feeling through her as she faced him. It was a moment like that moment in the garden, when their lips met, and the world held only herself and Charley. "You will come back to me, you will, you must!" he said. "You will forget what I said; you know we always loved you, always believed in you at home—Effie and I. Speak to me, say you forgive me, don't only look at me!" Charley implored, fastening his eager eyes on her face.

Even the sound of his voice in her ears was half lost in the hurried beating of her heart. She made an effort to obtain self-mastery. "What am I to say to you? What can I say? Let me go!" she cried. He released her instantly and stood up. Later, when the words and incidents of that afternoon came back to her in the clearness of lonely remembrance, she could better understand what Charley's jealous doubts meant. She could see how utterly he misunderstood her. But at the time his anger had burst on her like a blinding tempest, and then his pleading, and his humble obedience, had touched her to remembrance

and pity ; she was bewildered, she hardly knew what had happened. And Charley, for whom she was so sorry, stood silently waiting for her pardon.

"Oh, I forgive you !" she cried. "It isn't I who ought to forgive you anything to-day, but I do. And you forgive me?"

"What?" he asked. "You didn't mean any harm, telling Lauriston. I'm sure you didn't. It was all a mistake."

"Thank you," said Rachel gratefully. "No, I didn't mean any harm, but perhaps it was foolish. Only, you see, I couldn't have told you, Charley ; I used to have happier thoughts with you and Effie. But I never dreamed you would doubt me."

"I never will !" he answered fervently.

"No. And we will be friends," she hazarded.

"Friends !" he repeated, with a dismayed and darkening face. He had been so absolutely certain that Lauriston's influence was the real obstacle in his path, that with Rachel's assurance of pardon came triumph and rekindled hope. His outstretched hand dropped by his side. "You said you forgave me !" he exclaimed. "Are you going to send me away like this? Oh, I know what that means well enough. I shall be out of the way, and Lauriston——"

"Again !" she said. "Is it possible that you do not understand? Mr. Lauriston ! He has been kind, but nothing more ; that is all that anybody can be to me now. He is your friend as well as mine. Why will you insult him and me with these suspicions?"

Eastwood muttered doggedly that he knew Lauriston.

"I think not," she answered.

"Not so well as you do, you mean?"

"As you please." She half turned away. "What have I to do with him, or any one now?" she said with averted face. But after a moment, as if the coldness of her own tone had pained her, she looked round and made one last effort. "I told you I should never marry," she said. "As for Mr. Lauriston, he does not care for me, nor I for him. Oh, why do you make me say it?"

"Wait and see," said Charley, looking down. "Lauriston's game isn't played out yet."

"Mine is," she answered, with a bitterness he did not in the least comprehend. "Think of me as if I were dead. Charley, you wouldn't be jealous of a dead woman, would you?"

"Don't talk like that !" he cried.

"But I am dead," she persisted. "The old time and I are dead together. Think of me kindly as you think of people when they are gone. And now, will you leave me, Charley? I don't feel as if I could talk any more just now."

"But I can't go like this !" he exclaimed. The idea of going home with his story of failure and dismissal was intolerable. If he could have trusted Rachel, there would have been the bitter pain of loss, but at

least there would have been no humiliation. But he did not trust her, he could not, and he was tortured by his unbelief. He felt that Lauriston had outwitted him, that he would be laughed at as a dupe, and he raged in helpless fury at the thought. Later, Rachel could never exactly remember how that interview ended. Nothing remained of it in her mind but a vague and boundless sensation of misery and distaste. Eastwood, always on the point of going, lingered to repeat the protestations, questions, and remonstrances which had been uttered a score of times already. What might have been remembered as pathetically simple, entreaties, touching, though spoken in vain, became a weariness, blurred and confused, and mixed with angry upbraiding. He spoke because he could not stay and keep silence, and he could not resolve to go. His talk was like a tide chafing against rocks, all impotent foam and fury. Rachel had dropped into a chair, and heard him as if in a dream. Her sad eyes followed him as he came and went with impatient steps. He reminded her of old days, but his reproachful voice seemed to have nothing in common with the pleasant sunshine and kindness which had brightened her life. He complained, and she listened hopelessly. Over and over again came the same wearisome words, blunted and ineffectual, which could not pierce or touch. He reiterated his attack till the girl felt as if her very soul were the arena, not of a swift, courteous, fatal encounter, but of a clumsy struggle, prolonged with brutal and useless persistence, till the feelings which Mr. Lauriston had handled as delicately as if they were flowers were like trodden clay under Charley's feet. When at last he went, baffled and boyishly sullen, pausing on the threshold to look back with angry eyes, her first impulse was to rush to the door and make it fast. She turned the key with shaking fingers, not feeling safe till Eastwood's footsteps sounded in the passage below. Hiding behind the curtain, she watched him as he went out into the sunshine, striding moodily up the street with his head down, while his shadow on the glaring pavement accompanied him with long-legged steps, as if there were some malice in its mockery. When he crossed into the square and disappeared, she let the curtain fall into its accustomed place, with a transient thought of the many hands which might have drawn those meagre folds for a moment's concealment, as she had done. Other illusions might have died in that big silent room with its tarnished furniture. The air seemed heavy and dead, as if other sighs of utter hopelessness might have been breathed into it. Rachel threw herself on the sofa, and sobbed in pain and shame and utter weariness, stretching out hands which there was none to take. At that moment she sickened at the mere thought of existence. Nothing was left to her. She had dreaded this interview with her lover, not only for her own pain in uttering the words which must part them, but far more for the thought of his pain. She had wondered how Charley would take it. She had no idea what a man's sorrow might be like, and she had trembled at the possibility of some terrible momentary outbreak of rebellious anguish.

