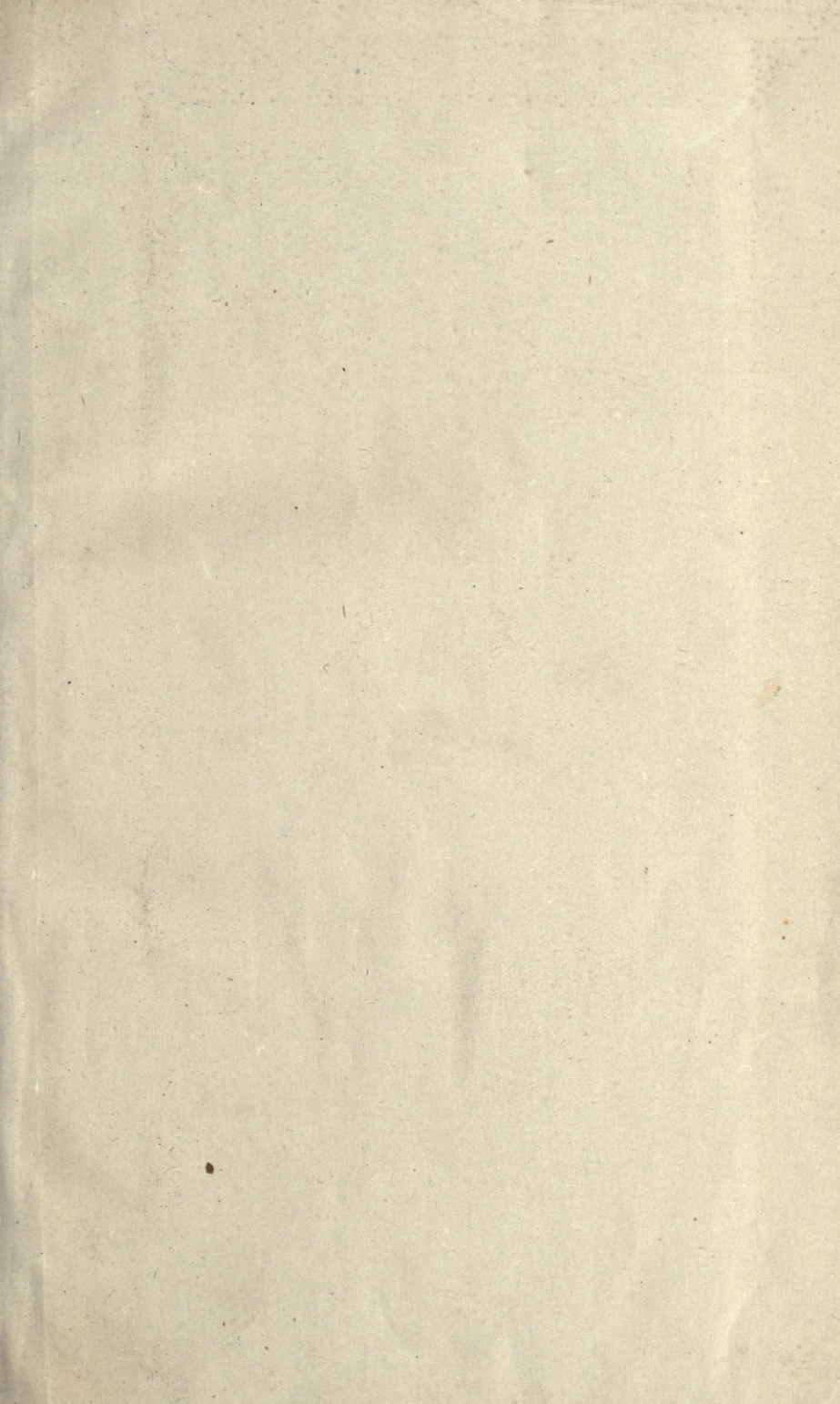


AP  
4  
C76  
no.1-4  
v.85  
c.1  
ROBARTS

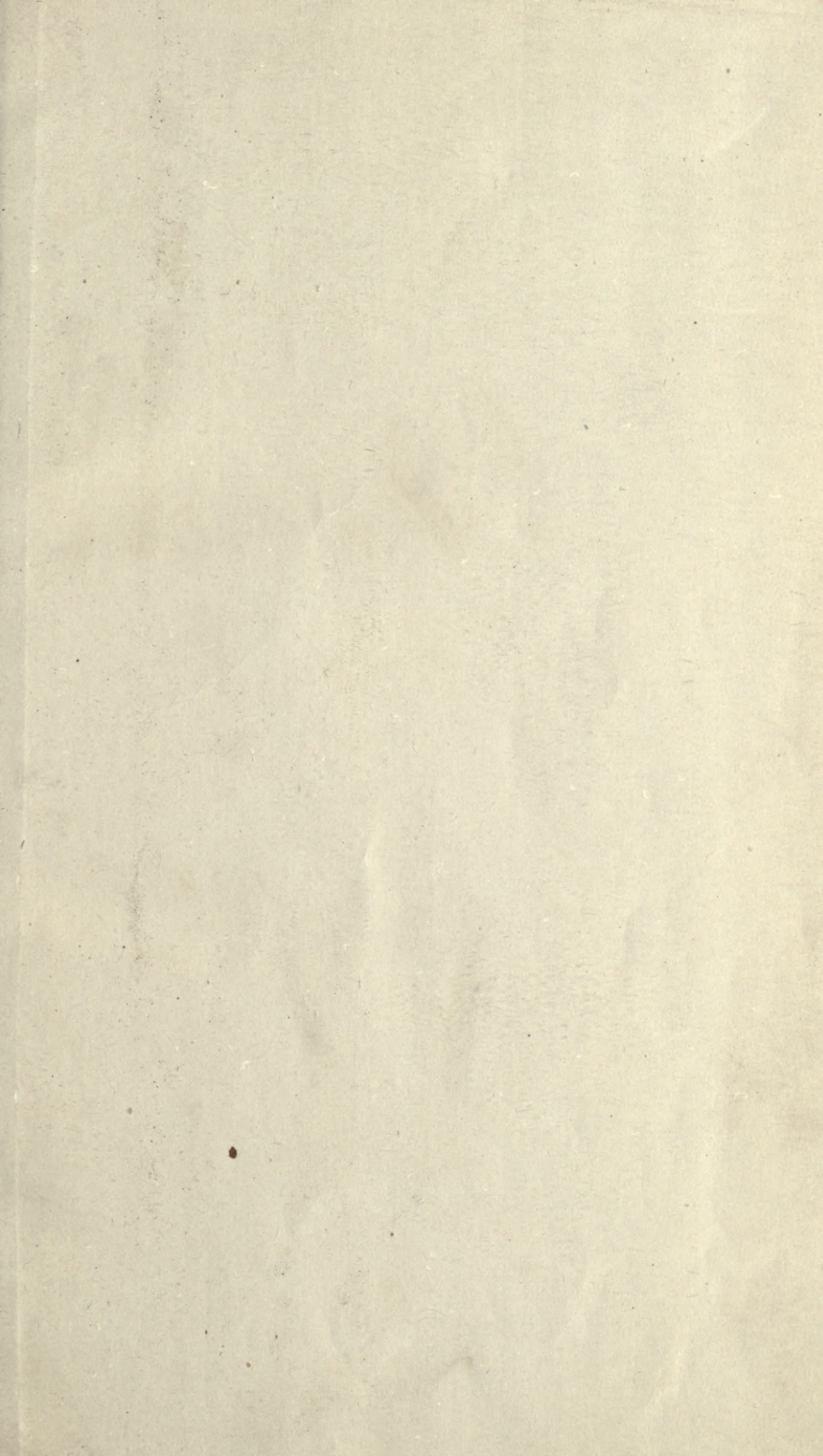






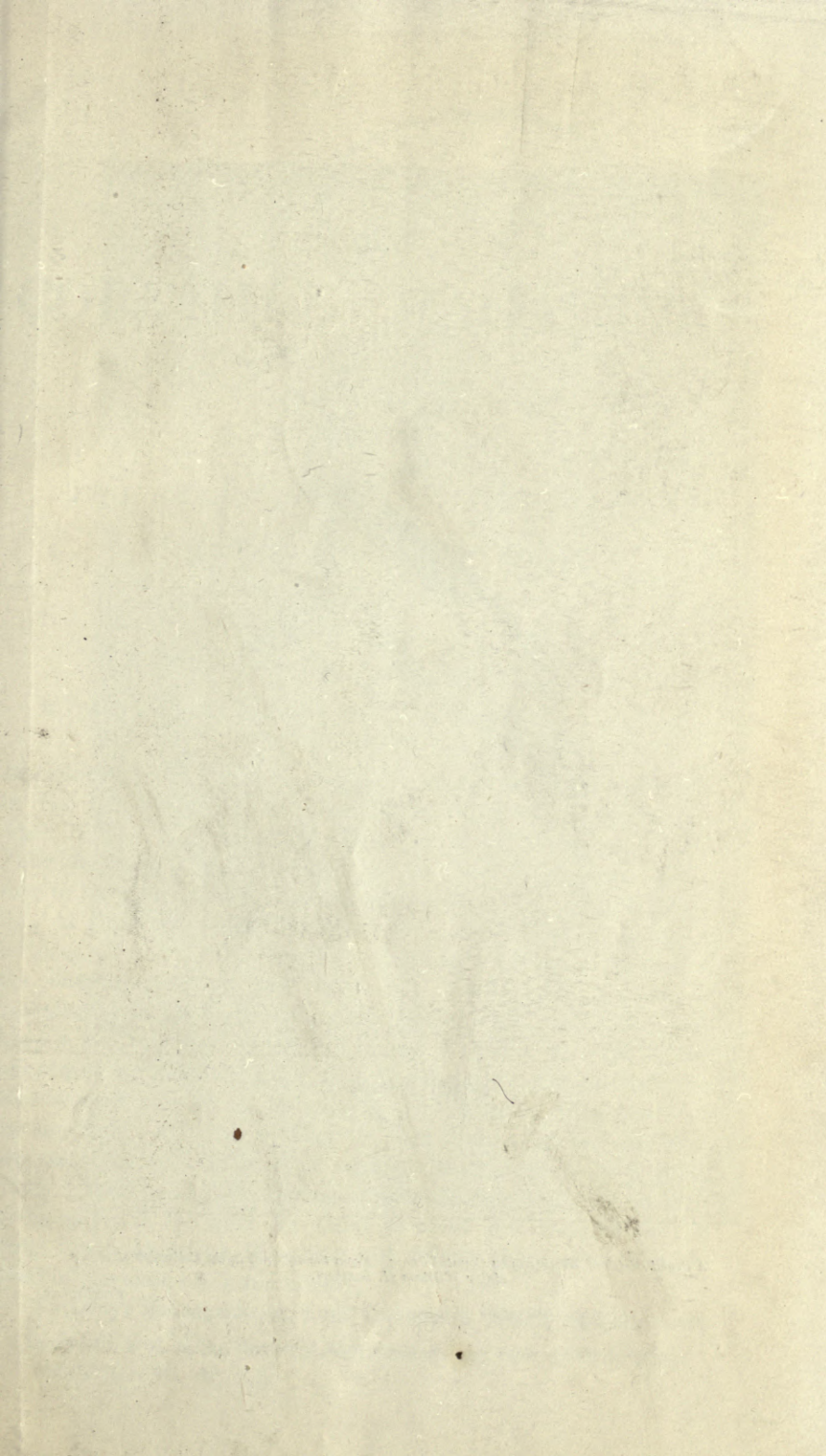


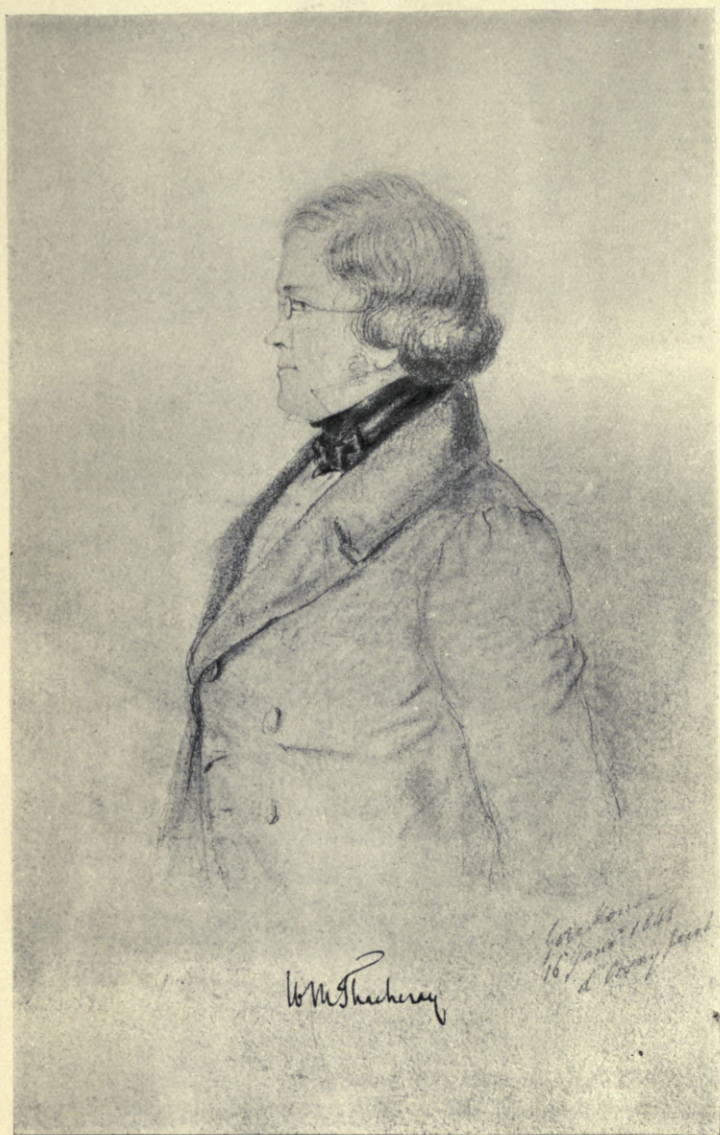












*A Pencil Sketch of Thackeray by Count d'Orsay. From the original in the Collection of Major William H. Lambert.*

*Frontispiece*





AP  
4  
C76  
v. 85  
no. 1-4

# CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

[ v. 85 , no. 1-4 ]

JANUARY 1902. - Apr 1902

## THACKERAY IN THE UNITED STATES.<sup>1</sup>

BY GENERAL JAMES GRANT WILSON.

### II.

#### THE SECOND VISIT (OCTOBER 1855—APRIL 1856).

If Truth were again a goddess, I would make Thackeray her High Priest.  
CHARLOTTE BRONTË.

In October 1855 Thackeray departed on his second lecture tour in the United States, from which he returned to England in April 1856. The subject of the uncompleted lectures on 'The Four Georges'—for he finished the last one in America—seems first to have occurred to him several years previous, while travelling on the Continent. In 1852 he wrote: 'I had a notion of lectures on the Four Georges, and going to Hanover to look at the place whence that race came; but if I hope for preferment hereafter, I mean Police-magistrateship or what not, I had best keep a civil tongue in my head: and I should be sure to say something impudent if I got upon that subject: and as I have no Heaven-sent mission to do this job, why, perhaps I had best look for another. And the *malheur* is, that because it is a needless job, and because I might just as well leave it alone, it is most likely I shall be at it.' In August 1855 Thackeray wrote: 'I am going to try in the next six weeks to write four lectures for the great North American Republic, and deliver them after they are tired of the stale old humourists.'

Two days before sailing, some threescore friends and admirers

<sup>1</sup> Copyright, 1901, in the United States of America, by the Century Company.  
VOL. XII.—NO. 67, N.S. 1

entertained him at the London Tavern, Charles Dickens presiding at the dinner, and proposing the toast of the evening. Thackeray delivered a carefully-prepared reply, which was followed by some complimentary verses by another guest, 'a friend of the O'Mulligan,' recited with great success.

In the course of an after-dinner address delivered in London in 1857, Thackeray said: 'The last time I visited America, two years ago, I sailed on board the *Africa*, Captain Harrison. As she was steaming out of Liverpool one fine blowy October day, and was hardly over the bar, when, animated by those peculiar sensations not uncommon to landsmen at the commencement of a sea-voyage, I was holding on amidships, up comes a quick-eyed, shrewd-looking little man, who holds on to the rope next to me, and says: "Mr. Thackeray, I am the representative of the house of D. Appleton & Co., of Broadway, New York—a most liberal and enterprising firm, who will be most happy to do business with you." I don't know that we then did any business in the line thus delicately hinted at, because at that particular juncture we were both of us called, by a heavy lurch of the ship, to a casting-up of accounts of a far less agreeable character.'

As on his previous visit, Thackeray landed in Boston, where he was most cordially welcomed, and where his lectures on 'The Four Georges' were highly commended by the critics. He renewed intimacies made there years earlier, and formed many new friendships, seeing much of Ticknor, 'Tom' Appleton, Longfellow, Lowell, Dana, and Prescott, whose histories, he said, afforded him more pleasure than Macaulay's; and he added: 'When we make a little fortune it will be pleasant some day to write a nice little history book. But where is the memory of the astonishing Macaulay?'

Who that saw Thackeray in the United States in the 'fifties will ever forget that giant form, crowned by a stately and massive head, covered with almost snow-white hair? Said Fitz-Greene Halleck, who was five feet seven, to a young friend as they approached the English humourist and Bayard Taylor in Broadway: 'Behold those two Brobdingnags coming this way. Together they measure twelve feet and several inches in their stockings.' The youth was presented, a few words of cordial greetings were exchanged, and the giant *littérateurs* passed on. Halleck called his companion's attention to the fact that Thackeray had a particularly small hand, half inherited, his friend Fitz Gerald



suggested, from the Hindu people among whom he was born. A few days later Bayard Taylor received the following note from Thackeray :

‘Wednesday, Clarendon [1855].

‘MY DEAR MR. TAYLOR A card has just been given to me which you must have written without having received my note written and promised to be sent from the Albion to the Tribune yesterday. Young has arranged the Press Club dinner should take place on Saturday 17th instead of 24th and we shall meet there I hope.

‘And don’t, don’t give a dinner at Delmonico’s please. I did yesterday and it’s a sin to spend so much money on the belly. Let us have content and mutton chops and I shall be a great deal better pleased than with that godless disbursement of dollars. . . .’

Notwithstanding Thackeray’s protest, he was bidden to a Delmonico Sunday breakfast a few days later, and of all the eighteen choice spirits who were present at the delightful entertainment, when the chief guest gave ‘Dr. Martin Luther,’ and Curtis and Wallack sang the duet ‘Drink to me only with thine eyes,’ Richard Henry Stoddard remembers that he is the only survivor. It may be mentioned here that the two ‘big fellows’ became great friends. With three possible exceptions, Thackeray admired Bayard Taylor more than any other American that he had met, and a few years later presented to him Schiller’s sword, perhaps his most valued possession ; for Fields relates that on one occasion, when Thackeray desired a little service done for a friend, he remarked with a quizzical expression, ‘Please say the favour will greatly oblige a man of the name of Thackeray, whose only recommendation is that he has seen Napoleon<sup>1</sup> and Goethe, and is the owner of Schiller’s sword.’ Taylor bequeathed the sword to the museum of Weimar, where it may now be seen among many relics of Goethe and Schiller. Thackeray purchased it in Weimar, using it as a part of his court costume when, as a student there, he was invited to the Grand Duke’s ball and other entertainments.

<sup>1</sup> Thackeray as a youth, while on a voyage from India to England, saw at St. Helena a short, fat man in white clothes, wearing a large straw hat. It was the hero whose meteor-like career was closed by Wellington at Waterloo, and whose funeral Thackeray witnessed in Paris. He afterwards described it in the paper entitled ‘The Second Funeral of Napoleon.’

In January 1856 Thackeray was again in Philadelphia, where large audiences listened to his lectures on 'The Four Georges,' and where he renewed his agreeable intimacies with William B.



*From the original in the collection of Major William H. Lambert.*

Reed, Morton McMichael, William D. Lewis, president of the Girard Bank, Thomas J. Wharton, and many others, of whom perhaps the only survivor is Mrs. Caspar Wister.



Thackeray had a particular delight in schoolboys, and an excellent way with them, as several American lads of New York and Philadelphia who experienced his liberality still remember. After his death two of the Philadelphians published appreciative notices of the great author with the titles of 'A Friend of my Childhood,' and 'A Child's Glimpse of Thackeray.' The mother of one of these schoolboys objected to his pocketing the sovereign, or five-dollar gold piece, presented to him by Thackeray, who vainly endeavoured to convince her that this specimen of beneficence was a thing of course in England. The result was that the coin was returned, but three months later the lad was made happy by the receipt of copies of 'Vanity Fair' and 'Pendennis,' across the title-pages of which he saw written, in a curiously small and delicate hand, his name, 'Henry Reed,' with W. M. Thackeray's kind regards, April 1856.' A passage in Dickens's brief tribute to his brother novelist will be recalled: 'I remember his once asking me with fantastic gravity, when he had been to Eton, where my eldest son then was, whether I felt as he did in regard to never seeing a boy without wanting instantly to give him a sovereign. I thought of this when I looked down into his grave, after he was laid there, for I looked down into it over the shoulder of a boy to whom he had been kind.' Another English lad to whom that 'big mass of soul,' as Carlyle described Thackeray, 'with its beautiful vein of genius,' gave a golden guinea, still treasures it among his most valued possessions. He is now known as one of the foremost heroes of the South African War—General Baden-Powell.

At Baltimore, where Thackeray was the guest of John P. Kennedy, he repeated his lectures; also in Richmond, Charleston, Savannah, Macon, Mobile—which city he greatly admired, 'though we did not make a mint of money there'—and New Orleans, where he records: 'The papers here are very civil except one a Hirish paper, which I am told whips me severely: but I don't read it and don't mind it or any abuse from dear old Ireland.' When, during his Southern tour, a Virginia friend inquired of Thackeray if he purposed to give his impressions of America to the public as his predecessor Charles Dickens had done, he promptly replied, 'I shall record my opinions on the Americans in the book that I *do not* intend to write.' In St. Louis the lectures were well received, and the lecturer met two interesting characters—Captain

<sup>1</sup> The late Judge Reed of Philadelphia, son of Professor Henry Reed, lost on the steamer *Arctic*.

Bonneville, immortalised by Irving, and Pierre Choteau, the famous fur-trader, a son of one of the brothers who founded the Western city in 1764. It was at the Planters' House that Thackeray overheard his waiter say to an associate, 'That's the great Thacker.' 'Well, what's to be done?' said the other. 'D——d if I know,' was the response. As indicated in the following letter to William Duer Robinson, Thackeray delivered his lectures on the Georges in Cincinnati, and then set out for New York, sending a few lines *en route* to his family, in which he says: 'How sparkling Lake Erie looked, how pretty the country was, albeit still wintry. But Europe is a prettier country still for me, and I still long for it.'

'St. Louis. Mo. 26 March [1856].

'MY DEAR ROBINSON. I think and hope and trust to be at New York next week. Is the Bower of Virtue vacant? O how glad I shall be to occupy it!—Is there a bed for Charles my man?

'Yours always

'W. M. THACKERAY.

'address care Mercantile Library Cincinnati.'

The Bower of Virtue was No. 604 Houston Street, near Broadway, between Green and Mercer. Its site is now occupied by a warehouse, but on the north side of the street are still to be seen several old-fashioned two-storied brick houses of the same style as the one that sheltered Thackeray for several weeks during his second visit to the United States. At that time Mr. Robinson, J. C. B. Davis, and Samuel E. Lyons occupied what the humourist styles 'the Bower of Virtue.' Mr. Davis, one of the few survivors among Thackeray's intimate American friends, says, in letters to the writer:

'My acquaintance with Thackeray began in a very pleasant way. In the summer of 1849 I went to London, with a letter to Mr. Thomas Baring, the head of the house of Baring Bros., and commonly known as Tom Baring. This brought me the usual invitation to dinner, but as the cholera was then prevalent in London, I found only two other guests. No presentations were made, and I finished my dinner and the cigars which followed it without knowing the names of my fellow-guests. When we came to leave, one of them, finding that I was going past Hyde Park Corner, said that he was going the same way, and we walked along together. When we reached the corner, as I was crossing Piccadilly,



(Madame having been slain at the threshold)  
I will put on the waistcoat and say 'Citizens!  
Respect the Citizeness who gives of her riches!'  
Before you touch the hem of her garment strike through  
the <sup>waistcoat</sup> ~~breast~~ of Titusarch! See - they are of the  
same piece! And the citizens will cheer you  
and your beautiful house and furniture will  
be safe. As for me I will wear your colours,  
as long - as long as they will hold together  
and I am told that there is enough for 2  
waistcoats for a slim man like  
You are much obliged





he said he was to have an early dinner the next day, and afterwards take his guests to Vauxhall: would I come? I answered that I should be glad to come, and was about to add that I had not the slightest idea what his name was, when he handed me his card, told me the hour for dinner, and we bade each other good night. When I got to a street light I saw that I had been spending the evening with Thackeray. "Vanity Fair" was the only novel which he had then published in full, and we were not as familiar with his appearance then as we afterwards became.

'The next day I went to the dinner, and found as companions most of the men who figure on the platform with him in the second number of the twelfth volume of "Punch": Doyle, Tom Taylor, Lemon, Leech, Douglas Jerrold, &c. We went to Vauxhall after dinner, and spent a pleasant evening there. A little later, when Pendennis went to the same place, I understood why we had been there. With the acquaintances I made then I had most friendly relations afterwards. They made my stay of three years in England a most happy one.

'In 1852 Thackeray made his first visit to the United States. I followed about a month later, reaching New York on New Year's day, 1853. I had hardly got into the hotel on Broadway, nearly opposite Grace Church, when he appeared and said he had an invitation for me to a reception party to be given that evening at a villa in the country, and would call for me. He came in a sleigh at the appointed hour, and took me to the out-of-town villa on the west side of Fifth Avenue, between 37th and 38th streets.

'You ask me about our lower floor in Houston Street. Like all New York houses of that day, it contained two rooms (with closets). The front was our dining-room. The closets between were our pantry; and the rear room was occupied as a bedroom by Samuel E. Lyon, Esq., whose family lived in Westchester County. He practised law in New York, where he was in partnership with Alexander Hamilton, grandson of *the* Alexander Hamilton. They had a large business, and often he had to stay over in town. When he did he made his home with us. . . .'

To the Bower of Virtue Thackeray was again heartily welcomed on his arrival in New York, and a corner was found for Charles, who was an excellent specimen of the good English valet. After his departure from New York, Mr. Robinson received a note from the novelist, saying: 'By the time you receive this, dear William, I shall be almost out of the harbour. Let me ask you to accept

this little gift, as a remembrance of the many, many pleasant days and nights we have passed together.' The present was a beautiful silver tankard, simply inscribed, 'W. D. Robinson from W. M. Thackeray, April 26, 1856,' which is still in the possession of Mr. Robinson's family. Another equally prized treasure is a copy of 'The Virginians,' presented by the author, with the following daintily-written inscription :

In the U. States and in the Queen's dominions  
 All people have a right to their opinions,  
 And many people don't much relish 'The Virginians.'  
 Peruse my book, dear R., and if you find it  
 A little to your taste, I hope you'll bind it.

In addition to George Bancroft, who knew Byron, Thackeray became well acquainted with Charles King, president of Columbia College, who, with his elder brother John, was at school at Harrow with Byron and Peel, their father, Rufus King, being then American Minister to the Court of St. James. This fine type of gentleman of the old school expressed to the English author his admiration for Byron's pluck. Once, when Harrow challenged Eton to a match at cricket, Eton refused, saying, 'Eton only plays with schools of royal foundation.' Mr. King remembered Byron saying, 'I am not good at cricket'—alluding to his foot—'but if you get up an eleven to fight an Eton eleven, I should like to be one of yours.'<sup>1</sup> James G. King, a younger brother of John and Charles, was Thackeray's New York banker.

Before sailing for Liverpool, Thackeray gave a farewell dinner at Delmonico's, then on the corner of Broadway and Chambers Street, opposite A. T. Stewart & Co.'s. Thirty-two guests sat down with him, including Reed and several other Philadelphia friends, who came to New York to attend the entertainment. The last survivor said, 'We had a glorious night of it,' and he remembered that the party included Cozzens, Cranch, Curtis, Daly, Dana, Charles A. Davis, Duer, Hackett, Halleck, Hicks, Charles King, Robinson, Taylor, the two Wallacks, Ward, and Young. Alas!

All, all are gone, the old familiar faces.

'Thackeray was in fine spirits,' writes George William Curtis, 'and when the cigars were lighted he said that there should be

<sup>1</sup> Byron played for Harrow against Eton in 1805, scoring 7 and 2 in his two innings. The name of King does not figure among the players in that year.—ED. CORNHILL.





*A Water-Colour Drawing of Himself, by Thackeray in a Letter to Lady Molesworth.*

*To face page 8.*





no speech-making, but that everybody, according to the old rule of festivity, should sing a song or tell a story. James Wallack was one of the guests, and with a kind of shyness which was unexpected but very agreeable in a veteran actor, he pleaded very earnestly that he could not sing and knew no story. But with friendly persistence, which yet was not immoderate, Thackeray declared that no excuse could be allowed, because it would be a manifest injustice to every other modest man at table and put a summary end to the hilarity. "Now, Wallack," he continued, "we all know you to be a truthful man. You can, since you say so, neither sing a song or tell a story. But I tell you what you can do better than any living man—you can give us the great scene from 'The Rent Day.'" There was a burst of enthusiastic agreement, and old Wallack, smiling and yielding, still sitting at the table in his evening dress, proceeded in a most effective and touching recitation from one of his most famous parts. No enjoyment of it was greater and no applause sincerer than those of Thackeray, who presently sang his "Little Billee," with infinite gusto.' As a pendant to the above, Judge Daly, the last of the party, after more than twoscore years, remembered two additional incidents of the evening: that the poet Halleck, remaining in his seat—for, as he said, he could not speak standing—made a remarkably bright little speech, and that Curtis and Lester Wallack sang several duets.

Two days before his departure on the American steamer *Baltic*, which sailed for Liverpool April 24, Thackeray dined with Charles Augustus Davis, meeting, among others, 'lovely Sally Baxter' and the poet Halleck. At that pleasant dinner-party he expressed great regret that he came to the United States too late to meet Cooper, for whose writings he entertained the highest admiration, and referred to the affecting final scene in 'The Prairie' when the dying Leatherstocking said, 'Here!' as surpassing anything that he had met with in English literature.

A few days after Thackeray sailed, Halleck was speaking to a young friend of the exquisite scene in 'The Newcomes' when the dying Colonel drew himself up, exclaiming, 'Adsum!' and he remarked that the similarity between this and the Cooper scene, to which attention had been called at the Davis dinner, was certainly a singular literary coincidence, but undoubtedly undesigned, adding, 'I know of nothing in nineteenth-century fiction likely to outlive them.'

The first message received from Thackeray after his departure from the United States was addressed to Mr. William Duer Robinson.

‘ On board last day. May 7, 1856.

‘ MY DEAR OLD ROBINSON I tell you that writing is just as dismal and disgusting as saying good bye. I hate it and but for a sense of duty I wouldn’t write at all—confound me if I would. But you know after a fellow has been so uncommonly hospitable and kind and that sort of thing—a fellow ought you see to write and tell a fellow that a fellow’s very much obliged and—in a word you understand. Sir you made me happy when I was with you, you made me sorry to come away and you make me happy now when I think what a kind generous friendly W D R you are. You have Davis back in the Bower of Virtue—you’ll fill that jug one day and drink to my health won’t you? and when you come to Europe you’ll come to me & my girls mind, and we’ll see if there is not some good claret at 36 Onslow Square. . . .’

‘ Home. (wiz 36 Onslow Square, Brompton London) May 9.

‘ We did pass the bar, and didn’t I have a good dinner at the Adelphi, and wasn’t I glad to get back to town yesterday, and wasn’t there a great dinner at the Garrick Club (the Annual Shakspeare dinner wh<sup>h</sup> ought to have come off on the 23d. ult. but was put off on acc<sup>t</sup> of a naval review) and didn’t I make a Yankee speech, and oh lor’ Robinson! haven’t I got a headache this morning? I’m ashamed to ask for a sober-water that’s the fact.—And so here’s the old house, the old room, the old teapot by my bedside, the old trees nodding in at the window—it looks as if I’d never been away—and that it is a dream I have been making. Well, in my dream I dreamt there was an uncommonly good fellow by name W D R. and I dreamed that he treated me with all sorts of kindness, and I send him and J C B D.<sup>1</sup> and D D<sup>2</sup> (and what’s L’s name downstairs?<sup>3</sup>) my heartiest regards; and when my young women come home I shall tell them what a deal of kindness their Papa had across the water. So good bye, my dear Robinson & believe me always gratefully yours

‘ W M T.

‘ Tell Jim Wallack that we hadn’t a single actor at the Shakspeare dinner and that F. Fladgate and C Dance send their best

<sup>1</sup> J. C. Bancroft Davis.

<sup>2</sup> Denning Duer.

<sup>3</sup> Samuel E. Lyons.





From my forthcoming drama 'Ally the Assassin'  
or 'The Barrier of Blood.'

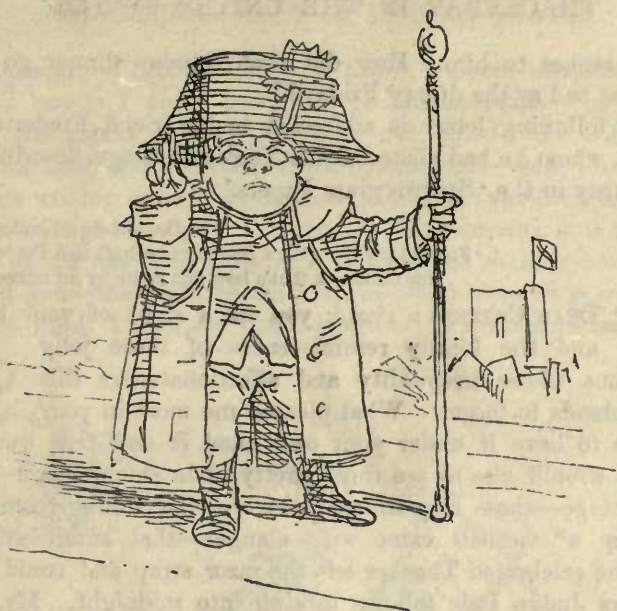


Flintz. Stand, silken Minion!  
By this pistol w<sup>o</sup> never missed  
its aim! By this sword on w<sup>o</sup>  
every notch hath been dented  
on the skull of a prostrate foe  
I bid thee come on!

(They engage)







J. Pummell Beadle of Kensinglou presents his compece to  
Lady Rachel Russell, and begs to Satisfy that the young  
man is known to me who have put out the Inclosed  
Aundbill.

He live in Young St. : as a Famnly: and pays his  
Taxes reglar. The tradesmen know him and trust  
him. And though at Church seldom, must say  
in the Watchus he never Ave been.

Pummell begs his duty to her Grace and as usual  
lets heal flys & Brooms on Sabbos : and Supplies the Nobellaty with  
fish at exactly double the London Prices.

*From the original in the collection of Major William H. Lambert.*

A THACKERAY AUTOGRAPH.

remembrances to him. How did that Sunday dinner go off? Was it as bad as the dreary Friday?'

The following letter is addressed to his friend Frederick S. Cozzens, whom he had visited at his Yonkers cottage, described so humorously in the 'Sparrowgrass Papers.'

'36 Onslow Sq: London.

'Feb. 8 [1857]. (It's a Sunday evening) and I'm waiting for dinner, & that's how you come by an answer.

'MY DEAR COZZENS: Thank you for a sight of your handwriting, and the kindly reminiscences of those jolly Centurions whose hospitality and affectionateness this never intends to forget. What pleased me most in your letter is to have it under your own hand & seal that you are well. I should like to see those pretty little chicks again—that snug cottage—those rosy-tinted palisades—that dining-room cupboard up w<sup>h</sup> victuals came with clangor—that snug bedroom where the celebrated Thacker left the razor strap and could hear for hours Judge Daly talking talking into midnight. My dear old Judge—I haven't forgot what I owe him. . . . Where Bayard may be now the Loramussy only knows—We liked his pretty sisters, we had brief glimpses of a jolly time together—we hope to meet in April or May when I bragged about taking him into the fashionable world. But I hear that I am in disgrace with the fashionable world for speaking disrespectfully of the Georgy porgies—and am not to be invited myself, much more to be allowed to take others into polight society. I writhe at the exclusion. The Georges are so astoundingly popular here that I go on month after month hauling in fresh bags of sovereigns, wondering that the people are not tired & that the lecturer is not found out. To-morrow I am away for 2 months to the North—have found a Barnum who pays me an awful sum for April & May, and let us hope June—shall make £10,000 by my beloved monarchs one way or the other—and then and then then—well I don't know what is going to happen. If I had not to write 20 letters a day on business I would have written to George Curtis, and given him an old man's blessing on his marriage. But I can't write—no, only for business or for money can this pen bite this paper. As I am talking nonsense to you, all the fellows are present in my mind, I hear their laughter & talk, and taste that 44 Chateau Margaux, and that Champagne do you remember?—And I say again I would like to





see those pretty little chicks. So the Athenæum assaulted you—lo you now! I never heard of the circumstance—the shot is fired, the report is over, the man not killed—the critic popping away at some other mark by this time—and you I hope you are writing some more of those papers. Your book & Bayard Taylor's helped me over the voyage—How curious it is writing! I feel as if I was back again in New York and shaking hands with 100 of you—the heart becomes warm—God bless all good fellows say I. Shall I ever see you all again? Providebit Dominus—



*From the original in the collection of Major William H. Lambert.*

A THACKERAY SKETCH.

I forget whether you know Bancroft Davis—The folks here are hospitable to him. He has a pleasant time. Yesterday we elected him into the Garrick—and on the mantelpiece in my dining-room is a bottle of madeira w<sup>h</sup> he gave it me and w<sup>h</sup> I am going to hand out to some worthies who are coming to dine. They have never tasted anything like it—that's the fact. As I go on twaddling I feel I MUST come back & see you all. I praise Mr. Washington five times more here than I did in the States—our people cheer—the fine folks look a little glum but the celebrated Thacker does not care for their natural ill-temper. Only

2 newspapers here have abused me—& I have been quite on their side.

'April 5. To think this was written on Feb. 8 and left in my portfolio! I went out of town the next day only returned April 3—have been killing & eating the Georges ever since. I do not know what this letter is about—I am not going to read so much M.S. if I can help it, but I remember, when I wrote it, how I had a great desire to commune with my old chums at New



*From the original in the collection of Major William H. Lambert.*

#### ANOTHER THACKERAY SKETCH.

York and hereby renew the kindest greetings to them. Tell me, Judge Daly, are you married & ahappy? If so I will send you those books I owe you. Poor Kane! I grieved to think of that hero carried so soon out of our world. There—I can no more—good bye my dear Cozzens—I salute you my excellent Century—G. Curtis & Young<sup>1</sup> & Daly I am yours always

'W. M. THACKERAY.'

The cordial note which follows was written to Bayard Taylor, mentioned in the above letter, who was then in London, receiving

<sup>1</sup> William Young, editor of the 'Albion.'









many kindly attentions from Thackeray, including, a little later, a portrait of Tennyson, with the message accompanying it, to which were added a few lines. Taylor appended his initials and the date, June 1857, so that, as may be seen in the facsimile given on the next page, the same sheet contains the handwriting of the three T's—Tennyson, Thackeray, and Taylor. The original is framed with the portrait, and belongs to Mrs. Bayard Taylor. In his 'At Home and Abroad,' Taylor describes a pleasant annual dinner given by Thackeray in July 1857, to the writers for 'Punch,' at which he and three other Americans were present. The others he describes as 'a noted sculptor, the architect-in-chief of the Central Park, and an ex-editor of the New York "Times."'

'36 Onslow Square 29 May [1857].


'MY DEAR BAYARD I have written a letter to Tennyson containing comments upon your character, which I couldn't safely trust to your own hand—and so, you'll go to Freshwater in the Isle of Wight and he'll be prepared to receive you. The girls are sorry not to see the sisters who must have had a famous time and we here shall be delighted to shake hands with you—A month sooner we would not have let you camp out elsewhere, but I have just pulled part of my house down and have only one bed-chamber where there were to be two. But live as close as you can to us and eat drink smoke come in and out as you please, and you'll be sure to please

'W. M. T.'

Some faint colour is given to the claim made by many Marylanders that John P. Kennedy wrote a portion, if not an entire chapter, of 'The Virginians' by Thackeray's frequent appeals to American friends for aid. These occur in several communications of this period, including the following addressed to William D. Robinson, 'Cashier of the Customs, New York,' which Mrs. Ritchie describes as 'a delightful letter,' adding: 'I think it can be scarcely necessary to contradict the assertion that Mr. Kennedy wrote a chapter<sup>1</sup> in "The Virginians," which is entirely in my father's handwriting. No doubt Mr. Kennedy gave him the facts about the scenery, but I am sure that my father wrote his own books, for no one could have written them for him.'

Mr. Dandridge Kennedy writes from Warrenton, Virginia:

<sup>1</sup> The chapter referred to is that headed 'Intentique ora tenebant.'

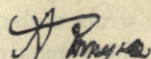
My dear B.T. I was so busy yesterday <sup>Faringford</sup>  
 that I couldn't keep my agreeable appointment <sup>G. W.</sup>  
 with Thompson; & am glad I didn't fetch you to Greenwich  
 Here's a note to: concern you, & I am ever yours 

My dear Thackeray,

June, 1857.  
 B. T.

Your American friend & post-  
 -traveller has never arrived. he has  
 I suppose changed his mind. I am  
 sure I should have been very glad to  
 see him for my 'castle' was never  
 yet 'barricaded & entrenched' against  
 good fellows. I write now this time to  
 say that after the 30<sup>th</sup> I shall not  
 be here.

My best remembrances to your daughters  
 whom I have twice seen once as little  
 girls & again a year or so back.

Yours ever 

From the original in the collection of Mrs. Bayard Taylor.

A LETTER FROM TENNYSON, WITH A NOTE TO BAYARD TAYLOR  
 ADDED BY THACKERAY.

(The words 'June, 1857,' and initials, are Bayard Taylor's.)



'While in this country, Thackeray was, for a time, the guest of my uncle, John P. Kennedy, and during that period my uncle took him on a visit to his brother, Mr. Andrew Kennedy, in

Palace Green,  
Kensington. W.

Dear Lady Londonderry.

I shall be delighted, if you will promise not to put me next to Mr. Strange Soady. The last time I met her at your house (and goodness, mercy knows why) she cut me as dead as ever she could cut. Now suppose, in your kindness and innocence, you were to say 'Mr. de Take the Hon<sup>ble</sup> Mr. Strange Soandso to dinner', and she were to begin cutting me over again? What a painful repast all of us would have, especially poor WMT!

T. O. S. V. P.

*From the original in the collection of Major William H. Lambert.*

LETTER FROM THACKERAY TO LADY LONDONDERRY.

Virginia. I believe that many of the family have credited the chapter you speak of to my uncle, but I cannot positively assert it. Mr. Latrobe was very intimate with my uncle, and, I think,

knew much of his literary and other work, and would be careful in any statement he made. I saw Mr. Thackeray while he was staying with my uncle, and knew that the latter gave him much information as to the Virginia people and country, and that he

I am just going out after my day's work, to buy myself a gold shirt button, and prevent the painful necessity of being sewn up as I was at London House last night.

Yours very sincerely,

W. M. Thackeray



Suppose it had been a poor curate anxious to make a favorable impression as his bishop? What a state the poor fellow would have been in when first obliged to ask to be sewn up by the housekeeper!

*From the original in the collection of Major William H. Lambert.*

LETTER FROM THACKERAY TO LADY LONDONDERRY.

took him on the visit to Virginia that he might see it for himself. I am not sure that they visited the exact spot of Virginia that Thackeray describes, and about which my uncle had written a great deal.'



'Saturday, Jan. 23. 1858. 36 Onslow Sq.

'A sudden gust of friendship blows from this boosom in the direction of Houston Street and my Wobinson. The fact is, Sir, I was in the drawing room just now, and out of a portfolio on one of the elegant rosewood tables, there peeped a photograph, wh represented the honest old mug of W. D. R. How is he? Can he afford to drink claret still? are there any cocktails about 604? I would give a guinea to be there—and now and then get quite a bust of feeling towards folks on your side. Davis's marriage came upon me quite inopportunately; I have had to give presents to no less than 4 brides this year and I can't positively stand no more. The last was Libbie Strong, whose votive teapot is at this present moment in my house, waiting for an opportunity to X the water. What can I tell you about myself? nothing very good, new, or funny. . . . Virginians are doing pretty well thank you, but not so very well as we expected so that I only draw 250£ per month instead of 300£ as the agreement is. But I like every body who deal with me to make money by me so I cede those 50£ you see until better times. I have just paid the last of the Oxford Election bills, and got how much do you think out of 900£?—13£ is the modest figure returned. Then you know J. G King's Sons have somehow forgotten to send me any dividends upon Michigan Centrals & N Y Centrals. So I am not much richer in Jan 58 than I was in Jan 57. that's the fact. But then in compensation I live very much more expensively. Charles, much injured by going to America, has been ruined by the company he keeps next door. Next door has a butler and a footman in livery. Charles found it was impossible to carry on without a footman in livery; so when the girls dine off 2 mutton chops they have the pleasure of being waited on by 2 menials who walk round & round them. We give very good dinners. our house is full of pretty little things. our cellar is not badly off. Sir I am going in a few days to pay 100£ for 18 dozen of '48 claret that is not to be drunk for 4 years. That is the price Wine has got to now. 'Tis as dear as at New York. No wonder a fellow can't afford to send a marriage token to his friend when he lives in this here extravagant way. I fondly talk of going to America in the autumn and finishing my story *sur les lieux*. I want to know what was the colour of Washington's livery—Where the deuce was George Warrington carried after he was knocked down at Braddock's defeat? Was he taken by Indians

into a French fort? I want him to be away for a year and a half, or until the siege of Quebec. If you see Fred. Cozzens or George Curtis, ask them to manage this job for me, and send me a little line stating what really has happened to the eldest of the 2 Virginians (This is genteeler paper than the other, w<sup>h</sup> I use for my "copy" paper.) I only got my number done last night, and am getting more disgustingly lazy every day. I *can't* do the work until it's wanted. . . . Sir I came up stairs now to do a little work before dinner; only I thought how much pleasanter it would be to have a chat with old Robinson! Do you see in the Times this morning the death of Beverley Robinson late a Captain of the R. Artillery? He must be one of you. And now it is 5 minutes to 7: and it is time to go dress for dinner. Hark at the Brougham-horse snorting in the frost!

Then follows this sketch:



#### HE DRESSES FOR DINNER

*From the original lent by Robert Emmet Robinson.*

And the letter runs on:

'This is Wednesday 27. What do you think I did yesterday? gave one of the old '51 lectures in a suburb of London. It was quite refreshing. Went there with my doctor who attended me all last year without a fee—gave him the 25£ cheque w<sup>h</sup> they gave me for the lecture. It was easily earned money wasn't it? How shall I fill up the rest of this thin paper? Ever since the Georges I have been in disgrace with the Bo Monde. My former



entertainers the Earls and Marquises having fought very shy of me. This year they're beginning to come back.

'Thursday 25<sup>th</sup>. Yes, but the 25<sup>th</sup> February. What a time this letter has been a-composing! I have written a number, two numbers, since it began have spent ever so much money grown ever so much older and not a bit wiser—am just at my desk again. . . . If I don't write this letter off now I shall never send it that's flat. It must go, Robinson, and I want you to ask Duer **THIS IS THE ONLY IMPORTANT PART** of the letter whether (I cannot spoil my own mug on the other side) the Michigan Centrals and New York Centrals are ever going to pay, and what becomes of the absent dividend of last year? What are my Michigan Bonds worth now? Will you get me a philosophic answer to these questions please? What more? I often look at your beauteous image. Next week I am going to Macready in the country to read one of those demd old Georges. He offers me 50£ to read in 2 little towns close by and I won't. Why do for nothing what I won't do for 50£? because I am sick of letting myself out for hire—I have just bought a famous little cob that carries me to perfection. Adieu Robinson, Davis, Duer.

'W M T [signed in monogram].'

As the story of 'Henry Esmond' was the fruit of Thackeray's researches for the preparation of his lectures on the 'English Humourists,' so 'The Virginians' originated in his studies for 'The Four Georges' and his second visit to the United States. The first number appeared in November 1857. The reader will recall the opening lines:

On the library wall of one of the most famous writers of America there hang two crossed swords, which his relatives wore in the great War of Independence. The one sword was gallantly drawn in the service of the King, the other was the weapon of a brave and honoured republican soldier. The possessor of the harmless trophy has earned for himself a name alike honoured in his ancestor's country and his own, where genius such as his has always a peaceful welcome.

Concerning this Mr. Prescott wrote:

'Boston, November 30, 1857.

'MY DEAR THACKERAY: I was much pleased on seeing you opened your new novel with a compliment to my two swords of Bunker Hill memory and their unworthy proprietor. It was prettily done, and I take it very kind of you. I could not have

wished anything better, nor certainly have preferred any other pen to write it among all the golden pens of history and romance. I am sure you will believe me. . . .

‘WILLIAM H. PRESCOTT.’



*W. M. Thackeray.*

*From the original in the collection of Major William H. Lambert.*

A THACKERAY SKETCH (POSSIBLY A CARICATURE OF HIMSELF).

Among Thackeray's many American correspondents was George William Curtis, who in 'Harper's Magazine,' immediately after the great author's death, published a touching tribute to his memory. Unfortunately he seems not to have preserved any of the numerous notes and letters received from his gifted friend,



but fortunately we find one written to Thackeray containing pleasant references to 'The Virginians':

'North Shore, Staten Island, June 17, 1858.

(This day eighty-three years ago, we had a tussle on Bunker Hill.)

'MY DEAR THACKERAY—I have received all your kind messages, and we have a hundred times conceived a round robin to you which flew away before we caught it—and oh! there's no end of reasons why I haven't written to a man I love dearly. Then I've been fighting for you in papers, &c., for of course you know how you've been abused by us for "The Virginians" and especially the Washington. It is curious that I have seen a copy of a MS. letter from Edward Mason to Routledge (I think) after the Lee difficulty at the battle of Monmouth, out of which, it was thought by the indiscreet, personal difficulty might grow, in which Mason says, "Have no fear, for I have known W. from boyhood, and he never had but one opinion of the duels, &c." It has been the most tempestuous teapot you ever heard. Meanwhile I have been as happy as a king, with my queen and prince imperial under the trees here on the island. We are all well, and you would not think it was all vanity, this writing, if you could see the eager circle of children and old men and maidens to whom I read the monthly "Virginians," with shouts of merriment and sometimes even a tear. We wonder if you will ever come back again, or if we are henceforth to shake hands with you at this long stretch; but your kindest memory does not go away. I am a sinner never to have sent you a solitary line before now. I give it an edge by two extracts—the one from Philadelphia, the other from New Orleans.—Good-bye. Think of us sometimes who think of you.

'Yours affectionately

'GEORGE W. CURTIS.'

In the following letter Thackeray introduces a young friend to William Duer Robinson, and in the succeeding one refers to his unfortunate quarrel with Edmund Yates, which led to an estrangement with Dickens, who took sides with Yates in the unhappy affair.

'36 Onslow Sq. S.W. July 11. 1860

'MY DEAR W. D. This will be handed to you by my young friend Mr. Gore, son of Mrs. Gore, who is going to Bluenosia to look after property left by his *loyalist ancestors*—this will be a recommendation to him with somebody whose name I shall write pre-

sently on an envelope. Gore has been in India with his regiment and served there like a man. He is also as you will see one of the Cremornaments of our young society. Please show him what you think pretty and profitable for him at New York, of w<sup>h</sup> I never think without a wish to see my trusty kind old W. D. Think of a letter to *You!* going to N. York & coming back to me! Wasn't it too bad? It was a stupid letter, but dull or lively, I am always W D's W T.'

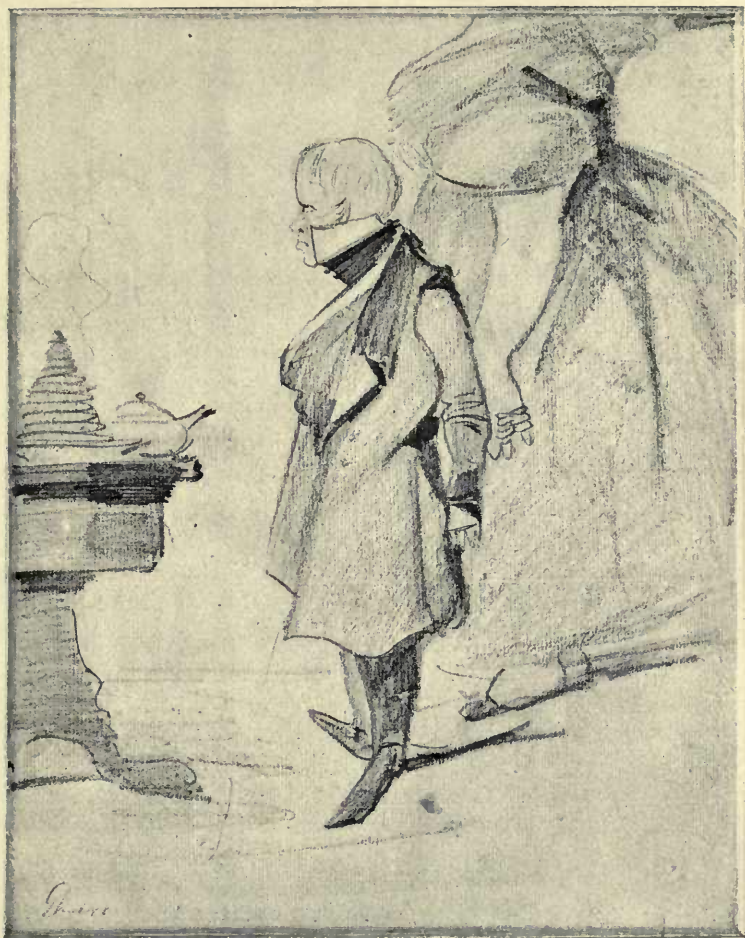
'XXXVI Onslow Sq. S.W. 26 Sep<sup>r</sup>. 1860

'MY DEAR OLD W D R. I fancy *you* write anything against me? what next? The culprit was my old friend Mr. Yates who was turned out of the Garrick because after agreeing to submit the difference between us to the Club, he would not consent to the apology w<sup>h</sup> they ordered him to make. And in consequence of this last business even Dickens has cut him. We don't like men writing about our privacies on this side of the water.

'And what the dickens has happened to Davis? I found on my return home a notekin beginning "dear Sir" and enclosing yours. He was here for some time, and never told me he had come—As soon as I heard it, I went to look for him. He never came to look for me. I thought nothing of it, but that he was busy engaged in some tremendous railroad transaction some one told me—too busy to come after me—and went away out of town with my young folks, and my parents, and my magazine on my back, . . . in dreary health, spirits, condition. We had a little trip to Holland from w<sup>h</sup> I have just returned and find your note. Well, surely, I've written since my last letter was sent back. I know I have—but that I have sent the letter is another *paire de bottes*—I find letters lying about weeks & months after and be hanged to me—I not only am lazy in writing 'em, but incorrigibly irregular in sending 'em. I have done those things w<sup>h</sup> I ought not to have done I have left undone those things w<sup>h</sup> I ought to have done, and there is little health in me.

'But if I don't write to my friends they'll remember what heaps of letters I have to write and forgive me, won't they? I have a magazine once a month, a fever attack once a month,—the charge of old folks and young folks whom I have to take to the country or arrange for at home—a great deal of business, & bad health, and very little order. *I* offended with my friends? I have been looking out for my dear good Baxters, who wrote in the Spring, and here's winter almost and no sign of 'em.





*Thackeray's Sketch of Thiers, from the original in the Collection of Major William H. Lambert.*

*To face page 24.*





‘What news for you? I am making and spending a deal of money, have outlived my health, popularity, and inventive faculties as I rather suspect—am building a fine house and wonder whether I shall ever be able to live in it, and am yours my dear Robinson as always

‘W. M. T.’

In February 1861, Thackeray sends to Robinson, from the Garrick Club, a laconic introduction of Mr.—now Sir W. H.—Russell, the well-known war correspondent, accompanied by some minute drawings on the envelope of a pair of spectacles. Except the date, it consists only of these words: ‘My dear old W. D., Russell is going to you with this, and I wish I was a going too,’ followed by his monogram. It was received by Mr. Robinson enclosed in the following note:

‘MY DEAR SIR: Here is that great big binocled man’s envelope which is supposed to contain a favouring word on behalf of your humble servant. I am sorry I had not got it to recommend myself to you last night.

‘Yours very faithfully,

‘W. H. RUSSELL.’

Many of Thackeray’s manuscripts are owned in America. The venerable Ferdinand J. Dreer of Philadelphia purchased for his friend, George W. Childs, at a cost of twenty-five hundred dollars, the original manuscript of the lectures on ‘The Four Georges,’ and he presented it to the Drexel Institute of that city. Mrs. Ritchie and her brother-in-law, Mr. Leslie Stephen, gave to the library of Harvard University the manuscript of the ‘Roundabout Papers,’ and among the treasures of Evert A. Duyckinck’s collection, bequeathed to the Lenox Library, as already mentioned, is the original of Thackeray’s preface to the Appletons’ American edition of his writings, containing much matter that had not before appeared in book form, and edited with rare discrimination. New York city possesses the Morgan, Reed, and Trowbridge collections of Thackeray, and Philadelphia those of Frederick S. Dickson and Major William H. Lambert, the latter believed by Mr. Dickson to be the completest in the world, and including the finest and fullest set of first editions known; also a complete file of the ‘Constitutional,’ the short-lived English journal that ruined Thackeray in early life. Among Major Lambert’s Thackeray

manuscripts is 'The Rose and the Ring,' with the original drawings begun in Rome in 1854, and issued in England for the following Christmas season; 'The Adventures of Philip'; lecture on 'Swift'; 'Charity and Humour' an address, written in New York; 'Our Street,' about one half; speech at the Commercial Travellers' dinner; notebook of 'The Virginians'; and fragments of manuscripts from most of Thackeray's other books. The manuscript of 'The Rose and the Ring' being shown to Sir Theodore Martin by Mrs. Ritchie, he took it away, returning it mounted and superbly bound in red morocco, additionally protected by double cases of morocco and sole-leather. 'If this work shall escape the wrecks of time,' said Sir Theodore, 'it will tell of such a combined power of pen and pencil as the world has not hitherto known.' The Thackeray autograph letters include the series sent to William B. Reed; above thirty written to Mrs. Brookfield, not included in the two Brookfield volumes purchased by Mr. J. Pierpont Morgan at the Augustin Daly sale for sixteen thousand two hundred dollars, for which there was much spirited bidding; many letters to Macready, to his early publishers, Chapman & Hall, and to his artist friend Richard Doyle.

Major Lambert's original drawings by Thackeray include twelve from 'Vanity Fair'; three from 'Pendennis'; two from 'The Newcomes,' not included in that work, but copied by Doyle, who illustrated it; five from 'The Great Hoggarty Diamond'; twelve from the 'Adventures of M. Boudin'; five from 'The Count and Countess des Dragiés'; and about two hundred and fifty others, together with an 'Original Sketch-Book,' containing many examples of Thackeray's skill as an artist.

The bust of the novelist by his friend and neighbour Baron Marochetti was unveiled in Westminster Abbey on October 25, 1865. Thirty-six years later, through the liberality of Major Lambert, the marble bust was vastly improved, under Mrs. Ritchie's supervision, by the removal of the long, pendent whiskers which Thackeray never wore.



*THE INTRUSIONS OF PEGGY.*

BY ANTHONY HOPE.

## CHAPTER I.

## LIFE IS RECOMMENDED.

THE changeful April morning that she watched from the window of her flat looking over the river began a day of significance in the career of Trix Trevalla—of feminine significance, almost milliner's perhaps, but of significance all the same. She had put off her widow's weeds, and for the first time these three years back was dressed in a soft shade of blue; the harmony of her eyes and the gleams of her brown hair welcomed the colour with the cordiality of an old friendship happily renewed. Mrs. Trevalla's maid had been all in a flutter over the momentous transformation; in her mistress it bred a quietly retrospective mood. As she lay in an armchair watching the water and the clouds, she turned back on the course of her life, remembering many things. The beginning of a new era brought the old before her eyes in a protesting flash of vividness. She abandoned herself to recollections—an insidious form of dissipating the mind, which goes well with a relaxed ease of the body.

Not that Mrs. Trevalla's recollections were calculated to promote a sense of luxury, unless indeed they were to act as a provocative contrast.

There was childhood, spent in a whirling succession of lodging-houses. They had little individuality and retained hardly any separate identity; each had consisted of two rooms with folding doors between, and somewhere, at the back or on the floor above, a cupboard for her to sleep in. There was the first baby, her brother, who died when she was six; he had been a helpless, clinging child, incapable of living without far more sympathy and encouragement than he had ever got. Luckily she had been of hardier stuff. There was her mother, a bridling, blushing, weak-kneed woman (Trix's memory was candid); kind save when her nerves were bad, and when they were, unkind in a weak and

desultory fashion that did not deserve the name of cruelty. Trix had always felt less anger than contempt for her half-hysterical outbursts, and bore no malice on their account. This pale visitor soon faded—as indeed Mrs. Trevalla herself had—into non-existence, and a different picture took its place. Here was the Reverend Algernon, her father, explaining that he found himself unsuited to pastoral work and indisposed to adopt any other active calling, that inadequate means were a misfortune, not a fault, that a man must follow his temperament, and that he asked only to be allowed to go his own way—he did not add to pay it—in peace and quiet. His utterances came back with the old distinction of manner and the distant politeness with which Mr. Trevalla bore himself towards all disagreeable incidents of life—under which head there was much reason to surmise that he ranked his daughter.

Was he unjust in that? Trix was puzzled. She recalled a sturdy, stubborn, rather self-assertive child; the freshness of delicacy is rubbed off, the appeal of shyness silenced, by a hand-to-mouth existence, by a habit of regarding the leavings of the first-floor lodger in the light of windfalls, by constant fittings unmarked by the discharge of obligations incurred in the abandoned locality, by a practical outlawry from the class to which we should in the ordinary course belong. Trix decided that she must have been an unattractive girl, rather hard, too much awake to the ways of the world, readily retorting its chilliness towards her. All this was natural enough, since neither death nor poverty nor lack of love was strange to her. Natural, yes; pleasant, no, Trix concluded, and with that she extended a degree of pardon to Mr. Trevalla. He had something to say for himself. With a smile she recalled what he always did say for himself, if anyone seemed to challenge the spotlessness of his character. On such painful occasions he would mention that he was, and had been for twenty years, a teetotaller. There were reasons in the Trevalla family history which made the fact remarkable; in its owner's eyes the virtue was so striking and enormous that it had exhausted the moral possibilities of his being, condemned other excellencies to atrophy, and left him, in the flower-show of graces, the self-complacent exhibitor of a single bloom.

Yet he had become a party to the great conspiracy; it was no less, however much motives of love, and hopes ever sanguine, might excuse it in one of the parties to it—not the Reverend



Algernon. They had all been involved in it—her father, old Lady Trevalla (her husband had been a soldier and K.C.B.), Vesey Trevalla himself. Vesey loved Trix, Lady Trevalla loved Vesey in a mother's conscienceless way; the mother persuaded herself that the experiment would work, the son would not stop to ask. The Reverend Algernon presumably persuaded himself too—and money was very scarce. So Trix was bidden to notice—when those days at Bournemouth came back to mind her brows contracted into a frown as though from a quick spasm of pain—how Vesey loved her, what a good steady fellow he was, how safely she might trust herself to him. Why, he was a teetotaller too! 'Yes, though his gay friends do laugh at him!' exclaimed Lady Trevalla admiringly. They were actually staying at a Temperance Hotel! The stress laid on these facts did not seem strange to an ignorant girl of seventeen, accustomed to Mr. Trevalla's solitary but eloquent virtue. Rather weary of the trait, she pouted a little over it, and then forgot it as a matter of small moment one way or the other. So the conspiracy throve, and ended in the good marriage with the well-to-do cousin, in being Mrs. Trevalla of Trevalla Haven, married to a big, handsome, ruddy fellow who loved her. The wedding day stood out in memory; clearest of all now was what had been no more than a faint and elusive but ever-present sense that for some reason the guests, Vesey's neighbours, looked on her with pity—the men who pressed her hand and the women who kissed her cheek. And at the last old Lady Trevalla had burst suddenly into unrestrained sobbing. Why? Vesey looked very uncomfortable, and even the Reverend Algernon was rather upset. However consciences do no harm if they do not get the upper hand till the work is done; Trix was already Vesey's wife.

He was something of a man, this Vesey Trevalla; he was large-built in mind, equitable, kind, shrewd, of a clear vision. To the end he was a good friend and a worthy companion in his hours of reason. Trix's thoughts of him were free from bitterness. Her early life had given her a tolerance that stood her in stead, a touch of callousness which enabled her to endure. As a child she had shrugged thin shoulders under her shabby frock; she shrugged her shoulders at the tragedy now; her heart did not break, but hardened a little more. She made some ineffectual efforts to reclaim him; their hopelessness was absurdly plain; after a few months Vesey laughed at them, she almost laughed

herself. She settled down into the impossible life, reproaching nobody. When her husband was sober, she never referred to what had happened when he was drunk; if he threw a plate at her then, she dodged the plate: she seemed in a sense to have been dodging plates and suchlike missiles all her life. Sometimes he had suspicions of himself, and conjured up recollections of what he had done. 'Oh, what does last night matter?' she would ask in a friendly if rather contemptuous tone. Once she lifted the veil for a moment. He found her standing by the body of her baby; it had died while he was unfit to be told, or at any rate unable to understand.

'So the poor little chap's gone,' he said softly, laying his hand on her shoulder.

'Yes, Vesey, he's gone, thank God!' she said, looking him full in the eyes.

He turned away without a word, and went out with a heavy tread. Trix felt that she had been cruel, but she did not apologise; and Vesey showed no grudge.

The odd thing about the four years her married life lasted was that they now seemed so short. Even before old Lady Trevalla's death (which happened a year after the wedding) Trix had accommodated herself to her position. From that time all was monotony—the kind of monotony which might well kill, but, failing that, left little to mark out one day from another. She did not remember even that she had been acutely miserable either for her husband or for herself; rather she had come to disbelieve in acute feelings. She had grown deadened to sorrow as to joy, and to love, the great parent of both; the hardening process of her youth had been carried further. When Vesey caught a chill and crumpled up under it as sodden men do, and died with a thankfulness he did not conceal, she was unmoved. She was not grateful for the deliverance, nor yet grieved for the loss of a friend. She shrugged her shoulders again, asking what the world was going to do with her next.

Mr. Trevalla took a view more hopeful than his daughter's, concluding that there was cause for feeling considerable satisfaction both on moral and on worldly grounds. From the higher standpoint Trix (under his guidance) had made a noble although unsuccessful effort, and had shown the fortitude to be expected from his daughter; while Vesey, poor fellow, had been well looked after to the end, and was now beyond the reach of tempta-



tion. From the lower—Mr. Trevalla glanced for a moment round the cosy apartment he now occupied at Brighton, where he was beginning to get a nice little library round him—yes, from the lower, while it was regrettable that the estate had passed to a distant cousin, Trix was left with twenty thousand pounds (in free cash, for Vesey had refused to make a settlement, since he did not know what money he would want—that is, how long he would last) and an ascertained social position. She was only twenty-two when left a widow, and better-looking than she had ever been in her life. On the whole, were the four years mispent? Had anybody very much to grumble at? Certainly nobody had any reason to reproach himself. And he wondered why Trix had not sent for him to console her in her affliction. He was glad she had not, but he thought that the invitation would have been natural and becoming.

‘But I never pretended to understand women,’ he murmured, with his gentle smile.

Women would have declared that they did not understand him either, using the phrase with a bitter intention foreign to the Reverend Algernon’s lips and temper. His good points were so purely intellectual—lucidity of thought, temperance of opinion, tolerance, humour, appreciation of things which deserved it. These gifts would, with women, have pleaded their rarity in vain against the more ordinary endowments of willingness to work and a capacity for thinking, even occasionally, about other people. Men liked him—so long as they had no business relations with him. But women are moralists, from the best to the worst of them. If he had lived, Trix would probably have scorned to avail herself of his counsels. Yet they might well have been useful to her in after days; he was a good taster of men. As it was, he died soon after Vesey, having caught a chill and refused to drink hot grog. That was his doctor’s explanation. Mr. Trevalla’s dying smile accused the man of cloaking his own ignorance by such an excuse; he prized his virtue too much to charge it with his death. He was sorry to leave his rooms at Brighton; other very strong feeling about his departure he had none. Certainly his daughter did not come between him and his preparations for hereafter, nor the thought of her solitude distract his fleeting soul.

In the general result life seemed ended for Trix Trevalla at twenty-two, and, pending release from it in the ordinary course,

she contemplated an impatient and provisional existence in Continental *pensions*—establishments where a young and pretty woman could not be suspected of wishing to reap any advantage from prettiness or youth. Hundreds of estimable ladies guarantee this security, and thereby obtain a genteel and sufficient company round their modest and inexpensive tables. It was what Trix asked for, and for two years she got it. During this period she sometimes regretted Vesey Trevalla, and sometimes asked whether vacancy were not worse than misery, or on what grounds limbo was to be preferred to hell. She could not make up her mind on this question—nor is it proposed to settle it here. Probably most people have tried both on their own account.

One evening she arrived at Paris rather late, and the isolation ward (metaphors will not be denied sometimes) to which she had been recommended was found to be full. Somewhat apprehensive, she was driven to an hotel of respectability, and, rushing to catch the flying coat-tails of *table d'hôte*, found herself seated beside a man who was apparently not much above thirty. This unwonted propinquity set her doing what she had not done for years in public, though she had never altogether abandoned the practice as a private solace: as she drank her cold soup, she laughed. Her neighbour, a shabby man with a rather shaggy beard, turned benevolently inquiring eyes on her. A moment's glance made him start a little and say, 'Surely it's Mrs. Trevalla?'

'That's my name,' answered Trix, wondering greatly, but thanking heaven for a soul who knew her. In the *pensions* they never knew who you were, but were always trying to find out, and generally succeeded the day after you went away.

'That's very curious,' he went on. 'I daresay you'll be surprised, but your photograph stands on my bedroom mantelpiece. I knew you directly from it. It was sent to me.'

'When was it sent you?' she asked.

'At the time of your marriage.' He grew grave as he spoke.

'You were his friend?'

'I called myself so.' Conversation was busy round them, yet he lowered his voice to add, 'I don't know now whether I had any right.'

'Why not?'

'I gave up very soon.'

Trix's eyes shot a quick glance at him and she frowned a little.



‘Well, I ought to have been more than a friend, and so did I,’ she said.

‘It would have been utterly useless, of course. Reason recognises that, but then conscience isn’t always reasonable.’

She agreed with a nod as she galloped through her fish, eager to overtake the *menu*.

‘Besides, I have——’ He hesitated a moment, smiling apologetically and playing nervously with a knife. ‘I have a propensity myself, and that makes me judge him more easily—and myself not so lightly.’

She looked at his pint of *ordinaire* with eyebrows raised.

‘Oh, no, quite another,’ he assured her, smiling. ‘But it’s enough to teach me what propensities are.’

‘What is it? Tell me.’ She caught eagerly at the strange luxury of intimate talk.

‘Never! But, as I say, I’ve learnt from it. Are you alone here, Mrs. Trevalla?’

‘Here and everywhere,’ said Trix, with a sigh and a smile.

‘Come for a stroll after dinner. I’m an old friend of Vesey’s, you know.’ The last remark was evidently thrown in as a concession to rules not held in much honour by the speaker. Trix said that she would come; the outing seemed a treat to her after the *pensions*.

They drank beer together on the boulevards; he heard her story, and he said many things to her, waving (as the evening wore on) a pipe to and fro from his mouth to the length of his arm. It was entirely owing to the things which he said that evening on the boulevards that she sat now in the flat over the river, her mourning doffed, her guaranteed *pensions* forsaken, London before her, an unknown alluring sea.

‘What you want,’ he told her with smiling vehemence, ‘is a revenge. Hitherto you’ve done nothing; you’ve only had things done to you. You’ve made nothing; you’ve only been made into things yourself. Life has played with you; go and play with it.’

Trix listened, sitting very still, with eager eyes. There was a life, then—a life still open to her; the door was not shut, nor her story of necessity ended.

‘I daresay you’ll scorch your fingers; for the fire burns. But it’s better to die of heat than of cold. And if trouble comes, call at 6A Danes Inn.’

‘Where in the world is Danes Inn?’ she asked, laughing.

‘Between New and Clement’s, of course.’ He looked at her in momentary surprise, and then laughed. ‘Oh, well, not above a mile from civilisation—and a shilling cab from aristocracy. I happen to lodge there.’

She looked at him curiously. He was shabby yet rather distinguished, shaggy but clean. He advised life, and he lived in Danes Inn, where an instinct told her that life would not be a very maddening or riotous thing.

‘Come, you must live again, Mrs. Trevalla,’ he urged.

‘Do you live, as you call it?’ she asked, half in mockery, half in a genuine curiosity.

A shade of doubt, perhaps of distress, spread over his face. He knocked out his pipe deliberately before answering.

‘Well, hardly, perhaps.’ Then he added eagerly, ‘I work, though.’

‘Does that do instead?’ To Trix’s new-born mood the substitute seemed a poor one.

‘Yes—if you have a propensity.’

What was his tone? Sad or humorous, serious or mocking? It sounded all.

‘Oh, work’s your propensity, is it?’ she cried gaily and scornfully, as she rose to her feet. ‘I don’t think it’s mine, you know.’

He made no reply, but turned away to pay for the beer. It was a trifling circumstance, but she noticed that at first he put down three *sous* for the waiter, and then returned to the table in order to make the tip six. He looked as if he had done his duty when he had made it six.

They walked back to the hotel together and shook hands in the hall.

‘6A Danes Inn?’ she asked merrily.

‘6A Danes Inn, Mrs. Trevalla. Is it possible that my advice is working?’

‘It’s working very hard indeed—as hard as you work. But Danes Inn is only a refuge, isn’t it?’

‘It’s not fit for much more, I fear.’

‘I shall remember it. And now, as a formality—and perhaps as a concession to the postman—who are you?’

‘My name is Airey Newton.’

‘I never heard Vesey mention you.’

‘No, I expect not. But I knew him very well. I’m not an impostor, Mrs. Trevalla.’



'Why didn't he mention you?' asked Trix. Vesey had been, on the whole, a communicative man.

He hesitated a moment before he answered.

'Well, I wrote to him on the subject of his marriage,' he confessed at last.

She needed no more.

'I see,' she said, with an understanding nod. 'Well, that was—honest of you. Good night, Mr. Newton.'

This meeting—all their conversation—was fresh and speaking in her brain as she sat looking over the river in her recovered gown of blue. But for the meeting, but for the shabby man and what he had said, there would have been no blue gown, she would not have been in London nor in the flat. He had brought her there, to do something, to make something, to play with life as life had played with her, to have a revenge, to die, if die she must, of heat rather than of cold.

Well, she would follow his advice—would accept and fulfil it amply. 'At the worst there are the *pensions* again—and there's Danes Inn!'

She laughed at that idea, but her laugh was rather hard, her mouth a little grim, her eyes mischievous. These were the marks youth and the four years had left. Besides, she cared for not a soul on earth.

---

## CHAPTER II.

### COMING NEAR THE FIRE.

At the age of forty (a point now passed by some half-dozen years) Mrs. Bonfill had become motherly. The change was sudden, complete, and eminently wise. It was accomplished during a summer's retirement; she disappeared a queen regnant, she reappeared a dowager—all by her own act, for none had yet ventured to call her *passée*. But she was a big woman, and she recognised facts. She had her reward. She gained power instead of losing it; she had always loved power, and had the shrewdness to discern that there was more than one form of it. The obvious form she had never, as a young and handsome woman, misused or over-used; she had no temptations that way, or, as her friend Lady Blixworth preferred to put it, 'In that respect dearest Sarah was always *bourgeoise* to the core.' The

new form she now attained—influence—was more to her taste. She liked to shape people's lives; if they were submissive and obedient she would make their fortunes. She needed some natural capacities in her *protégés*, of course; but, since she chose cleverly, these were seldom lacking. Mrs. Bonfill did the rest. She could open doors that obeyed no common key; she could smooth difficulties; she had in two or three cases blotted out a past, and once had reformed a gambler. But she liked best to make marriages and Ministers. Her own daughter, of course, she married immediately—that was nothing. She had married Nellie Towler to Sir James Quinby-Lee—the betting had been ten to one against it—and Lady Mildred Haughton to Frank Cleveland—flat in the face of both the families. As for Ministers, she stood well with Lord Farringham, was an old friend of Lord Glentorly, and, to put it unkindly, had Constantine Blair fairly in her pocket. It does not do to exaggerate drawing-room influence, but when Beaufort Chance became a Whip, and young Lord Mervyn was appointed Glentorly's Under-Secretary at the War Office, and everybody knew that they were Mrs. Bonfill's last and prime favourites—well, the coincidence was remarkable. And never a breath of scandal with it all! It was no small achievement for a woman born in, bred at, and married from an unpretentious villa at Streatham. *La carrière ouverte*—but perhaps that is doing some injustice to Mr. Bonfill. After all, he and the big house in Grosvenor Square had made everything possible. Mrs. Bonfill loved her husband, and she never tried to make him a Minister; it was a well-balanced mind, save for that foible of power. He was very proud of her, though he rather wondered why she took so much trouble about other people's affairs. He owned a brewery, and was Chairman of a railway company.

Trix Trevalla had been no more than a month in London when she had the great good fortune to be taken up by Mrs. Bonfill. It was not everybody's luck. Mrs. Bonfill was particular; she refused hundreds, some for her own reasons, some because of the things Viola Blixworth might say. The Frickers, for example, failed in their assault on Mrs. Bonfill—or had up to now. Yet Mrs. Bonfill herself would have been good-natured to the Frickers.

'I can't expose myself to Viola by taking up the Frickers,' she explained to her husband, who had been not indisposed, for



business reasons, to do Fricker a good turn. For Lady Blixworth, with no other qualities very striking to a casual observer, and with an appearance that the term 'elegant' did ample justice to, possessed a knack of describing people whom she did not like in a way that they did not like—a gift which made her respected and, on the whole, popular.

'The woman's like a bolster grown fat; the daughter's like a sausage filled unevenly; and the man—well, I wouldn't have him to a political party!'

Thus had Lady Blixworth dealt with the Frickers, and even Mrs. Bonfill quailed.

It was very different with Trix Trevalla. Pretty, presentable, pleasant, even witty in an unobtrusive sort of fashion, she made an immediate success. She was understood to be well-off too; the flat was not a cheap one; she began to entertain a good deal in a quiet way; she drove a remarkably neat brougham. These things are not done for nothing—nor even on the interest of twenty thousand pounds. Yet Trix did them, and nobody asked any questions except Mrs. Bonfill, and she was assured that Trix was living well within her means. May not 'means' denote capital as well as income? The distinction was in itself rather obscure to Trix, and, Vesey Trevalla having made no settlement, there was nothing to drive it home. Lastly, Trix was most prettily docile and submissive to Mrs. Bonfill—grateful, attentive, and obedient. She earned a reward. Any woman with half an eye could see what that reward should be.

But for once Mrs. Bonfill vacillated. After knowing Trix a fortnight she destined her for Beaufort Chance, who had a fair income, ambition at least equal to his talents, and a chance of the House of Lords some day. Before she had known Trix a month—so engaging and docile was Trix—Mrs. Bonfill began to wonder whether Beaufort Chance were good enough. Certainly Trix was making a very great success. What then? Should it be Mervyn, Mrs. Bonfill's prime card, her chosen disciple? A man destined, as she believed, to go very high—starting pretty high anyhow, and starts in the handicap are not to be disregarded. Mrs. Bonfill doubted seriously whether, in that mental book she kept, she should not transfer Trix to Mervyn. If Trix went on behaving well—— But the truth is that Mrs. Bonfill herself was captured by Trix. Yet Trix feared Mrs. Bonfill, even while she liked and to some extent managed her. After favouring

Chance, Mrs. Bonfill began to put forward Mervyn. Whether Trix's management had anything to do with this result it is hard to say.

Practical statesmen are not generally blamed for such changes of purpose. They may hold out hopes of, say, a reduction of taxation to one class or interest, and ultimately award the boon to another. Nobody is very severe on them. But it comes rather hard on the disappointed interest, which, in revenge, may show what teeth it has.

Trix and Mervyn were waltzing together at Mrs. Bonfill's dance. Lady Blixworth sat on a sofa with Beaufort Chance and looked on—at the dance and at her companion.

'She's rather remarkable,' she was saying in her idle languid voice. 'She was meant to be vulgar, I'm sure, but she contrives to avoid it. I rather admire her.'

'A dangerous shade of feeling to excite in you, it seems,' he remarked sourly.

The lady imparted an artificial alarm to her countenance.

'I'm so sorry if I said anything wrong; but, oh, surely, there's no truth in the report that you're——?' A motion of her fan towards Trix ended the sentence.

'Not the least,' he answered gruffly.

Sympathy succeeded alarm. With people not too clever Lady Blixworth allowed herself a liberal display of sympathy. It may have been all right to make Beaufort a Whip (though that question arose afterwards in an acute form), but he was no genius in a drawing-room.

'Dear Sarah talks so at random sometimes,' drawled she. 'Well-meant, I know, Beaufort, but it does put people in awkward positions, doesn't it?'

He was a conceited man, and a pink-and-white one. He flushed visibly and angrily.

'What has Mrs. Bonfill been saying about me?'

'Oh, nothing much; it's just her way. And you mustn't resent it—you owe so much to her.' Lady Blixworth was enjoying herself; she had a natural delight in mischief, especially when she could direct it against her beloved and dreaded Sarah with fair security.

'What did she say?'

'Say! Nothing, you foolish man! She diffused an impression.'



‘That I——?’

‘That you liked Mrs. Trevalla! She was wrong, I suppose. *Voilà tout*, and, above all, don’t look hot and furious; the room’s stifling as it is.’

Beaufort Chance was furious. We forgive much ill-treatment so it is secret, we accept many benefits on the same understanding. To parade the benefit and to let the injustice leak out are the things that make us smart. Lady Blixworth had by dexterous implication accused Mrs. Bonfill of both offences. Beaufort had not the self-control to seem less angry than he was. ‘Surely,’ thought Lady Blixworth, watching him, ‘he’s too stupid even for politics!’

‘You may take it from me,’ he said pompously, ‘that I have, and have had, no more than the most ordinary acquaintance with Mrs. Trevalla.’

She nodded her head in satisfied assent. ‘No, he’s just stupid enough,’ she concluded, smiling and yawning behind her fan. She had no compunctions—she had told nearly half the truth. Mrs. Bonfill never gossiped about her Ministers—it would have been fatal—but she was sometimes rather expansive on the subject of her marriages; she was tempted to collect opinions on them; she had, no doubt, (before she began to vacillate) collected two or three opinions about Beaufort Chance and Trix Trevalla.

Trix’s brain was whirling far quicker than her body turned in the easy swing of the waltz. It had been whirling this month back, ever since the prospect began to open, the triumphs to dawn, ambition to grow, a sense of her attraction and power to come home to her. The *pensions* were gone; she had plunged into life. She was delighted and dazzled. Herself, her time, her feelings, and her money, she flung into the stream with a lavish recklessness. Yet behind the gay intoxication of the transformed woman she was conscious still of the old self, the wide-awake, rather hard girl, that product of the lodging-houses and the four years with Vesey Trevalla. Amid the excitement, the success, the folly, the old voice spoke, cautioning, advising, never allowing her to forget that there was a purpose and an end in it all, a career to make and to make speedily. Her eyes might wander to every alluring object; they returned to the main chance. Wherefore Mrs. Bonfill had no serious uneasiness about dear Trix; when the time came she would be sensible; people fare, she reflected, none the worse for being a bit hard at the core.

‘I like sitting here,’ said Trix to Mervyn after the dance, ‘and seeing everybody one’s read about or seen pictures of. Of course I don’t really belong to it, but it makes me feel as if I did.’

‘You’d like to?’ he asked.

‘Well, I suppose so,’ she laughed as her eyes rambled over the room again.

Lord Mervyn was conscious of his responsibilities. He had a future; he was often told so in public and in private, though it is fair to add that he would have believed it unsolicited. That future, together with the man who was to have it, he took seriously. And, though of rank unimpeachable, he was not quite rich enough for that future; it could be done on what he had, but it could be done better with some more. Evidently Mrs. Bonfill had been captured by Trix; as a rule she would not have neglected the consideration that his future could be done better with some more. He had not forgotten it; so he did not immediately offer to make Trix really belong to the brilliant world she saw. She was very attractive, and well-off, as he understood, but she was not, from a material point of view, by any means what he had a right to claim. Besides she was a widow, and he would have preferred that not to be the case.

‘Prime Ministers and things walking about like flies!’ sighed Trix, venting satisfaction in a pardonable exaggeration. It was true, however, that Lord Farringham had looked in for half an hour, talked to Mrs. Bonfill for ten minutes, and made a tour round, displaying a lofty cordiality which admirably concealed his desire to be elsewhere.

‘You’ll soon get used to it all,’ Mervyn assured her with a rather superior air. ‘It’s a bore, but it has to be done. The social side can’t be neglected, you see.’

‘If I neglected anything, it would be the other, I think.’

He smiled tolerantly and quite believed her. Trix was most butterfly-like to-night; there was no hardness in her laugh, not a hint of grimness in her smile. ‘You would never think,’ Mrs. Bonfill used to whisper, ‘what the poor child has been through.’

Beaufort Chance passed by, casting a scowling glance at them.

‘I haven’t seen you dancing with Chance—or perhaps you sat out? He’s not much of a performer.’

‘I gave him a dance, but I forgot.’

‘Which dance, Mrs. Trevalla?’ Her glance had prompted the question.



‘Ours,’ said Trix. ‘You came so late—I had none left.’

‘I very seldom dance, but you tempted me.’ He was not underrating his compliment. For a moment Trix was sorely inclined to snub him; but policy forbade. When he left her, to seek Lady Blixworth, she felt rather relieved.

Beaufort Chance had watched his opportunity, and came by again with an accidental air. She called to him and was all graciousness and apologies; she had every wish to keep the second string in working order. Beaufort had not sat there ten minutes before he was in his haste accusing Lady Blixworth of false insinuations—unless, indeed, Trix were an innocent instrument in Mrs. Bonfill’s hands. Trix was looking the part very well.

‘I wish you’d do me a great kindness,’ he said presently. ‘Come to dinner some day.’

‘Oh, that’s a very tolerable form of benevolence. Of course I will.’

‘Wait a bit. I mean—to meet the Frickers.’

‘Oh!’ Meeting the Frickers seemed hardly an inducement.

But Beaufort Chance explained. On the one side Fricker was a very useful man to stand well with; he could put you into things—and take you out at the right time. Trix nodded sagely, though she knew nothing about such matters. On the other hand—Beaufort grew both diplomatic and confidential in manner—Fricker had little ambition outside his business, but Mrs. and Miss Fricker had enough and to spare—ambitions social for themselves, and, subsidiary thereunto, political for Fricker.

‘Viola Blixworth has frightened Mrs. Bonfill,’ he complained. ‘Lady Glentorly talks about drawing the line, and all the rest of them are just as bad. Now if you’d come——’

‘Me? What good should I do? The Frickers won’t care about me.’

‘Oh, yes, they will!’ He did not lack adroitness in baiting the hook for her. ‘They know you can do anything with Mrs. Bonfill; they know you’re going to be very much in it. You won’t be afraid of Viola Blixworth in a month or two! I shall please Fricker—you’ll please the women. Now do come.’

Trix’s vanity was flattered. Was she already a woman of influence? Beaufort Chance had the other lure ready too.

‘And I daresay you don’t mind hearing of a good thing if it comes in your way?’ he suggested carelessly. ‘People with money to spare find Fricker worth knowing, and he’s absolutely square.’

'Do you mean he'd make money for me?' asked Trix, trying to keep any note of eagerness out of her voice.

'He'd show you how to make it for yourself, anyhow.'

Trix sat in meditative silence for a few moments. Presently she turned to him with a bright friendly smile.

'Oh, never mind all that! I'll come for your sake—to please you,' she said.

Beaufort Chance was not quite sure that he believed her this time, but he looked as if he did—which serves just as well in social relations. He named a day, and Trix gaily accepted the appointment. There were few adventures, not many new things, that she was not ready for just now. The love of the world had laid hold of her.

And here at Mrs. Bonfill's she seemed to be in the world up to her eyes. People had come on from big parties as the evening waned, and the last hour dotted the ball-room with celebrities. Politicians in crowds, leaders of fashion, an actress or two, an Indian prince, a great explorer—they made groups which seemed to express the many-sidedness of London, to be the thousand tributaries that swell the great stream of its society. There was a little unusual stir to-night. A foreign complication had arisen, or was supposed to have arisen. People were asking what the Tsar was going to do; and, when one considers the reputation for secrecy enjoyed by Russian diplomacy, quite a surprising number of them seemed to know, and told one another with an authority only matched by the discrepancy between their versions. When they saw a man who possibly might know—Lord Glentorly—they crowded round him eagerly, regardless of the implied aspersion on their own knowledge. Glentorly had been sitting in a corner with Mrs. Bonfill, and she shared in his glory, perhaps in his private knowledge. But both Glentorly and Mrs. Bonfill professed to know no more than there was in the papers, and insinuated that they did not believe that. Everybody at once declared that they had never believed that, and had said so at dinner, and the very wise added that it was evidently inspired by the Stock Exchange. A remark to this effect had just fallen on Trix's ears when a second observation from behind reached her.

'Not one of them knows a thing about it,' said a calm, cool, youthful voice.

'I can't think why they want to,' came as an answer in rich pleasant tones.

Trix glanced round and saw a smart trim young man, and by



his side a girl with beautiful hair. She had only a glimpse of them, for in an instant they disentangled themselves from the gossipers and joined the few couples who were keeping it up to the last dance.

It will be seen that Beaufort Chance had not given up the game; Lady Blixworth's pin-pricks had done the work which they were probably intended to do: they had incited him to defy Mrs. Bonfill, to try to win off his own bat. She might discard him in favour of Mervyn, but he would fight for himself. The dinner to which he bade Trix would at once assert and favour intimacy; if he could put her under an obligation it would be all to the good; flattering her vanity was already a valuable expedient. That stupidity of his, which struck Viola Blixworth with such a sense of its density, lay not in misunderstanding or misvaluing the common motives of humanity, but in considering that all humanity was common: he did not allow for the shades, the variations, the degrees. Nor did he appreciate in the least the mood that governed or the temper that swayed Trix Trevalla. He thought that she preferred him as a man, Mervyn as a match. Both of them were, in fact, at this time no more than figures in the great *ballet* at which she now looked on, in which she meant soon to mix.

Mrs. Bonfill caught Trix as she went to her carriage—that smart brougham was in waiting—and patted her cheek *more materno*.

'I saw you were enjoying yourself, child,' she said. 'What was all that Beaufort had to say to you?'

'Oh, just nonsense,' answered Trix lightly.

Mrs. Bonfill smiled amiably.

'He's not considered to talk nonsense generally,' she said; 'but perhaps there was someone you wanted to talk to more! You won't say anything, I see, but—Mortimer stayed late! He's coming to luncheon to-morrow. Won't you come too?'

'I shall be delighted,' said Trix. Her eyes were sparkling. She had possessed wit enough to see the vacillation of Mrs. Bonfill. Did this mean that it was ended? The invitation to lunch looked like it. Mrs. Bonfill believed in lunch for such purposes. In view of the invitation to lunch, Trix said nothing about the invitation to dinner.

As she was driven from Grosvenor Square to the flat by the river, she was marvellously content—enjoying still, not thinking, wondering, not feeling, making in her soul material and sport of others, herself seeming not subject to design or accident. The change was great to her; the ordinary mood of youth that has

known only good fortune seemed to her the most wonderful of transformations, almost incredible. She exulted in it and gloated over the brightness of her days. What of others? Well, what of the players in the pantomime? Do they not play for us? What more do we ask of or about them? Trix was not in the least inclined to be busy with more fortunes than her own. For this was the thing—this was what she had desired.

How had she come to desire it so urgently and to take it with such recklessness? The words of the shabby man on the boulevards came back to her. 'Life has played with you; go and play with it. You may scorch your fingers, for the fire burns; but it's better to die of heat than of cold.'

'Yes, better of heat than of cold,' laughed Trix Trevala triumphantly, and she added, 'If there's anything wrong, why, he's responsible!' She was amused both at the idea of anything being wrong, and at the notion of holding the quiet shabby man responsible. There could be no link between his life and the world she had lived in that night. Yet, if he held these views about the way to treat life, why did he not live? He had said he hardly lived, he only worked. Trix was in an amused puzzle about the shabby man as she got into bed; he actually put the party and its great *ballet* out of her head.

---

### CHAPTER III.

#### IN DANES INN.

SOME men maintained that it was not the quantity, nor the quality, nor the colour of Peggy Ryle's hair that did the mischief, but simply and solely the way it grew. Perhaps (for the opinion of men in such matters is eminently and consciously fallible) it did not grow that way at all, but was arranged. The result to the eye was the same, a peculiar harmony between the waves of the hair, the turn of the neck, and the set of the head. So notable and individual a thing was this agreement that Arthur Kane and Miles Childwick, poet and critic, were substantially at one about it. Kane described it as 'the artistry of accident,' Childwick lauded its 'meditated spontaneity.' Neither gentleman was ill-pleased with his phrase, and each professed a polite admiration of the other's effort—these civilities are necessary in literary circles. Other young men painted or drew the hair, and the neck, and the head, till Peggy complained that her other



features were neglected most disdainfully. Other young men again, not endowed with the gift of expression by tongue or by hand, contented themselves with swelling Peggy's court. She did not mind how much they swelled it. She had a fine versatility, and could be flirted with in rhyme, in polished periods, in modern slang, or in the deaf-and-dumb alphabet; the heart is, of course, the thing in such a matter, various forms of expression no more than its interpreters. Meanwhile Peggy learnt men and their manners, caused a good deal of picturesque misery—published and unpublished—and immensely increased the amenity of life wherever she went. And she went everywhere, when she could pay a cab fare and contrive a frock, or borrow one or both of these commodities. (Elfreda Flood, for instance, often had a frock. She generally returned the cab fare, and you could usually regain the frock by personal exertions; it was not considered the correct thing to ask her directly for either. She had an income of forty pounds a year, and professed to be about to learn to paint in real earnest. There was also an uncle in Berlin who sent cheques at rare and irregular intervals. When a cheque came, Peggy gave a dinner-party; when there had been no cheque for a long while, Peggy accepted a dinner. That was all the difference it made. And anyhow there was always bread-and-butter to be had at Airey Newton's. Airey appeared not to dine, but there was tea and there was bread-and-butter—a thing worth knowing now and then to Peggy Ryle.

She had been acquainted with Airey Newton for two years—almost since her first coming to London. Theirs was a real and intimate friendship, and her figure was familiar to the dingy house whose soft-stone front had crumbled into a premature old age. Airey was on the third floor, front and back; two very large windows adorned his sitting-room—it was necessary to give all encouragement and opportunity to any light that found its way into the gloomy *cul-de-sac*. Many an afternoon Peggy sat by one of these windows in a dilapidated wicker arm-chair, watching the typewriting clerk visible through the corresponding big window opposite. Sometimes Airey talked, oftener he went on with his work as though she were not there; she liked this inattention as a change. But she was a little puzzled over that work of his. He had told her that he was an inventor. So far she was content, and when she saw him busy with models or working out sums she concluded that he was at his trade. It did not appear to be a good trade, for he was shabby, the room was shabbier, and (as

has been mentioned) he did not, so far as her observation went, dine. But probably it kept him happy; she had always pictured inventors as blissful although poverty-stricken persons. The work-table then, a big deal one which blocked the other window, was intelligible enough. The mystery lay in the small table on the right hand of the fireplace; under it stood a Chubb's safe, and on it reposed a large book covered in red leather and fastened with a padlock. She had never seen either book or safe open, and when she had asked what was in them, Airey told her a little story about a Spartan who was carrying something under his cloak—a mode of retort which rather annoyed her. So she inquired no more. But she was sure that the locks were unfastened when she was gone. What was there? Was he writing a great book? Or did he own ancestral plate? Or precious—and perhaps scandalous—documents? Something precious there must be; the handsomeness of the book, the high polish by which the metal of the safe shamed the surrounding dustiness, stood out sure signs and proofs of that.

Peggy had just bought a new frock—and paid for it under some pressure—and a cheque had not come for ever so long; so she ate bread-and-butter steadily and happily, interrupting herself only to pour out more tea. At last Airey pushed away his papers and models, saying, 'That's done, thank heaven!' and got up to light his pipe. Peggy poured out a cup of tea for him, and he came across the room for it. He looked much as when he had met Trix Trevalle in Paris, but his hair was shorter and his beard trimmed close and cut to a point; these improvements were due to Peggy's reiterated entreaties.

'Well?' he asked, standing before her, his eyes twinkling kindly.

'Times are hard, but the heart is light, Airey. I've been immortalised in a sonnet——'

'Dissected in an essay too?' he suggested with ironical admiration.

'I don't recognise myself there. And I've had an offer——'

'Another?'

'Not that sort—an offer of a riding-horse. But I haven't got a habit.'

'Nor a stable perhaps?'

'No, nor a stable. I didn't think of that. And you, Airey?'

'Barring the horse, and the sonnet, and the essay, I'm much as you are, Peggy.'



She threw her head back a little and looked at him ; her tone, while curious, was also slightly compassionate.

‘ I suppose you get some money for your things sometimes ? ’ she asked. ‘ I mean, when you invent a—a—well, say a cork-screw, they give you something ? ’

‘ Of course. I make my living that way. ’ He smiled faintly at the involuntary glance from Peggy’s eyes that played round the room. ‘ Yesterday’s again ! ’ he exclaimed suddenly, taking up the loaf. ‘ I told Mrs. Stryver I wouldn’t have a yesterday’s ! ’ His tone was indignant ; he seemed anxious to vindicate himself.

‘ It won’t be to-morrow’s, anyhow, ’ laughed Peggy, regarding the remaining and much diminished fragment in his hand. ‘ It wasn’t badly stale. ’

Airey took his pipe out of his mouth and spoke with the abruptness of a man who has just made up his mind to speak.

‘ Do you know a Mrs. Trevalla ? ’ he asked.

‘ Oh, yes ; by sight very well. ’

‘ How does she strike you ? ’

‘ Well—certainly pretty ; probably clever ; perhaps—— Is she a friend of yours ? ’

‘ I’ve known about her a long while and met her once. ’

‘ Once ! Well, then, perhaps unscrupulous. ’

‘ Why do you think she’s unscrupulous ? ’

‘ Why do you ask me about her ? ’ retorted Peggy.

‘ She’s written to me, proposing to come and see me. ’

‘ Have you asked her ? I can’t have you having a lot of visitors, you know. I come here for quiet. ’

Airey looked a little embarrassed. ‘ Well, I did give her a sort of general invitation, ’ he murmured, fingering his beard. ‘ That is, I told her to come if—if she was in any difficulty. ’ He turned an appealing glance towards Peggy’s amused face. ‘ Have you heard of her being in any difficulty ? ’

‘ No, but I should think it’s not at all unlikely. ’

‘ Why ? ’

‘ Have you ever had two people in love with you at the same time ? ’

‘ Never, on my honour, ’ said Airey with obvious sincerity.

‘ If you had, and if you were as pleasant as you could be to both of them, and kept them going by turns, and got all you could out of both of them, and kept on like that for about two months—— ’

‘ Oh, that’s how the land lies, is it ? ’

'Don't you think it possible you might be in a difficulty some day?'

'But, good heavens, that's not the sort of thing to bring to me.'

'Apparently Mrs. Trevalla thinks differently,' laughed Peggy. 'At least I can't think of any other difficulty she's likely to be in.' Airey was obviously disturbed and displeased.

'If what you say is true,' he observed, 'she can't be a good sort of woman.'

'I suppose not.' Peggy's admission sounded rather reluctant.

'Who are the two men?'

'Lord Mervyn and Beaufort Chance.'

'M.P.'s, aren't they?'

'Among other things, Airey. Well, you can't tell her not to come, can you? After that sort of general invitation, you know.' Peggy's tone was satirical; she had rather strong views as to the way in which men made fools of themselves over women—or sometimes said she had.

'I was an old friend of her husband's.'

'Oh, you've nothing to apologise for. When does she want to come?'

'To-morrow. I say, oughtn't I to offer to go and call on her?'

'She'd think that very dull in comparison,' Peggy assured him. 'Let her come and sob out her trouble here.'

'You appear to be taking the matter in a flippant spirit, Peggy.'

'I don't think I'm going to be particularly sorry if Mrs. Trevalla is in a bit of a scrape.'

'You young women are so moral.'

'I don't care,' said Peggy defiantly.

'Women have an extraordinary gift for disliking one another on sight,' mused Airey in an injured voice.

'You seem to have liked Mrs. Trevalla a good deal on sight.'

'She looked so sad, so solitary, a mere girl in her widow's weeds.' His tone grew compassionate, almost tender, as he recalled the forlorn figure which had timidly stolen into the dining-room of the Paris hotel.

'You'll find her a little bit changed perhaps,' Peggy suggested with a suppressed malice that found pleasure in anticipating his feelings.

'Oh, well, she must come anyhow, I suppose.'

'Yes, let her come, Airey. It does these people good to see how the poor live.'



Airey laughed, but not very heartily. However it was well understood that everybody in their circle was very poor, and Peggy felt no qualms about referring to the fact.

‘I shall come the next day and hear all about the interview. Fancy these interesting things happening to you! Because, you know, she’s rather famous. Mrs. Bonfill has taken her up, and the Glentorlys are devoted to her, and Lady Blixworth has said some of her best things about her. She’ll bring you into touch with fashion.’

‘Hang fashion!’ said Airey. ‘I wonder what her difficulty is.’ He seemed quite preoccupied with the idea of Mrs. Trevalla’s difficulty.

‘I see you’re going to be very romantic indeed,’ laughed Peggy Ryle.

His eyes dwelt on her for a moment, and a very friendly expression filled them.

‘Don’t you get into any difficulties?’ he said.

‘There’s never but one with me,’ she laughed; ‘and that doesn’t hurt, Airey.’

There was a loud and cheerful knock on the door.

‘Visitors! When people come, how do you account for me?’

‘I say nothing. I believe you’re taken for my daughter.’

‘Not since you trimmed your beard! Well, it doesn’t matter, does it? Let him in.’

The visitor proved to be nobody to whom Peggy needed to be accounted for; he was Tommy Trent, the smart trim young man who had danced with her at Mrs. Bonfill’s party.

‘You here again!’ he exclaimed in tones of grave censure, as he laid down his hat on the top of the red-leather book on the little table. He blew on the book first, to make sure it was not dusty.

Peggy smiled, and Airey relit his pipe. Tommy walked across and looked at the *débris* of the loaf. He shook his head when Peggy offered him tea.

A sudden idea seemed to occur to him.

‘I’m awfully glad to find you here,’ he remarked to her. ‘It saves me going up to your place, as I meant. I’ve got some people dining to-night, and one of them’s failed. I wonder if you’d come? I know it’s a bore coming again so soon, but——’

‘I haven’t been since Saturday.’

'But it would get me out of a hole.' He spoke in humble entreaty.

'I'd come directly, but I'm engaged.'

Tommy looked at her sorrowfully, and, it must be added, sceptically.

'Engaged to dinner and supper,' averred Peggy with emphasis as she pulled her hat straight and put on her gloves.

'You wouldn't even look in between the two and—and have an ice with us?'

'I really can't eat three meals in one evening, Tommy.'

'Oh, chuck one of them. You might, for once!'

'Impossible! I'm dining with my oldest friend,' smiled Peggy. 'I simply can't.' She turned to Airey, giving him her hand with a laugh. 'I like you best, because you just let me——'

Both words and laughter died away; she stopped abruptly, looking from one man to the other. There was something in their faces that arrested her words and her merriment. She could not analyse what it was, but she saw that she had made both of them uncomfortable. They had guessed what she was going to say; it would have been painful to one of them, and the other knew it. But whom had she wounded—Tommy by implying that his hospitality was importunate and his kindness clumsy, or Airey by a renewed reference to his poverty as shown in the absence of pressing invitations from him? She could not tell; but a constraint had fallen on them both. She cut her farewell short and went away, vaguely vexed and penitent for an offence which she perceived but did not understand.

The two men stood listening a moment to her light footfall on the stairs.

'It's all a lie, you know,' said Tommy. 'She isn't engaged to dinner or to supper either. It's beastly, that's what it is.'

'Yours was all a lie too, I suppose?' Airey spoke in a dull hard voice.

'Of course it was, but I could have beaten somebody up in time, or said they'd caught influenza, or been given a box at the opera, or something.'

Airey sat down by the fireplace, his chin sunk on his necktie. He seemed unhappy and rather ashamed. Tommy glanced at him with a puzzled look, shook his head, and then broke into a smile—as though, in the end, the only thing for it was to be amused. Then he drew a long envelope from his pocket.

'I've brought the certificates along,' he said. 'Here they are.'



Two thousand. Just look at them. It's a good thing; and if you sit on it for a bit, it'll pay for keeping.' He laid the envelope on the small table by Airey's side, took up his hat, put it on, and lit a cigarette as he repeated, 'Just see they're all right, old chap.'

'They're sure to be right.' Airey shifted uncomfortably in his chair and pulled at his empty pipe.

Tommy tilted his hat far back on his head, turned a chair back foremost, and sat down on it, facing his friend.

'I'm your business man,' he remarked. 'I do your business and I hold my tongue about it. Don't I?'

'Like the tomb,' Airey acknowledged.

'And—— Well, at any rate let me congratulate you on the bread-and-butter. Only——only, I say, she'd have dined with you, if you'd asked her, Airey.'

His usually composed and unemotional voice shook for an almost imperceptible moment.

'I know,' said Airey Newton. He rose, unlocked the safe, and threw the long envelope in. Then he unlocked the red-leather book, took a pen, made a careful entry in it, re-locked it, and returned to his chair. He said nothing more, but he glanced once at Tommy Trent in a timid way. Tommy smiled back in recovered placidity. Then they began to talk of inventions, patents, processes, companies, stocks, shares, and all manner of things that produce or have to do with money.

'So far, so good,' ended Tommy. 'And if the oxygen process proves commercially practicable—it's all right in theory, I know—I fancy you may look for something big.' He threw away his cigarette and stood up, as if to go. But he lingered a moment, and a touch of embarrassment affected his manner. Airey had quite recovered his confidence and happiness during the talk on money matters.

'She didn't tell you any news, I suppose?' Tommy asked.

'What, Peggy? No, I don't think so. Well, nothing about herself, anyhow.'

'It's uncommonly wearing for me,' Tommy complained with a pathetic look on his clear-cut healthy countenance. 'I know I must play a waiting game; if I said anything to her now I shouldn't have a chance. So I have to stand by and see the other fellows make the running. By Jove, I lie awake at nights—some nights, anyhow—imagining infernally handsome poets—— Old Arty Kane isn't handsome, though! I say, Airey, don't you think

she's got too much sense to marry a poet? You told me I must touch her imagination. Do I look like touching anybody's imagination? I'm about as likely to do it as—as you are.' His attitude towards the suggested achievement wavered between envy and scorn.

Airey endured this outburst—and its concluding insinuation—with unruffled patience. He was at his pipe again, and puffed out wisdom securely vague.

'You can't tell with a girl. It takes them all at once sometimes. Up to now I think it's all right.'

'Not Arty Kane?'

'Lord, no!'

'Nor Childwick? He's a clever chap, Childwick. Not got a *sou*, of course; she'd starve just the same.'

'She'd have done it before if it had been going to be Miles Childwick.'

'She'll meet some devilish fascinating chap some day, I know she will.'

'He'll ill-use her perhaps,' Airey suggested hopefully.

'Then I shall nip in, you mean? Have you been treating yourself to Drury Lane?'

Airey laughed openly, and presently Tommy himself joined in, though in a rather rueful fashion.

'Why the deuce can't we just like 'em?' he asked.

'That would be all right on the pessimistic theory of the world.'

'Oh, hang the world! Well, good-bye, old chap. I'm glad you approve of what I've done about the business.'

His reference to the business seemed to renew Airey Newton's discomfort. He looked at his friend, and after a long pause said solemnly:

'Tommy Trent!'

'Yes, Airey Newton!'

'Would you mind telling me—man to man—how you contrive to be my friend?'

'What?'

'You're the only man who knows—and you're my only real friend.'

'I regard it as just like drinking,' Tommy explained, after a minute's thought. 'You're the deuce of a good fellow in every other way. I hope you'll be cured some day too. I may live to see you bankrupt yet.'



‘I work for it. I work hard and usefully.’

‘And even brilliantly,’ added Tommy.

‘It’s mine. I haven’t robbed anybody. And nobody has any claim on me.’

‘I didn’t introduce this discussion.’ Tommy was evidently pained. He held out his hand to take leave.

‘It’s an extraordinary thing, but there it is,’ mused Airey. He took Tommy’s hand and said, ‘On my honour I’ll ask her to dinner.’

‘Where?’ inquired Tommy, in a suspicious tone.

Airey hesitated.

‘Magnifique!’ said Tommy firmly and relentlessly.

‘Yes, the—the Magnifique,’ agreed Airey, after another pause.

‘Delighted, old man!’ He waited a moment longer, but Airey Newton did not fix a date.

Airey was left sorrowful, for he loved Tommy Trent. Though Tommy knew his secret, still he loved him—a fact that may go to the credit of both men. Many a man in Airey’s place would have hated Tommy, even while he used and relied on him; for Tommy’s knowledge put Airey to shame—a shame he could not stifle any more than he could master the thing that gave it birth.

Certainly Tommy deserved not to be hated, for he was very loyal. He showed that only two days later, and at a cost to himself. He was dining with Peggy Ryle—not she with him; for a cheque had arrived, and they celebrated its coming. Tommy, in noble spirits (the coming of a cheque was as great an event to him as to Peggy herself), told her how he had elicited the offer of a dinner from Airey Newton; he chuckled in pride over it.

How men misjudge things! Peggy sat up straight in her chair and flushed up to the outward curve of her hair.

‘How dare you?’ she cried. ‘As if he hadn’t done enough for me already! I must have eaten pounds of butter—of mere butter alone! You know he can’t afford to give dinners.’

Besides anger, there was a hint of pride in her emphasis on ‘dinners.’

‘I believe he can,’ said Tommy, with the air of offering a hardy conjecture.

‘I know he can’t, or of course he would. Do you intend to tell me that Airey—Airey of all men—is mean?’

‘Oh, no, I—I don’t say——’

‘It’s you that’s mean! I never knew you do such a thing before. You’ve quite spoilt my pleasure this evening.’ She

looked at him sternly. 'I don't like you at all to-night. I'm very grievously disappointed in you.'

Temptation raged in Tommy Trent; he held it down manfully.

'Well, I don't suppose he'll give the dinner, anyhow,' he remarked morosely.

'No, because he can't; but you'll have made him feel miserable about it. What time is it? I think I shall go home.'

'Look here, Peggy, you aren't doing me justice.'

'Well, what have you got to say?'

Tommy, smoking for a moment or two, looked across at her and answered, 'Nothing.'

She rose and handed him her purse.

'Pay the bill, please, and mind you give the waiter half-a-crown. And ask him to call me a cab, please.'

'It's only half a mile, and it's quite fine.'

'A rubber-tired hansom, please, with a good horse.'

Tommy put her into the cab and looked as if he would like to get in too. The cabman, generalising from observed cases, held the reins out of the way, that Tommy's tall hat might mount in safety.

'Tell him where to go, please. Good-night,' said Peggy.

Tommy was left on the pavement. He walked slowly along to his club, too upset to think of having a cigar.

'Very well,' he remarked, as he reached his destination. 'I played fair, but old Airey shall give that dinner—I'm hanged if he shan't!—and do it as if he liked it too!'

A vicious chuckle surprised the hall-porter as Tommy passed within the precincts.

Peggy drove home, determined to speak plainly to Airey himself; that was the only way to put it right.

'He shall know that I do him justice, anyhow,' said she. Thanks to the cheque, she was feeling as the rich feel, or should feel, towards those who have helped them in early days of struggle; she experienced a generous glow and meditated delicate benevolence. At least the bread-and-butter must be recouped an hundredfold.

So great is the virtue of twenty pounds, if only they happen to be sent to the right address. Most money, however, seems to go astray.

*(To be continued.)*



*AT THE JUSTICE'S WINDOW.*

BY MRS. WOODS.

THE window looks on a narrow shelf of grass and a hedge of poinsettias. Beyond, the ground drops steeply towards the pastures. At this season the poinsettias have grown tall and ragged and hold their burning scarlet blossoms up singly to the sun. Through their straggling stems the trees show: a cloud of pale pink marena blossom, the heavy greens and browns of the palm, the dull foliage of the mango. Away to the right, beyond the verandah, there is the barbecue, looking like a small asphalt tennis-court set in the grass. On the edge of the little plateau a few palm-trees, with the bold pattern of their leaning stems and large fronds, put an accent on the wide distance; where in green pastures of tufted guinea-grass the red Herefords and the humped Indian cattle are feeding, under giant plumes of bamboos and in the elm-like shade of the broad-leaf. Spire-high the cotton-trees tower over all, stretching out gaunt white arms, half hidden by the growth of magenta orchids, wild pines, and parasite figs. And about the flat pastures stand forest-clothed mountains, beautiful with the beauty of mountains in all places of the earth. Here and there white wisps of vapour still trail across them, for it is early morning although there is no dewy dimness in the air. Rather the sun smites with such a brilliancy of light, such a crispness of shadow on the dozen or more black men and women waiting upon the barbecue, that it makes a picture of them in spite of themselves—they truly having put on the whole armour of civilisation, called Sunday clothes: except such of them as have no Sunday clothes. The ebon youth—they mostly are or look young—wear serge coats and light trousers of the last mode, the stiffest of shirt-collars and the smartest of ties. One hat alone, a felt, orange in the sunlight, strikes a note of colour, of pleasant savagery. The white sailor-hat, that pitiless uniform of the she Briton, perches whiter, harder than ever on the short wool, above the flat noses of three particularly black young negresses. Their waists are pinched in British shirt-blouses, their feet are pinched in yellow British shoes. On the stone edge of the barbecue a woman, worn and emaciated as one seldom sees

them here, sits nursing a baby, and a bright-eyed little girl stands beside her. This woman does not wear Sunday clothes. A crimson handkerchief, knotted at the four corners, covers her head and forehead squarely. Not far from her stands a much older woman, grim and silent, she also kerchiefed and clothed in a loose garment of a shade which our ancestors used to call Isabel—that is, the colour of Queen Isabel's linen when a rash vow compelled her still to go on wearing it. I mention the colour because it is the one which seems most generally worn in this neighbourhood, when Sunday clothes do not prevail. But just in time to save me from the sin of wishing all negroes, especially them of the sailor-hats, to go for ever clad in Isabel, up past the blowing bushes of red hibiscus, comes a fine robust black woman, clothed in a loose-girt garment of shining white, and wearing a snowy kerchief knotted four-square upon her well-held head. She also is seeking the magistrate, whom here they call the Justice, as our ancestors called him in Shakespeare's time; or the Squire, as fifty years since the rural Englishman called the landowner of his parish. And the Squire there in his study is to all appearance just such a big loose-coated Briton as might have tramped with dog and gun across his acres when there were still squires in England and such things were still done. Yet, of all living creatures astir this morning, none has a better and few as good a claim to be called a native; if one excepts the humming-birds and the small green lizard that flits about in the sun, waving its beautiful orange frill in hopes of touching the æsthetic sense of the flies. For in Jamaica everything which is most characteristic of the country is exotic; trees, fruit, animals, and, above all, men. The very grandfathers of some of these waiting negroes led the hunting and hunted life of the African forest less than a hundred years ago. Small wonder that the African type, the savage in his childishness, not in his ferocity, survives here, decked in tailoring instead of beads. Much more surprising to find how frequently the type of the energetic ruling race has survived generations of tropic life, life of the old kind, with its fever and pestilence, its luxury and its slave-owning. Yet so it is, and here sits the Squire according to the custom of that race, to do as a matter of course, without payment or reward, his share of the government of the community. This means, in truth, no great quantity of strictly legal business, but rather the listening to long stories—for the negro must be let



tell his tale in his own way—about larceny and suspected larceny, about difficulties between husbands and wives, and, above all, about abusive quarrels fain to transform themselves into cases of assault and libel. Truly to dissuade these law-abiding but law-loving people from indulging their passion for litigation is, perhaps, the most valuable, as it is certainly the lengthiest part of the Justice's business. And in these trivial stories, these childish individualities, Black Jamaica, with all its problems, is continually passing along that narrow shelf of grass before his window. The tenant who has now so long occupied it is telling, in the sweet inexpressibly plaintive negro voice, an interminable story concerning the mysterious disappearance of his yams. 'Tiefing,' he calls it. The Government calls it 'prædial larceny,' and is preparing a cat-o'-nine-tails for the thief; but whether either he or the Government will catch that elusive individual is another matter. As he draws to an end a well-dressed negro, with the air of youth bestowed by plump and shiny blackness, steps jauntily into his place. There is even something exaggerated about the easy nonchalance of his pose, the beatific nature of his smile. He coughs insinuatingly, and the Justice, who has been noting something in a book, looks up, stares, and then :

'Why, it's you, Dixon! I never expected to see you again.'

With innocent wonder Dixon interrogates: 'Not see me, 'quire? Why not see me?'

'Because I haven't seen you for ten years, and then you owed me a pound.'

Oh the world of gentle pained astonishment in that ebon face! The depths of mild yet shocked reproach in the mellifluous voice, 'Me go 'way and owe you a pound, 'quire? Oh no, Su', you make great mistake. I not owe no man anyting.'

But something—perhaps a distant glimpse of a certain big book which has a way of recording trifles otherwise unconsidered—suddenly galvanises Dixon's memory into unnatural activity. He not only recollects owing that pound, but he recollects repaying it at least seven times, if not unto seventy times seven. Doesn't Squire remember how he paid it in cleaning the pasture, how he paid it in corn, how he paid it in driving the wagon, how he paid it, in short, at various times in all the various fruits of the earth and by all the various labours of man?—how finally he, Dixon, paid that pound—of which, oh, shocking to relate, the Squire has heard nothing—in cash, into the hands of the Squire's

own trusted Mr. Brown? The debt of one pound has multiplied —on the wrong side—in a manner to put to shame the loaves and fishes, till the brain whirls in a vain attempt to catch up with it and calculate for how many pounds the Squire is by this time indebted to Dixon. But the Squire reckes not of this. What pains that British magistrate is, that his voluble ex-tenant has surprised him into the discussion of private affairs, when public business is to the fore. Has Dixon no magisterial business? He has. Alas, that he should not have a monopoly of dishonesty! Some very bad fellow has been 'tiefing' his bananas.

Prædial larceny, or the 'tiefing' of bananas and other fruits of the earth, is the one criminal offence really common in Jamaica; which does not prove the negro to be exceptionally thievish. 'When black man tief, he tief yam; when white man tief he tief whole estate,' says his own self-justificatory proverb. But if money lay scattered on the hill-sides the white man would 'tief' that; and the crop of his provision ground means the same thing to the black man. Any day in March or April you will see here and there as you look along the mountain ridges, blue columns of smoke rising up from the forest, and at night glow upon glow, as of dim beacon-fires. Each patch of light signifies that a negro is preparing a new provision ground after his wasteful primitive fashion. Sometimes, when the fire has licked up the trees and undergrowth, this ground will seem little more than a steep slope of limestone rock, coated with ashes. But out of this sprang the forest, and out of this too the kindly sun will bring forth, with no great toil on his part, his subsistence for the year and something to spare, which he can sell in the nearest market. This will give him a little money to spend at the store and—if he does not own his land—to pay his rent or such part of his rent as he does not prefer to pay in labour or produce. His shanty, built of laths and mud, is seldom near his provision ground. Possibly this is because his improvident system of culture makes a constant change of land necessary. He exhausts it so rapidly that in some parts of the island only ten per cent. of the land can be kept under cultivation at the same time. The rest, having been cropped two years, must lie fallow for eight or ten. Thus remote, usually separated by a mere boundary line from his neighbour's patch, the negro's provision ground is at the mercy of the thief; and if his own crop fail, he himself is apt to be at the mercy of that bunch of ripe bananas which hangs so



temptingly just on the wrong side of his boundary. They mean subsistence or wealth to him, and it is so easy to take them without discovery.

The local policeman is not here this morning, from which it must not be inferred he has nothing to do. To keep his clothes and his helmet at that dazzling and becoming pitch of whiteness must in itself be a care to him. Then there is the police-station, a substantial stone building, very different from the lath and plaster shanties of the neighbours, to be kept clean and tidy, and the wall round the yard to be whitewashed. The last policeman ignominiously failed in these duties and was dismissed in consequence; wherefore the present man is zealous in their performance. Having brought the uniform, the house, and the yard-wall up to the ideal standard, he has gone further, and is now engaged in reducing the surrounding trees to symmetry and order by whitewashing them all up to a certain height. It is, however, but a few days since he appeared at the Justice's window dragging with him a wretched delinquent. 'Please, sir,' says he, sternly triumphant, putting forward his living and quite unimpaired prey, 'Please, sir, I brought de suicide.' But what of that? Suicide is certainly rare, but I have seen many a murdered man stand here and tell—with dramatic illustrations—the horrid tale of his own murder. Only the word after all is more often 'Murderation'; and experience shows that a charge of murderation may be whittled down to one of 'using some scrampy words.'

The negro, in spite of the big knife he carries to cut his yams with, is seldom guilty of real violence. The countless victims of 'buse and 'ssault,' who fly to the Justice, thirsting for legal vengeance, have whole skins, however much their feelings may be abraded. Yet I can never withhold my sympathy from them when they rehearse the little scene of their wrongs before the window, their wonderful voices now waxing deep with manly indignation, now softening in the sad appeal of helpless and oppressed innocence. Having expressed at length all the grief and rage that is in their souls, these children of Nature—step-children of Civilisation—will most likely listen to the words of wisdom and kindness, humorous or grave, which flow from the lips of the Justice. They will recognise that the distant chance of punishing a neighbour for 'scrampy words' is hardly worth the trouble and the money it will cost them, although a negro who can find money for nothing else can find it for a law-

suit, and some are very persistent. Look at the youth with the orange felt hat, the particularly high shirt-collar and jaunty tie. With much dignity and careful attention to his diction, he expresses his desire to have 'process issued' against 'some persons' for 'ssault, 'buse, and damage to property.' He gave a tea-party, it appears, last Friday in the evening. Now, giving a tea-party in Jamaica is a matter of business as well as of pleasure. Admittance to a tea-party is a question of payment. There is a professional chairman who is paid for his speech. This may be entirely burlesque, or it may soar to heights in which a Latin word or so is necessary to support it; in which case he will have to apply to someone else for the Latin, and pay at least a macaroni (or shilling) for it. Burlesque speeches and songs will also be provided by the company. The show-cake is the most lncrative part of the affair to the organiser of the tea-party. It is a special, a superior cake, which cannot even be seen under one shilling, and one shilling must the man pay who would offer a slice to his fair. Then follows dancing, perhaps 'ketch dances,' negro dances, which are danced all together, hand in hand. That there are objections to these dances carried on late into the night, whether at a tea-party or a Revivalist meeting, it is easy to understand; but I suspect it is only the Nonconformist Conscience which impels ministers of religion to try and make their flocks ashamed of the harmless, light-hearted nonsense of the tea-party itself. Not that I have attended one. I have only played the Peri at the gate; and a very pretty gate it was. Long branches of bamboo and palm formed the arch, in the centre of which hung a coloured lamp, but this lamp was not yet lighted because the low sun still whitened the steep mountain road, and threw frail shadows of palm and mango across it. Beside the gate the Wandering Jew clothed the roadside bank with red-wine colour, and below, among the greyish-green of mango foliage, wild oranges hung out their globes of gold. Down the turn of the road, where the palm-trees feather against the sky, and up from the cane-fields and the bamboo-thickets of the plain, came trooping to that tea-party a joyous company of sweetly-laughing, ivory-smiling, jet-black beaux and belles. And I trust that the entertainment ended as joyously as it began, under the auspices of some more experienced manager than the boy of seventeen who told the story of *his* tea-party at the Justice's window. 'Fust I mek de tickets fippence (threepence), den dey not satis-



fied, and I mek dem a quarty (a penny-halfpenny) so dey all come. And I mek show-cake vary nice, bread and butter vary nice, but when I hand round bread and butter dey '—tears in the voice—'dey say it no ketch (go round). Dey fro de slices at me'—he suits the action to the word—'dey 'ssault me, 'quire, also dey say—ahem—dey say some several words—Yas, Su', some several words. Dey cut de show-cake and eat it, and dey not pay one shilling, no, dey not pay one gill' (three-farthings). His voice deepens to the tragic close, and he stares into vacancy sombrely.

The Justice, after a paternal admonition on the folly of his youth in undertaking so serious a matter as a tea-party, asked him how many persons he wishes to summons.

'All, Su', I want process 'gainst dem *all*.'

'How many?'

The youth does some mental arithmetic.

'Twenty-nine, 'quire.'

'Twenty-nine! Why, the Court-house would not hold them all. Name three or four.'

'No, Su', obstinately, 'I waant you issue process 'gainst dem *all*.'

The Justice smiles a subtle smile, and there is a touch of the vernacular in his next question. 'Why you want process 'gainst them all? You think they give evidence?'

'Yes, Su', the youth replies with ready candour, 'if I not get process 'gainst dem all, some of dem come give evidence 'gainst me.'

The Justice had already guessed his plan of campaign.

'If you want process against twenty-nine persons,' he says drily, 'you must go to someone else.'

'Going to someone else' means walking twenty-five miles, besides expense. The Justice is immovable, but the youth remains. He hangs round silently, like a child refused its way, but unable to abandon the hope of getting it eventually. That dodge for keeping the witness-box reserved for self and friends was not new certainly, but then how good it was!

Meantime the old woman in the Isabel clothes is at the window. She has two complaints to lay before the Justice. Firstly: her daughter, and the young man who should be her son-in-law—but there are reasons why lawful marriage is unpopular in Jamaica—have left their child upon her hands and contribute nothing to its support. Can the Justice compel them to do so? No, neither the Justice nor anyone else. Like three-

fifths of the children born in the island, this child has no legal claim on its parents. Secondly: there is a young man who frequently passes through her yard and jeers and 'buses her because she is a Sixty, and the Sixties meet there. Who are the Sixties? They are a Revivalist sect, so obscure that even the Squire has never heard of them. 'Are the Sixties noisy?' he asks with meaning. The Isabel woman repudiates the suggestion with due horror, 'Noisy, 'quire? De Sixties? No-o—no-o. De Sixties vairy quiet. Dey revive in dem beds.' She rocks herself and groans piously; also noisily. 'De Sixties waant Peace, Peace!' But what does this particular Sixty want? The suppression of the young man—peacefully. No; she does not want process issued against him. No; she will not go to the court-house on Wednesday, when the Justice and the stipendiary magistrate will be there. Apparently Sixties are above such proceedings. Then what does she want? 'Peace, Peace!' and the extermination of that young man. 'Peace, Peace!' in a crescendo yell. If it is thus that the Sixties 'revive in dem beds' they may be trying neighbours, even to youth. Revivalism in Jamaica has its tragedies and its comedies, but under no circumstances its advantages. The excitability of the black man is animal, it leads him backwards towards the jungle, towards Obeahism. The noisy Revivalistic meeting is a more serious scandal than a tea-party. A doctor told us that not long since he was called in to a meeting, where he saw a woman lying on the ground, while her co-religionists danced a ketch-dance in frantic circle round her, proclaiming her to be 'in de spirit.' He found she was dead from a fit caused by excitement. But the consequences of these 'pious orgies' may be merely inconvenient; as in the case of the black lady, who, when 'in de spirit,' climbed upon her neighbour's roof and sat there for two days. The neighbour found this inconvenient, to judge from the piteous accents in which he implored relief at the hands of the Justice.

The best, the most civilising form of religion for the black man is the one which is most successful in training him to think and to exercise self-control. In these respects Presbyterianism is considered by unprejudiced persons to stand first, partly owing to its inherent qualities and partly to the qualities of the Ministers the Scotch Church sends out to Jamaica.

It is now the turn of the woman with the little girl and the baby; a small drooping baby, which with its closed eyes and the



sores on its woolly head, painfully resembles a little sick mother-deserted black kitten. The poor tiny creature has plainly not long to live. There is here nothing misleading in the penetrating pathos of the negro voice, the supplicatory slave-tone; it accords well with the woman's melancholy story. She was left a widow with nine children whom one way and another she has managed to keep. But then her sister died, leaving this baby and two other children, and there was no one except herself to take charge of them. In this case it happens that she does not know who the father was, but if she did, these starving children, supported by a woman evidently half-starved herself, have no claim upon him. He is free to continue increasing the population with children for other people to support, since the law will do nothing to develop in him a sense of parental responsibility which one need not call human, since the birds possess it. The Justice can only advise her to apply for Parochial Relief on the first opportunity. Meantime, he sends round the starving woman, the dying baby, and the bright-eyed little girl to that much better Relieving Officer of his own—'the Missus.'

These are the evil results of the rudimentary negro social system. But as regards women only, there more frequently pass before this window examples of the disadvantages of importing an alien marriage system, which has grown up under social and above all economical conditions not prevailing among the black people. 'Trute is, 'quire, me and my husband is a bit disagreeable,' begins the handsome woman in white, confidentially. This time it is an ordinary matrimonial quarrel; but even this would probably not have occurred if the woman had been a partner instead of a legal wife. No other legal and aggrieved wife comes to the window to-day, but yesterday while we sat at tea on the balcony, a wild figure came rushing up the slope calling on the Squire for justice. Her brownish clothes were girt classically round her hips, an immense hat framed her black face and glittering eyes. She stood below swaying like a Mænad with whirling words and gestures. Her story was long, all about her husband's quarrel with his brother, and about a donkey belonging to herself which lodged in the brother's stable, and about the sundry occasions on which her husband had maltreated her on the score of this donkey. At last to-day, when she came back from feeding it, he had caught her by the throat and cried out he would murder her. 'Yas, he ketch me by de trote and choke me,' she cries, seizing herself by the throat with violent hands,

'I ketch de door-posts but he fro me down—' her arms are outstretched, her draperies flying—'he fro me out and trample on me—he say he kill me, he trample on me till I smell de fresh blood in my 'tomach.' The expression is crude but veridic, for a taste as of iron or blood in the mouth has been noted as a physiological symptom of extreme fear. 'I tell him I go to the Justice, but my husband tell me, "*Bocora* (white) law say no beat picc'ny, *bocora law no say no beat wife*."' Here lies the crux of the matter. To the letter the husband's statement is untrue, practically it is true. The only idea of marriage that the African brought with him was that of domestic slavery with himself for master. Unfortunately, in spite of all the modifications which civilisation has effected in it, our own marriage system is originally rooted in the same idea; moreover, its development has been conditioned by the economic dependence of European women. Now the antecedents of her race give the black woman an intense horror of slavery of any kind. She is not immoral, she is usually faithful to her own customary partnerships, but marriage according to *bocora* law takes away from her too much and offers her too little. For she is in a position of vantage as compared with a typical European or African woman. Her physical strength, a tropical climate, and the simplicity of social conditions, make her able to keep herself almost as well as a man. White civilisation protects her from enslavement and robbery of every sort—so long as she remains unmarried. If her partner over-works or beats her she has the remedy in her hands: consequently he seldom does it. Here are the reasons why so large a majority of the children born in Jamaica are illegitimate. It must be added that an undue proportion of the illegitimate children die, and it was for the benefit of this majority of children, and also as I conceive for the real benefit of the majority of parents, especially the fathers, that the Jamaicans lately passed an affiliation law. The Home Government quashed it.

All this time the Sunday clothes young ladies are waiting near the window with an admirable patience. Up trips one, resplendent in her white sailor hat and yellow shoes. She 'wants process' against the other two young ladies and against several more for 'ssault and 'buse.' She tells the usual lengthy tale with even more than the usual amount of pathos and meek, injured innocence thrown in. The lady with the jaunty hat is not exactly a widow, nor yet an orphan, but she would gladly for



the moment be both these and anything else that is forlorn, helpless, appealing, if she could be them with the faintest appearance of probability. Unluckily the two other ladies are what is called 'watching the case.' But she and her husband are all alone, they not belong to this parish (county), they come O from a long way off, they have no family, no friends to stand by them and defend them from wrong and insult. She knows not what she can have done to offend the local ladies, but she cannot even pass them in the road without they jeer and call her very bad names. Finally they box her. 'I 'tand de box,' says this virtuous one, 'but I no 'tand de bad words dem.' She does not, like the tea-party youth, confine herself to a euphemism, 'dey say some several words'—she distinctly states that she heard the words 'ineffectual biped.' The defendants vehemently deny having used so dreadful an expression. They say, what they really said, 'Ineffective rubbish!'

The Justice smoking his pipe listens with great gravity and attention. Probably he has heard about this quarrel before, for he is in the confidence of most of the neighbouring ministers.

'I believe you are all members of the same chapel?' he says. They admit it.

'Then you know you ought to lay your quarrel before your minister and let him settle it instead of bringing it to me.'

They accept this verdict meekly and depart without any of the usual silent sulky lingering of the rejected applicant. For the power of the Church—the paradox of the word is only apparent—is great, well earned and on the whole well used, although a certain unavoidable limitation of view in the wielders of it must always keep this kind of government something short of the best. The barbecue is deserted, the sun is high and hot. Surely by this time the Justice has earned his breakfast. In parenthesis, a true Jamaican breakfast is a *déjeuner à la fourchette*, and may take place at any hour from half-past ten to twelve. But no! Just as he is leaving his study another black head bounds into view at the window: a large, black, breathless, particularly ugly head

'Quire, 'quire, I want process 'gainst Thomas Jones!'

Thomas Jones is a black man.

'What for, Edwards?'

'Libel, Su', libel! He call me ugly black nigger. Yas—ugly, black, niggah!'

VICTOR.<sup>1</sup>

BY A. T. QUILLER-COUCH.

## I.

'You will ruin his life,' said one of the two women. As the phrase escaped her she remembered, or seemed to remember, having met with it in half a dozen novels. She had nerved herself for the interview which up to this moment had been desperately real; but now she felt herself losing grip. It had all happened before—somewhere; she was reacting an old scene, going through a past; the four or five second-hand words gave her this sensation. Then she reflected that the other woman, too, had perhaps met them before in some cheap novelette, and, being an uneducated person, would probably find them the more impressive for that.

The other woman had, in fact, met them before, in the pages of 'Bow Bells,' and been impressed by them. But since then love had found her ignorant and left her wise, wiser than in her humiliation she dared to guess, and yet the wiser for being humiliated. She answered in a curiously dispassionate voice: 'I think, miss, his life is ruined already; that is, if he sent you to say all this to me.'

'He did not.' Miss Bracy lifted the nose and chin which she inherited from several highly distinguished Crusaders, and gave the denial sharply and promptly, looking her ex-maid straight in the face. She had never—to use her own words—stood any nonsense from Bassett.

But Bassett, formerly so docile (though, as it now turned out, so deceitful), who had always known her place and never answered her mistress but with respect, was to-day an unrecognisable Bassett—not in the least impudent, but as certainly not to be awed or browbeaten. Standing in the glare of discovered misconduct, under the scourge of her shame, the poor girl had grasped some secret strength which made her invincible.

'But I think, miss,' she answered, 'Mr. Frank must have known you was coming.'

And this Miss Bracy could not deny. She had never told a lie in her life.

<sup>1</sup> Copyright, 1901, by A. T. Quiller-Couch in the United States of America.



‘It is very likely—no, it is certain—that he guessed,’ she admitted.

‘And if so, it comes to the same thing,’ Bassett persisted with a shade of weariness in her voice.

‘You ungrateful girl! You ungrateful and quite extraordinary girl! First you inveigle that poor boy at the very outset of his career, and then, when upon a supposed point of honour he offers to marry you——’

‘A supposed point, miss? Do you say “supposed”?’

‘Not one in a thousand would offer such a redemption. And even he cannot know what it will mean to his life—what it will cost him.’

‘I shall tell him, miss,’ said Bassett quietly.

‘And his parents—what do you suppose they would say, were they alive? His poor mother, for instance?’

Bassett dismissed this point silently. To Miss Bracy, the queerest thing about the girl was the quiet, practical manner she had put on so suddenly.

‘You said, miss, that Mr. Frank wants to make amends on a “supposed” point of honour. Don’t you think it a real one?’

Miss Bracy’s somewhat high cheek bones showed two red spots. ‘Because he offers it, it doesn’t follow that you ought to accept. And that’s the whole point,’ she wound up viciously.

Bassett sighed that she could not get her question answered. ‘You will excuse me, miss, but I never “inveigled” him as you say. That I deny, and if you ask Mr. Frank he will bear me out—not that it’s any use trying to make you believe,’ she added with a drop back to her old level tone, as she saw the other’s eyebrow go up. It was indeed hopeless, Miss Bracy being one of those women who take it for granted that a man has been inveigled as soon as his love affairs run counter to their own wishes or taste, and who thereby reveal an estimate of man for which in the end they are pretty sure to pay heavily.

All her answer now was a frankly incredulous stare.

‘You won’t believe me, miss. It’s not your fault, I know; you *can’t* believe me. But I loved Mr. Frank.’

Miss Bracy made a funny little sound high up in her Crusader-nose. That the passions of gentlemen were often ill regulated she knew; it disgusted her, but she recognised it as a real danger to be watched by their anxious relatives. That *love*, however—what she understood by *love*—could be felt by the lower orders, the

people who 'walked together,' and kept company' before mating, was too incredible. Even if driven by evidence to admit the fact, she would have set it down to the pernicious encroachment of Board School education and remarked that a little knowledge is a dangerous thing.

"Love!" My poor child, don't profane a word you cannot possibly understand. A nice love, indeed, that shows itself by ruining his life!

That second-hand phrase again! As it slipped out the indomitable Bassett dealt it another blow.

'I am not sure, miss, that I love him any longer—in the same way, I mean. I should always have a regard for him—for many reasons—and because he behaved honourably in a way. But I couldn't quite believe as I did before he showed himself weak.'

'Well, of all the——' Miss Bracy's lips were open for a word to fit this offence when Bassett followed it up with a worse one.

'I beg your pardon, miss, but you are so fond of Mr. Frank. Supposing I refused his offer, would you marry him yourself?'

The girl, too, meant it quite seriously. In her tone was no trace of impudence. She had divined her adversary's secret, and thrust home the question with a kind of anxious honesty. Miss Bracy, red and gasping, tingling with shame, yet knew that she was not being exulted over. She dropped the unequal fight between conventional argument and naked insight, and stood up, woman to woman. She neither denied nor exclaimed. She, too, told the truth.

'Never!' She paused. 'After what has happened I would never marry my cousin.'

'I thought that, miss. You mean it, I am sure, and it eases my mind, because you have been a good mistress to me, and it would always have been a sorry thought that I'd stood in your way. Not that it would have prevented me.'

'Do you still stand there and tell me that you will hold this unhappy boy to his word?'

'He's twenty-two, miss, my own age. Yes, I shall hold him to it.'

'To save yourself?'

'No, miss.'

'For his own sake, then?' Miss Bracy's laugh was passing bitter.

'No, miss—though there might be something in that.'



‘For whose, then?’

The girl did not answer. But in the silence her mistress understood, and moved to the door. She was beaten, and she knew it; beaten and unforgiving. In the doorway she turned.

‘It was not for your own sake that you persist? It was not to gratify yourself—to be made a lady—that you plotted this? Very well; you shall be taken at your word. I cannot counsel Frank against his honour; if he insists and you still accept the sacrifice, he shall marry you. But from that hour—you understand?—you have seen the last of him. I know Frank well enough to promise it.’

She paused to let the words sink in and watch their effect. This was not only cruel, but a mistake, for it gave Bassett—who was past caring for it—the last word.

‘If you do, miss,’ she said drearily, yet with a mind made up, ‘I dare say that will be best.’

## II.

Long before I heard this story I knew three of the characters in it. Just within the harbour beside which I am writing this—on your left as you enter it from the sea—a little creek runs up past Battery Point to a stout sea-wall with a turfed garden behind it and a low cottage; and behind that again a steep-sided valley down which a stream tumbles to a granite conduit. It chokes and overflows the conduit, is caught into a granite-covered gutter by the door of the cottage, and emerges beyond it in a small cascade upon the beach. At spring tides the sea climbs half way up this cascade, and great then is the splashing. The land birds, tits and warblers, come down to the very edge to drink; but none of them—unless it be the wagtail—will trespass on the beach below. The rooks and gulls on their side never forage above the cascade, but when the ploughing calls them inland mount and cross the frontier line high overhead. All day long in summer the windows of the cottage stand open and its rooms are filled with song; and night and day, summer and winter, the inmates move and talk, wake and sleep, to the contending music of the waters.

It had lain tenantless for two years when one spring morning Miss Bracy and Mr. Frank Bracy arrived and took possession. They came (for aught we knew) out of nowhere, but they brought a good many boxes, six cats, and a complete set of new muslin

blinds. On their way they purchased a quart of fresh milk, and Mr. Frank fed the cats while Miss Bracy put up the blinds. In the afternoon a long van arrived with a load of furniture, and we children who had gathered to watch were rewarded by a sensation when the van started by disgorging an artist's lay-figure, followed by a suit of armour. From these to a mahogany chest of drawers with brass handles was a sad drop, and we never regained the high romance of those first few minutes; but the furniture was undeniably handsome, and when Miss Bracy stepped out and offered us sixpence apiece to go and annoy somebody else we came away convinced that our visitors were persons of exceptionally high rank. It puzzled us afterwards that, though a bargain is a bargain, not one of us had stayed to claim his sixpence.

The newcomers brought no servants, but after a week there arrived (also out of nowhere) an elderly and taciturn cook. Also Miss Bracy on the third morning walked up to the farm at the head of the valley and hired down the hind's second daughter for a 'help.' We knew this girl, Lizzie Truscott, and waylaid her on her homeward road that evening, for information. She told us that Miss Bracy's cats had a cradle apiece lined with muslin over pink calico; that the window curtains inside reached from the ceilings to the floors; that the number of knives and forks was something cruel—one kind for fish, another for meat, and a third for fruit; that in one of the looking-glasses a body could see herself at one time from head to foot, though why you should want a looking-glass to see your feet in when you could see them without was more than she knew; and finally, that Miss Bracy had strictly forbidden her to carry tales—a behest which, convinced that Miss Bracy had dealings with the Evil One, she meant to observe. The elderly cook when she arrived warned us away from the door with a dialect we did not recognise. Her name (Lizzie reported) was Deborah, and in our hearts we set her down for a Jewess, but I seem to have detected her accent since, and a few of her pet phrases, in the pages of Scottish fiction.

This is all I can tell—so fitful are childish memories—of the coming of Miss Bracy and Mr. Frank. I cannot say, for instance, what gossip it bred, or how soon they wore down the edge of it and became, with their eccentricities, an accepted feature of the spot they had made their home. They made no friends, no acquaintances; every one knew of Miss Bracy's cats, but few had seen them. Miss Bracy herself was on view in church every



Sunday morning, when Mr. Frank walked with her as far as the porch. He never entered the building, but took a country walk during service, returning in time to meet her at the porch and escort her home. His other walks he took alone, and almost always at night. The policeman tramping toward Four Turnings after midnight to report to the country patrol would meet him and pause for a minute's chat. Night-wandering beasts—foxes and owls and hedgehogs—knew his footstep, and unlearned their first fear of it. Sometimes, but not often, you might surprise him of an afternoon seated before an easel in some out-of-the-way corner of the cliffs; but if you paused then to look he too paused and seemed inclined to smudge out his work. The vicar put it about that Mr. Frank had formerly been a painter of fame, and (being an astute man) one day decoyed him into his library, where hung an engraving of a picture, Amos Barton, by one F. Bracy. It had made a small sensation at Burlington House a dozen years before, and the vicar liked it for the pathos of its subject—an elderly clergyman beside his wife's death-bed. To him the picture itself could have told little more than this engraving, which utterly failed to suggest the wonderful colour and careful work the artist (a young man with a theory and enthusiasm to back it) had lavished on the worn carpet and valances of the bed, as well as the chestnut hair of the dying woman glorified in the red light of sunset.

Mr. Frank glanced up at the engraving and turned his face away. It was the face of a man taken at unawares, embarrassed, almost afraid. The vicar, who had been watching him, intending some pleasant remark about the picture, saw at once that something was wrong, and with great tact kept the talk upon some petty act of charity in which he sought to enlist his visitor's help. Mr. Frank listened, and gave his promise hurriedly and made his escape. He never entered the vicarage again.

### III.

Eighteen years had passed since Miss Bracy's interview with Bassett; and now, late on a summer afternoon, she and Mr. Frank were pacing the little waterside garden while they awaited their first visitor.

Mr. Frank betrayed the greater emotion, or, at any rate, the greater nervousness. Since breakfast he had been unable to sit

still or to apply himself to any piece of work for ten minutes together until Miss Bracy suggested the lawn-mower, and brought purgatory upon herself. With that lawn-mower all the afternoon he had been 'rattling her brain to fiddle-strings,' as she put it, and working himself into a heat which obliged a change of clothing. The tea stood ready now on a table which Deborah had carried out into the garden—dainty linen and silver-ware and flowered china dishes heaped with cakes of which only Scotch-women know the secrets.

The sun dropping behind Battery Point slanted its rays down through the pine-trunks and over the massed plumes of the rhododendrons. Scents of jasmine and of shorn grass mingled with the clear breath of the sea borne to the garden wall on a high tide tranquil and clear—so clear that the eye, following for a hundred yards the lines of the cove, could see the feet of the cliffs where they rested, three fathoms down, on lily-white sand. Miss Bracy adored these clear depths. She had missed much that life could have given; but at least she had found a life comely and to her mind. She had sacrificed much; but at times she forgot how much in contemplating the modest elegance of the altar.

She wore this evening a gown of purplish silk with a light cashmere scarf about her shoulders. Nothing could make her a tall woman; but her grey hair dressed high à *l'impératrice* gave her dignity at least, and an air of old-fashioned distinction. And she was one of those few and fortunate ladies who never used to worry about the appearance of their cavaliers. Mr. Frank—six feet of him, without reckoning a slight stoop—always satisfied the eye; his grey flannel suit fitted loosely, but fitted well; his wide-brimmed straw hat was as faultless as his linen; his neck-tie had a negligent neatness; you felt sure alike and at once of his bootmaker and his shirtmaker; and his fresh complexion, his prematurely white hair, his strong, well-kept hands completed the impression of cleanliness for its own sake, of a careful physical cult as far as possible removed from foppery.

This may have been in Miss Bracy's mind when she began: 'I dare say he will be fairly presentable to look at. That unfortunate woman had at least an art of dressing—a quiet taste, too, quite extraordinary in one of her station. I often wondered where she picked it up.'

Mr. Frank winced. Until the news of his wife's death came,



a fortnight ago, her name had not been spoken between them for years. That he and his cousin regarded her very differently, he knew; but, while silence was kept, it had been possible to ignore the difference. Now it surprised him that speech should hurt so, and at the same moment, that his cousin should not divine how sorely it hurt. After all, *he* was the saddest evidence of poor Bassett's 'lady-like' tastes.

'I suppose you know nothing of the school she sent him to?' Miss Bracy went on. 'King William's, or whatever it is?'

'King Edward's,' Mr. Frank corrected. 'Yes, I made inquiries about it at the time—ten years ago. People spoke well of it. Not a public school, of course—at least, not quite; the line isn't so easy to draw nowadays—but it turns out gentlemen.'

In her heart Miss Bracy thought him too hopeful. But she said: 'He wrote a becoming letter—his hand, by the way, curiously suggests yours. It was quite a nice letter, and agreeably surprised me. I shouldn't wonder if his headmaster had helped him with it and cut out the boyish heroics, for of course *she* must have taught him to hate us.'

'My dear Laura, why in the world——' began Mr. Frank testily.

'Oh, she had spirit!' The encounter of long ago rose up in Miss Bracy's memory, and she nodded her head with conviction. 'Like most of the quiet ones, she had spirit. You don't suppose, I imagine, that she forgave?'

'No.' Mr. Frank came to a halt and dug with his heel at a daisy-root in the turf. Then using his heel as a pivot, he swung himself around in an awkward circle. The action was ludicrous almost, but he faced his cousin again with serious eyes. 'But it is not her heart that I doubt,' he added gently.

Miss Bracy stared up at him. 'My dear Frank, do you mean to tell me that you *regret*?'

Yes, as a fact, he did regret, and knew that he should never cease to regret. He was not a man to nurse malice even for a wrong done to him, still less to live carelessly conscious of having wronged another. He was weak, but incurably just. And more, though self entered last into his regret, he knew perfectly well that the wrong had wrecked him too. His was a career *manqué*: he had failed as a man, and it had broken his nerve as an artist. He was a dabbler now, with—as Heine said of De Musset—a fine future *behind him*, and none but an artist can tell the bitterness of that self-knowledge. Had he kept his faith with Bassett in

spirit as in letter he might have failed just as decidedly; her daily companionship might have coarsened his inspiration, soured him, driven him to work cheaply, recklessly; but at least he could have accused fate, circumstance, a boyish error, whereas now he and his own manhood shared the defeat and the responsibility. Yes, he regretted; but it would never do to let Laura know his regret. That would be to play the double traitor. She had saved him (she believed) from himself; with utterly wrong-headed loyalty she had devoted her life to this. The other debt was irredeemable; but this, at any rate, could be paid.

He evaded her question. 'My dear,' he said, 'what was done has been atoned for by her, and is being atoned for by—by us. Let us think of her without bitterness.'

Miss Bracy shook her head. 'I am a poor sort of Christian,' she confessed, 'and if she has taught this boy to hate us——'

'Mr. Victor Bracy,' announced Deborah from the garden-porch behind them, and a tall youth in black stepped past her and came across the turf with a shy smile.

The pair turned with an odd sort of confusion, almost of dismay. They were prepared for the 'Victor,' but somehow they had not thought of him as bearing their own surname. Mr. Frank had felt the shock once before, in addressing an envelope, but to Miss Bracy it was quite new.

Yet she was the first to recover herself, and, while holding out her hand, took quick note that the boy had Frank's stature and eyes, carried his clothes well and himself, if shyly, without clumsiness. She could find no fault with his manner of shaking hands, and when he turned to his father, the boy's greeting was the less embarrassed of the two. Mr. Frank indeed had suddenly become conscious of his light suit and bird's-eye neckcloth.

'But how did you come?' asked Miss Bracy. 'We sent a cart to meet you—I heard no sound of wheels.'

'Yes, I saw it outside the station, but the man didn't recognise me—quite a small crowd came by the train—and of course I didn't recognise him. So I bribed a porter to put my luggage on a barrow and come along with me. Half-way up the hill the cart overtook us—the driver full of apologies. While they transhipped my things I walked on ahead—yes, listen—there it comes: and—oh, I say, what a lovely spot!'

Miss Bracy was listening—not for the wheels, and not to the story, but critically to every word as it came from his lips. 'The



woman has certainly done wonders,' was her unspoken comment. At Victor's frank outburst, however, she flushed with something like real pleasure. She was proud of her cottage and garden, and had even a sort of proprietary feeling about the view.

They sat down around the little tea-table, the boy first apologising for his travel-stains (he was, in fact, as neat as a pin) and afterward chatting gaily about his journey—not talking too much, but appealing from one to another with a quick deferent grace and allowing them always the lead.

'This is better and better,' thought Miss Bracy as she poured out tea, and, after a while: 'But this is amazing!' He was a thorough child, too, with all his unconscious tact. The scent of lemon-verbena plant fetched him suddenly to his feet with his eyes bright.

'Please let me——' He thrust his face into the bush. 'I have never seen it growing like this.'

Miss Bracy looked at Mr. Frank. How utterly different it was from their old-maidish expectations! They had pictured the scene a hundred times, and always it included some awkwardly decorous reference to the dead woman. *This* had been their terror—to do justice to the occasion without hurting the poor boy's feelings—to meet his sullen shyness, perhaps antipathy, with a welcome which somehow excused the past. Yes, the past (they had felt) required excuse to *him*. And he had made no allusion to his mother, and obviously wished for none. Miss Bracy could not help smiling at the picture of their fears.

The boy had turned, caught her smiling, and broke into a jolly laugh at his own absurdity. It echoed in the garden where no one had laughed aloud for years. And with that laugh Bassett's revenge began.

#### IV.

For with that laugh they began to love him. They did not—or at any rate Miss Bracy did not—know it at the time. For some days they watched him, and he, the unsuspecting one, administered a score of shocks as again and again he took them neatly and decisively at unawares. He had accepted them at once and in entire good faith. They were (with just the right recognition of their seniority) good comrades in this jolliest of worlds. They were his holiday hosts, and it was not for the guest to hint (just yet) at the end of the holiday.

He surprised them at every turn. His father's canvases filled him with admiring awe. 'Oh, but I say—however is it done?' As he stood before them with legs a trifle wide, he smoothed the top of his head with a gesture of perplexity. And Mr. Frank, standing at his shoulder with legs similarly spread, used the same gesture—as Miss Bracy had seen him use it a thousand times. Yet the boy had no artistic talent—not so much as a germ. For beauty of line and beauty of colour he inherited an impeccable eye; indeed his young senses were alive to seize all innocent delight—his quickness in scenting the lemon-verbena bush proved but the first of many instances. But he began and ended with enjoyment; of the artist's impulse to reproduce and imitate beauty he felt nothing. Mr. Frank recognised with a pang that he had failed not only in keeping his torch bright, but in passing it on, that the true self which he had missed expressing must die with him barren and untransmitted. The closer he drew in affection, the farther this son of his receded—receded in the very act of acknowledging his sonship—with a gesture, smilingly irreprehensible, with eyes which allured the yearning he baffled, and tied it to the hopeless chase.

Mr. Frank, who worshipped flowers, was perhaps the most ineffective gardener in England. With a trowel and the best intentions he would do more damage in twenty minutes than Miss Bracy could repair in a week. She had made a paradise in spite of him, and he contented himself with assuring her that the next tenant would dig it up and find it paved with good intentions. The seeds he sowed—and he must have sown many pounds' worth before she stopped the wild expense—never sprouted by any chance. 'Dormant, my dear Laura—dormant!' he would exclaim in springtime, rubbing his head perplexedly as he studied the empty borders. 'When I die and am buried here they will all sprout together, and you will have to take a hook and cut your way daily through the vegetation which hides my grave.' But Victor, who approached them in the frankest ignorance, seemed to divine the ways of flowers at once. In the autumn he struck cuttings of Miss Bracy's rarest roses; he removed a sickly passion-flower from one corner of the cottage to another, and restored it to health within a fortnight. Within a week after his coming he and Miss Bracy were deep in cross-fertilising a border full of carnations she had raised from seed. He carried the same natural deftness into a score of small household repairs. He



devised new cradles for Miss Bracy's cats, and those conservative animals at once accepted the improvement; he invented a cupboard for his father's canvases; he laid an electric bell from the kitchen beneath the floor of the dining-room, so that Miss Bracy could ring for Deborah by a mere pressure of the foot; and the well-rope which Deborah had been used to wind up patiently was soon fitted with a wheel and balance-weight which saved four-fifths of the labour.

'It beats me where you learned how to do these things,' his father protested.

'But it doesn't want learning; it's all so simple—not like painting, you know.'

Mr. Frank had been corresponding with the boy's head-master.

'Yes, he is a good fellow,' said one of the letters. 'Just a gentle, clean-minded boy, with courage at call when he wants it, and one really remarkable talent. You may not have discovered it, but he is a mathematician, and as different from the ordinary book-made mathematician—from the dozens of boys I send up regularly to Cambridge—as cheese is from chalk. He has a sort of passion for pure reasoning—for its processes. Of course he does not know it, but from the first it has been a pleasure to me (an old pupil of Routh's) to watch his work. "Style" is not a word one associates as a rule with mathematics, but I can use no other to express the quality which your boy brings to that study. . . .'

'Good Lord!' groaned Mr. Frank, who had never been able to add up his washing bills.

He read the letter to Miss Bracy, and the pair began to watch Victor with a new wonder. They were confident that no Bracy had ever been a mathematician; for an uncle of theirs, now a rector in Shropshire and once of Emmanuel College, Cambridge, where, for reasons best known to himself, he had sought honours in the mathematical tripos, and narrowly missed the Wooden Spoon, had clearly no claim to the title. Whence in the world did the boy derive this gift? 'His mother——' Miss Bracy began, and broke off as a puff of smoke shot out from the fireplace. It was late September. Deborah had lit the fire that morning for the first time since May, and the chimney never drew well at starting. Miss Bracy took the tongs in hand, but she was not thinking of the smoke; neither was Mr. Frank, while he watched her. They were both thinking of the dead woman.

The thought of her—the ghost of her—was always rising now between them and her boy; *she* was the impalpable screen they tried daily and in vain to pierce; to *her* they had come to refer unconsciously all that was inexplicable in him. And so much was inexplicable! They loved him now! they stretched out their hands to him; behind *her* he smiled at them, but through or across *her* their hands could never reach.

As at first they had avoided all allusion to her and been thankful that the boy's reticence made it easy, so now they grew almost feverishly anxious to discover how he felt towards his mother's memory. They detected each other laying small traps for him, and were ashamed. They held their breath as with an air of cheerful unconsciousness he walked past the traps, escaping them one and all. At first in her irritation Miss Bracy accused him of what she (of all women!) called false pride. 'He is ashamed of her. He wishes to forget, and is only too glad that we began by encouraging him.' On second thoughts she knew the charge to be undeserved and odious. His obvious simplicity gave it the lie. Besides she knew that a small water-colour sketch of her in her youth—a drawing of Mr. Frank's—stood on the table in the boy's bedroom. Miss Bracy often dusted that room with her own hands.

'And, Frank,' she confessed one day, 'he kisses it! I know by the dulness on the glass when I rub it.' She did not add that she rubbed it viciously. 'I tell you,' she insisted almost with a groan, 'he lives with her. She is with him in this house in spite of us; she talks with him; his real existence is with her. He comes out of it to make himself pleasant to us, but he goes back and tells her his secrets.'

'Nonsense, Laura,' Mr. Frank interrupted testily. 'For some reason or other the boy is getting on your nerves. It is natural, after all.'

'Natural? Yes, I see; you mean that I'm an old maid, and it's a case of crabbed age and youth.'

'My dear Laura, I mean nothing so rude. But, after all, we have been living here a great many years, and it is a change.'

'Frank, you can be singularly dense at times. Must I tell you in so many words that I am fond of the boy, and if he'd be only as fond of me he might racket the house down and I'd only like him the better for it?'

Mr. Frank rubbed his head, and then with sudden resolution



marched out of the house in search of Victor. He found the boy on the roof removing a patent cowl which the local man had set up a week before to cure the smoky chimney.

‘My dear fellow,’ the father cried up. ‘You’ll break your neck! Come down at once—I have something particular to say to you.’

Victor descended with the cowl under his arm.

‘Do be careful. Doesn’t it make you giddy, clambering about a place like that?’ Mr. Frank had no head at all for a height.

‘Not a bit. . . . Just look at this silly contrivance—choked with soot in three days! The fellow who invented it ought to have his head examined.’

‘It has made you in a horrible mess,’ said his father, who took no interest in cowls, but lost his temper in a smoky house.

‘I’ll run in and have a change and wash.’

‘No, put the nasty thing down and come into the garden.’ He opened the gate and Victor followed after dipping his hands in the waterfall.

‘The fact is, my boy, I’ve come to a decision. This has been a pleasant time—a very pleasant time—for all of us. We have put off speaking to you about this, but I hope you understand that this is to be your home henceforward; that we wish it and shall be the happier for having you. . . .’

Victor had been gazing out over the cove, but now turned and met his father’s eyes frankly.

‘I have a little money,’ he said. ‘Mother managed to put by a small sum from time to time—enough to start me in life. She did not tell me until a few days before she died; she knew I wanted to be an engineer.’

He said this quite simply. It was the first time he had mentioned his mother. Mr. Frank felt his face flushing.

‘But your head-master tells me it will be a thousand pities if you don’t go to Cambridge. I am proposing that you should go there—should matriculate this term. My dear boy’—he laid a hand on Victor’s arm—‘don’t refuse me this. I have no right, perhaps, to insist; but I dare say you can guess what your acceptance would mean to me. You can choose your own career when the time comes. For your sake your mother would have liked this; ask yourself if she would not.’

Mr. Frank had not looked forward to pleading like this, yet when it came to the point this seemed his only possible attitude. Victor had removed his gaze, and his eyes were resting now on

the green sunny waves rolling in at the harbour's mouth. For about a minute he kept silence, then :

'Yes, she would advise it,' he said. It was as though he had laid the case before an unseen adviser and waited submissively for the answer. Mr. Frank had gained his end and without trouble, yet he felt a disappointment he could not at once explain. He was the last man in the world to expect a gratitude which he did not deserve, but in the satisfaction of carrying his point he missed something, and surmised what he missed. The boy had not turned to *him* for the answer, but had turned away and brought it to him. Father and son would never have the deeper joy of taking counsel together—heart to heart.

## V.

So Victor went up to Trinity and returned for the Christmas vacation on the heels of an announcement that he had won a scholarship. He had grown more manly and serious, and he smoked a tobacco which sorely tried Miss Bracy's distinguished nose, but he kept the boyish laugh—the laugh which always seemed to them to call invitingly from the door of his soul : 'Why don't you enter and read me? The house is clean and full of good-will—come!' But though they never ceased trying, they could never penetrate to those inner chambers. Sometimes—though they might be talking of most trivial matters—the appeal would suddenly grow pathetic, almost plangent : 'What is this that shuts me off from you? We sit together and love one another ; why am I set apart?' Time was when he had seemed to them consciously reticent, almost of set purpose, but now it was they who, looking within the doorway, saw the dead woman standing there with finger on lip.

He made no intimate friends at Cambridge, yet was popular, and something of a figure in his college, which had marked him down for high—perhaps the highest—university honours, and was pleasantly astonished to find him also a good cricketer. His good looks attracted men ; they asked his name, were told it, and exclaimed, 'Bracy? Not the man Trinity is running for Senior Wrangler?' With this double reputation he might have won a host of friends, and his father and Miss Bracy would gladly have welcomed one, in hope that such companionship might exorcise the ghost ; but he kept his way, liking and liked by men, yet aloof ; with many acquaintances, censorious of none ; influenced by none ; avoiding where he disapproved, but not judging, and in



no haste even to disapprove; easy to approach and almost eager for good will, yet in the end inaccessible.

His first Easter vacation he spent with a reading-party in Cumberland. There he first tasted the 'sacred fury' of the mountains and mountain-climbing, and in Switzerland the next August it grew to be a passion. He returned to it again and again, in Cumberland playing at the game with half a dozen fellow-undergraduates whom he had bitten with the mania, but in Switzerland during the Long Vacations giving himself over to a glut of it, with only a guide and porter for company—sometimes alone, if he could ever be said to be alone. As in mathematics, so in his sport, the cold heights were the mistresses he wooed; the peaks called to him, the rare atmosphere, the glittering wastes. He neither scorned danger nor was daunted by it. Below in the forests he would sing aloud, but the summits held him silent. As an old pastor at Zermatt told Mr. Frank, he would come down from a mountain 'like Moses, with his face illumined.'

He started on his third visit to Switzerland early in July; in the second week in August Miss Bracy and Mr. Frank were to join him at Chamounix, and thence the three would make a tour together. He started in the highest spirits, and halted at the gate to wave his ice-axe defiantly.

## VI.

The clergyman who ministered to the little tin English church boarded at the big hotel, which kept a bedroom and a sitting-room at his disposal. They faced north from the back of the building, which stood against the mountain-side, but the sitting-room had a second window at the corner of the block, and from this the eye went up over a plantation of dark firs to the white snowfields of the Col and the dark jagged wall of the Dent du Géant—distant, yet as clear as if stencilled against the blue heaven. It was a delectable vision, but the clergyman, being short-sighted as a mole, had never seen it. He wore spectacles with a line running horizontally across them, and through these he peered at Mr. Frank and Miss Bracy as if uncertain of their distance.

Mr. Frank, in a suit of black, sat at the little round table in the centre of the room, pressing his finger-tips into the soft nap of gaudy French tablecloth. Miss Bracy stood by the window with her back to the room, but she was listening. She, too, wore black. The fourth person, at the little clergyman's elbow, was

Christian, the guide. It was he who spoke, while Mr. Frank dug his fingers deeper, and the clergyman nodded at every pause sympathetically, and both kept their eyes on the tablecloth, the pink and crimson roses of which, on their background of buff and maroon, were to one a blur only, to the other a pattern bitten on his brain.

'It must have been between noon and one o'clock,' the guide was saying, 'when we crossed the Col and began on the rocks. I was leading, of course; the Herr next, and Michel'—this was their porter—'behind. We had halted and lunched at the foot of the rocks. They were nasty, with a coating, for the most part, of thin ice which we must knock away; but not really dangerous. The Herr was silent, not singing—he had been singing and laughing all through the morning—but in high spirits. He kept his breath now for business. I never knew him fatigued, and that day I had to beg him once or twice not to press the pace. Michel was tired, I think, and the wine he had taken earlier had upset his stomach; also he had been earning wages all the winter in England as a gentleman's valet, and this was his first ascent for the year, so it may have been that his nerve was wrong.