But she had never feared that he would misunderstand her. She had looked forward to this parting as to a supreme hour which would hold faith and friendship even in the bitterness of renunciation, and which, when she looked back to it in later days, would glorify her love. She had not expected fine speeches or attitudes. But she had hoped that she should remember the warm pressure of Charley's hand, the troubled sympathy in his kind eyes, and, perhaps, assurances of constancy, and attempts at consolation and encouragement, worded simply, or even clumsily, but spoken in that honest voice which she liked to hear. He would promise to be her brother, and that Effie should be her sister. Then he would go away. And in course of time he would marry—she would be glad that he should marry—and in his happiness he would perhaps forget that first boyish love which she would always remember. At any rate it would be buried in silence; but it would be hers, like the remembrance of flowers in a bygone spring, and in her lonely life it would be an ever living bond of sympathy between her and all young hearts that loved and hoped around her.

That was her dream, and in reality the parting had been a miserable confusion of wrangling words and hateful suspicions. Rachel, pressing her face against the cushion on which she rested, tried hard not to realise how great a gulf had opened between herself and Charles Eastwood. In her weariness the very thought of him was so distasteful that it seemed to her as if she must have been in some degree false to him. Not false as he had thought, but could she have deceived herself? This was the only love her life could hold, and was it possible that it was a mistake from first to last? Had she given herself away and never really loved at all? She could not tell, but she knew that she dared not look back to the old days which were to have been the treasured remembrance of her life. Charley had never understood her, nor she Charley. Could it be that she had lost both past and future, and that nothing was left to her? Miss Whitney? Even in her misery Rachel could not help faintly smiling. Effie? No, she was lost with Charley. Mr. Lauriston?

Yes; Mr. Lauriston remained. She lifted her hand as she lay, and held it up to the light, looking at the ring with the black stone in it. Charley had looked at that ring more than once during his talk, with a certainty that it was unfamiliar, which was simple enough, and yet with a vague sense that somehow it was familiar too. This had puzzled him, but as he had not happened to connect it with Lauriston, he had taken it for granted that it had come to Rachel from the Rutherfords, and had not spoken of it. Rachel herself had thought of the ring before Charley came, meaning to tell him of it, but had forgotten it later. Now she looked at it dreamily and almost apathetically, holding her hand at a little distance, not touching the ring with the other hand, as a woman touches and turns a ring she loves. After a minute she let her hand fall and lie. Yes; Mr. Lauriston remained, but the taunting iteration with which Eastwood had spoken his name lingered in her ears. "Lauriston!

You told Lauriston! How Lauriston must have laughed!" Was it possible that he had laughed? Rachel's feeling towards him was a perplexity to herself, an attraction which was seldom for any length of time free from a shadow of uneasy doubt. She liked the thought of that afternoon in Redlands Park, less now that she knew that Charles Eastwood had also carried his confidences to Mr. Lauriston. Perhaps he might have had good cause to smile over the two confessions. She imagined no boisterous laughter, but a quiet analytical amusement, which would not prevent his helping her to the utmost of his power.

She determined that she would not think of Mr. Lauriston. She clasped her hands above her head, so that she did not see his ring, and idly watched the yellow sunlight on the wall. There was a restless buzzing of flies on the window panes, and from time to time a street cry, or the rattle of a passing cab. She fancied that she was thinking only of the sights and sounds around her, when all at once she found herself wondering what Mr. Lauriston would have thought of Charley and herself that afternoon. Even as she sprang up and crossed the room, hoping to escape the importunate and intolerable thought by movement, there came a heavy knocking at the closed door, and Miss Whitney's voice asking admission. For an instant the girl paused in the centre of the floor, looking vainly round, like a creature caught and caged. Then, with a half laugh at her own folly, she answered the appeal, and braced herself to endure the inevitable questioning. As she turned the key she foresaw that Miss Whitney, when she heard what had passed, would pride herself on her superior sagacity. Had she not feared some little irritation on Mr. Eastwood's part? "It seems she knew him better than I did," said Rachel to herself.

CHAPTER IX.

ALONE.

MR. LAURISTON, ushered in the next morning, looked round the room for Miss Whitney, as Charles Eastwood had looked the day before, and saw only Rachel, standing by the chimney-piece. She was evidently awaiting him. As he went forward to greet her he had time, with one of his swift glances, to recognise a certain difference in her appearance. She was very tired, any one might see that. And the vague sadness and apprehension, which formerly passed like cloud shadows over her face, had given place to a more definite and settled melancholy. But what impressed him chiefly was something of loneliness in her look and attitude.

"Miss Whitney isn't well," she said, holding out her hand. "She has a headache, and she thought she would lie down."

"I'm sorry to hear that. Had I better come again later? She sent me a message, you know."

"I know. But it was I who wanted to see you."

Mr. Lauriston bent his head slightly. "In that case I'm very much at your service," he said, as he drew a chair forward. "Is it anything I can do for you? You look as if somebody ought to do something for you."

"Why?" said Rachel.

"Well, you look as if you had been doing rather too much for yourself and other people."

"I didn't sleep very well last night," the girl replied. There was a brief pause. "Mr. Lauriston," she said, "Charles Eastwood was here yesterday."

Her eyes met a vivid glance of interest and inquiry, but he looked down instantly, as if he would not press her with a question. "Miss Whitney told me he was coming," he said.

"Yes." Again there was a pause. "He was very angry."

"Angry? How was that?"

"Well," said Rachel, "he didn't believe me. You see it came upon him by surprise. He wasn't prepared."

Mr. Lauriston, still looking down, did not seem ready with a reply, and after a moment she went on. "If you think of it, perhaps it is not wonderful. He came with such different thoughts in his head, and I had done nothing to warn him beforehand." Rachel had tried so hard to defend Charley to herself, that she found it comparatively easy to plead for him to Mr. Lauriston. "It was my fault; I thought it would be easier to tell than to write, and it did not seem so when the time came. But I don't think it was wonderful that he did not understand just at first, do you?"