'The first trouble we had with him was soon after starting on the rocks. We were roped, and at the first awkward place he said, "If one of us should slip now, we are all lost." The Herr was annoyed as I have never seen him, and I, too, was angry, the more because what he said had some truth, but it was not, you understand, the moment to say it. After this we had no great trouble until we had passed the place where Herr Mummery turned back. About thirty metres from the summit we came to a bit requiring caution, a small *couloir* filled with good ice, but at a slope—so!' Here Christian held his open hand aslant, but Mr. Frank did not lift his eyes. 'They anchored themselves and held me while I cut steps—large steps—across it. On the other side there was no good foothold within length of the rope, so I cast off, and the Herr came across in my steps with Michel well anchored. It was now Michel's turn, and having now the extra length of rope brought across by the Herr, I could go higher to a rock and moor myself firmly. The Herr was right enough where he stood, but not to bear any strain, so I told him to cast off that I might look to Michel alone. While he unknotted his rope I turned to examine the rock, and at that instant . . . Michel did not understand, or was impatient to get it over . . . at any rate, he started to cross just as the Herr had both hands busy. He



slipped at the third step . . . I heard, and turned again in time to see the jerk come. The Herr bent backward, but it was useless ; he was torn from his foothold——'

The little clergyman nodded and broke in : ' They were found, close together, on a ledge, two thousand feet below. Your son, sir, was not much mutilated, though his limbs were broken—and his spine and neck. The bodies were found the next day, and brought down. We did all that was possible. Shall I take you and madame to the grave ?'

But the guide had not finished. ' He fell almost on top of Michel, and the two went spinning down the *couloir* out of sight. I do not think that Michel uttered any cry, but the Herr as the strain came and he went backward against it, seeking to get his axe free and plant it . . . though that would have been useless . . . the Herr cried once and very loud . . . such a strange cry !'

' Madame will be glad,' interrupted the clergyman again, who had heard Christian's story at the inquest. ' Madame will be glad——' He addressed Miss Bracy, who, as he was dimly aware, had been standing throughout with face averted, staring up at the far-away cliffs. ' The young's man's last thoughts——'

But Christian was not to be denied. He had told the story a score of times during the last three days, had assured himself by every evidence that he could tell it effectively. He was something of an egoist, too, and the climax he had in mind was that of his own emotions in recrossing the fatal *couloir* ropeless, with shaking knees, haunted by the Englishman's last cry.

' Such a strange cry,' he persisted. ' His eyes were on mine for a moment . . . then they turned from me to the *couloir* and the great space below. It was then he uttered it, stretching out his hands as the rope pulled him forward, yet not as one afraid. " Mother !" he cried ; just that, and only once—" Mother !"'

Mr. Frank looked up sharply and turned his head toward Miss Bracy. The clergyman and the guide also had their eyes on her, the latter waiting for the effect of his climax.

' It must be a consolation to you,' the clergyman began to mumble.

But Miss Bracy did not hear. Mr. Frank withdrew his eyes from her and fixed them again on the gaudy tablecloth. She continued to stare up at the clean ice-fields, the pencilled cliffs. She did not even move.

So Bassett was avenged.

*THE EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY PLACE-HUNTER.*

BY ALEXANDER INNES SHAND.

WHEN Disraeli very unfairly satirised Croker in 'Coningsby,' the sharpest stroke was naming Lord Monmouth's parasite and pander after the most notorious time-server of the previous century. The real Rigby has had the honours of infamy; political moralists have taken him for the type of all that was corrupt, scandalous, and shameless. Junius splashed him incidentally with vitriol in the letters addressed to his Grace of Grafton, Macaulay branded him in the articles on Lord Chatham, and Macaulay's nephew, in the 'Early History of Charles Fox,' has laid on the lash with unsparing severity. He is not dismissed with a few stinging cuts of the cat; like the soldiers of our good old régime, he is sentenced to innumerable lashes, and the punishment is dealt out in generous instalments. Unrelenting severity is apt to overreach itself, and excessive punishment awakens sympathy with its victim. We ask if Rigby was really so vile as he is represented, and whether there is any very exceptional reason why he should be singled out as the scapegoat of a worthless generation. And the answer is not altogether unfavourable. If Rigby was not a good man or a great man, he was undoubtedly a strong man, and he made his mark by sterling qualities which Englishmen hold in respect. His very vices were sometimes the excess of popular virtues. He had the dogged and indomitable pluck which asserted our ascendancy in bloody sea-fights, for it was sheer calumny that taxed him with showing the white feather; he was always ready to back his abuse with the pistol, and could face a storm of obloquy as resolutely as a shower of brickbats. In fact, he owed the constant patronage of the Duke of Bedford to having saved him at no slight personal peril from a riotous mob. He would never, like his ally Sandwich, have turned Jemmy Twitcher and 'peached upon an old pal'; though he could throw a friend brutally over if their interests happened to clash. Honour among thieves was his guiding maxim, and when he formed and disciplined the Bloomsbury Gang, bound to stick together through



thick and thin in all contingencies, he promoted the political company (limited) whose shares were always at a premium. He was no hypocrite in that hypocritical age: he never professed the lofty principles he ridiculed; and thanks to the unimpeachable honesty of his unblushing and audacious candour, enemies and friends alike knew exactly 'where to have him.' He was not a great man, but he was a very powerful man. He led his patron the Duke of Bedford by the nose, a statesman with rectitude and perhaps intellect far superior to his own, and so he wielded the influence of the great House of Russell. He set the exalted disinterestedness of Chatham down as sheer insanity; that was a nobility of soul of which he had no sort of comprehension; but to Chatham he dictated terms when the great war minister was bargaining for allies. And not the least of his gifts was an extraordinarily strong head. In that hard-drinking age, when manhood was measured by the 'marines' thrown aside at a drinking bout; when Carteret's ordinary allowance was half a gallon of Burgundy, and when a leading divine in the strait-laced Scottish Church was famous as a five-bottle man, Rigby was *primus inter pares*. Nowhere was so much liquor consumed as at his daily carouses at the Pay Office. Ministers knew his cellar and liked his company, and never refused his invitations. His guests might be slipping under the table or loosening their starched neckties, but Rigby was still cool and self-possessed. When he left the dinner-table for the senate his coarse eloquence was only more animated; he was ever ready in debate and prompt in retort. His whole character may be summed up as concentrated and cynical egotism: he set himself to retrieve his shattered fortunes at the cost of the country; he pressed steadily forwards towards the cumulation of lucrative preferments, and no place-hunter in English history ever had more brilliant success. He embarked in politics when well-nigh ruined; he lived in luxury, regardless of expense, and he is said to have died worth half a million.

Rigby, by general consent, like Richard III., and Iago and other historical scarecrows, has been blackened almost beyond redemption, and gibbeted to point morals for posterity; yet material for the whitewasher is not altogether wanting. Needless to say that his failings were regarded leniently by his friends and contemporaries, who were pretty generally tarred with the same brush, and rather inclined to envy than censure. But Horace Walpole, who seldom took genial views of humanity,

is singularly charitable to the indefatigable place-hunter. He magnifies his virtues and extenuates or explains his faults. From the popular portraiture we are apt to figure to ourselves a bloated, brazen-faced ruffian, with an overbearing swagger. Junius speaks of his blushing for Grafton as an unprecedented and almost miraculous sign of the times. But Walpole says he had an advantageous and manly person, a spirited jollity that was very pleasing, though sometimes roughened into brutality, and a most insinuating good-breeding when he wished to be pleasing. He admits that his passions were turbulent and his manner dictatorial—as much might have been said of Chatham—but he credits him with ‘a bold courage, fond of exerting itself.’ He even adds that though in company, from gaiety of temper, he indulged in profuse drinking, in private few men were so sober; though Garrick suggested that he loved to retire to his sequestered seat of Mistley, in the marshlands, that he might have an excuse for drinking brandy as other men drink small beer. *Quot homines, tot sententiæ!* We should have said that from Rigby’s point of view he had made as few mistakes in life as most men. But Walpole, assuming some errors, attributes them to a mischievous political education. A pupil of Winnington, he was the victim of Winnington’s vicious maxims. Winnington had lived when all virtue had been set up to sale, and in ridicule of hypocritical pretences had affected an honesty in avowing whatever was dishonourable. ‘Rigby, whose heart was naturally good, thought it sensible to laugh at the shackles of morality, and having early encumbered his fortunes by gaming, he found his patrons’ maxims but too well adapted to retrieve his desperate fortunes.’ As to that, all that can be said is that the times had not changed for the better with the passing of a generation, and that Rigby was an apt pupil who improved on the teaching of his master. There is truth as well as shrewdness in Walpole’s summing up. ‘A man who seldom loved or hated with moderation, yet he himself, though a violent opponent, was never a bitter enemy. His amiable qualities were natural: his faults were all acquired.’ ‘Shrewdness,’ we say, because Rigby was far too practical to care for hard hitting, whether fair or foul. It was all in the rough and tumble game. And it clashed with his principles to bear malice, when the foe of the day might be the friend of the morrow, and when, in the incessant shuffling of the cards, anything might turn up trumps.



It is a common subject of lament with biographers that their heroes were born too soon or too late. Rigby's good luck stood by him from the cradle, and he came into the world at the very time most favourable for the exercise of his peculiar abilities. In his early manhood, when he set seriously to sowing his wild oats, London was seething with political intrigue; corruption was rampant, and fashionable life was almost as loose as in the reign of the second Charles. Though the grandson of a linen-draper, he had inherited a handsome fortune, and the rich young squire, with good manners and a hospitable country seat, had money to throw away, which was his best recommendation. Most doors in the Georgian period were unlocked by a golden key, and a gambler who was a good loser had the *entrée* almost anywhere. At no time was high Cabinet office more jealously monopolised by the great aristocracy. In the ministry which came into power the year after Rigby attained his majority, with the exception of the premier—the brother of a duke—all the ministers were peers and eight of them had dukedoms. Yet, as the peerage has always been recruited from the ranks, some of the most aristocratic leaders of fashion have been men of the humblest origin. Fifty years later, Brummel was the rival of the Regent, and Brummel is said to have been son of a footman. So Rigby, who was easy and genial when on his promotion, convivial, free-handed, and a prince of good fellows, had naturally a fair chance. Nor did he neglect the setting off of his personal advantages. When he had grown gross and bloated, the bully of the House of Commons was still severely correct in his attire, and in earlier manhood he had been something of a fop. When the custom dues on clothes imported from France were exorbitant, the Right Hon. Richard Rigby might have been seen one stormy day crossing the Channel in a court suit, richly embroidered with gold lace and priceless ruffles of Flanders point.

As matter of course he made the Grand Tour, which was *de rigueur*, and on his return was presented at Leicester House, where the Prince gave him a gracious reception and soon admitted him to something like intimacy. The youth had then the flexibility of the courtier, and less intelligence than his would have quickly hit the royal road to courtly favour. Flattery went far, no doubt, but the favoured parasites, when without political influence, had to pay their footing. Rigby dropped large sums at the card-tables: his losses were so serious that his creditors became

troublesome. We know not what his original intentions were, and very probably he would have let himself drift on the sea of pleasure had all been smooth sailing. But adversity called all his special energies into action, and he was the last man to let his practical capacity run to waste. It was then he turned in earnest to the business of place-hunting, and no profession was so lucrative. The great nobles might monopolise power and high place, but obsequious followers, who could make themselves useful, were richly rewarded. Subordinate offices, largely salaried, with pickings and stealings at the holder's indiscretion, sinecures, pensions on the Irish Establishment, were to be had for the asking by politicians who were either serviceable or feared. When a minister took one of these jackals into his confidence, it was at the risk of being remorselessly blackmailed. Rigby's first disappointment proved another stroke of luck. Prince Frederick was always lavish of promises, and he had pledged himself to make Rigby a Lord of the Bedchamber. As Rigby's duns became pressing, in turn he pressed the Prince, and then a vacancy occurred. The spendthrift Frederick, though far deeper in debt than his petitioner, was in some respects an excellent economist: nor was he fool enough to fulfil his engagement to the friend whose pockets he had emptied. Rigby shook the dust of Leicester Square off his feet, and, trading on the gratitude of its noble owner, transferred his attendance to Bedford House, where he speedily rose to the command of his Grace's Household brigade.

He assured his fortunes by the fortunate exchange, and it is doubtful whether the Duke lost by the connection. Like many another man, had he been other than he was, he might have taken commanding rank among English statesmen. Disinterested as Chatham, and lavish of his large revenues, he was a man of no mean capacity, and honestly patriotic and conscientious. But there was an unpractical side to his unstable character, and he was born not to lead, but to be guided. Predestined to be the pawn and tool of absolutely unscrupulous intriguers, Rigby was as good as any for the purpose. Rigby was his will, his mind, his memory, and his evil genius. It is true that it was the counsels of his Mephistopheles which gave point to the satire of Junius. It is true that it was the subtle temptation of Rigby which induced the Viceroy of Ireland to abandon purity of principle for shameless prostitution of patronage. But Sandwich, or Weymouth, or any other adviser would have done the same, and Rigby had the iron



concentration of purpose which in some measure communicated itself to his nominal superior. Rigby's self-seeking was not altogether devoid of patriotism, though patriotism was kept in the second place and at a long distance. And there were lengths to which Bedford would not be driven, and measures to which he could not be induced to stoop. He stood aloof from parties; his following was a personal one; his influence on State affairs, on the whole, was good; his letters to ministers abroad show sagacity and political insight; and if he exercised any influence at all, it was because Rigby had drilled his compact battalion.

Rigby had entered Parliament when twenty-three, and in Pelham's administration had voted with the Opposition as silent member for Castle Rising and Sudbury. He had lost his seat for the latter borough; but in 1754 his new patron returned him for Tavistock. Without intermission he represented that family seat of the Bedfords for more than thirty years. It is a proof at once of the constancy of the patron, who never forsook a friend, though he had often to complain of ingratitude—witness Legge, who owed everything to Bedford and turned Judas when Newcastle ousted him from the ministry—and of the many-sided usefulness of Rigby, who speedily made himself indispensable. His letters to the Duke are amusingly autobiographical, abounding in frank self-revelation. The first which appears in the published correspondence was written in June 1751. Already he had established a respectful familiarity. It is the letter of a favoured servant, on the footing of a trusted friend, who knows how to take playful liberties without offending the dignity he serves.

Rigby had won the Duke by the real service to which we have alluded, and improved his opportunities as the best of boon companions. The great man passed much of his time at Woburn; in fact, one of Newcastle's complaints when backbiting him with the monarch was that he was always on the road and seldom in his office. In his ample leisure he divided time and tastes between his children, his plantations and private theatricals. But he loved to keep himself informed of all that went on in the gay world. Rigby constituted himself purveyor-in-ordinary of rumours, gossip and scandal. He feels his way delicately in these letters, making one pave the way for another, by protesting that he would not write at all if his Grace thought it incumbent to answer. He knew well that however averse to letter-writing the Duke might be, it was a correspondence in which he must

inevitably be entangled. As well might Horace Mann have refused to reply to Horace Walpole. Rigby's style is rough and ready, as Walpole's is polished, but these letters of his are scarcely less amusing. He moved in the highest society, where he knew well how to keep his place in more senses than one: he would buttonhole a duke in his regardful familiarity: he was in the good graces of fair ladies of fashion: he was forward in getting up parties at Greenwich or Richmond: he supped and dropped his money—by way of investment—at White's or Brooks'; and in those days conviviality levelled ranks and degrees, when the wine was in and the wit was out. We may be sure, besides, that he made the very most of his intimacy with Bedford, who with rank and wealth and fair chances of political supremacy was a sort of Mikado generally worshipped, but not to be lightly approached.

The intimacy ripened fast. In 1752 the Duke paid a visit to the Squire of Mistley—no slight condescension, Rigby writes with befitting gratitude. 'You must accept my thanks for the great honour you have done me in this second-rate manner. I must declare that though I cannot express either my obligations or my attachment to you in so good oratorical language' (as Mr. Pitt's), 'I can keep my word better and be more faithful to you in every respect. But not to read you a panegyric upon myself, I will have done with egotism and assure you I am infinitely obliged for the favour of your visit. It convinces the world of what I am most desirous they should know—that I am extremely well in your good graces, and it convinces me of what makes me more happy (if, indeed, I could want conviction), that I am so also in your friendship.' The last sentence might have been addressed by Boswell to Johnson, and both were servile worshippers of their idol, though Bozzy's devotion was the more disinterested. For Rigby had made himself useful till he was indispensable. The Duke invariably consulted him and was guided by his advice. He was regarded by all intriguers as the official representative and mayor of the palace of the man whom Newcastle addressed in one of his flattering letters—for the most part they were asking Bedford to aid in some job—as the first and greatest of English subjects. In 1758, when Bedford consented to go to Dublin as Lord Lieutenant, Rigby naturally accompanied him as Irish Secretary. In some respects it was an excellent choice. In that hard-drinking society the Secretary could hold his own, and his bluff good-fellowship commended him to men



who loved jests and light talk the better for strong seasoning. He tells his patron complacently of a couple of clever character-sketches by Lady Doneraile: 'His Grace was the honestest and best man, but an *ipse-dixit* man; and his Secretary was a good four-bottle man.'

But rare convivial qualities are not everything, and Rigby found that in the Protestant Parliament he had a difficult team to drive. Irish politicians might be place-hunters like himself, but patriotism was a strong card to play, and the mob was as inflammable as the Parliament was venal. Bedford went to Ireland with the fairest professions and probably with the best intentions. He declared he would rise superior to faction, and have nothing to do with jobbery. Nothing, indeed, could be more firm than his respectful opposition to His Majesty's gracious and modest proposal to saddle the Irish pension list with annuities for life to the Princess of Hesse and her children, who had been turned out of their hereditary principality. But purity was opposed to Rigby's principles. Playing on his patron's family affection, he persuaded him to pension his sister-in-law; and the barrier being once breached, the Bloomsburys came with a rush. As was but right and just, Rigby came best off. First appointed to the Board of Trade, a few months later he was Master of the Rolls. As Walpole remarked, 'Though the office is no post of business, the choice of a man so little grave is not decent.' He might have added besides that a gentleman who had never passed at the Bar was scarcely eligible for a nominally legal appointment. But the beauty of the sinecure system was that ineligibility was no objection.

Irishmen in high places had no objection to financial abuses in the abstract, but they naturally resented English intrusion. The Lord Lieutenant and his Secretary became the more unpopular, that they had raised national hopes which were disappointed. Pensioners who were secured in their pensions turned rusty in the House, and it became impossible to keep a Government majority. Even Ponsonby, the Speaker, assumed a virtue if he had it not—blocked the money Bills and brought the Viceroy to his knees. Moreover, their emissaries spread the report that Bedford was bent on bringing about a Union, and that the Secretary was his zealous agent. They set Dublin in a flame, and a furious mob besieged the doors of the House of Commons. Ponsonby, alarmed at the storm, tried in vain to

pacify them. Rigby rose in his place to declare that if a Bill of Union were brought in, he would be the first to oppose it. Probably he spoke the truth, but unfortunately he was not believed. His appointment as Master of the Rolls rekindled the smouldering fire. Again there was serious rioting, and the cavalry was called out. Undoubtedly he had a very narrow escape, for the mob had raised a gallows and fully intended to hang him. As it chanced, he had gone out that morning for a ride; he got warning of the fate intended for him, and did not come back till the streets were cleared. Cowardice was none of his failings, and the place-hunter becomes hardened to invective and unpopularity. But Dublin thenceforth was no bed of roses, and he could only congratulate himself when Bedford was relieved. He had done an excellent stroke of business on his Irish trip, and could spend the pay of his sinecures more pleasantly in London.

When Fox was packing a Parliament for Bute, Rigby was in his element. None was more active than he in hounding on the able renegade, who had abandoned his friends and broken with his associations. The group of the Bedfords was holding watchfully aloof, and Rigby's thoroughgoing counsel to Fox was to make a clean sweep of the other Whig families. Great was the fall of Fox in the following year, when, charged with peculation and threatened with impeachment, he was execrated on all sides. At least he might have counted on the support of Rigby, and he confidently reckoned on his friendship. Unamiably as he was to all beyond his family circle, to Rigby he seems to have been strangely attracted and tenderly attached. He wrote to Selwyn at the time, 'I thought this man's friendship had not been only political.' Five years afterwards he wrote to Bedford, 'Mr. Rigby (whose behaviour has cost me more than any other thing that has ever yet happened) I loved as much as I did my brother.' If he loved him, it is no marvel he was deeply wounded at the manner in which his prompter and counsellor broke off the connection. The disgraced minister met Rigby's chariot in St. James's Street and stopped it. Leaning on the door he began to abuse Lord Shelburne. 'You tell your story of Shelburne,' was the harsh rejoinder. '*He* has a damned one to tell of you, and I do not trouble myself which is the truth,' and pushing Fox's elbow aside, he bade the coachman drive on. There could hardly be a coarser display of brutality, and no doubt it hit the sagacious



Fox the harder that he appreciated his 'friend's' shrewdness. Rigby would never have trampled on him had there been anything to hope from him in the future.

To Bedford, Rigby was what Thackeray calls 'a florid toady,' and even when paying assiduous and humble court to his chief, he always knew well how *se faire valoir*. But it must be remembered that in that reflected light and with his own talents for intrigue he was really an important personage. He had been chosen to mediate between Fox and Pitt, when it was the desire alike of the Crown and the country to have them working amicably in the same Cabinet. His Majesty habitually admitted him to private interviews, unbending so far as lay in his nature to do. Most significant of all, Newcastle never kept him waiting at the crowded *levées*, and always spoke of him behind his back with extreme civility. When addressing himself to the great jobber and giver of places on behalf of his patron, Rigby never failed, when he saw the opportunity, of putting in a word for himself. As Bedford's steady backing was essential, and as the Duke knew him for a confirmed beggar, he always reported these interviews frankly. One passage from the letters—one among many—will show the manner of his proceedings. In 1761 he had good cause of complaint, for nothing had been given since he evacuated Ireland. He writes:—'Your goodness in mentioning my name to him' (Newcastle) 'was the means of opening a conversation about myself and my situation. The chair which your Grace has mentioned' (at the Treasury Board), 'his Grace thinks, as I do, would not suit me. . . . But he has been very explicit and kind with respect to any other favour I might wish to have and your Grace thinks I should deserve. I told him fairly I should be very glad of a place, but that I could never take one from any other recommendation but the Duke of Bedford's.' After discussing various possible openings in which the minister seems to have shuffled characteristically, and after encouraging Rigby to look even higher than he had done, the crafty veteran sent the petitioner away delighted. A clever piece of political legerdemain it was, that throwing dust in the eyes of the keen-sighted Rigby, for he was to get nothing more for several years to come. 'Upon my word,' he says, 'I could not desire more show of friendship or regard from the nearest friend I have in the world, hardly from your Grace yourself. He cast about for everything that is or is likely to be vacant, and told me that my pretensions were

heightened by the great consequence of my patron, of which I ought to avail myself, and in doing which I should have his whole weight and support. . . . I hope I have not said too much about myself in this letter. The last thing I mean to do is to lay your Grace under any difficulties about me. And if you don't like to ask any favours from the Court, I am perfectly happy and satisfied with those you were so good as to shower upon me out of employment.'

In 1763 Bedford was persuaded to take office as President of the Council, and Rigby was busier than ever at wire-pulling. Bedford hated Bute and disliked Grenville for his pennywise parsimony. There was a stormy passage of arms in the House, when Rigby savagely attacked Lord Temple. Grenville, in a tempest of unaccustomed passion, called Rigby a coward who had fled from Ireland to escape the gallows. Rigby laughed pleasantly, restored to good-humour, and readily consented to keep the peace. Hard words break no bones; he could not afford to make an enemy of Grenville, and indeed not long afterwards he had serious occasion to approach him with obsequious appeals.

In 1766, when Chatham's tottering administration was shaken by the secession of those of the Rockinghams who had joined him, he necessarily sought the support of the Bedfords. The bargaining was closed in the following January, when Grafton surrendered at discretion. It was the triumph of Rigby's astute strategy. The Bloomsbury company might have adopted the device of the Swiss Confederation—*Un pour tous et tous pour un*. Rigby bluntly told Chatham that he must take all or have none. They sold themselves in a lot, and got their own terms. Lord Gower was to be President of the Council, Sandwich had the patronage of the Post Office, and the Duke was induced, after long hesitation, to insist on the sacrifice of Conway. He had held to the seals too long for his good fame, but now they were handed over to Weymouth. Rigby, the soul of the venal league, looked strictly, as usual, to the main chance. He had another draft on the Irish Exchequer, in the shape of a vice-treasurership with a salary of 3,500*l.*, and he was assured of the reversion of the Pay Office, the most lucrative place under Government. He might have been contented, for the Pay Office fell vacant next year, but humanity is never secure from trouble. The minister was guilty of a piece of gross injustice. He actually brought in a Bill to tax the incomes of non-resident Irish officials and pen-



sioners. Rigby was in despair: he whined and he blustered; he made himself exceptionally offensive in the House by unmeasured abuse; and he addressed the most humble petitions to Grafton and to Grenville. The misfortune was that all was in vain, and he had a sad experience of ministerial ingratitude. However, he was consoled in a measure by the vacancy at the Pay Office, and he was never more in his element. All the business could be done by deputy; he drew an ample salary, and he had almost limitless pickings and 'stealings,' which were sanctioned by use and honoured precedent. At that time he had no sinister foreboding that a Burke was to succeed him and call him over the coals. And the genial side of his character came to the front, when he made himself famous by his convivial entertainments. He dined and got 'concerned in liquor,' in the best official company. With Gower and Weymouth, his sworn allies, he had always been hand in glove. Dundas kept him company as a many-bottle man, and the sage and austere Thurlow graced the orgies with his imposing presence.

In gratitude for favours, past, present and to come, he stood loyally by the King and Court in the Wilkes affair. Indeed, he went to no small expense in getting up 'a loyal address' from his county of Essex, and when arbitrary and unconstitutional action was bringing the democracy to the verge of revolt, naturally Rigby of the iron nerve was put forward to make the motion to annul the election. Soon afterwards another blow was struck at constitutional or traditional right, but on that occasion Rigby was for once on the popular side. Grenville's Bribery Bill proposed to limit freedom of corruption, and among other things to forbid treating at elections. Rigby denounced it with all the honest vehemence of the hard drinker who has sympathy with old English virtues, and of the politician whose experience had taught him the methods most persuasive with the uneducated.

That was the last of his prominent public performances, though afterwards he was to oppose the motion for funeral honours to Chatham—we may remember that no less a man than Windham took the same line in the case of Chatham's illustrious son; and on another occasion, with all the fire of strong fellow-feeling, he warmly defended some officials charged with malversation. For the period of his public eminence was drawing to a close. In 1771 died the Duke of Bedford, and Rigby became simply the Right Hon. Richard when he ceased to be the

*alter ego* of the great Duke. His patron and staunch friend had dealt with him liberally. He left him a legacy and the remission of considerable debts, for his Grace had been consistently generous, and Rigby had never scrupled to draw on his purse. That the debts had never been repaid is significant of their relations, for Rigby had repaired his fortunes many years before, and when he went to the Pay Office he must have been rolling in riches. He remained there till the fall of the Coalition Ministry in 1784, when Burke was tardily rewarded with the profitable place. Being turned out of the lucrative berth was hard enough upon the old place-hunter, but it was far worse to be called to account by the law-officers for heavy balances of public money in his hands. Rigby was shocked by the indelicacy of the proceeding, and seriously alarmed by the threats of an impeachment; but his astuteness was equal to the occasion, and he seems to have scraped clear of the dilemma, with what might have been called some sacrifice of character. But Rigby's character had been established long before beyond possibility of damage.

He died at Bath in 1785, and was buried at his Essex seat, bequeathing to a nephew the half million of money he had industriously amassed in the public service. Satire itself must have been silenced, had it been inscribed upon his tomb that he turned his talents to excellent account.



*A LONDONER'S LOG-BOOK.*

XII.

OUR experiment of spending the autumn in London was not altogether a success; but the winter is passing very pleasantly. The fogs which have so extensively prevailed have afforded Bertha excellent opportunities of losing her way in returning from her district, and it has become quite a recognised institution that Bumpstead should see her home just about tea-time, when he does extraordinary execution among Selina's buttered scones. His performances in this field elicit no acrid criticisms, but my dear wife banters him with a winsome playfulness which recalls the days when I used to ride over from Proudflsh Park to The Sawpits, and decline old Mr. Topham-Sawyer's 'glass of sherry and a biscuit' in favour of the tea and muffins dispensed by the fascinating Miss Selina. That was more than twenty years ago, and if I asked for muffins to-day the request would be received with some painfully frank allusion to incipient obesity.

The Soulsbys are away. The exertions and emotions of the Harvest Festival proved too much for the Vicar's highly-strung organisation. He was overwrought already, and that Brown Paper Service was what old Lady Farrington, who is now a little doddering, called 'the last hair upon the camel's back.' Signs of brain-fag and nerve-exhaustion made themselves apparent to Dr. Snuffin's watchful eye, and Soulsby was recommended to take three weeks at Torquay. 'No lark could pipe in skies so dull and gray,' he quoted pathetically, as his excuse for deserting his parish so soon after his autumn holiday; and, turning his face sunward, left his flock to the tender mercies of frost and fog. During the Vicar's absence, Mr. Bumpstead became acting editor of 'St. Ursula's Parish Magazine,' and his brief period of responsibility was signalled by a remarkable occurrence. When the December number appeared, it was found to contain an anonymous set of verses, some of which I append:—

I am a loyal Anglican,  
A Rural Dean and Rector;  
I keep a wife and pony-trap,  
I wear a chest-protector.

I should not like my name to be  
 Connected with a party ;  
 But still my type of service is  
 Extremely bright and hearty.

Of course, one has to keep abreast  
 Of changing times and manners ;  
 A Harvest Festival we keep,  
 With Special Psalms—and banners ;  
 A Flower-Service in July,  
 A Toy-Fund Intercession,  
 And, when the hens lay well, we hope  
 To start an Egg-Procession.

My wife and I composed a form  
 For dedicating hassocks,  
 Which (slightly changed) we also use  
 For surplices and cassocks ;  
 Our Bishop, when we sent it for  
 His Lordship's approbation,  
 Remarked : ' A very primitive  
 And pleasing compilation.'

To pick the best from every school  
 The object of my art is,  
 And steer a middle course between  
 The two contending parties.  
 My own opinions would no doubt  
 Be labelled ' High ' by many ;  
 But all know well I would not wish  
 To give offence to any.

When first I came I had to face  
 A certain opposition,  
 And several friends in town advised  
 A short Parochial Mission ;  
 I thought that quiet pastoral work  
 Would build foundations firmer.  
 It did. This year we started ' Lights,'  
 Without a single murmur.

One ought, I'm certain, to produce  
 By gradual education  
 A tone of deeper Churchmanship  
 Throughout the population.  
 There are, I doubt not, even here  
 Things to be done in plenty ;  
 But still—you know the ancient saw—  
 ' Festina lentè—lentè.'

I humbly feel that my success,  
 My power of attraction,  
 Is mainly due to following  
 This golden rule of action :



' See all from all men's point of view,  
Use all men's eyes to see with,  
And never preach what anyone  
Could ever disagree with.'

The appearance of these rather ribald rhymes occasioned nothing less than a parochial storm. Loud was the outcry of the Fishers in Deep Waters. 'It is too shameful,' they exclaimed, 'to hold up the dear Vicar to ridicule in his own magazine! Not, of course, that it was the least bit like him; but obviously it was meant for him. How dreadfully pained he will be! I shouldn't wonder if he would resign the living. Who in the world could have written the lines? They are in the worst possible taste, and not the least amusing. I am sure, if I knew who it was, I would never ask him inside my house again. And how *could* Mr. Bumpstead have printed them? Well, for my own part, I always thought him a very underbred young man. And he is completely uneducated, and not the least fitted to be Mr. Soulsby's colleague. I do hope the Bishop of London will do something. But the worst of it is that this new Bishop likes that sort of young man, and calls them "old chap." I suppose they remind him of the people he lived with in the East End.'

Oddly enough, my own modest roof remains unshaken by this storm. A year ago it would have been a very different story. Selina would have said, 'Well, I am not the least surprised. You know what I always said about that man; and you see it has come true. If he put those horrid verses into the magazine in order to make fun of the Vicar, it was most impertinent; and as to saying that he didn't see the point of them till he read them in print, all I can say is that if that's the case he must be even stupider than he looks.'

Such, I say, would have been the language of a year ago; but to-day Selina says the verses are really very funny, and remind her of the things which Lord Curzon used to write in visitors'-books when she used to meet him in country-houses. And from certain mysterious signs of sympathy which I see passing between Bumpstead and Bertha, I am inclined to believe that my sister-in-law, who has come to think Mr. Soulsby 'an absolute fraud,' must have handed the peccant poem to her clerical admirer. I believe parochial rumour asserts that I wrote it, but this I categorically deny; and I should recommend the Vicar, if he feels aggrieved, to make personal inquiries at

St. Alban's Clergy-House, Holborn, where, unless my friend Arthur Stanton has very much changed, the worthy Soulsby will hear, as the advertisements say, something to his advantage.

But Christmas is upon us, and 'amicablenesses' (as Miss Miggs called them), rather than 'unpleasantnesses' (as the Parish calls them) should dominate the season. For my own part, I feel no difficulty in being amiable when I contrast a Christmas in Stuccovia with a Christmas in Loamshire. 'Christians, awake,' with the thermometer below zero; the arctic cold of the family pew at Proud flesh Park or The Sawpits; the faint odour of long-descended ancestry wafted up from the vault beneath; the concourse of uncongenial cousins; the masses of revengeful food; the servants' ball and the workhouse treat—all these 'Christmassy sort of things,' as Byng in 'Happy Thoughts' called them, belong to a remote past. In London no one compels me to eat what disagrees with me, or go to churches where I catch cold, or dine with relations whom I don't like, or attend gatherings at which I feel out of place. And then, again, we happy denizens of Stuccovia are within half-an-hour by Underground Train of the centre of life, civilisation, and commerce.

Ere yet my Selina had fallen like a star from its place—in other words, before she had married me and settled down in Stuccovia—one of her partners was the admirable Lord St. Aldegonde, who used to hunt in Loamshire. Mrs. Topham-Sawyer fondly fancied that his reason for choosing our very undistinguished country was his admiration for Selina, who certainly looked her best on a horse; but his real inducement—as with generous outspokenness he did not scruple to tell us—was that, though the hunting was infernally slow and the whole establishment seemed to have come out of Noah's Ark, it was a good grass country and lay within two hours' journey of London, whereas his own ancestral castle frowned upon the Border. 'What I want in December,' he used to say, 'is a slice of cod and a beefsteak, and, by Jove! I never could get them at home. Those infernal cooks spoil everything. I was obliged to come to town. It is no joke having to travel three hundred miles for a slice of cod and a beefsteak.' I am entirely of one mind with St. Aldegonde. Whether the object of one's desires is a beefsteak or a Christmas card, a slice of cod or a wedding present, it is no joke having to travel three hundred miles to get it. We, who are hampered by no Northern castles, have got through our



Christmas shopping this year very comfortably, and, on the whole, inexpensively. For the barrel of oysters which we used to send to The Sawpits we have substituted a box of chromatic sweetmeats made by a lady in reduced circumstances. A photograph-frame for Mrs. Topham-Sawyer works out at considerably less than the Gorgonzola cheese of more affluent days; while the Soulsbys, on their return from Torquay, will find our Christmas gift awaiting them in the shape of a copy—already cut, but very carefully handled so as to avoid thumb-marks—of ‘Lady Marguerite Manquée.’

This may fairly be said, by others than its publishers, to be the Book of the Season. It has smashed ‘The Eternal City,’ and obliterated the memory of ‘Tristram of Blent.’

The Manqués, Manquées, or De Manques, for so their name was indifferently spelt in the earlier stages of our history, were a family of Norman extraction. Some genealogists refer their origin to a hardy Norseman who exercised regal rights in the Isle of Man long before the Earls of Derby were heard of; but Mr. J. Horace Round dismisses this pedigree as legendary, and represents the original De Manques as companions-in-arms of the Conqueror. From successive kings they obtained grants of royal land, stately castles, hereditary offices, and writs of summons. They sedulously mixed their blood with all that was noblest in European chivalry, and increased in splendour and opulence as the centuries rolled on. Dynasties rose and fell, religions changed, revolutions brought the proudest heads to the block, and confiscation impoverished the wealthiest; but no disaster ever touched the fortunate De Manques. They seemed to be in some mysterious way the spoilt children of fate; and, as our national history unrolled itself, a tradition gradually gained ground in the highest circles of the social mysteries that the prosperity of this favoured race depended on some talisman or charm. ‘The Luck of the Manqués’ became proverbial, though nobody except the head of the family, the eldest son, and the domestic chaplain knew what it was. There were romantic stories of a secret chamber where it was death to penetrate unbidden. The wife of one of the Lords De Manque had once peeped through the keyhole, and had spent the rest of her days in a strait-waistcoat. A chimney-sweeper who had climbed to the top of the Donjon-Keep and peered down the chimney, exclaimed, ‘Well, I *am* damned,’ and fell, a blackened corpse, into the moat. The

intrusions of a profane curiosity being rebuked by these signal catastrophes, 'the Luck of the Manqués' took its place among the recognised mysteries of high life. Lord Houghton wrote a monograph about it. The Psychological Society made it the subject of some curious experiments. Mr. Augustus Hare (who was a cousin of the Manqués) gave several detailed, though inconsistent, accounts of it in successive volumes of his *Memoirs*. But, in spite of all struggles for the light, the secret remained involved in Cimmerian darkness. Meanwhile the fortunes of the illustrious line had come to centre in the person of an only girl. The last Lord de Manque (they had been Barons since the Flood and Earls since the Conquest) was a man of desperate adventures and broke his neck in trying to ride an Irish hunter over the Great Wall of China. Thus heroically cut off in his prime, he left an infant daughter and heiress—Marguerite Manquée. She would have been a peeress in her own right but for some tiresome technicality about a wedding-ring. As an earl's daughter she was styled by courtesy 'Lady,' although some purists might have disputed even that modest claim; and she inherited all her father's estates, equal in size to a German Principality. Her mother had died in giving birth to her, and the sole trustee and guardian appointed by her father's will was the domestic chaplain. As Marguerite was only a year old when she succeeded, she could not, in spite of amazing precocity, be admitted to the Secret of the Luck, of which the chaplain was now the sole depository. She was brought up in her principal castle, under the careful superintendence of accomplished governesses, none of whom was below the rank of a Baronet's daughter; and she was sedulously withheld from contact with the outer world. But the development and characteristics of so great an heiress could not fail to evoke the interest of a right-minded society.

People began to ask one another if they knew anything of that Manquée child, who must really be a big girl by now; and in reply to these queries disquieting rumours began to circulate. It was stated, with much show of certitude and circumstantiality, that the Heiress of the De Manques had no hair and no teeth; while others went so far as to add that she had only one eye. 'Ah, poor child!' cried sympathetic friends, 'every situation has its drawbacks, and all lots their crosses. But it is really too bad to spread these stories about her, if they are not true. We shall see when she comes out.'



When Marguerite Manquée was presented, social curiosity was keenly on the alert, and the verdict on her appearance was highly favourable. She was tall and nobly made; her bearing was majestic. She wore a lifelike peruke of the richest auburn. Her *râtelier* was the finest product of Parisian art. Her one eye flashed with all the fire of her Crusading ancestry; and the other, fashioned out of a single opal, rather added to than detracted from the impressiveness of her general appearance.

But how came a pretty girl of seventeen to be so strangely defective in those appendages which nature, as a rule, bestows impartially on the high-born and the lowly? Society might have asked the question in vain, only an Illustrious Personage, who had danced with Lady Marguerite at the Court Ball, insisted on knowing the truth. Then, all unexpectedly, the mystery of the Luck of the De Manques was disclosed. The talisman which from generation to generation had been so jealously guarded in the secret chamber of Castle Manque had vanished out of existence. It could never be recovered; the secret was at an end, and the story might be told.

And what a weird story it was! Lionel Manqué, tenth Baron De Manque, who flourished A.D. 1000, had conceived an unhallowed passion for his grandmother. His ill-starred love is commemorated for the warning of posterity in the Table of Kindred and Affinity. Heaven had manifested its wrath by saying (through the mouth of a Palmer), 'You shall have what you desire. You have admired the toothless and the bald. Henceforward no child born to the Manqués shall ever have a tooth in its mouth or a hair on its head.'

The doom which fell upon the house in the person of the guilty Lionel was reversed by the piety of his successor, *Bawdewyn*. His exploits in the Crusades expiated his father's sin, and an Eremite of Ascalon, to whom he had paid a handsome tribute of Turks' heads, gave him in return a mysterious elixir, which could be warranted to stir into generative activity the barest scalp or the deadest gum. This invaluable fluid the triumphant Crusader brought home in a pocket-flask. A golden pyx of cunning workmanship was fashioned to receive it, and a secret chamber was hollowed in the thickness of the castle-wall to enshrine the talisman.

For generation after generation this talisman, always safeguarded by the Lord, the Heir, and the Chaplain, went on doing

its beneficent work. The Palmer's curse was frustrated, and each child born to the De Manques was in time subjected to the healing influence, and developed hair and teeth in the richest abundance. But the story closed in gloom. When the last Lord De Manque died, the Chaplain, finding himself in sole possession of the secret, suddenly yielded to a diabolical impulse. A life-long dipsomaniac (as subsequent investigation proved), the temptation to sample a new liquor was too much for him. He drank the elixir, took the next train for London, sold the gold pyx to coiners who melted it into sovereigns, and, recovering from a paroxysm of inebriety, was overcome by remorse and drowned himself in the Serpentine, leaving a letter in his trousers-pocket to say what he had done. The spell was broken, and henceforward the heiress of the De Manques must dree her weird of toothlessness and alopecia.

This romantic tale, instinct with historical and supernatural interest, spread like wildfire. At every ball where Lady Marguerite appeared, young men of fashion were drawn to her by an irresistible attraction. They longed to toy with those exuberant tresses; they hung in rapture on every word which issued from those gleaming teeth. And a further zest was added to their passion when it became known that the loss of Marguerite's eye was due to the duenna-like zeal of her governess, who had inadvertently jobbed it out with a ruler when correcting her pupil for winking at the schoolroom-footman. This last was a trait of hereditary character not to be overlooked in a story of the affections.

Among the band of ardent youths who worshipped at Lady Marguerite's shrine, the most ardent and the most irresistible was young Lancelot Smith, who inherited from his father (a friend of Charles Kingsley's) a power of passion which carried all before it. He loved with an uncalculating and self-abandoned ardour which seemed to belong to a more strenuous age and a warmer climate than our own. The crisis of his fate was reached when, one day, slipping into Lady Marguerite's boudoir in order to lay a *billet-doux* upon her blotting-book, he found her dozing on the sofa. It was a scorching afternoon in July, and Marguerite was fatigued by a long day's shopping. Her hair was thrown carelessly upon the piano. Her dachshund was playing with her *râtelier* on the velvet hearth-rug. *It was too much.* Lancelot saw Marguerite as she really was. The rich, concrete fact surpassed even his most ardent imaginations. His passion broke



the narrow bounds of convention, as an imprisoned ocean bursts its dam. Flinging all restraint to the winds, he tickled the coral gums with a peacock's feather torn from the hand-screen, and rained kisses on the virginal, cold, white scalp.

Lancelot and Marguerite were married in Westminster Abbey. When the Dean joined their hands the Home Secretary joined their names. The Smith-Manqués live splendidly in Lady Marguerite's castle, now completely refurnished by Gillow; and it is understood that at the Coronation the barony of De Manque is pretty sure to be revived.

*THE GREAT DUCHESS.*

WHENEVER, in my casual reading, I meet with even the slightest mention of Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough, I pause to offer her memory a silent salutation. I have just now read two rather large volumes about her, and it becomes necessary to me to break into articulate homage. It is an instinct with most of us to be struck (whether we are catholic enough to admire or not) by the spectacle of any person wholly and absolutely consistent with himself and with some simple elemental law of his being. Now I know of no man or woman in history who, on anything like a large scale and with recognisable strength of will and action, is at all comparable to Sarah Jennings for unity of life and feeling. In her slightest aside and most vehement speech, in her least and her greatest actions, the same spectacle is presented to my admiring vision—a procession of strong, unfaltering, straightforward, frank, remorseless, heartless selfishness. She was a perfect expression of egotism, without compromise or exception—a type, an example for ever. The moralist may say this or that, but the artist cannot choose but applaud.

It is not my purpose to 'review' Mr. FitzGerald Molloy's *Life of her* which I have just read. (He calls it 'The Queen's Comrade,' in which title I doubt poor Queen Anne would have seen irony or cynicism.) But it would be less than civil not to thank him for much material new to me, and to compliment him on the pleasant manner of its presentment. To people who have not made a study of the sort of thing the book should be both illuminative and interesting, and an excellent corrective, so far as it goes, in regard to Revolution times of that arch-manipulator of truth, Lord Macaulay. To me, who knew something of the subject, it was an increase of detailed knowledge and a confirmation of opinion. The latter very decidedly, especially as regarded Sarah Jennings. In every fresh detail she was the same as I had always seen her, never swerving to the right or the left, grasping everything with her strong hands, and striking hard with them if she were thwarted—old friends, old benefactors, her own children: it was all one to her. A perfectly consistent woman.

You can express her life with the simplicity and finality of a



problem in Euclid. The theory which guided her throughout, and which I will not believe could have been less than half-conscious, was clearly this: that the world was created for the benefit of Sarah Jennings; that those who aided this wise design of Providence by advancing her fortunes, heaping money and titles on her, and so forth, were simply doing their duty, and deserved neither return nor any feeling of gratitude on her part; that those who ceased so to do, or who were indifferent, or who did the opposite, were wretches for whom no punishment could be too severe: they were thwarting the nature of things. There is something almost impersonal in the even, unhesitating retribution with which she pursued any one who had crossed or offended her in the slightest degree; such a person was an undoubted reptile, and when it raised its head—whenever or wherever—Sarah Jennings hit at it. And, mark, there was very little cant of self-righteousness about all this. She was not like Queen Mary II., who, whenever her treachery to her father had been brought home to her, went and congratulated Heaven on her virtues in her diary.

No misconduct, you may be sure, was ever brought home to the mind of the Duchess of Marlborough. When Queen Anne finally dismissed her, the Duchess simply excused herself for ever having put up with the society of such a creature as her Sovereign. 'I am afraid,' she wrote to Sir David Hamilton, 'you will have a very ill opinion of one that could pass so many hours with one I have just given such a character of; but though it was extremely tedious to pass so many hours where there could be no conversation, I knew she loved me.' You see, the kindness had been all on the Duchess's part, not on the Queen's, who had endured all kinds of affronts in the last reign, because she would not part with her favourite, and since her accession had heaped every benefit she could on the Duchess. Of course Sarah had given her Sovereign a direct piece of her mind before her dismissal, in terms even then, when English people were far less obsequious to Royalty than they are now, very much out of the way, but not as one defending herself, rather as one painfully pointing out a child's naughtiness. To say that she did not blame herself for the rupture is to understate the truth; in her mind no conduct of hers, whatever it was, could justify a revolt against her. With the same beautiful and, I do not doubt, sincere simplicity, when she had to leave England, she bewailed the necessary ruin of a country which had ceased to pay the Duke and her ninety thou-

sand a year. There was no cant in this; it flowed inevitably from her theory of life.

For the expression of this theory—and it was surely a fine theory to live with—Nature had been kind to Sarah Jennings and us. It had given her every quality necessary to make it clear to our edification. To begin with, she was only passionate when her interests were concerned, not otherwise. People who are passionate in their love affairs may be selfish, but their selfishness is superficially obscured now and then by an apparent regard for the other person. Sarah Jennings escaped that obscuration. Moreover her coldness of blood, in that regard, probably ministered to the extreme uxoriousness of the Duke, lasting from young manhood to old age. Wherever he was, campaigning or not, he sent her constant letters of devotion, and was lucky, it seemed, if he escaped a douche of criticism in return. He mentions a 'kind' letter of hers as something extraordinary. No one could throw stones at the Duchess on the score of her morals, in the usual sense of the term, so that she was invulnerable to the general criticism of English moralists; in fact, I venture to think they ought to acclaim her as a 'good woman.' But her husband could not stand against her theory; she could not curb her indignation with Anne for taking a new favourite, and so give him a chance of keeping his places. It is not an extended selfishness that we contemplate in Sarah Jennings; it is the real thing; self with her meant self.

Again, she had a splendid constitution, a strong will, and a good head; necessary qualities, because if she had been ailing, weak, or a fool, her selfishness might have been just as complete, but it would not have been so fine a spectacle for us. Also she was naturally frank and straightforward. Had she been more inclined to subterfuge and double-dealing she might, it is true, have had even greater success in life, but her memory would not be so finely simple to appreciate. She was not an intriguer. She felt it due to her theory of life to march straight to her goal and seize on what she wanted in the eye of the world. Of course she dropped people who had ceased to be useful to her, but openly and as a natural consequence. When James's cause was hopeless she dropped him; it was his fault that he could no longer promote and enrich her husband, and so he forfeited her patronage. It is really misleading to call such plain-dealing as that treachery. The great successes in her life were due to her influence over Anne,



and that was gained by no flattery or intrigue, but by the frank imposition of a strong will on a weak one. Anne became her creature and took her orders. When Anne had revolted and that source of power was gone, even then she did not intrigue. She made one straightforward threat, to publish the letters of 'Mrs. Morley' to 'Mrs. Freeman.' It was rather like blackmailing, to be sure, and no doubt the Duchess thought it hard that Providence should drive her to such means to her just ends, but it was not intriguing. Nor, in the absence of direct evidence, do I believe that she coquetted between St. Germain and Hanover as her husband did. He was a born intriguer, a man natively underhand, but it was not her way at all. She did not plot to bring people into power; when they were in power she went to them and demanded everything they had to give. Moreover, she honestly disliked St. Germain, and was true to her dislikes. Fairly consistent in an age of turncoats, fairly truthful in an age of liars, and very strong in an age of weaklings—her good qualities in this kind all minister to the supreme effect of her life.

Accident and circumstance as well as natural qualities conspired to bring her theory into relief. If she had been successful without interruption, had never met with a rebuff, we should have missed the sublime spectacle of her indignation, of her wrath with those who had defied the right order of the universe. The first rebuff came with William and Mary. Mary hated Lady Churchill, a fact which Lady Churchill was very slow to grasp. But when she did grasp it, and the fact that she and Lord Churchill had little to hope for from the new Court, she said very forcible things. Other people were disappointed as well. It is, indeed, rather refreshing to observe the indignation of the patriots who had brought in William of Orange when they perceived that he preferred his Dutch minions, the Bentincks and the Keppels, to his English traitors, driving the latter from his presence that he might get drunk in peace with the former. The Princess Anne said things about him which we may fairly trace to the more trenchant style of her favourite—'Caliban' and 'the Dutch monster' I am sure were phrases of Sarah Jennings. But Sarah was generous; those who sinned against her had to be punished all their lives, but her just wrath stopped short at the grave. 'When the King came to die,' she beautifully wrote, 'I felt nothing of that satisfaction which I once thought I should have had upon this occasion . . . so little is it in my nature to retain resentment against any

mortal (however unjust he may have been) in whom the will to injure is no more.' Surely a grand passage! But familiarity with the injustice of kings did not prevent this great woman from taking infinite pains to punish humble people. When Sir John Vanbrugh had the temerity to criticise her she 'was very sorry I had fouled my fingers in writing to such a fellow'; but, mindful of her duty to the world, she took the trouble to fill thirty sheets of paper with charges against Sir John.

In her old age, indeed, she found time to do a good deal of polemical writing against her enemies. Among other such efforts she wrote an elaborate account of her daughters' misconduct towards her, and sent the agreeable brochure to various friends and relations. 'Having boare what I have done for so many years, rather than hurt my children, I hope nobody will blame me now,' &c., &c. Also she dictated to Hooke her famous 'Account of her Conduct,' and composed with Henry Fielding her 'Vindication.' (What would one not give to have heard these two geniuses in consultation!) Her vindication, it need hardly be said, took the form of exposing the wickedness of other people rather than of defending herself. . . . But I protest that as I think of this splendid old woman, bed-ridden at last and so near her end, still indomitable, still strong in thought, and still keenly humorous, I feel sympathy for her human qualities rather than admiration for her superhuman perfection. But that is a sentimental weakness and must be suppressed. An artistic wonder and joy in the contemplation of life and character absolutely thorough, absolutely true to itself—that must be one's emotion when one reads of Sarah Jennings, Duchess of Marlborough.

G. S. STREET.



*A FORGOTTEN POET.*

THE Cotswolds, I have often been tempted to say, have no poet. I have been often contradicted; and, indeed, I am not eager to defend myself. There have been many since Robert of Gloucester looked on the battle of Evesham and saw the storm—'grisly,' as he calls it—sweep over the hills, who have set down their thoughts in verse. I certainly do not forget some charming lines of Mr. Norman Gale. But now I am inclined to think rather of one who is forgotten—William Shenstone, who sought some of his first subjects among the Cotswolds.

Though his chief fame circles round his own house of the Leasowes, near Halesowen, he belongs not a little to the country which lies between Stratford and Campden and Cheltenham, as pretty a wooded hilly land as you may see. It is near here that William Morris thought of settling before he went to Merton. Broadway, the too hackneyed resort of artists and Americans, a place far inferior in picturesqueness to Campden, or to Willersey, its nearer neighbour, is hard by. Shenstone himself knew all the attractions of the district, and he did not forget that it was Shakespeare who had given immortality to them all. Indeed, he was almost at his happiest when he wrote those quaint lines that he called 'Slender's Ghost.' They begin:

Beneath a churchyard yew,  
Decay'd and worn with age,  
At dusk of eve methought I spy'd  
Poor Slender's ghost, that whim'ring cry'd,  
'O sweet, O sweet Anne Page.'

Certainly we none of us doubt that Slender walked the streets of Stratford, and he may well have stepped out a few miles to where the yews grow round a church that Shenstone knew well,

Where Avon rolls her winding stream,  
Avon, the Muse's fav'rite theme!  
Avon, that fills the farmers' purses,  
And decks with flow'rs both farms and verses.

So Shenstone wrote when he told a scandalous tale that happened 'in Evesham Vale or near it.' It was from Mickleton, where his close friend Graves (best remembered as the author of 'The Spiritual Quixote') lived, that he chiefly saw the Cotswolds.

At Mickleton there is still the manor-house of Graves, built perhaps by the Porters and lived in by that peerless Endymion, the associate of all the Jacobean wits—a fine Elizabethan ‘mansion,’ as they call it. The church has the more abiding memorial of Shenstone. It is a fine Decorated building with some earlier work about it, a priest’s chamber over the north porch, a large south aisle, and a fine spire. It is filled with monuments—of the Graves family and of earlier folk—but its most interesting memorial is that which Shenstone’s friend put up ‘in memory of an extraordinary young woman, Utrecia Smith, the daughter of a worthy and learned clergyman who, on a small living of about fifty pounds a year, a curacy of thirty pounds, and a lifehold estate of about the same value, bred up two sons and two daughters in a genteel manner, and died at the age of ninety, without any other preferment. This daughter, Utrecia,’ says Mr. Graves, ‘at a time when the ladies did not so generally rival our sex in learning and ingenuity, from the books with which her father supplied her had formed to herself so good a taste of polite literature, and wrote so well in prose (and sometimes in verse), that a very ingenious clergyman, bred at a public school and a Master of Arts in the University, often said he was afraid to declare his opinion of any author till he previously knew hers.’

The inscription runs thus :

UTRECIAE SMITH  
Puellae simplici, innocuae, eleganti ;  
R. G.  
Una actae memor pueritiae  
Moerens posuit.  
MDCCLXIV.

It is on this that Shenstone wrote his first elegy, which he called ‘Ophelia’s Urn.’

Sure nought unhallow’d shall presume to stray  
Where sleep the reliques of that virtuous maid ;  
Nor aught unlovely bend its devious way  
Where soft Ophelia’s dear remains are laid.

He was himself, so a manuscript note of an ancestor of mine tells me, an elegant writer of epitaphs. ‘Shenstone’s epitaph on his amiable Relation,’ wrote my great-uncle in his copy of Johnson’s ‘Lives,’ ‘Miss Doleman, who died of the small-pox at the age of 21, is one of the very rare modern Productions,



that not only resembles, but rivals, the dignified and affecting conciseness of the Ancients in their sepulchral Inscriptions. It is worth volumes of his pastorals :

Peramabili snae consobrinae  
 M. D.  
 Ah! Maria,  
 Puellarum elegantissima,  
 Ah! flore venustatis abrepta,  
 Vale!  
 Heu quanto minus est  
 Cum reliquis versari,  
 Quam tui  
 Meminisse.'

But to return. As it was the memory of Utracia Smith that gave a subject for his first elegy, so it was in this neighbourhood that Shenstone was inspired by the mild passion of his life, the delight in the artifices of a garden maker. Mickleton, wrote the owner of its manor house, 'though in an indifferent country'—a statement which it is hard to forgive—'has many natural beauties; of surrounding hills, and hanging woods; a spacious lawn, and one natural cascade: capable of great improvement, though, from various circumstances, the place is to this day in a very unfinished state.' It was his friend's design that set Shenstone to work at the Leasowes, and there he wrought the mimic wonders which brought him so much fame and the tepid eulogy of Johnson—'that to embellish the form of Nature is an innocent form of amusement; and some praise must be allowed by the most supercilious observer to him who does best what such multitudes are contending to do well.'

Johnson's inimitable description of the foibles of this ingenious gentleman—'nothing raised his indignation more than to ask if there were any fishes in his water,' and 'in time his expenses brought clamours about him that overpowered the lamb's bleat and the linnet's song; and his groves were haunted by beings very different from fauns and fairies'<sup>1</sup>—concerns us as little as Mr. Graves's serious defence. Shenstone has the artificiality of his age most of all when he strives to be natural, and we care but very tepidly for his waterfalls and groves, and not at all, when they are described in verse, for his hermitages and statues

<sup>1</sup> There is a quaint little poem in the first volume of Shenstone's works (ed. 1765), pp. 217-18, called *The Poet and the Dun*.

and urns. It is as a poet and a lover of country life that we think of him when we wander over the Cotswolds, for they were his first inspiration.

It was at Mickleton, where it would seem that he was first brought into a society above that in which he had been born, that he formed that delightful idea of the rich man's country paradise which is so characteristic of the ideals of the century and of the man:

'Had I a fortune of about eight or ten thousand pounds a year, I would, methinks, make myself a neighbourhood. I would first build a village with a church, and people it with inhabitants of some branch of trade that was suitable to the country round. I would then, at proper distances, erect a number of genteel boxes of about a thousand pounds apiece, and amuse myself with giving them all the advantages they could receive from taste. These would I people with a select number of well-chosen friends, assigning to each annually the sum of two hundred pounds for life. The salary would be irrevocable, in order to give them independency. The house, of a more precarious tenure, that, in cases of ingratitude, I might introduce another inhabitant.'

The picture needs no emphasis. Genteel boxes, at proper distances, would make an eighteenth-century Elysium; and indeed the millionaires of the twentieth are likely to make a worse use of their money. But Shenstone adds, 'How plausible however this may appear in speculation, perhaps a very natural and lively novel might be founded upon the inconvenient consequences of it, when put in execution.'

He himself had certainly no chance to carry out such a design: he was obliged to be content with 'the peace of solitude, the innocence of inactivity, and the unenvied security of an humble station,' which, however they may have satisfied his modest ambition—and they hardly seem to have done so—can fill, as Johnson says, but a few pages of poetry. A few pages, and those perhaps artificial in every line. Yet the inspiration was natural, and it was only the trammels which convention placed upon a mind most submissive to such a despotism which prevented the heart of Shenstone from speaking freely. He is hampered by the absurdities of his day. The shepherdesses are too dainty for life. There is an air of Watteau in the background. And yet Shenstone is not nearly delicate enough for the style of the prince of Court painters, though he is not ready to advance to the robust



naturalism of Crabbe. Here are some lines from one of his Cotswold elegies. Collin is 'a discerning shepherd,' and he laments the state of the woollen manufacture :

Near Avon's bank, on Arden's flow'ry plain,  
A tuneful shepherd charm'd the list'ning wave ;  
And sunny Cotsol' fondly lov'd the strain.  
Yet not a garland crowns the shepherd's grave.

The shepherd, and indeed he was but Mr. Somerville in disguise, must needs die, and as he departs he advises his brother-shepherds to arouse the British statesman to arrest the craft of Gallia, and again procure for Britain the markets of the world. Then

Britons for Britain shall the crook employ ;  
Britons for Britain's glory sheer the fold.

It was a plaint that he learnt on the hills beside Mickleton :

Where the wild thyme perfumes the purpled heath.

And as he walked through those pleasant lanes that run by Weston-sub-Edge he may well have written the lines

And you, ye shepherds ! lead my gentle sheep ;  
To breezy hills, or leafy shelters lead ;  
But if the sky with show'rs incessant weep,  
Avoid the putrid moisture of the mead.

The neighbourhood of Mickleton remained for many years full of attraction for Shenstone. It was there, says his friend Graves, that 'he seems to have felt the first symptoms of that tender passion, which appears so conspicuous and predominant in most of his lyrics, and at length produced his much-admired "Pastoral Ballad" ; and in 1743 he paid a long visit to Cheltenham, where he became attached to Miss C., of whom the biographer 'can hardly believe, as her sister was married to a baronet of considerable fortune, that' she, 'in her bloom, would have condescended to marry a man, however deserving, of so small a fortune as Mr. Shenstone.' On his way to Cheltenham once he 'missed the road, and wandered till ten o'clock at night on the Cotswold Hills.' It was this which brought out his seventh elegy, which comes as near perhaps to a description of the Cotswolds as anything else he ever wrote :

On distant heaths, beneath autumnal skies,  
Pensive I saw the circling shades descend ;  
Weary and faint I heard the storm arise,  
While the sun vanish'd like a faithless friend.

No kind companion led my steps aright ;  
 No friendly planet lent its glim'ring ray  
 Ev'n the lone cot refus'd its wonted light,  
 Where toil in peaceful slumber clos'd the day.

Then the dale bell had giv'n a pleasing sound ;  
 The village cur 'twere transport then to hear ;  
 In dreadful silence all was hush'd around,  
 While the rude storm alone distress'd mine ear.

There is not much description here, certainly ; but he has caught and conveyed the chill that is felt so keenly on these high downs, and one may imagine him then writing the reflection that he afterwards set down : ' How melancholy it is to travel late, upon any ambitious project, on a winter's night, and observe the light of cottages, where all the unambitious people are warm and happy, or at rest in their beds ! Some of them (says *Whistler*) as wretched as princes, for what we know to the contrary.' But there is more perhaps of the Cotswold air in the 'Irregular Ode after Sickness, 1749,' in which he sings his return to 'catch the verdure of the trees' :

Come, gentle air ! and, while the thickets bloom,  
 Convey the jasmin's breath divine,  
 Convey the woodbine's rich perfume,  
 Nor spare the sweet-leaft eglantine.  
 And may'st thou share the rugged storm  
 Till health her wonted charms explain,  
 With rural pleasure in her train,  
 To greet me in her fairest form ;  
 While from this lofty mount I view  
 The sons of earth, the vulgar crew,  
 Anxious for futile gains, beneath me stray,  
 And seek with erring step contentment's obvious way.

These pictures that came to him as he stood on the Cotswold slopes prepared at least, it may be thought, the sensitive delicate touch which shows itself in the best poem he ever wrote, the charming 'Hope,' the second part of his 'Pastoral Ballad,' which came, Mr. Graves tells, from the inspiration he gained at Cheltenham, and is set in scenery that may be the happiest Cotswold :

My banks they are furnish'd with bees,  
 Whose murmur invites one to sleep ;  
 My grottoes are shaded with trees,  
 And my hills are white over with sheep.  
 I seldom have met with a loss,  
 Such health do my fountains bestow  
 My fountains all border'd with moss,  
 Where the hare-bells and violets grow.



Charming though that is, it is hardly the best stanza. It sounds easy enough, but really the tunefulness of it is inimitable. And it comes, like so many other sweet things, from the Cotswolds.

But though a lover of this 'sea of rolling hills and dancing air' may try to claim Shenstone as a Cotswold worthy, it were idle to deny that his fame, such as it is, belongs to the land of Hagley and Halesowen. How changed it is now! Hagley is still beautiful, and Halesowen has her fine church unspoiled; but all else is altered. Pits everywhere, and slag hills and rows of grimy cottages replace the 'glass-house not ill-resembling a distant pyramid' in the 'romantic well-variegated country' which enchanted the sober mind of Mr. Richard Dodsley, the publisher and the poet's friend. Yet the memory of Shenstone still lingers, though the memory is akin to neglect. A plain tomb, worse than that of many a yeoman of his day, still stands in the churchyard, near his brother's (as Graves tells us), but touched by another tomb still meaner than his own. The plain inscription is repeated on an urn inside the church, and below the urn are the lines Graves wrote for memorial. Thus they end:

Reader! if genius, taste refin'd,  
A native elegance of mind;  
If virtue, science, manly sense;  
If wit, that never gave offence;  
The clearest head, the tenderest heart,  
In thy esteem e'er claimed a part;  
Ah! smite thy breast, and drop a tear,  
For know, *thy* Shenstone's dust lies here.

Near it is the magnificent monument which Lady Jane Halliday erected to the memory of her husband, who bought the Leasowes after Shenstone's death, and who seems to have made his chief and modest approach to fame in the boast that he was the poet's successor:

What tho' no more (alas!) allow'd to rove,  
With learned ease, thro' *Shenstone's* classic grove;  
Tho' spar'd no longer to protect that ground,  
Which the *lov'd Poet's* genius hovers round;  
Tho' the fine *form* by a too early doom  
Be left to moulder in this votive tomb,  
Th' unfettered *Spirit* sooner wins her way  
To higher joys in scenes of endless day.

Halliday preserved the 'delightful scenes which persons of taste in the present age are desirous to see'—the walks and grotts and rivulets; but the house he replaced by a larger one. Shen-

stone had 'a mere farmhouse of modest dimensions,' in which the utmost he could do was to give 'his hall some air of magnificence, by sinking the floor an altitude of ten feet instead of seven.' The house that Mr. Halliday built still stands. He had the good taste not to attempt to replace the *ferme ornée* by any extravagant mansion. The gardens remained the attraction of the Leasowes, and so they remain to-day.

Mr. Dodsley wrote a description 'intended to give a friend some idea of the Leasowes,' and the description is still useful to the visitor. Mr. Dodsley himself was for a time celebrated there, 'in a natural bower of almost circular oaks, inscribed in the following manner':

Come then, my friend, thy sylvan taste display;  
Come, hear thy Faunus tune his rustic lay;  
Ah, rather come, and in these dells disown  
The care of other strains, and tune thine own.

Whether the kindly publisher accepted the invitation and disowned the care of Mr. Shenstone's strains he does not inform us. Certainly he published them in a very friendly fashion after the author's death. And, for his own, he tuned them in prose quite prettily when he told of the happy valleys so cleverly planned to afford a *visto* again and again, and here and there some openings 'to the more pleasing parts of this grotesque and hilly country.'

The Leasowes is approached now, as in 1763, by a green lane, 'descending in a winding manner to the bottom of a deep valley finely shaded.' It was there that the worthy Mr. Wildgoose, the spiritual Quixote, discovered his old college friend, 'a gentleman in his own hair, giving directions to some labourers, who were working beyond the usual hour in order to finish a receptacle for a cataract of water, a glimpse of which appeared through the trees on the side of the road.' With Mr. Dodsley's description in your hand you identify the 'ruinated wall,' you walk on by the slopes of a narrow dingle, past the Priory—a delightful piece of eighteenth-century Gothic, which seemed to be a hermitage, but really sheltered a labourer and his family—to the little lake at the bottom of the hill. Alas! the *visto* hence is now closed by a slag hill, so you gladly turn away to seek by the 'pleasing serpentine walk' a 'common bench, which affords a retiring place secluded from every eye, and a short respite, during which the eye reposes on a fine amphitheatre of wood and thicket.' The common bench is gone, and the fine canopy of spreading oak has followed it, and



there is no cast of the piping Faunus or urn to William Somerville. Yet still through the glade you may trace, as you ascend, where once the 'irregular and romantic fall of water' rushed 'very irregular one hundred and fifty yards in continuity.' It was only upon reflection that Mr. Dodsley found that the stream was 'not a Niagara, but rather a waterfall in miniature.' The language need not excite any tremendous emotion to-day. A toy Niagara indeed it must have been at best; but now it has ceased even to flow, choked, like so many of these pretty fantasies of the gardener, by the leaves and saplings that time has strewn over the glade. The trees of Shenstone's time, except here and there a group of firs or elms or beeches, have perished, and are replaced by thin straggling shoots. The urns have long been destroyed, and no inscription survives to illustrate the poet's piety or friendship. Yet still you can follow the path as he made it, with the plan that Mr. Dodsley drew for your guide, by thickets, across broken rustic bridges, past sloping lawns, on the verge of 'wild shaggy precipices.' From the higher ground the distant views may still be seen—the Hagley obelisk and the hill of Clent. 'Virgil's Grove' is still 'a beautiful gloomy scene,' with an 'ingenious succession of cascades' and 'a dripping fountain, where a small rill trickles down a rude nich of rock-work, through fern, liverwort and aquatic weeds.'

A pathetic sight, neglected, overgrown, despoiled, is the scene to whose beauties 'it was Mr. Shenstone's only study to give their full effect.' But even now it shows, as do few other places in England, how in the beginnings of the art the principles of landscape gardening were developed. It was Shenstone's idea 'that a landscape-painter would be the best English gardener,' and Mr. Graves, in his charming 'Recollections of Some Particulars in the Life of the Late William Shenstone, Esq.,' makes comparison between the work of his friend and that of Gainsborough. The poet himself very pleasantly expounded his system in prose, and indeed he has some claim to be regarded as one of the earliest masters of that craft. He had no sympathy, it is clear, with some of the later affectations, such as those which Thomas Love Peacock makes mock at. He endeavoured always to minister to Nature, not to thwart her. Yet his statues and urns were little better than an intrusion, though he could defend them thus: 'Art should never be allowed to set a foot in the province of Nature otherwise than clandestinely and by night. Whenever she is allowed

to appear there, and men begin to compromise the difference, night, Gothicism, confusion and absolute chaos are come again.' Artifice must have been, if not obvious, yet easy to expose, if we may believe Johnson's suggestion that the Lytteltons, when they became jealous of their neighbour's success, delighted to take their visitors to the points of view from which the disguises were patent, and maliciously to destroy all the deceptive steps of gradual allurements designed by the poor owner of the Leasowes. It seems as if he found no great comfort in his art, or his simple country life, at the best. Winter seemed to him an intolerable season. 'To see one's urns, obelisks and waterfalls laid open; the nakedness of our beloved mistresses, the Naiads and the Dryads, exposed by that ruffian Winter to universal observation; is a severity scarcely to be supported by the help of blazing hearths, cheerful companions, and a bottle of the most grateful Burgundy.'

All did not, indeed, go well with him. His aphorisms, often witty, have a tinge of unhappy bitterness about them. 'His whole philosophy,' said Gray a little unkindly of him, 'consisted in living against his will in retirement, and in a place which his taste had adorned, but which he only enjoyed when people of note came to see and commend it.' A letter of his which was for sale in London the other day seems to make only a show of contentment. It was written to his friend Graves; and it is worth quoting as it stands, for it does not seem to have been printed till now. There is no date to it, but evidently it was written while he was not at enmity with his other friend, Mr. Whistler, with whom he had the silly quarrel Graves tells us of. Thus it runs:

MR. GRAVES.

DEAR SIR,—I did indeed give you up for lost, as a correspondent, and find by your letter y<sup>t</sup> I am to expect but very few future ones. I will endeavour all I can to avoid any suspicion of your Indifference for my own satisfaction. But I don't know for certain y<sup>t</sup> I shall be able, unless you assist my Endeavours, like my good Genius, by a course of suitable Epistles at certain distances. I myself correspond but very little now, so you will meet with the more Indulgence. I don't find by your Letter y<sup>t</sup> you have much more Philosophy y<sup>n</sup> me. I can't tell indeed what y<sup>e</sup> situation of y<sup>r</sup> House is. I own mine gives me offence on no other consideration y<sup>n</sup> that it does not receive a sufficient Number of polite Friends, or y<sup>t</sup> it is not fit to receive 'em, were they so dispos'd. I wou'd else cultivate an Acquaintance with about Three or Four in my Neighbourhood, y<sup>t</sup> are of a Degree of Elegance, and station superior to y<sup>e</sup> common Run. But I make it a certain Rule *Arcere profanū vulgus*. Persons of vulgar minds, who will despise you for y<sup>e</sup> want of a good set of Chairs, or an uncouth Fire-shovel at y<sup>e</sup> same Time y<sup>t</sup> they can't taste any Excellence in a mind that overlooks those things; or, (to make a conceit of this sentiment) with whom 'tis in vain that y<sup>r</sup> mind is



furnish'd if y<sup>r</sup> walls are naked. Indeed one loses much of one's Acquisitions in virtue by an Hour's converse with such as Judge of merit by Money, &c. Yet I am now and then impell'd by y<sup>e</sup> social Passion to sit half an Hour in my Kitchen. I was all along an Admirer of Sr. Thomas Head's Humour and Wit, And I beg you wou'd represent me in y<sup>t</sup> light if occasion happens. 'Tis not impossible y<sup>t</sup> I may penetrate this winter as far as y<sup>r</sup> neighbourhood, connecting a set of visits which I have in my Eye. Tell M<sup>r</sup> Whistler when you see him that if he must have *some* Distemper, I cannot but be pleas'd y<sup>t</sup> it is one which is a Forerunner of Longevity. Don't tell him so neither, for y<sup>e</sup> compliment is trite. From y<sup>e</sup> 'Birmingham Gazette': 'We hear that on Thursday last was married at Halesowen, in Shropshire, M<sup>r</sup> Jorden, an eminent Gunsmith of this Town, to a sister of y<sup>e</sup> R<sup>t</sup> Hon<sup>ble</sup> Ferdinando L<sup>d</sup> Dudley.' I was yesterday at y<sup>e</sup> Grange, where his old Father (w<sup>th</sup> a number of People) was celebrating y<sup>e</sup> Nuptials of his Son; when in the midst of his Feasting, high Jollity, and grand Alliance, the old Fellow bethought him of a Piece of Timber in y<sup>e</sup> neighbourhood y<sup>t</sup> was convertible into good Gunsticks, and had some of it sent for into y<sup>e</sup> Room by way of Specimen! *Animæ nil magnæ laudis egentis!* Pray, is y<sup>r</sup> Sister at Smethwick? For I have not heard. You said you wou'd give me y<sup>r</sup> Picture, which I long earnestly for. Cou'dn't you contrive to have it sent me directly? I am quite in y<sup>r</sup> debt with regard to downright goods and moveables, and what is y<sup>e</sup> proper subject of an Inventory—*neque tu pessima munerū ferres divite me scilicet artium quas aut Parrhasius protulit aut Scopas—sed non hæc mihi vis!* I will, however, endeavour to be more upon a Par with you w<sup>th</sup> regard to presents, tho' I never can with regard to y<sup>e</sup> Pleasures I have receiv'd fro y<sup>r</sup> conversation. I make People wonder at my Exploits in pulling down walls, Hovels, cow-houses, &c.; and my Place is not y<sup>e</sup> same. I am, that is, w<sup>th</sup> Regard to you a Faithfull Friend, and h<sup>ble</sup> serv<sup>t</sup>,

W. S.

M<sup>r</sup> Whistler and you and I and S<sup>r</sup> T. Head (whō I shou'd name first, speaking after y<sup>e</sup> manner of men) have just variety enough, and not too much, in our Charct. to make an Interview, whenever it happens, Entertaining—I mean, tho' we were not old Friends and Acquaintance.

It is the letter of a good-humoured, if a disappointed man. And disappointed Shenstone certainly was. 'The Schoolmistress' should have won him more fame than it did. He had few friends. Percy, the Lytteltons, Pitt, Lady Luxborough (Bolingbroke's charming sister), and Spence were only acquaintances for whom he had a tepid liking; and after his brother's death he lived a lonely life. Horace Walpole seems never to have heard of him till he was dead, and in his pretty little essay on 'Modern Gardening,' printed so daintily at the Strawberry Hill Press, with a translation into French by the Duc de Nivernois, in 1785, studiously ignores his existence. Of his poetry all the exquisite could find to say was that he was 'a water-gruel bard'; and unkindness could go no further than the cruel words in which he summed up his aims: 'Poor man! he wanted to have all the world talk of him for the pretty place he had made, and which he seems to have made only that it might be talked of.'

Talked of, the Leasowes and its 'landskips' are no longer; but those who visit them can still trace the ingenuity in their ordering which friends called genius. Long enough ago Mr. Graves unkindly observed that the place was called 'Shenstone's Folly'; and he added, 'this is a name which, with some sort of propriety, the common people give to any work of taste, the utility of which exceeds the level of their comprehension.' Those who turn over the pages of prose and verse that Dodsley collected and eulogised may raise even now a kindly affection for their author. Shenstone has some of the marks of the true poet, and certainly not a few of the kindly and amiable man.

W. H. HUTTON.



## THE FOUR FEATHERS.<sup>1</sup>

BY A. E. W. MASON.

### CHAPTER I.

#### A CRIMEAN NIGHT.

LIEUTENANT SUTCH was the first of General Feversham's guests to reach Broad Place. He arrived about five o'clock on an afternoon of sunshine in mid June, and the old red-brick house, lodged on a southern slope of the Surrey hills, was glowing from a dark forest depth of pines with the warmth of a rare jewel. Lieutenant Sutch limped across the hall, where the portraits of the Fevershams rose one above the other to the ceiling, and out on to the stone-flagged terrace at the back. There he found his host sitting erect like a boy, and gazing southwards towards the Sussex Downs.

'How's the leg?' asked General Feversham, as he rose briskly from his chair. He was a small wiry man, and, in spite of his white hairs, alert. But the alertness was of the body. A bony face with a high narrow forehead and steel-blue inexpressive eyes suggested a barrenness of mind.

'It gave me trouble during the winter,' replied Sutch. 'But that was to be expected.' General Feversham nodded, and for a little while both men were silent. From the terrace the ground fell steeply to a wide level plain of brown earth and emerald fields and dark clumps of trees. From this plain voices rose through the sunshine, small but very clear. Far away towards Horsham a coil of white smoke from a train snaked rapidly in and out amongst the trees; and on the horizon, patched with white chalk, rose the Downs.

'I thought that I should find you here,' said Sutch.

'It was my wife's favourite corner,' answered Feversham in a quite emotionless voice. 'She would sit here by the hour. She had a queer liking for wide and empty spaces.'

<sup>1</sup> Copyright, 1901, by A. E. W. Mason in the United States of America.

The character of Harry Feversham is developed from a short story by the author, originally printed in the *Illustrated London News*, and since republished.

‘Yes,’ said Sutch. ‘She had imagination. Her thoughts could people them.’

General Feversham glanced at his companion as though he hardly understood. But he asked no questions. What he did not understand he habitually let slip from his mind as not worth comprehension. He spoke at once upon a different topic.

‘There will be a leaf out of our table to-night.’

‘Yes. Collins, Barberton, and Vaughan went this winter. Well, we are all permanently shelved upon the world’s half-pay list as it is. The obituary column is just the last formality which gazettes us out of the Service altogether,’ and Sutch stretched out and eased his crippled leg, which fourteen years ago that day had been crushed and twisted in the fall of a scaling-ladder.

‘I am glad that you came before the others,’ continued Feversham. ‘I would like to take your opinion. This day is more to me than the anniversary of our attack upon the Redan. At the very moment when we were standing under arms in the dark——’

‘To the west of the quarries, I remember,’ interrupted Sutch with a deep breath. ‘How should one forget?’

‘At that very moment Harry was born in this house. I thought, therefore, that if you did not object he might join us to-night. He happens to be at home. He will, of course, enter the service, and he might learn something, perhaps, which afterwards will be of use—one never knows.’

‘By all means,’ said Sutch with alacrity. For since his visits to General Feversham were limited to the occasion of these anniversary dinners, he had never yet seen Harry Feversham.

Sutch had for many years been puzzled as to the qualities in General Feversham which had attracted Muriel Graham, a woman as remarkable for the refinement of her intellect as for the beauty of her person; and he could never find an explanation. He had to be content with his knowledge that for some mysterious reason she had married this man so much older than herself, and so unlike to her in character. Personal courage and an indomitable self-confidence were the chief, indeed the only qualities which sprang to light in him. Lieutenant Sutch went back in thought over twenty years as he sat on his garden-chair to a time before he had taken part, as an officer of the Naval Brigade, in that unsuccessful onslaught on the Redan. He re-



membered a season in London to which he had come fresh from the China Station ; and he was curious to see Harry Feversham. He did not admit that it was more than the natural curiosity of a man who, disabled in comparative youth, had made a hobby out of the study of human nature. He was interested to see whether the lad took after his mother or his father—that was all.

So that night Harry Feversham took a place at the dinner-table and listened to the stories which his elders told, while Lieutenant Sutch watched him. The stories were all of that dark winter in the Crimea, and a fresh story was always in the telling before its predecessor was ended. They were stories of death, of hazardous exploits ; of the pinch of famine and the chill of snow. But they were told in clipped words and with a matter-of-fact tone, as though the men who related them were only conscious of them as far-off things ; and there was seldom a comment more pronounced than a mere 'that's curious,' or an exclamation more significant than a laugh.

But Harry Feversham sat listening as though the incidents thus carelessly narrated were happening actually at that moment and within the walls of that room. His dark eyes—the eyes of his mother—turned with each story from speaker to speaker, and waited wide-open and fixed until the last word was spoken. He listened fascinated and enthralled. And so vividly did the changes of expression shoot and quiver across his face, that it seemed to Sutch the lad must actually hear the drone of bullets in the air, actually resist the stunning shock of a charge, actually ride down in the thick of a squadron to where guns screeched out a tongue of flame from a fog. Once a major of artillery spoke of the suspense of the hours between the parading of the troops before a battle and the first command to advance ; and Harry's shoulders worked under the intolerable strain of those lagging minutes.

But he did more than work his shoulders. He threw a single furtive, wavering glance backwards ; and Lieutenant Sutch was startled, and indeed more than startled, he was pained. For this after all was Muriel Graham's boy.

The look was too familiar a one to Sutch. He had seen it on the faces of recruits during their first experience of a battle too often for him to misunderstand it. And one picture in particular rose before his mind. An advancing square at Inkermann,

and a tall big soldier rushing forward from the line in the eagerness of his attack, and then stopping suddenly as though he suddenly understood that he was alone, and had to meet alone the charge of a mounted Cossack. Sutch remembered very clearly the fatal wavering glance which the big soldier had thrown backwards towards his companions, a glance accompanied by a queer sickly smile. He remembered too, with equal vividness, its consequence. For though the soldier carried a loaded musket and a bayonet locked to the muzzle, he had without an effort of self-defence received the Cossack's lance-thrust in his throat.

Sutch glanced hurriedly about the table, afraid that General Feversham, or that some one of his guests, should have remarked the same look and the same smile upon Harry's face. But no one had eyes for the lad; each visitor was waiting too eagerly for an opportunity to tell a story of his own. Sutch drew a breath of relief and turned to Harry. But the boy was sitting with his elbows on the cloth and his head propped between his hands, lost to the glare of the room and its glitter of silver, constructing again out of the swift succession of anecdotes a world of cries and wounds, and maddened riderless chargers and men writhing in a fog of cannon-smoke. The curtest, least graphic description of the biting days and nights in the trenches set the lad shivering. Even his face grew pinched, as though the iron frost of that winter was actually eating into his bones. Sutch touched him lightly on the elbow.

'You renew those days for me,' said he. 'Though the heat is dripping down the windows, I feel the chill of the Crimea.'

Harry roused himself from his absorption.

'The stories renew them,' said he.

'No. It is you listening to the stories.'

And before Harry could reply, General Feversham's voice broke sharply in from the head of the table:

'Harry, look at the clock!'

At once all eyes were turned upon the lad. The hands of the clock made the acutest of angles. It was close upon midnight, and from eight, without so much as a word or a question, he had sat at the dinner-table listening. Yet even now he rose with reluctance.

'Must I go, father?' he asked, and the General's guests



intervened in a chorus. The conversation was clear gain to the lad, a first taste of powder which might stand him in good stead afterwards.

‘ Besides, it’s the boy’s birthday,’ added the major of artillery. ‘ He wants to stay, that’s plain. You wouldn’t find a youngster of fourteen sit all these hours without a kick of the foot against the table-leg unless the conversation entertained him. Let him stay, Feversham !’

For once General Feversham relaxed the iron discipline under which the boy lived.

‘ Very well,’ said he. ‘ Harry shall have an hour’s furlough from his bed. A single hour won’t make much difference.’

Harry’s eyes turned towards his father, and just for a moment rested upon his face with a curious steady gaze. It seemed to Sutch that they uttered a question, and, rightly or wrongly, he interpreted the question into words :

‘ Are you blind ?’

But General Feversham was already talking to his neighbours, and Harry quietly sat down, and again propping his chin upon his hands, listened with all his soul. Yet he was not entertained; rather he was enthralled, he sat quiet under the compulsion of a spell. His face became unnaturally white, his eyes unnaturally large, while the flames of the candles shone even redder and more blurred through a blue haze of tobacco-smoke, and the level of the wine grew steadily lower in the decanters.

Thus half of that one hour’s furlough was passed; and then General Feversham, himself jogged by the unlucky mention of a name, suddenly blurted out in his jerky fashion :

‘ Lord Wilmington. One of the best names in England if you please. Did you ever see his house in Warwickshire? Every inch of the ground you would think would have a voice to bid him play the man, if only in remembrance of his fathers. . . . It seemed incredible and mere camp rumour, but the rumour grew. If it was whispered at the Alma, it was spoken aloud at Inkermann, it was shouted at Balaclava. Before Sebastopol the hideous thing was proved. Wilmington was acting as galloper to his General. I believe upon my soul the General chose him for the duty, so that the fellow might set himself right. There were three hundred yards of bullet-swept flat ground, and a message to be carried across them. Had Wilmington toppled off his horse

on the way, why, there were the whispers silenced for ever. Had he ridden through alive he earned distinction besides. But he didn't dare, he refused! Imagine it if you can! He sat shaking on his horse and declined. You should have seen the General. His face turned the colour of that Burgundy. "No doubt you have a previous engagement," he said, in the politest voice you ever heard—just that, not a word of abuse. A previous engagement on the battle-field! For the life of me I could hardly help laughing. But it was a tragic business for Wilmington. He was broken of course, and slunk back to London. Every house was closed to him, he dropped out of his circle like a lead bullet you let slip out of your hand into the sea. The very women in Piccadilly spat if he spoke to them; and he blew his brains out in a back bedroom off the Haymarket. Curious that, eh? He hadn't the pluck to face the bullets when his name was at stake, yet he could blow his own brains out afterwards.'

Lieutenant Sutch chanced to look at the clock as the story came to an end. It was now a quarter to one. Harry Feversham had still a quarter of an hour's furlough, and that quarter of an hour was occupied by a retired surgeon-general with a great wagging beard, who sat nearly opposite to the boy.

'I can tell you an incident still more curious,' he said. 'The man in this case had never been under fire before, but he was of my own profession. Life and death were part of his business. Nor was he really in any particular danger. The affair happened during a hill campaign in India. We were encamped in a valley, and a few Pathans used to lie out on the hillside at night and take long shots into the camp. A bullet ripped through the canvas of the hospital tent—that was all. The surgeon crept out to his own quarters, and his orderly discovered him half-an-hour afterwards lying in his blood stone dead.'

'Hit?' exclaimed the Major.

'Not a bit of it,' said the surgeon. 'He had quietly opened his instrument-case in the dark, taken out a lancet and severed his femoral artery. Sheer panic, do you see, at the whistle of a bullet.'

Even upon these men, case-hardened to horrors, the incident related in its bald simplicity wrought its effect. From some there broke a half-uttered exclamation of disbelief; others moved restlessly in their chairs with a sort of physical discomfort, because a man had sunk so far below humanity. Here an officer



gulped his wine, there a second shook his shoulders as though to shake the knowledge off as a dog shakes water. There was only one in all that company who sat perfectly still in the silence which followed upon the story. That one was the boy Harry Feversham.

He sat with his hands now clenched upon his knees and leaning forward a little across the table towards the surgeon; his cheeks white as paper, his eyes burning and burning with ferocity. He had the look of a dangerous animal in the trap. His body was gathered, his muscles taut. Sutch had a fear that the lad meant to leap across the table and strike with all his strength in the savagery of despair. He had indeed reached out a restraining hand when General Feversham's matter-of-fact voice intervened, and the boy's attitude suddenly relaxed.

'Queer incomprehensible things happen. Here are two of them. You can only say they are the truth and pray God you may forget 'em. But you can't explain. For you can't understand.'

Sutch was moved to lay his hand upon Harry's shoulder.

'Can you?' he asked, and regretted the question almost before it was spoken. But it was spoken, and Harry's eyes turned swiftly towards Sutch, and rested upon his face, not, however, with any betrayal of guilt, but quietly, inscrutably. Nor did he answer the question, although it was answered in a fashion by General Feversham.

'Harry understand!' exclaimed the General with a snort of indignation. 'How should he? He's a Feversham.'

The question, which Harry's glance had mutely put before, Sutch in the same mute way repeated. 'Are you blind?' his eyes asked of General Feversham. Never had he heard an untruth so demonstrably untrue. A mere look at the father and the son proved it so. Harry Feversham wore his father's name, but he had his mother's dark and haunted eyes, his mother's breadth of forehead, his mother's delicacy of profile, his mother's imagination. I needed perhaps a stranger to recognise the truth. The father had been so long familiar with his son's aspect that it had no significance to his mind.

'Look at the clock, Harry.'

The hour's furlough had run out. Harry rose from his chair, and drew a breath.

'Good-night, sir,' he said, and walked to the door.

The servants had long since gone to bed ; and, as Harry opened the door, the hall gaped black like the mouth of night. For a second or two the boy hesitated upon the threshold, and seemed almost to shrink back into the lighted room as though in that dark void peril awaited him. And peril did—the peril of his thoughts.

He stepped out of the room and closed the door behind him. The decanter was sent again upon its rounds, there was a popping of soda-water bottles, the talk revolved again in its accustomed groove. Harry was in an instant forgotten by all but Sutch. The Lieutenant, although he prided himself upon his impartial and disinterested study of human nature, was the kindest of men. He had more kindness than observation by a great deal. Moreover, there were special reasons which caused him to take an interest in Harry Feversham. He sat for a little while with the air of a man profoundly disturbed. Then, acting upon an impulse, he went to the door, opened it noiselessly, as noiselessly passed out, and, without so much as a click of the latch, closed the door behind him.

And this is what he saw : Harry Feversham holding in the centre of the hall a lighted candle high above his head and looking up towards the portraits of the Fevershams as they mounted the walls and were lost in the darkness of the roof. A muffled sound of voices came from the other side of the door-panels. But the hall itself was silent. Harry stood remarkably still, and the only thing which moved at all was the yellow flame of the candle as it flickered apparently in some faint draught. The light wavered across the portraits, glowing here upon a red coat, glittering there upon a corselet of steel. For there was not one man's portrait upon the walls which did not glisten with the colours of a uniform, and there were the portraits of many men. Father and son, the Fevershams had been soldiers from the very birth of the family. Father and son, in lace collars and bucket boots, in Ramillies wigs and steel breastplates, in velvet coats with powder on their hair, in shakos and swallow-tails, in high stocks and frogged coats, they looked down upon this last Feversham, summoning him to the like service. They were men of one stamp ; no distinction of uniform could obscure their relationship—lean-faced men, hard as iron, rugged in feature, thin-lipped, with firm chins and straight level mouths, narrow foreheads, and the steel-blue inexpressive eyes ; men of courage and resolution,



no doubt, but without subtleties, or nerves, or that burdensome gift of imagination; sturdy men, a little wanting in delicacy, hardly conspicuous for intellect; to put it frankly, men rather stupid—all of them, in a word, first-class fighting men, but not one of them a first-class soldier.

But Harry Feversham plainly saw none of their defects. To him they were one and all portentous and terrible. He stood before them in the attitude of a criminal before his judges, reading his condemnation in their cold unchanging eyes. Lieutenant Sutch understood more clearly why the flame of the candle flickered. There was no draught in the hall, but the boy's hand shook. And finally, as though he had heard the mute voices of his judges delivering sentence and admitted its justice, he actually bowed to the portraits on the wall. As he raised his head, he saw Lieutenant Sutch in the embrasure of the doorway.

He did not start, he uttered no word; he let his eyes quietly rest upon Sutch and waited. Of the two it was the man who was embarrassed.

'Harry,' he said, and in spite of his embarrassment he had the tact to use the tone and the language of one addressing not a boy, but a comrade equal in years, 'we meet for the first time to-night. But I knew your mother a long time ago. I like to think that I have the right to call her by that much misused word—friend. Have you anything to tell me?'

'Nothing,' said Harry.

'The mere telling sometimes lightens a trouble.'

'It is kind of you. There is nothing.'

Lieutenant Sutch was rather at a loss. The lad's loneliness made a strong appeal to him. For lonely the boy could not but be, set apart as he was no less unmistakably in mind as in feature from his father and his father's fathers. Yet what more could he do? His tact again came to his aid. He took his card-case from his pocket.

'You will find my address upon this card. Perhaps some day you will give me a few days of your company. I can offer you on my side a day or two's hunting.'

A spasm of pain shook for a fleeting moment the boy's steady inscrutable face. It passed, however, swiftly as it had come.

'Thank you, sir,' Harry monotonously repeated. 'You are very kind.'

‘And if ever you want to talk over a difficult question with an older man, I am at your service.’

He spoke purposely in a formal voice lest Harry with a boy’s sensitiveness should think he laughed. Harry took the card and repeated his thanks. Then he went upstairs to bed.

Lieutenant Sutch waited uncomfortably in the hall until the light of the candle had diminished and disappeared. Something was amiss, he was very sure. There were words which he should have spoken to the boy, but he had not known how to set about the task. He returned to the dining-room, and with a feeling that he was almost repairing his omissions, he filled his glass and called for silence.

‘Gentlemen,’ he said, ‘this is June 15th,’ and there was great applause and much rapping on the table. ‘It is the anniversary of our attack upon the Redan. It is also Harry Feversham’s birthday. For us, our work is done. I ask you to drink the health of one of the youngsters who are ousting us. His work lies before him. The traditions of the Feversham family are very well known to us. May Harry Feversham carry them on! May he add distinction to a distinguished name!’

At once all that company was on its feet.

‘Harry Feversham!’

The name was shouted with so hearty a goodwill that the glasses on the table rang. ‘Harry Feversham, Harry Feversham,’ the cry was repeated and repeated, while old General Feversham sat in his chair, with a face aflush with pride. And a boy a minute afterwards in a room high up in the house heard the muffled words of a chorus:

For he’s a jolly good fellow,  
For he’s a jolly good fellow,  
For he’s a jolly good fellow,  
And so say all of us,

and believed the guests upon this Crimean night were drinking his father’s health. He turned over in his bed and lay shivering. He saw in his mind a broken officer slinking at night in the shadows of the London streets. He pushed back the flap of a tent and stooped over a man lying stone-dead in his blood, with an open lancet clenched in his right hand. And he saw that the face of the broken officer and the face of the dead surgeon were one; and that one face, the face of Harry Feversham.



## CHAPTER II.

## CAPTAIN TRENCH AND A TELEGRAM.

THIRTEEN years later, and in the same month of June, Harry Feversham's health was drunk again, but after a quieter fashion and in a smaller company. The company was gathered in a room high up in a shapeless block of buildings which frowns like a fortress over Westminster. A stranger crossing St. James's Park southwards, over the suspension bridge, at night, who chanced to lift his eyes and see suddenly the tiers of lighted windows towering above him to so precipitous a height, might be brought to a stop with the fancy that here in the heart of London was a mountain and the gnomes at work. Upon the tenth floor of this building Harry had taken a flat during his year's furlough from his regiment in India; and it was in the dining-room of this flat that the simple ceremony took place. The room was furnished in a dark and restful fashion, and since the chill of the weather belied the calendar, a comfortable fire blazed in the hearth. A bay window over which the blinds had not been lowered commanded London.

There were four men smoking about the dinner-table. Harry Feversham was unchanged except for a fair moustache which contrasted with his dark hair, and the natural consequences of growth. He was now a man of middle height, long-limbed and well-knit like an athlete, but his features had not altered since that night when they had been so closely scrutinised by Lieutenant Sutch. Of his companions two were brother-officers on leave in England, like himself, whom he had that afternoon picked up at his club. Captain Trench, a small man, growing bald, with a small, sharp, resourceful face and black eyes of a remarkable activity, and Lieutenant Willoughby, an officer of quite a different stamp. A round forehead, a thick snub nose, and a pair of vacant and protruding eyes gave to him an aspect of invincible stupidity. He spoke but seldom, and never to the point, but rather to some point long forgotten which he had since been laboriously revolving in his mind; and he continually twisted a moustache, of which the ends curled up towards his eyes with a ridiculous ferocity. A man whom one would dismiss from mind as of no consequence upon a first thought, and take again into one's consideration upon

a second. For he was born stubborn as well as stupid ; and the harm which his stupidity might do, his stubbornness would hinder him from admitting. He was not a man to be persuaded ; having few ideas he clung to them ; it was no use to argue with him, for he did not hear the argument, but behind his vacant eyes all the while he turned over his crippled thoughts and was satisfied. The fourth at the table was Durrance, a lieutenant of the East Surrey Regiment, and Feversham's friend, who had come in answer to a telegram.

This was June of the year 1882, and the thoughts of civilians turned towards Egypt with anxiety, those of soldiers with an eager anticipation. Arabi Pasha, in spite of threats, was steadily strengthening the fortifications of Alexandria, and already a long way to the south, the other, the great danger, was swelling like a thunder-cloud. A year had passed since a young, slight, and tall Dongolawi, Mohammed Ahmed, had marched through the villages of the White Nile, preaching with the fire of a Wesley the coming of a Saviour. The passionate victims of the Turkish tax-gatherer had listened, had heard the promise repeated in the whispers of the wind in the withered grass, had found the holy names imprinted even upon the eggs they gathered up. In 1882 Mohammed had declared himself that Saviour, and had won his first battles against the Turks.

'There will be trouble,' said Trench, and the sentence was the text on which three of the four men talked. In a rare interval, however, the fourth, Harry Feversham, spoke upon a different subject.

'I am very glad you were all able to dine with me to-night. I telegraphed to Castleton as well, an officer of ours,' he explained to Durrance, 'but he was dining with a big man from the War Office, and leaves for Scotland afterwards, so that he could not come. I have news of a sort.'

The three men leaned forward, their minds still full of the dominant subject. But it was not about the prospect of war that Harry Feversham had to speak.

'I only reached London this morning from Dublin,' he said with a shade of embarrassment. 'I have been some weeks in Dublin.'

Durrance lifted his eyes from the tablecloth and looked quietly at his friend.

'Yes?' he asked steadily.



‘I have come back engaged to be married.’

Durrance lifted his glass to his lips.

‘Well, here’s luck to you, Harry,’ he said, and that was all. The wish, indeed, was almost curtly expressed, but there was nothing wanting in it to Feversham’s ears. The friendship between these two men was not one in which affectionate phrases had any part. There was, in truth, no need of such. Both men were securely conscious of it; they estimated it at its true strong value; it was a helpful instrument which would not wear out, put into their hands for a hard, lifelong use; but it was not, and never had been, spoken of between them. Both men were grateful for it, as for a rare and undeserved gift; yet both knew that it might entail an obligation of sacrifice. But the sacrifices, were they needful, would be made, and they would not be mentioned. It may be, indeed, that the very knowledge of its strength constrained them to a particular reticence in their words to one another.

‘Thank you, Jack!’ said Feversham. ‘I am glad of your good wishes. It was you who introduced me to Ethne. I cannot forget it.’

Durrance set his glass down without any haste. There followed a moment of silence, during which he sat with his eyes upon the tablecloth, and his hands resting on the table-edge.

‘Yes,’ he said in a level voice. ‘I did you a good turn then.’

He seemed on the point of saying more, and doubtful how to say it. But Captain Trench’s sharp, quick, practical voice, a voice which fitted the man who spoke, saved him his pains.

‘Will this make any difference?’ asked Trench.

Feversham replaced his cigar between his lips.

‘You mean, shall I leave the service?’ he asked slowly. ‘I don’t know;’ and Durrance seized the opportunity to rise from the table and cross to the window, where he stood with his back to his companions. Feversham took the abrupt movement for a reproach, and spoke to Durrance’s back, not to Trench.

‘I don’t know,’ he repeated. ‘It will need thought. There is much to be said. On the one side, of course, there’s my father, my career, such as it is. On the other hand, there is her father, Dermod Eustace.’

‘He wishes you to chuck your commission?’ asked Willoughby.

‘He has no doubt the Irishman’s objection to constituted

authority,' said Trench with a laugh. 'But need you subscribe to it, Feversham?'

'It is not merely that.' It was still to Durrance's back that he addressed his excuses. 'Dermod is old, his estates going to ruin, and there are other things. You know, Jack?'

The direct appeal he had to repeat, and even then Durrance answered it absently:

'Yes, I know,' and he added like one quoting a catch-word, "If you want any whisky, rap twice on the floor with your foot. The servants understand."

'Precisely,' said Feversham. He continued, carefully weighing his words, and still intently looking across the shoulders of his companions to his friend.

'Besides, there is Ethne herself. Dermod for once did an appropriate thing when he gave her that name. For she is of her country, and more of her county. She has the love of it in her bones. I do not think that she could be quite happy in India, or indeed in any place which was not within reach of Donegal, the smell of its peat, its streams, and the brown friendliness of its hills. One has to consider that.'

He waited for an answer, and getting none went on again. Durrance, however, had no thought of reproach in his mind. He knew that Feversham was speaking—he wished very much that he would continue to speak for a little while—but he paid no heed to what was said. He stood looking steadfastly out of the windows. Over against him was the glare from Pall Mall striking upwards to the sky, and the chains of lights banked one above the other as the town rose northwards, and a rumble as of a million carriages was in his ears. At his feet, very far below, lay St. James's Park silent and black, a quiet pool of darkness in the midst of glitter and noise. Durrance had a great desire to escape out of this room into its secrecy. But that he could not do without remark. Therefore he kept his back turned to his companion and leaned his forehead against the window, and hoped his friend would continue to talk. For he was face to face with one of the sacrifices which must not be mentioned, and which no sign must betray.

Feversham did continue, and if Durrance did not listen, on the other hand Captain Trench gave to him his closest attention. But it was evident that Harry Feversham was giving reasons seriously considered. He was not making excuses, and in the end Captain Trench was satisfied.



‘Well, I drink to you, Feversham,’ he said, ‘with all the proper sentiments.’

‘I too, old man,’ said Willoughby, obediently following his senior’s lead.

Thus they drank their comrade’s health, and as their empty glasses rattled on the table, there came a knock upon the door.

The two officers looked up. Durrance turned about from the window. Feversham said, ‘Come in’; and his servant brought in to him a telegram.

Feversham tore open the envelope carelessly, as carelessly read through the telegram, and then sat very still with his eyes upon the slip of pink paper, and his face grown at once extremely grave. Thus he sat for an appreciable time, not so much stunned as thoughtful. And in the room there was a complete silence. Feversham’s three guests averted their eyes. Durrance turned again to his window; Willoughby twisted his moustache and gazed intently upwards at the ceiling; Captain Trench shifted his chair round and stared into the glowing fire, and each man’s attitude expressed a certain suspense. It seemed that sharp upon the heels of Feversham’s good news calamity had come knocking at the door.

‘There is no answer,’ said Harry, and fell to silence again. Once he raised his head and looked at Trench as though he had a mind to speak. But he thought the better of it, and so dropped again to the consideration of this message. And in a moment or two the silence was sharply interrupted, but not by any one of the expectant motionless three men seated in the room. The interruption came from without.

From the parade ground of Wellington Barracks the drums and fifes sounding the tattoo shrilled through the open window with a startling clearness like a sharp summons, and diminished as the band marched away across the gravel and again grew loud. Feversham did not change his attitude, but the look upon his face was now that of a man listening, and listening thoughtfully, just as he had read thoughtfully. In the years which followed that moment was to recur again and again to the recollection of each of Harry’s three guests. The lighted room with the bright homely fire, the open window overlooking the myriad lamps of London, Harry Feversham seated with the telegram spread before him, the drums and fifes calling loudly, and then dwindling to a music very small and pretty—music which beckoned, where a

moment ago it had commanded : all these details made up a picture of which the colours were not to fade by any lapse of time, although its significance was not apprehended now.

It was remembered that Feversham rose abruptly from his chair, just before the tattoo ceased. He crumpled the telegram loosely in his hands, tossed it into the fire, and then, leaning his back against the chimney-piece and upon one side of the fireplace, said again :

‘ I don’t know ’ ; as though he had thrust that message, whatever it might be, from his mind, and was summing up in this indefinite way the argument which had gone before. Thus that long silence was broken, and a spell was lifted. But the fire took hold upon the telegram and shook it, so that it moved like a thing alive and in pain. It twisted, and part of it unrolled, and for a second lay open and smooth of creases, lit up by the flame and as yet untouched ; so that two or three words sprang, as it were, out of a yellow glare of fire and were legible. Then the flame seized upon that smooth part too, and in a moment it shrivelled into black tatters. But Captain Trench was all this while staring into the fire.

‘ You return to Dublin, I suppose ? ’ said Durrance. He had moved back again into the room. Like his companions, he was conscious of an unexplained relief.

‘ To Dublin, no. I go to Donegal in three weeks’ time. There is to be a dance. It is hoped you will come.’

‘ I am not sure that I can manage it. There is just a chance, I believe, should trouble come in the East, that I may go out on the Staff.’ The talk thus came round again to the chances of peace and war, and held in that quarter till the boom of the Westminster clock told that the hour was eleven. Captain Trench rose from his seat on the last stroke ; Willoughby and Durrance followed his example.

‘ I shall see you to-morrow,’ said Durrance to Feversham.

‘ As usual,’ replied Harry ; and his three guests descended from his rooms and walked across the Park together. At the corner of Pall Mall, however, they parted company, Durrance mounting St. James’s Street, while Trench and Willoughby crossed the road into St. James’s Square. There Trench slipped his arm through Willoughby’s, to Willoughby’s surprise for Trench was an undemonstrative man.

‘ You know Castleton’s address ? ’ he asked.



'Albemarle Street,' Willoughby answered and added the number.

'He leaves Euston at twelve o'clock. It is now ten minutes past eleven. Are you curious, Willoughby? I confess to curiosity. I am an inquisitive methodical person, and when a man gets a telegram bidding him tell Trench something and he tells Trench nothing, I am curious as a philosopher to know what that something is! Castleton is the only other officer of our regiment in London. Castleton, too, was dining with a big man from the War Office. I think that if we take a hansom to Albemarle Street we shall just catch Castleton upon his doorstep.'

Mr. Willoughby, who understood very little of Trench's meaning, nevertheless cordially agreed to the proposal.

'I think it would be prudent,' said he, and he hailed a passing cab. A moment later the two men were driving to Albemarle Street.

---

### CHAPTER III.

#### THE LAST RIDE TOGETHER.

DURRANCE, meanwhile, walked to his lodging alone, remembering a day, now two years since, when by a curious whim of old Dermot Eustace he had been fetched against his will to the house by the Lennon river in Donegal, and there, to his surprise, had been made acquainted with Dermot's daughter Ethne. For she surprised all who had first held speech with the father. Durrance had stayed for a night in the house, and through that evening she had played upon her violin, seated with her back towards her audience, as was her custom when she played, lest a look or a gesture should interrupt the concentration of her thoughts. The melodies which she had played rang in his ears now. For the girl possessed the gift of music, and the strings of her violin spoke to the questions of her bow. There was in particular an overture—the Melusine overture—which had the very sob of the waves. Durrance had listened wondering, for the violin had spoken to him of many things of which the girl who played it could know nothing. It had spoken of long perilous journeys and the faces of strange countries; of the silver way across moonlit seas; of the beckoning voices from the under edges of the desert. It had taken a deeper, a more mysterious tone. It had

told of great joys, quite unattainable, and of great griefs too, eternal, and with a sort of nobility by reason of their greatness; and of many unformulated longings beyond the reach of words; but with never a single note of mere complaint. So it had seemed to Durrance that night as he had sat listening while Ethne's face was turned away. So it seemed to him now when he knew that her face was still to be turned away for all his days. He had drawn a thought from her playing which he was at some pains to keep definite in his mind. The true music cannot complain.

Therefore it was that as he rode the next morning into the Row his blue eyes looked out upon the world from his bronzed face with not a jot less of his usual friendliness. He waited at half-past nine by the clump of lilacs and laburnums at the end of the sand, but Harry Feversham did not join him that morning, nor indeed for the next three weeks. Ever since the two men had graduated from Oxford it had been their custom to meet at this spot and hour, when both chanced to be in town, and Durrance was puzzled. It seemed to him that he had lost his friend as well.

Meanwhile, however, the rumours of war grew to a certainty, and when at last Feversham kept the tryst, Durrance had news.

'I told you luck might look my way. Well, she has. I go out to Egypt on General Graham's Staff. There's talk we may run dow the Red Sea to Suakim afterwards.'

The exhilaration of his voice brought an unmistakable envy into Feversham's eyes. It seemed strange to Durrance even at that moment of his good luck, that Harry Feversham should envy him—strange and rather pleasant. But he interpreted the envy in the light of his own ambitions.

'It is rough on you,' he said sympathetically, 'that your regiment has to stay behind.'

Feversham rode by his friend's side in silence. Then, as they came to the chairs beneath the trees, he said:

'That was expected. The day you dined with me I sent in my papers.'

'That night?' said Durrance, turning in his saddle. 'After we had gone?'

'Yes,' said Feversham, accepting the correction. He wondered whether it had been intended. But Durrance rode silently forward. Again Harry Feversham was conscious of a reproach



in his friend's silence, and again he was wrong. For Durrance suddenly spoke heartily, and with a laugh.

'I remember. You gave us your reasons that night. But for the life of me I can't help wishing that we had been going out together. When do you leave for Ireland?'

'To-night.'

'So soon?'

They turned their horses and rode westwards again down the alley of trees. The morning was still fresh. The limes and chestnuts had lost nothing of their early green, and since the May was late that year, its blossoms still hung delicately white like snow upon the branches and shone red against the dark rhododendrons. The Park shimmered in a haze of sunlight, and the distant roar of the streets was as the tumbling of river water.

'It is a long time since we bathed in Sandford Lasher,' said Durrance.

'Or froze in the Easter vacations in the big snow-gully on Great End,' returned Feversham. Both men had the feeling that on this morning a volume in their book of life was ended, and since the volume had been a pleasant one to read, and they did not know whether its successors would sustain its promise, they were looking backwards through the leaves before they put it finally away.

'You must stay with us, Jack, when you come back,' said Feversham.

Durrance had schooled himself not to wince, and he did not even at that anticipatory 'us.' If his left hand tightened upon the thongs of his reins, the sign could not be detected by his friend.

'If I come back,' said Durrance. 'You know my creed. I could never pity a man who died on active service. I would very much like to come by that end myself.'

It was a quite simple creed, consistent with the simplicity of the man who uttered it. It amounted to no more than this: that to die decently was worth a good many years of life. So that he uttered it without melancholy or any sign of foreboding. Even so, however, he had a fear that perhaps his friend might place another interpretation upon the words, and he looked quickly into his face. He only saw again, however, that puzzling look of envy in Feversham's eyes.

‘You see there are worse things which can happen,’ he continued. ‘Disablement, for instance. Clever men could make a shift perhaps to put up with it. But what in the world should I do if I had to sit in a chair all my days? It makes me shiver to think of it,’ and he shook his broad shoulders to unsaddle that fear. ‘Well, this is the last ride. Let us gallop,’ and he let out his horse.

Feversham followed his example, and side by side they went racing down the sand. At the bottom of the Row they stopped, shook hands, and with the curtest of nods parted. Feversham rode out of the Park, Durrance turned back and walked his horse up towards the seats beneath the trees.

Even as a boy in his home in Devonshire upon a wooded creek of the Salcombe estuary, he had always been conscious of a certain restlessness, a desire to sail down that creek and out over the levels of the sea, a dream of queer outlandish countries and peoples beyond the dark familiar woods. And the restlessness had grown upon him, so that ‘Guessens,’ even when he had inherited it with its farms and lands, had remained always in his thoughts as a place to come home to rather than an estate to occupy a life. He purposely exaggerated that restlessness now, and purposely set against it words which Feversham had spoken and which he knew to be true. Ethne Eustace would hardly be happy outside her county of Donegal. Therefore, even had things fallen out differently, as he phrased it, there might have been a clash. Perhaps it was as well that Harry Feversham was to marry Ethne—and not another than Feversham.

Thus at all events he argued as he rode, until the riders vanished from before his eyes, and the ladies in their coloured frocks beneath the cool of the trees. The trees themselves dwindled to ragged mimosas, the brown sand at his feet spread out in a widening circumference and took the bright colour of honey; and upon the empty sand black stones began to heap themselves shapelessly like coal, and to flash in the sun like mirrors. He was deep in his anticipations of the Soudan, when he heard his name called out softly in a woman’s voice, and, looking up, found himself close by the rails.

‘How do you do, Mrs. Adair?’ said he, and he stopped his horse. Mrs. Adair gave him her hand across the rails. She was Durrance’s neighbour at Southpool, and by a year or two his elder—a tall woman remarkable for the many shades of her thick brown hair



and the peculiar pallor on her face. But at this moment the face had brightened, there was a hint of colour in the cheeks.

‘I have news for you,’ said Durrance. ‘Two special items. One, Harry Feversham is to be married.’

‘To whom?’ asked the lady eagerly.

‘You should know. It was in your house in Hill Street that Harry first met her. And I introduced him. He has been improving the acquaintance in Dublin.’

But Mrs. Adair already understood; and it was plain that the news was welcome.

‘Ethne Eustace,’ she cried. ‘They will be married soon?’

‘There is nothing to prevent it.’

‘I am glad,’ and the lady sighed as though with relief. ‘What is your second item?’

‘As good as the first. I go out on General Graham’s Staff.’

Mrs. Adair was silent. There came a look of anxiety into her eyes, and the colour died out of her face.

‘You are very glad, I suppose,’ she said slowly.

Durrance’s voice left her in no doubt.

‘I should think I was. I go soon, too, and the sooner the better. I will come and dine some night, if I may, before I go.’

‘My husband will be pleased to see you,’ said Mrs. Adair rather coldly. Durrance did not notice the coldness, however. He had his own reasons for making the most of the opportunity which had come his way; and he urged his enthusiasm, and laid it bare in words more for his own benefit than with any thought of Mrs. Adair. Indeed, he had always rather a vague impression of the lady. She was handsome in a queer, foreign way, not so uncommon along the coasts of Devonshire and Cornwall, and she had good hair, and was always well dressed. Moreover, she was friendly. And at that point, Durrance’s knowledge of her came to an end. Perhaps her chief merit in his eyes was that she had made friends with Ethne Eustace. But he was to become better acquainted with Mrs. Adair. He rode away from the Park with the old regret in his mind that the fortunes of himself and his friend were this morning finally severed. As a fact he had that morning set the strands of a new rope a-weaving which was to bring them together again in a strange and terrible relationship. Mrs. Adair followed him out of the Park, and walked home very thoughtfully.

Durrance had just one week wherein to provide his equipment,

and arrange his estate in Devonshire. It passed in a continuous hurry of preparation, so that his newspaper lay each day unfolded in his rooms. The General was to travel overland to Brindisi, and so on an evening of wind and rain towards the end of July Durrance stepped from the Dover Pier into the mail boat for Calais. In spite of the rain and the gloomy night, a small crowd had gathered to give the General a send-off. As the ropes were cast off a feeble cheer was raised, and before the cheer had ended, Durrance found himself beset by a strange illusion. He was leaning upon the bulwarks idly wondering whether this was his last view of England, and with a wish that some one of his friends had come down to see him go, when it seemed to him suddenly that his wish was answered. For he caught a glimpse of a man standing beneath a gas-lamp, and that man was of the stature and wore the likeness of Harry Feversham. Durrance rubbed his eyes and looked again. But the wind made the tongue of light flicker uncertainly within the glass, the rain too blurred the quay. He could only be certain that a man was standing there, he could only vaguely distinguish beneath the lamp the whiteness of a face. It was an illusion, he said to himself. Harry Feversham was at that moment most likely listening to a girl playing the violin under a clear sky in a high garden of Donegal. But even as he was turning from the bulwarks, there came a lull of the wind, the lights burned bright and steady on the pier, and the face leaped from the shadows distinct in feature and expression. Durrance leaned out over the side of the boat.

'Harry!' he shouted at the top of a wondering voice.

But the figure beneath the lamp never stirred. The wind blew the lights again this way and that, the paddles churned the water, the mail-boat passed beyond the pier. It was an illusion, he repeated, it was a coincidence. It was the face of a stranger very like to Harry Feversham. It could not be Feversham's, because the face which Durrance had seen so distinctly for a moment was a haggard wistful face, a face stamped with an extraordinary misery, the face of a man cast out from among his fellows.

Durrance had been very busy all that week. He had clean forgotten the arrival of that telegram and the suspense which the long perusal of it had caused. Moreover, his newspaper had lain unfolded in his rooms. But his friend Harry Feversham had come to see him off.

*(To be continued.)*



THE  
CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

---

FEBRUARY 1902.

---

*BROWNING IN VENICE.*

BEING RECOLLECTIONS BY THE LATE KATHARINE DE KAY BRONSON,  
WITH A PREFATORY NOTE BY HENRY JAMES.

\* \*  
\*

I HAVE read the following pages of cordial and faithful reminiscence, in which a frank, predominant presence seems to live again, with an interest inevitably somewhat sad—so past and gone to-day is so much of the life suggested. Those who fortunately knew Mrs. Bronson will read into her notes still more of it—more of her subject, more of herself too, and of many things—than she gives, and some may well even feel tempted to do for her what she has done here for her distinguished friend. In Venice, during a long period, for many pilgrims, Mrs. Arthur Bronson, originally of New York, was, so far as ‘society,’ hospitality, a charming personal welcome were concerned, almost in sole possession; she had become there, with time, quite the prime representative of those private amenities which the Anglo-Saxon abroad is apt to miss just in proportion as the place visited is publicly wonderful, and in which he therefore finds a value twice as great as at home. Mrs. Bronson really earned in this way the gratitude of mingled generations and races. She sat for twenty years at the wide mouth, as it were, of the Grand Canal, holding out her hand, with endless good-nature, patience, charity, to all decently-accredited petitioners, the incessant troop of those either bewilderedly making or fondly renewing acquaintance with the dazzling city.

Casa Alvisi is directly opposite the high, broad-based florid church of S. Maria della Salute—so directly that from the balcony

over the water-entrance your eye, crossing the canal, seems to find the key-hole of the great door right in a line with it; and there was something in this position that, for the time, made all Venice-lovers think of the genial *padrona* as thus levying in the most convenient way the toll of curiosity and sympathy. Everyone passed, everyone was seen to pass, and few were those not seen to stop and to return. The most generous of hostesses died a year ago at Florence; her house knows her no more—it had ceased to do so for some time before her death; and the long, pleased procession—the charmed arrivals, the happy sojourns at anchor, the reluctant departures that made Ca' Alvisi, as was currently said, a social *porto di mare*—is, for remembrance and regret, already a procession of ghosts; so that, on the spot, at present, the attention ruefully averts itself from the dear little old faded but once familiarly bright façade, overtaken at last by the comparatively vulgar uses that are doing their best to 'paint out' in Venice, right and left, by staring signs and other vulgarities, the immemorial note of distinction. The house, in a city of palaces, was small, but the tenant clung to her perfect, her inclusive position—the one right place that gave her a better command, as it were, than a better house obtained by a harder compromise; not being fond, moreover, of spacious halls and massive treasures, but of compact and familiar rooms, in which her remarkable accumulation of minute and delicate Venetian objects could show. She adored—in the way of the Venetian, to which all her taste addressed itself—the small, the domestic and the exquisite; so that she would have given a Tintoretto or two, I think, without difficulty, for a cabinet of tiny gilded glasses or a dinner-service of the right old silver.

The general receptacle of these multiplied treasures played at any rate, through the years, the part of a friendly private box at the constant operatic show, a box at the best point of the best tier, with the cushioned ledge of its front raking the whole scene and with its withdrawing-rooms behind for more detached conversation; for easy—when not indeed slightly difficult—polyglot talk, artful *bibite*, artful cigarettes too, straight from the hand of the hostess, who could do all that belonged to a hostess, place people in relation and keep them so, take up and put down the topic, cause delicate tobacco and little gilded glasses to circulate, without ever leaving her sofa-cushions or intermitting her good-nature. She exercised in these conditions, with never a block, as



we say in London, in the traffic, with never an admission, an acceptance of the least social complication, her positive genius for easy interest, easy sympathy, easy friendship. It was as if, at last, she had taken the human race at large, quite irrespective of geography, for her neighbours, with neighbourly relations as a matter of course. These things, on her part, had at all events the greater appearance of ease from their having found to their purpose—and as if the very air of Venice produced them—a cluster of forms so light and immediate, so pre-established by picturesque custom. The old bright tradition, the wonderful Venetian legend, had appealed to her from the first, closing round her house and her well-plashed water-steps, where the waiting gondolas were thick; quite as if, actually, the ghost of the defunct Carnival—since I have spoken of ghosts—still played some haunting part.

Let me add, at the same time, that Mrs. Bronson's social facility, which was really her great refuge from importunity, a defence with serious thought and serious feeling quietly cherished behind it, had its discriminations as well as its inveteracies, and that the most marked of all these, perhaps, was her attachment to Robert Browning. Nothing in all her beneficent life had probably made her happier than to have found herself able to minister, each year, with the returning autumn, to his pleasure and comfort. Attached to Ca' Alvisi, on the land side, is a somewhat melancholy old section of a Giustiniani palace, which she had annexed to her own premises mainly for the purpose of placing it, in comfortable guise, at the service of her friends. She liked, as she professed, when they were the real thing, to have them under her hand; and here succeeded each other, through the years, the company of the privileged and the more closely domesticated, who liked, harmlessly, to distinguish between themselves and outsiders. Among visitors partaking of this pleasant provision Mr. Browning was of course easily first. But I must leave her own pen to show him as her best years knew him. The point was, meanwhile, that if her charity was great even for the outsider, this was by reason of the inner essence of it—her perfect tenderness for Venice, which she always recognised as a link. That was the true principle of fusion, the key to communication. She communicated in proportion—little or much, measuring it as she felt people more responsive or less so; and she expressed herself—in other words her full affection for the place—only to those who had

most of the same sentiment. The rich and interesting form in which she found it in Browning may well be imagined—together with the quite independent quantity of the genial at large that she also found; but I am not sure that his favour was not primarily based on his paid tribute of such things as ‘Two in a Gondola,’ and ‘A Toccata of Galuppi.’ He had more ineffaceably than anyone recorded his initiation from of old.

She was thus, all round, supremely faithful; yet it was perhaps after all with the very small folk, those to the manner born, that she made the easiest terms. She loved, she had from the first enthusiastically adopted, the engaging Venetian people, whose virtues she found touching, and their infirmities but such as appeal mainly to the sense of humour and the love of anecdote; and she befriended and admired, she studied and spoiled them. There must have been a multitude of whom it would scarce be too much to say that her long residence among them was their settled golden age. When I consider that they have lost her now I fairly wonder to what shifts they have been put and how long they may not have to wait for such another messenger of Providence. She cultivated their dialect, she renewed their boats, she piously relighted—at the top of the tide-washed *pali* of *traghetto* or lagoon—the neglected lamp of the tutelary Madonetta; she took cognisance of the wives, the children, the accidents, the troubles, as to which she became, perceptibly, the most prompt, the established remedy. On lines where the amusement was happily less one-sided she put together in dialect many short comedies, dramatic proverbs, which, with one of her drawing-rooms permanently arranged as a charming diminutive theatre, she caused to be performed by the young persons of her circle—often, when the case lent itself, by the wonderful small offspring of humbler friends, children of the Venetian lower class, whose aptitude, teachability, drollery, were her constant delight. It was certainly true that an impression of Venice as humanly sweet might easily found itself on the frankness and quickness and amiability of these little people. They were at least so much to the good; for the philosophy of their patroness was as Venetian as everything else; helping her to accept experience without bitterness and to remain fresh, even in the fatigue which finally overtook her, for pleasant surprises and proved sincerities. She was herself sincere to the last for the place of her predilection; inasmuch as though she had arranged herself, in the later time—and largely for the love of



'Pippa Passes'—an alternative refuge at Asolo, she absented herself from Venice with continuity only under coercion of illness.

At Asolo, periodically, the link with Browning was more confirmed than weakened, and there, in old Venetian territory, and with the invasion of visitors comparatively checked, her preferentially small house became again a setting for the pleasure of talk and the sense of Italy. It contained again its own small treasures, all in the pleasant key of the homelier Venetian spirit. The plain beneath it stretched away like a purple sea from the lower cliffs of the hills, and the white *campanili* of the villages, as one was perpetually saying, showed on the expanse like scattered sails of ships. The rumbling carriage, the old-time, rattling, red-velveted carriage of provincial, rural Italy, delightful and quaint, did the office of the gondola; to Bassano, to Treviso, to high-walled Castelfranco, all pink and gold, the home of the great Giorgione. Here also memories cluster; but it is in Venice again that her vanished presence is most felt, for there, in the real, or certainly the finer, the more sifted Cosmopolis, it falls into its place among the others evoked, those of the past seekers of poetry and dispensers of romance. It is a fact that almost everyone interesting, appealing, melancholy, memorable, odd, seems at one time or another, after many days and much life, to have gravitated to Venice by a happy instinct, settling in it and treating it, cherishing it, as a sort of repository of consolations; all of which to-day, for the conscious mind, is mixed with its air and constitutes its unwritten history. The deposed, the defeated, the disenchanting, the wounded, or even only the bored, have seemed to find there something that no other place could give. But such people came for themselves, as we seem to see them—only with the egotism of their grievances and the vanity of their hopes. Mrs. Bronson's case was beautifully different—she had come altogether for others.

HENRY JAMES.

\* \*  
\*

<sup>1</sup> In a letter from Browning dated in London, speaking of a pleasant experience in Venice, he says: 'It has given an association which will live in my mind with every delight of that dearest place in the world.' Again, in allusion to an album of carefully chosen

<sup>1</sup> Copyright, 1902, in the United States of America by the Century Co.

Venetian photographs received as a Christmas gift, he says: 'What a book of memories, and instigations to yet still more memories, does that most beautiful book prove to me! I never supposed that photographers would have the good sense to use their art on so many out-of-the-way scenes and sights, just those I love most.'

Nevertheless, he did not acquiesce when people suggested that he should leave England and take up his permanent abode in Venice. His answer was: 'Impossible! I have too many friends in London. I would never forsake them. Still, I admit that for three or four months in the year I should like nothing half so well as Venice.'

To this end he once made all arrangements for the purchase of an ancient Venetian palace. Everything seemed propitious. He was charmed with the early fifteenth-century construction, with the arched windows and exquisite façade covered with medallions of many-coloured marbles, and pleased himself with plans and fancies of how, with certain alterations, it could easily be made a perfect summer and autumn residence. All was decided, the law formalities were nearly complete, and the purchase-money was ready, when, at the last hour, a flaw in the title became apparent, partly owing to the fact that the property belonged to absentees. So, to the poet's intense chagrin, he was obliged to give up his darling scheme. Perhaps he had never, in his long lifetime, been so thoroughly annoyed by a thwarted project as by the failure of this one. There came a day, some years later, when he saw that all had been ordained for his good. As a matter of fact, the foundations of the palace were as insecure as the title, there were many sunless rooms, some of the floors were sunken badly, and an enormous outlay of money would have been required to make the place habitable.

These drawbacks the poet at first refused to consider. He thought only of the beauty and the archæological interest; he doubted that the façade was in a perilous condition; pleased himself by fancying how many windows he could open to the morning sun on the garden, how many balconies could be added towards the south; in fact, he may be said to have passed a month, not in building but in restoring a 'castle in the air' hanging over the waters of the Grand Canal. Even when he became convinced that Fate had kept a kindly hand over him, and that the purchase, had it been concluded, would have proved a source of endless trouble and perhaps regret, he still remained offended with the unseen and



unknown owners of the palazzo. It was only after his son had bought the Palazzo Rezzonico<sup>1</sup> that the father was really reconciled to the loss of the Manzoni.

The poet's nature was so essentially joyous that one was at a loss to decide where he took the keenest pleasure, whether in his daily walks or his afternoon rows in the gondola. He seemed never to weary of either, but my personal experience of his delight was in the latter, when we floated over the still lagoons. The view of the rose-coloured city rising from the pale-green waters, of the golden light of sunset on the distant Alps, of the day as it turned to evening behind the Euganean Hills, never seemed to pall upon his sense.

'Only Shelley has given us an idea of this,' he would say, and quote lines from 'Julian and Maddalo.' 'Never say Euganean,' he corrected me; 'many people make that mistake, but if you keep in mind that the poet makes the word rhyme to 'pæan,' you will remember to pronoun it Eugané-an.'

His memory for the poems he had read in his youth was extraordinary. If one quoted a line from Byron, who, he said, was the singer of his first enthusiasm, he would continue the quotation, never hesitating for a word, and then interrupt himself, saying 'I think you have had enough of this,' to which his dear sister and I would give silent consent, lest the effort of memory should tire him. He was very proud of his retentive memory and of his well-preserved sight; the latter he attributed to his practice of bathing his eyes in cold water every morning. He was proud, too, of his strength, of his power of walking for hours without fatigue, of the few requirements of his Spartan-like daily life, and above all he was proud of his son, who was his idol.

Yes, that was his vulnerable point, the heel of Achilles. People who praised or loved or noticed his only child found the

<sup>1</sup> It is on the left side of the palace, at the corner above the little canal, that one may see the memorial tablet erected by the municipality of Venice:

A

ROBERTO BROWNING

MORTO IN QUESTO PALAZZO

IL 12 DICEMBRE 1889

VENEZIA

POSE

'Open my heart and you will see  
Graved inside of it, "Italy."'

direct road to his heart. Even those who only spoke with him of 'Pen' were at once his friends and worthy of attention and interest. He said to me many years ago, while awaiting anxiously the result of his son's earnest art studies :

'Do you know, dear friend, if the thing were possible, I would renounce all personal ambition and would destroy every line I ever wrote, if by so doing I could see fame and honour heaped on my Robert's head.'

What a proof are these words of an intense nature devoid of all egotism! In his boy he saw the image of the wife whom he adored, literally adored; for, as I felt, the thought of her, as an angel in heaven, was never out of his mind. He wore a small gold ring on his watch-chain. 'This was hers,' he said. 'Can you fancy that tiny finger? Can you believe that a woman could wear such a circlet as this? It is a child's.'

The only other souvenir on his chain was a coin placed there years ago, the date 1848, a piece of the first money struck by Manin in Venice to record the freedom from Austrian dominion. 'I love this coin,' he said, 'as she would have loved it. You know what she felt and wrote about United Italy.'

He had no personal vanity: it never occurred to him to admire himself in any way, to call attention to the beauty of his hand, which in old age was the hand of youth, nor did he seem to be aware of the perfect outline of his head, the colour and brightness of his eyes, or the fairness of his skin, which, with his snow-white hair, made him look as if carved in old Greek marble.

After his disappointment with regard to the Palazzo Manzoni he cherished a momentary—idea, may I call it?—perhaps fancy is the better word—of buying an unfinished villa on the Lido, the sand-strip towards the Adriatic, begun in years gone by for Victor Emmanuel. He would talk of this with great zest, saying, 'Thence one could see every day the divine sunsets,' and continue with a list of the charms and advantages of the really beautiful place, then pause and wait for the assent and approbation of his sister or some listening friend. He seemed annoyed when no such word was spoken. He could not bring those who loved him quite to agree with so unpractical a scheme, yet all contrary arguments of distance from town and markets, exposure to storms, and so on, seemed to annoy him, until at last everyone ended by listening to his enthusiastic plans, while offering no direct opposition to them. After a time, finding that in this case silence meant the



reverse of consent, he ceased to talk and dream of a 'villa on the Lido.'

He expressed one day a wish to go to the Church of San Niccolò to find the tomb of his hero Salinguerra. On the way he talked of the character and deeds of this soldier prince, who plays so important a part in the poem of 'Sordello'; how he was taken by the Venetians at Ferrara, and kept for years an honoured prisoner by the republic, and how he died in Casa Bosco at San Tomà, and was buried with great pomp at San Niccolò al Lido. After searching vainly for some time through the lonely church, where no sacristan was to be found, he discovered or rediscovered the memorial tablet in a sort of corridor attached to the east side of the church. It bears in Gothic characters the name and date of death of the renowned Salinguerra, which being translated signifies 'leap to war.'

The poet looked at the ancient stone with great interest and attention, and on the way back to Venice he seemed lost in thought. Though he said but little, I could follow through that the current of his thought. He was repassing in his mind that complicated bit of mediæval Italian history so strongly treated in his own great poem. While he took a vivid and ever-present interest in all he had written, he very rarely spoke on the subject, even to his most intimate friends. In a letter of thanks for a manuscript collection of dramatic episodes taken from Venetian archives, he said :

'The extracts are all very characteristic and valuable. If I do not immediately turn them to use, it is because of an old peculiarity in my mental digestion—a long and obscure process. There comes up unexpectedly some subject for poetry, which has been dormant, and apparently dead, for perhaps dozens of years. A month since I wrote a poem of some two hundred lines about a story I heard more than forty years ago, and never dreamed of trying to repeat, wondering how it had so long escaped me; and so it has been with my best things. These *petits faits vrais* are precious.'

The poem he spoke of is 'Donald.' I always fancied that in Venice the poet was more ready to be pleased than elsewhere; everything charmed him. He found grace and beauty in the *popolo*, whom he paints so well in the Goldoni sonnet. The poorest street children were pretty in his eyes. He would admire a carpenter or a painter who chanced to be at work in the house,

and say to me : ' See the fine poise of the head, the movement of the torso, those well-cut features. You might fancy that man in the crimson robe of a senator, as you see them on Tintoret's canvas.'

I would occasionally translate his compliment to the man in question, in milder terms : ' The signore says you look like the people in the old pictures ' ; and it amused him to see the workman change colour at words of praise from the one he well knew as the *sommo poeta*. Professor Molmenti wrote to him one day with the request that he would write something for a pamphlet published at the time of the unveiling of Goldoni's statue in Venice. He acquiesced without hesitation, and the very next day the sonnet was ready for print. It was written very rapidly ; probably it was thought out carefully before he put pen to paper, as I observed there were but two or three trifling alterations in the original copy. He seemed pleased that the committee should have asked him to write, and pleased to accede to the wish. The subject appealed to his taste, and he seemed most happy to show his sympathy with Venice and Venetians.

The saying that ' no man is a hero to his *valet de chambre*' was disproved in the case of Robert Browning. He was so gracious and yet so dignified with servants that he was as profoundly revered by them as he was beloved. An exact account of his gentle geniality in this regard might read like exaggeration. He appeared to dread giving his inferiors trouble ; it was as though he would fain spare them the sense of servitude, which his own independent spirit caused him to imagine a painful burden. It seemed as if he were ever striving to place a cushion under a galling yoke, and in vain one sought to convince him that service rendered to such as he could only be a source of pride and pleasure to the server. He would always resist the hand of a friend or menial that tried to assist him, even in so small a matter as the adjustment or removal of his great-coat or his hat.

' Nothing that I can do for myself should be done for me,' he would say, and brave was the servant who dared hold an umbrella over his head as he stepped into or out of the gondola. ' What do you take me for,' he would exclaim—' an infant or a man ?'

In Venice his memory will live in many a humble heart until its pulse has ceased to beat. ' There'll never be another like



him,' is still the common saying whenever his name is mentioned to those who served him.

In his immense humanity he refused to make distinctions of manner among those of his own class of life who approached him, always excepting the rare cases where base qualities had been proved beyond a doubt to his mind. The thing he most abhorred was untruthfulness; even insincerity in its most conventional form was detestable to an upright mind which loved and sought for truth in all its phases. His first impulse was to think well of people, to like them, to respect them; they were human souls, and therefore to him of the greatest earthly interest. He conversed affably with all. Lover of beauty as he was, he would talk as pleasantly with dull old ladies as with young and pretty ones. He made himself delightful at a dinner-party; whether the guests chanced to be of mediocre intelligence or of superior brains, his fund of sparkling anecdote for all was never exhausted. In this, as in many other ways, one learned from him the lesson of self-forgetfulness. He never asked, 'Do these people amuse me? Do I find them agreeable?' His only thought was, 'Let me try to make their time pass pleasantly.'

He wrote a few words some years ago in the album of Lia, a daughter of Princess Mélanie Metternich, a lovely little creature, just ten years of age, who died some months later of scarlet fever. Among her books the mother found one containing original verses, some most pathetic lines, bidding her brother farewell, and prophetic of her approaching death. The child had never shown them to anyone, not even to her governess. I copied and sent them to Mr. Browning, and he thus wrote in answer:

'I want to say how much touched I was by those dear innocencies of the poor sweet child a week before the end. The mother's discovery of that book, those unsuspected yearnings in verse, one cannot venture to try and realise that. I like to think that when the kind little creature asked me so prettily to write my name in her birthday book there went some sort of true sympathy (in the asking) with a person she had heard was a "poet," not merely a stranger with a name other people told her they had heard of. Perhaps she was meaning to be herself a "poet." Well, she is passed into poetry, for all who knew her even so slightly as I.'

Some years ago an overflow of rivers, and consequent inundation of a part of the Venetian territory, interrupted for a time all

communication between Venice and northern Italy. In a letter written at this fateful time, soon after his return to London, he said :

‘As for the failure to get to Venice, we, my sister and I, have only regretted it once, that is, uninterruptedly ever since. You must know that, beside the adverse floods and bridge-breakings, I was, for the first time in my life, literally lamed by what I took for an attack of rheumatism, which I caught just before leaving St. Pierre de Chartreuse, through my stupid inadvertence in sitting with a window open at my back—reading the Iliad, all my excuse!—while clad in a thin summer suit, and snow on the hills and bitterness everywhere ; . . . but this was no such slight matter at Bologna, and I fancied I might be absolutely crippled at Venice if I even managed to overcome all obstacles and get there. Of course now that what is done is done, I am tantalised with fancies of what might have been done otherwise. But, if I live and do well, be sure that I will go as early to Venice next year, and stay as late, as circumstances will allow.’

A gifted friend of mine, who met Mr. Browning in my house, thus writes of him :

‘It was evident to me that he always strove to excuse the faults of others and overlook their weaknesses, gathering all, with his large charity, into the great brotherhood of humanity. But his indignation at anything low, base, or untrue was like a flash of fire. His whole face would change and glow as he denounced those who used their talents to corrupt the world, as he thought some of the modern French novelists do. No word was too scathing, no scorn too intense, for that great sin consciously committed.’

In this connection I recollect that a certain lady, whom he had known slightly years ago in Rome, met him one day in the street and greeted him with, ‘Oh, Mr. Browning, you are the very person I wished to see!’ This was somewhat embarrassing, as he did not recognise his former acquaintance in the least ; so she hurriedly explained to him who she once had been—the wife of an English banker in Rome—and who she then was—the wife of an Italian councillor of prefecture.

‘And what, pray, can I do for you?’ asked Mr. Browning.

‘I have written a poem,’ was her answer, ‘and I want you to read it and tell me what you think of it ;’ so there and then she brought forth a manuscript from her pocket, and was about to read it aloud in the street when he stopped her, saying :



‘Not here, not here! Had we not better go into a shop?’

So, as they chanced to be near the library on the Piazza, they stepped into a book-shop, and the title and dedication of the poem were read. It was addressed to a French novelist, whom the author called ‘the Jenner of literature.’ Mr. Browning was displeased, but, as he said, he managed to conceal his real sentiments, only saying:

‘I think I should be an unfair critic on such a subject. I would rather not hear the poem.’

Surprised, the lady asked his reason. ‘Do you not think,’ she inquired, ‘that the portrayal of the evil existing in the world has the effect of making people fear and avoid it?’

‘Not in the very least,’ he explained; ‘the exact contrary is the case. It tends to make people who sin occasionally consider themselves admirably virtuous as compared with those who commit sins every day and hour.’ So saying, he took leave of the poetess.

One of his great pleasures was to walk with my daughter through the little Venetian *calli*. He liked to find himself suddenly in one so narrow as to force him to close his umbrella, whether in sun or rain.

‘Edith is the best cicerone in the world,’ he said; ‘she knows everything and teaches me all she knows. There never was such a guide.’

In past years he had known little of the tortuous inner streets of Venice, so all was new to him. He sometimes fancied that he and his young companion had discovered a hitherto unknown bit of stone carving or bas-relief. I remember hearing him give a description of the tablet which marks the visit of Pope Alexander to Venice, which the two explorers had found in a dim, out-of-the-way corner, and he seemed so pleased that I dared not disappoint him by saying that its existence is mentioned in various guide-books. One of his favourite walks was to SS. Giovanni e Paolo to see the Colleoni, which he considered the finest equestrian statue in the world. He remarked that the artist was well named Verocchio, or ‘true eye,’ and related to us one day, in his own inimitable terse manner, the story of the checkered life of the great *condottiere*, and why his statue had been erected in Venice. He never passed a day without taking one or more long walks; indeed, his panacea for most ills was exercise, and the exercise he chiefly advocated was walking. He wrote:

‘I get as nearly angry as it is in me to become with people I love when they trifle with their health,—that is, with their life,—like children playing with jewels over a bridge-side, jewels which, once in the water, how can we, the poor lookers-on, hope to recover? You don’t know how absolutely well I am after my walking, not on the mountains merely, but on the beloved Lido. Go there, if only to stand and be blown about by the sea-wind.’

His long walks on the Lido were among his greatest pleasures. At one time he went there daily with his congenial friends Mr. and Mrs. Sargent Curtis. He would return full of colour and health, talk of the light and life and fresh air with enthusiasm, combined with a sort of pity for those who had remained at home. ‘It is like coming into a room from the outer air,’ he said, ‘to re-enter Venice after walking on the sea-shore.’

When storms kept him by force in the house all day, he never complained; but one could see that it troubled him to find himself a prisoner. He would stand at the window and watch the sea-gulls as they sailed to and fro, their presence a sure sign of heavy storms in the Adriatic. He remarked upon their strength of wing and grace of flight, as they swept down to the wreaths and long lines of dark-green seaweed floating on the surface of the canal between the house and the Church of the Salute. One day he observed: ‘I do not know why I never see in descriptions of Venice any mention of the sea-gulls; to me they are even more interesting than the doves of St. Mark.’

Indeed, the white-winged creatures so charmed him that I often thought the world would see a poem from his pen to immortalise the birds. He admired the Salute, the sometimes adversely criticised Church of Our Lady of Health.

‘Is it possible,’ he said, ‘that wise men disapprove of those quaint buttresses? To me they rise out of the sea like gigantic shells; but then I am not an architect, and only know what is beautiful to my own eyes.’

‘One of his most charming traits was the readiness with which he always acquiesced when asked to read aloud his own poems. He accepted no thanks, saying in a genial manner: ‘It is very kind of you to wish to hear them; when shall it be?’

He liked especially to read for his friends the Curtises at the Palazzo Barbaro, where he felt at home, feeling certain that hosts and guests were sympathetic. The day and hour fixed, he allowed nothing to interfere with his intention. The sense of honour



which showed itself in the smallest matters made it impossible for him to frame even a conventional excuse when his absence might disappoint others. Rather than break a promise he would brave a storm, or force himself to keep his word even when he justly complained that his throat was not quite as it should be. That word, once given, must be held to, despite all obstacles. Let me quote again from my friend's letter :

'His reading of his own poems was a never-to-be-forgotten delight—simple, direct, and virile as was the nature of the man. The graver portions he read in a quiet, almost introspective way, as if he were thinking it all out again. I remember once that in finishing the grand profession of faith at the end of "Saul" his voice failed him a very little, and when it was ended he turned his back to us, who were gathered about him in reverent silence, and laying the book quietly on the table, stood so for a moment. . . . He seemed as full of dramatic interest in reading "In a Balcony" as if he had just written it for our benefit. One who sat near him said that it was a natural sequence that the step of the guard should be heard coming to take Norbert to his doom, as, with a nature like the queen's, who had known only one hour of joy in her sterile life, vengeance swift and terrible would follow on the sudden destruction of her happiness.

"Now, I don't quite think that," answered Browning, as if he were following out the play as a spectator. "The queen had a large and passionate temperament, which had only once been touched and brought into intense life. She would have died, as by a knife in her heart. The guard would have come to carry away her dead body."

"But I imagine that most people interpret it as I do," was the reply.

"Then," said Browning, with quick interest, "don't you think it would be well to put it in the stage directions, and have it seen that they were carrying her across the back of the stage?"

'Whether this was ever done I do not know; but it was wonderful to me, as showing the personal interest he took in his own creations.'

He had a fund of simple playfulness which often comes with genius. One evening, after dinner at the Casa Alvisi, he was talking on the subject of certain music with the lady whose letter I have quoted, when he said suddenly :

'Come, I will play to you on the spinet in the anteroom.'

So they went together, and found the place but partly lighted by one dim lamp. The spinet had no chair, so he knelt on the carpet before it, the light falling on his bent head, its snow-white hair, and on his small, eloquent hands. He played a little fugue of Bach, and finding that one or two of the ancient keys refused to do their work,—for the spinet was a curiosity, and not meant for use,—he said :

‘ Raise the wooden bar over the hammers ; let us see if it will do better.’

The lady obeyed, and all going well, he was threading some of the intricacies of the great maestro, when she, thinking still to improve the tone, lifted the bar higher, then all at once the little hammers, tipped with bits of crow-quill, freed from captivity, leaped into the air and fell lifeless on the strings. Then all was lost, and in the midst of suppressed laughter he said :

‘ Now you have ruined the instrument ! Let us cover it quickly and go back.’

So they covered over the destruction, and, like naughty children, lifted the portière and went back demurely to the drawing-room, making no confession of the crime. He would refer to this escapade with boyish amusement.

He was on friendly terms with one of the foreign residents in Venice, an old Russian prince, a man of intelligence and varied experience. Born in Rome in the beginning of the nineteenth century and educated in Russia, he afterwards represented his country at the courts of Athens, Constantinople, and Turin. At the latter place he was the friend of Cavour and of good service in maintaining friendly diplomatic relations between St. Petersburg and newly formed United Italy. Between him and Browning, therefore, numerous subjects of common interest existed, and their long conversations were enjoyed equally on both sides.

‘ I like Gagarin, with his crusty old port flavour,’ the poet says in one of his letters.

On one never-to-be-forgotten evening the subject of music took the place of old-time politics. To the great surprise of the prince, the poet recalled to his memory, and sang in a low, sweet voice, a number of folk-songs and national airs he had caught by ear during his short stay in Russia, more than fifty years before. First one would sing and then the other ; if one hesitated for a note or phrase, the other could generally supply the deficiency, and with great spirit and mutual delight they continued the



curious tournament for quite an hour. It was evident that the old music took them both back to the days of their youth. The Russian expressed himself amazed at the poet's musical memory. 'It is better than my own, on which I have hitherto piqued myself not a little,' he said at the time, and he often referred to the experience of that evening as the most remarkable proof of memory he ever met with.

Browning never failed to read the London daily papers, but seldom found time to look at those published in Venice. When he did take up one of the latter he would smile and say:

'Now listen to the iniquities committed in this wicked city yesterday!'

Then he would read aloud the police reports, which never recorded anything more serious than a petty theft of oars or *forcole, cavalli di gondola*, or, at the worst, some household linen—by a bold thief abstracted from its drying place—to the value of five francs. Comparison of these delinquencies with those of similar columns in other lands was really a source of delight to the poet.

'How pleasant it is to be in the midst of so guileless a community!' he would say, with a genial laugh. On reading the necrologies, which often recorded the demise of someone '*morto nella ancora fresca età di sessanta-cinque anni*' (dead at the still youthful age of sixty-five), 'They consider sixty-five an early death apparently,' he said, with a smile.

A modern book was brought to his notice during his last sojourn (but one) in Venice. It is Tassini's '*Curiosità Veneziane*,' which gives a history in brief of the old palaces, together with their divers legends; also the origin of the names of the streets and bridges. He was interested in this, and even mentions the book in a letter written after his return to London: 'Tassini tempts me to dip into him whenever I pass the book-case.'

He was impressed by a story in this volume, which he afterwards told in verse. It is published in '*Asolando*,' and is entitled '*Ponte dell' Angelo*.' Not content with Tassini's version of the legend, the poet looked it up in the '*Annals of the Cappucini*,' by Father Boverio. He said nothing of this to anyone until a certain day, when, to the question, 'Where would you like to go?' he answered promptly:

'To see the house of the Devil and the Advocate.'

We rowed quickly to the place where three waterways meet,

and where the Ponte dell' Angelo spans one of the narrow canals. Opposite stands the old Soranzo palace, with an angel carved in stone on the façade.

'Stop,' he said to the gondolier, 'broad-backed Luigi,' as he always called him. 'Do you know the story of that angel?'

'Sì, signore.'

'Then relate it.'

The boatman at once proceeded to repeat most volubly in the Venetian dialect the tale, familiar to him from childhood.

'Do you think it is true, Luigi?' said the poet.

'Yes, sir, it is really true; it has been printed.' The man's faith in the veracity of print amused the poet immensely.

He was much pleased on one occasion when Professor Nencioni came from Rome expressly to see him. Nencioni is perhaps the only Italian who has thoroughly mastered the difficulties of Browning's poetry, certainly the only one who has translated and written essays upon it, and one need hardly say that he is an enthusiastic admirer. Browning was already aware of this through a series of articles in the 'Fanfulla della Domenica,' published at Rome. Italian recognition of his work was especially gratifying to him for various reasons, and he welcomed this distinguished exponent of it with genuine gratitude and pleasure. 'I subscribed to the paper at once,' he said, with his usual frank geniality, 'after reading your first kind notice of me.'

Together with his clever young friend and 'fellow-pilgrim' Carlo Placci, the professor dined with the poet at Casa Alvisi. Everyone was in the best of spirits, but to recall such conversation is beyond my power. I only remember that in the evening Nencioni, speaking to me in an aside, said: 'I have studied Browning since my early youth, when first I saw him in Siena. I consider that his work has qualities not to be found even in Shakespeare; in fact, in some respects I regard him as the superior of the two.'

After the Professor had gone I said to the poet, 'Do you know what your admirer says of you?'

'No; what?'

So I made myself a base tattler and repeated his words. The poet frowned and shook his head impatiently.

'No, no, no; I won't hear that. No one in the world will ever approach Shakespeare—never!'

So I repented my boldness, but fancied, nevertheless, he must



have been somewhat pleased by what, in his modesty, he found an exaggerated expression of admiration. Indeed, this was but one of many instances which went to prove that, although he had a sincere consciousness of his own merit as a poet, he placed others far above himself. Nothing annoyed him more than comparisons so often made between himself and Tennyson, for whom he had a heartfelt appreciation. The slightest word of dispraise or faint praise of his friend and brother poet roused him to positive anger. His admirers frequently displeased him in this way, thinking to flatter him by some such expression of opinion, and his sharp quick answer always punished their want of tact and discrimination.

In one of his later letters he says :

‘Did you get a little book by Michael Field, “Long Ago,” a number of poems written to *innestare* what fragmentary lines and words we have left of Sappho’s poetry? . . . The author is a great genius, a friend we know. Do you like it?’

In speaking afterwards to me on the subject of this work, his praise was enthusiastic, and he added to his expressions of admiration for the author’s genius his sorrow for the trouble and anxiety she had been lately called upon to bear.

In Venice, as elsewhere, Browning rose early, and after a light breakfast went with his sister to the Public Gardens. They never failed to carry with them a store of cakes and fruits for the prisoned elephant, whose lonely fate was often pityingly alluded to by the poet, in whom a love of animals amounted to a passion. A large baboon, confined in what had once been a greenhouse, was also an object of special interest to him. This beast fortunately excited no commiseration, being healthy and content, and taking equal pleasure with the givers in his daily present of dainty food. After saying ‘Good morning’ and ‘Good appetite’ to these animals, he gave a passing salutation to a pair of beautiful gazelles, presented to the gardens by one of his friends; then a word of greeting to two merry marmosets, the gift of another friend; then a glance at the pelicans, the ostriches, and the quaint kangaroos; he had a word and a look for each, seeming to study them and almost to guess their thoughts. After this he made the tour of the gardens, three times round the inclosure with great exactness, and then returned to his temporary home in the Palazzo Giustiniani-Recanati.

On a certain day he met one of the servants, whose joy it was

to wait upon him, carrying a rather heavy basket of grapes and other fruits on her arm.

‘Oh, Giuseppina,’ he cried, ‘let me help you!’ and seized the basket suddenly from her hand.

The woman, overwhelmed by such condescension, protested, ‘Troppo onore, signore.’

‘Nonsense!’ said the poet. ‘You are always helping me; won’t you allow me for once to help you?’

Still the woman resisted, saying, ‘It is not for such as you, O signore!’

This was more than he could bear.

‘We are all made of the same clay, Giuseppina’; and gaining his point—for who could withstand his will?—he held one handle of the basket until they reached the palace door.

This same worthy woman is fond of relating a story of her master which illustrates another side of his character. He had paid her weekly account, and there remained one centesimo as change. The woman showed the little coin, saying shyly, ‘I cannot offer this trifle to the signore.’

‘Yes, my good Giuseppina,’ he said, taking it from her hand; ‘it is one thing to be just and another to be generous; you do right to return it to me.’

‘And not long after this,’ continues the woman, ‘he made me such a grand present!’

The Giustiniani-Recanati palace was in some respects worthy of a poet’s sojourn. It is one of the oldest in Venice, built in the fifteenth century, and has a fine façade, with Gothic windows looking out upon a court and garden, and a southern exposure. It belongs to a lineal descendant of one of the most ancient and historically interesting families in Italy, the one in which the well-known circumstance of the marriage of a monk, by order of the Pope, occurred many centuries ago. The aroma of antiquity—and we may add sanctity, since many members of the family lived and died in the odour thereof—was a source of pleasure to the poet. He said once, ‘I am glad to have written some of my verses in the house of the Giustiniani,’ for his soul rejoiced in the heroic deeds and romantic records of bygone days.

It was curious to see that, on each one of his arrivals in Venice, he took up his life precisely as he had left it. On Sunday morning he always went with his sister to the same Waldensian chapel, in which they seemed to take great interest, especially enjoying the



preaching of a certain eloquent pastor, whose name, I regret to say, I have forgotten. On the return from the brisk morning walk he read his newspapers and letters, answering each day a few among the many received from friends and admirers. He was amused, but never impatient, with the innumerable requests for autographs, some of which were written in illiterate and inelegant handwriting, many of them from the Western States and far California. When his instinct told him these were genuinely asked for, and not from the idly curious, he would answer them, unless, indeed, the number of important private letters took up too much of his precious time. When people asked him *viva voce* for an autograph, he looked puzzled, and said :

‘ I don’t like to write always the same verse, yet I can remember only one.’

Of course the person addressed replied : ‘ I am grateful for anything whatever that comes to your mind.’ Then he would take up his pen at once and write :

All that I know of a certain star, etc.

Sometimes, when in a merry mood, he wrote this verse in so fine a handwriting that only such extraordinary eyesight as his own could decipher it, and on one occasion, in the same microscopic calligraphy, he wrote Mrs. Barbauld’s lines,

Life! we’ve been long together, &c.

saying, after he had read it aloud, ‘ If she had never written aught but that one verse she would deserve to be for ever remembered.’

I recollect an amusing incident *à propos* of autographs. A Venetian banker had asked, through me, an autograph for his daughter’s album. Browning said, ‘ I really cannot write always the same thing ;’ then, after a pause, he exclaimed, ‘ Ah, now I have it,’ and, seating himself at a table, he quickly wrote a verse which I had often heard him quote and laugh at, about pence and pounds, a variety of the well-known proverb. Edith said timidly :

‘ But will they not find that rather personal ?’

The poet thought a moment, and, laughing heartily, said, ‘ I believe you are right, my dear ; here, keep this for yourself, and I will write something else for the banker’s daughter.’

He could not possibly have managed to keep pace with his large correspondence but for the aid of his sister, his guardian angel, who helped him in this as in many other ways—not obtrusively, for she knew his strong spirit of independence, but with

the fine tact that can be inspired by intense affection only, combined with a high order of intelligence. The most perfect understanding existed between the two, and the devotion of the sister to the supremely endowed brother was appreciated and admired by all who were privileged to observe it. At midday these two dear friends took their second breakfast together, ordering by preference Italian dishes, such as *risotto*, macaroni, and all fruits in their season, especially grapes and figs. They enjoyed their novel menus and tête-à-tête repasts, talking and laughing the while, and approving especially of the cook's manner of treating ortolans, of which 'mouthfuls for cardinals' the poet writes so amusingly in the prologue to 'Ferishtah's Fancies.' About three o'clock they went out in a gondola. To the question, 'Where shall we go?' the answer was :

'Anywhere. All is beautiful, but let it be toward the Lido.'

They seldom wished to make formal visits, though they were scrupulously exact in returning those which, as he always said, people were 'kind enough to make him.'

Sometimes, though rarely, they wandered through the antiquity shops. The poet had a keen *flair* for good *bric-à-brac*, and had an especial liking for tapestry and old carved furniture. He seldom sought for them, but his eye seized quickly upon an object of interest or value. He never hesitated or changed his mind; his intuition was always correct. A purchase once made, he was as thoroughly delighted as if the particular object were the first bibelot he had ever had the good luck to acquire. Like a child with a new toy, he would carry it himself (size and weight permitting) into the gondola, rejoice over his chance in finding it, and descant eloquently upon its intrinsic merits. In this, as in every other phase of his character, he was entirely unspoiled. Then he would explain minutely where the object should be placed in the London house, and add significantly, 'I never buy anything without knowing exactly what I wish to do with it,' which was quite true, as his mind was unfailingly clear from great things to trifles. 'You might take this lesson from me, if none other,' he said to me playfully; for he disapproved of the habit of buying useless things in a vague manner only because they were old and pretty.

He never expressed a wish to 'see sights' in the tourist manner, but would occasionally visit such churches as SS. Giovanni e Paolo or the Frari, and study the monuments with close attention.



These seemed to interest him more than old pictures, and he examined carefully, on one occasion, the marble carvings within and without of the *Miracoli*, which he called a 'jewel of a church.' The ancient palaces with their strangely varied façades were always interesting and suggestive to him; we see how suggestive in that wonderful short poem called 'In a Gondola,' in which he pictures Venice, it seems to me, as no one else in prose or verse has ever depicted the sea-city.

About five o'clock, when we returned to the *Alvisi* for tea, the poet would sometimes say, 'Excuse me for to-day,' and retire to his own apartments in the *Giustiniani*. He never gave nor was asked his reason for doing so; it was enough that he wished it. At other times he would join us at the tea-table and talk with equal facility in English, French, or Italian with visitors who chanced to be present. Occasionally, to our great delight, he would say, 'Edith dear, you may give me a cup of tea to-day;' but, as a rule, he abstained from what he considered a somewhat unhygienic beverage if taken before dinner. When it so pleased them the brother and sister went together to their own rooms, and punctually at half-past seven returned to dine at *Casa Alvisi*. The poet, unlike many men of letters, was always scrupulously careful in his dress, especially in his dinner-hour toilet. His sister wore beautiful gowns of rich and sombre tints, and appeared each day in a different and most dainty French cap and quaint antique jewels. They were both so genial and content that, puzzle the brain as one might, it was impossible to know whether the quiet family dinner or the presence of guests was the more agreeable to them. In face of the doubt we decided on the latter; it seemed selfish to do otherwise, and we were rarely without common friends to share the pleasure of the poet's conversation. If the direct question were asked on this subject, the invariable answer was, 'Do as you please; you know we are always perfectly happy.'

Browning's strong dramatic instinct made him take intense pleasure in plays, whether written or acted. Though he was rarely seen at the theatre in London, he greatly enjoyed a 'short season' at the *Goldoni*, where he went every night to see *Gallina's* clever Venetian comedies. He had two boxes thrown into one, and, seated in an armchair quite at his ease, he followed each play with the deepest interest, never taking his eyes off the stage until the fall of the curtain. *Gallina* was invited during an *entr'acte* to come into the box to be presented to the poet and hear from his

own lips an expression of genuine admiration for his work. The Italian was pleased and flattered, as may be easily imagined, for Browning's art of praise was as distinguishing a characteristic as was his art of dedication, which caused someone to style him the 'Prince of Dedicators.' It was a combination of judgment and enthusiasm, so turned that each word should have its due 'specific gravity,' and of which there should be neither too many nor too few.

Each night after the play *Gallina* waited at the door of the theatre to see the poet pass, and the latter invariably turned a few steps out of his way to exchange a hearty hand-shake with his 'brother dramatist,' as he liked to call him. Browning's large and genial nature made him always wish to express his thanks, either for favours received, the occasion for which happened rarely in his independent mode of life, or for pleasures procured him by anyone; author or actor, whoever it might be, he always longed to say the words, 'I thank you.' The following extract from one of his letters, written at Primiero, is an illustration of this:

'The little train from Montebelluna to Feltre was crowded; we could find no room except in a smoking-carriage, wherein I observed a good-natured elderly gentleman—an Italian, I took for granted. Presently he said, "Can I offer you an English paper?"

"What, are you English?"

"Oh, yes, and I know that you are going to see your son at Primiero."

"Why, who can you be?"

"One who has seen you often."

"Not surely Mr. Malcolm?"

"Well, nobody else."

'So ensued an affectionate greeting, he having been the guardian angel of Pen in all his chafferings about the purchase of the palazzo. He gave me abundance of information, and satisfied me on many points.'

The time of year which Browning always gave to his sojourns in Venice was one which all the great Venetian families pass in their country homes, so that comparatively few among them had the pleasure of the illustrious stranger's acquaintance. Among these few the Countess Marcello was a favourite of his, and he accepted, for himself and his sister, her invitation to pass a day at her villa at Mogliano. The day was bright and beautiful,



and he seemed to enjoy the short hour's journey by rail, and to admire the smiling country about him. The countess, with several of her children, met us at the little station, and we were quickly whirled away, the younger people with their ponies, the elders in a comfortable landau, through the country road and pretty park to a villa of simple yet imposing architecture. On one side of the house is a sun-dial with the familiar motto (in Latin), 'I count only the hours of sunshine,' and the lawns near the house bear English mottoes in flowers and coloured plants, together with the device of the countess, a trefoil joined by letters to form her name, Andriana. After luncheon we all repaired to the tennis-ground, past the deer-houses and through a stately avenue of ancient beech-trees whose great branches met and interlaced far above our heads, making a gigantic arbour. The young people gave up their usual games and seated themselves on rustic benches, listening attentively to every word from the poet's lips. A Venetian sculptor, who chanced to be one of the guests, hid himself behind a group of trees, and, peeping through their trunks from his coign of vantage, drew in his album a fairly good portrait of Browning. The countess, who was Queen Margherita's favourite lady of honour, showed the poet a specimen of the handwriting of her royal mistress, which he greatly admired, as being at once forcible and graceful.

Before the hour of departure, the daughter of the house, a young and very lovely creature, asked the favour that Mr. Browning should write in her album.

'With the greatest pleasure,' he said, 'but I am ashamed to say I remember only one verse.'

Everyone smiled at this, and the poet, as usual, wrote 'My star.' When the *contessina* looked at it, she exclaimed: 'This is one of my favourites. See, I have copied it in my book of verses'; and turning over the pages, she showed the poem, neatly written out by her own hand, among many others by the same author. Browning was surprised to find his writings understood and admired by this fair young foreigner, and complimented her on her proficiency in so difficult a language, adding, with a smile: 'Even English girls do not find my poems easy to read, you know.' Then he said: 'Let us compare the verses, the one you have copied and the one I have written; I am sure we shall find some mistake.'

There were indeed a few errors, and as he corrected them

he said: 'See what a service you have rendered me. I should have left the verse full of faults if you had not been able to correct me.'

The girl flushed with pleasure, which made her beauty still more apparent. In speaking afterwards of this most agreeable visit, Browning gave a glowing description of the beautiful mother and her children. 'It is like an English family,' he said, which was the highest praise he could bestow.

At the railway-station, while we were awaiting the arrival of the train, a young Italian *littérateur* asked to be presented to Browning. The countess introduced him as 'one who has already distinguished himself in the world of letters,' which was of course a passport to the poet's interest. They talked together until forced to part by the shrill whistle of warning, and then came cordial farewells to all who had accompanied us to the station.

'He seems a youth of promise,' said Browning, as we sped Venice-ward; 'I liked him. I hope he will do well and that I shall hear of him again.'

Unluckily, when next his name was mentioned, it was in connection with a series of lectures announced in the papers as 'twelve lectures on Zola,' which, as may be supposed, the poet expressed no desire to attend.

All who strove to attain success in art or literature interested him. Each one struck, with more or less force, his most responsive chord. He was pleased, on the occasion of one of his readings at the Palazzo Barbaro, to meet the novelist Castelnovo, and mentioned an incident which had long before made the writer's name familiar to his ear. He related how, on his second visit to Asolo, whither he had taken his sister to bear witness to the wisdom of his early admiration for the place, they found themselves without a book of any sort, an unusual position for book-lovers such as they. The poet went out in search of something or anything readable in the little town, where book-shops are even now unknown. He found one volume only, in a paper-shop I think it was, containing a series of short stories by Castelnovo, entitled 'Alla Finestra.' The brother and sister were both delighted with the book, and ever after procured for themselves each work by the same author as soon as it was given to the public.