"I think it would have been wonderful if he had," was the slightly ambiguous reply. "But did he understand at last?"

"No," said Rachel reluctantly; "I'm afraid he didn't."

"And he went away angry," said Mr. Lauriston half to himself. "But, Miss Conway, if you are going to tell me about this——"

She nodded.

"There is a question I must ask. If Eastwood didn't believe what you told him, what did he believe?"

"That is exactly what I want to tell you," said Rachel; "I think you ought to know." She looked him in the face with a coolness which even to herself seemed singular. "Charley does not believe I have told him the real reason. He blames you. Mr. Lauriston, you are *not* to be angry," she said with simple confidence. "He thinks I am not true to him, but that I should have been true if you had not been against him, and persuaded me to give him up."

Mr. Lauriston showed no signs of anger. In fact he smiled. "Eastwood overrates my influence," he said.

"But it was not unnatural," she persisted. "It was my fault for ever troubling you with my foolish fancies. I see now that it was a mistake."

"I am sorry——" he began, but the girl interrupted him.

"It seems as if I were always saying something ungracious, but you must understand, please. It is not because of anything you have done that I say it was a mistake. But I see now that if I meant to tell any one I ought to have told Charley, only somehow I couldn't. I hoped it was all such silly nonsense that it did not matter, but as things have turned out it is different. It was difficult to explain yesterday——"

Mr. Lauriston made a little gesture of assent, and waited for her to go on.

"In fact it seemed that I couldn't explain," she said. "And when I denied it, I felt as if I were insulting you. There are things one ought not to be obliged to deny, but Charley was too startled and angry to think what he was saying."

"Of course he was. But, Miss Conway, what did you want me to do in this matter?"

"Nothing," she said quickly. "But I thought—I was afraid you might meet him."

"Ah!" Lauriston looked up with quick intelligence. "He is in a threatening mood?"

"You must be patient with him," she said, very earnestly. "It was my fault, Mr. Lauriston, and you must bear with him for my sake. You don't like Charley, I know, but you must remember it was hard on him."

"You do me something less than justice," he replied, "if you don't believe that I am sincerely sorry for Eastwood now. As for his want of belief in you—well, I haven't any right to resent that."

"But for yourself, Mr. Lauriston; if he is angry?"

"If I met him, and if he were angry, I would remember what you have said. But I don't suppose I shall meet him, and I don't much think he is as angry to-day. I know Charley's tempers pretty well; they are hot, but they don't last. You may depend upon it he has cooled down, forgotten half he said, and repented of some of the rest. Have you been worrying yourself about this?"

"A little, perhaps," said Rachel. In truth, the thought had haunted her during the long hours of that sleepless night. She had feared some outbreak of violence if the two met. Charley's furious jealousy had terrified her, and when she closed her eyes his face rose up before her in the shadows, as she had seen it when he paused at the door to threaten Mr. Lauriston. At the time his threat had passed unheeded, lost in the storm of his menacing words; but she realised its meaning afterwards, and her fevered fancy dwelt on it, and intensified her recollection, till she feared the worst. Nor was it only Charley's face that haunted her. By a curious divination, though she had never known Mr. Lauriston otherwise than quiet and courteous, she seemed to see him also, not distinctly like the other, but as a pale mask against the background of darkness, floating uncertainly till she fixed her attention on eyes or lips, when the expression became visible. As she lay there, too weak and weary to

control her excited imagination, she seemed to see how Charles Eastwood's utmost fury would be that of a brute, and Adam Lauriston's that of a devil. Of course the morning light banished these grotesquely exaggerated terrors, and brought saner thoughts, though enough un-casiness remained to make her anxious to see Mr. Lauriston, and speak a word of warning. But even the morning's apprehension seemed absurd when Mr. Lauriston was actually before her, looking much as usual, and saying in his quiet voice that he knew Charley's tempers pretty well. Rachel was half ashamed of her own fancies, and half frightened at their fantastic madness, as she allowed that she had worried herself about this matter "a little, perhaps."

"Then pray don't do so any more. Eastwood and I are not going to quarrel. What makes you think I don't like him?"

"Well, you don't," she said unanswerably.

Mr. Lauriston slightly shrugged his shoulders. "I thought I did, with reasonable limitations," he said. "Not in a David and Jonathan fashion, of course. I never professed that."

"People don't trouble themselves about reasonable limitations in a case of real liking," said the girl. "I don't suppose that you dislike Charley, but you are not quite just to him, I think."

"Very likely not. Justice is about the most unattainable thing going."

"Not intentionally unjust," she said. "I didn't mean that, but I don't think you understand him." A sudden colour dyed her face, and she looked at her companion. "I oughtn't to talk of understanding him," she said in a low voice. "I didn't yesterday."

Mr. Lauriston stooped to pick up his glove. "What are you and Miss Whitney going to do?" he asked, as he threw himself back in his chair, with a glance round the room. "Isn't your business with Goodwin pretty nearly finished by now?"

"Yes. I don't know that there is anything to stay for."

"Then I think you ought to get away into fresher air," he said, looking critically at her pale cheeks and heavy-lidded eyes. "These rooms are gloomy too; all this old furniture must have had a long acquaintance with London dust, and dirt, and fogs. You don't want to breathe the stored-up smoke of bygone years, the ordinary supply is quite sufficient. Have you made any plans yet?"

"I don't know how to make any plans," said Rachel. "I must, I suppose, but I don't know how to begin."

"What does Miss Whitney say?"

"Miss Whitney's plans won't be mine any more," she answered, looking down.

There was a flash of surprise in Mr. Lauriston's eyes. "No?" he said. "Already!"

Rachel laughed. She had not even smiled before, and there was something sad in this brief and sudden laughter. "I'm hard to please,"

she said. "Nobody believes exactly what I want them to believe, unless you do, Mr. Lauriston!"

"What does Miss Whitney believe, then?"