Browning's memory is still green in Asolo, where many of the



citizens remember him well, where his son owns not only Pippa's Tower, erected after his father's death, but other houses with fine outlooks over the Venetian plain. The small museum in the town hall has his bust in plaster by a local artist, and other relics of the poet who so doted on Asolo. These rambling reminiscences of hours spent with him in Asolo and Venice may have the good fortune to bring him in spirit nearer to his admirers, for I have striven to give an exact report of the man and his character as they appeared to me during an unbroken friendship of many years.

THE CONSOLATION OF MEDIOCRITY.

I.

THOSE persons happiest I deem  
 Who learn the valuable lesson  
 How better is than each extreme  
 What Aristotle calls the Meson :

Who sit secure upon a fence,  
 Nor are by passing crazes bitten,  
 But with judicial sentiments  
 Review the feuds of Boer and Briton,—

Nor prophesy an instant storm  
 Though Germans growl and Frenchmen vapour,  
 Nor straightway don their uniform  
 Whene'er they read a foreign paper :

Who hope not much the truth to find  
 In statements of demented dailies,  
 But with a philosophic mind  
 Accept them all *cum grano salis* :

Who know the worth of party names,  
 Nor much revere those titles hoary,  
 When Tories strive for Liberal aims  
 And Liberal apes the ways of Tory :—

II.

Who,—when some bard of new renown  
 Provides a theme that critics rave on,  
 And Robinson asserts that Brown  
 Is equal to the Swan of Avon,—



Their mental equilibrium  
 By judgment rational controlling  
 Amid the loud diurnal hum  
 Of logs reciprocally rolling,

Calmly such ecstasies survey,  
 Nor blame the age with useless sorrow :  
 Because they know the boom to-day  
 Is followed by a slump to-morrow.

## III.

This is the reasonable man  
 Who cultivates content and patience,  
 And does not spend his vital span  
 In looking out for new sensations :

Who covets not with effort vain  
 The mind of Mill, the strength of Sandow,  
 But sees his limitations plain,  
 And what he can't, and what he can do :

Nor murmurs much nor makes a fuss  
 About the marks which fates assign us  
 (Though Delta mayn't be Alpha Plus  
 'Tis better far than Lambda Minus),

And when of life's supreme rewards  
 He sees that he can ne'er be winner,  
 Yet with a solid joy regards  
 The daily prospect of his dinner.

## IV.

Such are the good and truly great,  
 And attributes like these will show them :  
 But hitherto, I grieve to state,  
 I've not been privileged to know them.

THE INTRUSIONS OF PEGGY.<sup>1</sup>

BY ANTHONY HOPE.

CHAPTER IV.

FROM THE MIDST OF THE WHIRL.

‘REALLY I must congratulate you on your latest, Sarah,’ remarked Lady Blixworth, who was taking tea with Mrs. Bonfill. ‘Trix Trevalla is carrying everything before her. The Glentorlys have had her to meet Lord Farringham, and he was delighted. The men adore her, and they do say women like her. All done in six weeks! You’re a genius!’

Mrs. Bonfill made a deprecatory gesture of a *Non nobis* order. Her friend insisted amiably:

‘Oh, yes, you are. You choose so well. You never make a mistake. Now do tell me what’s going to happen. Does Mortimer Mervyn mean it? Of course she wouldn’t hesitate.’

Mrs. Bonfill looked at her volatile friend with a good-humoured distrust.

‘When you congratulate me, Viola,’ she said, ‘I generally expect to hear that something has gone wrong.’

‘Oh, you believe what you’re told about me,’ the accused lady murmured plaintively.

‘It’s experience,’ persisted Mrs. Bonfill. ‘Have you anything that you think I sha’n’t like to tell me about Trix Trevalla?’

‘I don’t suppose you’ll dislike it, but I should. Need she drive in the park with Mrs. Fricker?’ Her smile contradicted the regret of her tone, as she spread her hands out in affected surprise and appeal.

‘Mrs. Fricker’s a very decent sort of woman, Viola. You have a prejudice against her.’

‘Yes, thank heaven! We all want money nowadays, but for my part I’d starve sooner than get it from the Frickers.’

‘Oh, that’s what you want me to believe?’

‘Dearest Sarah, no! That’s what I’m afraid her enemies and yours will say.’

<sup>1</sup> Copyright, 1902, by A. H. Hawkins, in the United States of America.



‘I see,’ smiled Mrs. Bonfill indulgently. She always acknowledged that Viola was neat—as a siege-gun might admit it of the field artillery.

‘Couldn’t you give her a hint? The gossip about Beaufort Chance doesn’t so much matter, but——’ Lady Blixworth looked as if she expected to be interrupted, even pausing an instant to allow the opportunity. Mrs. Bonfill obliged her.

‘There’s gossip about Beaufort, is there?’

‘Oh, there is, of course; that can’t be denied; but it really doesn’t matter as long as Mortimer doesn’t hear about it.’

‘Was there never more than one aspirant at a time when you were young?’

‘As long as you’re content, I am,’ Lady Blixworth declared in an injured manner. ‘It’s not my business what Mrs. Trevalla does.’

‘Don’t be huffy,’ was Mrs. Bonfill’s maternal advice. ‘As far as I can see, everything is going splendidly.’

‘It is to be Mortimer?’

‘How can I tell, my dear? If Mortimer Mervyn should ask my advice, which really isn’t likely, what could I say except that Trix is a charming woman, and that I know of nothing against it?’

‘She must be very well off, by the way she does things.’ There was an inflection of question in her voice, but no direct interrogatory.

‘Doubtless,’ said Mrs. Bonfill. Often the craftiest suggestions failed in face of her broad imperturbability.

Lady Blixworth smiled at her. Mrs. Bonfill shook her head in benign rebuke. The two understood one another, and on the whole liked one another very well.

‘All right, Sarah,’ said Lady Blixworth, ‘but if you want my opinion, it is that she’s out-running the constable, unless——’

‘Well, go on.’

‘You give me leave? You won’t order me out? Well, unless—— Well, as I said, why drive Mrs. Fricker round the Park? Why take Connie Fricker to the Quinby-Lees’s dance?’

‘Oh, everybody goes to the Quinby-Lees’s. She’s never offered to bring them here or anywhere that matters.’

‘You know the difference; perhaps the Frickers don’t.’

‘That’s downright malicious, Viola. And of course they do;

at least they live to find it out. No, you can't put me out of conceit with Trix Trevalla.'

'You're so loyal,' murmured Lady Blixworth in admiration. 'Really Sarah's as blind as a bat sometimes,' she reflected as she got into her carriage.

A world of people at once inquisitive and clear-sighted would render necessary either moral perfection or reckless defiance; indifference and obtuseness preserve a place for that mediocrity of conduct which characterises the majority. Society at large had hitherto found small fault with Trix Trevalla, and what it said, when passed through Lady Blixworth's resourceful intellect, gained greatly both in volume and in point. No doubt she had very many gowns, no doubt she spent money, certainly she flirted, possibly she was, for so young and pretty a woman, a trifle indiscreet. But she gave the impression of being able to take care of herself, and her attractions, combined with Mrs. Bonfill's unwavering patronage, would have sufficed to excuse more errors than she had been found guilty of. It was actually true that, while men admired, women liked her. There was hardly a discordant voice to break in harshly on her triumph.

There is no place like the top—especially when it is narrow, and will not hold many at a time. The natives of it have their peculiar joy, those who have painfully climbed theirs. Trix Trevalla seemed, to herself at least, very near the top; if she were not quite on it, she could put her head up over the last ledge and see it, and feel that with one more hoist she would be able to land herself there. It is unnecessary to recite the houses she went to, and would be (save for the utter lack of authority such a list would have) invidious; it would be tiresome to retail compliments and conquests. But the smallest choicest gatherings began to know her, and houses which were not fashionable but something much beyond—eternal pillars supporting London society—welcomed her. This was no success of curiosity, of whim, of a season; it was the establishment of a position for life. From the purely social point of view, even a match with Mervyn could do little more. So Trix was tempted to declare in her pride.

But the case had other aspects, of course. It was all something of a struggle, however victorious; it may be supposed that generally it is. Security is hard to believe in, and there is always a craving to make the strong position impregnable.



Life alone at twenty-six is—lonely. These things were in her mind, as they might have been in the thoughts of any woman so placed. There was another consideration, more special to herself, which could not be excluded from view: she had begun to realise what her manner of life cost. Behold her sitting before books and bills that revealed the truth beyond possibility of error or of gloss! Lady Blixworth's instinct had not been at fault. Trix's mouth grew rather hard again, and her eyes coldly resolute, as she studied these disagreeable documents.

From such studies she had arisen to go to dinner with Beaufort Chance and to meet the Frickers. She sat next Fricker, and talked to him most of the time, while Beaufort was very attentive to Mrs. Fricker, and the young man who had been procured for Connie Fricker fulfilled his appointed function. Fricker was not a bad-looking man, and was better bred and less aggressive than his wife or daughter. Trix found him not so disagreeable as she had expected; she encouraged him to talk on his own subjects, and began to find him interesting; by the end of dinner she had discovered that he, or at least his conversation, was engrossing. The old theme of making money without working for it, by gaming or betting, by chance or speculation, by black magic or white, is ever attractive to the children of men. Fricker could talk very well about it; he produced the impression that it was exceedingly easy to be rich; it seemed to be anybody's own fault if he were poor. Only at the end did he throw in any qualification of this broad position.

'Of course you must know the ropes, or find somebody who does.'

'There's the rub, Mr. Fricker. Don't people who know them generally keep their knowledge to themselves?'

'They've a bit to spare for their friends sometimes.' His smile was quietly reflective.

Beaufort Chance had hinted that some such benevolent sentiments might be found to animate Mr. Fricker. He had even used the idea as a bait to lure Trix to the dinner. Do what she would, she could not help giving Fricker a glance, half-grateful, half-provocative. Vanity—new-born of her great triumph—made her feel that her presence there was really a thing to be repaid. Her study of those documents tempted her to listen when the suggestion of repayment came. In the drawing-room Trix found herself inviting Mrs. Fricker to call. Youthful experiences made

Trix socially tolerant in one direction if she were socially ambitious in another. She had none of Lady Blixworth's shudders, and was ready to be nice to Mrs. Fricker. Still her laugh was conscious and she blushed a little when Beaufort Chance thanked her for making herself so pleasant.

All through the month there were renewed and continual rumours of what the Tsar meant to do. A speech by Lord Farringham might seem to dispose of them, but there were people who did not trust Lord Farringham—who, in fact, knew better. There were telegrams from abroad, there were mysterious paragraphs claiming an authority too high to be disclosed to the vulgar, there were leaders asking whether it were actually the fact that nothing was going to be done; there was an agitation about the Navy, another final exposure of the methods of the War Office, and philosophic attacks on the system of party government. Churchmen began to say that they were also patriots, and dons to remind the country that they were citizens. And—in the end—what did the Tsar mean to do? That Potentate gave no sign. What of that? Had not generals uttered speeches and worked out professional problems? Lord Glentorly ordered extensive manœuvres, and bade the country rely on him. The country seemed a little doubtful; or, anyhow, the Press told it that it was. 'The atmosphere is electric,' declared Mr. Liffey in an article in the 'Sentinel': thousands read it in railway carriages and looked grave; they had not seen Mr. Liffey's smile.

Things were in this condition, and the broadsheets blazing in big letters, when one afternoon a hansom whisked along Wych Street and set down a lady in a very neat grey frock at the entrance of Danes Inn. Trix trod the pavement of that secluded spot and ascended the stairs of 6A with an amusement and excitement far different from Peggy Ryle's matter-of-fact familiarity. She had known lodging-houses; they were as dirty as this, but there the likeness ended. They had been new, flimsy, confined; this looked old, was very solid and relatively spacious; they had been noisy, it was very quiet; they had swarmed with children, here were none; the whole place seemed to her quasi-monastic; she blushed for herself as she passed through. Her knock on Airey Newton's door was timid.

Airey's amazement at the sight of her was unmistakable. He drew back saying:



‘Mrs. Trevalla! Is it really you?’

The picture he had in his mind was so different. Where was the forlorn girl in the widow’s weeds? This brilliant creature surely was not the same!

But Trix laughed and chattered, insisting that she was herself.

‘I couldn’t wear mourning all my life, could I?’ she asked. ‘You didn’t mean me to, when we had our talk in Paris?’

‘I’m not blaming, only wondering.’ For a moment she almost robbed him of speech; he busied himself with the tea (there was a cake to-day) while she flitted about the room, not omitting to include Airey himself in her rapid scrutiny. She marked the shortness of his hair, the trimness of his beard, and approved Peggy’s work, little thinking it was Peggy’s.

‘It’s delightful to be here,’ she exclaimed as she sat down to tea.

‘I took your coming as a bad omen,’ said Airey, smiling, ‘but I hope there’s nothing very wrong?’

‘I’m an impostor. Everything is just splendidly right, and I came to tell you.’

‘It was very kind.’ He had not quite recovered from his surprise yet.

‘I thought you had a right to know. I owe it all to your advice, you see. You told me to come back to life. Well, I’ve come.’

She was alive enough, certainly; she breathed animation and seemed to diffuse vitality; she was positively eager in her living.

‘You told me to have my revenge, to play with life. Don’t you remember? Fancy your forgetting, when I’ve remembered so well! To die of heat rather than of cold—surely you remember, Mr. Newton?’

‘Every word, now you say it,’ he nodded. ‘And you’re acting on that?’

‘For all I’m worth,’ laughed Trix.

He sat down opposite her, looking at her with a grave but still rather bewildered attention.

‘And it works well?’ he asked after a pause, and, as it seemed, a conscientious examination of her.

‘Superb!’ She could not resist adding, ‘Haven’t you heard anything about me?’

‘In here?’ asked Airey, waving his arm round the room, and smiling.

‘No, I suppose you wouldn’t,’ she laughed; ‘but I’m rather famous, you know. That’s why I felt bound to come and tell you—to let you see what great things you’ve done. Yes, it’s quite true, you gave me the impulse.’ She set down her cup and leant back in her chair, smiling brightly at him. ‘Are you afraid of the responsibility?’

‘Everything seems so prosperous,’ said Airey. ‘I forgot, but I have heard one person speak of you. Do you know Peggy Ryle?’

‘I know her by sight. Is she a friend of yours?’

‘Yes, and she told me of some of your triumphs.’

‘Oh, not half so well as I shall tell you myself!’ Trix was evidently little interested in Peggy Ryle. To Airey himself Peggy’s doubts and criticism seemed now rather absurd; this bright vision threw them into the shade of neglect.

Trix launched out. It was the first chance she had enjoyed of telling to somebody who belonged to the old life the wonderful things about the new. Indeed who else of the old life was left? Graves, material or metaphorical, covered all that had belonged to it. Mrs. Bonfill was always kind, but with her there was not the delicious sense of the contrast that must rise before the eyes of the listener. Airey gave her that; he had heard of the lodging-houses, he knew about the four years with Vesey Trevalla; it was evident he had not forgotten the forlornness and the widow’s weeds of Paris. He then could appreciate the change, the great change, that still amazed and dazzled Trix herself. It was not in ostentation, but in the pure joy of victory, that she flung great names at him, would have him know that the highest of them were familiar to her, and that the woman who now sat talking to him, friend to friend, amidst the dinginess of Danes Inn, was a sought-after, valued, honoured guest in all these houses. Peggy Ryle went to some of the houses also, but she had never considered that talk about them would interest Airey Newton. She might be right or wrong. Trix Trevalla was certainly right in guessing that talk about herself in the houses would.

‘You seem to be going it, Mrs. Trevalla,’ he said at last, unconsciously reaching out for his pipe.

‘I am,’ said Trix. ‘Yes, do smoke. So will I.’ She produced her cigarette-case. ‘Well, I’ve arrears to make up, haven’t I?’ She glanced round. ‘And you live here?’ she asked.



‘Always. I know nothing of all you’ve been talking about.’

‘You wouldn’t care about it anyhow, would you?’ Her tones were gentle and consolatory. She accepted the fact that it was all impossible to him, that the door was shut, and comforted him in his exclusion.

‘I don’t suppose I should, and at all events——’ He shrugged his shoulders. If her impression had needed confirmation, here it was. ‘And what’s to be the end of it with you?’ he asked.

‘End? Why should there be an end? It’s only just begun,’ cried Trix.

‘Well, there are ends that are beginnings of other things,’ he suggested. What Peggy had told him recurred to his mind, though certainly there was no sign of Mrs. Trevalla being in trouble on that or any other score.

Yet his words brought a shadow to Trix’s face, a touch of irritation into her manner.

‘Oh, some day, I daresay,’ she said. ‘Yes, I suppose so. I’m not thinking about that either just now. I’m just thinking about myself. That’s what you meant me to do?’

‘It seems to me that my responsibility is growing, Mrs. Trevalla.’

‘Yes, that’s it, it is!’ Trix was delighted with the whimsicality of the idea. ‘You’re responsible for it all, though you sit quietly here and nobody knows anything about you. I shall come and report myself from time to time. I’m obedient up to now?’

‘Well, I’m not quite sure. Did I tell you to——?’

‘Yes, yes, to take my revenge, you know. Oh, you remember, and you can’t shirk it now.’ She began to laugh at the half-humorous gravity of Airey’s face, as she insisted on his responsibility. This talk with him, the sort of relations that she was establishing with him, promised to give a new zest to her life, a pleasant diversion for her thoughts. He would make a splendid onlooker, and she would select all the pleasant things for him to see. Of course there was nothing really unpleasant, but there were a few things that it would not interest him to hear. There were things that even Mrs. Bonfill did not hear, although she would have been able to understand them much better than he.

Trix found her host again looking at her with an amused and admiring scrutiny. She was well prepared for it; the most select of parties had elicited no greater care in the choice of her dress than this visit to Danes Inn. Was not the contrast to be made as wonderful and striking as possible?

‘Shall I do you credit?’ she asked in gay mockery.

‘You’re really rather marvellous,’ laughed Airey. ‘And I suppose you’ll come out all right.’

A hint of doubt crept into his voice. Trix glanced at him quickly.

‘If I don’t, you’ll have to look after me,’ she warned him.

He was grave now, not solemn, but, as it seemed, meditative.

‘What if I think only of myself too?’ he asked.

Trix laughed at the idea. ‘There’d be no sort of excuse for you,’ she reminded him.

‘I suppose not,’ he admitted, rather ruefully.

‘But I’m going to come out most splendidly all right, so we won’t worry about that.’ As she spoke she had been putting on her gloves, and now she rose from her chair. ‘I must go; got an early dinner and a theatre.’ She looked round the room, and then back to Airey; her lips parted in an appealing confidential smile that drew an answer from him, and made him feel what her power was. ‘Do you know, I don’t want—I positively don’t want—to go, Mr. Newton.’

‘The attractions are so numerous, so unrivalled?’

‘It’s so quiet, so peaceful, so out of it all.’

‘That a recommendation to you?’ He raised his brows.

‘Well, it’s all a bit of a rush and a fight, and—and so on. I love it all, but just now and then’—she came to him and laid her hand lightly on his arm—‘just now and then may I come again?’ she implored. ‘I shall like to think that I’ve got it to come to.’

‘It’s always here, Mrs. Trevalla, and, except for me, generally empty.’

‘Generally?’ Her mocking tone hid a real curiosity; but Airey’s manner was matter-of-fact.

‘Oh, Peggy Ryle comes, and one or two of her friends, now and then. But I could send them away. Any time’s the same to them.’

‘Miss Ryle comes? She’s beautiful, I think; don’t you?’

‘Now am I a judge? Well, yes, I think Peggy’s attractive.’



‘Oh, you’re all hypocrites! Well, you must think me attractive too, or I won’t come.’

It was a long while since Airey Newton had been flirted with. He recognised the process, however, and did not object to it; it also appeared to him that Trix did it very well.

‘If you come, I shall think you most attractive.’

Trix relapsed into sincerity and heartiness. ‘I’ve enjoyed coming awfully,’ she said. Airey found the sincerity no less attractive. ‘I shall think about you.’

‘From the midst of the whirl?’

‘Yes, from the midst of the whirl! Good-bye.’

She left behind her a twofold and puzzling impression. There was the woman of the world, with airs and graces a trifle elaborate, perhaps, in their prettiness, the woman steeped in society, engrossed with its triumphs, fired with its ambitions. But there had been visible from time to time, or had seemed to peep out, another woman, the one who had come to see her friend, had felt the need of talking it all over with him, of sharing it and getting sympathy in it, and who had in the end dropped her graces and declared with a frank heartiness that she had enjoyed coming ‘awfully.’ Airey Newton pulled his beard and smoked a pipe over these two women, as he sat alone. With some regret he came to the conclusion that as a permanent factor, as an influence in guiding and shaping Trix Trevalla’s life, the second woman would not have much chance against the first. Everything was adverse to the second woman in the world in which Trix lived.

And he had sent her to that world? So she declared, partly in mockery perhaps, enjoying the incongruity of the idea with his dull life, his dingy room, his shabby coat. Yet he traced in the persistence with which she had recurred to the notion something more than mere chaff. The idea might be fanciful or whimsical, but there it was in her mind, dating from their talk at Paris. Unquestionably it clung to her, and in some vague way she based on it an obligation on his part, and thought it raised a claim on hers, a claim that he should not judge her severely or condemn the way she lived; perhaps, more vaguely still, a claim that he should help her if ever she needed help.

---

## CHAPTER V.

## THE WORLD RECALCITRANT.

BEAUFORT Chance was no genius in a drawing-room—that may be accepted on Lady Blixworth's authority. In concluding that he was a fool in the general affairs of life she went beyond her premises and her knowledge. Mrs. Bonfill, out of a larger experience, had considered that he would do more than usually well; he was ingenious, hard-working, and conciliatory, of affable address and sufficient tact; Mrs. Bonfill seemed to have placed him with judgment, and Mr. Dickinson (who led the House) was content with his performances. Yet perhaps after all he was, in the finest sense of the term, a fool. He could not see how things would look to other people, if other people came to know them; he hardly perceived when he was sailing very near the wind; the probability of an upset did not occur to him. He saw with his own eyes only; their view was short, and perhaps awry.

Fricker was his friend; he had bestowed favours on Fricker, or at least on Fricker's belongings, for whose debts Fricker assumed liability. If Fricker were minded to repay the obligation, was there any particular harm in that? Beaufort could not see it. If, again, the account being a little more than squared, he in his turn equalised it, leaving Fricker's kindness to set him at a debit again, and again await his balancing, what harm? It seemed only the natural way of things when business and friendship went hand in hand. The Frickers wanted one thing, he wanted another. If each could help the other to the desired object, good was done to both, hurt to nobody. Many things are private which are not wrong; delicacy is different from shame, reticence from concealment. These relations between himself and Fricker were not fit subjects for gossip, but Beaufort saw no sin in them. Fricker, it need not be added, was clearly, and even scornfully, of the same opinion.

But Fricker's business affairs were influenced, indeed most materially affected, by what the Tsar meant to do, and by one or two kindred problems then greatly exercising the world of politics, society, and finance. Beaufort Chance was not only in the House, he was in the Government. Humbly in, it is true, but actually. Still, what then? He was not in the Cabinet. Did he know secrets? He knew none; of course he would never



have used secrets or divulged them. Things told to him, or picked up by him, were *ex hypothesi* not secrets, or he would never have come to know them. Fricker had represented all this to him, and, after some consideration and hesitation, Fricker's argument had seemed very sound.

Must a man be tempted to argue thus or to accept such arguments? Beaufort scorned the idea, but, lest he should have been in error on this point, it may be said that there was much to tempt him. He was an extravagant man; he sat for an expensive constituency; he knew (his place taught him still better) the value of riches—of real wealth, not of a beggarly competence. He wanted wealth and he wanted Trix Trevalla. He seemed to see how he could work towards the satisfaction of both desires at the same time and along the same lines. Mervyn was his rival with Trix—every day made that plain. He had believed himself on the way to win till Mervyn was brought on the scene—by Mrs. Bonfill, whom he now began to hate. Mervyn had rank and many other advantages. To fight Mervyn every reinforcement was needed. As wealth tempted himself, so he knew it would and must tempt Trix; he was better informed as to her affairs than Mrs. Bonfill, and shared Lady Blixworth's opinion about them.

Having this opinion, and a lively wish to ingratiate himself with Trix, he allowed her to share in some of the benefits which his own information and Fricker's manipulation of the markets brought to their partnership. Trix, conscious of money slipping away, very ready to put it back, reckless and ignorant, was only too happy in the opportunity. She seemed also very grateful, and Beaufort was encouraged to persevere. For a little while his kindness to Trix escaped Fricker's notice, but not for long. As soon as Fricker discovered it, his attitude was perfectly clear and, to himself, no more than reasonable.

'You've every motive for standing well with Mrs. Trevalla, I know, my dear fellow,' said he, licking his big cigar and placing his well-groomed hat on Beaufort's table. 'But what motive have I? Everybody we let in means one more to share the—the profit—perhaps, one might add, to increase the risk. Now why should I let Mrs. Trevalla in? Any more than, for instance, I should let—shall we say Mrs. Bonfill—in?' Fricker did not like Mrs. Bonfill since she had quailed before Viola Blixworth.

'Oh, if you take it like that!' muttered Beaufort crossly.

‘I don’t take it any way. I put the case. It would be different if Mrs. Trevalla were a friend of mine or of my family.’

That was pretty plain for Fricker. As a rule Mrs. Fricker put the things plainly to him, and he transmitted them considerably disguised and carefully wrapped in his dry humour. On this occasion he allowed his hint to be fairly obvious; he knew Beaufort intimately by now.

Beaufort looked at him, feeling rather uncomfortable.

‘Friends do one another good turns; I don’t go about doing them to anybody I meet, just for fun,’ continued Fricker.

Beaufort nodded a slow assent.

‘Of course we don’t bargain with a lady,’ smiled Fricker, thoughtfully flicking off his ash. ‘But, on the other hand, ladies are very quick to understand. Eh, Beaufort? I daresay you could convey——?’ He stuck the cigar back into his mouth.

This was the conversation that led to the little dinner-party hereinbefore recorded; Fricker had gone to it not doubting that Trix Trevalla understood; Mrs. Fricker did not doubt it either when Trix had been so civil in the drawing-room. Trix herself had thought she ought to be civil, as has been seen; it may, however, be doubted whether Beaufort Chance had made her understand quite how much a matter of business the whole thing was. She did not realise that she, now or about to be a social power, was to do what Lady Blixworth would not and Mrs. Bonfill dared not—was to push the Frickers, to make her cause theirs, to open doors for them, and in return was to be told when to put money in this stock or that, and when to take it out again. She was told when to do these things, and did them. The money rolled in, and she was wonderfully pleased. If it would go on rolling in like this, its rolling out again (as it did) was of no consequence; her one pressing difficulty seemed in a fair way to be removed. Something she did for the Frickers; she got them some minor invitations, and asked them to meet some minor folk, and thought herself very kind. Now and then they seemed to hint at more, just as now and then Beaufort Chance’s attentions became inconveniently urgent. On such occasions Trix laughed and joked and evaded, and for the moment wriggled out of any pledge. As regards the seemliness of the position, her state of mind was very much Beaufort’s own; she saw no harm in it, but she did not talk about it; some people were stupid, others malicious. It was, after all, a private concern. So she said



nothing to anybody—not even to Mrs. Bonfill. There was little sign of Airey Newton's 'second woman' in her treatment of this matter; the first held undivided sway.

If what the Tsar meant to do and the kindred problems occupied Fricker in one way, they made no less claim on Mervyn's time in another. He was very busy in his office and in the House; he had to help Lord Glentorly to persuade the nation to rely on him. Still he made some opportunities for meeting Trix Trevalla; she was always very ready to meet him when Beaufort Chance and Fricker were not to the fore. He was a man of methodical mind, which he made up slowly. He took things in their order, and gave them their proper proportion of time. He was making his career. It could hardly be doubted that he was also paying attentions, and it was probable that he meant to pay his addresses, to Trix Trevalla. But his progress was leisurely; the disadvantages attaching to her perhaps made him slower, even though in the end he would disregard them. In Trix's eyes he was one or two things worse than leisurely. He was very confident and rather condescending. On this point she did speak to Mrs. Bonfill, expressing some impatience. Mrs. Bonfill was sympathetic as always, but also, as always, wise.

'Well, and if he is, my dear?' Her smile appealed to Trix to admit that everything which she had been objecting to and rebelling against was no more than what any woman of the world would expect and allow for.

Trix's expression was still mutinous. Mrs. Bonfill proceeded with judicial weightiness.

'Now look at Audrey Pollington—you know that big niece of Viola's? Do you suppose that, if Mortimer paid her attentions, she'd complain of him for being condescending? She'd just thank her stars, and take what she could get.' (These very frank expressions are recorded with an apology.)

'I'm not Audrey Pollington,' muttered Trix, using a weak though common argument.

There are moments when youth is the better for a judicious dose of truth.

'My dear,' remarked Mrs. Bonfill, 'most people would say that what Audrey Pollington didn't mind, you needn't.' Miss Pollington was grand-daughter to a duke (female line), and had a pretty little fortune of her own. Mrs. Bonfill could not be held wrong for seeking to temper her young friend's arrogance.

‘It’s not my idea of making love, that’s all,’ said Trix obstinately.

‘We live and learn.’ Mrs. Bonfill implied that Trix had much to learn. ‘Don’t lose your head, child,’ she added warningly. ‘You’ve made plenty of people envious. Don’t give them any chance.’ She paused before she asked, ‘Do you see much of Beaufort now?’

‘A certain amount.’ Trix did not wish to be drawn on this point.

‘Well, Trix?’

‘We keep friends,’ smiled Trix.

‘Yes, that’s right. I wouldn’t see too much of him, though.’

‘Till my lord has made up his mind?’

‘Silly!’ That one word seemed to Mrs. Bonfill sufficient answer. She had, however, more confidence in Trix than the one word implied. Young women must be allowed their moods, but most of them acted sensibly in the end; that was Mrs. Bonfill’s experience.

Trix came and kissed her affectionately; she was fond of Mrs. Bonfill and really grateful to her; it is possible, besides, that she had twinges of conscience; her conversations with Mrs. Bonfill were marked by a good deal of reserve. It was all very well to say that the matters reserved did not concern Mrs. Bonfill, but even Trix in her most independent mood could not feel quite convinced of this. She knew—though she tried not to think of it—that she was playing a double game; in one side of it Mrs. Bonfill was with her and she accepted that lady’s help; the other side was sedulously hidden. It was not playing fair. Trix might set her teeth sometimes and declare she would do it, unfair though it was; or more often she would banish thought altogether by a plunge into amusement; but the thought and the consciousness were there. Well, she was not treating anybody half as badly as most people had treated her. She hardened her heart and went forward on her dangerous path, confident that she could keep clear of pitfalls. Only—yes, it was all rather a fight; once or twice she thought of Danes Inn with a half-serious yearning for its quiet and repose.

Some of what Mrs. Bonfill did not see Lady Blixworth did—distantly, of course, and mainly by putting an observed two together with some other observed but superficially unrelated two—a task eminently congenial to her mind. Natural inclination was quickened by family duty. ‘I wish,’ Lady Blixworth said, ‘that



Sarah would have undertaken dear Audrey; but since she won't, I must do the best I can for her myself.' It was largely with a view to doing the best she could for Audrey that Lady Blixworth kept her eye on Trix Trevalla—a thing of which Trix was quite unconscious. Lady Blixworth's motives command respect, and it must be admitted that Miss Pollington did not render her relative's dutiful assistance superfluous. She was a tall handsome girl, rather inert, not very ready in conversation. Lady Blixworth, who was never absurd even in praise, pitched on the epithet 'statuesque' as peculiarly suitable. Society acquiesced. 'How statuesque Miss Pollington is!' became the thing to say to one's neighbour or partner. Lady Blixworth herself said it with a smile sometimes; most people, content as ever to accept what is given to them, were grave enough.

Audrey herself was extremely pleased with the epithet, so delighted, indeed, that her aunt thought it necessary to administer a caution.

'When people praise you or your appearance for a certain quality, Audrey dear,' she observed sweetly, 'it generally means that you've got that quality in a marked degree.'

'Yes, of course, Aunt Viola,' said Audrey, rather surprised but quite understanding.

'And so,' pursued Aunt Viola in yet more gentle tones, 'it isn't necessary for you to cultivate it consciously.' She stroked Audrey's hand with much affection. 'Because they tell you you're statuesque, for instance, don't try to go about looking like the Venus of Milo in a pair of stays.'

'I'm sure I don't, Auntie,' cried poor Audrey, blushing piteously. She was conscious of having posed a little bit as Mr. Guise, the eminent sculptor, passed by.

'On the contrary, it does no harm to remember that one has a tendency in a certain direction; then one is careful to keep a watch on oneself and not overdo it. I don't want you to skip about, my dear, but you know what I mean.'

Audrey nodded rather ruefully. What is the good of being statuesque if you may not live up to it?

'You aren't hurt with me, darling?' cooed Aunt Viola.

Audrey declared she was not hurt, but she felt rather bewildered.

With the coming of June, affairs of the heart and affairs of the purse became lamentably and unpoetically confounded in Trix

Trevalla's life and thoughts. Mrs. Bonfill was hinting prodigiously about Audrey Pollington; Lady Blixworth was working creditably hard, and danger undoubtedly threatened from that quarter. Trix must exert herself if Mervyn were not to slip through the meshes. On the other hand, the problems were rather acute. Lord Farringham had been decidedly pessimistic in a speech in the House of Lords, Fricker was hinting at a great *coup*, Beaufort Chance was reminding her in a disagreeably pressing fashion of how much he had done for her and of how much he still could do. Trix had tried one or two little gambles on her own account and met with serious disaster; current expenses rose rather than fell. In the midst of all her gaiety Trix grew a little careworn and irritable; a line or two showed on her face; critics said that Mrs. Trevalla was doing too much, and must be more careful of her looks. Mrs. Bonfill began to be vaguely uncomfortable about her favourite. But still Trix held on her way, her courage commanding more admiration than any other quality she manifested at this time. Indeed she had moments of clear sight about herself, but her shibboleth of 'revenge' still sufficed to stiffen, if not to comfort her.

Some said that Lord Farringham's pessimistic speech was meant only for home consumption, the objects being to induce the country to spend money freely and also to feel that it was no moment for seeking to change the Crown's responsible advisers. Others said that it was intended solely for abroad, either as a warning or, more probably, as an excuse to enable a foreign nation to retire with good grace from an untenable position. A minority considered that the Prime Minister had perhaps said what he thought. On the whole there was considerable uneasiness.

'What does it all mean, Mr. Fricker?' asked Trix, when that gentleman called on her, cool, alert, and apparently in very good spirits.

'It means that fools are making things smooth for wise men, as usual,' he answered, and looked at her with a keen glance.

'If you will only make them plain to one fool!' she suggested with a laugh.

'I presume you aren't interested in international politics as such?'

'Not a bit,' said Trix heartily.

'But if there's any little venture going——' He smiled as he tempted her, knowing that she would yield.



‘You’ve been very kind to me,’ murmured Trix.

‘It’s a big thing this time—and a good thing. You’ve heard Beaufort mention the Dramoffsky Concessions, I daresay?’

Trix nodded.

‘He’d only mention them casually, of course,’ Fricker continued with a passing smile. ‘Well, if there’s trouble, or serious apprehension of it, the Dramoffsky Concessions would be blown sky-high—because it’s all English capital and labour, and for a long time anyhow the whole thing would be brought to a standstill, and the machinery all go to the deuce, and so on.’

Again Trix nodded wisely.

‘Whereas, if everything’s all right, the Concessions are pretty well all right too. Have you noticed that they’ve been falling a good deal lately? No, I suppose not. Most papers don’t quote them.’

‘I haven’t looked for them. I’ve had my eye on the *Glowing Star*.’ Trix was anxious to give an impression of being business-like in one matter anyhow.

‘Oh, that’s good for a few hundreds, but don’t you worry about it. I’ll look after that for you. As I say, if there’s serious apprehension, Dramoffskys go down. Well, there will be—more serious than there is now. And after that——’

‘War?’ asked Trix in some excitement.

‘We imagine not. I’d say we know, only one never really knows anything. No, there will be a revival of confidence. And then Dramoffskys—well, you see what follows. Now it’s a little risky—not very—and it’s a big thing if it comes off, and what I’m telling you is worth a considerable sum as a marketable commodity. Are you inclined to come in?’

To Trix there could be but one answer. Coming in with Mr. Fricker had always meant coming out better for the process. She thanked him enthusiastically.

‘All right. Lodge five thousand at your bankers’ as soon as you can, and let me have it.’

‘Five thousand!’ Trix gasped a little. She had not done the thing on such a scale as this before.

‘It’s always seemed to me waste of time to fish for herrings with a rod and line,’ observed Fricker; ‘but just as you like, of course.’

‘Does Beaufort think well of it?’

‘Do you generally find us differing?’ Fricker smiled ironically.

'I'll go in,' said Trix. 'I shall make a lot, sha'n't I?'

'I think so. Hold your tongue, and stay in till I tell you to come out. You can rely on me.'

Nothing more passed between them then. Trix was left to consider the plunge that she had made. Could it possibly go wrong? If it did—she reckoned up her position. If it went wrong—if the five thousand or the bulk of it were lost, what was left to her? After payment of all liabilities, she would have about ten thousand pounds. That she had determined to keep intact. On the interest of that—at last the distinction was beginning to thrust itself on her mind with a new and odious sharpness—she would have to live. To live—not to have that flat, or those gowns, or that brougham, or this position; not to have anything that she wanted and loved, but just to live. *Pensions* again! It would come to going back to *pensions*.

No, would it? There was another resource. Trix, rather anxious, a little fretful and uneasy, was sanguine and resolute still. She wrote to Beaufort Chance, telling him what she had done, thanking him, bidding him thank Fricker, expressing the amplest gratitude to both gentlemen. Then she sat down and invited Mervyn to come and see her; he had not been for some days, and, busy as he was, Trix thought it was time to see him, and to blot out, for a season at least, all idea of Audrey Pollington. She reckoned that an interview with her, properly managed, would put Audrey and her ally out of action for some little while to come.

Mervyn obeyed her summons, but not in a very cheerful mood. Trix's efforts to pump him about the problems and the complications were signally unsuccessful. He snubbed her, giving her to understand that he was amazed at being asked such questions. What then was Beaufort Chance doing, she asked in her heart. She passed rapidly from the dangerous ground, declaring with a pout that she thought he might have told her some gossip, to equip her for her next dinner party. He responded to her lighter mood with hardly more cordiality. Evidently there was something wrong with him, something which prevented her spell from working on him as it was wont. Trix was dismayed. Was her power gone? It could not be that statuesque Miss Pollington had triumphed, or was even imminently dangerous?

At last Mervyn broke out with what he had to say. He looked, she thought, like a husband (not like Vesey Trevalla, but



like the abstract conception), and a rather imperious one, as he took his stand on her hearthrug and frowned down at her.

'You might know—no, you do know—the best people in London,' he said, 'and yet I hear of your going about with the Frickers! I should think Fricker's a rogue, and I know he's a cad. And the women!' Aristocratic scorn embittered his tongue.

'Who have you heard it from?'

'Lots of people. Among others, Viola Blixworth.'

'Oh, Lady Blixworth! Of course you'd hear it from her!'

'It doesn't matter who tells me, if it's true.'

That was an annoying line to take. It was easy to show Lady Blixworth's motive, but it was impossible to deny the accuracy of what she said. A hundred safe witnesses would have confounded Trix had she denied.

'What in the world do you do it for?' he asked angrily and impatiently. 'What can Fricker do for you? Don't you see how you lower yourself? They'll be saying he's bought you next!'

Trix did not start, but a spot of colour came on her cheeks; her eyes were hard and wary as they watched Mervyn covertly. He came towards her, and, with a sudden softening of manner, laid his hand on hers.

'Drop them,' he urged. 'Don't have anything more to do with such a lot.'

Trix looked up at him; there were doubt and distress in her eyes. He was affectionate now, but also very firm.

'For my sake, drop them,' he said. 'You know people can't come where they may meet the Frickers.'

Trix was never slow of understanding; she saw very well what Mervyn meant. His words might be smooth, his manner might be kind, and, if she wished it at the moment, ready to grow more than kind. With all this he was asking, nay, he was demanding, that she should drop the Frickers. How difficult the path had suddenly grown; how hard it was to work her complicated plan!

'A good many people know them. There's Mr. Chance——' she began timidly.

'Beaufort Chance! Yes, better if he didn't!' His lips, grimly closing again, were a strong condemnation of his colleague.

'They're kind people, really.'

‘They’re entirely beneath you—and beneath your friends.’

There was no mistaking the position. Mervyn was delivering an ultimatum. It was little use to say that he had no right because he had made her no offer. He had the power, which, it is to be feared, is generally more the question. And at what a moment the ultimatum came! Must Trix relinquish that golden dream of the Dramoffsky Concessions, and give up those hundreds—welcome if few—from the Glowing Star? Or was she to defy Mervyn and cast in her lot with the Frickers—and with Beaufort Chance?

‘Promise me,’ he said softly, with as near an approach to a lover’s entreaty as his grave and condescending manner allowed. ‘I never thought you’d make any difficulty. Do you really hesitate between doing what pleases me and what pleases Chance or the Frickers?’

Trix would have dearly liked to cry ‘Yes, yes, yes!’ Such a reply would, she considered, have been wholesome for Mortimer Mervyn, and it would have been most gratifying to herself. She dared not give it; it would mean far too much.

‘I can’t be actually rude,’ she pleaded. ‘I must do it gradually. But since you ask me, I will break with them as much and as soon as I can.’

‘That’s all I ask of you,’ said Mervyn. He bent and kissed her hand with a reassuring air of homage and devotion. But evidently homage and devotion must be paid for. They bore a resemblance to financial assistance in that respect. Trix was becoming disagreeably conscious that people expected to be paid, in one way or another, for most things that they gave. Chance and Fricker wanted payment. Mervyn claimed it too. And to pay both as they asked seemed now impossible.

Somehow life appeared to have an objection to being played with, the world to be rather unmalleable as material, the revenge not to be the simple and triumphant progress that it had looked.

Trix Trevalla, under pressure of circumstances, got thus far on the way towards a judgment of herself and a knowledge of the world; the two things are closely interdependent.

*(To be continued.)*



*THE LUXURY OF DOING GOOD.*

BENEVOLENCE, said Hobbes, is a love of power and delight in the exercise of it. Strange that so trenchant a definition never provoked from a somewhat self-righteous mankind such protest as was raised by La Rochefoucauld when he laid it down that virtue is for the most part only self-love in disguise. Perhaps mankind felt instinctively that the Frenchman had overstated his case, but had an equally instinctive disinclination to adventure in the defence of disinterested virtue against the position taken up by Hobbes. For, although there exist men and women with whom an actual, positive affection for self is the predominant motive, realised and not merely unconsciously present—men and women who, in whatever they say or do, think not simply of what they are saying or doing, but of the way in which their sensations will be affected by it—yet these persons are rare and exceptional; just as are those others who regulate all their words and works by a kindly thought of some fellow-creature. Action in itself is pleasant; inaction, except by contrast, destitute of pain; and most acts of the ordinary mortal are performed for the perfectly natural satisfaction which attends the accomplishing of any end.

Very low down in the scale of evolution men are impelled to act by the pains and pleasures attending hunger and thirst. Yet even here it is pretty certain that if one savage sees another whittling incompetently at a stick in the endeavour to make a bow, he will take the tool and go to work himself sooner than watch the job bungled. He will not be deterred by the notion that in equipping a rival he sacrifices something of his own superiority, for the excellent reason that the idea will not occur to him. He will want to do the thing just for the sake of doing it right, desiring, so far as he consciously has a desire in the matter, the glow of gratification that attends any successful exhibition of power just as surely as pleasure accompanies the filling of a stomach. In the sphere of life that most of us think about, hunger and thirst have only a theoretical existence. We work, no doubt, in order to get more of the good things of existence, but we work also very largely to let off steam.

It is an axiom of conduct that if you want a thing done you should go to the busiest man of your acquaintance; and we all act upon this maxim without reflecting that it concedes the theory of benevolence put forward by Hobbes. How else should one account for this practical paradox? Is it to be supposed that busy men are more sympathetic than idle ones? Hardly. If you want sympathy, someone to be sorry for you or glad with you, an idle person is the best recipient of your confidence. You will occupy a larger and a more enduring place in his mind. But two things go to make up benevolence—sympathy and energy—and for practical purposes the latter is the more important. It may seem that sympathy lies nearer to the fount of action, and is, therefore, to be ranked as a cause, whereas energy is merely a condition. And this is true in a sense. Stupidity and indolence are the two hindrances to benevolence, and of the two, stupidity—that is, dulness of perception—is the more potent obstacle; for the stupid man will never realise in sympathy the need of help, nor leap to a sight of the means to supply it; whereas the indolent man may be moved by sympathy to shake off his indolence.

But my argument is that most acts of practical benevolence are traceable not to the desire to help, but to the instinct to do. Every energetic man is a reservoir of unexhausted force, for hardly anyone is employed up to the limit of his capacity. No salary will buy the monopoly of a man's power, and very few have so much work to do for themselves that there is no energy left over. Certain pursuits, such as the passionate study of an art, or the business of money-making, when the object is not what money will buy but simply the acquisition of wealth, have power to engross the faculties so far that no object unconnected with the one main purpose will tempt the man to exertion. But these cases are abnormal; and if you go to the ordinary successful busy man with a request for help in a difficulty, you propound to him a practical problem: What is to be done? If he likes you, it will of course give him pleasure to gratify you, but the exertion by which he does so will be pleasant for its own sake. And even if you are perfectly indifferent to him, you will still have propounded a problem to one who has the habit of doing things and the instinct for getting them done. His mind by its very nature and training instantly turns to think of an expedient. He sees something that can be done, and in nine cases out of ten cannot resist what is really an appetite to do it. The surplus energy flows as naturally as water



when you turn a tap. Moreover, it is a positive pain to a capable man to see labour misapplied, capacity going to waste, or a life bungled; and if he interposes, it is often from just the same motive as the savage with the bow; he helps because he cannot endure to see the work being done badly.

It is worth while to emphasise this aspect of benevolence, because so many people, especially in England, dislike the idea of 'giving trouble,' as they call it—but in reality the idea of laying themselves under an obligation. Yet, if they would realise how they themselves would probably welcome the chance of doing a good turn to some acquaintance, there would surely be less of this ungenerous reluctance. It is the sense of obligation which breeds ingratitude; for ingratitude is not merely indifference, but an ill-suppressed malignity. 'I owe him one' is the thought of the ungrateful, and it bears a sinister meaning. The cheerful and natural philosophy of Hobbes would tell us that we have afforded to another human being the delight of exercising the power which he loves, and if we are the gainers by the transaction, why, so is our friend. The other view of the relation degrades benevolence almost to the level of the charity which confers an official merit on the giver and an official stigma on the recipient. Yet the Charity Organisation Society would, I am sure, disclaim all pretension to benevolence, and I am sure that whatever unfortunate person has gone to them for help would amply bear them out in the disclaimer. No right-minded person can feel a pleasure in giving what cannot be accepted without a sense of humiliation, whereas the essence of benevolence lies in giving help which is both given and received with pleasure. The Society I speak of, which stands, on the whole, rightly for the perfected type of scientific almsgiving, concerns itself with strict justice—the administration of the indispensable aid. Benevolence does not look so closely into the title of the person to be helped, does not ask whether he or she has failed to save money, but helps simply for the sake of helping. In this way benevolence is often first-cousin to jobbery; and for jobbery also there is a good word to be said.

Most of the help which is worth giving or getting takes the shape of assisting another person to find work. And that help comes to us chiefly (we are taught to believe) from our connections, but in my own experience of life much more often from our competitors—that is, from those in our own profession. One hears

a great deal of professional jealousies, and very little of professional good-fellowship, yet the latter is in reality a much more potent factor, and for very good reasons. To begin with, of course, every man knows the ropes more or less in his own trade; professional knowledge suggests means to help which would be less evident to an outsider. But this does not account for the willingness to put those means into operation—a willingness which is, nevertheless, quite natural.

The career of each of us is to himself or herself a matter of the most vivid interest; every colour, every shade, every turn in a life is acutely realised by the person who lives it. Yet to the rest of the world, as Mr. Hardy has remarked in more than one page of melancholy comment, each of us is only a passing thought—at best, to our nearest and dearest only a thought of frequent recurrence. The points at which our fortunes are least inadequately realised by our neighbours, at which they assume to others something of the importance that they wear to ourselves, are the points of community. The ambitions, the hopes and fears, of a son who is a barrister must be always somewhat vague to his father, the doctor; but every other barrister is interested by them almost as keenly as a mother by all that relates to her daughter's marriage. That is the cause of professional sympathy—a feeling so strong that for one man who stops to reflect that the profession is already overcrowded, and competition increasing in severity, you shall find twenty who gladly give a hand to the man on a lower rung of the ladder, regardless of the fact that he may one day be jostling them off it. They will remember to put in a word where a word is useful, when another friend with equal opportunities would forget, just because the young man's fortunes resemble their own as one woman's love affairs resemble another's. Professional benevolence is, in short, very nearly allied to matchmaking, and, like nearly all the most lovable traits in human nature, has no claim to be regarded as a disinterested virtue. The healthy-minded energetic man does not stop to consider whether the man he backs is the ideal person for a given employment—he simply desires to get the job for the man whom he is backing; and I have no doubt that the trouble which he will take for almost an absolute stranger is unconsciously prompted by the desire to effectuate his own personality, to utilise some of his spare energy in accomplishing an end with which he has identified himself.



Perhaps it is wrong to deny that this natural propensity of a strong physical and mental constitution ranks or ought to rank as a virtue when it is exercised on behalf of mere friends or acquaintances. But if so, I am sure it should not be condemned as nepotism or jobbery when allowed free play on behalf of kinsfolk. We praise the Scotch for the clannish tendency which they seldom fail to manifest when a Scot is among the candidates for an employment (the Irish, I am glad to say, exhibit something of the same characteristic), yet what is this but the most extended nepotism? Even if we grant that the ideally benevolent man will be too delicate to make interest for himself or his nearest kin, but will wear himself out in the endeavour to serve some stray aspirant who, either by promise of merit or need of help, has excited his sympathy (and I have known such a character), yet it must be urged that the men who go far out of their way to secure good things for their relatives are as a rule the industrious, active men who do service to the world, and are also men who, in default of a relation, will be exceedingly prone to serve a stranger sooner than leave undone a good turn which they see their way to doing. Of course, like all other creditable and harmless propensities, this may be exaggerated into a defect, just as every truth may be pushed into a heresy; but upon the whole nepotism lies nearer to virtue than to vice, and a race or family in whom the instinct of racial benevolence has died out is in extreme danger of dying out itself. But it is superfluous to labour a defence of jobbery. The virtue of nepotism is commended to us by the highest examples—the State and the law lend it illustrious sanction.

On the other hand, there is a kind of benevolence which runs very easily into an odious failing; but it is the sort which popularly figures as an accredited virtue. This is the benevolence which seeks to substitute its own goodwill for its neighbour's possibly very inferior inclination; which is always willing, and even anxious, to help its neighbour, but not as the neighbour desires to be helped. There is no need nowadays—or there should not be—to condemn the other-worldliness which sees in the human beings placed at a disadvantage the occasion for a profitable investment of good works. And yet there are still those who argue that Socialism is impious because it seeks to abolish poverty, whereas we are promised that the poor shall be always with us, to afford stepping-stones to celestial preferment. This,

however, is plainly not benevolence. The benevolence of which I speak is the benevolence of a benevolent despotism—the love of power passing into a tyranny. The respectable Christian who knows a young man bent upon becoming an actor or a journalist, or upon devoting himself to the study of physical science or any other of the pursuits habitually disapproved by respectable Christians, and who offers that young man a stool in his counting-house, may be doing a wise thing, but is not really benevolent. And yet in many cases he talks of black ingratitude because the would-be author or scientist does not thank him for the offer, and perhaps rejects it with contumely. Such, says the respectable Christian, is the reward of benevolence. But benevolence consists in helping your neighbour to attain an end which he desires, not in substituting an end which you would be glad to see him attain by your assistance. Much of the assistance offered with the keenest sense of merit in the offering is about as valuable or appropriate as the ugly sack stitched at a working-party is to the South Sea islander whose harmonious proportions it is designed to conceal. Sometimes the offer is accepted, and, whether it be the sack or the high stool, it seldom does much good to the person who accepts what is foreign to his or her whole nature and desires.

Yet suppose it accepted, and suppose everything turns out well, who is to be grateful? I who accepted, let us say, or you who volunteered the help? I may be grateful for assistance that I sought or desired, but this was none of my seeking. The convention demands that I should feel gratitude, but the morality of the case is very different. To interpolate our personality into the life of another human being is always a liberty, it may be an impertinence; and if the act, however kindly meant, be taken in a friendly spirit, we should be amply contented. We have had the satisfaction of doing what we designed to do; we have probably been thanked for it. But the gratitude that endures should be on our side, for there is no truer truth than that we love those whom we have benefited—another person being converted into a monument of our good deed. But to be angry because someone else will not efface his will to let us have this satisfaction is really iniquitous. Benevolence is not often self-sacrifice—it is always self-realisation; and to attempt to realise ourselves at someone else's expense, to express our own personality by sacrificing our neighbour's, is one of the



wickednesses which not only escape the social stigma, but continually masquerade as virtues.

In short, the luxury of doing good is a luxury, and like all luxuries carries with it a temptation. We cannot do too much good ; but we can easily administer to ourselves too often the pleasant sensation of having done it, neglecting to establish thoroughly the necessary premise that we have administered a pleasurable sensation to others—whether in the present or the future. How often does the sense that we have done good to some other person arise out of a conviction that we have administered to him or to her a sensation the reverse of pleasurable !

STEPHEN GWYNN.

*THE CASE OF GOVERNOR EYRE.*

NEAR the extreme south-east corner of the island of Jamaica, washed by the Caribbean rollers and hemmed in between the sea and the Blue Mountains, lies Morant Bay, a little West Indian township with its houses half-hidden amid cane-fields and cocoa-nut groves. Not far from the shelving beach, its back to the water, stands the Court-house. Adjoining it are a group of buildings, and the square or parade before the steps forms a spacious frontage, upon which several streets converge. Here, on the afternoon of October 11, 1865, an anxious group of British subjects were collected together face to face with one of those crises which from time to time try the mettle of men whose lot is cast among an alien people.

The history of Jamaica needs no telling here. Won from the Spaniards by Cromwell's fleet, governed and enriched by Morgan and his buccaneers, it has shared in the prosperity and decay of the West Indies. The slave trade and the sugar-cane made it, during the eighteenth century, the most flourishing of the King's possessions over-sea, and Rodney, after his great victory had saved it from the French, described it as the first gem in the diadem of England. Emancipation and the equalisation of the sugar duties brought down the planters from wealth to penury. A vast negro population was suddenly, without any preparation or restraint, invested with the full civil rights of English citizens. When a period of prolonged and apparently hopeless industrial depression accompanies such a social upheaval, only a match is needed to kindle the flame of revolution.

All through the early months of 1865 trouble had been brewing in Jamaica. A certain Dr. Underhill, the secretary of the Baptist Missionary Society, had seized the opportunity of a long drought, with its consequent distress, to lay before Mr. Cardwell, the Secretary for the Colonies, a highly coloured memorandum as to the poverty and political grievances of the negroes. This document was sent back from England to the Governor of Jamaica with directions for an inquiry, and its contents were not long in finding their way into the colonial papers. An agitation was set on foot, largely supported by the ministers of the native Baptist con-



nection, meetings were held at which inflammatory speeches were delivered by orators of colour, and appeals to united action were widely circulated. It was notorious that much excitement prevailed among the negroes, but the months passed on and there seemed good reason to hope that the storm would blow over.

On Saturday, October 7, the ordinary court of petty sessions for the parish of St. Thomas-in-the-East was held at Morant Bay. Readers of last month's CORNHILL will not need to be reminded that in Jamaica justice is still administered, as in the rural districts of England, by the local gentry, among whom the 'squire' and the clergyman loom large. On that day the business was mostly of an ordinary description, 'consisting principally of charges of assault and of the use of abusive language,' but the court was unusually crowded and there was much disturbance, culminating in something very like a riot and in the rescue from the police of a negro whose arrest had been ordered by the magistrates.

On the following Monday warrants were issued for the arrest of, amongst others, a certain Paul Bogle, who had taken a leading part in the disturbance and was a man of importance among the negroes of the parish. They were placed in the hands of a black policeman, who started early on the morning of Tuesday, the 10th, with five of his comrades and two rural constables, for Stony Gut, a negro settlement about five miles from Morant Bay, where Paul Bogle's habitation was situated. The warrants were not destined to be executed. Arrived at Stony Gut, the officers of the law were surrounded by a mob of some hundreds of negroes armed with cutlasses, sticks, and pikes. Bogle called on them for help; the police were overpowered, beaten, and only released after a detention of some hours upon taking an oath that from henceforth they would 'join their colour' and 'cleave to the black'; while Bogle openly expressed the intention of leading his men down to Morant Bay on the morrow, and threats were uttered of 'killing all the white men and all the black men that would not join them.'

The news of this outrage and of the threat to march on Morant Bay was not long in reaching Baron von Ketelhodt, a naturalised German who filled the position of Custos of the parish of St. Thomas-in-the-East, an office combining some of the functions of the Lord-Lieutenant of an English county with those of a chairman of quarter sessions. The Baron had incurred some unpopularity among the negroes, and had been stigmatised in an anonymous placard some months previously as 'an unscrupulous and

oppressive foreigner.' He now lost no time, but despatched a letter to Spanish Town begging the Governor for military aid, and as there were no troops in the parish he summoned the Volunteers of the neighbouring district of Bath to assemble early the next morning at Morant Bay. Accordingly, by 8 A.M. on Wednesday, the 11th, the St. Thomas-in-the-East Volunteers, No. 1 company, drawn from the scanty white population, and mustering about twenty strong, were in full march under Captain Hitchens. For all practical purposes they were untrained men; they knew little drill, were barely acquainted with their manual and firing exercises, and were restricted to ten rounds of ball ammunition apiece. When they reached Morant Bay they were joined by nine or ten of the Volunteers of that locality, and finding everything quiet there were allowed by the Custos, after a few preliminary evolutions, to fall out and obtain refreshment.

Meanwhile the vestry, which consisted of certain elected members, coloured as well as white, and of the magistrates who sat *ex officio*, were transacting their routine business, and up till four o'clock in the afternoon it looked as if, after all, there would be no disturbance. Suddenly one of the rector's sons was seen galloping at full speed across the parade, and a cry was raised 'They are coming, they are coming!' The Volunteers had scarcely time to load their muskets and form up in front of the Court-house when the whole open space was filled with a surging mob of negroes armed with cutlasses, sticks, and firearms. The Custos came out on to the steps with the magistrates and vestrymen. His cries of 'Keep peace, go back, keep peace!' were drowned with yells of 'War, war!' Stones were flung from the crowd, Captain Hitchens was struck on the head, an ineffectual effort was made to read the Riot Act, and the order was given to the Volunteers to fire. Some of the rioters fell, but the mob were too close to be checked; the Volunteers were overwhelmed in a moment, some were mortally wounded, others disarmed, and the rest were compelled either to flee or to take refuge in the Court-house with the Custos and the magistrates. Here for a time resistance was maintained, the mob returning the fire with the weapons they had captured, and with showers of stones. One by one the defenders sank down wounded. After a time a cry was heard of 'Burn the brutes out!' The school-house, which adjoined the Court-house, was seen to be on fire, the flames spread to the latter building, and as the roof was beginning to



fall in, the surviving occupants made their way out of the building, hoping, by the aid of the darkness—for it was now night—to conceal themselves in the vicinity. Some few were successful and remained undiscovered till morning, but others were dragged from their hiding-places and beaten to death, or left for dead on the ground. Among those who perished in this miserable fashion were the Custos, Mr. Herschell the curate of the parish, and several of the magistrates and Volunteer officers, together with some of the coloured vestrymen. Altogether eighteen lives were taken and thirty more of the party were wounded, some of them very severely. The town remained in the hands of the rioters, the gaol was broken into and the prisoners released, several stores were attacked, and a considerable quantity of gunpowder was taken.

Later on in the evening, when all was over, Bogle, who throughout the assault had acted as the ringleader, returned to Stony Gut, and there, in the chapel in which he was in the habit of conducting service, returned thanks to God that he 'went to this work and that God had succeeded him in his work.' Early the next morning a party of 200 negroes armed with guns and pikes, and with shells blowing to summon their comrades, proceeded to Coley, a few miles to the north-west of Stony Gut, obtaining fresh adherents as they went, and compelling all they met, under the threat of immediate death, to swear that they would henceforth join the blacks. 'Colour for colour!' was the cry everywhere. Bath was entered by a large party marching in military order, with flags flying and drums beating. The stores in the town were pillaged, and property to a large amount was taken or destroyed, while the few white inhabitants took refuge in the bush. In the course of the next three days the insurgents spread over a tract of country extending from White Horses, a few miles to the west of Morant Bay, to Elmwood, a distance of upwards of thirty miles to the north-east, burning and plundering the houses and estates.

In one or two instances the owners or the managers were murdered, in others they were severely wounded, but in most cases timely warning was given, and the persons who were sought for were able to escape, frequently by the connivance and assistance of faithful black servants. At Blue Mountains, a valuable estate belonging to Sir William Fitzherbert, the white bookkeeper was done to death with cutlasses, but Mr. Beresford Fitzherbert, a young man just arrived from England, was spared,

on the intercession of a coloured overseer, and catching a bare-backed mule, he rode, without saddle or bridle, some thirty miles across the mountains into safety. Meanwhile women and children were cowering in hiding-places in the woods, exposed to hourly apprehensions of a fate worse than death,<sup>1</sup> many of them having already suffered bereavement, and more still in a state of sickening uncertainty as to the safety of those who were dearest to them.

Fortunately, the agony was not of long duration. It will be remembered that on the afternoon of the 10th the ill-fated Baron von Ketelhodt had despatched a letter asking for military aid. On the morning of the 12th, H.M.S. *Wolverine*, under the command of Captain Algernon de Horsey, and with a company of the West India Regiment on board, steamed into Morant Bay. The soldiers were landed and marched through the square, still strewn with maimed and disfigured corpses,<sup>2</sup> and during the course of that day and the next the fugitives, men, women and children, were placed on board the vessel and conveyed to Kingston.

His Excellency John Edward Eyre, the Governor of Jamaica, was a man in the prime of life, and with a prolonged and varied experience in dealing with subject races. Born in August 1815, the son of a Yorkshire clergyman, and the descendant of that gallant Sir Gervase Eyre who held Newark for King Charles against the armies of Meldrum and Willoughby, he owed nothing to fortune or connection. Emigrating to Australia at the age of eighteen, he had thriven and prospered, and was appointed a resident magistrate and Protector of the Aborigines, in which capacity he became known as the consistent and unflinching champion of the natives against the settlers. 'He was too big a dog,' wrote Henry Kingsley, 'to be bayed down by any small bush clique.' He won fame as an explorer by his memorable and fearless journey with a single black companion across the terrible desert from Sydney to Swan River, and in 1846 he was made Lieutenant-Governor of New Zealand under Sir George Grey. Thence he was transferred as Governor to St. Vincent in 1854, and to Antigua in 1859, in each position winning

<sup>1</sup> In or two cases insult was offered, but there is no authenticated case of outrage, though the rioters made no secret as to what the fate of the women would be when their protectors were slain.

<sup>2</sup> Blood-curdling stories were in circulation, and ultimately transmitted to England, of atrocities committed on the bodies of the fallen before life was extinct, but they appear to have had little or no foundation.



golden opinions and maintaining his former reputation for even-handed justice between black man and white. In 1862 he was sent to Jamaica as acting Governor during the absence of Sir Charles Darling, and on the latter's retirement, in 1864, he succeeded him as Governor-in-Chief.

There from the very beginning he found himself at variance with the turbulent and ill-regulated local Legislature, in which the negro element was largely represented. The year 1865 had been calamitous in many ways. Dr. Underhill's lucubrations had added fuel to the flame, and as far back as July the Governor had received warning of an intended negro rising on August 4, and had taken his measures accordingly. Now he was confronted with that most awful of scourges—a Servile war in which colour is pitted against colour. None knew better than he that, though the negro brain is utterly wanting in that power of combination which alone can give reality to what we understand by conspiracy, yet a common grievance and a common end will suddenly transmute themselves into concerted action with appalling rapidity. Where distress and disaffection undoubtedly existed, the least encouragement or show of weakness was certain to be fatal, and it should be borne in mind that in the hundred years immediately preceding the Emancipation Act of 1834 there had been in Jamaica some half-dozen formidable negro risings, in the course of which plantations had been fired and proprietors killed by the score.

On the morning of Wednesday, the 11th, immediately on the receipt of Baron von Ketelhodt's letter, Governor Eyre communicated its purport to the officer commanding the forces in Jamaica, Major-General O'Connor, and requested him to despatch troops to Morant Bay. In the course of the morrow came the news of the rising and massacre. The Governor rode straight into Kingston, and, after hurriedly concerting measures of repression with the military and naval authorities, he summoned his Executive Committee and Privy Council. There was no divergence of opinion as to the necessity for the immediate proclamation of martial law, but under the island constitution it was necessary to obtain the advice and sanction of a so-called 'Council of War.' The next morning, the 13th, that body assembled, comprising the senior naval and military officers, the Governor, and the members of the two branches of the Legislature. A proclamation, drawn up by the Attorney-General, was approved, and it was announced in the Queen's name,

to all whom it may concern, that martial law shall prevail throughout the said county of Surrey, except in the city and parish of Kingston, and that our military forces shall have all power of exercising the rights of belligerents against such of the inhabitants of the said county, except as aforesaid, as our said military forces may consider opposed to our Government and the well-being of our beloved subjects.

The force at the disposal of Major-General O'Connor was certainly not excessive. Rather more than 500 regular soldiers drawn from the 1st West India Regiment and the 2nd battalion of the 6th Foot, together with one or two field guns under the care of an artillery subaltern, represented all that was available for the repression of the rebellion, leaving another 500 for the protection of an island with an area of 4,193 square miles, much of which consisted of mountain fastnesses or dense jungles with few facilities for intercommunication, and with a population in the ratio of 350,000 blacks to 13,000 whites. Besides this, however, were the officers and bluejackets of the *Wolverine*, the *Onyx*, and the *Aurora*, some hastily-enrolled Volunteers and the town pensioners, while as a last resort were the Maroons, a strange wild race, the descendants of the slaves held in bondage by the Spaniards when the island was taken from them in 1658. The Maroons had retreated to the mountains, they had never been reduced to slavery by the English, they had warred against them and made peace with them time out of mind, and they had never intermarried or mingled with the negro population, by whom they were held in great awe. To call out, arm, and enroll these men was a desperate experiment, but it has had many parallels in our history, and on this occasion it was completely successful. It is not too much to say that the fate of Jamaica rested for the moment on the loyalty of the Maroons.

The object of the Governor was to hem in the insurgents between the mountains and the eastern coast, and thus prevent them from effecting raids in the central, western, and northern districts of the island. Aably carried out by the military and naval authorities, his plans were completely successful. The area of disturbance was strictly confined to the seat of the original outbreak, the refugees were promptly extricated from their perilous position, and the insurgent negroes, equally surprised and cowed by the arrival of the troops, slunk away without offering more than the shadow of an armed resistance. Paul Bogle, on whose head had been set a reward of four thousand dollars, was captured by the Maroons, handed over to the military, and promptly hanged. On October 30 it was formally announced



by the Governor that the rebellion had been subdued, and that the chief instigators and actors therein had been visited with condign punishment.

As to the severity of the punishment, indeed, there could be no two opinions. During the thirty days for which martial law extended over the county of Surrey, 439 negroes were either shot down or executed, sometimes with, sometimes without the formality of a trial, and over 600, amongst whom were included a number of women, were flogged, in some cases with revolting cruelty. Due allowance must be made for the soldiers, few in number amidst an overwhelming population, acting in small detachments where it was difficult to keep prisoners, and with the memories of the Indian Mutiny still fresh in their minds. For the first two or three days after the murders at the Court-house the fate of Jamaica was trembling in the balance, and it was idle to expect any great self-restraint on the part of those engaged in repressing the insurrection. But it is impossible to resist the conclusion that the reign of terror was continued long after it had ceased to have any justification, that proper discrimination was not always used in sifting the innocent from the guilty, that many perished who had no connection with the rising, and that the number of hangings and floggings was grossly in excess of the requirements of the emergency. The youth and inexperience of the ensigns and naval lieutenants who sat on many of the courts-martial that dealt out such heavy measure with so free a hand were unfortunate circumstances, though it was afterwards held by the Royal Commission 'that in the great majority of cases the evidence seems to have been unobjectionable in character and quite sufficient to justify the finding of the Court,' and justice was done to the manner and deportment of the officers themselves. On the other hand, unfortunately several of them, and those not the youngest, placed on record their own condemnation by the reckless levity and brutality in which by speech and on paper they described their actions towards the negroes. The British fighting man is not always a felicitous letter writer, nor does he always measure his words with accuracy or calculate their effect upon the public; but it is extraordinary that the military authorities on the island should not only have passed these deplorable documents without censure, but should actually have transmitted them home.

In the suppression of the rebellion and in these wholesale

measures of retribution the Governor took no share, though he fully accepted the responsibility for the acts of his subordinates. Having once placed the safety of the white inhabitants in the hands of the military, he refrained from interference. But in one conspicuous case he played a part which was destined to embitter his whole future life. George William Gordon was a coloured man of education and intelligence, owning considerable landed property in the parish of St. Thomas-in-the-East, which he represented in the House of Assembly, as well as at Kingston and in other parts of the island. He was a member of the 'Native Baptists,' and had recently ordained as a deacon in that community Paul Bogle, who was his intimate correspondent or friend. He had taken great interest in the parochial affairs of St. Thomas, and had been at one time appointed churchwarden, but his adhesion to the Baptists was held to disqualify him for that office. He had been removed from the vestry by Baron von Ketelhodt, the Custos, had subsequently brought an unsuccessful action against him, and was known to cherish bitter resentment against the Baron, against Mr. Herschell, and the local magistracy generally. It should be added that his estates were heavily mortgaged, and his financial affairs deeply involved.

All through the spring and summer of 1865 Gordon had taken a leading part in the agitation which followed upon the publication of Dr. Underhill's memorandum, and he had used language of a highly inflammatory and vindictive nature both towards the Government and the Governor. On October 11 Gordon was far away from the scene of the massacre, being on his property at Cherry Garden, a place near Kingston, where Mr. Froude afterwards stayed on his visit to the West Indies; but when the news of the outbreak and its attendant horrors reached the latter place his name was at once associated in popular speech with the authors of the disturbances, and he was regarded both by friends and foes as being undoubtedly a party to it. He seems to have had news of the massacre at a period which, considering the distance between Morant Bay and Kingston, is difficult to reconcile with entire ignorance of what was in contemplation. Flight was suggested, but he disregarded the advice, adding that if he went to St. Thomas-in-the-East he would be the first man hanged, and on the 14th came into Kingston, which, it will be remembered, was excepted from the proclamation of martial law. On the 17th, while the police were searching unsuccessfully for



him, he went to the house of Major-General O'Connor and gave himself up. The general declined jurisdiction, but at that moment Governor Eyre arrived on the scene, and informed Gordon that he must accompany him on board the *Wolverine*, which was then about to start on a second trip for Morant Bay.

Arrived there, he was put on shore as a prisoner, and on October 21 he was sent by Lieutenant-Colonel Nelson, an officer of considerable service and experience and in command of the troops on the spot, before a court-martial consisting of Lieutenant Brand, R.N., who acted as President, Lieutenant Errington, R.N., and Ensign Kelly, of the 4th West India Regiment. He was charged with furthering the massacre at Morant Bay, 'inciting and advising with certain insurgents, and thereby by his influence tending to cause the riot.' After a six hours' trial he was found guilty and sentenced to death. The finding was confirmed by Colonel Nelson, and forwarded through General O'Connor to Governor Eyre, who replied in writing that he quite concurred in the justice of the sentence and the necessity of carrying it into effect. Gordon was hanged on the morning of October 23 from the centre arch of the ruined Court-house.

The first news of the outbreak reached England on November 3, and caused a thrill of horror. The apprehension and concern were not lessened when fuller particulars of the outrages and excesses of the negroes were furnished by mail on the 13th. On the 17th, however, came the news of the complete suppression of the rising and the execution of Gordon, who was described as the ringleader in the insurrection. It was clear from the first that the repression had been ruthless, and the 'Times' on the following day anticipated that there would be an outcry, and expressed regret that the tone of the officers' letters had not been more guarded. There succeeded a feeling of wonder that an outbreak which had caused such widespread alarm could have been quenched with such ease and rapidity. Then came the tale of the floggings and hangings and burnings of cottages, embellished with all the luxuriance of a tropical imagination, and multiplied far beyond the truth, which, indeed, scarcely needed exaggeration. On the top of all came the violation of the liberty of the subject involved in the removal of Gordon from civil jurisdiction and his trial by court-martial. There was a burst of indignation throughout the land. In a very short time a 'Jamaica Committee' was formed, and meetings were held in London and throughout the provinces,

at which Governor Eyre and his subordinates were denounced in the most unmeasured terms. Speaking at Blackburn on November 30, John Bright did not hesitate to say that if murder had not changed its name and ceased to be a crime, he hoped to see the Governor of Jamaica and his accomplices standing at the Bar for the murder of Gordon.

Associated with the great tribune were Mr. 'Tom' Hughes, then member for Lambeth; Mr. Peter Taylor, member for Leicester, a veteran of the Anti-Corn Law League and an eminent opponent of vaccination; Mr. Frederic Harrison, and Mr. John Stuart Mill, M.P. A large section of the Press took the same line: there was little or no restraint in what the 'Pall Mall Gazette' called 'the brutal and senseless outcry,' and anonymous letters and telegrams of a disgraceful nature were directed to Miss Eyre, who had the temerity to beg, in print, that her brother might not be condemned unheard.

This aspect of the case had few sympathisers among the white population of Jamaica. The Governor's 'prompt forethought, vigorous action, and generous courage' were in the mouths of all. Addresses of gratitude and of confidence poured in from every corner of the island—from every class of society, from the Legislative Council, from the House of Assembly, from the magistracy, and inhabitants of every parish, from grand juries and custodes, from the clergy, from the heads of private families, and from the women, who felt that they owed the Governor an especial debt. Mrs. Stewart, the wife of the Archdeacon, and 2,809 other ladies presented a memorial in which their fervent and heartfelt thankfulness was expressed to his Excellency for saving them, 'their families and their homes, from outrage, desolation, and ruin.'

Our gratitude is enhanced by the sad and solemn recollection, no less of the miseries over which widows, orphans, and other victims of wrong have now to mourn, than of the horrors to which we ourselves had been doomed.

The inhabitants of Jamaica had ever at their door the example of the black republic of Haiti, and the memory of the awful scenes of bloodshed and lust and agony in which the French planters and their families had been exterminated by the negroes in 1793. At the meetings which preceded the Morant Bay rising there had been ominous references to Haiti; and the white population, scattered in isolated and unprotected positions and widely separated from each other, had passed through all the anguish of anticipation. To the planters the trend of feeling at home was equally incom-



prehensible and repellent, just as those excellent and humane people to whom 'massacre, torture, and black despair' are mere idle words can little appreciate the sort of temperament which is engendered where a native rising is an ever-present possibility.

On December 30, 1865, a Royal Commission was issued to inquire into the origin, nature, and circumstances of the 'disturbances' in Jamaica, and 'with respect to the measures adopted in the course of their suppression,' wherein 'it is alleged that excessive and unlawful severity had been used.' The Commissioners appointed were Major-General Sir Henry Storks, a soldier of long military service and considerable experience in civil administration, together with Mr. Russell Gurney, the Recorder of London, and Mr. John Blossett Maule, Recorder of Leeds, both of them barristers of high standing and accustomed to the exercise of judicial functions. The secretary, Mr. C. S. Roundell, also a barrister, and for many years a member of the House of Commons, still survives. It was impossible to disguise the fact that Eyre was practically on his trial before the Commission, and with such a cloud hanging over him his retention of the office of Governor was hardly practicable. He was superseded *pendente lite*, and the senior Commissioner, Sir Henry Storks, took his place.

The labours of the Commission were thorough and exhaustive; 730 witnesses were examined and sixty separate sittings were held between January 25 and March 21, 1866. Governor Eyre gave evidence at great length, besides furnishing an enormous mass of documentary evidence to the Commissioners. It is, I think, impossible to read his examination, whatever view one takes of his actions, without feeling that he bore himself with dignity in a very trying situation, and that he had conducted himself in what he felt to be a great emergency with a single eye to the safety of the people committed to his charge.

The report was despatched from Jamaica on April 9, received in London on the 30th; and five out of its seven clauses contained a complete vindication of the Governor. The Commissioners found:

(1) That the disturbances in St. Thomas-in-the-East had their immediate origin in a planned resistance to lawful authority.

(2) That while the obtaining of land free from rent and a want of confidence in the local tribunals were among the predisposing motives of the rioters, 'not a few contemplated the attainment of their ends by the death or expulsion of the white inhabitants of the island.'

(3) That though the original design was confined to a small portion of the

parish of St. Thomas-in-the-East, the disorder spread with singular rapidity over an extensive tract of country, 'and that such was the state of excitement prevailing in other parts of the island that, had more than a momentary success been obtained by the insurgents, their ultimate overthrow would have been attended with a still more fearful loss of life and property.'

(4) That praise is due to Governor Eyre for the skill, promptitude, and vigour which he manifested during the early stages of the insurrection, to the exercise of which qualities its speedy termination is in a great degree to be attributed.

(5) That the military and naval operations appear to us to have been prompt and judicious.

#### On the other hand :

(6) That by the continuance of martial law in its full force to the extreme limit of its statutory operation the people were deprived for longer than the necessary period of the great constitutional privileges by which the security of life and property is provided for.

(7) That the punishments inflicted were excessive: (a) that the punishment of death was unnecessarily frequent; (b) that the floggings were reckless, and at Bath positively barbarous; (c) that the burning of 1,000 houses was wanton and cruel.

The responsibility for the amount and kind of the punishments thus stigmatised clearly rests with the military authorities, to whom the execution of martial law was delegated. It is equally clear that the responsibility for what the Commissioners regarded as the unnecessary prolongation of martial law, with its consequent severities, lay with the Governor.

To the case of Gordon the Commissioners devoted a separate section of their report. After a careful review of the evidence, they found that though by his words and writings Gordon had probably produced a material effect upon the minds of Bogle and his followers, and did much to produce that excitement and discontent throughout the island which rendered the spread of the insurrection exceedingly probable, yet they could see no sufficient proof either of his complicity in the outbreak at Morant Bay, or of his having been a party to a general conspiracy against the Government. They added their opinion 'that the true explanation of Mr. Gordon's conduct is to be found in the account which he has given of himself: "I have gone as far as I can go, but no further,"' and that though this educated member of the Legislature might know well the distinction between (to use his own words) a "rebellion" and a "demonstration," it would not be so easy to his ignorant and fanatical followers. When we are told that as recently as September 4 he had used the words at a meeting, "We must do as Haiti does," it is difficult to feel any very profound sympathy with him, and the cry of one of the blacks who was being



led to execution, "See what Massa Gordon bring me to," is a melancholy commentary on whatever good intentions Mr. Gordon may have been endowed with.' Yet a case of such gravity demanded a more responsible tribunal than a court-martial consisting of two naval lieutenants and an ensign in a West India regiment.

The publication of the report and the evidence in the form of an enormously bulky Blue-book produced a profound effect, and rekindled the flame of agitation, which had somewhat died down. Whether a strong Ministry could have reinstated Eyre in his post as Governor, and whether after a verdict in which praise and censure were so closely blended they would have been justified, may be doubted. But Lord Russell's Administration was notoriously weak, and the outcry against Eyre raged fiercest among those with whom he could least afford to quarrel. Governor Eyre was recalled. His fall was made as gentle for him as possible by the terms in which the decision was communicated to him; but the blunt fact remained that he was a ruined man, and that his career was over. In May 1866 he quitted the island which, in the opinion of nine-tenths of the white population, he had saved from the horrors of Haiti and St. Domingo, carrying away with him such a tribute of gratitude, regard, and affection as falls to the lot of few colonial Governors.<sup>1</sup>

The Jamaica Committee at home were scarcely more satisfied with what they called the feeble and timid report. As far back as January they had consulted Mr. (afterwards Sir) James Fitzjames Stephen as to the proper steps to take for invoking the law, and they now prepared to act on his opinion. A serious difference, however, soon made itself manifest in their ranks. The majority of the Committee and their supporters were for the immediate prosecution of the ex-Governor and his subordinates on the charge of murdering Gordon. The Government, when interrogated in Parliament, declined to undertake any such proceeding, on the ground that Eyre had been fully convinced of Gordon's guilt and had acted without legal 'malice.' Not deterred by this, the Committee resolved to prosecute, either by themselves or through Mrs. Gordon, and fresh funds were collected and the

<sup>1</sup> It may be added that several months after the Commissioners had come home, and when Eyre's successor, Sir Peter Grant, was firmly in the saddle, a number of trials before the regular civil tribunals proved much more premeditation in the outbreak than had come out before the Commissioners, and sentences of great severity were awarded by the Courts.

meetings renewed through the country. Their chairman, however, Mr. Buxton, M.P. for East Surrey, resigned his position and seceded from the Committee, followed by several others who held with him that criminal proceedings were bound to fail and would result in a triumph to the accused, and that they might rest content with the recall and disgrace of the Governor.

A final effort, however, was made to induce the Government to follow the wishes of the Jamaica Committee, and on July 31 Mr. Buxton moved a series of resolutions deploring the excessive punishments that had been inflicted during the late disturbances, approving the dismissal of Governor Eyre, calling for compensation to the families of the black victims, and for a remission of sentences for all those still undergoing punishments. Lord Russell's Administration had been overthrown on June 18, and Lord Derby reigned in his stead, the Colonial Office being represented in the Commons by Sir Charles Adderley (now Lord Norton), the Under Secretary.

Mr. Buxton's speech was free from the intemperances of the platform, but it contained a powerful and moving recital of the floggings and burnings, a fierce attack on the youngsters who comprised the courts-martial, on the senior officers who approved and confirmed their sentences, and on the 'cold indifference to the anguish of the people exhibited by the Governor.' He made light of the supposed danger to the island, laughed at the idea of conspiracy, and represented the tumult and massacre at Port Morant as an agrarian riot badly handled by the authorities. As was said by Sir Charles Adderley, he picked out of the report of the Commissioners all that censured the Jamaica authorities, and omitted all that praised or excused them. Mr. John Stuart Mill followed with a cold logical argument, in which he expressed his intention of prosecuting Eyre and of establishing 'the great principle of the responsibility to the law of all agents of the Executive for taking human life without justification.'

The burden of opposition fell upon Mr. Cardwell and Mr. W. E. Forster, who had been respectively Secretary and Under Secretary for the Colonies during the period when Eyre's conduct was under investigation. Mr. Forster held that the Governor deserved the censure of the House of Commons, but deprecated the idea of prosecution; and while crediting Eyre with being a humane and conscientious man, said that there were particular circumstances connected with the Jamaica Act which practically



left the Governor no option in declaring martial law. Mr. Cardwell went further, and expressed strong concurrence with all the language used by the Commissioners in Eyre's favour, and pointed to him as a man who, amid universal anxiety and alarm, had retained some portion, at any rate, of his self-possession. The fatal mistake had been, he said, the continuance of martial law for the full period of thirty days. Mr. Russell Gurney rose to asseverate his opinion that while the evidence on which Gordon was condemned might have possibly subjected him to an indictment for sedition, it was totally insufficient to justify a conviction for murder. At the same time he indignantly traversed Mr. Buxton's description of the original outbreak, both as to its origin and gravity, and pointed out how completely the latter had ignored the planned risings, the drillings, the war-cry of 'Colour for colour!' and the significant fact that 'the trash-houses' for crushing the sugar were invariably left standing on the ruined plantations for the use of their future masters.

Mr. Baillie Cochrane (afterwards Lord Lamington) and Colonel North (not the nitrate king, but the member for Oxfordshire) spoke out for Eyre. Mr. Hughes, on the other hand, thought he ought to welcome the opportunity of clearing his character in the dock, and Mr. Ayrton, afterwards famous as Mr. Gladstone's First Commissioner of Works, advocated impeachment, a course which was not likely to commend itself to those who remembered the dreary farce into which the proceedings against Warren Hastings had degenerated. Finally, after Sir Charles Adderley had intimated that both compensation and a revision of sentences were in contemplation, the House passed, without a division, the resolution deploring the excessive punishments, and allowed the others to be withdrawn.

The Jamaica Committee had received somewhat cold encouragement, but it now set to work, under the chairmanship of Mr. Mill, to bring the man whom they regarded as 'the splendid delinquent' to justice. There were many who hoped to see him hang as high as Governor Wall, whom tardy justice had overtaken in 1802 for acts of cruelty committed twenty years before. The recently published letters of John Richard Green record Lady Salisbury's epigram, 'Here is the Eyre, come, let us kill him.'

Meanwhile Eyre's friends had not been idle. When the first mutterings of the storm had become audible, Henry Kingsley, the brilliant writer whose novels have been somewhat eclipsed by a brother's fame, had dwelt on his splendid Australian

record, and described him as a man eminently 'kind, generous, and just.' The author of 'Geoffrey Hamlyn' could speak with some authority, both as to his championship of the natives and his work as an explorer. Sir Roderick Murchison, as the President of the Royal Geographical Society, was no less warm in his praises. And in the 'Daily Telegraph' of December 19, 1865, appeared a letter signed John Ruskin, which, amid much charming irrelevance, protested that the writer had thought better of Mr. Mill and Mr. Hughes 'than that they would countenance this fatuous outcry against Governor Eyre.' 'Let the men,' he added, 'who would now deserve well of England, reserve their impeachments, or turn them from those among us who have saved colonies to those who have destroyed nations.'

But a fiercer fighter than Ruskin was to come on the scene. Brooding in his lonely room at Cheyne Row, the Sage of Chelsea was stirred into a white heat of fury at what he considered the base and ungenerous treatment of Governor Eyre. In characteristic language he branded his recall and prosecution as the 'reward for saving the West Indies and hanging one incendiary mulatto, well worth the hanging if I can judge.' To quote the words of Mr. Froude :

Beaten as he himself was to the ground, he took weapon in hand again, and stood forward with such feeble support as he could find for an unpopular cause in defence of a grossly injured man.

An 'Eyre Defence Committee' was formed in the course of the autumn, and an appeal to the public was made for funds, which was liberally responded to. Carlyle was voted into the chair at the first meeting, and became, with Sir Roderick Murchison, its vice-president. Ruskin and Charles Kingsley were among its leading spirits, and on December 15, 1866, Carlyle sent to Miss Bromley a copy of a speech by the former, and wrote :

While all the world stands tremulous, shilly-shallying from the gutter, impetuous Ruskin plunges his rapier up to the very hilt in the abominable belly of the vast blockheadism, and leaves it staring very considerably.

Carlyle's own metaphor has been often quoted : the captain of a burning ship, by immediate and bold exertion, had put the fire out, and had been called to account for having flung a bucket or two of water into the hold beyond what was necessary. He had damaged some of the cargo, perhaps, but he had saved the ship.

All through the year meetings and counter-meetings were held up and down the country side, and the Press teemed with



letters, argumentative and vituperative. Society was rent asunder much as the French nation over the Dreyfus case, and many of the 'demonstrations' were of a stormy character. There are survivors who remember when a 'knuckle-duster' was part of the equipment of those who held strong views, and were prone to express them to an adverse audience. Governor Eyre himself arrived in England on August 12, and was greeted with a complimentary banquet at Southampton, at which Charles Kingsley was reported to have described his actions in Jamaica as a display of modern chivalry, words which prompted Sir George Trevelyan to write :

Let's rather speak of what was felt by us who value 'Yeast'  
 On learning who had led the chair at that triumphal feast,  
 Where Hampshire's town and county joined a civic wreath to fling  
 O'er him, the great pro-consul, whose renown through time shall ring.  
 . . . . That he who gave our ancient creeds their first and rudest shock,  
 Till half the lads for pattern took his Chartist Alton Locke,  
 . . . . Should teach that 'modern chivalry' has found its noblest egress  
 In burning Baptist villages, and stringing up a negress.

On January 6, 1867, Mr. Stephen applied at Bow Street before Sir Thomas Henry, on behalf of Mr. Mill and Mr. Peter Taylor (the widowed Mrs. Gordon having declined to prosecute), for a warrant against Colonel Nelson and Lieutenant Brand on the charge of having wilfully murdered George William Gordon, and after a good deal of evidence and a learned legal argument, the accused were committed for trial at the Central Criminal Court. Mr. Stephen was less successful in his application for a warrant against Eyre himself. The latter was residing in Shropshire, at Adderley Hall, and on March 25 Mr. Stephen appeared before a full bench of magistrates at Market Drayton, presided over by Sir Baldwin Leighton, Chairman of Quarter Sessions for the County. The ex-Governor was charged with having been an accessory before the fact to the murder of Gordon; he was represented by the present Lord Chancellor, then Mr. Giffard, and after a prolonged hearing the application was refused, the magistrates being unanimously of opinion that the evidence did not raise a strong or probable presumption of guilt.

At the Old Bailey, on April 10, an indictment for murder was duly preferred against Nelson and Brand. Sir Alexander Cockburn, Lord Chief Justice, himself charged the grand jury in an address which lasted six hours, and is looked upon as the classic judicial utterance on the history, existence, and nature of martial law in England. The points to which he asked the jury to direct their

mind were, whether the accused had jurisdiction to try Gordon, and, if so, was the jurisdiction exercised honestly, or corruptly for the purpose of getting rid of a political opponent. If the jury had any opinion that the jurisdiction to exercise martial law was not satisfactorily made out, or had any doubt whether the accused had acted honestly and faithfully in the discharge of their duties, then the Chief Justice thought it would be the safer course for the jury to 'let the matter go forward.'

The jury ignored the bill, making, however, a formal presentment that it was highly desirable that martial law should be more clearly defined—a recommendation which has gone the way of most presentments.

After this rebuff it was thought by many sympathisers with the Jamaica Committee that enough had been done, and that the wisdom of Mr. Buxton's advice had been justified. Amongst these was Mr. Stephen, who felt, according to his brother and biographer, that to proceed further would look like a vindictive prosecution, and he ceased for the future to act as their counsel, to the no small dudgeon of Mill, who chafed at such want of zeal in the matter.

Nothing daunted, the Committee persisted on their course, and on June 2, 1868, an indictment was brought before a grand jury of Middlesex, in the Court of Queen's Bench, charging Mr. Eyre, in twenty-one counts, with various misdemeanours in connection with the Jamaica rising. They included the maintenance of martial law after the necessity for it had ceased, the removal of Gordon from Kingston, and the causing him to be tried by a court which had no jurisdiction over him, together with the flogging of certain negroes, for which it was alleged he was directly responsible.

Mr. Justice Blackburn, on whom, as senior puisne judge, it devolved to charge the grand jury, put the hypotheses in a somewhat more favourable light to the accused than is to be found in the charge of his chief in the case of Nelson and Brand.

'If the jury thought that Eyre sent Gordon to Morant Bay to hang him because he would be acquitted under the common law and ordinary tribunals,' then it was an act of grave and lawless oppression, and a bill ought to be found at once. But if they should hold, putting themselves as much as possible in the Governor's position, 'that he thought there was a dangerous insurrection and conspiracy spreading throughout the island, and that it was necessary for suppressing it that Gordon should be summarily tried, because there was no time to wait,' then Eyre would be excused, however mistaken, in acting under the powers conferred upon him by the Colonial Legislature for that purpose, and there



should be no bill. Secondly, Was Eyre guilty of that degree of want of care and reasonable calmness and moderation which a man in his position was bound to exercise as to render him criminally responsible ?

The jury found for Eyre on both points by ignoring the bill.

This was the last criminal proceeding to which the ex-Governor was subjected, though he was harassed by a series of civil suits for assault, false imprisonment, &c., the last of which, by a negro named Phillipps, was dismissed in January 1869, the indemnity of the Colonial Legislature being deemed a sufficient estoppel. The Jamaica Committee had ceased to exist by that time, having failed, as Mr. Peter Taylor admitted, in its main object, but 'having procured an authoritative declaration that the law was what they maintained it to be.' And as John Stuart Mill puts it in his 'Autobiography' :

We had given an emphatic warning to those who might be tempted to similar guilt thereafter, that though they might escape the actual sentence of a criminal tribunal, they were not safe against being put to some trouble and expense in order to avoid it.

Of that there can be no doubt, for on July 8, 1872, Parliament voted 4,133*l.* to defray the costs incurred by Mr. Eyre in the various criminal prosecutions instituted against him. The vote, in spite of the fact that the Government were pledged to it by a promise made by their predecessors, was bitterly opposed, and eventually carried by 243 to 130, after a debate in which the whole story of the rising and its suppression was thrashed out again.

With that vote Governor Eyre disappears from history, and his death at Walreddon Manor, near Tavistock, on November 30 last was only a surprise because few imagined him to be still living. In his long retirement he maintained dignified silence on the events which had once convulsed England, and he left his case to the verdict of posterity. As to what that verdict should be men will always differ, as was said by his biographer in the 'Times,' so long as the types of mind represented by Ruskin, Froude, and Carlyle on the one hand, are matched by those of Bright and Mill and Buxton on the other. Whatever his errors of judgment may have been—and they were undoubtedly grave—it seems to me that he saved Jamaica from a terrible civil war, and that he met with but a scant measure of that tolerance and consideration which is the meed of all men who are called upon to act promptly in a moment of great peril.

## A LONDONER'S LOG-BOOK.

## XIII.

ALTHOUGH at the time of writing it is only mid-January, there is a feeling of spring in the air. Our letters from Loamshire report the first crocus of the season in the south garden at Proud-flesh Park; and Tom Topham-Sawyer, sending us a brace of pheasants, remarked with characteristic grace that in this muggy weather nothing would keep, and so he was obliged to clear out his larder. But, though the physical season is thus abnormally mild, there is a certain rigour in the religious atmosphere of Stuccovia, and for its cause we must look back a little. The vicar returned from Torquay just at the end of Advent; but the accumulation of Christmas Trees, social gatherings, and Plum-Pudding Services has proved a little too much for even his renovated strength. On the last night of the old year he conducted a novel devotion in church. It was announced as 'voices of eminent preachers, heard through the phonograph, with illustrative comments;' and was so timed that, just as the clock struck twelve, Dr. Liddon was heard saying, in the tone of a half-stified Punch, 'We stand at a division of time: we look backward and we look onwards.' The effect, as the Parish Magazine said, was supernaturally solemn, but the reaction was too much for Soulsby. The pew-opener tells Bertha that he swooned in the vestry, and that, when she pressed a glass of water to his lips and the curate told him to buck up, he only murmured with half-closed eyes—

O, 'tis a burthen, Bumpstead, 'tis a burthen  
Too heavy for a man that hopes for heaven.

When Bertha reported this collapse, Selina observed with acrimony that if Mr. Soulsby would only take Pulsatilla before preaching and Grape-nuts afterwards, perhaps he wouldn't have to desert his parish for six months every year. But Dr. Snuffin, who has in high perfection that faculty of sympathy which is so invaluable in a family physician, likened his patient to a high-bred racer which will go till it drops; and recommended him to lie in bed till ten every morning and to drink a pint of dry champagne with his luncheon and dinner. The churchwardens, the district-



visitors, and the Fishers in Deep Waters, joined in a chorus of warning against 'overdoing it,' and the vicar so far yielded as to call in a good deal of clerical assistance. Father Adderley has more than once swooped down from his high perch in the Marylebone Road; and the Cowley Fathers from Dartmouth Street have been unremitting in their attentions. Hence arises that rigour of which I spoke before as marring the mildness of our religious atmosphere. I have observed that, whether on grounds of reason or of mere prejudice, English people dislike a man in a petticoat—'a woman with a great peard under her muffler'—and though Father Black and Father Waggett have given us the most excellent sermons, their appearance in Stucco Road, which is the part of our parish least touched by ecclesiastical influences, has given rise to unfavourable comment. The minister of the Wesleyan Chapel has preached a discourse on the 'Vestments of Baal,' which has been reported in the local press; and Miss Scrimgeour, a member of the 'Presbyterian Church of England,' whatever that may be, has been distributing from door to door a warning poem (printed at Chelmsford), which lamentably fails to distinguish between our truly Anglican organisations and those of an alien type.

#### THE COMING OF THE MONKS.

Wherefore should they come to England,  
 Companies of banded foes :—  
 Come to England in the open,  
 While their tactics England knows—  
 If their influence is evil  
 Where the legislature ties,  
 What their mischief where their system  
 Legislative law defies ?  
 Freedom ! ! Aye, aye, give them freedom  
 Such as we and ours may claim,  
 In the ranks of social labour  
 To uphold an honest name  
 But I know not, oh, I know not  
 Where is England's common sense,  
 That she lets her halls to traitors  
 And ignores her own defence.  
 Is it not enough that lately  
 Up and down the land has sprung  
 Locked and barred and bolted buildings  
 For the hiding of our young ?  
 Many a father would have sooner  
 Parted with his household stuff ;  
 Many a mother's heart is broken—  
 Tell me, is it not enough ?

Do we want our boys to wither  
 'Neath a monasteric blight ;  
 With the priestly bands around them  
 And the Bible out of sight ?  
 Should we swell the list of voters,  
 Who at touch of foreign spring,  
 Through the ballot could endanger  
 The position of our king ?

Wherefore should they come to England ?  
 Wherefore should their haunts be free  
 From the government inspector,  
 In this land of liberty ?  
 And since nuns are noted beggars,  
 How does English law avail,  
 While these bold bag-carrying spinsters  
 All escape the common gaol ?

An alarmist ! aye, I know it,  
 My opponents know it too ;  
 Know the danger and the duty  
 Of the Protestants they woo :  
 It might rouse us could we witness  
 How they grin behind their cowl,  
 At our ineffectual clearing  
 Of the nest they come to fowl.

O, the sorrow would be lessened  
 If old England did not *know* ;  
 But she has the lights of ages  
 Falling on her welcomed foe :  
 God sends night to those who love it,  
 And our warnings men will note,  
 When the papacy in England  
 Takes her hostess by the throat.

'This is eloquence,' said Queen Caroline, when Jeanie Deans had made an end of pleading for her sister. 'This is eloquence' cried many a Stuccovian Protestant, when he pictured the British father 'parting with his household stuff' to save his son. The scene of the Papacy taking her hostess by the throat seemed to suggest a woodcut for the 'Police News.' The thought of our monastic preachers 'grinning' at us 'behind their cowl' was excessively annoying ; and, as an excuse for not giving is always welcome, our front doors have been rudely banged in the face of the 'bold bag-carrying spinsters' from the convent in Stucco Vale.

To what lengths this religious rigour would have gone, and how far it would have frozen the stream of neighbourly goodwill, it skills not now to inquire ; for, before a parochial crisis had



time to arise, a sudden scare of smallpox has recalled our attention to the secular sphere. As long as the disease confined its ravages to Camberwell and Poplar we regarded it with philosophic calm.

We bore their sufferings with such equanimity  
That everyone exclaimed, 'What magnanimity!'

We agreed that sanitation was everything—that if people would live in filth they must expect disease; and as Stuccovia is a remarkably clean and airy district we felt that virtue was its own reward. But one fine day a case was reported from Stucco Gardens Mews, and in an instant the whole spirit of the place was changed. How the disease had made its way into so well-regulated a parish we shall never know; and indeed the sceptical are inclined to believe that it has never been within five miles of our sacred precincts. But undoubtedly one of the district visitors found a child with a rash, and insisted on calling in Dr. Snuffin, who, with disinterested zeal for the public health, told all his patients that they must at once be revaccinated. Marvellous was the result of this ukase. Selina, who, since she took to unauthorised systems of medicine, has poured scorn on vaccination as a disgusting and archaic superstition, not only was vaccinated herself, but caused a domestic revolution by insisting that all the servants should follow suit. Muggins, the dingy retainer, had been deeply pitted with the disease in infancy, but this availed him nothing against Selina's sanitary zeal; and the cook, who will never see sixty again, pleaded in vain the case, well known to her, of a young person at Friller's, the great dress-maker's, who 'ad such a harm through bein' done that it 'ad to be cut hoff above the elber.'

Mr. Soulsby preached a mystical sermon on the Golden Calf, interpreting it as prophetic of that most beneficent boon of science which will be immortally associated with the name of Jenner; and fainted three times when subjected to the process. Mr. Barrington-Bounderley, laudably anxious to set a good example to his constituents, goes about with a red ribbon tied round the arm of his astrachan coat. Dr. Snuffin, whose horses have hitherto been a little touched in the wind or else afflicted with string-halt, and were presumably bought cheap in consideration of those infirmities, has now broken out into a pair of steppers; and a grand piano has been seen going in at his drawing-room window.

Young Bumpstead 'took' rather badly, and carries his left arm in a sling. Having been recommended by Snuffin to take it easy for a day or two, he spends most of his time in our dining-room, where his contests with Bertha at Ping-Pong are Homeric, and have led to betting. Bertha is a capital hand at all athletic exercises. She rides, rows, skates, swims, and cycles, has won the Loamshire Annual Prize for lawn-tennis, and captains a girls' golf club. When she is staying in Stuccovia she rather misses these accustomed exercises, and Ping-Pong is the only substitute which our resources provide. Selina, indeed, has a certain contempt for bodily prowess. She likes games which, as she says, 'involve a little mind,' and when I seek to renew my youth by playing croquet she professes that she can see nothing to admire in a fat man trying to squeeze a big ball through a narrow hoop, though, to be sure, it is better than bowls. 'My dear Robert, if you were such a goose as to stoop double directly after dinner you would die no other death.' That a bosom which harbours these sentiments should have melted towards Ping-Pong is, I am convinced, partly due to the influence of fashion. My Selina loves to keep abreast with what Soulsby calls 'the great mundane movement.' She has heard that Lord Salisbury and the Bishop of London played Ping-Pong when they met at Sandringham the other day, and (though she expressed a high-sniffing contempt for such nonsense when she first read it) I am persuaded that this paragraph from 'Classy Cuttings' was not without its effect upon her mind. It has been suggested by unfriendly critics of the game that the language is ironical; but Selina, who has all the admirable gravity of her sex, takes it 'at the foot of the letter.'

Conferences about political party matters, about the settlement of the Boer War, about education, and the housing of the working classes are no doubt all very well in their way. They may be useful, of course, and for those who are interested in such matters they may have their importance. But the really momentous question of the day is, How can we best promote the interests of the great Ping-Pong movement? How can the game be most widely popularised? What can be done to add interest to it, and to bring the rules by which it is governed into closer harmony with the eternal principles of right and justice? Some of the greatest of living authorities, and many of the most gifted and accomplished players in the British Empire, have, I understand, been sitting in solemn conclave for the discussion of imperatively needed changes in the laws of the game, and anxiously debating proposals for some sort of national federation. It seems probable therefore that Ping-Pong is about to enter on a new phase of interest and importance, and that upper and middle-class society will have less time and attention to bestow on such troublesome and unpleasant matters as the South African War and the evils of the drink-trade.



Selina does not herself play Ping-Pong, though she is all in favour of it for the young and thoughtless. Her own brow wears a preoccupied air, and there is that in her manner and bearing which assures me that her mind is big with solemn purposes.

Lord Beaconsfield, when he depicted the high-born damsels of Muriel Towers brushing their hair at night, broke off with the quaint *aposiopesis*,—‘But we must not profane the mysteries of Bona Dea.’ I am much too cautious to commit myself to any original observations about woman’s dress; but I am conscious of an impalpable feeling in the air which portends some startling development. Just a year ago, a loyal population was plunged into mourning; and, though Selina really looks her best in black, and was once told with amiable frankness by dear old Lady Farringford, that she ‘was a fright in yaller,’ I have for some time been aware that she was growing restive under the discipline of twelve months’ sombreness. Bertha frankly revels in bright colours, and, if left to her own devices, would bedizen herself like a macaw. For my own part, these concerns do not touch me, as long as my women-kind confine their operations to Stuccovia; but occasionally our old friends of the County or the world remember us, and then I have to escort my wife and sister-in-law into a more formidable society. I confess to anxious moments when I see the lost companions of my youth gazing critically at Selina’s gown, or hear them whispering that Bertha isn’t a bad-looking girl, but her clothes look as if they had come out of a rag-bag. Splendour we cannot attain; but a chaste sobriety of apparel is within our compass, and I dread experiments in millinery. Judge, therefore, of my consternation when I lately picked up a notice of Friller’s winter sales, and found the following items marked with Selina’s violet ink:

Navy Blue Serge Bolero, trimmed blue and white velvet, with large ermine sailor collar, skirt with box-pleated flounce, and strapped blue and white velvet.

Red Faced Cloth Zouave, fancy strapping of own material, white embroidered cloth collar, facings and cuffs studded with quaint buttons, skirt strapped and studded to match coat.

Mauve Shag Cloth Russian Blouse, collar and facings and cuffs of white cloth, with fancy braid box-pleated skirt.

Ducks-egg Green Coat, faced velvet, and trimmed white braid, *slightly soiled*.

Mauve Hopsac, strapped faced cloth, bolero and skirt stitched and tucked, lined through silk, *slightly soiled*; suitable for *short stout figure*.

Well indeed is it for ardent youth that it cannot foresee its future. ‘Seek not to proticipate,’ is the wisest of warnings. On

that long-distant night at the Loamshire Hunt Ball, when I first learned that I had proposed to Selina and had been accepted by her, I little thought that I should some day have to lead about a wife in a Navy Blue Bolero or a Shag Cloth Blouse; but even less that the developments of time would link me to a 'short stout figure,' in a 'Mauve Hopsac,' or a 'Ducks-egg Green Coat, slightly soiled.'

But, if these things are to be done—as I understand they are—in the light of day, far worse are the deeds of darkness. Under the heading of 'Evening Dresses,' I find that the violet ink has been alarmingly busy. Sympathetic crosses of approbation are prefixed to the succeeding items, while marks of interrogation against the annexed prices indicate a characteristic determination to drive a bargain :

Pink Chiffon Princess Gown, bodice embroidered corals and pearls, handsomely trimmed lace, flowing overtrain. 20 gns.

Black Point d'Esprit gown, baby bodice, trimmed jet and silver sequins, embroidered on cream panne, skirt with 18 net frills in front and wider at back, niched at waist. 18 gns.

Pink Kilted Chiffon Princess Dress, with insertion of ecru lace, black lace applique, pin-boxed velvet poppies. 12 gns.

White soft satin, with lace embroidered violets in baskets and pearls, embroidered sequins, straps of velvet, applique lace and velvet flowers, baby bodice embroidered jet and steel, with primula garniture. 25 gns.

Now if, as I surmise, some at least of these garments are intended for Bertha's wearing, I confess that I deplore the prospect. I cannot believe that the dear girl will look her best in 'Pink Kilted Chiffon,' even though it be enlivened by 'pin-boxed velvet poppies.' The object of dress, I take it, is marriage; and that supreme end of woman will, I believe, be more readily attained by simpler methods. Bertha Topham-Sawyer in a well-cut habit, popping over the Loamshire fences, or tittupping along Rotten Row, is a spectacle as attractive as Die Vernon on her black hunter or Mary of Scotland on 'Rosabelle.' In a home-spun skirt and a red jacket, wielding a golf-club or driving the 'bung' at hockey, she is a figure that might inspire heroes, and is absolutely fatal to susceptible curates. But in a 'baby bodice' and 'flowing overtrain,' 'niched' at the waist, and garnished with primulas, she will, I fear, create a less felicitous impression.

It used, I believe, to be held by that section of English society to which Selina and I by birth belonged that 'frippery was the ambition of a huckster's daughter;' but one cannot live twenty



years in Stuccovia without imbibing something of its spirit. Evil communications with the Cashingtons and the Barrington-Bounderleys corrupt good manners; and for my own part I fancy that, in our narrow sphere, we are experiencing that 'Americanisation of the World' on which Mr. Stead has just expended 164 pages of luscious rhetoric. The American invasion has reached us through Lady Farringford; and here I must be understood as indicating the wife of the present peer. The dear old dowager remains unshaken in the convictions of her youth. To her, Americans are a set of people who talk through their noses, dine with their 'helps,' and drape the legs of their pianos; nor would either argument or eloquence move her from that sure anchorage. But, in spite of these prepossessions, her son, the present Lord Farringford, having partly ruined himself at Newmarket and completed the process at Monte Carlo, has repaired his shattered fortunes by marrying Miss Van Oof of New York, whose father made his millions by the famous 'corner' in canvas-backed ducks. And the new Lady Farringford, being young, pretty, rich, and outspoken, has had a deserved success in London. Her intimacy in the highest quarters, reported in the society journals of New York, provoked from a friend of her youth the sarcastic exclamation, 'What! Sally Van Oof sporting in the lap of Royalty? You bet your last biscuit she'll roll off!' But the prophecy is not yet fulfilled. The dowager, who knows the market value of social commodities as well as most of us, has conveniently forgotten her former sarcasms against Vanderbilts and Astors, and has given tea-parties in honour of her daughter-in-law. Contrary to my expectations, Selina has 'taken immensely' to young Lady Farringford. Even Bertha thinks she is 'rather a dear'; and she has conciliated parochial sympathy by pronouncing Mr. Soulsby 'a lovely man.' But she brings with her an atmosphere of worldliness which I perceive and deplore. Her taste in dress is flamboyant. Her habits of expenditure are difficult to keep pace with. She defies all the social proprieties in which Selina and I were nurtured. And yet she confidently reckons on being invited to the 'courts' which the King and Queen are to hold; and she has just carried off Bertha to Norfolk House to inspect the model of the robes in which she will flaunt at the Coronation.

*THE GIFTS.*

WHENAS my child was ten days old,  
 Beside his tiny cot I laid  
 My slender wedding ring of gold  
 Upon a table white arrayed ;  
 Cakes and fruits moreover,  
 And a piece of silver money,  
 And a pot of mountain honey,  
 Smelling of thyme and clover,  
 And three new almonds therewithin,  
 The Fairy Ladies' grace to win.

So when I knew he soundly slept,  
 As any blossom pink and small,  
 Behind the curtain-fold I crept,  
 And watched to see what should befall ;  
 And presently a brightness  
 About the doorway kindled,  
 So that the firelight dwindled—  
 Then came, all clad in whiteness,  
 The Ladies Three, and stood and smiled,  
 Looking upon my little child.

Then said the first, ' This fruit and cake  
 I claim—that he may hunger sore.'  
 The second said, ' This coin I take—  
 Poverty he shall know therefore.'  
 The third one, reaching over,  
 Took the ring, laughing lightly,  
 ' New sorrows daily and nightly  
 Shall pierce the hapless lover.  
 Now have we left him void and bare  
 Unto the bitter world's cold air !'

Then was I torn 'twixt grief and rage,  
 Whether to curse them there and die,  
 Who robbed my dear's poor heritage,  
 And bid him cold and hungry lie,



Or to kneel down before them,  
 And pray them for repentance  
 Of this their cruel sentence,  
 And with wild words implore them,  
 And with a mother's anguish plead,  
 To change the doom they had decreed.

But suddenly there seemed to wake  
 A music like a silver bell ;  
 And if they sang, or if they spake,  
 Or if I dreamed, I cannot tell.  
 A singing and a ringing,  
 Like rivers murmuring lowly,  
 Like wind-rocked pine trees slowly  
 Their woven branches swinging,  
 Filled all the room : and one did stand  
 With the honey-jar in her right hand.

Then said the first, ' This child I dower  
 With fragrance of the mountain thyme,  
 And sweetness of the clover-flower,  
 Set in imperishable rhyme.'  
 The next, ' And in his hearing  
 Shall bees be ever humming,  
 In filmy flight still coming  
 With drowsy sounds endearing.'  
 The third, ' I give the glory and glow  
 Of yon great sea that rolls below.'

' Sleep soft,' they sang ; ' thy little lips  
 Not yet in deathless song shall stir,  
 Not yet thy rosy finger-tips  
 Shall touch or lute or dulcimer :  
 Weaned from the world's gross pleasure,  
 By pain and fast made worthy,  
 Eternal fame waits for thee,  
 And everlasting treasure.  
 Then shalt thou greet us where we dwell  
 On our clear heights—till then, farewell.'

MAY BYRON.

*LA DOCTORESSE MALGRE ELLE.*

WHEN the doctors advised us to go and settle in the mountains, for the sake of our baby-boy who was just recovering from a long and serious illness, we were delighted. As we had always lived in towns, we longed for the open fields, exclaiming with Horace : ‘ *O rus, quando ego te aspiciam ?* ’

My husband at once looked out for a country church. The parish of B., over three thousand feet high, in the Cévennes mountains, was in want of a pastor, so he went and reconnoitred. He found it was just what we were seeking, and the inhabitants, descendants of the old Huguenots, welcomed him enthusiastically.

When we arrived at B., in the month of June, the country was at its best. The meadows were covered with a profusion of wild flowers, the green corn was waving in the fields, the brooks babbling gaily as they skirted the edges of the pine forests. Wherever we turned picturesque views met our charmed gaze, and we congratulated one another on having found a home in such exquisite scenery.

What was our surprise to find that these beauties of Nature were unappreciated by the peasants !

When we admired the many-hued sweet-scented flowers we were told they spoilt the hay ; the bold rocky mountains were bad pasture-land, and the lovely ferns only good for fodder. Once I made a nosegay of large wild pansies that spread like a fragrant carpet at our feet. Next morning a girl called at the Manse with a basket full of them, wanting to sell them at twopence the pound ! I lifted the lid, and there were hundreds of the lovely blooms—crushed and stalkless. She had seen me gathering them and thought I wanted them for herb-tea.

The longer we stayed at B. the more we were struck by the contrast between its romantic surroundings and its unpoetic inhabitants. They did not even use the produce of their country for themselves, and instead of thriving on creamy milk, golden butter, and new-laid eggs, as we had imagined, they carried all these to market to be turned into ready money, and lived on prosy fat bacon, cabbages, and potatoes in the form of soup. So attached were they to this diet that I once heard a young fellow



grumble to his mother, who had cooked some barley for supper, 'Well, mother, if a fellow can't have his cabbage soup every meal, life isn't worth living.'

The limpid water of the brooks they used internally, it is true, but externally it was applied on Sundays only in many cases. One fresh-looking woman was a constant scandal to her neighbours. She washed her face and hands several times a day, and was even suspected of taking baths; they insinuated that she must have very little to do to have so much time to waste on her ablutions.

Before we had discovered these manners and customs, we were surprised to find that in spite of the pure mountain air there was a good deal of sickness in B. We soon saw that it could not be otherwise with people living on such poor fare and having so complete a disregard of the aphorism that 'cleanliness is next to godliness.' Many of the complaints they suffered from were chronic, and they treated them with home-made remedies, such as *tisanes* (herb-tea), in the use of which the simplest French housewife is very skilful. But we were astonished to see that, even in acute cases of serious illness, a medical man was rarely sent for. This was due, first, to the high fees the doctors charged on account of the distance, the nearest living over two hours' drive from B., then to the fatalism of the peasants, whose habitual remark by the bedside of a sick friend was, 'If his hour has come, what is the use of sending for the doctor?' in which sentiment the patient fully acquiesced. Their economy was sometimes productive of very serious consequences, as in the following case.

My husband was called every autumn of our stay in B. to a peasant's house to bury a newborn babe. The mother would send for neither doctor nor nurse, with the result that each infant in turn died at the birth. He told the parents such parsimony was criminal and they promised to do differently, but they never did.

When a doctor *was* summoned they had no scruple in beating down his fees. I saw this done once myself. After he had prescribed, the patient's wife asked:

'How much is it?'

'Let me see, how far is it? Twenty kilometres or thereabouts. Then it is twenty francs; I will say eighteen.'

'Oh, perhaps not as much as that! We are poor people.'

Here the neighbours chimed in: 'Oh, yes, they are poor people. I wished myself miles away, I felt so uncomfortable for that doctor. But he was evidently an old hand. After a little more haggling, the woman put fifteen francs in his hand, saying: 'We shall not quarrel over three paltry francs!' He pocketed the money without further comment.

As a rule the doctor was sent for too late, and the patient would die just before his arrival. In the midst of their grief, the nearest relatives (who would have to pay) never failed to exclaim: 'Send somebody to stop the doctor, quick!'

So after a long drive the latter would be told, as he came in sight of the house, that all was over and he could go home again—fee-less.

They never dreamed of asking him to see the body to make sure that life was extinct.

Such things were done in a free-and-easy style at B. Red-tape existed but to a limited extent. For instance, no pastor could legally conduct a funeral before receiving the official document stating that the death of the person concerned had been verified by the mayor's clerk. And this paper always was handed in duly signed and stamped. But the clerk had not been near the deceased's house. A relative informed him that So-and-So was dead, and he delivered the 'permission to bury' at once without any formalities.

My husband feared that this casual way of interring people might lead to gruesome results, so he always ascertained the exact hour of the decease in order that the legal minimum delay of twenty-four hours should be observed. The peasants were in great haste to be rid of their dead. So many had but one room to live—and die in.

A neighbouring pastor told us he felt convinced he had buried a man alive. The person in question had been a hard drinker, a rarity in the mountains, and he expired, or appeared to do so, at the end of a drinking bout. A few days after the funeral, the pastor heard rumours which led him to investigate the matter. The responsible parties, on being pressed, admitted that when the body was put into the coffin it was still warm. Asked why they did not say so at the time, they replied:

'We thought the brandy had preserved him, perhaps,' adding by way of explanation:

'You see, everything was ready and we were not sure.'



'Then, to console the horror-struck pastor, they said cheerfully  
'He'll be dead by now, at any rate.'

My husband was within a hair's-breadth of doing the same thing.

A peasant called to ask him to conduct the funeral of a Monsieur Verne the next day.

'When did he die?'

'To-day.'

'Yes, but at what time?'

The messenger replied calmly :

'He must be dead by now, I should think.'

'What! do you mean to say he is still alive and you ask me to bury him?'

'Well, you see, it's far from here and, as I happened to be coming this way, the family asked me to tell you. I am now going to the town hall to make the declaration of his death, to save sending a messenger on purpose. It's all right, there was scarcely any breath in him when I started; he's dead now, for sure.'

My husband pointed out the heartlessness of such a proceeding, and prevented his making the declaration.

Receiving no further intimation from the family, my husband took occasion to go to their house a few weeks later; the first person he saw was Monsieur Verne tying up cabbages in his garden. Knowing the peasants were not sensitive on such points, he told him how near he came to burying him. The good man was quite flattered, and ever after enjoyed a little local celebrity as the man whose funeral was ordered before he was dead.

He was more fortunate than most men of his age (he was over forty), for as a rule their constitutions were so worn out with poor food and hard work that they rarely recovered from any disease that overtook them.

Infants, too, were handicapped by the want of suitable nourishment. The mothers fed them on cabbage soup before they cut their teeth. An epidemic of whooping cough was at its height when we arrived at B., and the sufferings of the poor babies, greatly increased by the indigestible food, so touched my heart that I prescribed for two or three of them, little thinking with what consequences this action was fraught.

I had the little mites' chests and backs rubbed night and morning with acetic acid, which had proved very useful in our

baby-boy's illness, and gave them some homœopathic medicines internally. They were well in a fortnight.

The news of these cures spread like wild-fire through the parish, as we learned by subsequent events; the first of which was the arrival of a peasant with her baby, saying she had heard Madame was a doctor and she had brought her child to be cured. My astonished maid replied:

‘Madame is not a doctor, you must mean somebody else.’

But the woman insisted on seeing me. She told me she knew I cured babies, so had brought hers. Would I make him well? And she lifted pleading eyes to mine. I gave her the same simple remedies and thought no more about it, for we were far from surmising that she was the first of hundreds who would come to see *la doctoresse malgré elle*.

Yet so it was. Next day the bell rang constantly, and by night over twenty mothers had called for medicines. I supposed the rush was over, but I was mistaken, for during the following weeks our hall and dining-room were constantly filled with women and children, and now the former wanted remedies for themselves too.

‘But I am not a doctor,’ I explained to the first woman who urged me to prescribe for her.

‘Madame could cure me if she liked,’ was her reply.

‘I have never studied medicine; all I know I have learned just by nursing my own family.’

‘Madame could cure me if she liked,’ persisted the woman, and seeing she meant it, what was there for it but to give her the most suitable medicines I could think of?

The climax arrived a week later. My maid came to me, her eyes sparkling with mischief.

‘Please, Madame, there’s a man downstairs asking for you, and (here she giggled) I think he is ill.’

‘Ill!’ I cried, ‘but I do not see sick *men*. Find out if he is ill, and tell him to go to a doctor.’

Down she went, but soon re-appeared.

‘He says he must see you, Madame, but he will not say what for.’ I went to my visitor and found a middle-aged peasant.

‘You wanted to speak to me?’

‘Yes, Madame.’ A pause. ‘It’s my throat.’

‘So you *are* ill. You must consult a medical man. I only treat women and children.’



‘Won’t your “stuff” do men good?’ he asked with surprise.

‘I dare say it might.’

‘Then why won’t you give me some? I don’t mind taking the same stuff as the babies.’

I was perplexed; he was incapable of understanding my difficulty, for those simple-minded peasants had very primitive ideas on the subject of proprieties. After a minute’s reflection, I said:

‘Open your mouth and let me see your throat.’

He did so, and I gave him his medicines, which he carried off triumphantly.

Now the number of patients increased, for the men came too. One of the quaintest of them was the Mayor of Chabroulles. He was a wizened old man, wearing a coat cut very short in front, with little tails behind that terminated abruptly a foot below the waist. His high, unstarched collar was held erect by a voluminous neckcloth. His sockless feet were encased in huge black *sabots*, and he had a broad-brimmed felt hat on. His son, in more modern attire, signed to him to take his hat off. He did so, but replaced it by a black nightcap, which stood straight up like a sugar-loaf, surmounted by a tassel. It was the finishing touch!

‘What are you suffering from?’ I asked.

He referred me by a sign to his son, who explained that the Mayor only spoke patois, so he had come to translate. After the consultation the son wrote down name and address; the old man, thinking doubtless it was a document that needed signing, added a large cross, saying in patois, ‘That’s my mark.’

At last I was so overdone with constant doctoring that I fixed three mornings a week for sick visitors. But this did not deter some from coming at all hours of the day or night.

One woman on being told she could not see Madame, for she was lying down tired out, exclaimed: ‘I don’t mind going to her room,’ and, suiting the action to the word, made for the staircase.

One Saturday the bell rang soon after midnight. I found a peasant with an infant in her arms.

‘Not very good for baby to come out at this time of night,’ I remarked.

‘It won’t hurt her, she has been ill over five months.’

‘Over five months! Then why did you not bring her this morning?’

‘I was at the fair at Chabroulles all day, and when I returned I felt, all of a sudden, that I would bring her.’

I inwardly hoped that the rest of the parishioners would not feel ‘all of a sudden’ that they would pay me nocturnal visits, but said nothing and gave the necessary remedies.

The people eventually were not satisfied with coming to see me, they wanted me to visit them, and this is how that began.

A peasant woman arrived one day accompanied by a village shopkeeper as spokeswoman. The latter informed me that the woman’s husband was dangerously ill and wanted *Monsieur le pasteur* to go and administer the Communion. I promised to tell him at once, and expressed my sympathy. The women still lingered, the peasant signing to her friend to speak.

‘She wants you to go too, Madame.’

‘Indeed, and why?’

‘To give Monsieur Croche some medicine.’

‘She shall have some to take home, but she must fetch a doctor. I am told they may complain if I go to patients’ houses.’

Here Madame Croche burst into tears, and went down on her knees to me crying :

‘Oh, Madame, save my husband! *Pour l’amour de Dieu*, save my husband!’

I was moved; no wife can hear that cry untouched. Her companion whispered to me :

‘They won’t send for a doctor; they are poor, and it would cost them twenty-five francs and over. Madame will harm nobody by going.’

So I agreed to go. We started off and reached Rette, the nearest village to the sick man’s house, within an hour. There they told us to go down—a road they called it—a rough track full of rocks. Half an hour’s scramble brought us to our destination. Madame Croche, who had gone home on horseback by a short cut then unknown to us, come out to meet us. We followed her indoors and found her husband in bed in a cupboard, as was customary in those parts. These cupboards had doors, which the peasants shut on cold nights to keep the warmth in. He was suffering from an ulcerated throat. He listened to my husband with great attention and took the Communion. I prescribed some remedies (he was well again in ten days), and we left to visit some parishioners close by.

These offered to send us home in their cart; in a rash moment



I accepted. I have been in springless wood carts in Switzerland, I have driven over rough American roads in a broken-down buggy, but none of these experiences, though they are still green (and blue) in my memory, came anywhere near that drive to Rette. It was like a sea-voyage, for now we were on the crest of a rock, then down in the hollow of a rut, with the difference that the sea lets you down gently and that road did not. At first I felt like pointing out the boulders to the driver, that he might avoid the largest of them, but I soon saw he had a soul above such trifles; he drove stolidly over whatever lay in his path. Suddenly a sharper jerk than usual sent me flying to the bottom of the cart. I picked myself up ruefully, explaining to my conductor, who seemed surprised at my behaviour, that it was the first time I had the privilege of driving over such a road in such a conveyance. 'It is a little rough' was all he would admit.

At last we arrived at Rette, and as we drew up in the little market-place, where my husband was to rejoin us, we were surrounded by people clamouring for medicine. My first male patient was among them. He told me his throat was quite well; to prove his statement he advanced to the side of the vehicle, and when my husband came upon the scene this is what met his astonished gaze. A man with hat off and head thrown well back opening a large pair of jaws, his wife looking down from the cart into the man's throat, and a group of peasants watching the proceedings in spell-bound admiration.

Now I was looked upon as the doctor of the parish, and was sent for from far and near. I went in cases of sudden emergencies, or when the sick person was really too poor to pay the doctor's fee.

Once I was called to a year-old baby; noticing the irritated state of the skin, I asked the mother if she ever washed him.

'Washed him?' she replied indignantly, 'no, indeed, Madame! What makes you think I would do such a thing? He has always been delicate, but it is not my fault, for I can truthfully say I have never touched him with water, hot or cold.'

That the preceding generation had an equal antipathy to performing their ablutions I discovered one day when letting my baby-boy paddle in the brook. A dear old lady over seventy, the nurse of the village, watched him with great interest; then she turned to me and said:

'There, now! and to think you are not afraid of the little dear

wetting his pretty feet! Why, I have never put mine in water since I was born!

I was consulted for a girl who had taken a chill. I ordered a hot bath. The messenger assured me no one would take the responsibility of administering so heroic a remedy. Would I come and superintend? I agreed to do so, and gave directions to have everything ready by the time I arrived.

I found the mother and sisters assembled at the patient's bedside, looking like people prepared for the worst. I coaxed the girl into the bath, and, tucking up my sleeves, took advantage of the chance of soaping her well. When she had sat a few minutes in the tub, she exclaimed, 'Why, it's quite nice!'

After she was snug in bed again, a knock was heard, and a neighbour put her head in, her face full of the deepest concern. She said:

'I heard your poor Vasti was to have a bath. I have come to see if she is still alive!'

Luckily the girl recovered in a few days.

Epidemics were rare in B., but we had some cases of infectious diseases. Many of the peasants had relatives working in the nearest city. These would catch some complaint, and then come home to recruit, bringing the germs with them.

One day a peasant begged me to come and see her husband. Knowing she was well off, I replied that she must fetch a doctor. Later on she re-appeared, and so implored me to come that I went. I found him in a high fever. Not knowing the nature of the illness, I ordered wet packs wrung out of acetic acid and water. This relieved him greatly.

In the middle of the night, they sent word that he was all over spots; would we come and see? When I examined the rash, being a perfect novice (as I constantly assured them), I still failed to see what it was. My husband felt the spots, and he too did not know what it could be. He read and prayed with him, and we left telling them to report what the doctor said. I never knew if they failed to send for him, at any rate he did not put in an appearance that day.

The following afternoon, as I approached the house, I heard Monsieur Charlier, the schoolmaster, holding forth. He was much looked up to by the villagers, and now a dozen of them were listening open-mouthed while he explained matters to them.

'This, my friends, is a case of fever.' His audience exchanged



admiring glances, as much as to say, 'How clever of him to find that out!'

'As it is a fever complicated with a rash, we may go further and call it a case of eruptive fever.'

Here, unfortunately, he caught sight of me, which cut his eloquence short. His hearers afterwards informed their friends that 'poor Pierre Borel has the fever,' then, shaking their heads significantly, 'and Monsieur Charlier says it is the "ruptive" fever, just think of that!'

The patient was getting weaker; I was getting anxious about him, and still the doctor did not arrive. We continued the wet packs, as he kept asking for them. Next day the doctor appeared. He looked at the sick man, then said sharply to Madame Borel:

'Give me a spoon!'

He glanced at the throat, then, flinging the spoon across the room into the fire, he shouted:

'Good heavens! He has the small-pox of the worst kind! It's black small-pox, and he'll be dead to-morrow!'

And taking up his hat he made for the door.

This is a fair specimen of the frank way in which the faculty expressed their view of the situation when visiting patients in those regions.

He called Madame Borel to him and said:

'Send for this at once,' writing down a prescription in pencil.

'What's the use,' replied the thrifty housewife, 'if he will be dead to-morrow?'

'Tut! tut! my good woman; you can't let a man die without trying to save him. Send for this immediately.'

I learned all this a few hours later, when they brought the doctor's report and asked me to go and sit up with the sick man for a while. I found them depressed and not a neighbour near (the village was panic-stricken), but very brave as far as fear of infection was concerned. The patient, one of the elders of the church, seemed quite resigned. I left them towards morning, and soon after daybreak he died.

I was sitting in the dining-room a few hours after his death when the gate opened and the senior elder came in. Our baby-boy was in the garden; his nurse had orders to run off with him directly anyone called, for fear of contagion. She happened not to be there, and before I could get to him the old man had bent

over him saying, '*Bonjour, Monsieur Bébé.*' Then he said to me: 'Very sad about Pierre Borel, isn't it? Poor fellow, I have just been putting him in his coffin'!

He had no more sense than to stand over a baby in the same clothes. Having had the small-pox himself, he ran no risk, but none of us at the Manse had ever seen the disease before.

Monsieur Borel was buried under the pine tree a stone's-throw from his dwelling. This was usual in B., only those who owned no land being carried to the cemetery.

We had a few more cases of small-pox. We look back upon that time as a very trying one. The peasants had such confidence in me, and yet I could do so little to check the loathsome disease, that my nights were sleepless from anxiety.

What were the results of my medical labours? Seeing that by calling in aid immediately further illness might be averted, the peasants, who never scrupled to send for me at any hour (as it cost them nothing), became less convinced that because a person fell ill 'his hour had come.' As, too, I urged them in serious cases to send for a doctor, the local physicians were more often called in during our stay in B. than ever before. One with whom we were very friendly told me so and thanked me for it. This result was indirect, but none the less useful.

The direct results were also satisfactory, for many sufferers were cured.

It is true that the carelessness of the more ignorant peasants was a great hindrance to the recovery of their friends. They would persist in rubbing them with the medicines and giving them the lotions to drink!

A woman applied the homœopathic potion to her mother's spine, and gave her the pure acetic acid to drink, and then said that my 'stuff' made her mother cry.

A man sponged his father's sore leg with undiluted acid; the result was vociferous.

And all this in spite of minute written directions and verbal warnings.

Happily I used no poisonous liniments, or there would have been some terrible catastrophes.

The effect of the treatment was often neutralised by the diet. Some mothers insisted on giving their sick babies cabbage soup instead of the milk I advised. Adults fared no better. I admit that in extreme cases the oldest fowl on the farm was sometimes



reluctantly sacrificed and converted into weak broth, but the partaker might be sure then that his friends felt 'his hour had come' indeed.

Still, my presence in the parish of B. was a source of untold comfort to the inhabitants, and never have I felt to be of so much use to the community as I did there. It moves me now as I remember how the troubled faces brightened when I appeared, and how completely anxious relatives transferred their burden of responsibility to me; the words, 'Here's Madame!' did the patient more good than a dose of medicine.

Whenever I think of my doctoring days, my heart goes out in pity to those poor helpless peasants, and I long to hear they have found another '*doctoresse malgré elle.*'

ZÉLIA DE LADEVÈZE.

*THE SONNETS OF SHAKESPEARE.*<sup>1</sup>

BY THE REV. PROF. H. C. BEECHING.

THE value of Shakespeare's sonnets lies, of course, in their supreme beauty, and is altogether independent of the critical and historical problems that cluster about them. These problems have, nevertheless, a perennial interest, even a fascination of their own; witness the large and ever-increasing number of volumes devoted to their investigation. Within the last few years three elaborate studies have been added to the pile, two of which, at any rate, cannot be disregarded by anyone who wishes to form a competent judgment upon the points at issue. Mr. Sidney Lee, in his monumental *Life of Shakespeare*, published in 1898, devoted four chapters and eight appendices to an examination of the general character of sonneteering in the sixteenth century, and a reinforcement of the claim of the Earl of Southampton, Shakespeare's early patron, to be the person to whom the sonnets are addressed. Of the learning displayed in that examination and the skill with which the arguments are marshalled there cannot be two opinions. I do not myself think, however, that the Southampton theory can be maintained, for reasons which will be advanced presently; and Mr. Lee's general view, which aims at formulating a scientific law of sonnet-writing, seems to me to disregard the instances—those of men of genius—which alone have any value and interest. To argue away the special characteristics of Shakespeare's sonnets on the ground that twenty contemporary sonnet-sequences do not possess them seems as illogical a course as the common habit, against which Mr. Lee protests, of ignoring the fact that Shakespeare's sonnets have literary parallels; but the new abstraction, Shakespeare being what he was, is likely to lead farther from the truth than the old. In the same year as Mr. Lee's book Mr. George Wyndham produced a handsome and scholarly edition of Shakespeare's poems, and collected into his introduction most of the historical material with which the criticism of the sonnets must deal; but the main purpose of his book, and a most praiseworthy one, was to rivet

<sup>1</sup> Copyright, 1902, in the United States of America by the Rev. Professor H. C. Beeching.



attention on the poems themselves. In the year following Mr. Samuel Butler, the author of 'Erewhon,' brought out an edition of the sonnets with prolegomena; which are sufficiently good reading when they handle the absurdities and inconsistencies of his predecessors, but are negligible in their own proposals. The purpose of the present paper is not to attempt any final pronouncement on a cause which will surely go from court to court and be judged and rejudged many times yet; but simply to investigate the present position of the problem as Mr. Lee has left it, to see if any points may be taken as finally concluded, and to expose the questions remaining upon which more light is still required.

## I.

Readers of the sonnets who have no theories to defend would probably agree that the friendship which the sonnets describe is an affection between an elder and a younger man, wherewith there mingles not a little admiration for his grace and charm, which, indeed, occasionally seem to get on the poet's nerves. If I may put in one word what I conceive to be the peculiar type of this affection, I should say it was a type not uncommonly found in imaginative natures. A poet, whatever else he is, is a man with keener senses and stronger emotions than other men; he is more sensitive to beauty, especially the beauty of youth; and, as the poetry of the whole world may convince us, he is especially sensitive to that beauty's decay. Hence it is not uncommon to find in poets of mature years a strong disposition to consort with young people, and a keen pleasure in their society, as though to atone for the slow sapping of youthful strength and ardour in themselves. It is well that the majority of us should stifle our dissatisfaction at the inevitable oncoming of age by doing the tasks which age lays upon us and for which youth is incompetent. The middle-aged youth or maiden is a fair theme for satire. But poets cannot be blamed if, feeling what we feel more keenly, they give to the sentiment an occasional expression; nor if they seek to keep fresh their own youthful enthusiasm by associating with younger people. There is an interesting passage in Browning's poem of 'Cleon,' where Cleon, who is a poet, writing to King Protus on the subject of joy in life, contrasts his own supposed joy in the wide outlook of age with the actual joy of living; and Browning seems there, through the mouth of Cleon, to be utter-

ing a sentiment that many poets have felt, and which, as I believe, accounts for much in Shakespeare's sonnets :—

The last point now : thou dost except a case,  
 Holding joy not impossible to one  
 With artist-gifts—to such a man as I,  
 Who leave behind me living works indeed ;  
 For such a poem, such a painting, lives.  
 What ? dost thou verily trip upon a word,  
 Confound the accurate view of what joy is  
 (Caught somewhat clearer by my eyes than thine)  
 With feeling joy ? Confound the knowing how  
 And showing how to live (my faculty)  
 With actually living ? Otherwise,  
 Where is the artist's 'vantage o'er the king ?  
 Because in my great epos I display  
 How divers men young, strong, fair, wise can act—  
 Is this as though I acted ? if I paint,  
 Carve the young Phœbus, am I therefore young ?  
 Methinks I'm older that I bowed myself  
 The many years of pain that taught me art !  
 Indeed, to know is something, and to prove  
 How all this beauty might be enjoyed is more :  
 But knowing nought, to enjoy, is something too.  
 Yon rower with the moulded muscles there,  
 Lowering the sail, is nearer it than I.  
 I can write love-odes : thy fair slave's an ode.  
 I get to sing of love, when grown too grey  
 For being beloved : she turns to that young man,  
 The muscles all a-ripple on his back.  
 I know the joy of kingship—well, thou art king !

That passage goes far to explain the attraction which many poets have found in the society of young people distinguished in some special degree for beauty, or grace, or vivacity. And, of course, there must not be forgotten another element in the problem, the peculiar sweetness of admiration and praise coming from the young. Theocritus desired to sing songs that should win the young ; and the sentiment has been echoed by the most austere of our own living poets :—

'Twere something yet to live again among  
 The gentle youth beloved, and where I learned  
 My art, be there remembered for my song.

The nearest parallel I can suggest to the case of Shakespeare and his young friend is the friendship between the poet Gray and Bonstetten. Bonstetten was a Swiss youth of quality, who went to Cambridge with an introduction to Gray from his friend Norton Nicholls ; and the havoc he wrought in that poet's



domestic affections is visible in his correspondence. He wrote to Norton Nicholls (April 4, 1770):—

At length, my dear sir, we have lost our poor de Bonstetten. I packed him up with my own hands in the Dover machine at four o'clock in the morning on Friday, 23rd March; the next day at seven he sailed, and reached Calais by noon, and Boulogne at night; the next night he reached Abbeville. From thence he wrote to me; and here am I again to pass my solitary evenings, which hung much lighter on my hands before I knew him. This is your fault! Pray, let the next you send me be halt and blind, dull, unapprehensive, and wrong-headed. For this (as Lady Constance says) *Was never such a gracious creature born!* and yet—

Among Gray's letters are three to Bonstetten himself; it will be sufficient to quote the shortest of them:—

I am returned, my dear Bonstetten, from the little journey I made into Suffolk, without answering the end proposed. The thought that you might have been with me there has embittered all my hours. Your letter has made me happy—as happy as so gloomy, so solitary a being as I am is capable of being made. I know, and have too often felt the disadvantages I lay myself under, how much I hurt the little interest I have in you, by this air of sadness, so contrary to your nature and present enjoyments; but sure you will forgive, though you cannot sympathise with me. It is impossible with me to dissemble with you; such as I am I expose my heart to your view, nor wish to conceal a single thought from your penetrating eyes. All that you say to me, especially on the subject of Switzerland, is infinitely acceptable. It feels too pleasing ever to be fulfilled, and as often as I read over your truly kind letter, written long since from London, I stop at these words: '*la mort qui peut glacer nos bras avant qu'ils soient entrelacés.*'

It seems to me that in these letters we have, beneath many superficial dissimilarities, a very close parallel to Shakespeare's own case as it lies before us in the sonnets. We have a companionship marked by respectful admiration and affection on the one side, on the other by a more tender sentiment. And the other letters draw the parallel closer, for one describes the pangs of absence—

Alas! how do I every moment feel the truth of what I have somewhere read: '*Ce n'est pas le voir, que de s'en souvenir;*' and yet that remembrance is the only satisfaction I have left. My life now is but a conversation with your shadow, &c.

and another warns the youth against the vices to which his youth and good looks and the example of his own class leave him peculiarly exposed. With such an actual experience to call in evidence, I do not see why we should reject as inconceivable the obvious interpretation that the sonnets put upon themselves: that Shakespeare at a certain period found the loneliness of his life in London filled up by a friendship which, not being 'equal poised,'

could not last, but which was in no sense unworthy. If that were allowed, it would not, of course, follow that the sonnets could be treated as one side of an ordinary correspondence, and every statement they contain be transferred to Shakespeare's biography as literal fact. The truth at which poetry aims is a truth of feeling, not of incident. And the fact, often enough implied in the sonnets, that they were intended for publication some day (though that day was anticipated by a piratical publisher), as well as the still more cogent fact that Shakespeare was a poet, should prepare us to recognise that situations would be generalised and reduced to their common human measure.

## II.

Such being, in my judgment, the view of the sonnets that will commend itself to a reader who interprets them in the light of general experience, we must see how far such a view is affected by Mr. Lee's investigation into the special conditions of Elizabethan sonnet-writing. Mr. Lee's theory is that what the ordinary reader takes for friendship in Shakespeare's sonnets is merely the conventional adulation common at the time between client and patron. 'There is nothing,' he says, 'in the vocabulary of affection which Shakespeare employed in his sonnets of friendship to conflict with the theory that they were inscribed to a literary patron, with whom the intimacy was of the kind normally subsisting at the time between literary clients and their patrons' (p. 141). A new theory of this sort must, of course, stand or fall by the evidence that can be produced for it; and accordingly Mr. Lee proceeds to supply parallels. 'The tone of yearning,' he tells us, 'for a man's affection is sounded by Donne and Campion almost as plaintively in their sonnets to patrons as it was sounded by Shakespeare' (*ib.*). In support of this statement Mr. Lee refers to two poems (which we must presume to be the strongest instances he can find), one a verse-letter by Donne to a certain T. W., and the other a poem by Campion addressed to the young Lord Walden. The letter of Donne's must be ruled out, because it is not written to a patron at all, but to a friend. We do not know who T. W. was, but we know the names of Donne's patrons, and the initials fit none of them. In the four stanzas to Lord Walden which are prefixed, among various dedications, to one of Campion's masques, I cannot detect the



least tone of yearning, or even of plaintiveness. The word 'love' certainly occurs twice, but the love meant is the general love of all the world for the young gentleman's admired virtues. As Campion's poems are not accessible except in a privately printed edition, it may be well to quote the material verses:—

If to be sprung of high and princely blood,  
 If to inherit virtue, honour, grace,  
 If to be great in all things, and yet good,  
 If to be facile, yet t' have power and place,  
 If to be just, and bountiful, may get  
 The love of men, your right may challenge it.

But if th' admired virtues of your youth  
 Breed such despairing to my daunted Muse  
 That it can scarcely utter naked truth,  
 How shall it mount as ravished spirits use  
 Under the burden of your riper days,  
 Or hope to reach the so far distant bays ?

My slender Muse shall yet my love express,  
 And by the fair Thames' side of you she'll sing ;  
 The double streams shall bear her willing verse  
 Far hence with murmur of their ebb and spring.  
 But if you favour her light tunes, ere long  
 She'll strive to raise you with a loftier song.

I do not think that the ordinary reader unbiassed by a theory would hear in these conventional lines any tone of yearning for affection ; what is too clearly audible in them is a bid for 'favour' in some more tangible shape. If Mr. Lee is to convince the world that there is nothing in Shakespeare's sonnets beyond the normal Elizabethan note of patron-worship, he must adduce by way of parallel a poem with some passion in it. Did any Elizabethan client, for example, speak of his love for his patron as keeping him awake at night, as Shakespeare says in the sixty-first sonnet that his love for his friend kept him awake ?

A more specious argument is that which Mr. Lee bases on the very mysterious section of the sonnets concerned with rival poets (lxxvii.—lxxxvi.), which he interprets as an attempt on Shakespeare's part to monopolise patronage. In the sonnets Shakespeare certainly reveals some jealousy. He charges his friend with being attracted by the flattery of some other writer of verses. But it is evident that the poems in question are not dedicated to the friend, but written about him ;<sup>1</sup> the friend is not the patron, but the subject of the rival's song ; so that it is not merely

<sup>1</sup> They may, of course, have included dedicatory poems, printed or unprinted, as the 82nd sonnet seems to imply.

patronage that Shakespeare deprecates. Indeed, how could he have done so, considering the custom of the age, with any reasonable prospect of success? I would have said, how could he have done so with decency? only Mr. Lee denies him decency. He says: 'The sole biographical inference deducible from the sonnets is that at one time in his career Shakespeare disdained no weapon of flattery in an endeavour to monopolise the bountiful patronage of a young man of rank' (p. 159). The sonnets themselves, happily, lend no support to this view. It is one thing to say 'X. has begun to ask your patronage for his books. I hope you will have nothing to do with him;' and quite another thing to say, as Shakespeare says, 'X. has been writing verses about you in which he flatters you extravagantly. Of course you like it. And I am quite willing to own that as poetry his verses are better than mine. But for all that, mine express real affection; so don't desert me for him.' It is difficult to bring this matter to a more decisive test, because it is impossible to determine how far the complaint was serious and who this rival was; and no verses of the sort are extant. The praise of the poet's learning and the reference to the 'proud full sail of his great verse' have been thought by Professor Minto to indicate Chapman. (Those who take this view may thank me for a further argument. It is hinted in the eighty-sixth sonnet that the rival dabbled, as many Elizabethans did, in necromancy; for the reference to the familiar ghost

That nightly *gulls* him with intelligence

is not a compliment, and cannot be whittled down to a recognition of 'a touch of magic' in the poet's writing. Now we find Chapman dedicating a poem in 1598 to that celebrated Doctor Harriot of whom Marlowe had said, in his 'atheistical' way, that he could juggle better than Moses.) But can we conceive of Chapman writing sentimental sonnets about any young man? With his sonnet-cycle on Philosophy before me I find it impossible to do so. A less incredible suggestion would be Ben Jonson, who was becoming known in 1597, and in that or the next year took the town by storm with 'Every Man in his Humour;' and 1597-8, as I hope to show, is probably the date of a large number of the sonnets.

Mr. Lee enumerates (p. 175) twenty sonnets which he calls 'dedicatory' sonnets, in which he claims that the friend is 'declared without paraphrase and without disguise to be a patron of the poet's verse.' If so, Mr. Lee uses the word 'patron'



in an esoteric sense. Shakespeare says again and again that his friend's beauty and constancy give his pen 'both skill and argument':—

How can my Muse want *subject* to invent  
 While thou dost breathe, that pour'st into my verse  
 Thine own sweet *argument*, too excellent  
 For every vulgar paper to rehearse ?

Surely there is all the difference in the world between the subject and argument of a book and its patron! I do not think, then, that Mr. Lee's new and ingenious theory, that the relations of the poet and his friend were simply those of client and patron, will bear the test of examination, and as the theory seriously impugns the character of Shakespeare, I for one cannot be sorry that the facts are against it.

### III.

The next problem that presents itself concerns the approximate date of the sonnet-cycle. This problem is usually discussed in relation to the question whether Lord Southampton or Lord Pembroke is the friend to whom the sonnets are addressed, because a late date makes the former an impossible candidate, and an early date disposes of the latter. But it has also a bearing upon the previous question, whether we are justified in looking in the sonnets for any genuine sentiment at all. Mr. Lee in his *Life of Shakespeare* has restated with new emphasis the fact that the sonnet was a fashionable literary form in the last decade of the sixteenth century; and he has further shown, for the first time, that a large stock of ideas and images was common to the whole tribe of sonneteers. Of course it by no means follows because a poet uses a fashionable and artificial form of verse, that the emotion he puts into it is merely fashionable and artificial. It may be or it may not be. We must not forget that, although the sonnet was fashionable at this epoch, the passion of love had perhaps as great a vogue as the sonnet.<sup>1</sup> If, however, Shake-

<sup>1</sup> Perhaps Mr. Lee a little overstates the case, strong as it is, for the artificiality of the emotion displayed in Elizabethan sonnets. Drayton, by calling his lady Idea, did not imply (p. 105 n.) that she was merely an abstraction, but that she was his ideal. He himself identifies her with Anne Goodere. Nor does he tell his readers (*ib.*) 'that if any sought *genuine* passion in them they had better go elsewhere.' His words are: 'Into these loves who but for passion looks, At this first sight here let him lay them by'; and he goes on to explain *passion* by 'far-fetched sighs,' 'ah, me's,' and 'whining.' The point of the sonnet, which is a prefatory advertisement, is that the reader may expect variety and

spere wrote a sequence of sonnets simply, as Mr. Lee thinks, to be in the mode and to please his patron, we should expect to find him turning them out as soon as he had finished 'Lucrece' in 1594; for even as early as that date Sidney, Daniel, Constable, Barnes, Watson, Lodge, and Drayton—to mention only considerable people—were in the field before him. And in pursuance of his theory Mr. Lee places the bulk of Shakespeare's sonnets in 1594. But all the evidence there is points to a date considerably later. No reference to the sonnets has been traced in contemporary literature before 1598. It was not till 1599 that any of them found their way into print. And the only sonnet that can be dated with absolute certainty from internal evidence (cvii.) belongs to 1603. The evidence from style points also, for the most part, to a late date; but of that it is of no use to speak, because it convinces no one who has other reasons for not being convinced. There is, however, a line of argument hitherto neglected which, in competent hands, might yield material results—the argument from parallel passages. Every writer knows the perverse facility with which a phrase once used presents itself again; and Shakespeare seems to have been not a little liable to this human infirmity. It is not uncommon for him to use a word or a phrase twice in a single play, and never afterwards.<sup>1</sup> There is a strong probability, therefore, if a remarkable phrase or figure of speech occurs both in a sonnet and in a play, that the play and the sonnet belong to the same period. Now the greater number of the parallel passages hitherto recognised are to be found in 'Henry IV.,' in 'Love's Labour's Lost,' and in 'Hamlet;' and it is certain that 'Henry IV.' was written in 1597, that 'Love's Labour's Lost' was revised in that same year, and that 'Hamlet' is later still.<sup>2</sup> To take an example: the phrase 'world-without-end' makes a sufficiently remarkable epithet; but it is so used only in the fifty-seventh sonnet and in 'Love's Labour's Lost' (v. 2, 799). But as it is open to anyone to reply that this and other phrases may have occurred in the original draft of that

will not be bored. The Doctor of Divinity whom Mr. Lee quotes as warning his readers that 'a man may write of love, and not be in love,' was probably in fear of his archdeacon.

<sup>1</sup> Examples are *discandy* (*A. and C.* iii. 13, 165; iv. 12, 22); *chare* (*A. and C.* iv. 15, 75; v. 2, 231); *bear me hard* (*J. C.* i. 3, 311; ii. 1, 215); *handsome about him* (*Much Ado*, iv. 2, 88; v. 4, 105).

<sup>2</sup> Professor Bradley calls my attention to the series 71-74, which has not only the tone of 'Hamlet' but parallelisms of phrase, especially in 74 to v. 2, 350 and i. 4, 66.



play, written several years earlier, it will be best to confine the parallels to 'Henry IV.,' the date of which is beyond dispute. Compare, then, Sonnet 33—

Anon *permit* the *basest* clouds to ride  
With ugly rack on his celestial face

with '1 Henry IV.' i. 2, 221—

The sun,  
Who doth *permit* the *base* contagious clouds  
To smother up his beauty from the world.

Again, compare the 52nd sonnet—

Therefore are *feasts* so *seldom* and so *rare*,  
Since, *seldom* coming, in the long year set

So is the time that keeps you as my chest,  
Or as the wardrobe which the *robe* doth hide,  
To make some special instant special blest

with '1 Henry IV.' iii. 2, 55—

My presence like a *robe* pontifical,  
Ne'er seen, but wonder'd at; and so my state  
*Seldom* but sumptuous, showed like a *feast*,  
And won by *rareness* such solemnity,

where the concurrence of the images of a feast and a robe is very noticeable. Compare also the 64th sonnet with '2 Henry IV.' iii. 1, 45, where the revolution of states is compared with the sea gaining on the land, and the land on the sea—an idea not found in the famous description of the works of Time in 'Lucrece.' Compare also the epithet *sullen*, applied to a bell in Sonnet 71, and '2 Henry IV.' i. 1, 102, and the phrase 'compounded with clay,' or 'dust,' found in the same sonnet and '2 Henry IV.' iv. 5, 116. I do not wish to press this argument further than it will go, but it must be allowed that its force accumulates with every instance adduced; and, in my opinion, it is strong enough to dispose of the hypothesis that the main body of the sonnets was written in 1593 or 1594, especially as not a single argument has been brought forward for assigning them to so early a date,<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Lee yields a doubtful assent to the idea that Henry Willobie, in his *Avisa* (1594), refers to Shakespeare, under the initials W. S., as having escaped heart-whole from a passion in which he found himself involved. The sole ground for the conjecture is that W. S. is referred to as the 'old player.' But the love affair had been previously spoken of as 'a comedy like to end in a tragedy,' and Willobie himself is called the 'new actor.' There is, therefore, not the slightest reason for taking the one expression more literally than the other. And where, it may be asked, is there anything in the sonnets that could be

and every indication of both internal and external evidence suggests that they were written later. One conclusion from these premisses seems to be that Shakespeare did not write his sonnets merely in pursuit of the fashion, though he recognised the fashion by introducing a sonnet occasionally into an early play, and by representing his lovers—Beatrice and Benedick, the lovesick Thurio in the ‘Two Gentlemen of Verona,’ and the nobles in ‘Love’s Labour’s Lost’—as turning to the sonnet as the proper form in which to ease their over-burdened hearts. It may have been that the impulse to write sonnets came to Shakespeare himself from a like natural cause.

## IV.

Who was Shakespeare’s friend? Mr. Butler, in his edition of the sonnets referred to above, makes very merry over the popular notion that the friend must have been a peer; and to a reader who comes to the sonnets without prejudice there are a few striking passages that make the current hypothesis a little hard to believe. ‘Farewell,’ says the poet in the 87th sonnet; ‘thou art too dear for my possessing, and *like enough* thou know’st thy estimate.’ Now it is generally given to peers to know their estimate very exactly. Again, in 84 the poet says:

You to your beauteous blessings add a curse,  
Being fond on praise, which makes your praises worse

and in 69 he says, still more rudely:

But why thy odour matcheth not thy show  
The soil [solution] is this—that thou dost common grow.

To a mere patron such lines could never have been addressed; and hardly to an Elizabethan peer at all, unless he were very young and the friendship very intimate. But that may be the true explanation of such passages. That the friend was a person of high birth and great fortune is put beyond reasonable doubt by

referred to as a recovery from love? Another point which would be an argument for the early date of the sonnets, if it could be supported, may be referred to here. Mr. Lee thinks Sir John Davies, in a ‘gulling sonnet,’ was parodying Shakespeare’s legal phraseology in Sonnet 26. It is possible, though, considering the excesses in this respect of ‘Zepheria,’ to which Davies refers by name, it is uncertain. Mr. Lee dates Davies’ sonnets in 1595 (p. 436); but they are dedicated to Sir Anthony Cooke, who, according to Grosart, was knighted at the sack of Cadiz, September 15, 1596. They must, therefore, be subsequent to that date and they may belong to any year between 1597 and 1603, when Davies himself was knighted, for in the MSS. they are attributed to ‘Mr. Davyes.’



the 37th sonnet. Mr. Butler attempts to get over the evidence of this sonnet by pointing to its hypothetical construction; but the whole point of the sonnet is that the friend had advantages of fortune which were denied to the poet.

As a decrepit father takes delight  
To see his active child do deeds of youth,  
So I, made lame by *Fortune's* dearest spite,  
Take all my comfort of thy worth and truth;

where 'worth' must be construed in terms of what follows. And if it be replied that a private gentleman might claim 'beauty, birth, and wealth and wit' as well as a peer, the rejoinder might be that 'glory' in the twelfth line is a very strong word indeed, especially to a youth, being equivalent to 'splendour' or 'magnificence':

I in thy abundance am suffic'd,  
And by a part of all thy glory live.

I admit, however, that this is the only evidence for the friend's nobility, and it is not quite convincing.

The further question, Which of the young gentlemen of the day had the honour of being Shakespeare's admired friend, is one that divides the commentators into two hostile factions—the advocates of Southampton and of Pembroke; and as I have already said that I believe the sonnets to have been written from 1597 onwards, I have implicitly given a vote against Southampton's claim; for that nobleman was born as early as 1573, and in 1597 was engaged with Essex in an expedition to the Azores. The Southampton theory has received a new lease of life from Mr. Lee's recent advocacy; but I am bold enough to think that, even on Mr. Lee's own data, Southampton's claim can be disposed of. Mr. Lee, although he dates most of the sonnets in 1593–4, assigns the 107th sonnet to the year 1603<sup>1</sup>; it follows that the date of the Envoy (cxxvi), a poem obviously, from its exceptional form, written to conclude the series, must be at least not earlier than 1603, in which year Southampton was thirty years old.

<sup>1</sup> It may be well to state shortly the argument for this date. The palmary line is 'The mortal moon hath her eclipse endured.' The parallel in *Antony and Cleopatra* (iii. 13, 153), 'Our terrene moon is now eclipsed,' which is applied to Cleopatra, shows that 'mortal moon' must refer to a person (and it is not easy to see what other meaning it could have), and that to 'endure an eclipse' means to 'suffer it,' not 'to go through it and emerge.' There is no instance in Shakespeare of 'eclipse' being used with the implied notion of recovery. Mr. Lee (p. 148 ff.) adds other arguments from contemporary sources.

Now is it credible that anyone, even if he were the greatest peer of the realm and the most bountiful patron conceivable, should have been addressed by Shakespeare as a 'lovely boy' when thirty years of age; especially considering the fact that in the sixteenth century life began earlier than now, and ended earlier? Mr. Lee surmounts this difficulty by a theory that the Envoy is addressed not to Southampton, but to Cupid; but this does not seem to me possible. Cupid is immortal or he is nothing; and the point of the Envoy is that mortal beauty must fade at last. Nature may hold back some favourite for a while from the clutches of Time, to whom all things are due, but she must at last come to the audit, and cannot secure her acquittance without surrendering her favourite:

If Nature, sovereign mistress over wrack,  
As thou goest onward, still will pluck thee back,  
She keeps thee to this purpose, that her skill  
May Time disgrace, and envious minutes kill.  
Yet fear her, O thou minion of her pleasure!  
She may detain, but not still [always] keep, her treasure:  
Her audit, though delayed, answered must be,  
And her quietus is to render thee.

Mr. Lee has advanced one new argument for the Southampton theory which, if it could be maintained, would place it for ever beyond cavil. Southampton was released from prison on James's accession in 1603, and 'it is impossible,' says Mr. Lee, 'to resist the inference that Shakespeare [in the 107th sonnet] saluted his patron on the close of his days of tribulation.' The inference seems to me far from irresistible. Indeed, if this sonnet were really an ode of congratulation under such circumstances, Southampton in turn could hardly have congratulated the poet on the fervour of his feelings. For there is no reference in the sonnet to any release from prison, and its crowning thought is that Shakespeare himself, not his friend, has overcome death—a curiously awkward compliment on such a remarkable occasion. Mr. Lee suggests a paraphrase of the opening quatrain which it will not bear.

Not mine own fears, nor the prophetic soul  
Of the wide world, dreaming on things to come,  
Can yet the lease of my true love control,  
Supposed as forfeit to a confined doom.

The words 'my true love' might certainly by themselves be taken, as Mr. Lee takes them, to mean 'my true *friend*,' but 'the lease of my true love' can only mean the 'lease of my true



*affection* for my friend.' All leases are for a term of years ; each has a limit or 'confine' assigned to it, on which day of doom it expires. Shakespeare says that neither his own fears nor the world's prophecies of disastrous changes have justified themselves, for in the year of grace 1603 he finds his affection fresher than ever. But to the friends of Southampton the death of Elizabeth would not have been an occasion of foreboding, but of hope.

But perhaps the most emphatic argument against the identification of Shakespeare's friend with the Earl of Southampton is the non-natural interpretation of certain words and phrases to which it compels its adherents. The publisher, Thomas Thorpe, inscribed his book to 'the only *begetter* of these insuing sonnets, Mr. W. H.'—a phrase that ninety-nine persons out of every hundred, even of those familiar with Elizabethan literature, would unhesitatingly understand to mean their inspirer. But Southampton's initials were H. W. Either, therefore, it must be assumed that the publisher inverted their order as a blind, or else some new sense must be found for 'begetter.' Boswell, the editor of the *Variorum Shakespeare*, who wished to relieve the poet from the imputation of having written the sonnets to any particular person, or as anything but a play of fancy, suggested for the word the sense of 'getter' (which had not occurred to either Steevens or Malone), meaning by that the person who procured the manuscript, and this interpretation has been adopted by Mr. Lee. Such a use of the word is acknowledged to be extremely rare, and the cases alleged are dubious, but it is not impossible. However, against understanding such a sense here there are several strong reasons. In the first place, it takes all meaning from the word *only*. Allowing it to be conceivable that a piratical publisher should inscribe a book of sonnets to the thief who brought him the manuscript, why should he lay stress on the fact that 'alone he did it'? Was it an enterprise of such great peril? Mr. Lee attempts to meet this and similar difficulties by depreciating Thorpe's skill in the use of language ; but the examples he quotes in his interesting Appendix do not support his theory. Thorpe's words are accurately used, even to nicety, and, indeed, Mr. Lee himself owns that in another matter Thorpe showed a 'literary sense' and 'a good deal of dry humour.' I venture to affirm that this dedication also shows a fairly well-developed literary sense. In the next place, this theory of the 'procurer' obliges us to believe that Thorpe wished Mr. W. H. that eternity which the

poet had promised not to him, nor to men in general, but to some undesignated third party. Mr. Lee calls the words '*promised by our ever-living poet*' 'a decorative and supererogatory phrase.' That is a very mild qualification of them under the circumstances. But an examination of Thorpe's other dedications shows that his style was rather sententious than 'supererogatory.' Then, again, on this theory the epithet *well-wishing* also becomes 'supererogatory.' For what it implies is that the adventurous publisher's motive in giving the sonnets to the world without their author's consent was a good one. The person to whom they were written might reasonably expect, though he would not necessarily credit, an assurance on this head; but what would one literary jackal care for another's good intentions? There are other points that might be urged, but these are sufficient. Only, I would add that the whole tone of the dedication, which is respectful, and the unusual absence of a qualifying phrase, such as 'his esteemed friend,' before the initials are against the theory that Mr. W. H. was on the same social level as the publisher.

There is one other point of interpretation upon which the Southampton faction are compelled by their theory to go against probabilities. There are two places in which a play is made upon the name Will, the paronomasia being indicated in the *editio princeps* by italic type, in which that edition, as Mr. Wyndham has shown at length, is very far from being lavish. In one of these places (cxliii), if the pun be allowed at all, it cannot refer to the poet's own name, but must refer to the name of his friend. In this sonnet the 'dark lady,' pursuing the poet's friend while the poet pursues her, is compared to a housewife chasing a chicken and followed by her own crying child. It concludes:

So runn'st thou after that which flies from thee,  
 Whilst I thy babe chase thee afar behind;  
 But if thou catch thy hope, turn back to me,  
 And play the mother's part, kiss me, be kind:  
     So will I pray that thou mayst have thy *Will*,  
     If thou turn back, and my loud crying still.

The word *Will* is printed here in the original text in italics, and the pun is in Shakespeare's manner. The 135th sonnet opens:

Whoever hath her wish, thou hast thy *Will*,  
 And *Will* to boot, and *Will* in overplus;  
 More than enough am I that vex thee still,  
 To thy sweet will making addition thus.



The third Will here must be Shakespeare, because 'Will in overplus' corresponds to 'more than enough am I'; and few critics with the 143rd sonnet also in mind would hesitate to refer the second Will to Shakespeare's friend, for whom the 'dark lady' had been laying snares. But the Southamptonites, who cannot allow that the friend's name was Will, are constrained to deny that there is any pun at all in 143, and to refer that in 135 to the distinction between 'will' in its ordinary sense and 'will' in the sense of 'desire.' But the balance of the line makes it almost necessary that, as 'Will in overplus' must be a proper name, 'Will to boot' should be a proper name also. And that there are more Wills than one concerned in the matter is made more evident still by other passages, where the poet jocosely limits his claim to the lady's favour to the fact that his Christian name is Will, acknowledging that not a few other people have as good a claim as he:

Shall will in others seem right gracious,  
And in my will no fair acceptance shine?

and again:

Let no unkind 'no' fair beseechers kill  
Think all but one, and me in that one, Will.

To attempt, then, in the face of these multiplied improbabilities to maintain that Shakespeare's friend was Lord Southampton is a task worthy of a great advocate, and Mr. Lee's brilliant effort would suggest that the Bar has lost an ornament in his devotion to historical research. I own, nevertheless, that I should prefer to hear him argue the other side.

The theory that the friend addressed in the sonnets was William Herbert, afterwards third Earl of Pembroke, arose inevitably from the letters W. H. of the dedication, as soon as the sonnets themselves began to be studied; and although it cannot be said to have established itself, there are not a few arguments that may be urged in its favour. Herbert was born in 1580, so that he was sixteen years younger than Shakespeare; and he seems to have been of an intellectual temper, likely both to attract and be attracted by the poet. He wrote verses himself, and was inclined, we are told, to melancholy. Dr. Gardiner calls him the Hamlet of James's Court, and there may be more in the phrase than he intended. At any rate, the date of 'Hamlet' is 1602. Pembroke's personal handsomeness is dwelt upon in a sonnet by Francis Davison, the son of Secretary Davison, who, being a gentleman, was less likely than a literary hack to say

the thing that was not. In inscribing to him the 'Poetical Rhapsody' in 1602 he prefixed a sonnet which opens thus :

Great earl, whose high and noble mind is higher  
 And nobler than thy noble high desire ;  
 Whose outward shape, *though it most lovely be,*  
 Doth in fair robes a fairer soul attire. . . .