"All that I tell her, and a little more. Miss Whitney is quite impressed with the fact of the Rutherford madness. She has been seriously considering it ever since I told her why I could never marry."

"But what does she say?"

"Nothing, or very little. But she is afraid of me."

Mr. Lauriston sprang up with a hasty exclamation, which Rachel could not catch, but she had an opportunity of seeing his face for a moment under a new aspect. He walked quickly across the room and back before he spoke. "Miss Conway," he said, halting before her, "are you serious?"

"Quite," she answered. "I don't mean it is only that. You see she thought I was going to be married, and of course that would have made a difference. She had made up her mind that we must be parted soon. And now she knows of this she is so dreadfully nervous——"

"Good God!" said Lauriston, still looking down at the girl's white face.

"She doesn't say anything, but she watches me anxiously to see what I am likely to do," Rachel explained. "We can't go on so, you know. I can't live with somebody who wants me to feed myself with a spoon, and Miss Whitney can't live with somebody who may put a dinner-knife to her throat at any minute. It isn't possible."

Mr. Lauriston had recovered something of his ordinary manner. "Well, you wouldn't either of you enjoy your meals," he said drily.

"No. Poor Miss Whitney has the worst of it, I think, so for her sake the sooner it is ended the better. But I don't quite know how to set about it."

"You are so utterly alone!" he said. It was half a question, half an exclamation.

"She will not leave me till I have settled what I am going to do. Mr. Lauriston, you must not be hard on Miss Whitney. She has always been kind to me, and she can't help being nervous, you know. Upon my word," said Rachel with a little laugh, "I think it is wonderfully brave of her to stay with me at all, when she feels like that. Why, it's as bad as if I were shut up with my grey lady!"

She spoke in what was intended for a lightly defiant tone, but there was a touch of painful effort in it in spite of her. "I don't think it's quite a parallel case, is it?" said Mr. Lauriston, with a curious smile. "Well, it doesn't matter. I will respectfully admire Miss Whitney's valour, since you intend to dispense with it, and her, as soon as may be."

Rachel sighed. "I always thought if she and I were parted that there would be the Eastwoods. I never fancied that I should be quite alone. Effie and I used to plan how we would live together, and Mrs. Eastwood often said she felt as if I were one of her girls. Well, that's

all over ! And now the question is, what am I to do ? I must have some lady to live with me ; ought I to advertise ? ”

“ That would be one way, no doubt,” said Mr. Lauriston, sitting down again in the same low chair on which Charles Eastwood had knelt while he begged Rachel to forgive him. He leaned back, and his head rested just where their clasped hands had been. “ One way, but hardly the best. You must be careful, you and Miss Whitney, I mean.”

“ I don’t see any other way,” Rachel replied. “ And if I do advertise, you will have to write the advertisement for me. You don’t know how helpless I am, and though, as I said, Miss Whitney will stay with me till everything is arranged, I think you must take it for granted that she has abdicated. We had a talk last night,” the girl coloured as if at some remembrance, and hurried on, “ and I don’t think I must depend on her to manage anything for me. But surely it can’t be very difficult. I want to find a lady who will know about everything for me, and who will be pleasant and kind, and let me go my own way in peace. Can’t I find one like that ? Oh ! Mr. Lauriston, ask your cousin ; ask Mrs. Latham if she knows anybody, will you ? I could trust her ; I think she would understand. I would rather have somebody she knew than just a stranger who answered an advertisement.”

He looked hard at her. “ Why not Mrs. Latham herself ? ” he said.

For a moment Rachel did not speak ; but there came into the clear depths of her grey eyes something that was like a gleam of sunshine on a rainy day. It was the first light of anything like hope or pleasure that had crossed her face since she came into her inheritance, and, faint as it was, it was reflected in Mr. Lauriston’s glance ; yet it seemed to him the saddest revelation of her loneliness, that she should catch so eagerly at this slight bond of acquaintanceship. “ Mrs. Latham ! ” she repeated. “ But she wouldn’t.”

“ I don’t know,” he said, “ but I think she would like it.”

Rachel looked down, smiling to herself, and following out this new idea. Mrs. Latham had pleased her, had seemed to her a woman who would have tact and readiness in little everyday matters, and who would not want to search into deeper springs of thought and feeling. The girl desired to possess her own soul in silence. Her haunting sense of loneliness and dread had overcome this instinct once, and compelled her to accept Mr. Lauriston’s friendship ; but there were times when she resented his presence in the sanctuary to which she had herself admitted him. And even had she wished for sympathy, she saw clearly that, in taking him for her confidant, she had for ever shut herself out from the possibility of frank speech with any other. The mere fact of the Rutherford madness might be told to all the world, but the dusky terror which lurked in all the shadows of her life, and gave the fact its dark significance, could never again be drawn forth and put into words, without a consciousness of Mr. Lauriston as a third in the interview, mute, but with expressive eyes and lips. Such as he was, he was her only possible

friend, and Rachel was glad to think that Mrs. Latham was his cousin. The relationship assured a continued communication between herself and Mr. Lauriston in an easy and matter-of-fact way, which would not be a strain on her uncertain feelings towards him. Such lifelong bonds, if they are not to fray and grow thin, should be formed either of the deepest and truest sentiments, or of the circumstances of daily life which hold people together till habit has united them. It was unnatural that these two should have no common ground on which to meet, except the darkest and most shadowy recesses of the woman's soul, and that they should be bound so closely together with neither custom nor love. Rachel, thinking thus of Mr. Lauriston, looked up and met his eyes.

"Ah!" he said, "I thought you were weighing advantages and disadvantages, but I fancy you had wandered away to something more abstract, had you not?"

"I don't think I need weigh them," she replied, "if Mrs. Latham is willing to try me; but will you ask her?"

"Certainly, if you wish it, or you might ask her yourself. But, Miss Conway, there are one or two things you ought to consider. I think myself the plan is a good one. I believe you will find Laura very pleasant to live with. I don't imagine that there will be any very deep sympathy between you——"

"I don't want it," said Rachel hastily.

There was a scarcely perceptible pause, and then Mr. Lauriston half smiled as he went on. "But I think you will be good friends, as people use the term. And there is one great advantage, that if you have made a mistake, there will be no difficulty about parting. Laura has her own income—not large, but sufficient to allow her to go her own way as freely as you can go yours. You need have no scruples; you need not feel bound in any way. But on the other hand——" He stopped and looked questioningly at her.

"I don't see what there is on the other hand," she said.

"No? Perhaps you have seen it and made up your mind about it. It is no business of mine, I suppose; yet I feel as if I ought to remind you that, if you live with my cousin, Eastwood will certainly attribute the arrangement to that influence of mine which he over-estimates in such a flattering way. I know better, but perhaps from his point of view——"

Rachel, leaning back in her chair, looked at Mr. Lauriston, and drew her brows down. Her face hardened painfully into decision as he waited. "That will not make any difference," she said slowly.

"So be it."

After a moment she continued, as if she had not heeded his ready assent. "I cannot make Charley believe me. My word is not enough. I was silly enough to think that I myself was enough; that he knew me, and would not want even words. But it seems I was wrong. If this is as you say, I think I would rather do something decisive, and make sure

that it is all over. What business have I to think any more about him now?"

"Well," said Mr. Lauriston, as if he were carrying on the general conversation rather than answering her last speech, "there is no hurry, is there? Suppose you let me know what you think to-morrow. That will give you time to talk it over with Miss Whitney if you like. Laura is stationary for the next few days, so it will be just the same, as far as she is concerned, whether we speak to her to-day or next week."

"I thought she was seeing about a house," said Rachel.

"No; only getting rid of the house she had. She is going to the sea when that is settled, I believe. You might go together and try how you liked each other before you pledged yourselves to anything. Where should you like to go?"

Rachel hesitated over her answer. Places seemed very indifferent to her just then, always provided they were not the places which she had known with Miss Whitney and the Eastwoods. She had an intense desire for something new, but she questioned whether the world held it. There is as yet no "Murray" to guide us to the country where one can travel away from one's shadow, and nothing is quite new in that familiar company. Rachel's vague aspirations were directed towards a world which, by the hazard of an impression, apparently unimportant, yet proving curiously permanent, lay in purple mystery beyond a wide stretch of shadowy moorland. The very road which led to it revealed itself in the moonlight, white, straight, and untrodden. She did not imagine that she was destined to tread that path with Mrs. Latham, or indeed with any human being, but it was to her the symbol of all she longed to discover.

"I don't mind, she said languidly. "I should like to go to some place where I have never been; but that is easy, for I have hardly been anywhere. Anything else that Mrs. Latham liked I should like. You can fancy—can't you?—that if I went to the seaside, I should not care to go up that cliff path again. I feel as if I would not rather go there any more."

"I can quite imagine that," he replied.

Rachel was silent for a moment, leaning back in an easy chair of dusky red. The sombre colour, and her heavy black dress, emphasised the pallor of her clearly-cut features.

"How very tired you are!" said Mr. Lauriston, as he had said a few days before.

"Yes," she answered absently, as if her weariness were so much a matter of course that an allusion to it did not arouse her attention. "I was thinking what places were haunted for me. There is that bit of turf by the cliff's edge, and there is the house where the grey lady lived. It is queer to think that that house is really standing somewhere on the face of the earth. I fancy now and then that some day, when I am least expecting it, I shall find myself driving across that little bridge, with

the water rushing over the stones below, and I shall start and look up, and, as the carriage swings round the corner, I shall see the grey house on the hill-side, and the black fir-trees up against the clouds."

"But don't you know where it is?" he asked in some surprise.

"Well, yes, to a certain extent I do. I could find it, of course, if I tried, because I know where we were living just then. But it was a long drive—twelve or thirteen miles, I should think—and whether we went north, south, east, or west I don't know."

"Possibly it might wear a more commonplace aspect if you did find it."

"Then I would rather not. It would be just as terrible—nothing could alter that. I would rather have it unlike everything else."

"Perhaps you are right," he said. "If our terrors are to continue to exist they may as well be poetical. And are there any more haunted places, Miss Conway?"

"Yes, there is the school where Miss Whitney sent me after mamma died. I was so very miserable there. They were not unkind to me, but I was so utterly alone. Sometimes I used to feel as if all the girls and governesses were just a noisy dream, and only the madwoman and I were real. Yes, before Effie came, that school was certainly one of my haunted places."

"And—Redlands?" said Mr. Lauriston. "Ah! but I ought not to ask that!" For Rachel, hesitating in her turn, raised her eyes, and looked at him with an appealing glance.

"Your park is very beautiful," she said after a pause. "It was such a dim, melancholy day when you showed it to me; I hardly know what it would be in the sunshine. But I remember how good the earth and all the green leaves smelt. I wonder whether it would be as sweet now."

"Scarcely so fresh and green late in August," he said.

"No; but something better than these town trees," she said musingly. Her thoughts went back to the grass, and mossy stems, and shining ivy-leaves of that spring day, and to the great bed of thickly-grown lilies, where Mr. Lauriston stooped and gathered her that handful of flowers, whose penetrating sweetness mixed strangely with her strange fancies. "At least," she said, looking up, "I have only kind memories of Redlands. And if I insisted on taking my own ghost into your park, it wasn't your fault, Mr. Lauriston."