Considering that the occasion did not call for any reference to the Earl's personal appearance, Davison's statement must be received with attention. Mr. Lee denies that there is any evidence for Pembroke's beauty, and calls this sentence of Davison's 'a cautiously qualified reference'; while, on the other hand, he holds that the Virgilian tag, 'quo non formosior alter Affuit,' which an Oxford wit applied to Southampton, is a satisfactory proof that he came up to Shakespeare's ideal. Surely one passage is as good evidence as the other; and perhaps the fact that both young noblemen were admitted to Elizabeth's favour is better evidence than either. It is perhaps lucky that we have no portrait of Pembroke in youth, for the portrait that Mr. Lee prints of Southampton certainly supports his theory that Shakespeare's praises, supposing them addressed to him, were mere professional flattery. It is interesting that we should have a testimony to Pembroke's 'loveliness' as late as 1602, when he was two-and-twenty, for the use of that epithet—not, surely, a 'cautiously qualified' but a very strong one considering his age—is some argument that he is the person to whom the same epithet is applied in the 126th sonnet, and who is there stated to have retained his youthful looks beyond the usual term. Enthusiasts for the Pembroke theory, like Mr. Tyler and the Rev. W. A. Harrison, have collected from the Sidney Papers all the references they contain to the young lord, and one or two of these lend a certain additional plausibility to the theory. It is discovered, for example, that in 1597 negotiations were on foot to marry Herbert to a daughter of the Earl of Oxford, which came to nothing; and the suggestion has been made that Shakespeare was prompted to help in overcoming the youth's reluctance. It cannot be denied that the opening set of sonnets, while they are in keeping with the age, demand some such background of historical fact; though the situation is one that might have presented itself in any dozen great houses in any one year. Such a theory requires us to assume that Shakespeare was familiar at Wilton, and knew Herbert at home before he



came up to London in the following spring. I do not think this so improbable as it appears to Mr. Lee, for Shakespeare had become famous three years earlier, and Lady Pembroke (Sidney's sister) was renowned for her patronage of poets; moreover Samuel Daniel, who speaks of Wilton as 'that arbour of the Muses,' was himself there at this period as tutor to the young lord; so that Shakespeare's fame is not likely to have been unsounded. As to the probability, we may ask, If Ben Jonson was welcomed at Penshurst, why should not Shakespeare have been received at Wilton? If this were allowed, it might be urged that a friendship begun at Wilton in the boy's impressionable youth was in a natural way continued in London. Of course all this is merely conjecture; but in the extreme paucity of the records I do not think that an argument from silence is conclusive against it. A friendship is an intangible thing, and would make no stir so as to be talked about. It would be absurd to have to conclude that neither Shakespeare nor Pembroke had any friends in London because we cannot give their names. At the same time, it must not be ignored that one weak place in the Pembroke theory is the fact that some of the sonnets were certainly written before 1598, and that the young gentleman did not come to London till that year.

Another weak place in the theory is the mis-description, that it implies, of Lord Pembroke as *Mr. W. H.* It has often been alleged that a parallel case is that of the poet Lord Buckhurst, who is described on title-pages as *Mr. Sackville*; but Mr. Lee has disposed of the parallel by showing that while Lord Buckhurst was a commoner when he wrote his poems, Lord Pembroke had by courtesy always been a peer, and was known to contemporaries in his minority as Lord Herbert. It is perhaps going too far to say that this difficulty renders the Pembroke hypothesis altogether untenable; for there remain two alternative possibilities. It is possible that Thorpe found his manuscript of the Sonnets headed 'To W. H.,' and, being ignorant who W. H. was, supplied the ordinary title of respect. This would be a perfectly fair argument; though I should say that it does not answer to the impression that the terms of the dedication leave on one's mind. (The further question whether the young nobleman would have answered to the name of *Will* instead of to his family title I will not attempt to argue; to friendship all things are possible.) The alternative to Thorpe's ignorance would be that he suppressed his

lordship's title by way of disguise. This also is a fairly legitimate supposition under the circumstances. Mr. Lee argues that for a publisher to have addressed any peer as plain *Mister* would have been defamation and a Star Chamber matter, as it well might if the publisher intended an insult. But in any case the peer would have to set the Star Chamber in motion; and there might be good reasons for not doing so. The terms of the dedication seem to imply that the publisher was not conscious of taking any great liberty. Hence if W. H. is to be interpreted of Pembroke, we shall have to assume that Thorpe had satisfied himself that the dedication would not be resented; for if Thorpe knew the secret, it must have been a fairly open one. If Thorpe had obtained permission to dedicate the Sonnets to Pembroke on condition that his *incognito* was respected—a somewhat difficult supposition—then it is hard to say that 'Mr. W. H.' was an impossible way of referring to him; because, though by courtesy a peer, Herbert was legally a commoner until he succeeded to the earldom in 1601. Those who on the ground of this derogation from Herbert's dignity have denied the possibility of his being the 'begetter' of the Sonnets have perhaps not always given weight enough to the impossibility of dedicating them 'To the Right Honourable William, Earle of Pembroke, Lord Chamberlaine to His Majestie, one of his most honourable Privie Counsell, and Knight of the most noble order of the Garter.' Had Thorpe ventured upon such a dedication as that, I can almost conceive the Star Chamber taking action of its own accord. Still, when special pleading has done its utmost, I am bound to confess that I am not convinced. There is a smug tone about the dedication which suggests that while Mr. W. H. was far above Thorpe's own social position, he was yet something less than so magnificent a personage as the Earl of Pembroke.

The Pembroke party, however, not content with identifying the poet's friend, are determined to find a counterpart in real life to the 'dark lady' who figures so ominously in the sonnets. The number of 'dark ladies' in the capital at any time is legion, and the sonnets supply no possible clue by which the particular person can be identified. The attempt, therefore, to fix upon someone with whom Pembroke is known to have had relations is merely gratuitous; and it rejoices the heart of any sane spectator to learn that this supposed 'dark lady' turns out, when her portraits are examined, to have been conspicuously fair.



Probably, as the portraits seem of unimpeachable pedigree, we shall next be told that the sonnets themselves imply that the lady dyed her hair before sitting for the portrait.

To sum up, then, the results at which the most recent Shakespearean scholarship has arrived. No new light has been gained upon the identity of the rival poet, or the friend to whom the sonnets were addressed. These mysteries remain as dark as ever. The only certain results are negative results. The poet is almost certainly not Chapman, and the friend is quite certainly not Southampton. If the friend were a peer, he must have been Herbert; if he were a commoner, he may have been any young gentleman of good family and large fortune with a taste for the theatre and the flattery of men of genius.<sup>1</sup> It is more important to remember that, whoever he was, we are not yet debarred by Mr. Lee's researches from regarding the sonnets as expressions of real feeling, though, in deference to his proof of the fashionableness of superlatives under Elizabeth, we may be wise to-day in transposing their key a tone lower. If superlatives trouble us, we may recollect that a sonnet, by its very nature, is a 'descant' upon a more simple 'ground.' More important still is it to remember that these sonnets contain some of the finest poetry in the world. Of that nothing has been said in this paper, because it is admitted by all critics; indeed, if it were not for their supreme beauty no one would think them worth disputing over.

<sup>1</sup> Tyrwhitt used to think his name was Hughes because in the 20th sonnet the word *Hews* is printed in italics for no obvious reason. As the line stands in the original edition,

'A man in hew all *Hews* in his controwling,'

it looks momentous; and there is no other word in italics between the 5th sonnet and the 53rd. But on the other hand it must be noted that what chiefly impresses us is the capital letter, and this is found with every word printed in italics throughout the sonnets, so that it is not in itself evidence of a proper name. Further, there is no pun as there is in the sonnets which contain the name 'Will.' Probably the italic is accidental. Mr. Wyndham says of *Hews*, 'if its capital and italics be a freak of the printer, they constitute the only freaks of that kind in the whole edition of 1609' (p. 261). But there is another in the 104th sonnet, where 'autumn' is in italic type and both 'spring' and 'winter' in roman.

*THE FOUR FEATHERS.*<sup>1</sup>

BY A. E. W. MASON.

## CHAPTER IV.

## THE BALL AT LENNON HOUSE.

YET Feversham had travelled to Dublin by the night mail after his ride with Durrance in the Row. He crossed Lough Swilly on the following forenoon by a little cargo steamer, which once a week steamed up the Lennon river as far as Ramelton. On the quayside Ethne was waiting for him in her dog-cart; she gave him the hand and the smile of a comrade.

'You are surprised to see me,' said she, noting the look upon his face.

'I always am,' he replied. 'By so much you exceed my thoughts of you;' and the smile changed upon her face—it became something more than the smile of a comrade.

'I shall drive slowly,' she said as soon as his traps had been packed into the cart; 'I brought no groom on purpose. There will be guests coming to-morrow. We have only to-day.'

She drove along the wide causeway by the river-side, and turned up the steep, narrow street. Feversham sat silently by her side. It was his first visit to Ramelton, and he gazed about him, noting the dark thicket of tall trees which climbed on the far side of the river, the old grey bridge, the noise of the water above it as it sang over shallows, and the drowsy quiet of the town, with a great curiosity and almost a pride of ownership, since it was here that Ethne lived, and all these things were part and parcel of her life.

She was at that time a girl of twenty-one, tall, strong, and supple of limb, and with a squareness of shoulder proportionate to her height. She had none of that exaggerated slope which our grandmothers esteemed, yet she lacked no grace of womanhood on that account, and in her walk she was light-footed as a deer. Her hair was dark brown, and she wore it coiled upon the nape of her neck; a bright colour burned in her cheeks, and her

<sup>1</sup> Copyright, 1901, by A. E. W. Mason in the United States of America.



eyes, of a very clear grey, met the eyes of those to whom she talked with a most engaging frankness. And in character she was the counterpart of her looks. She was honest, she had a certain simplicity, the straightforward simplicity of strength which comprises much gentleness and excludes violence. Of her courage there is a story still told in Ramelton, which Feversham could never remember without a thrill of wonder. She had stopped at a door on that steep hill leading down to the river, and the horse which she was driving took fright at the mere clatter of a pail and bolted. The reins were lying loose at the moment; they fell on the ground before Ethne could seize them. She was thus seated helpless in the dog-cart, and the horse was tearing down to where the road curves sharply over the bridge. The thing which she did, she did quite coolly. She climbed over the front of the dog-cart as it pitched and raced down the hill, and balancing herself along the shafts, reached the reins at the horse's neck, and brought the horse to a stop ten yards from the curve. But she had, too, the defects of her qualities, although Feversham was not yet aware of them.

Ethne during the first part of this drive was almost as silent as her companion, and when she spoke it was with an absent air, as though she had something of more importance in her thoughts. It was not until she had left the town and was out upon the straight undulating road to Letterkenny that she turned quickly to Feversham and uttered it.

'I saw this morning that your regiment was ordered from India to Egypt. You could have gone with it had I not come in your way. There would have been chances of distinction. I have hindered you, and I am very sorry. Of course, you could not know that there was any possibility of your regiment going, but I can understand it is very hard for you to be left behind. I blame myself.'

Feversham sat staring in front of him for a moment. Then he said in a voice suddenly grown hoarse:

'You need not.'

'How can I help it? I blame myself the more,' she continued, 'because I do not see things quite like other women. For instance, supposing that you had gone out, and that the worst had happened, I should have felt very lonely, of course, all my days, but I should have known quite surely that when those days were over, you and I would see much of one another.'

She spoke without any impressive lowering of the voice, but in the steady level tone of one stating the simplest imaginable fact. Feversham caught his breath like a man in pain. But the girl's eyes were upon his face, and he sat still, staring in front of him without so much as a contraction of the forehead. But it seemed that he could not trust himself to answer. He kept his lips closed, and Ethne continued :

'You see I can put up with the absence of the people I care about a little better perhaps than most people. I do not feel that I have lost them at all,' and she cast about for a while as if her thought was difficult to express. 'You know how things happen,' she resumed. 'One toddles along in a dull sort of way, and then suddenly a face springs out from the crowd of one's acquaintances, and you know it at once and certainly for the face of a friend, or rather you recognise it, though you have never seen it before. It is almost as though you had come upon someone long looked for and now gladly recovered. Well, such friends—they are few, no doubt, but after all only the few really count—such friends one does not lose, whether they are absent, or even—dead.'

'Unless,' said Feversham slowly, 'one has made a mistake. Suppose the face in the crowd is a mask, what then? One may make mistakes.'

Ethne shook her head decidedly.

'Of that kind, no. One may seem to have made mistakes, and perhaps for a long while. But in the end one would be proved not to have made them.'

And the girl's implicit faith took hold upon the man and tortured him, so that he could no longer keep silence.

'Ethne,' he cried, 'you don't know——' But at that moment Ethne reined in her horse, laughed, and pointed with her whip.

They had come to the top of a hill a couple of miles from Ramelton. The road ran between stone walls enclosing open fields upon the left, and a wood of oaks and beeches on the right. A scarlet letter-box was built into the left-hand wall, and at that Ethne's whip was pointed.

'I wanted to show you that,' she interrupted. 'It was there I used to post my letters to you during the anxious times.' And so Feversham let slip his opportunity of speech. He looked at the wonderful letter-box, which had once received missives of so high an importance.



‘The house is behind the trees to the right,’ she said.

‘The letter-box is very convenient,’ said Feversham.

‘Yes. I suppose that you and I are the only two people in the British Isles who are satisfied with the Postmaster-General,’ said Ethne, and she drove on and stopped again where the park wall had crumbled.

‘That’s where I used to climb over to post the letters. There’s a tree on the other side of the wall as convenient as the letter-box. I used to run down the half-mile of avenue at night.’

‘There might have been thieves,’ exclaimed Feversham.

‘There were thorns,’ said Ethne, and turning through the gates she drove up to the porch of the long, irregular grey house. ‘Well, we have still a day before the dance.’

‘I suppose the whole countryside is coming,’ said Feversham.

‘It daren’t do anything else,’ said Ethne with a laugh. ‘My father would send the police to fetch them if they stayed away, just as he fetched your friend Mr. Durrance here. By the way, Mr. Durrance has sent me a present—a Guarnerius violin.’

The door opened, and a thin, lank old man with a fierce peaked face like a bird of prey came out upon the steps. His face softened, however, into friendliness when he saw Feversham, and a smile played upon his lips. A stranger might have thought that he winked. But his left eyelid continually drooped over the eye.

‘How do you do?’ he said. ‘Glad to see you. Must make yourself at home. If you want any whisky, stamp twice on the floor with your foot. The servants understand,’ and with that he went straightway back into the house.

The biographer of Dermot Eustace would need to bring a wary mind to his work. For though the old master of Lennon House has not lain twenty years in his grave, he is already swollen into a legendary character. Anecdotes have grown upon his memory like barnacles, and any man in those parts with a knack of invention has only to foist his stories upon Dermot to ensure a ready credence. There are, however, definite facts. He practised an ancient and tyrannous hospitality, keeping open house upon the road to Letterkenny, and forcing bed and board even upon strangers, as Durrance had once discovered. He was a man of another century, who looked out with a glowering, angry eye upon a topsy-turvy world with which he would not be re-

conciled except after much alcohol. He was a sort of intoxicated Coriolanus, believing that the people should be shepherded with a stick, yet always mindful of his manners even to the lowliest of women. It was always said of him with pride by the townsfolk of Ramelton that even at his worst, when he came galloping down the steep cobbled streets, mounted on a big white mare of seventeen hands, with his inseparable collie-dog for his companion—a gaunt, grey-faced, grey-haired man with a drooping eye, swaying with drink, yet by a miracle keeping his saddle—he had never ridden down anyone except a man. There are two points to be added. He was rather afraid of his daughter, who wisely kept him doubtful whether she was displeased with him or not, and he had conceived a great liking for Harry Feversham.

Harry saw little of him that day, however. Dermot retired into the room which he was pleased to call his office, while Feversham and Ethne spent the afternoon fishing for salmon in the Lennon river. It was an afternoon restful as a Sabbath, and the very birds were still. From the house the lawns fell steeply, shaded by trees and dappled by the sunlight, to a valley, at the bottom of which flowed the river swift and black under overarching boughs. There was a fall, where the water slid over rocks with a smoothness so unbroken that it looked solid except just at one point. There a spur stood sharply up and the river broke back upon itself in an amber wave through which the sun shone. Opposite this spur they sat for a long while, talking at times, but for the most part listening to the roar of the water, and watching its perpetual flow. And at last the sunset came, and the long shadows. They stood up, looked at each other with a smile, and so walked slowly back to the house. It was an afternoon which Feversham was long to remember. For the next night was the night of the dance, and as the band struck up the opening bars of the fourth waltz, Ethne left her position at the drawing-room door, and taking Feversham's arm passed out into the hall.

The hall was empty and the front door stood open to the cool of the summer night. From the ballroom came the swaying lilt of the music and the beat of the dancers' feet. Ethne drew a breath of relief at her reprieve from her duties, and then, dropping her partner's arm, crossed to a side table.

'The post is in,' she said. 'There are letters, one, two, three for you, and a little box.'

She held the box out to him as she spoke, a little white



jeweller's cardboard box, and was at once struck by its absence of weight.

'It must be empty,' she said.

Yet it was most carefully sealed and tied. Feversham broke the seals and unfastened the string. He looked at the address. The box had been forwarded from his lodgings and he was not familiar with the handwriting.

'There is some mistake,' he said as he shook the lid open, and then he stopped abruptly. Three white feathers fluttered out of the box, swayed and rocked for a moment in the air, and then, one after another, settled gently down upon the floor. They lay like flakes of snow upon the dark polished boards. But they were not whiter than Harry Feversham's cheeks. He stood and stared at the feathers until he felt a light touch upon his arm. He looked and saw Ethne's gloved hand upon his sleeve.

'What does it mean?' she asked. There was some perplexity in her voice, but nothing more than perplexity. The smile upon her face and the loyal confidence of her eyes showed she had never a doubt that his first word would lift it from her. 'What does it mean?'

'That there are things which cannot be hid, I suppose,' said Feversham.

For a little while Ethne did not speak. The languorous music floated into the hall, and the trees whispered from the garden through the open door. Then she shook his arm gently, uttered a breathless little laugh, and spoke as though she were pleading with a child.

'I don't think you understand, Harry. Here are three white feathers. They were sent to you in jest? Oh, of course in jest. But it is a cruel kind of jest——'

'They were sent in deadly earnest.'

He spoke now, looking her straight in the eyes. Ethne dropped her hand from his sleeve.

'Who sent them?' she asked.

Feversham had not given a thought to that matter. The message was all in all, the men who had sent it so unimportant. But Ethne reached out her hand and took the box from him. There were three visiting cards lying at the bottom, and she took them out and read them aloud.

'Captain Trench, Mr. Castleton, Mr. Willoughby. Do you know these men?'

‘All three are officers of my old regiment.’

The girl was dazed. She knelt down upon the floor and gathered the feathers into her hand with a vague thought that merely to touch them would help her to comprehension. They lay upon the palm of her white glove, and she blew gently upon them and they swam up into the air and hung fluttering and rocking. As they floated downwards she caught them again, and so she slowly felt her way to another question.

‘Were they justly sent?’ she asked.

‘Yes,’ said Harry Feversham.

He had no thought of denial or evasion. He was only aware that the dreadful thing for so many years dreadfully anticipated had at last befallen him. He was known for a coward. The word which had long blazed upon the wall of his thoughts in letters of fire was now written large in the public places. He stood as he had once stood before the portraits of his fathers, mutely accepting condemnation. It was the girl who denied, as she still kneeled upon the floor.

‘I do not believe that is true,’ she said. ‘You could not look me in the face so steadily were it true. Your eyes would seek the floor, not mine.’

‘Yet it is true.’

‘Three little white feathers,’ she said slowly, and then with a sob in her throat. ‘This afternoon we were under the elms down by the Lennon river—do you remember, Harry?—just you and I. And then come three little white feathers; and the world’s at an end.’

‘Oh don’t!’ cried Harry, and his voice broke upon the word. Up till now he had spoken with a steadiness matching the steadiness of his eyes. But these last words of hers, the picture which they evoked in his memories, the pathetic simplicity of her utterance caught him by the heart. But Ethne seemed not to hear the appeal. She was listening with her face turned towards the ball-room. The chatter and laughter of the voices there grew louder and nearer. She understood that the music had ceased. She rose quickly to her feet, clenching the feathers in her hand, and opened a door. It was the door of her sitting-room.

‘Come,’ she said.

Harry followed her into the room, and she closed the door, shutting out the noise.

‘Now,’ she said, ‘will you tell me, if you please, why the feathers have been sent?’



She stood quietly before him ; her face was pale, but Feversham could not gather from her expression any feeling which she might have beyond a desire and a determination to get at the truth. She spoke, too, with the same quietude. He answered, as he had answered before, directly, and to the point, without any attempt at mitigation.

‘A telegram came. It was sent by Castleton. It reached me when Captain Trench and Mr. Willoughby were dining with me. It told me that my regiment would be ordered on active service in Egypt. Castleton was dining with a man likely to know, and I did not question the accuracy of his message. He told me to tell Trench. I did not. I thought the matter over with the telegram in front of me. Castleton was leaving that night for Scotland, and he would go straight from Scotland to rejoin the regiment. He would not, therefore, see Trench for some weeks at the earliest, and by that time the telegram would very likely be forgotten, or its date confused. I did not tell Trench. I threw the telegram into the fire, and that night sent in my papers. But Trench found out somehow. Durrance was at dinner, too—good God, Durrance ! He suddenly broke out. ‘Most likely he knows like the rest.’

It came upon him as something shocking and strangely new that his friend Durrance, who, as he knew very well, had been wont rather to look up to him, in all likelihood counted him a thing of scorn. But he heard Ethne speaking. After all, what did it matter whether Durrance knew, whether every man knew from the South Pole to the North, since she, Ethne, knew.

‘And is this all?’ she asked.

‘Surely it is enough,’ said he.

‘I think not,’ she answered, and she lowered her voice a little as she went on. ‘We agreed, didn’t we, that no foolish misunderstandings should ever come between us. We were to be frank, and to take frankness each from the other without offence. So be frank with me ! Please !’ and she pleaded. ‘I could, I think, claim it as a right. At all events I ask for it as I shall never ask for anything else in all my life.’

There was a sort of explanation of his act, Harry Feversham remembered. But it was so futile when compared with the overwhelming consequence. Ethne had unclenched her hands, the three feathers lay before his eyes upon the table. They could not be explained away ; he wore ‘coward’ like a blind man’s label ; besides, he could never make her understand. However,

she wished for the explanation, and had a right to it; she had been generous in asking for it, with a generosity not very common amongst women. So Feversham gathered his wits and explained:

‘All my life I have been afraid that some day I should play the coward, and from the very first I knew that I was destined for the army. I kept my fear to myself. There was no one to whom I could tell it. My mother was dead, and my father——’ he stopped for a moment with a deep intake of the breath. He could see his father, that lonely iron man, sitting at this very moment in his mother’s favourite seat upon the terrace, and looking over the moonlit fields towards the Sussex Downs; he could imagine him dreaming of honours and distinctions worthy of the Fevershams to be gained immediately by his son in the Egyptian campaign. Surely that old man’s stern heart would break beneath this blow! The magnitude of the bad thing which he had done, the misery which it would spread, were becoming very clear to Harry Feversham. He dropped his head between his hands and groaned aloud.

‘My father,’ he resumed, ‘would, nay, could never have understood. I know him. When danger came his way it found him ready, but he did not foresee. That was my trouble always. I foresaw. Any peril to be encountered, any risk to be run—I foresaw them. I foresaw something else besides. My father would talk in his matter-of-fact way of the hours of waiting before the actual commencement of a battle, after the troops had been paraded. The mere anticipation of the suspense and the strain of those hours was a torture to me. I foresaw the possibility of cowardice. Then one evening, when my father had his old friends about him on one of his Crimean nights, two dreadful stories were told—one of an officer, the other of a surgeon, who had both shirked. I was now confronted with the fact of cowardice. I took those stories up to bed with me. They never left my memory; they became a part of me. I saw myself behaving now as one, now as the other of those two men had behaved, perhaps in the crisis of a battle bringing ruin upon my country, certainly dishonouring my father and all the dead men whose portraits hung ranged in the hall. I tried to get the best of my fears. I hunted, but with a map of the countryside in my mind. I foresaw every hedge, every pit, every treacherous bank.’



‘Yet you rode straight,’ interrupted Ethne. ‘Mr. Durrance told me so.’

‘Did I?’ said Feversham vaguely. ‘Well, perhaps I did, once the hounds were off. Durrance never knew what the moments of waiting before the covers were drawn meant to me! So when this telegram came I took the chance it seemed to offer and resigned.’

So he ended his explanation. He had spoken warily, having something to conceal. However earnestly she might ask for frankness, he must at all costs, for her sake, hide something from her. But at once she suspected it.

‘Were you afraid too of disgracing me? Was I in any way the cause that you resigned?’

Feversham looked her in the eyes and lied:

‘No.’

‘If you had not been engaged to me you would still have sent in your papers?’

‘Yes.’

Ethne slowly stripped a glove off her hand. Feversham turned away.

‘I think that I am rather like your father,’ she said. ‘I don’t understand’; and in the silence which followed upon her words Feversham heard something whirr and rattle upon the table. He looked and saw that she had slipped her engagement ring off her finger. It lay upon the table, the stones winking at him.

‘And all this—all that you have told to me,’ she exclaimed suddenly, with her face very stern, ‘you would have hidden from me. You would have married me and hidden it had not these three feathers come?’

The words had been on her lips from the beginning, but she had not uttered them lest by a miracle he should after all have some unimagined explanation which would re-establish him in her thoughts. She had given him every chance. Now, however, she struck and laid bare the worst of his disloyalty. Feversham flinched, and he did not answer, but allowed his silence to consent. Ethne, however, was just; she was in a way curious too: she wished to know the very bottom of the matter before she thrust it into the back of her mind.

‘But yesterday,’ she said, ‘you were going to tell me something. I stopped you to point out the letter-box,’ and she laughed in a queer empty way. ‘Was it about the feathers?’

‘Yes,’ answered Feversham wearily. What did these persistent questions matter, since the feathers had come, since her ring lay flickering and winking on the table. ‘Yes, I think what you were saying rather compelled me.’

‘I remember,’ said Ethne, interrupting him rather hastily, ‘about seeing much of one another—afterwards. We will not speak of such things again,’ and Feversham swayed upon his feet as though he would fall. ‘I remember, too, you said one could make mistakes. You were right, I was wrong. One can do more than seem to make them. Will you, if you please, take back your ring?’

Feversham picked up the ring and held it in the palm of his hand, standing very still. He had never cared for her so much, he had never recognised her value so thoroughly as at this moment when he lost her. She gleamed in the quiet room, wonderful, most wonderful, from the bright flowers in her hair to the white slipper on her foot. It was incredible to him that he should ever have won her. Yet he had, and disloyally had lost her. Then her voice broke in again upon his reflections.

‘These, too, are yours. Will you take them please?’

She was pointing with her fan to the feathers upon the table. Feversham obediently reached out his hand, and then drew it back in surprise.

‘There are four,’ he said.

Ethne did not reply, and looking at her fan Feversham understood. It was a fan of ivory and white feathers. She had broken off one of those feathers and added it on her own account to the three.

The thing which she had done was cruel, no doubt. But she wished to make an end—a complete, irrevocable end; though her voice was steady, and her face, despite its pallor, calm, she was really tortured with humiliation and pain. All the details of Harry Feversham’s courtship, the interchange of looks, the letters she had written and received, the words which had been spoken, tingled and smarted unbearably in her recollections. Their lips had touched—she recalled it with horror. She desired never to see Harry Feversham after this night. Therefore she added her fourth feather to the three.

Harry Feversham took the feathers as she bade him, without a word of remonstrance, and indeed with a sort of dignity which even at that moment surprised her. All the time, too, he had



kept his eyes steadily upon hers, he had answered her questions simply, there had been nothing abject in his manner; so that Ethne already almost began to regret this last thing which she had done. However, it *was* done. Feversham had taken the four feathers.

He held them in his fingers as though he was about to tear them across. But he checked the action. He looked suddenly towards her, and kept his eyes upon her face for some little while. Then very carefully he put the feathers into his breast pocket. Ethne at this time did not consider why. She only thought that here was the irrevocable end.

'We should be going back, I think,' she said. 'We have been some time away. Will you give me your arm?' In the hall she looked at the clock. 'Only eleven o'clock,' she said, wearily. 'When we dance here, we dance till daylight. We must show brave faces until daylight.'

And, with her hand resting upon his arm, they passed into the ball-room.

---

## CHAPTER V.

### THE PARIAH.

HABIT assisted them; the irresponsible chatter of the ball-room sprang automatically to their lips; the appearance of enjoyment never failed from off their faces; so that no one at Lennon House that night suspected that any swift cause of severance had come between them. Harry Feversham watched Ethne laugh and talk as though she had never a care, and was perpetually surprised, taking no thought that he wore the like mask of gaiety himself. When she swung past him the light rhythm of her feet almost persuaded him that her heart was in the dance. It seemed that she could even command the colour upon her cheeks. Thus they both wore brave faces as she had bidden. They even danced together. But all the while Ethne was conscious that she was holding up a great load of pain and humiliation which would presently crush her, and Feversham felt those four feathers burning at his breast. It was wonderful to him that the whole company did not know of them. He never approached a partner without the notion that she would turn upon him with the contemptuous name which was his upon her tongue. Yet he felt no

fear on that account. He would not indeed have cared had it happened, had the word been spoken. He had lost Ethne. He watched her and looked in vain amongst her guests, as indeed he surely knew he would, for a fit comparison. There were women, pretty, graceful, even beautiful, but Ethne stood apart by the particular character of her beauty. The broad forehead, the perfect curve of the eyebrows; the great steady, clear, grey eyes, the full red lips which could dimple into tenderness and shut level with resolution, and the royal grace of her carriage, marked her out to Feversham's thinking, and would do so in any company. He watched her in a despairing amazement that he had ever had a chance of owning her.

Only once did her endurance fail her and then only for a second. She was dancing with Feversham and as she looked towards the windows she saw that the daylight was beginning to show very pale and cold upon the other side of the blinds.

'Look!' she said, and Feversham suddenly felt all her weight upon his arms. Her face lost its colour and grew tired and very grey. Her eyes shut tightly and then opened again. He thought that she would faint. 'The morning at last!' she exclaimed, and then in a voice as weary as her face, 'I wonder whether it is right that one should suffer so much pain.'

'Hush!' whispered Feversham, 'Courage! A few minutes more—only a very few!' He stopped and stood in front of her until her strength returned.

'Thank you!' she said gratefully and the bright wheel of the dance caught them again.

It was strange that he should be exhorting her to courage, she thanking him for help, but the irony of this queer momentary reversal of their position occurred to neither of them. Ethne was too tried by the strain of those last hours, and Feversham had learned from that one failure of her endurance, from the drawn aspect of her face and the depths of pain in her eyes, how deeply he had wounded her. He no longer said, 'I have lost her,' he no longer thought of his loss at all. He heard her words: 'I wonder whether it is right that one should suffer so much pain.' He felt that they would go ringing down the world with him, persistent in his ears, spoken upon the very accent of her voice. He was sure that he would hear them at the end above the voices of any who should stand about him when he died, and hear in them his condemnation. For it was not right.



The ball finished shortly afterwards. The last carriage drove away and those who were staying in the house sought the smoking-room or went upstairs to bed according to their sex. Feversham, however, lingered in the hall with Ethne. She understood why.

'There is no need,' she said, standing with her back to him as she lighted a candle, 'I have told my father. I told him everything.'

Feversham bowed his head in acquiescence.

'Still, I must wait and see him,' he said.

Ethne did not object, but she turned and looked at him quickly with her brows drawn in a frown of perplexity. To wait for her father under such circumstances seemed to argue a certain courage. Indeed, she herself felt some apprehension as she heard the door of the study open and Dermod's footsteps on the floor. Dermod walked straight up to Harry Feversham, looking for once in a way what he was, a very old man, and stood there staring into Feversham's face with a muddled and bewildered expression. Twice he opened his mouth to speak, but no words came. In the end he turned to the table and lit his candle and Harry Feversham's. Then he turned back towards Feversham, and rather quickly, so that Ethne took a step forward as if to get between them. But he did nothing more than stare at Feversham again and for a long time. Finally, he took up his candle.

'Well——' he said and stopped. He snuffed the wick with the scissors and began again. 'Well——' he said and stopped again. Apparently his candle had not helped him to any suitable expressions. He stared into the flame now instead of into Feversham's face and for an equal length of time. He could think of nothing whatever to say, and yet he was conscious that something must be said. In the end he said in a lame way:

'If you want any whisky stamp twice on the floor with your foot. The servants understand.'

Thereupon he walked heavily up the stairs. The old man's forbearance was perhaps not the least part of Harry Feversham's punishment.

It was broad daylight when Ethne was at last alone within her room. She drew up the blinds and opened the windows wide. The cool fresh air of the morning was as a draught of spring water

to her. She looked out upon a world as yet unilluminated by colours and found therein an image of her days to come. The dark, tall trees looked black; the winding paths a singular dead white; the very lawns were dull and grey, though the dew lay upon them like a network of frost. It was a noisy world, however, for all its aspect of quiet. For the blackbirds were calling from the branches and the grass, and down beneath the overhanging trees the Lennon flowed in music between its banks. Ethne drew back from the window. She had much to do that morning before she slept. For she designed with her natural thoroughness to make an end at once of all her associations with Harry Feversham. She wished that from the moment when next she waked she might never come across a single thing which could recall him to her memory. And with a sort of stubborn persistence she went about the work.

But she changed her mind. In the very process of collecting together the gifts which he had made to her she changed her mind. For each gift that she looked upon had its history, and the days before this miserable night had darkened on her happiness came one by one slowly back to her as she looked. She determined to keep one thing which had belonged to Harry Feversham, a small thing, a thing of no value. At first she chose a penknife, which he had once lent to her and she had forgotten to return. But the next instant she dropped it and rather hurriedly. For she was after all an Irish girl, and though she did not believe in superstitions, where superstitions were concerned she preferred to be on the safe side. She selected his likeness in the end and locked it away in a drawer.

The rest of his presents she gathered together, packed them carefully in a box, fastened the box, addressed it and carried it down to the hall, that the servants might despatch it in the morning. Then coming back to her room she took his letters, made a little pile of them on the hearth and set them alight. They took some while to consume, but she waited, sitting upright in her armchair while the flame crept from sheet to sheet, discolouring the paper, blackening the writing like a stream of ink, and leaving in the end only flakes of ashes like feathers, and white flakes like white feathers. The last sparks were barely extinguished when she heard a cautious step on the gravel beneath her window.

It was broad daylight, but her candle was still burning on



the table at her side, and with a quick instinctive movement she reached out her arm and put the light out. Then she sat very still and rigid, listening. For awhile she heard only the black-birds calling from the trees in the garden and the throbbing music of the river. Afterwards she heard the footsteps again, cautiously retreating; and in spite of her will, in spite of her formal disposal of the letters and the presents, she was mastered all at once, not by pain or humiliation, but by an overpowering sense of loneliness. She seemed to be seated high on an empty world of ruins. She rose quickly from her chair, and her eyes fell upon a violin case. With a sigh of relief she opened it, and a little while after one or two of the guests who were sleeping in the house chanced to wake up and heard floating down the corridors the music of a violin played very lovingly and low. Ethne was not aware that the violin which she held was the Guarnerius violin which Durrance had sent to her. She only understood that she had a companion to share her loneliness.

---

## CHAPTER VI.

### HARRY FEVERSHAM'S PLAN.

It was the night of August 30. A month had passed since the ball at Lennon House, but the uneventful country side of Donegal was still busy with the stimulating topic of Harry Feversham's disappearance. The townsmen in the climbing street and the gentry at their dinner-tables gossiped to their hearts' contentment. It was asserted that Harry Feversham had been seen on the very morning after the dance, and at five minutes to six—though according to Mrs. Brien O'Brien it was ten minutes past the hour—still in his dress clothes and with a white suicide's face, hurrying along the causeway by the Lennon Bridge. It was suggested that a drag-net would be the only way to solve the mystery. Mr. Dennis Rafferty, who lived on the road to Rathmullen, indeed, went so far as to refuse salmon on the plea that he was not a cannibal, and the saying had a general vogue. Their conjectures as to the cause of the disappearance were no nearer to the truth. For there were only two who knew, and those two went steadily about the business of living as though no catastrophe had befallen them. They held their heads a trifle

more proudly perhaps. Ethne might have become a little more gentle, Dermod a little more irascible, but these were the only changes. So gossip had the field to itself.

But Harry Feversham was in London, as Lieutenant Sutch discovered on the night of the 30th. All that day the town had been perturbed by rumours of a great battle fought at Kassassin in the desert east of Ismailia. Messengers had raced ceaselessly through the streets, shouting tidings of victory and tidings of disaster. There had been a charge by moonlight of General Drury-Lowe's Cavalry Brigade, which had rolled up Arabi's left flank and captured his guns. It was rumoured that an English general had been killed, that the York and Lancaster Regiment had been cut up. London was uneasy, and at eleven o'clock at night a great crowd of people had gathered in Pall Mall, watching with pale upturned faces the lighted blinds of the War Office. The crowd was silent and impressively still. Only if a figure moved for an instant across the blinds a thrill of expectation passed from man to man, and the crowd swayed in a continuous movement from edge to edge. Lieutenant Sutch, careful of his wounded leg, was standing on the outskirts with his back to the parapet of the Junior Carlton Club, when he felt himself touched upon the arm. He saw Harry Feversham at his side. Feversham's face was working and extraordinarily white, his eyes were bright like the eyes of a man in a fever, and Sutch at the first was not sure that he knew or cared who it was to whom he talked.

'I might have been out there in Egypt to-night,' said Harry in a quick troubled voice. 'Think of it! I might have been out there, sitting by a camp-fire in the desert, talking over the battle with Jack Durrance; or dead perhaps. What would it have mattered? I might have been in Egypt to-night!'

Feversham's unexpected appearance, no less than his wandering tongue, told Sutch that somehow his fortunes had gone seriously wrong. He had many questions in his mind, but he did not ask a single one of them. He took Feversham's arm and led him straight out of the throng.

'I saw you in the crowd,' continued Feversham. 'I thought that I would speak to you, because—do you remember, a long time ago you gave me your card? I have always kept it because I have always feared that I would have reason to use it. You said that if one was in trouble, the telling might help.'



Sutch stopped his companion.

'We will go in here. We can find a quiet corner in the upper smoking-room;' and Harry looking up, saw that he was standing by the steps of the Army and Navy Club.

'Good God, not there!' he cried in a sharp low voice, and moved quickly into the roadway, where no light fell directly on his face. Sutch limped after him. 'Nor to-night. It is late. To-morrow if you will, in some quiet place, and after nightfall. I do not go out in the daylight.'

Again Lieutenant Sutch asked no questions.

'I know a quiet restaurant,' he said. 'If we dine there at nine we shall meet no one whom we know. I will meet you just before nine to-morrow night at the corner of Swallow Street.'

They dined together accordingly on the following evening at a table in the corner of the Criterion grill-room. Feversham looked quickly about him as he entered the room.

'I dine here often when I am in town,' said Sutch. 'Listen!' The throbbing of the engines working the electric light could be distinctly heard, their vibrations could be felt.

'It reminds me of a ship,' said Sutch with a smile. 'I can almost fancy myself in the gunroom again. We will have dinner. Then you shall tell me your story.'

'You have heard nothing of it?' asked Feversham suspiciously.

'Not a word,' and Feversham drew a breath of relief. It had seemed to him that everyone must know. He imagined contempt on every face which passed him in the street.

Lieutenant Sutch was even more concerned this evening than he had been the night before. He saw Harry Feversham clearly now in a full light. Harry's face was thin and haggard with lack of sleep, there were black hollows beneath his eyes; he drew his breath and made his movements in a restless feverish fashion, his nerves seemed strung to breaking point. Once or twice between the courses he began his story, but Sutch would not listen until the cloth was cleared.

'Now,' said he, holding out his cigar-case. 'Take your time, Harry.'

Thereupon Feversham told him the whole truth, without exaggeration or omission, forcing himself to a slow, careful, matter-of-fact speech, so that in the end Sutch almost fell into the illusion that it was just the story of a stranger which Feversham

was recounting merely to pass the time. He began with the Crimean night at Broad Place, and ended with the ball at Lennon House.

‘I came back across Lough Swilly early that morning,’ he said in conclusion, ‘and travelled at once to London. Since then I have stayed in my rooms all day, listening to the bugles calling in the barrack-yard beneath my windows. At night I prowls about the streets or lie in bed waiting for the Westminster clock to tell each new quarter of an hour. On foggy nights, too, I can hear steam-sirens on the river. Do you know when the ducks start quacking in St. James’s Park?’ he asked with a laugh. ‘At two o’clock to the minute.’

Sutch listened to the story without an interruption. But half way through its narrative he changed his attitude, and in a significant way. Up to the moment when Harry told of his concealment of the telegram, Sutch had sat with his arms upon the table in front of him, and his eyes upon his companion. Thereafter he raised a hand to his forehead, and so remained with his face screened while the rest was told. Feversham had no doubt of the reason. Lieutenant Sutch wished to conceal the scorn he felt, and could not trust the muscles of his face. Feversham, however, mitigated nothing, but continued steadily and truthfully to the end. But even after the end was reached Sutch did not remove his hand, nor for some little while did he speak. When he did speak, his words came upon Feversham’s ears with a shock of surprise. There was no contempt in them, and though his voice shook, it shook with a great contrition.

‘I am much to blame,’ he said. ‘I should have spoken that night at Broad Place, and I held my tongue. I shall hardly forgive myself.’ The knowledge that it was Muriel Graham’s son who had thus brought ruin and disgrace upon himself was uppermost in the lieutenant’s mind. He felt that he had failed in the discharge of an obligation, self-imposed no doubt, but a very real obligation none the less. ‘You see, I understood,’ he continued remorsefully. ‘Your father, I am afraid, never would.’

‘He never will,’ interrupted Harry.

‘No,’ Sutch agreed. ‘Your mother, of course, had she lived would have seen clearly, but few women, I think, except your mother. Brute courage! Women make a god of it. That girl, for instance——’ and again Harry Feversham interrupted.

‘You must not blame her. I was defrauding her into marriage.’



Sutch took his hand suddenly from his forehead.

‘Suppose that you had never met her, would you still have sent in your papers?’

‘I think not,’ said Harry slowly. ‘I want to be fair. Disgracing my name and those dead men in the hall I think I would have risked. I could not risk disgracing her.’

And Lieutenant Sutch thumped his fist despairingly upon the table. ‘If only I had spoken at Broad Place. Harry, why didn’t you let me speak? I might have saved you many unnecessary years of torture. Good heavens! what a childhood you must have spent with that fear all alone with you. It makes me shiver to think of it. I might even have saved you from this last catastrophe. For I understood. I understood.’

Lieutenant Sutch saw more clearly into the dark places of Harry Feversham’s mind than Harry Feversham did himself; and because he saw so clearly, he could feel no contempt. The long years of childhood, and boyhood, and youth, lived apart in Broad Place in the presence of the uncomprehending father and the relentless dead men on the walls had done the harm. There had been no one in whom the boy could confide. The fear of cowardice had sapped incessantly at his heart. He had walked about with it; he had taken it with him to his bed. It had haunted his dreams. It had been his perpetual menacing companion. It had kept him from intimacy with his friends lest an impulsive word should betray him. Lieutenant Sutch did not wonder that in the end it had brought about this irretrievable mistake. For Lieutenant Sutch understood.

‘Did you ever read “Hamlet?”’ he asked.

‘Of course,’ said Harry in reply.

‘Ah, but did you consider it? The same disability is clear in that character. The thing which he foresaw, which he thought over, which he imagined in the act and in the consequence—that he shrank from, upbraiding himself even as you have done. Yet when the moment of action comes, sharp and immediate, does he fail? No, he excels, and just by reason of that foresight. I have seen men in the Crimea, tortured by their imaginations before the fight—once the fight had begun you must search amongst the Oriental fanatics for their match, “Am I a coward?” Do you remember the lines?

Am I a coward?

Who calls me villain? Breaks my pate across?  
Plucks off my beard, and blows it in my face?

There's the case in a nutshell. If only I had spoken on that night !'

One or two people passed the table on the way out. Sutch stopped and looked round the room. It was nearly empty. He glanced at his watch and saw that the hour was eleven. Some plan of action must be decided upon that night. It was not enough to hear Harry Feversham's story. There still remained the question, what was Harry Feversham, disgraced and ruined, now to do? How was he to recreate his life? How was the secret of his disgrace to be most easily concealed?

'You cannot stay in London, hiding by day, slinking about by night,' he said with a shiver. 'That's too like——' and he checked himself. Feversham, however, completed the sentence.

'That's too like Wilmington,' said he quietly, recalling the story which his father had told so many years ago, and which he had never forgotten even for a single day. 'But Wilmington's end will not be mine. Of that I can assure you. I shall not stay in London.'

He spoke with an air of decision. He had indeed mapped out already the plan of action concerning which Lieutenant Sutch was so disturbed. Sutch, however, was occupied with his own thoughts.

'Who know of the feathers? How many people?' he asked. 'Give me their names.'

'Trench, Castleton, Willoughby,' began Feversham.

'All three are in Egypt. Besides, for the credit of their regiment they are likely to hold their tongues when they return. Who else?'

'Dermod Eustace and—and—Ethne.'

'They will not speak.'

'You, Durrance perhaps, and my father.'

Sutch leaned back in his chair and stared.

'Your father! You wrote to him?'

'No. I went into Surrey and told him.'

Again remorse for that occasion, recognised and not used, seized upon Lieutenant Sutch.

'Why didn't I speak that night?' he said impotently. 'A coward, and you go quietly down to Surrey and confront your father with that story to tell to him! You do not even write! You stand up and tell it to him face to face. Harry, I reckon myself as good as another when it comes to bravery, but for the life of me I could not have done that.'



'It was not—pleasant,' said Feversham simply; and this was the only description of the interview between father and son which was vouchsafed to anyone. But Lieutenant Sutch knew the father and knew the son. He could guess at all which that one adjective implied. Harry Feversham told the results of his journey into Surrey.

'My father continues my allowance. I shall need it, every penny of it—otherwise, I should have taken nothing. But I am not to go home again. I did not mean to go home for a long while in any case, if at all.'

He drew his pocket-book from his breast, and took from it the four white feathers. These he laid before him on the table.

'You have kept them?' exclaimed Sutch.

'Indeed I treasure them,' said Harry quietly. 'That seems strange to you. To you they are the symbols of my disgrace. To me they are much more. They are my opportunities of retrieving it.' He looked about the room, separated three of the feathers, pushed them forward a little on the table-cloth, and then leaned across towards Sutch.

'What if I could compel Trench, Castleton, and Willoughby to take back from me, each one of them, the feather he sent? I do not say that it is likely. I do not say even that it is possible. But there is a chance that it may be possible, and I must wait upon that chance. There will be few men leading active lives as these three do who do not at some moment stand in great peril and great need. To be in readiness for that moment is from now my career. All three are in Egypt. I leave for Egypt to-morrow.'

Upon the face of Lieutenant Sutch there came a look of great and unexpected happiness. Here was an issue of which he had never thought, and it was the only issue, as he knew for certain, once he was aware of it. This student of human nature disregarded without a scruple the prudence and the calculation proper to the character which he assumed. The obstacles in Harry Feversham's way, the possibility that at the last moment he might shrink again, the improbability that three such opportunities would occur—these matters he overlooked. His eyes already shone with pride, the three feathers for him were already taken back. The prudence was on Harry Feversham's side.

'There are endless difficulties,' he said. 'Just to cite one.'

I am a civilian, these three are soldiers, surrounded by soldiers ; so much the less opportunity therefore for a civilian.'

'But it is not necessary that the three men should be themselves in peril,' objected Sutch, 'for you to convince them that the fault is retrieved.'

'Oh no. There may be other ways,' agreed Feversham. 'The plan came suddenly into my mind, indeed at the moment when Ethne bade me take up the feathers, and added the fourth. I was on the point of tearing them across when this way out of it sprang clearly up in my mind. But I have thought it over since during these last weeks while I sat listening to the bugles in the barrack yard. And I am sure there is no other way. But it is well worth trying. You see, if the three take back their feathers'—he drew a deep breath, and in a very low voice, with his eyes upon the table so that his face was hidden from Sutch, he added—'why, then she perhaps might take hers back too.'

'Will she wait, do you think?' asked Sutch; and Harry raised his head quickly.

'Oh no,' he exclaimed, 'I had no thought of that. She has not even a suspicion of what I intend to do. Nor do I wish her to have one until the intention is fulfilled. My thought was different'—and he began to speak with hesitation for the first time in the course of that evening. 'I find it difficult to tell you—Ethne said something to me the day before the feathers came—something rather sacred. I think that I will tell you, because what she said is just what sends me out upon this errand. But for her words, I would very likely never have thought of it. I find in them my motive and a great hope. They may seem strange to you, Lieutenant Sutch. But I ask you to believe that they are very real to me. She said—it was when she knew no more than that my regiment was ordered to Egypt; she was blaming herself because I had resigned my commission, for which there was no need, because—and these were her words—because had I fallen, although she would have felt lonely all her life, she would none the less have surely known that she and I would see much of one another—afterwards.'

Feversham had spoken his words with difficulty, not looking at his companion, and he continued with his eyes still averted :

'Do you understand? I have a hope that if—this can be set right'—and he pointed to the feathers—'we might still, perhaps, see something of one another—afterwards.'



It was a strange proposition, no doubt, to be debated across the soiled table-cloth of a public restaurant, but neither of them felt it strange or even fanciful. They were dealing with the simple serious issues, and they had reached a point where they could not be affected by any incongruity in their surroundings. Lieutenant Sutch did not speak for some while after Harry Feversham had done, and in the end Harry looked up at his companion, prepared for almost a word of ridicule. But he saw Sutch's right hand outstretched towards him.

'When I come back,' said Feversham, and he rose from his chair. He gathered the feathers together and replaced them in his pocket-book.

'I have told you everything,' he said. 'You see, I wait upon chance opportunities; the three may not come in Egypt. They may never come at all, and in that case I shall not come back at all. Or they may come only at the very end and after many years. Therefore I thought that I would like just one person to know the truth thoroughly in case I do not come back. If you hear definitely that I never can come back, I would be glad if you would tell my father.'

'I understand,' said Sutch.

'But don't tell him everything—I mean not the last part—not what I have just said about Ethne and my chief motive. For I do not think that he would understand. Otherwise you will keep silence altogether. Promise!'

Lieutenant Sutch promised, but with an absent face, and Feversham consequently insisted.

'You will breathe no word of this, to man or woman, however hard you may be pressed, except to my father under the circumstances which I have explained,' said Feversham.

Lieutenant Sutch promised a second time and without an instant's hesitation. It was quite natural that Harry should lay some stress upon the pledge, since any disclosure of his purpose might very well wear the appearance of a foolish boast, and Sutch himself saw no reason why he should refuse it. So he gave the promise and fettered his hands. His thoughts, indeed, were occupied with the limit Harry had set upon the knowledge which was to be imparted to General Feversham. Even if he died with his mission unfulfilled, Sutch was to hide from the father that which was best in the son, at the son's request. And the saddest part of it, to Sutch's thinking, was that the son was right in so

requesting. For what he had said was true : the father could not understand. Lieutenant Sutch was brought back to the causes of the whole miserable business : the premature death of the mother, who could have understood ; the want of comprehension in the father, who was left ; and his own silence on the Crimean night at Broad Place.

‘ If only I had spoken,’ he said sadly. He dropped the end of his cigar into his coffee-cup, and standing up, reached for his hat. ‘ Many things are irrevocable, Harry,’ he said, ‘ but one never knows whether they are irrevocable or not until one has found out. It is always worth while finding out.’

The next evening Feversham crossed to Calais. It was a night as wild as that on which Durrance had left England ; and, like Durrance, Feversham had a friend to see him off. For the last thing which his eyes beheld as the packet swung away from the pier was the face of Lieutenant Sutch beneath a gas lamp. The Lieutenant maintained his position after the boat had passed into the darkness and until the throb of its paddles could no longer be heard. Then he limped through the rain to his hotel, aware, and regretfully aware, that he was growing old. It was long since he had felt regret on that account, and the feeling was very strange to him. Ever since the Crimea he had been upon the world’s half-pay list, as he had once said to General Feversham, and what with that and the recollection of a certain magical season before the Crimea, he had looked forward to old age as an approaching friend. To-night, however, he prayed that he might live just long enough to welcome back Muriel Graham’s son with his honour redeemed and his great fault atoned.

*(To be continued.)*



THE  
CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

---

MARCH 1902.

---

*THE INTRUSIONS OF PEGGY.*<sup>1</sup>

BY ANTHONY HOPE.

CHAPTER VI.

CHILDREN OF SHADOW.

‘A POLITICIAN! I’d as soon be a policeman,’ remarked Miles Childwick, with delicate scorn. ‘I don’t dispute the necessity of either—I never dispute the necessity of things—but it would not occur to me to become either.’

‘You’re not tall enough for a policeman, anyhow,’ said Elfreda Flood.

‘Not if it became necessary to take you in charge, I admit’ (Elfreda used to be called ‘queenly’ and had played Hippolyta), ‘but your remark is impertinent in every sense of the term. Politicians and policemen are essentially the same.’

Everybody looked at the clock. They were waiting for supper at the Magnifique; it was Tommy Trent’s party, and the early comers sat in a group in the luxurious outer room.

‘From what I know of policemen in the witness-box, I incline to agree,’ said Manson Smith.

‘The salaries, however, are different,’ yawned Tommy, without removing his eyes from the clock.

‘I’m most infernally hungry,’ announced Arty Kane, a robust-looking youth, somewhat famous as a tragic poet. ‘Myra Lacrimans’ was perhaps his best-known work.

Mrs. John Maturin smiled; she was not great at repartee outside her writings. ‘It is late,’ she observed.

<sup>1</sup> Copyright, 1902, by A. H. Hawkins, in the United States of America.

‘But while policemen,’ pursued Miles Childwick, sublimely careless of interruption, ‘while policemen make things endurable by a decent neglect of their duties (or how do we get home at night?), politicians are constantly raising the income tax. I speak with no personal bitterness, since to me it happens to be a small matter, but I observe a laceration of the feelings of my wealthy friends.’

‘He’d go on all night, whether we listened or not,’ said Horace Harnack, half in despair, half in admiration. ‘I suppose it wouldn’t do to have a song, Tommy?’

His suggestion met with no attention, for at the moment Tommy sprang to his feet, exclaiming, ‘Here’s Peggy at last!’

The big glass doors were swung open and Peggy came in. The five men advanced to meet her; Mrs. John Maturin smiled in a rather pitying way at Elfreda, but Elfreda took this rush quite as a matter of course and looked at the clock again.

‘Is Airey here?’ asked Peggy.

‘Not yet,’ replied Tommy. ‘I hope he’s coming, though.’

‘He said something about being afraid he might be kept,’ said Peggy; then she drew Tommy aside and whispered, ‘Had to get his coat mended, you know.’

Tommy nodded cautiously.

‘And she hasn’t come either?’ Peggy went on.

‘No; and whoever she is, I hate her,’ remarked Arty Kane. ‘But who is she? We’re all here.’ He waved his arm round the assembly.

‘Going to introduce you to society to-night, Arty,’ his host promised. ‘Mrs. Trevalla’s coming.’

‘Duchesses I know, and countesses I know,’ said Childwick; ‘but who——’

‘Oh, nobody expected you to know,’ interrupted Peggy. She came up to Elfreda and made a rapid scrutiny. ‘New frock?’

Elfreda nodded with an assumption of indifference.

‘How lucky!’ said Peggy, who was evidently rather excited. ‘You’re always smart,’ she assured Mrs. John Maturin.

Mrs. John smiled.

Timidly and with unfamiliar step Airey Newton entered the gorgeous apartment. Relief was dominant on his face when he saw the group of friends, and he made a hasty dart towards them, giving on the way a nervous glance at his shoes, which showed two or three spots of mud—the pavements were wet outside. He



hastened to hide himself behind Elfreda Flood, and, thus sheltered, surveyed the scene.

‘I was just saying, Airey, that politicians——’

Arty Kane stopped further progress by the hasty suggestion of a glass of sherry, and the two went off together to the side room, where supper was laid, leaving the rest again regarding the clock—except Peggy, who had put a half-crown in her glove, or her purse, or her pocket, and could not find it, and declared that she could not get home unless she did; she created no sympathy and (were such degrees possible) less surprise, when at last she distinctly recollected having left it on the piano.

‘Whose half-crown on whose piano?’ asked Manson Smith with a forensic frown.

When the sherry-bibbers returned with the surreptitious air usual in such cases, the group had undergone a marked change; it was clustered round a very brilliant person in a gown of resplendent blue, with a flash of jewels about her, a hint of perfume, a generally dazzling effect. Miles Childwick came up to Manson Smith.

‘This,’ said Childwick, ‘we must presume to be Mrs. Trevalla. Let me be introduced, Manson, before my eyes are blinded by the blaze.’

‘Is she a new flame of Tommy’s?’ asked Manson in a whisper.

The question showed great ignorance; but Manson was comparatively an outsider, and Miles Childwick let it pass with a scornful smile.

‘What a pity we’re not supping in the public room!’ said Peggy.

‘We might trot Mrs. Trevalla through first, in procession, you know,’ suggested Tommy. ‘It’s awfully good of you to come. I hardly dared ask you,’ he added to Trix.

‘I was just as afraid, but Miss Ryle encouraged me. I met her two or three nights ago at Mrs. Bonfill’s.’

They went in to supper. Trix was placed between Tommy and Airey Newton, Peggy was at the other end, supported by Childwick and Arty Kane. The rest disposed themselves, if not according to taste yet with apparent harmony; there was, however, a momentary hesitation about sitting by Mrs. John. ‘Mrs. John means just one glass more champagne than is good for one,’ Childwick had once said, and the remark was felt to be just.

‘No, politicians are essentially concerned with the things that

perish,' resumed Miles Childwick; he addressed Peggy—Mrs. John was on his other side.

'Everything perishes,' observed Arty Kane, putting down his empty soup-cup with a refreshed and cheerful air.

'Do learn the use of language. I said "essentially concerned." Now we are essentially concerned with——'

Trix Trevala heard the conversation in fragments. She did not observe that Peggy took much part in it, but every now and then she laughed in a rich gurgle, as though things and people in general were very amusing. Whenever she did this, all the young men looked at her and smiled, or themselves laughed too, and Peggy laughed more and, perhaps, blushed a little. Trix turned to Tommy and whispered, 'I like her.'

'Rather!' said Tommy. 'Here, waiter, bring some ice.'

Most of the conversation was far less formidable than Miles Childwick's. It was for the most part frank and very keen discussion of a number of things and persons entirely, or almost entirely, unfamiliar to Trix Trevala. On the other hand, not one of the problems with which she, as a citizen and as a woman, had been so occupied was mentioned, and the people who filled her sky did not seem to have risen above the horizon here. Somebody did mention Russia once, and Horace Harnack expressed a desire to have 'a slap' at that great nation; but politics were evidently an alien plant, and soon died out of the conversation. The last play or the last novel, the most recent success on the stage, the newest paradox of criticism, were the topics when gossip was ousted for a few moments from its habitual and evidently welcome sway. People's gossip, however, shows their tastes and habits better than anything else, and in this case Trix was not too dull to learn from it; it reproduced another atmosphere and told her that there was another world than hers. She turned suddenly to Airey Newton.

'We talk of living in London, but it's a most inadequate description. There must be ten Londons to live in!'

'Quite—without counting the slums.'

'We ought to say London A, or London B, or London C. Social districts, like the postal ones; only far more of them. I suppose some people can live in more than one?'

'Yes, a few; and a good many people pay visits.'

'Are you Bohemian?' she asked, indicating the company with a little movement of her hand.



‘Look at them!’ he answered. ‘They are smart and spotless. I’m the only one who looks the part in the least. And, behold, I am frugal, temperate, a hard worker, and a scientific man!’

‘There are believed to be Bohemians still in Kensington and Chelsea,’ observed Tommy Trent. ‘They will think anything you please, but they won’t dine out without their husbands.’

‘If that’s the criterion, we can manage it nearer than Chelsea,’ said Trix. ‘This side of Park Lane, I think.’

‘You’ve got to have the thinking too, though,’ smiled Airey.

Miles Childwick had apparently been listening; he raised his voice a little and remarked: ‘The divorce between the theoretical bases of immorality——’

‘Falsely so called,’ murmured Manson Smith.

‘And its practical development is one of the most——’

It was no use; Peggy gurgled helplessly, and hid her face in her napkin. Childwick scowled for an instant, then leant back in his chair, smiling pathetically.

‘She is the living negation of serious thought,’ he complained, regarding her affectionately.

Peggy, emerging, darted him a glance as she returned to her chicken.

‘When I published “Myra Lacrimans”——’ began Arty Kane.

In an instant everybody was silent. They leant forward towards him with a grave and eager attention, signing to one another to keep still. Tommy whispered: ‘Don’t move for a moment, waiter!’

‘Oh, confound you all!’ exclaimed poor Arty Kane, as he joined in the general outburst of laughter.

Trix found herself swelling it light-heartedly.

‘We’ve found by experience that that’s the only way to stop him,’ Tommy explained, as with a gesture he released the grinning waiter. ‘He’ll talk about “Myra” through any conversation, but absolute silence makes him shy. Peggy found it out. It’s most valuable. Isn’t it, Mrs. John?’

‘Most valuable,’ agreed Mrs. John. She made no other contribution to the conversation for some time.

‘All the same,’ Childwick resumed, in a more conversational tone but with unabated perseverance, ‘what I was going to say is true. In nine cases out of ten the people who are——’ He paused a moment.

‘Irregular,’ suggested Manson Smith.

'Thank you, Manson. The people who are irregular think they ought to be regular, and the people who are regular have established their right to be irregular. There's a reason for it, of course——'

'It seems rather more interesting without one,' remarked Elfreda Flood.

'No reason, I think?' asked Horace Harnack, gathering the suffrages of the table.

'Certainly not,' agreed the table as a whole.

'To give reasons is a slur on our intellects and a waste of our time,' pronounced Manson Smith.

'It's such a terribly long while since I heard anybody talk nonsense on purpose,' Trix said to Airey, with a sigh of enjoyment.

'They do it all the time; and, yes, it's rather refreshing.'

'Does Mr. Childwick mind?'

'Mind?' interposed Tommy. 'Gracious, no! He's playing the game too; he knows all about it. He won't let on that he does, of course, but he does all the same.'

'The reason is,' said Childwick, speaking with lightning speed, 'that the intellect merely disestablishes morality, while the emotions disregard it. Thank you for having heard me with such patience, ladies and gentlemen.' He finished his champagne with a triumphant air.

'You beat us that time,' said Peggy with a smile of congratulation.

Elfreda Flood addressed Harnack, apparently resuming an interrupted conversation.

'If I wear green I look horrid, and if she wears blue she looks horrid, and if we don't wear either green or blue, the scene looks horrid. I'm sure I don't know what to do.'

'It'll end in your having to wear green,' prophesied Harnack.

'I suppose it will,' Elfreda moaned disconsolately. 'She always gets her way.'

'I happen to know he reviewed it,' declared Arty Kane with some warmth, 'because he spelt "dreamed" with a "t." He always does. And he'd dined with me only two nights before!'

'Where?' asked Manson Smith.

'At my own rooms.'

'Then he certainly wrote it. I've dined with you there myself.'

Trix had fallen into silence, and Airey Newton seemed content



not to disturb her. The snatches of varied talk fell on her ears, each with its implication of a different interest and a different life, all foreign to her. The very frivolity, the sort of schoolboy and chaffy friendliness of everybody's tone, was new in her experience, when it was united, as here it seemed to be, with a liveliness of wits and a nimble play of thought. The effect, so far as she could sum it up, was of carelessness combined with interest, independence without indifference, an alertness of mind which laughter softened. These people, she thought, were all poor (she did not include Tommy Trent, who was more of her own world), they were none of them well known, they did not particularly care to be, they aspired to no great position. No doubt they had to fight for themselves sometimes—witness Elfreda and her battle of the colours—but they fought as little as they could, and laughed while they fought, if fight they must. But they all thought and felt, they had emotions and brains. She knew, looking at Mrs. John's delicate fine face, that she too had brains, though she did not talk.

'I don't say,' began Childwick once more, 'that when Mrs. John puts us in a book, as she does once a year, she fails to do justice to our conversation, but she lamentably neglects and misrepresents her own.'

Trix had been momentarily uneasy, but Mrs. John was smiling merrily.

'I miss her pregnant assents, her brief but weighty disagreements, the rich background of silence which she imparts to the entertainment.'

Yes, Mrs. John had brains too, and evidently Miles Childwick and the rest knew it.

'When Arty wrote a sonnet on Mrs. John,' remarked Manson Smith, 'he made it only twelve lines long. The outside world jeered, declaring that such a thing was unusual, if not ignorant. But we of the elect traced the spiritual significance.'

'Are you enjoying yourself, Airey?' called Peggy Ryle.

He nodded to her cordially.

'What a comfort!' sighed Peggy. She looked round the table, laughed, and cried 'Hurrah!' for no obvious reason.

Trix whispered to Airey, 'She nearly makes me cry when she does that.'

'You can feel it?' he asked in a quick low question, looking at her curiously.

'Oh, yes, I don't know why,' she answered, glancing again at the girl whose mirth and exultation stirred her to so strange a mood.

Her eyes turned back to Airey Newton, and found a strong attraction in his face too. The strength and kindness of it, coming home to her with a keener realisation, were refined by the ever-present shadow of sorrow or self-discontent. This hint of melancholy persisted even while he took his share in the gaiety of the evening; he was cheerful, but he had not the exuberance of most of them; he was far from bubbling over in sheer joyousness like Peggy; he could not achieve even the unruffled and pain-proof placidity of Tommy Trent. Like herself then—in spite of a superficial remoteness from her, and an obviously nearer kinship with the company in life and circumstances—he was in spirit something of a stranger there. In the end he, like herself, must look on at the fun rather than share in it whole-heartedly. There was a background for her and him, rather dark and sombre; for the rest there seemed to be none; their joy blazed unshadowed. Whatever she had or had not attained in her attack on the world, however well her critical and doubtful fortunes might in the end turn out, she had not come near to reaching this; indeed it had never yet been set before her eyes as a thing within human reach. But how naturally it belonged to Peggy and her friends! There are children of the sunlight and children of the shadow. Was it possible to pass from one to the other, to change your origin and name? It seemed to her that, if she had not been born in the shadow, it had fallen on her full soon and heavily, and had stayed very long. Had her life now, her new life with all its brilliance, quite driven it away? All the day it had been dark and heavy on her; not even now was it wholly banished.

When the party broke up—it was not an early hour—Peggy came over to Airey Newton. Trix did not understand the conversation.

'I got your letter, but I'm not coming,' she said. 'I told you I wouldn't come, and I won't.' She was very reproachful, and seemed to consider that she had been insulted somehow.

'Oh, I say now, Peggy!' urged Tommy Trent, looking very miserable.

'It's your fault, and you know it,' she told him severely.

'Well, everybody else is coming,' declared Tommy. Airey said nothing, but nodded assent in a manner half-rueful, half-triumphant.



‘It’s shameful,’ Peggy persisted.

There was a moment’s pause. Trix, feeling like an eaves-dropper, looked the other way, but she could not avoid hearing.

‘But I’ve had a windfall, Peggy,’ said Airey Newton. ‘On my honour, I have.’

‘Yes, on my honour, he has,’ urged Tommy earnestly. ‘A good thumping one, isn’t it, Airey?’

‘One of my things has been a success, you know.’

‘Oh, he hits ’em in the eye sometimes, Peggy.’

‘Are you two men telling anything like the truth?’

‘The absolute truth.’

‘Bible truth!’ declared Tommy Trent.

‘Well, then, I’ll come, but I don’t think it makes what Tommy did any better.’

‘Who cares, if you’ll come?’ asked Tommy.

Suddenly Airey stepped forward to Trix Trevalla. His manner was full of hesitation—he was, in fact, awkward; but then he was performing a most unusual function. Peggy and Tommy Trent stood watching him, now and then exchanging a word.

‘He’s going to ask her,’ whispered Peggy.

‘Hanged if he isn’t!’ Tommy whispered back.

‘Then he must have had it!’

‘I told you so,’ replied Tommy in an extraordinarily triumphant, imperfectly lowered voice.

Yes, Airey Newton was asking Trix to join his dinner-party.

‘It’s—it’s not much in my line,’ he was heard explaining, ‘but Trent’s promised to look after everything for me. It’s a small affair, of course, and—and just a small dinner.’

‘Is it?’ whispered Tommy with a wink, but Peggy did not hear this time.

‘If you’d come——’

‘Of course I will,’ said Trix. ‘Write and tell me the day, and I shall be delighted.’ She did not see why he should hesitate quite so much, but a glance at Peggy and Tommy showed her that something very unusual had happened.

‘It’ll be the first dinner-party he’s ever given,’ whispered Peggy excitedly, and she added to Tommy, ‘Are you going to order it, Tommy?’

‘I’ve asked him to,’ interposed Airey, still with an odd mixture of pride and apprehension.

Peggy looked at Tommy suspiciously.

'If you don't behave well about it, I shall get up and go away,' was her final remark.

Trix's brougham was at the door—she found it necessary now to hire one for night-work, her own horse and man finding enough to do in the daytime—and after a moment's hesitation she offered to drive Airey Newton home, declaring that she would enjoy so much of a digression from her way. He had been looking on rather vaguely while the others were dividing themselves into hansom-cab parties, and she received the impression that he meant, when everybody was paired, to walk off quietly by himself. Peggy overheard her invitation and said with a sort of relief:—

'That'll do splendidly, Airey!'

Airey agreed, but it seemed with more embarrassment than pleasure.

But Trix was pleased to prolong, even by so little, the atmosphere and associations of the evening, to be able to talk about it a little more, to question him while she questioned herself also indirectly. She put him through a catechism about the members of the party, delighted to elicit anything that confirmed her notion of their independence, their carelessness, and their comradeship. He answered what she asked, but in a rather absent, melancholy fashion; a pall seemed to have fallen on his spirits again. She turned to him, attracted, not repelled, by his relapse into sadness.

'We're not equal to it, you and I,' she said with a laugh. 'We don't live there; we can only pay a visit, as you said.'

He nodded, leaning back against the well-padded cushions with an air of finding unwonted ease. He looked tired and worn.

'Why? We work too hard, I suppose. Yes, I work too, in my way.'

'It's not work exactly,' he said. 'They work too, you know.'

'What is it then?' She bent forward to look at his face, pale in the light of the small carriage lamp.

'It's the Devil,' he told her. Their eyes met in a long gaze. Trix smiled appealingly. She had to go back to her difficult life—to Mervyn, to the Chance and Fricker entanglement. She felt alone and afraid.

'The Devil, is it? Have I raised him?' she asked. 'Well, you taught me how. If I—if I come to grief, you must help me.'

'You don't know in the least the sort of man you're talking to,' he declared, almost roughly.



‘I know you’re a good friend.’

‘I am not,’ said Airey Newton.

Again their eyes met, their hearts were like to open and tell secrets that daylight hours would hold safely hidden. But it is not far—save in the judgment of fashion—from the Magnifique to Danes Inn, and the horse moved at a good trot. They came to a stand before the gates.

‘I don’t take your word for that,’ she declared, giving him her hand. ‘I sha’n’t believe it without a test,’ she went on in a lighter tone. ‘And at any rate I sha’n’t fail at your dinner-party.’

‘No, don’t fail at my party—my only party.’ His smile was very bitter, as he relinquished her hand and opened the door of the brougham. But she detained him a moment; she was still reluctant to lose him, to be left alone, to be driven back to her flat and to her life.

‘We’re nice people! We have a splendid evening, and we end it up in the depths of woe! At least—you’re in them too, aren’t you?’ She glanced past him up the gloomy passage, and gave a little shudder. ‘How could you be anything else, living here?’ she cried in accents of pity.

‘You don’t live here, yet you don’t seem much better,’ he retorted. ‘You are beautiful and beautifully turned out—gorgeous! And your brougham is most comfortable. Yet you don’t seem much better.’

Trix was put on her defence; she awoke suddenly to the fact that she had been very near to a mood dangerously confidential.

‘I’ve a few worries,’ she laughed, ‘but I have my pleasures too.’

‘And I’ve my pleasures,’ said Airey. ‘And I suppose we both find them in the end the best. Good-night.’

Each had put out a hand towards the veil that was between them; to each had come an impulse to pluck it away. But courage failed, and it hung there still. Both went back to their pleasures. In the ears of both Peggy Ryle’s whole-hearted laughter, her soft merry ‘Hurrah!’ that no obvious cause called forth, echoed with the mockery of an unattainable delight. You need clear soul-space for a laugh like that.

---

## CHAPTER VII.

## A DANGEROUS GAME.

THERE were whispers about Beaufort Chance, and nods and winks such as a man in his position had better have given no occasion for; men told one another things in confidence at the club; they were quite sure of them, but at the same time very anxious not to be vouched as authority. For there seemed no proof. The list of shareholders of the Dramoffsky Concessions did not display his name; it did display, as owners of blocks of shares, now larger, now smaller, a number of names unknown to fame, social or financial; even Fricker's interest was modest according to the list, and Beaufort Chance's seemed absolutely nothing. Yet still the whispers grew.

Beaufort knew it by the subtle sense that will tell men who depend on what people say of them what people are saying. He divined it with a politician's sensitiveness to opinion. He saw a touch of embarrassment where he was accustomed to meet frankness, he discerned constraint in quarters where everything had been cordiality. He perceived the riskiness of the game he played. He urged Fricker to secrecy and to speed; they must not be seen together so much, and the matter must be put through quickly; these were his two requirements. He was in something of a terror; his manner grew nervous and his face careworn. He knew that he could look for little mercy if he were discovered; he had outraged the code. But he held on his way. His own money was in the venture; if it were lost he was crippled in the race on which he had entered. Trix Trevalla's money was in it too; he wanted Trix Trevalla and he wanted her rich. He was so hard-driven by anxiety that he no longer scrupled to put these things plainly to himself. His available capital had not sufficed for a big stroke; hers and his, if he could consider them as united, and if the big stroke succeeded, meant a decent fortune; it was a fine scheme to get her to make him rich while at the same time he earned her gratitude. He depended on Fricker to manage this; he was, by himself, rather a helpless man in such affairs. Mrs. Bonfill had never expected that he would rise to the top, even while she was helping him to rise as high as he could.

Fricker was not inclined to hurry himself, and he played



with the plea for secrecy in a way that showed a consciousness of power over his associate. He had been in one or two scandals, and to be in another would have interfered with his plans—or at least with Mrs. Fricker's. Yet there is much difference between a man who does not want any more scandals and him who, for the sake of a great prize risking one, would be ruined if his venture miscarried. Fricker's shrewd equable face displayed none of the trouble which made Chance's heavy and careworn.

But there was hurry in Fricker's family, though not in Fricker. The season was half-gone, little progress had been made, effect from Trix Trevala's patronage or favour was conspicuously lacking. Mrs. Fricker did not hesitate to impute double-dealing to Trix, to declare that she meant to give nothing and to take all she could. Fricker had a soul somewhat above these small matters, but he observed honour with his wife—for his oath's sake and a quiet life's. Moreover, be the affair what it would, suggest to him that he was being 'bested' in it, and he became dangerous.

A word is necessary about the position of Dramoffskys. They had collapsed badly on Lord Farringham's pessimistic speech. Presently they began to revive on the strength of 'inside buying'; yet their rise was slow and languid, the Stock Exchange was distrustful, the public would not come in. There was a nice little profit ('Not a scoop at present,' observed Fricker) for those who had bought at the lowest figure, but more rumours would stop the rise and might send quotations tumbling again. It was all-important to know, or to be informed by somebody who did, just how long to hold on, just when to come out. Dramoffskys, in fine, needed a great deal of watching; the operator in them required the earliest, best, and most confidential information that he could get. Fricker was the operator. Beaufort Chance had his sphere. Trix, it will be noticed, was inclined to behave purely as a sleeping partner, which was all very well as regarded Dramoffskys themselves, but very far from well as it touched her relations towards her fellows in the game.

Trix was praying for speed and secrecy as urgently as Beaufort Chance himself; for secrecy from Mrs. Bonfill, from Mervyn, from all her eminent friends; for speed that the enterprise might be prosperously accomplished, the money made, and she be free again. No more ventures for her, if once she were free, she declared. If once she were—free! There she would

pause and insist with herself that she had given Beaufort Chance no reason to expect more than the friendship which was all that he had openly claimed, nor the Frickers any right to look for greater countenance or aid than her own acquaintance and hospitality ensured them. Had she ever promised to marry Chance, or to take the Frickers to Mrs. Bonfill's or the Glen-torlys'? She defied them to prove any such thing—and looked forward with terror to telling them so.

At this point Mr. Liffey made entry on the scene with an article in 'The Sentinel.' Mr. Liffey had a terribly keen nose for misdeeds of all sorts and for secrets most inconvenient if disclosed. He was entirely merciless and inexhaustibly good-natured. He never abused anybody; he dealt with facts, leaving each person to judge those facts by his own moral standard. He had no moral standard of his own, or said so; but he had every idea of making the 'Sentinel' a paying property. He came out now with an article whose heading seemed to harm nobody—since people with certain names must by now be hardened to having their patronymics employed in a representative capacity. 'Who are Brown, Jones, and Robinson?' was the title of the article in 'The Sentinel.' As the reader proceeded—and there were many readers—he found no more about these names, and gathered that Mr. Liffey employed them (with a touch of contempt, maybe) to indicate those gentlemen who, themselves unknown to fame, figured so largely in the share list of Dramoffskys. With a persistence worthy of some better end than that of making fellow-creatures uncomfortable, or of protecting a public that can hardly be said to deserve it, Mr. Liffey tracked these unoffending gentlemen to the honourable, though modest, suburban homes in which they dwelt, had the want of delicacy to disclose their avocations and the amount of their salaries, touched jestingly on the probable claims of their large families (he had their children by name!), and ended by observing, with an innocent surprise, that their holdings in Dramoffskys showed them to possess either resources of which his staff had not been able to inform him, or, on the other hand, a commercial enterprise which deserved higher remuneration than they appeared to be enjoying. He then suggested that present shareholders and intending investors in Dramoffskys might find the facts stated in his article of some interest, and avowed his intention of pursuing his researches into this apparent mystery. He ended by remark-



ing, 'Of course, should it turn out that these gentlemen, against whom I have not a word to say, hold their shares in a fiduciary capacity, I have no more to say—no more about them, at least.' And he promised, with cheerful obligingness, to deal further with this point in his next number.

Within an hour of the appearance of this article Beaufort Chance entered Fricker's study in great perturbation. He found that gentleman calm and composed.

'How much does Liffey know?' asked Chance, almost trembling.

Fricker shrugged his shoulders. 'It doesn't much matter.'

'If he knows that I'm in it, that I've——'

'He won't know you're in it, unless one of the fellows gives us away. Clarkson knows about you, and Tyrwhitt—none of the rest. I think I can keep them quiet. And we'll get out now. It's not as good as I hoped, but it's pretty good, and it's time to go.' He looked up at Chance and licked his cigar. 'Now's the moment to settle matters with the widow,' he went on. 'You go and tell her what I want and what you want. I don't trust her, and I want to see; and, Beaufort, don't tell her about Dramoffskys till you find out what she means. If she's playing square, all right. If not,'—he smiled pensively—'she may find out for herself the best time for selling Dramoffskys—and Glowing Stars too.'

'Glowing Stars? She's not deep in them, is she? I know nothing about them.'

'A little private flutter—just between her and me,' Fricker assured him. 'Now there's no time to lose. Come back here and tell me what happens. Make her understand—no nonsense! No more shuffling! Be quick. I shall hold up the market a bit while our men get out, but I won't let you in for anything more.' Fricker's morals may have been somewhat to seek, but he was a fine study at critical moments.

'You don't think Liffey knows——' stammered Chance again.

'About those little hints of yours? I hope not. But I know, Beaufort, my boy. Do as well as you can for me with the widow.'

Beaufort Chance scowled as he poured himself out a whisky-and-soda. But he was Fricker's man and he must obey. He went out, the spectre of Mr. Liffey seeming to walk with him and to tap him on the shoulder in a genial way.

At eleven o'clock Beaufort Chance arrived at Trix Trevalla's

and sent up his name. Mrs. Trevala sent down to say that she would be glad to see him at lunch. He returned that his business was important and would not bear delay. In ten minutes he found himself in her presence. She wore a loose morning-gown, her hair was carefully dressed, she looked very pretty; there was an air of excitement about her; fear and triumph seemed to struggle for ascendancy in her manner. She laid a letter down on the table by her as he entered. While they talked she kept putting her hand on it and withdrawing it again, pulling the letter towards her and pushing it away, fingering it continually, while she kept a watchful eye on her companion.

‘What’s the hurry about?’ she asked, with a languor that was not very plausible. ‘Dramoffskys?’

‘Dramoffskys are all right,’ said he deliberately, as he sat down opposite her. ‘But I want a talk with you, Trix.’

‘Did we settle that you were to call me Trix?’

‘I think of you as that.’

‘Well, but that’s much less compromising—and just as complimentary.’

‘Business! business!’ he smiled, giving her appearance an approving glance. ‘Fricker and I have been having a talk. We’re not satisfied with you, partner.’ He had for the time conquered his agitation, and was able to take a tone which he hoped would persuade her, without any need of threats or of disagreeable hints.

‘Am I not most amiable to Mr. Fricker, and Mrs., and Miss?’ Trix’s face had clouded at the first mention of Fricker.

‘You women are generally hopeless in business, but I expected better things from you. Now let’s come to the point. What have you done for the Frickers?’

Reluctantly brought to the point, Trix recounted with all possible amplitude what she considered she had done. Her hand was often on the letter as she spoke. At the end, with a quick glance at Beaufort, she said:—

‘And really that’s all I can do. They’re too impossible, you know.’

He rose and stood on the hearthrug.

‘That’s all you can do?’ he asked in a level smooth voice.

‘Yes. Oh, a few more big squashes, perhaps. But it’s nonsense talking of the Glentorlys or of any of Mrs. Bonfill’s really nice evenings.’



‘It’s not nonsense. You could do it if you liked. You know Mrs. Bonfill, anyhow, would do it to please you; and I believe the Glentorlys would too.’

‘Well, then, I don’t like,’ said Trix Trevala.

He frowned heavily and seemed as if he were going to break out violently. But he waited a moment and then spoke calmly again. The truth is that Fricker’s interests were nothing to him. They might go, provided he could show that he had done his best for them; but doing his best must not involve sacrificing his own chances.