"Perhaps I had talked too much of mine," he said lightly. But he was thinking, as he said it, that there was nothing that he possessed which had not in some measure taken the impression of her sadness. She had told him that his house was too big, and hollow, and full of shadows; and he suspected that, in her thoughts, his garden was only the scene of that hinted story of which he had spoken when he did not know her, and when he was trying to awaken her interest that he might study it. And his park—must not Rachel feel as if the low clouds, that hung so sullenly above its trees that afternoon, were heavy with the bolt which

was to shatter her life a few weeks later? Nothing of his could ever seem new and hopeful to her.

"Where do you think Mrs. Latham is going?" she asked presently, and he promptly came back to everyday life.

He did not know what Laura's plans were, he said. But he talked a little of possible places pleasantly enough, and then rose to go. He left a civil message of regret concerning Miss Whitney's indisposition, promised to be Miss Conway's ambassador to his cousin on the morrow, if she wished it, and was politely bowing himself out when the girl recalled him.

"Mr. Lauriston," she said, "I want to know——"

"Well?" he smiled, as she paused. "But perhaps it is something I want to know too."

"No; you know it. Did you settle this beforehand about Mrs. Latham? Did you plan it, I mean?"

"Yes and no," he answered instantly. "I did not fancy you would live very long with Miss Whitney. I thought she would find the change too great. I did not see why you and Laura should not be friends meanwhile, and then afterwards, if you had cared to make any arrangement——"

"I see," said Rachel. "I thought I should like to know."

"But I did not anticipate this hurried dissolution of partnership, and I have never said a word to Laura," Mr. Lauriston continued. "My idea was only of a distant possibility, if you had become friends."

"I see," said Rachel again.

He waited a moment, but, as she asked no further question, he repeated his goodbye, and went.

Rachel, left to herself, did not watch Mr. Lauriston down the street as she had watched Charley the day before. She went slowly back to her chair and propped her head on her hand, meditating. He had said, when he rose to go, that he feared he was tiring her, but in truth it was only his presence that gave her any feeling of rest. While he was there she had some one to answer her, some one who was ready to offer suggestions, and who, if need were, could help her to resolve. Depressed and burdened as she was, it was impossible for her to turn her thoughts from her own anxieties, and Mr. Lauriston's talk demanded no such effort, but lingered about that central subject, dealing with lighter matters, such as her approaching journey, yet always with an underlying remembrance. In his absence she saw her life under a more commonplace aspect. Fate was no longer mysterious, working in the shadows of the past and future, but cold, dull, hard-featured, prosaic, something which had to be explained to Miss Whitney. Rachel, as she sat gazing at the hearthrug, was heavily conscious of the good lady in the best bedroom overhead.

Poor Miss Whitney had suffered more in the matter than the girl quite understood. After her own frigid fashion she had loved the

daughter of her dead friend, and Rachel, opening into beautiful womanhood, was the blossom of her narrowly enclosed life. Miss Whitney would have preferred a more formal and sapless flower, but at least she had never spared careful training and guardianship. The tidings of Rachel's fortune bewildered her; she could neither understand nor enjoy so great a change. Still, for Rachel's sake, she rejoiced in her wealth, and at the first moment was not disposed to attach too much importance to the story of the Rutherford madness which accompanied it. She believed that, even among the highest families, instances of the traditional skeleton in the cupboard were not unknown. Such things were very sad, and, according to Miss Whitney, should be hushed up. What frightened her in Rachel's case was the insistence with which the girl dwelt on this terrible thought, as a matter not of the past but of the present. Miss Whitney was compelled to look upon it as a fact, so powerful and so close at hand that it changed the whole course and direction of life, and when it was thus brought home to her she was aghast. Moreover, there was something improper in dragging these hidden mysteries into the light of day, and discussing them with a young man. When she questioned Rachel concerning her interview with Charley, she drew forth an avowal that he had said that he was not afraid, and that his feelings were unchanged. "That was very nice of him," Miss Whitney remarked. "I don't see what you could say to him after that."

"It didn't concern Charley only," Rachel replied.

"No; of course it concerned you too. But you were not changed either."

"Nor me only," was the answer. "Were our children to be born to this same fear of mine?"

"But you couldn't say that to Mr. Eastwood!"

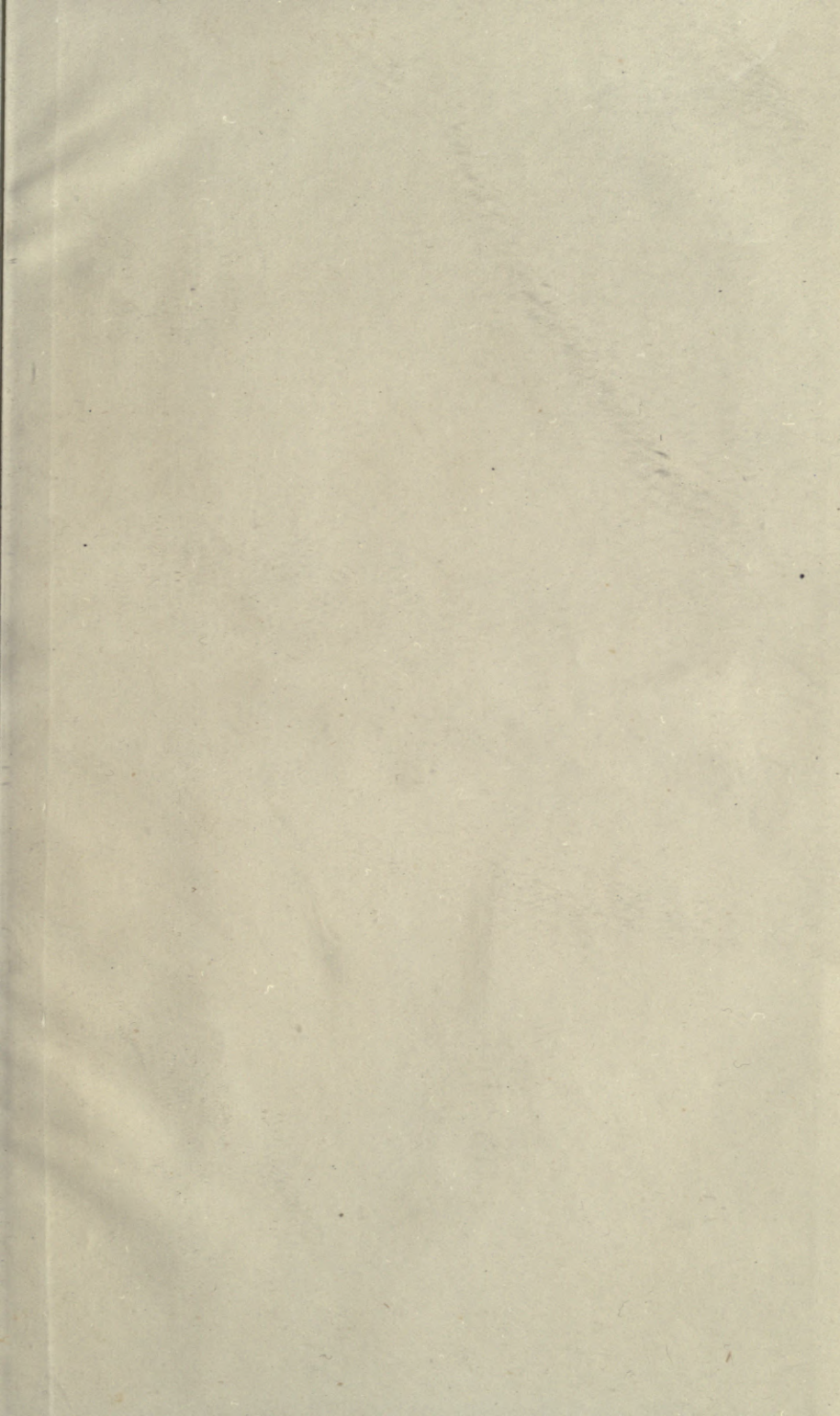
Miss Whitney would have doomed any number of possible children to a lunatic asylum, and would have gone herself resignedly to the stake, sooner than have spoken of them to a young man. She would not even have owned in so many words to herself that she had ever thought of them; and when the girl fronted her, and, with a hot wave of colour flushing her pure face, said, "Yes; I did say it, or something very like it—he understood what I meant," poor Miss Whitney, blushing too, could only cry, "Oh, Rachel!" in low tones of horror.

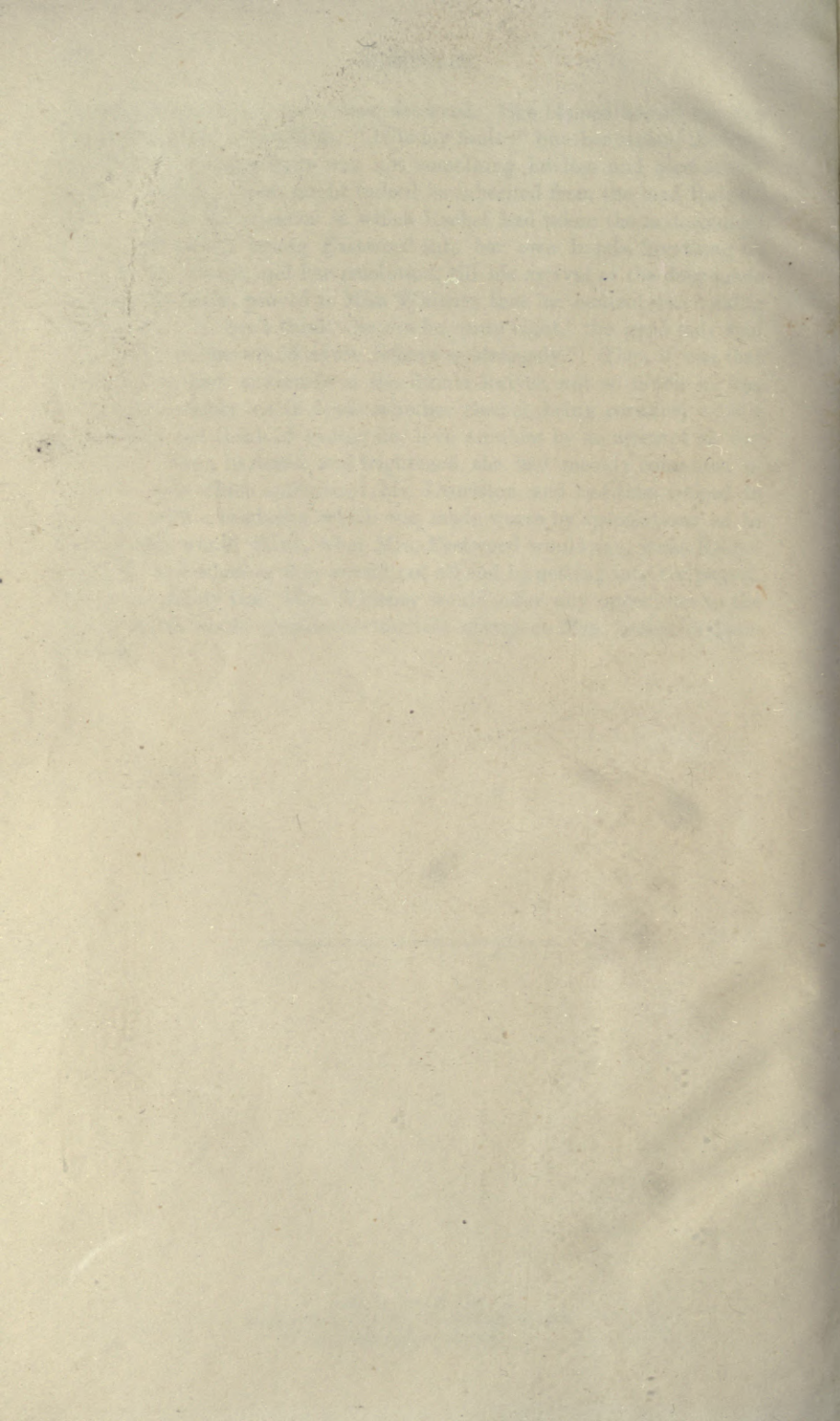
"Well, what else could I do? I had no choice."

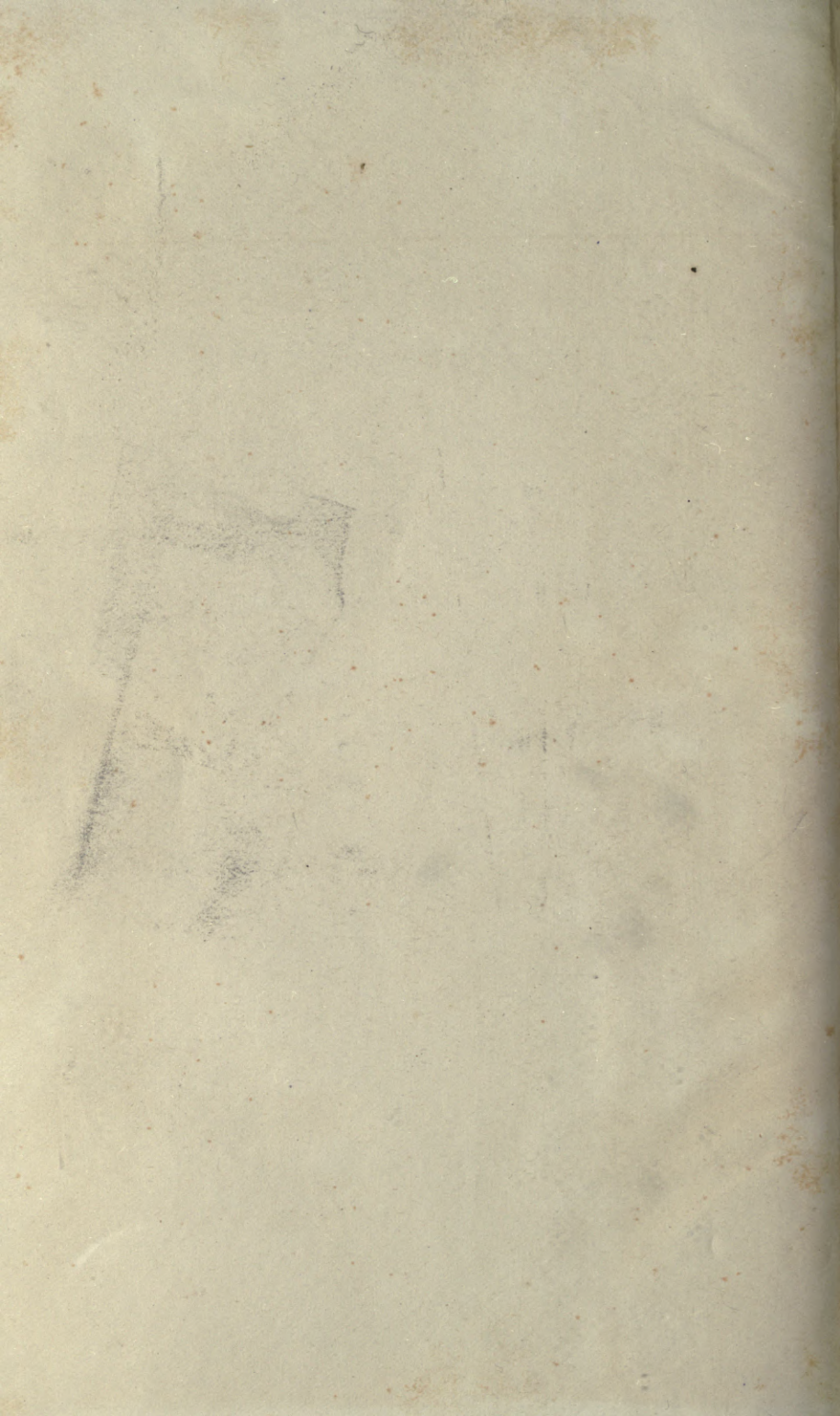
"It is my fault," groaned the elder lady. "I have left you too much to yourself. I ought to have taken more care. You have been so independent; but, oh, Rachel! I didn't think I need tell you that girls don't say such things to gentlemen."

Rachel turned away proudly and gravely; but in Miss Whitney's eyes, which followed her with sorrowful glances, she had lost the bloom of perfectly preserved modesty. There might have been a touch of "improper propriety" in this judgment, only with Miss Whitney there was such a simple and single-minded desire to do what was correct that the

imputation would not have been deserved. She blamed herself ; it was her first impulse to exclaim, "It is my fault !" but her second thought was a doubt whether there was not something lawless and eccentric in the girl's nature, which might indeed be inherited from the mad Rutherfords. The wilful manner in which Rachel had taken the management of her affair with young Eastwood into her own hands, breathing no word of her secret, and her resolution, till his arrival at the door made counsel impossible, proved to Miss Whitney that her control was a thing of the past. "I don't think she can be quite right," the good lady said to herself, "or she would never behave so strangely." Then it was that she began to look anxiously at the dinner-knives, not so much in fear for her own safety, as in doubt whether Rachel, being certainly a little mad, might not think of ending her love troubles by an attempt on her own life. Thus harassed and frightened, she had meekly consented to write the note which summoned Mr. Lauriston, and had then retired to her room with a headache, which was made worse by speculations as to what people would think, what Mrs. Eastwood would say, what Rachel would do, and whether they would not all end by getting into the papers. It was not likely that Miss Whitney would offer any opposition to the scheme which would confide her terrible charge to Mrs. Latham's guardianship.







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