‘So much for Fricker! I must say you’ve a cool way with you, Trix.’

‘The way you speak annoys me very much sometimes,’ remarked Trix reflectively.

‘Why do you suppose he interested himself in your affairs?’

‘I’ve done what I could.’ Her lips shut obstinately. ‘If I try to do more I sha’n’t help the Frickers and I shall hurt myself.’

‘That’s candid, at all events.’ He smiled a moment. ‘Don’t be in a hurry to say it to Fricker, though.’

‘It’ll be best to let the truth dawn on him gradually,’ smiled Trix. ‘Is that all you wanted to say? Because I’m not dressed, and I promised to be at the Glentorlys’ at half-past twelve.’

‘No, it’s not all I’ve got to say.’

‘Oh, well, be quick then.’

Her indifference was overdone, and Beaufort saw it. A suspicion came into his mind. ‘So much for Fricker!’ he had said. Did she dare to think of meting out the same cavalier treatment to him?

‘I wish you’d attend to me and let that letter alone,’ he said in a sudden spasm of irritation.

‘As soon as you begin, I’ll attend,’ retorted Trix; ‘but you’re not saying anything. You’re only saying you’re going to say something.’ Her manner was annoying; perhaps she would have welcomed the diversion of a little quarrel.

But Beaufort was not to be turned aside; he was bent on business. Fricker, it seemed, was disposed of. He remained. But before he could formulate a beginning to this subject, Trix broke in:—

‘I want to get out of these speculations as soon as I can, she said. ‘I don’t mind about not making any more money

as long as I don't lose any. I'm tired of—of the suspense, and—and so on. And, oh, I won't have anything more to do with the Frickers!

He looked at her in quick distrust.

'Your views have undergone a considerable change,' he remarked. 'You don't want to speculate! You don't mind about not making any more money!'

Trix looked down and would not meet his eyes.

'Going to live on what you've got?' he asked mockingly. 'Or is it a case of cutting down expenses and retiring to the country?'

'I don't want to discuss my affairs. I've told you what I wish.'

He took a turn across the room and came back. His voice was still calm, but the effort was obvious.

'What's happened?' he asked.

'Nothing,' said Trix.

'That's not true.'

'Nothing that concerns you, I mean.'

'Am I to be treated like Fricker? Do you want to have nothing more to do with me?'

'Nonsense! I want us to be friends, of course.'

'You seem to think you can use men just as you please. As long as they're useful you'll be pleasant—you'll promise anything—'

'I never promised anything.'

'Oh, women don't promise only in words. You'll promise anything, hold out any hopes, let anything be understood! No promises, no! You don't like actual lying, perhaps, but you'll lie all the while in your actions and your looks.'

People not themselves impeccable sometimes enunciate moral truths and let them lose little in the telling. Trix sat flushed, miserable, and degraded as Beaufort Chance exhibited her ways to her.

'You hold them off, and draw them on, and twiddle them about your finger, and get all you can out of them, and make fools of them. Then—something happens! Something that doesn't concern them! And, for all you care, they may go to the devil! They may ruin themselves for you. What of that? I daresay I've ruined myself for you. What of that?'

Trix was certainly no more than partly responsible for any



trouble in which Mr. Chance's dealings might land him ; but we cannot attend to our own faults in the very hour of preaching to others. Chance seemed to himself a most ill-used man ; he had no doubt that but for Trix Trevalla he would have followed an undeviatingly straight path in public and private morality.

'Well, what have you got to say?' he demanded roughly, almost brutally.

'I've nothing to say while you speak like that.'

'Didn't you lead me to suppose you liked me?'

'I did like you.'

'Stuff! You know what I mean. When I helped you—when I introduced Fricker to you—was that only friendship? You knew better. And at that time I was good enough for you. I'm not good enough for you now. So I'm kicked out with Fricker! It's a precious dangerous game you play, Trix.'

'Don't call me Trix!'

'I might call you worse than that, and not do you any wrong.'

Among the temporal punishments of sin and folly there is perhaps none harder to bear than the necessity of accepting rebuke from unworthy lips, of feeling ourselves made inferior by our own acts to those towards whom we really (of this we are clear) stand in a position of natural superiority. Their fortuitous advantage is the most unpleasant result of our little slips. Trix realised the truth of these reflections as she listened to Beaufort Chance. Once again the scheme of life with which she had started in London seemed to have something very wrong with it.

'I—I'm sorry if I made you——' she began in a stammering way.

'Don't lie. It was deliberate from beginning to end,' he interrupted.

A silence followed. Trix fingered her letter. He stood there, motionless but threatening. She was in simple bodily fear ; the order not to lie seemed the precursor of a blow—just as it used to be in early days when her mother's nerves were very bad ; but then Mrs. Trevalla's blows had not been severe, and habit goes for something. This recrudescence of the tone of the old life—the oldest life of all—was horrible.

Of course Beaufort Chance struck no blow ; it would have been ungentlemanly in the first place ; in the second it was unnecessary ; thirdly, useless. Among men of his class the distinction lies, not in doing or not doing such things, but in wanting

or not wanting to do them. Beaufort Chance had the desire; his bearing conveyed it to Trix. But he spoke quietly enough the next minute.

‘You’ll find you can’t go on in this fashion,’ he said. ‘I don’t know what your plan is now, though perhaps I can guess. You mean to start afresh, eh? Not always so easy.’ His look and voice were full of a candid contempt; he spoke to her as a criminal might to his confederate who had ‘rounded on’ him in consideration of favours from the police.

He did not strike her, but in the end, suddenly and with a coarse laugh, he stooped down and wrenched the letter from her hand, not caring if he hurt her. She gave a little cry, but sat there without a movement save to chafe her wrenched fingers softly against the palm of the other hand. Beaufort Chance read the letter; it was very short: ‘I knew you would do what I wish. Expect me to-morrow.—M.’

Trix wanted to feel horrified at his conduct—at its brutality, its licence, its absolute ignoring of all the canons of decent conduct. Look at him, as he stood there reading her letter, jeering at it in a rancorous scorn and a derision charged with hatred! She could not concentrate her indignation on her own wrong. Suddenly she saw his too—his and Fricker’s. She was outraged; but the outrage persisted in having a flavour of deserved punishment. It was brutal; was it unjust? On that question she stuck fast as she looked up and saw him reading her letter. The next instant he tore it across and flung it into the grate behind him.

‘You’ll do as he wishes!’ he sneered. ‘He knows you will! Yes, he knows you’re for sale, I suppose, just as I know it, and as Fricker knows it. He can bid higher, eh? Well, I hope he’ll get delivery of the goods he buys. We haven’t.’

He buttoned his frock-coat and looked round for his hat.

‘Well, I’ve got a lot to do. I must go,’ he said, with a curious unconscious return to the ordinary tone and manner of society. ‘Good-bye!’

‘Good-bye, Mr. Chance,’ said Trix, stretching out her hand towards the bell.

‘I’ll let myself out,’ he interposed hastily.

Trix rose slowly to her feet; she was rather pale and had some trouble to keep her lips from twitching. Speak she could not; her brain would do nothing but repeat his words; it would not



denounce him for them, nor impugn their truth; it would only repeat them. Whether they were just or not was a question that seemed to fall into the background; it was enough that anybody should be able to use them, and find her without a reply.

Yet when he was gone her feeling was one of great relief. The thing had been as bad as it could be, but it was done. It was over and finished. The worst had come—was known, measured, and endured. At that price she was free. She was degraded, bruised, beaten, but free. Chastened enough to perceive the truths with which Beaufort Chance had assailed her so unsparingly, she was not so changed in heart but that she still rejoiced to think that the object towards which she worked, in whose interest she had exposed herself to such a lashing, was still possible, really unprejudiced, in fact hers if she would have it. The letter was gone; but the promise of the letter lived.

Suddenly another thing occurred to her. What about Dramoffskys? What about her precious money? There she was, in the hands of these men whom she had flouted and enraged, so ignorant that she could do nothing for herself, absolutely at their mercy. What would they do? Would they wash their hands of her?

‘Well, if they do—and I suppose they will—I must sell everything directly, even if I lose by it,’ she thought. ‘That’s the only thing, and I sha’n’t be quite ruined, I hope.’

Alas, how we misjudge our fellow-creatures! This trite reflection, always useful as a corrective either to cynicism or to enthusiasm, was to recur to Trix before the close of the day and to add one more to its already long list of emotions. Wash their hands of her? Concern themselves no more with her? That was not, it seemed, Mr. Fricker’s intention anyhow. The evening post brought her a letter from him; she opened it with shrinking, fearing fresh denunciations, feeling herself little able to bear any more flagellation. Yet she opened it on the spot; she was unavoidably anxious about Dramoffskys.

Threats! Flagellation! Nothing of the sort. Fricker wrote in the friendliest mood; he was almost playful:—

‘My dear Mrs. Trevalla,—I understand from our friend Beaufort Chance that he had an interview with you to-day. I have nothing to do with what concerns you and him only, and no desire to meddle. But as regards myself I fear that his friendly

zeal may have given you rather a mistaken impression. I am grateful for your kindness, which is, I know, limited only by your ability to serve me, and I shall think it a privilege to look after your interests as long as you leave them in my charge. I gather from Chance that you are anxious to sell your Dramoffskys at the first favourable moment. I will bear this in mind. Let me, however, take the liberty of advising you to think twice before you part with your Glowing Stars. I hear good reports, and even a moderate rise would give you a very nice little profit on the small sum which you entrusted to me for investment in G. S.'s. Of course you must use your own judgment, and I can guarantee nothing; but you will not have found my advice often wrong. I may sell some of your Dramoffskys and put the proceeds in G. S.'s.

'I am, dear Mrs. Trevalla,

'With every good wish,

'Very faithfully yours,

'SYDNEY FRICKER.'

There was nothing wherewith to meet this letter save a fit of remorse, a very kindly note to Mr. Fricker, and a regret that it was really impossible to do much for the Frickers. These emotions and actions duly occurred; and Trix Trevalla went to bed in a more tolerable frame of mind than had at one time seemed probable.

The gentlemen unknown to fame sold Dramoffskys largely that day, and at last, in spite of Mr. Fricker, the price fell and fell. Fricker, however, professed himself sanguine. He bought a few more; then he sold a few for Trix Trevalla; then he bought for her a few Glowing Stars, knowing that his friendly note would gain him a free hand in his dealings. But his smile had been rather mysterious as he booked his purchases, and also while he wrote the note; and—

'It's all right, my dear,' he said to Mrs. Fricker, in reply to certain observations which she made. 'Leave it to me, my dear, and wait a bit.'

He had not washed his hands of Trix Trevalla; and Beaufort Chance was ready to let him work his will. As a pure matter of business Mr. Fricker had found that it did not pay to be forgiving; naturally he had discarded the practice.

*(To be continued.)*



*CALYPSO AND ULYSSES.*

ODYSSEY, v. 148-224.

BY J. W. MACKAIL.

So saying, the mighty Shining One therefrom  
 Passed, and the nymph imperial from her home  
 Went forth to find Odysseus high of heart,  
 Heeding the message that from Zeus had come.

And him she found upon the ocean-brim,  
 Where evermore his eyes with tears were dim,  
 And with home-sickness all the joy of life  
 In lamentation wore away from him.

For now no more the nymph was his delight,  
 Though in the hollow caverns night by night  
 Perforce he needs must sleep beside her, yet  
 With no desire could her desire requite :

And day by day on cliff or beach apart,  
 Fretted with tears and sighs and bitter smart  
 He sate, and on the seas unharvested  
 Gazed with the tears down dropping, sick at heart.

Then standing by him spoke the Goddess fair :  
 ‘ No more, unhappy man, sit mourning there,  
 Nor let your life be worn away ; for now  
 Myself unasked your journey will prepare.

‘ Up therefore, hew long beams, and skilfully  
 Fit them with tools a broad-floored raft to be ;  
 And build aloft a spar-deck thereupon  
 To carry you across the misty sea.

‘ But water I will store on it, and bread,  
 And the red wine wherewith is comforted  
 Man’s heart, that you be stayed from famishing ;  
 And lend you raiment ; and your sail to spread

‘ Will send a following wind, that free from ill  
 Home you may win, if such indeed the will  
 Be of the Gods, who hold wide heaven, and are  
 Greater than I to purpose and fulfil.’

She spoke : but toilworn bright Odysseus heard  
 Aghast, and answering said a winged word :  
 ‘ Ah Goddess, surely not my home-going,  
 But some strange purpose in your heart is stirred ;

‘ On a frail raft the mighty gulfs of sea  
 Bidding me cross, that fierce and dreadful be,  
 So that not even a swift well-balanced ship  
 Before God’s wind may cross them running free.

‘ And on a raft my foot I will not set,  
 Goddess, unless your full consent I get,  
 And you take oath and swear, against my life  
 Not to devise some other practice yet.’

So spake he : but the Goddess bright and bland  
 Calypso, smiling, stroked him with her hand,  
 And spoke a word and answered : ‘ Verily  
 A witch you are, and quick to understand,

‘ Such words are these you have devised to say !  
 Now Earth I take to record here to-day,  
 And the wide Heaven above our head, and that  
 Water Abhorred that trickles down alway

‘ (Which is the mightiest and most dread to break  
 Of all the oaths the blessed Gods may take),  
 No practice for your hurt will I devise,  
 But take such thought and counsel for your sake



‘ As for mine own self I would reckon good,  
If in the like extremity I stood.  
For my own mind is righteous, nor my heart  
Iron within me, but of piteous mood.’

Uttering these words the shining Goddess fair  
Led swiftly on, and he behind her there  
Followed her footsteps; to the hollow cave,  
A man beside a goddess, came the pair;

And to the seat whence Hermes forth was gone  
Divine Odysseus went, and sat thereon.  
Beside him then, that he might eat and drink,  
All kinds of food that mortals feed upon

The nymph began to lay, and took her seat  
Over against him; while, that she might eat,  
The thralls her handmaidens set forth for her  
The deathless drink and the immortal meat.

So to the ready food before them spread  
They reached their hands out: and when they had fed  
To quench their thirst and hunger, then began  
Calypso, bright of Goddesses, and said:

‘ Son of Laertes, high-born, subtle-souled,  
Odysseus, may your longing naught withhold  
To your own land so straightway to be gone?  
Then fare you well; but had your heart foretold

‘ How many woes the fates for you decree  
Before you reach your country, here with me  
You had abode, and in this house had kept,  
And been immortal, howso fain to see

‘ That wife for whom through all your days you pine—  
Yet deem I not her beauty more than mine.  
Since hardly may a mortal woman vie  
In shape and beauty with my race divine.’

Then in his wisdom spoke and answered he :  
' Goddess and mistress, be not wroth with me  
Herein : for very well myself I know  
That, set beside you, sage Penelope

' Were far less stately and less fair to view,  
Being but mortal woman, nor like you  
Ageless and deathless : yet even so I yearn  
With longing sore to see my home anew ;

' And through all days I see that one day shine :  
But if amid the ocean bright as wine  
Once more some God shall break me, then once more  
With steadfast purpose would my heart incline

' Still to endurance, and would suffer still,  
As ofttimes I have suffered, many an ill  
And many a woe in wave or war ; and now  
Let this too follow after, if it will.'



*THE NEW BOHEMIA.*

BY AN OLD FOGEY.

SOMETHING more than a quarter of a century ago, before I went out to help my uncle Benjamin as a tea-planter in Assam, I used to know a little about the Bohemian circles of the town. It was rather a fashion among young fellows from Oxford and Cambridge in those days. The Thackeray tradition was still with us, and at that time we used to read 'Pendennis' and 'The Newcomes' and 'The Adventures of Philip.' I am told people do not read them any longer, preferring the polished compositions and chaste fancies of certain later novelists. It may be so. We are apt to fall a little behind the current of popular literature in the remoter East. At any rate, we youngsters in the seventies knew our Thackeray, with our Dickens, our Clough, our Tennyson, and other now perhaps obsolete writers, and came up to London emulous of the brave life which those gallant heroes, Warrington and Pen and Clive Newcome, led so dashingly among the taverns and the theatres, the men of the quill, and the brothers of the brush and palette-knife. Like most other things, the reality proved hardly equal to the illusion. We had hummed over the famous lines—

Though its longitude's rather uncertain,  
 And its latitude's doubtful and vague,  
 That person I pity who knows not the city,  
 The beautiful city of Prague.

So we young fellows went for it 'bald-headed'—to use the elegant expression which I cull from the pages of one of the most cultured American authors of the day—and were never so happy as when we were spending an evening in the company of our Bohemian friends, who, to do them justice, being a hospitable set, were not averse to see us.

They were a jovial crew, who worked hard, and amused themselves in a roystering, companionable fashion. I am bound to say that already, when I first came upon the town and took chambers in Hare Court, Temple (dingy old Hare Court, whose venerable buildings have now been pulled down and replaced

by structures which appear to have been designed in Chicago), the glories of the older Bohemianism, as painted by our great novelist, had somewhat waned. The singing and suppers of the famous Back Kitchen lived only in the regretful memories of the elder men. You remember Thackeray's description: 'Squads of young apprentices and assistants, the shutters being closed over the scene of their labours, came hither, for fresh air, doubtless. Rakish young medical students—gallant, dashing, what is called "loudly" dressed, and (must it be owned?) somewhat dirty—were here smoking and drinking and vociferously applauding the songs. Young University bucks were to be found here, too, with that indescribable genteel simper which is only learned at the knees of Alma Mater; and handsome young Guardsmen, and florid bucks from the St. James's Street clubs—nay, senators, English and Irish, and even members of the House of Peers.'

There were men, we knew, who had assisted at these revels—men who numbered Mr. Hoolan and Mr. Doolan among their intimates, who had written for the 'Dawn' and the 'Day,' hobnobbed with the original of Captain Shandon, and received guineas from the firms of Bacon and of Bungay; and, albeit we had fallen upon somewhat soberer days, they did their best to maintain the Back Kitchen precedent in certain resorts and *cœnacula*, to which they were often good enough to give admission to us youngsters. Well do I recollect one particular club to which I had the honour of being elected a member, on the introduction of my journalistic friend and patron of those days, poor Bob Ireson.

Everybody knew Bob at that time, and to be taken up by him was an introduction to the more esoteric circles of Fleet Street and the Strand. He was a gentleman and a scholar, was Bob—or, at least, had been the former, and was still the latter, when sober. He had been at St. Quentin's College, Oxford, took his 'first' in 'Mods.' and 'Greats,' was *proxime* for the 'Hertford,' and would almost certainly have got the 'Ireland,' but for the fact that he had been seduced into a little game of cards and a late supper-party the night before with young Lord Rupert Deloraine, who subsequently, as everybody knows, held one of the highest offices in the councils of the Queen, but was at that time a somewhat too convivial undergraduate at Quentin's. Owing to this festivity Bob was by no means in his best form at the Examination Schools, and his Greek iambs were not up to their usual standard. A similar accident deprived him of the Fellowship on which he had



reckoned ; and so Bob came to town and joined the Corporation of the Goose-Quill. When I knew him he had been in it some fifteen years, and was the most brilliant, unreliable, well-informed, and erratic contributor who ever plagued or delighted an editor. He had a wife and half a dozen neglected children stowed away in a back street in Holloway, to which suburb he occasionally retired when no other opportunity of spending an evening presented itself. I have reason to believe that his domestic life was not luxurious ; and Mrs. Bob, who was understood to be distantly connected with his laundress at Oxford, did not frequent literary or other society. Bob himself preferred associating with his male companions in that congenial quarter of the town in which he pursued his fitful avocations.

I do not know where or when he wrote, but somehow or other he contrived to cover an enormous quantity of copy-paper. He would write leaders, reviews, dramatic criticisms, savage lampoons in prose or verse (he was never happier than when he was reviling his old college boon companion, Lord Rupert, who by this time had long since ranged himself, married an American heiress, and lived in great splendour at Rutland Gate), librettos for burlesques and pantomimes, or, in fact, anything for which he was paid. He earned a good deal of money, according to the comparatively humble standard of those days, but I do not think that much of it found its way out to Holloway. He had in him the root and essential quality of Bohemianism. When he had done pretty well and was flush he was ready to stand a bottle of champagne and a dinner to any friend—or, for the matter of that, to any enemy, for Bob was the most placable of men, and would eat and drink with anybody. When he had a run of bad luck, he consumed sausages and gin-and-water in those appalling dark taverns and cook-shops, which have been replaced by the mammoth restaurants and garish cafés of a more civilised generation.

Sometimes he would vanish for a month or so, and nobody knew what became of him ; but in due course he turned up again at our club, jovial, impecunious, reckless as ever, equally ready to play billiards with the racing tout of a sporting newspaper or to discuss Aristophanes with a professor of Greek. At length he disappeared definitely, and came back no more ; and the rumour went about that he had been found in a condition of utter destitution in poor lodgings at a minor seaside resort, and had been taken to the local workhouse infirmary. So we made up

a little purse for him at the club, and sent him out on a sea voyage to Australia, with strict injunctions to the steward of the vessel that he was to be served with nothing stronger than soda-water on the journey. But Bob never reached Melbourne. He died at sea; and his body rests quietly, deep down somewhere in the Indian Ocean. When a few friends came to look into the affairs of the establishment at Holloway they found that poor Mrs. Bob was in a very bad way indeed; and so another subscription had to be raised, and many good fellows who had known Bob in his prime were willing enough to put their guineas to it.

A sad ending; but many of our jolly Bohemians did finish rather mournfully. Still they were uncommonly good company while they lasted. Those evenings at our club were amusing enough and something more. We used to meet in two or three shabby rooms somewhere off the Strand. There were faded carpets on the floor, threadbare curtains at the windows, battered, old, comfortable leather-seated arm-chairs, and horsehair-covered sofas of primeval antiquity. The fastidious appointments of the modern club had not entered into the imagination of our members. Sam, the butler, a very Ganymede in the bearing and compounding of drinks, wore the same shirt for a week; so by the way did some of the members. There was a cupboard in which you could wash your hands, but I do not think it was often used.

The *menu* was more satisfying than pretentious. You could get an excellent steak, a sufficient chop, kidneys grilled to a nicety, potatoes smoking hot in their jackets, kippers, bloaters, soft roes on toast, devilled bones of a fiery potency; and gin and whisky, and brandy-and-water hot, and stout and bitter, flowed in a never slackening stream. On occasions, too, there would be a vast bowl of punch, brewed by Mulligan, the cunning of hand, who had a skill in that decoction which was famous throughout Bohemia, and had penetrated even to the United States. There was dinner, cost you 2s., on the table at six o'clock every evening—Irish stew, boiled mutton, roast beef and Yorkshire pudding, and other viands of a simple and satisfying nature. If you dropped in to this meal you would find some twenty men, more or less, gathered round the board, prepared to do full justice to the provisions. For our Bohemians, as I have said, were as a rule hard-working folks, and they did little at luncheon, and would have scorned afternoon tea and muffins if anybody had been prepared to supply them with those delicacies.



The food eaten and the cloth cleared, clay pipes and briars were produced—it was before the day of cigarettes, and many of us could not afford cigars—a tumbler of spirits or perhaps a small bottle of port or claret was before each man, and the company settled itself down steadily for conversation. And how they talked! They were the last survivors, some of them, of a great conversational age, a time when men met together, as they used to do in the days of Addison and in the days of Johnson, as in those of Scott and Hazlitt, for the purpose of exchanging ideas. It is a custom that seems to have vanished while I have been growing tea in Assam. Nowadays I am told there is no conversation. It is *l'éternel féminin* which has destroyed the practice. Women are everywhere, and you can't converse with women. Besides, there is no time to talk. People are too busy in playing games, or seeing plays, or performing them. But my elder cronies of the old shabby club did not go into society, and would no more have thought of putting on a dress coat, and listening to music in a lady's drawing-room, than they would have played battledore and shuttlecock with school-girls across a dining-room table. In the intervals of their work, they liked to discuss matters with one another, amid clouds of tobacco and the fragrance of much alcohol.

I do not say the talk was always of the best kind. It was apt to be too full-fleshed, too ribald, a little (shall we say?) too virile. There was old Ventregris, the doyen of the *coterie*, a prosperous accountant, I believe, whom we all regarded with considerable respect, because he was known to live in affluence somewhere in the neighbourhood of Weybridge, with horses and carriages, and gardens and many servants to wait upon him. He was the patron and financial adviser of the club, and I believe its appointments would have been even dingier than they were but for occasional cheques from him. The hoary old reprobate preferred the gin-sodden atmosphere of our pothouse to all his suburban splendours, and was never so happy as when sitting there listening to the most atrocious stories, invented for his delectation by some ingenious follower of the theatrical art. But the talk was not always, or even usually, of that kind. Much of it, of course, was 'shop,' and you were not long in that society before you knew exactly how much or how little was to be acquired at the precarious trade of letters, or the still more precarious pursuit of journalism. You could learn what publisher was good for an advance on royalties,

and what editor could most safely be planted with copy. But often we got far away from these subjects. Literature, art, politics, philosophy, all these things would be discussed and considered and debated by men who, if they were Bohemians, were also in many cases students and thinkers and readers, with a knowledge of the world and books; and I can recall some midnight symposia in those close and murky chambers in which mind had clashed with mind, and perhaps even for a moment the deep places of the soul had been unveiled.

So with these recollections upon me, grave and gay, I have naturally not been averse, since my return to town, to seeing something of the Bohemianism of the younger generation. I find things have changed a good deal in the last quarter of a century. The successors of the careless wits and jovial *viveurs* of my earlier days are, I must admit, a much more decorous body of persons. The other day, for instance, young Grubbins, the son of my old friend, Joe Grubbins, whom you will recollect as one of Bacon and Bungay's favourite and most successful bookmakers, came to make acquaintance with me.

Grubbins *père* was a very sedulous exponent of the literary art. Every few months he was in the habit of publishing a substantial volume, 'Half Hours with the Twelve Apostles,' 'The Homes of Queen Elizabeth,' 'The Private Life of the Emperor Tiberius,' 'Ten Thousand Household Cookery Recipes,' and so on. Nothing human came amiss to him if he received a publisher's commission to write about it. He had written a History of the World, illustrated, which was sold in sixpenny parts with woodcuts of a spirited character, and he had written a treatise on Domestic Medicine. Withal, he was a fellow of infinite resource and a mass of curious information, and he worked ten hours a day, and lived in a small house in Brixton with an excellent thrifty wife, who put the antimacassars on the chairs in the little back drawing-room when visitors were expected, and otherwise sat with Joe in the front room, which was parlour, dining-room, and study all in one. Here the talented author composed his valuable works and pursued his researches when he was not at the British Museum Reading-room.

Young Joseph is a literary gentleman also, but he seems to have hit upon an easier and more lucrative branch of the profession than his father. I have not been able to discover the names of any books that he has published. When I questioned him on the subject he replied, 'Books, no fear, sir! They don't



pay. The old dad had enough of that, and it don't suit me.' Questioned more particularly as to the precise nature of his compositions, I discovered that Mr. Grubbins devoted himself to that department of journalism which used to be known as personal. An enterprising newspaper, that has come into existence since my migration to the East, is the favourite vehicle for what he calls his pars, which are mainly concerned with the comings and goings, and the private affairs, of members of fashionable society. On the strength of this pursuit Grubbins junior is apparently regarded as a member of quite elegant and exclusive circles himself, has chambers in Jermyn Street, dines not infrequently in Piccadilly and Park Lane, and is on familiar terms with various personages, whose affluence and distinction have penetrated to me even in the recesses of Asia. Invited by this young gentleman to spend an evening with him at the Jolly Beggars' Club, I accepted with avidity, a trifle surprised to find that the entertainment was to take place, not as I might have expected at a tavern in the Fleet Street region, but in the 'Byzantine Saloon' of the Megatherium Hotel.

I was somewhat doubtful as to whether one ought to wear evening dress or not, for in the old days these garments were little in favour with our set; but I concluded that as a stranger and a visitor I should do no harm to err on the right side and array myself in the usual dinner costume. It was well I did so. I drove down to Piccadilly in a pleasantly anticipatory frame of mind. The name of the club had an attractive sound about it. With the Jolly Beggars methought I might count on a rollicking evening, perhaps too rollicking for my sedate middle age, but full of mirth, wit, and gay boon companionship. The reality was a little different. When I arrived, somewhat late, in the radiant banquetting-hall of the Megatherium, I found a great company assembled, some three or four hundred of both sexes. The male guests were to a man arrayed in what the novelists of the good old times used to call faultless evening costume. The ladies, to my unaccustomed eyes, seemed to be attired in all the luxury of the latest fashion. The chairman of the Jolly Beggars was a severe gentleman of solemn aspect, who presided over the festive board with magisterial dignity. The guests of the evening were that eminent archæologist, Professor Chumpchop, whose researches into the dietetic peculiarities of the Marquesas Islanders have gained deserved applause. Beside him sat a lady, decorated

with many diamonds, whom I ascertained to be a popular writer of current fiction.

The company as a whole was not unworthy of these distinguished personages. There were actors, journalists, men of letters, who all behaved with the rigid and unbending gravity so pleasantly characteristic of English society in its hours of relaxation. I found myself placed alongside of a severe person, a contributor to some of the leading reviews of this capital, who drank mineral water throughout the evening, and entertained me with a serious discourse on the cost of living in the western portions of the metropolis, and the incidence of parochial rates in South Kensington. I found on subsequent inquiry that a considerable number of the Jolly Beggars were resident in this or similar eligible localities. Instead of the shabby establishments in Holloway and Camden Town and those other quarters in which my older Bohemian friends abode, I discovered that these younger men lived in unimpeachable middle-class respectability at Bayswater or Earl's Court. Their wives were At Home on the second and fourth Thursdays, and they themselves were in the habit of giving dinner-parties, attended by colonels and baronets. They take their families to the sea-side in August, they play golf, they live in an atmosphere of Philistine calm. They are churchwardens, guardians of the poor, some perhaps have sunk to be county councillors.

I turned into our old club the other Saturday evening. It has changed its location and many other things. Gone are the shabby chairs and sofas, the threadbare carpets. The rooms looked clean and prim under the shaded electric lights. The 'Times' was on the table, servants in livery ministered to your wants, blameless water-colours and photogravures on the walls had replaced the furious caricatures and Rabelaisian sketches contributed by some of our artistic members. It was supper-time, and supper on Saturday night used to be a scene of riotous revelry, a babel of unruly talk into the small hours. One veteran I recollect was wont to say that he never left the club on a Sunday morning till it was time to take in the milk. His successors keep better hours. I found some dozen languid members about the table. They were mostly in evening dress, and they ate their kippers, and drank a modest quantity of whisky and water, to a subdued hum of intermittent conversation in duets. There was no general chatter, and if you did not 'know' your neighbour he regarded



you with the frozen, suspicious glare of polite society. In the old days we should no more have asked for an introduction than for a certificate of baptism. However, I found a man with whom I was slightly acquainted, and was permitted to take part in a discussion on the Vaccination Acts. Then there was a frigid interval of silence, and somebody began to talk in a broken whisper of Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman. I paid my bill to the butler—a dignified functionary no more like unto old Sam 'than I to Hercules'—and left in good time to catch the last 'bus westward.

I went to another Bohemian club the other day, which I am assured is very much in the movement. It bears the name of a mediæval writer whose works, I understand, are chiefly devoted to the glorification of self-indulgence. But there was nothing riotous in our merrymaking. A gentleman from, I believe, Mincing Lane was good enough to read us a paper about Mrs. Hannah More. We discussed the personality and literary merits of this author for three hours with suitable gravity. One speaker, an eminent lawyer, made several jokes; but his levity I think rather jarred on the feelings of the assembly, which had clearly met in a praiseworthy spirit of mutual improvement and edification. The majority of the members seemed bored, and I wondered why they came. But on opening my daily newspaper the next morning I found it on record that 'The —— Club had a meeting last evening at the —— Restaurant, under the presidency of Mr. ——. Among those present were Messrs. —— &c.' The old Bohemia seldom got 'into the papers.' The new Bohemia appears to spend its life, not unsuccessfully, in being paraphrased. It is much too busy in this way to have leisure for enjoyment. Indeed it takes its pleasures rather sadly. On the other hand, it is always interviewing itself and publishing its own portrait in the illustrated newspapers, and giving descriptions of its own wives and books and private pursuits.

I have lately made the acquaintance of a leading member of the new school. He is a very active person, who has founded a number of literary clubs. The attention of the world is not infrequently invited to his doings. 'Mr. Vincent Ropemin will preside at the monthly House Dinner of the Asterisk Club on Thursday.' 'Mr. Vincent Ropemin will read a paper before the Society of Typewriters on Literary Copyright in Venezuela, with special reference to the rights of British authors.' 'Mr. and

Mrs. Vincent Ropemin gave a delightful reception at their charming home in Brompton Crescent the other day. The pretty rooms were crowded with literary and theatrical celebrities, among whom I noticed, &c. The hostess looked lovely in pale blue with sequin trimmings.' 'Mr. Ropemin informs us that his latest journalistic venture, the "Ladies' Rattle," is proving a phenomenal success.' 'Mr. Ropemin has gone to Constantinople to work up the materials for his new novel on the subject of the Empress Theodora.' With all these pre-occupations, Mr. Ropemin is not a vivacious companion. He is a wearied gentleman, prematurely bald and grey, with anxious eyes, and he presides at the sparkling entertainments just alluded to with all the gaiety of a mute at a funeral. When I dine with him in serious state in Brompton, with a grizzled bejewelled lady on my right hand, and on my left the portly wife of Sir Haverstock Hill, that noted City magnate, I realise that many things have changed since I left England when Lord Beaconsfield was Consul. Literary people, journalists, actors, are no longer *déclassés*; they are respectable, and often prosperous men of business, as regular in their habits as if they bought shellac or sold indigo. I suppose there are still unsuccessful out-at-elbow penmen, who haunt low taverns, and borrow half-crowns, and pawn their clothes, and enjoy themselves in low dissipation. But my friends of the old Bohemia strain were not of that kind at all. They were for the most part hard-working, and not always ill-paid, craftsmen in the factory of letters; only they had inherited a tradition of dislike for the ways of the *bourgeoisie*. Their successors, being wise men in their generation, have allowed themselves to be quietly drafted into the great disciplined army of the 'professional' classes, and order their lives like unto their fellows.

On the whole I suppose one ought not to regret the disappearance of the old Bohemia. The modern variety is in many ways the better of the two. The young fellows—I perceive that during my absence everybody under threescore has grown young—are in essential respects better than their fathers, at least in some of those matters which make for happiness in private life and good repute in public. They pay their way, they earn their living in a steady fashion, they indulge themselves I dare say in a more innocent manner, and they certainly cause a good deal less trouble to their wives and other belongings. One recollects Captain Shandon in the Fleet Prison, and the manner in which that



gentleman occupied himself when a casual stroke of work put a few pounds in his way. 'Mrs. Shandon sadly went on with her work at the window looking into the court. She saw Shandon with a couple of men on his heels run rapidly in the direction of the prison tavern. She had hoped to have had him at dinner herself that day; there was a piece of meat and some salad in a basin on the ledge outside the window of their room, which she had expected that she and little Mary were to share with the child's father. But there was no chance of that now. He would be in that tavern until the hour for closing it; then he would go and play at cards or drink in some other man's room, and come back silent, with glazed eyes, reeling a little in his walk, that his wife might nurse him.' Yes, perhaps the new Bohemians are a more reputable set than their predecessors; but one cannot help thinking that they are a great deal duller.

## ARMS AND THE WOMAN.

THE tide was out and they were sitting on the sea wall that holds up the end of the lawn at Drumcleugh, smoking and kicking their heels absently against the smooth blocks of Portland cement—Jack Oramore, occupant of Drumcleugh, and his brother-in-law, Dick Keppel.

It was a perfectly peaceful Clyde Sabbath morning. There is a special breadth and depth of serenity about a quiet Sabbath morning on the Clyde, once you get below Greenock, which is almost unsurpassable. The air was so very still that the smoke from the men's pipes wreathed their heads like a blue halo, and the smoke from the breakfast chimney of Drumcleugh rose like a tall grey feather against the wooded hill behind. The hills on the opposite shore looked solemnly down at themselves in the loch as in a mirror. Oramore's yacht, the *Albatross*, was joined at the water-line to an inverted *Albatross* which floated half way up an inverted hillside.

The two men had not spoken for many minutes. One might almost have imagined that the peacefulness of the scene had entered into their souls. That, however, would have implied a very slight acquaintance with Master Richard Keppel. He glanced now and again, without turning his head, at the moody face of the other, and then, by way of breaking an irksome silence, said cheerfully:

'Pretty picture, isn't it?'

Oramore only grunted, and they smoked on in silence till Dick broke out again, through his teeth:

'See here, old man, out with it, whatever it is. My brain's getting muddled trying to think which of my sins has come home to roost this time. There's such a lot of 'em it'll be a real relief to know which one it is. Is it Cissie Travers?'

Oramore shook his head and looked sombrely out over the loch.

'Bolsover?' queried Dick, 'I did think Bolsover was a dead cert, but anyhow Polyanthus will pull me round on the Derby.'

Oramore puffed viciously and lost the pleasure of his pipe.



'Well,' continued Dick, in default of response, 'if it's neither Cissie nor Bolsover, I'm hanged if I know what it can be. Not that New York business again?'—with an anxious look at the gloomy smoker.

'Nothing to do with you, Dick,' said Oramore at last. 'Don't give yourself away any more than you need.'

'All right, old man, if it's nothing to do with me it's all right.'

'I wish to heaven it was. It's all damned wrong.'

'And nothing to do with me? Who's in the mud now?'

'Me. I'm on the rocks.'

'The deuce! What is it? Bottom fallen out of market?'

Oramore nodded gloomily.

'Thought you generally managed to stand from under and catch some of the droppings as they fell?'

'I had it straight from old Harris himself to put every penny I had into Charteredds. I went a big plunge and look like coming a big cropper. That's about the size of it, Dick.'

'Same with me and Bolsover. No Derby to look forward to?'

'Yes, if I could hang on there's probably a fortune in them. I've faith in Harris, and this is only a temporary set-back. But settlement's next week, and I don't see my way to cover.'

'What does it run to?'

'I've got 100,000. They're down four shillings.'

Dick whistled solemnly as he figured it out on the wall with a bit of white stone.

'20,000*l.*! That beats me and Bolsover all into fits. Say, Jack, my boy, you ought to be more cautious. 20,000*l.* takes a lot of covering.'

'I can manage about half in the time—at a sacrifice. But half's no good. It looks like smash.'

'Bank no use?'

'Not a cent. They look askance at this kind of thing.'

'Dolly know?'

'No; she'll know soon enough, poor girl. We'll have to sell up and clear out.'

He smoked in gloomy silence for a few minutes, and then slowly pulled out of his pocket a letter with a foreign stamp on, and handed it over to Keppel. Dick opened it, and looked first with wide round eyes at an enclosure, which proved to be a bank draft for 10,000*l.*

'Heavens!' he said, and then read the letter, and then asked, 'And what are you going to do?'

'What would you do?'

'How does it work out?'

'Profit on 10,000*l.* worth of arms and ammunition about 2,000*l.*'

'Good enough, but doesn't help you much for next week.'

'I should get three months' credit on the goods.'

'I—see!'

'But it's risky business all round. I was half sorry when I got the letter yesterday morning. I don't like to disappoint Sylvain, and yet I don't much like the business. Someone else will do it, of course, if I don't. You see he takes it for granted I'll make no bones about it, and it would mean a delay to them which may be of importance.'

'And you could have the use of that 10,000*l.* for three months?'

Oramore nodded, and the other pondered the situation, flipping the draft for 10,000*l.* against his fingers.

'Well, what would you do?' asked Oramore.

'Could you meet the bills in three months' time in any case?'

'Certainly, unless things go to the deuce altogether.'

'Very well, in that case I should take this chance and send the stuff along. It's a risky business, I know, but when one's back's to the wall one takes every chance, and I don't see that you can afford to let this one slip.'

'Will you help? If I buy the stuff will you take it out in the *Albatross*?'

'Will I, my boy? Won't I? I'd take fifty *Albatrosses* into Manzanillo or into Havana itself to help along. I've no great liking personally for the Cubans, but I like 'em better than the Spaniards, and they've been brutally treated, there's no doubt about that.'

'Then we'll do it, and if you take 'em out you shall have the profit on the run. Here come Dolly and Poppet. Keep mum about all this, Dick. No need to worry the wife if there's no need to. God!' he said, as the fair-haired girl and her two-year-old daughter came down the lawn to call them in to breakfast, 'I'd do more than this to keep them all right.'

'Me, too!' said Keppel. 'Come along, Poppet, and I'll be your donk-donk up to the house,' and off he went with the child on his back.



Just one week later the two men were leaning over the sea wall again, under much the same conditions as to weather, but in a very much more hopeful frame of mind.

Chartereds had picked up a trifle, and with the help of the draft from Cuba Oramore had weathered the settlement and was looking forward to a still more hopeful time when that eventful day came round again. The arms and ammunition were bought, and were being packed and despatched to Glasgow in as innocent-looking packages as could be contrived, and within ten days or so Keppel expected to start on his adventure.

Suddenly Oramore rose up from the wall.

'Here's old McKinnon coming; I'm off. Don't let him pump you, Dick. He knows I was hard hit, and he's on pins and needles to find out how I pulled through.'

Their neighbour came slowly along the shore, picking his way over the seaweed-covered stones: an elderly, grey, tight-lipped man, his eyes fixed on the ground, his hands behind him. He was thinking over his profits on the last settlement, which had been a particularly fortunate one for him. He was therefore in a peaceful and contented frame of mind.

It was not till he came opposite the place where Keppel leaned over the wall smoking that he looked up with an air of surprise.

'Morning, Mr. McKinnon!' said Dick cheerfully.

'Oh, Mr. Dick, how are you this morning?'

'Fine, thanks. You all right?'

'I am well, I thank you.'

'Miss Maggie none the worse for her soaking yesterday, I hope?'

'I trust not. It was foolish, however, to go so far——'

'But we didn't know it was going to come down like that, you know. The morning was as fine as this one.'

'It is never wise to count too much on a continuance of fine weather at this time of year. It is as undependable as——'

'Stocks and shares,' said Dick.

'Ah!' said the old man. 'This is the Sabbath. Let us leave stocks and shares alone for one day in the week. How is Mr. Oramore?'

'He's fine, too, thanks.'

'Ah!'

'Going to the kirk?' asked Dick, after a pause.

'No; I'm just taking a dander round to get rid of the cobwebs.'

'Miss Maggie going?—Hel-lo! who's this?'

Two gleaming spires of snowy canvas had crept round Lamont Point and were stealing noiselessly up the loch. The schooner carried the breeze from the outer loch with her, and just managed to reach anchorage near the *Albatross* when her sails drooped and flapped like the wings of a wounded bird, and then in a trice they disappeared—a splash—the ringing run of the chain, and she swung round and fitted into the peace of her surroundings.

The similarity of the two yachts struck both men. From knife-sharp forefoot to cream-painted funnel they were as like as two peas and almost of a size—if anything the *Albatross* had the advantage by some twenty tons.

‘Might be sisters,’ said Keppel.

‘Ay,’ said McKinnon. ‘Who is’t at all?’

As they watched, a boat dropped gently into the water and presently came skimming over the mirror towards them, two men pulling and a third steering. The steersman scrambled ashore and came up over the rocks towards them; the boat turned and pulled back.

The newcomer wore the dress of a naval officer, and as he drew near he sang out cheerily, ‘Good morning, Mr. McKinnon! Hoo’s a’ wi’ ye the noo?’

‘Why, Robert Ogilvie! I thought you were in the Mediterranean.’

‘I’m in a much better place, Mr. McKinnon. How’s Miss Maggie?’

‘She is well, thank you. When did you get back? Let me introduce you to Mr. Richard Keppel—Mr. Keppel, Lieutenant Ogilvie.’

The two men nodded and eyed one another askance. Dick Keppel disliked Ogilvie on sight, because he had just seen Miss Maggie McKinnon turn out of the Dunglass grounds and come along the shore towards them, and the Sunday morning stroll he had hoped for was obviously out of the question. Ogilvie disliked Dick on the general principle that a fellow doesn’t, as a rule, like another fellow—especially if he be an unusually good-looking fellow, as Dick was—who has exceptional advantages in the enjoyment of the society of a particular young lady, while he himself has to be away on duty.

Miss Maggie McKinnon was a very charming young lady indeed, so very charming that it was difficult to reconcile her relationship with her own father, until one remembered that the



wild rose blooms on a stem all unkindly and full of prickles. She came picking her way over the slippery stones with a light sure step, and with her eyes still seeking the best footing sang out, 'Well, good people, is this a prayer meeting? Good morning, Mr. Keppel; none the worse for your wetting? Why, Bob! where on earth have you sprung from?' and a gladder light shone in her eyes and a richer colour mantled her cheek, as she greeted him with outstretched hand.

'Bob! She calls him Bob!' said Dick to himself with an internal groan.

'From going to and fro,' said Ogilvie, turning and greeting her with a gladness which was reflected in her own eyes and face, 'but last of all from the yacht there. Kibblewhite's ordered up here on special duty, and I'm just taking a turn round with him. I know this part of the world, you see, and he doesn't.'

'And how long can you stop?' asked Maggie.

'That depends on circumstances,' and he had the appearance of one who could say more than he would. 'Going to the kirk, Miss Maggie?'

'Yes, I'm going. Will you row me over?'

'Will I? Won't I?'

'Anybody else coming?' asked Maggie over her shoulder in a way that said as plainly as words, 'Please don't; you really are not wanted.'

'Certainly, my dear, I am coming,' said Mr. McKinnon. 'And you, Mr. Dick?'

'No, thanks,' said Dick, grimly amused at the old man's sudden change of front and at the disappointment expressed in the backs of the other two. 'Three's bad, but four's worse.'

The others turned in the direction of the Dunglass boat, and Dick Keppel lit another cigar and kicked his heels against the sea wall and laughed quietly to himself. He knew perfectly well that the old man disapproved of himself. It was distinctly consoling to know that he regarded Ogilvie with no greater favour. But as to Maggie herself—'She calls him Bob!' he said again with a sigh.

'Calls who Bob?'

Oramore had come over the lawn unobserved and stood behind him watching the embarkation.

'Bob's the fool in the brass buttons. Though why a girl's

eyes should dance like that just because a man wears brass buttons and a band round his hat is beyond me.'

'H'm!' said Oramore. 'Is it as bad as all that? A very nice little arrangement, indeed, if the old gentleman were not there.'

'That's what those two are thinking, I guess.'

'Miss Maggie McKinnon with 20,000*l.* is one thing and an exceedingly nice thing. But Mr. James McKinnon with 20,000*l.* is quite a different story.'

'That's so,' sighed Dick, 'and she calls him Bob!'

'What boat's that?' asked Oramore.

'Don't know, 'cept that Bob came in her. He's a navy man—lieutenant.'

'What's the meaning of that, I wonder?' said Oramore.

'Imagine they've got wind of your rifles?' laughed Dick.

'Shouldn't be a bit surprised. We'll stroll over after tea and find out all we can about Bob and his boat. She's just about the same size as the *Albatross* and just about as fast, I should say. Very much the same build of boat, don't you think?'

'Like as two peas,' said Dick.

They strolled over to Dunglass after tea, as proposed, and learned several things.

*Item.*—That a very good understanding existed between Miss McKinnon and Lieutenant Ogilvie, and that old McKinnon eyed the matter with distinct disfavour.

*Item.*—That the *Barracouta* was on special duty under a Government charter, and that she was posing as a private yacht for special reasons. Lieutenant Bob was no diplomatist. Moreover, in his friend's house he had every reason to imagine that anything he said would be considered confidential. Perhaps, however, he spoke more freely than was altogether wise.

'You know every nook and corner of the Clyde, Mr. Keppel, I suppose?' he said.

'Pretty well,' said Dick.

'Suppose you wanted to run a shipment of arms out of the country, *sub rosa* you know, where would you take 'em aboard?'

'Glasgow,' said Dick without turning a hair. 'Who's gun-running now?'

'It's only rumour. The Spanish Government have asked for a specially sharp look-out to be kept on certain ports, the Clyde



among others, as they have information that shipments of arms are being made to the insurgents in Cuba. So we're just nosing round in the *Barracouta*, Kibby on duty, and I for the fun of the thing.'

'And what happens if you come across them?' asked Dick.

'The arms would be confiscated, of course, and those concerned would get various pains and penalties. You see we don't recognise the Cubans as belligerents at present.'

'I see,' said Dick. 'Well, so far as my own feelings go, I would sooner be shipping arms to the Cubans than stopping them for the Spaniards.'

'Personally, so would I, perhaps,' said Ogilvie; 'but all the same it is our duty to stop 'em, and we've got to do our best.'

'This complicates matters somewhat, old man,' said Oramore, as they strolled home in the gloaming.

'Oh, I don't know. I guess we'll manage all right. Master Bob's heart is busier at Dunglass than hunting gun-runners.'

They laid their heads together and settled their plans.

Dick was to start three days later, after coaling at Gourock, for a cruise among the western islands. He was to return unexpectedly on the second day of his cruise with an alleged breakdown of machinery. The following day he was nominally to take the yacht under sail across to her builders, Thomson's, of Port Glasgow, for repairs. The contraband had been coming direct from the makers in small lots for several days past, packed as china, and was being loaded into lighters, which, when the consignment was complete, were to proceed to the Tail o' the Bank and transfer their cargo to the good ship *Reindeer*, bound for Archangel, which was supposed to be awaiting them there.

When the *Albatross* started on her western cruise the *Barracouta* took a sudden fancy to cruise in the same direction, but, after seeing their friends well round the Mull of Cantire, the Government boat returned and nosed inquisitively about the coast, returning each night to Loch Grail, so that Lieutenant Bob might enjoy, and otherwise, the society of Miss Maggie McKinnon and her father.

He and the young lady were sitting in the heather above the belt of trees behind Dunglass, when the *Albatross* crept up unexpectedly to her moorings on the evening of the day after she had started for her cruise among the western isles. They were

talking very earnestly and very confidentially, but the sight of the *Albatross* made Lieutenant Bob sit up.

'Hello!' he said, 'here's Oramore's yacht back. Now I wonder what she's back for? Well, Kibby must play his own game now. I've got better work on hand,' at which Miss Maggie laughed a low sweet laugh, which was very pleasant for anyone to hear, and especially pleasant for Lieutenant Bob.

'I don't like leaving him in this way, Bob,' she said presently, with a little sigh; 'but if we wait for his consent we may wait half our lives, and I know he'll forgive us when it's all over and done with.'

'Why, of course he will, Meg. He's been a good old dad to you, but he's hard as nails to me.'

'That is because he fears your intentions. You are quite sure Miss Ogilvie won't be leaving London before——'

'I have written to her that I'm coming to see her on Friday. We shall arrive on Friday morning, and she will be just a wee bit surprised when she sees you, but she's as good as gold and as full of romance as a penny novelette, and she'll enjoy it all immensely, and worship your very boots.'

'My dear,' she said gravely, 'I am putting myself into your hands——'

'And you are not afraid?' he said.

'No, I am not afraid.'

He kissed her very reverently, and said with all his heart in his voice, 'You will never regret it, Meg!'

'I shall never regret it,' she said quietly.

Before they reached the house the *Albatross* had hoisted her sails again and crept quietly out of the loch, and later on they heard that Keppel had only called in to inform his friends at Drumcleugh of his breakdown, and was now on his way to Thomson's yard at Port Glasgow to repair damages.

That Wednesday night several important things happened.

Lieutenant Sir John Kibblewhite, Bart., dined at Dunglass, and, by previous arrangement with Lieutenant Bob, he so ingratiated himself with Mr. McKinnon that he obtained permission for Miss Maggie to accompany the *Barracouta* on her next day's cruise, it being understood that she was to be returned safe and sound in the evening.

The three men sat long over their cigars in the conservatory, while Miss Maggie in the next room played and sang the plaintive



old Scotch airs and ballads which her father and Lieutenant Bob loved, and which appealed pleasantly even to Kibblewhite's southern ear.

And while they were thus enjoying themselves at Dunglass business of importance was transacting at the Tail o' the Bank.

The lighters laden with china for Archangel had been anchored there since midday, and their skippers were greatly perturbed at the non-appearance of their consignee, the *Reindeer*. There were several large freighters about, but none of them was the *Reindeer*.

Skipper No. 1 went the length of venting his mind on skipper No. 2, to whose dilatoriness in coming down stream he ascribed their present predicament. The *Reindeer* had evidently sailed without this portion of her freight, and they would have to suffer for it. Skipper No. 1's language was voluble and expressive; skipper No. 2 resented it.

Terms of endearment were still in the air when night fell and put an end to the bombardment. About ten o'clock, as the skippers were on the point of turning in, after seeing that their lights were all right for the night, a sudden hail from the darkness roused them to a fresh spell.

'Lighters ahoy! are you for the *Reindeer*?'

'Ay, ay,' sung out the skippers, greatly relieved.

'Right! We had a hitch in the machinery and had to go up to the yard for repairs.' A sharp-nosed vessel felt its way cautiously in between them and dropped an anchor. It was not the kind of vessel they had expected, but they had not much time to think about it, for a sharp voice above them shouted, 'Now then there, off hatches and let's get your stuff aboard. We ought to have been away hours ago.'

The skippers, having got over their relief, growlingly set their men to work, and the crew of the steamer tailed to briskly, and the sharp-voiced man drove them all. With a lighter braced up to either side of her, and her low deck which enabled the cases to be easily handled, the work went on apace. By five o'clock the cargo was all transferred, and with a full head of steam and a crisp white curl at her forefoot, the *Reindeer* was swinging merrily down stream bound for Archangel—or elsewhere.

Miss Maggie McKinnon stepped from the boat to the deck of the *Barracouta* with very mixed feelings, and as the yacht ran down the loch she looked back at Dunglass nestling among its

trees, and her eyes were like the water that lies under the shadow of the hills when the gloaming is darkening into night.

Little Sir John could not make enough of his charming visitor, and in the fulness of her heart she was so graciously responsive that his conscience began to prick him lest Ogilvie should fancy he was trespassing on his friend's preserves.

Old McKinnon, as he stepped on board the morning boat for Greenock *en route* for Glasgow, was anything but happy in his mind. He was quite aware that his daughter's heart was wrapped up in Ogilvie, and knew well that the high spirit which had also been her mother's grew only stronger under opposition. Under the beguilement of the little baronet the night before, he had foolishly consented to this cruise on the *Barracouta*. Suppose it was all a put-up job on Lieutenant Bob's part, and only the first step towards that greater one of which he lived in perpetual dread. For, close and hard as he was in business matters, he loved his daughter as the apple of his eye, only their points of view as to what made most for her happiness differed diametrically. Maggie would have 10,000*l.* a year when he died. Lieutenant Bob possessed a few paltry hundreds. No doubt Lieutenant Bob was a rising man, and might go far and high. He had known him all his life, and his father before him. Indeed, there had been a time when—but things went contrary, and Janet Ogilvie was an old maid in London, and he was a widower this fifteen years. If it had even been little Sir John, now, he would have been more satisfied. In time, if the girl had made up her mind, he might have to come round to it; but if Robert Ogilvie tried to steal a march on him before he had brought his mind to it, let him look out for trouble.

He had half a mind to return direct to Dunglass from Greenock. He would feel easier in his mind if he was on the spot. Here the *Barracouta* shot past, and his daughter waved a farewell from the stern. He could do nothing by going back at present, and there were several pressing business matters to attend to in town. He would see to them, and get back as soon as he could. He really would not feel easy in his mind till Maggie was safe home again.

About midday, as the *Barracouta* was leisurely crossing the Tail o' the Bank towards Helensburgh, she was hailed by a lighter, whose skipper had just turned out after a stiff night's work and a long lie.



‘Was you the boat ’at was speirin’ efter anither boat?’

‘Ay, ay,’ shouted Kibby eagerly. ‘What do you know about her?’

‘I’ll come aboard and tell ye.’

The discontented skipper came aboard, and as the result of his communication the *Barracouta* headed for Helensburgh, which was the nearest landing-place, put Miss McKinnon and Lieutenant Ogilvie ashore there, and then set her nose to the south, and went down the firth at the top of her speed.

Just off Dunoon she passed the *Chancellor*, on which Mr. McKinnon was returning home for the alleviation of his anxiety on his daughter’s behalf. He gazed after the flying boat, and metaphorically tore his hair and cursed his shortsightedness in allowing Maggie ever to set foot on her. He spent a miserable afternoon awaiting her return, and when evening came and no *Barracouta* and no daughter, he could stand inaction no longer. He borrowed the McColls’ steam-launch—the McColls were butchers in Glasgow, and ordinarily he had not much to say to them; but they had a launch, and he needed it, and in it he chuffed away round to Helensburgh, and learned that the *Barracouta* had hurriedly gone south soon after midday.

Without more ado he steamed across to Port Glasgow. Thomson the boatbuilder was an old friend of his, and he was so fortunate as to catch him still in the yard.

‘Tam,’ he said, ‘I want the fastest screw boat you have, now, at once.’

‘What for?’ said Mr. Thomson.

Mr. McKinnon whispered in his ear, and Tam Thomson looked grave and said ‘Nay!’ and then issued rapid orders and turned on so many men that by seven o’clock Mr. McKinnon was also flying down the Clyde in pursuit of the *Barracouta* on Tam Thomson’s own fast twin-screw yacht, the *Clutha*.

The night mail from Glasgow carried Miss Maggie McKinnon and Lieutenant Robert Ogilvie to London, where they duly arrived early on Friday morning, and proceeded at once to the house of Miss Janet Ogilvie in Lansdowne Crescent, and were by her received with all the surprise and delight which Bob had foretold. Aunt Janet’s own romance had never come to a head; she had accordingly spread her natural capacity for the enjoyment thereof over half a lifetime, and vicariously suffered and endured and

triumphed in the sufferings and triumphs of her many friends both inside books and outside them.

The *Albatross*, still disguised as the *Reindeer*, sped merrily down the firth at her top speed, which ran to about fifteen knots. She crossed to the shelter of the Irish coast, and never eased her engines till she lay safe and snug alongside the coaling jetty in Queenstown harbour. Keppel gave instructions to coal up as rapidly as possible, and then went on to the post-office, where Oramore had promised to wire him if he had any news. A telegram awaited him, but it was six o'clock before he could get it. It was short and to the point—two words only: '*Barracouta* follows,' but they sent him back to his ship hot foot.

'Get in all you can in an hour,' he said to his skipper; 'then we must be off.' And to the minute he broke off the work and headed out to sea again.

He scanned the sea sharply for signs of the pursuit, but saw nothing like her, so he laid his course straight for Cuba, and pressed on.

As day after day passed and no sign of the *Barracouta* was discoverable, he came to believe that he had shaken her off or that she had given up the chase; and as he was bound to economise fuel for the final risky run into the coast, he banked his fires and hoisted his sails, which gave him a speed of about eight knots, and so jogged contentedly along.

The *Barracouta* came down the Clyde at a good fourteen knots, one knot worse than the *Albatross*. Kibblewhite felt pretty certain the first stop the chase would make would be at Queenstown, and he set off with the intention of getting there as quickly as possible. Still, to make sure he was on the right track, he stopped now and again at look-out stations to inquire if the yacht had been sighted. He reached Queenstown just eight hours after the *Albatross* steamed out, learned that she had short coaled there, shot such a supply into his bunkers as he could manage in an hour, and followed in the direction he learned she had taken, being thus nine hours behind her.

The *Clutha*, with Mr. McKinnon on board, had no indication what port the *Barracouta* would make for, and so had to depend entirely on such information as was obtainable at the look-out stations. She was a fairly fast boat, doing her fifteen knots in the hour without undue pressure; but the constant inquiries necessary to keep on the right track handicapped her considerably.



Between stations, however, they drove her hard, and she reached Queenstown five hours after the *Barracouta* sailed. Her skipper set her coaling at once, and meanwhile made his usual inquiries, learned that the *Barracouta* had called, had coaled, and had left hurriedly, steering west by south, and 'where in thunder they can be going to beats me hollow,' said he, and followed on without an instant's unnecessary delay.

The course the *Barracouta* was taking led to nowhere, he told Mr. McKinnon, and might be just a blind, and they would circle round and make for Southampton or London. The old gentleman acknowledged that might be so, but had no suggestions to offer, and bade him keep straight on. They hailed every passing ship, and asked if they had sighted a schooner-rigged steam-yacht with cream-coloured funnel, and how far she was ahead, and they were much puzzled by the humorous character of the replies they received, for each vessel had been subjected to exactly the same queries by the *Barracouta* but a few hours before, and the skippers in more than one case wound up by asking, 'How many more of you's coming?'

On the fourth day out the *Albatross* took fright at sight of smoke dead astern on the horizon, lit up her fires again, and regardless of coal pressed on with all speed. Presently she sighted smoke ahead, which rapidly developed into a West Indian cargo steamer, and Keppel, with considerable foresight, made for her at once. He said to himself, 'We're both wanting coal, or will be before we're through. The one that gets it first will be the only one that gets it,' and as soon as he was within hailing distance, he lay to, jumped into his boat, and was pulled across to the row of inquiring faces on the steamer.

'Captain,' he said, when greetings were over and he had discovered by his speech that the other was a Scot, 'I've got Lord Ullin's daughter aboard the yacht there, and Lord Ullin himself is coming up astern. Can you spare us a few tons of coal—all you can—at your own price?'

The Captain grinned, and made a bargain in which sentiment did not interfere with a very handsome profit. Keppel signalled the yacht alongside, and the coal was shot rapidly aboard. Then, with many thanks and hearty shake of the hand, and a cheer from the tarry-breeks, Keppel got back into his ship and clapped on full speed to make up for lost time.

An hour later the West Indiaman was hailed by the

*Barracouta*, who asked for information respecting a schooner-rigged yacht with cream-coloured funnel, and begged a supply of coal on Government service. To which the captain replied that he remembered passing such a yacht, and turned for information as to an approximate date to the grinning Jacks alongside. One suggested that it was last week, and another that it was ten days ago, another with an air of extreme exactitude thought that it was last Friday. 'Well, anyway,' said the captain, 'it's inside a week.' Yes, they finally all agreed it might be inside a week. As for coal, he had barely enough to carry him home and couldn't spare half a shovel-full. About an hour later the West Indiaman was greeted with identically the same requests by the *Clutha*, and this time he met them with a hoarse guffaw.

'Haw,' said he, 'think I'm a travelling sign post and a coaling station all in one? Haven't set eyes on a ship since we left Kingston, and haven't got any coal on board.'

And as the *Clutha* swung sulkily away and pressed on, with the rakings of her bunkers blackening the sky and a determination never to give in, the captain of the West Indiaman looked after her and growled, 'Well, if you're short of coals you'll catch it before morning.' For the barometer was falling rapidly, and the western sky was full of storm and strife. It broke on them at midnight, and before dawn the full fury of it was about them—above, below, and all around them.

Keppel's skipper put the *Albatross's* nose right into it, and steamed for dear life, and was slowly borne back.

Kibblewhite tried to do the same, but for lack of coal could not make much of a fight of it, and the fight ended suddenly, when, with a jerk and a shudder, the shaft of his propeller snapped, the engines raced madly for a few seconds, and then the *Barracouta* fell off into the trough of the sea, and the men set their jaws tight and quietly prepared for the end. The great white caps came roaring over them and into them, and it was only a question of minutes with them, when, on top of a roller in front, like a rearguard fighting strenuously as it falls back slowly with its face to the enemy, they caught a glimpse of the gallant little *Albatross* battling for dear life. The bluejackets raised a cheer. Beaten themselves, it warmed their hearts to see another craft making a brave fight. The *Albatross* caught sight of the *Barracouta*, and Keppel, like a British gentleman, though in evil enough case himself, set to work to do what he could. They



were not quite in line with the disabled craft, but by skilful manœuvring the skipper managed so that the trend of their drift was straight for her. It was impossible to launch a boat. They tied ropes to every life-belt on board and hove them overboard, then eased the engines slightly, and came down, stern on, straight for the labouring schooner. She was wobbling under their feet with a sickening tremor when the *Albatross* came down on them with the life-belts streaming out from her like the filaments of a jelly-fish. Then the *Albatross's* screw began to thrash round faster and faster. She almost held her own and hung just ahead of them, offering a bare chance of safety for the taking. Then without further sign or warning the waterlogged schooner sank, the *Albatross* eased her screw and was in among them, and the bluejackets leaped for the life-buoys like sharks for baited hooks.

It was gallantly done, and as the ropes were hauled slowly in and the rescued men were dragged on board in ones and twos they testified their thanks with deep and grateful oaths.

Little Sir John, when he was hove inboard by the neck of his jacket, spat the salt out of his mouth, and, with the water still running out of his sleeves, turned to Keppel, who was hanging on to the mainmast, and gasped, 'Awfully obliged to you.'

'Pray don't mention it,' shouted Keppel. 'Couldn't see you drown, you know.'

'Hel-lo!' he shouted again; 'who's this?' For astern and slightly to windward came the *Clutha*, actually making headway against the hurricane.

The two men watched her breathlessly. So slim and frail a thing she seemed in the riot of the storm.

'God!' said Kibblewhite, 'it's touch and go with her. If she falls off half a point she's done for. Ach-h-h! Gr-r-r-r! She's gone!' For that had happened which they had feared for her. Either from a momentary default on the part of the steersman, or from the sudden impact of a cross sea, the full blast of the gale caught her starboard bow and she darted off sideways down the side of a swelling green mountain and dived headlong into another, and then lay rolling, helpless and waterlogged.

'Out with those belts again,' shouted Keppel, and repeating their former tactics they drifted down to where they had last seen the schooner. Half-a-dozen cork-jacketed figures were floating about. They had anticipated the catastrophe and provided for it.

One by one they grabbed the safety lines and were hauled aboard the *Albatross*.

It was close quarters for them all, but, as the skipper of the *Clutha* remarked, it was a fine sight, better than rolling about free outside. Keppel did his best for his unexpected guests, and as soon as the gale blew out, and they had time to think of anything less pressing than life and death, he fed and clothed them to the extent of his powers, and made them welcome.

The first meeting in the saloon of the *Albatross* had its points of humour. Mr. McKinnon's wrath at the abduction of his daughter had had opportunity of cooling, and besides he was in a state of absolute mystification. He had been following the *Barracouta*; he found himself aboard the *Albatross*. He had expected to find Lieutenant Ogilvie; he found instead Lieutenant Kibblewhite and Mr. Richard Keppel. He was eaten with anxiety about his daughter, but he saw no signs of her. At last he could wait no longer, and he asked abruptly:

'Where is my daughter, Mr. Keppel?'

'I beg your pardon?' said Keppel, in great surprise. 'Miss McKinnon?'

'Yes; where is she?'

'My dear sir, I have not the remotest idea. Why do you ask me?'

'Is she not on board this boat? But it was on the *Barracouta* I expected to find her.'

'On the *Barracouta*?' said Kibblewhite. 'Why, good heavens! Mr. McKinnon, what do you mean? I landed Miss McKinnon and Ogilvie at Helensburgh before I started.'

'Before you started? Started for where, and where *is* the *Barracouta*?' asked the bewildered old man.

'The *Barracouta* went to the bottom about half an hour before your boat,' said Kibblewhite.

'And my daughter? Oh, you say she was not on board. I'm afraid I'm getting a little bewildered.'

'Now, Mr. Keppel,' said Kibblewhite, 'let me ask a question or two. Don't answer any you don't want to. Where are you bound for?'

'Cuba,' said Dick, 'with arms for my friend Sylvain, one of the insurgent leaders.'

'I see. Then you're the *Reindeer*?'

'Well, I was before the storm. I expect I'm the *Albatross* again now. It was only a question of paste and paper. Do help



yourself to another cigar, Lieutenant. Mr. McKinnon, take some more whisky and pass the bottle.'

'Have you coal enough to make Cuba?' asked Kibblewhite.

'Well, this has taxed us a good deal, but now we can take it easy till the final run in. We may just about do it, but it'll be a tight fit.'

Kibblewhite began to laugh. 'Nice situation for an officer in Her Majesty's Service, running contraband for insurgents against a friendly nation.'

'Ever been in Cuba?' asked Dick.

'No.'

'I have,' said Dick decisively. 'But, anyhow, you can't any of you help yourselves. I didn't absolutely ask any of you to come aboard.'

'I'm not so sure of that,' laughed Kibby. 'If those life-buoys were not in the nature of an invitation, I never received one. But, anyhow, Mr. Keppel, I'm very glad to be here under the circumstances. We might all be in a very much worse place, and, being here, if I can be of any service to you pray command me.'

The run was made without any further casualty, beyond the fact that they had to burn all the cases in which the arms were packed and every scrap of available woodwork on the yacht on the last night.

They loaded up enough wood at Manzanillo to reach Kingston, and there Mr. McKinnon was able to cable home the news that he was still in the land of the living. He asked for news of his daughter, but up to the time the *Albatross* sailed received no answer.

As Keppel was going straight back to the Clyde Mr. McKinnon and Lieutenant Kibblewhite elected to go with him, and the yacht crept up the loch to her moorings opposite Drumcleugh one fine evening as quietly as though she had simply been for a spin down the coast.

Among the letters awaiting Mr. McKinnon was one in his daughter's handwriting. It contained her wedding cards and a fervent appeal for his forgiveness and the assurance that she was very happy. It was dated a fortnight back. He put on his hat and walked round the point to the telegraph office in the grocer's shop, and wired to Janet Ogilvie, 'Send them home.'

No information has ever transpired as to how those arms reached Cuba.

WHAT IS 'POPULAR POETRY'?<sup>1</sup>

BY W. B. YEATS.

I THINK it was a Young Ireland Society that set my mind running on 'popular poetry.' We used to discuss everything that was known to us about Ireland, and especially Irish literature and Irish history. We had no Gaelic, but paid great honour to the Irish poets who wrote in English, and quoted them in our speeches. I could have told you at that time the dates of the birth and death, and quoted the chief poems, of men whose names you have not heard, and perhaps of some whose names I have forgotten. I knew in my heart that the most of them wrote badly, and yet such romance clung about them, such a desire for Irish poetry was in all our minds that I kept on saying, not only to others but to myself, that most of them wrote well, or all but well. I had read Shelley and Spenser and had tried to mix their styles together in a pastoral play which I have not come to dislike much, and yet I do not think Shelley or Spenser ever moved me as did these poets. I thought one day—I can remember the very day when I thought it—'If somebody could make a style which would not be an English style and yet would be musical and full of colour, many others would catch fire from him, and we would have a really great school of ballad poetry in Ireland. If these poets, who have never ceased to fill the newspapers and the ballad-books with their verses, had a good tradition they would write beautifully and move everybody as they move me.' Then a little later on I thought, 'If they had something else to write about besides political opinions, if more of them would write about the beliefs of the people like Allingham, or about old legends like Ferguson, they would find it easier to get a style.' Then, with a deliberateness that still surprises me, for in my heart of hearts I have never been quite certain that one should be more than an artist, that even patriotism is more than an impure desire in an artist, I set to work to find a style and things to write about that the ballad writers might be the better. They are no better, I think, and my desire to make them so was, it may be, one of the illusions Nature holds before one, because she knows that the gifts she has to give are not worth

<sup>1</sup> Copyright, 1902, by W. B. Yeats, in the United States of America.



troubling about. It is for her sake that we must stir ourselves, but we would not trouble to get out of bed in the morning, or to leave our chairs once we are in them, if she had not her conjuring bag. She wanted a few verses from me—I hope she did at any rate—and because it would not have seemed worth while taking so much trouble to see my books lie on a few drawing-room tables, she filled my head with thoughts of making a whole literature, and plucked me out of the Dublin art schools where I should have stayed drawing from the round, and sent me into a library to read bad translations from the Irish, and at last down into Connaught to sit by turf fires. I wanted to write 'popular poetry' like those Irish poets, for I believed that all good literatures were popular, and even cherished the fancy that the Adelphi melodrama, which I had never seen, might be good literature, and I hated what I called the coteries. I thought that one must write without care, for that was of the coteries, but with a gusty energy that would put all straight if it came out of the right heart. I had a conviction, which indeed I have still, that one's verses should hold, as in a mirror, the colours of one's own climate and scenery in their right proportion; and, when I found my verses too full of the reds and yellows Shelley gathered in Italy, I thought for two days of setting things right, not as I should now by making my rhythms faint and nervous and filling my images with a certain coldness, a certain wintry wildness, but by eating little and sleeping upon a board. I felt indignant with Matthew Arnold because he complained that somebody, who had translated Homer into a ballad measure, had tried to write epic to the tune of 'Yankee Doodle.' It seemed to me that it did not matter what tune one wrote to, so long as that gusty energy came often enough and strongly enough. And I delighted in Victor Hugo's book upon Shakespeare, because he abused critics and coteries and thought that Shakespeare wrote without care or premeditation and to please everybody. I would indeed have had every illusion had I believed in that straightforward logic, as of newspaper articles, which so tickles the ears of the shopkeepers; but I always knew that the line of Nature is crooked, that, though we dig the canal beds as straight as we can, the rivers run hither and thither in their wildness.

From that day to this I have been busy among the verses and stories that the people make for themselves, but I had been busy a very little while before I knew that what we call popular poetry never came from the people at all. Longfellow, and Campbell,

and Mrs. Hemans, and Macaulay in his Lays, and Scott in his longer poems are the poets of the middle class, of people who have unlearned the unwritten tradition which binds the unlettered, so long as they are masters of themselves, to the beginning of time and to the foundation of the world, and who have not learned the written tradition which has been established upon the unwritten. I became certain that Burns, whose greatness has been used to justify the littleness of others, was in part a poet of the middle class, because though the farmers he sprang from and lived among had been able to create a little tradition of their own, less a tradition of ideas than of speech, they had been divided by religious and political changes from the images and emotions which had once carried their memories backward thousands of years. Despite his expressive speech which sets him above all other popular poets, he has the triviality of emotion, the poverty of ideas, the imperfect sense of beauty of a poetry whose most typical expression is in Longfellow. Longfellow has his popularity, in the main, because he tells his story or his idea so that one needs nothing but his verses to understand it. No words of his borrow their beauty from them that used them before, and one can get all that there is in story and idea without seeing them, as if moving before a half-faded curtain embroidered with kings and queens, their loves and battles and their days out hunting, or else with holy letters and images of so great antiquity that nobody can tell the god or goddess they would commend to an unfading memory. Poetry that is not popular poetry presupposes, indeed, more than it says, though we, who cannot know what it is to be disinherited, only understand how much more when we read it in its most typical expressions, in the 'Epipsychidion' of Shelley, or in Spenser's description of the gardens of Adonis, or when we meet the misunderstandings of others. Go down into the street and read to your baker or your candlestick-maker any poem which is not popular poetry. I have heard a baker, who was clever enough with his oven, deny that Tennyson could have known what he was writing when he wrote 'Warming his five wits, the white owl in the belfry sits,' and once when I read out Omar Khayyam to one of the best of candlestick-makers, he said, 'What is the meaning of "we come like water and like wind we go"?' Or go down into the street with some thought whose bare meaning must be plain to everybody; take with you Ben Jonson's 'Beauty like sorrow dwelleth everywhere,' and find out how utterly its enchantment depends on an association of beauty



with sorrow which written tradition has from the unwritten, which had it in its turn from ancient religion; or take with you these lines in whose bare meaning also there is nothing to stumble over, and find out what men lose who are not in love with Helen.

Brightness falls from the air,  
Queens have died young and fair,  
Dust hath closed Helen's eye.

I pick my examples at random, for I am writing where I have no books to turn the pages of, but one need not go east of the sun or west of the moon in so simple a matter.

On the other hand, when a Walt Whitman writes in seeming defiance of tradition, he needs tradition for his protection, for the butcher and the baker and the candlestick-maker grow merry over him when they meet his work by chance. Nature, which cannot endure emptiness, has made them gather conventions which cannot disguise their low birth though they copy, as from far off, the dress and manners of the well-bred and the well-born. The gatherers mock all expression that is wholly unlike their own, just as little boys in the street mock at strangely dressed people and at old men who talk to themselves.

There is only one kind of good poetry, for the poetry of the coteries, which presupposes the written tradition, does not differ in kind from the true poetry of the people, which presupposes the unwritten tradition. Both are alike strange and obscure, and unreal to all who have not understanding, and both, instead of that manifest logic, that clear rhetoric of the 'popular poetry,' glimmer with thoughts and images whose 'ancestors were stout and wise,' 'anigh to Paradise' 'ere yet men knew the gift of corn.' It may be that we know as little of their descent as men knew of 'the man born to be king' when they found him in that cradle marked with the red lion crest, and yet we know somewhere in the heart that they have been sung in temples, in ladies' chambers, and our nerves quiver with a recognition they were shaped to by a thousand emotions. If men did not remember or half remember impossible things, and, it may be, if the worship of sun and moon had not left faint reverence behind it, what Aran fisher-girl would sing:

'It is late last night the dog was speaking of you; the snipe was speaking of you in her deep marsh. It is you are the lonely bird throughout the woods; and that you may be without a mate until you find me.

'You promised me and you said a lie to me, that you would be before me where the sheep are flocked. I gave a whistle and three hundred cries to you; and I found nothing there but a bleating lamb.

'You promised me a thing that was hard for you, a ship of gold under a silver mast; twelve towns and a market in all of them, and a fine white court by the side of the sea.

'You promised me a thing that is not possible; that you would give me gloves of the skin of a fish; that you would give me shoes of the skin of a bird, and a suit of the dearest silk in Ireland.

'My mother said to me not to be talking with you, to-day or to-morrow or on Sunday. It was a bad time she took for telling me that, it was shutting the door after the house was robbed. . . .

'You have taken the east from me, you have taken the west from me, you have taken what is before me and what is behind me; you have taken the moon, you have taken the sun from me, and my fear is great you have taken God from me.'

The Gael of the Scottish islands could not sing his beautiful song over a bride had he not a memory of the belief that Christ was the only man who measured six feet and not a little more or less, and was perfectly shaped in all other ways, and if he did not remember old symbolical observances:

I bathe thy palms  
 In showers of wine,  
 In the cleansing fire,  
 In the juice of raspberries,  
 In the milk of honey.

Thou art the joy of all joyous things,  
 Thou art the light of the beam of the sun,  
 Thou art the door of the chief of hospitality,  
 Thou art the surpassing pilot star,  
 Thou art the step of the deer of the hill,  
 Thou art the step of the horse of the plain,  
 Thou art the grace of the sun rising,  
 Thou art the loveliness of all lovely desires.

The lovely likeness of the Lord  
 Is in thy pure face,  
 The loveliest likeness that was upon earth.

I soon learned to cast away one other illusion of 'popular poetry.' I learned from the people themselves, before I learned it from any book, that they cannot separate the idea of an art or a



craft from the idea of a cult with ancient technicalities and mysteries. They can hardly separate mere learning from witchcraft, and are fond of words and verses that keep half their secret to themselves. Indeed, it is certain that before the counting-house had created a new class and a new art without breeding and without ancestry, and set this art and this class between the hut and the castle, and between the hut and the cloister, the art of the people was as closely mingled with the art of the coteries as was the speech of the people that delighted in rhythmical animation, in idiom, in images, in words full of far-off suggestion, with the unchanging speech of the poets.

Now I see a new generation in Ireland which discusses Irish literature and history in 'Young Ireland Societies,' and societies with newer names, and there are far more than when I was a boy who would make verses for the people. They have the help, too, of an awakening press, and this press sometimes urges them to desire the direct logic, the clear rhetoric, of 'popular poetry.' It sees that Ireland has no cultivated minority, and it does not see, though it would cast out all English things, that its literary ideal belongs more to England than to other countries. I have hope that the new writers will not fall into illusion, for they write in Irish, and for a people the counting-house has not made forgetful. Among the seven or eight hundred thousand who have had Irish from the cradle, there is, perhaps, nobody who has not enough of the unwritten tradition to know good verses from bad ones, if he have enough mother-wit. Among all that speak English in Australia, in America, in Great Britain, are there many more than the ten thousand the prophet saw, who have enough of the written tradition education has set in room of the unwritten to know good verses from bad ones, even though their mother-wit has made them Ministers of the Crown or what you will? Nor can things be better till that ten thousand have gone hither and thither to preach their faith that 'the imagination is the man himself,' and that the world as imagination sees it is the durable world, and have won men as did the disciples of Him who—

His seventy disciples sent  
Against religion and government.

*SOCIAL SOLECISMS.*

BY LADY GROVE.

THERE appeared elsewhere an article by me on the subject of mispronunciation and other peculiarities, intended to be mildly diverting, but which roused a certain amount of antagonistic criticism to which I certainly do not think it was entitled. If everything in the article had been meant perfectly seriously I admit that it might have given offence in certain quarters, but I am happy to say that most of its readers saw its humorous side without having had all the i's dotted and the t's crossed for them. And indeed I do think that the very people who were offended ought, on the contrary, to have been very grateful to me for pointing out the microscopic difference between the 'Ins' and the 'Outs,' and for exposing the slightness of the structure upon which the extreme exclusiveness of a certain section of society rests, and for throwing open the bridge thereto whereupon all who read might run with the fullest confidence that they would not trip up.

Nevertheless, my contention must distinctly be understood to be that it is not the things people do and say that determine to what 'sphere' they belong, but that it is the people themselves that build up and put their own unmistakeable mark upon what to another 'sphere' constitute solecisms. Given certain conditions, an individual may do or say almost anything he pleases. The only certainty is that there are things which under no circumstances would he take pleasure in doing. No proverb is more irrefutably borne out by experience than the one that points out how one man may steal a horse, and another not even be allowed to look over the hedge.

It is also a fact that words, their pronunciation and use, expressions, and even habits, transfer themselves from one grade of society to another. What is perfectly correct in one generation becomes first old-fashioned, then affected, and finally either obsolete or vulgar, according as to whether these discarded husks of civilisation have been generally adopted by the 'lower orders' or not. The pronunciation of the word Derby is an illustration of this point: 'Darby' has been comparatively recently adopted



by the same grade of society as that which formerly pronounced the word as the porters, cabmen, and others pronounce it now.

In the democratic ardour of my youth I did that which is now a source of regret to me. I carefully modernised my pronunciation, and endeavoured to 'get away' from what I considered the unenlightened peculiarities of the generation above me. Alas! I can no longer say 'corfy' naturally, so I resign myself to the less distinguished and more general sound, except on the occasions when, to my joy, I unconsciously revert to the pronunciation of my early youth. A highly refined writer of fiction will, in depicting his low-life scenes, make his barbarians say, 'I'm *orf*.' And when one sees the word spelt like that as a sign of the coarseness and ignorance of the character, the writer has betrayed his own hideous, mincing mispronunciation of the word which the ruffian has enunciated quite as it should be.

Mr. Rudyard Kipling is rather an offender in this respect. I know a highly cultivated, ultra-refined person who always speaks of a 'Gawd-mother,' not using the word in any ironical sense, however, as indicating the only use that children as a rule can see in Godmothers, but simply because she happens to pronounce such words in the same way as Mr. Kipling's soldiers.

At the same time, there it is, and it is no use ignoring the fact, and, without wishing to appear dictatorial or arrogant, I must say it: there are certain things that must *not* be said. For instance, if you have on your table no matter what specimen of the genus hen, even should it be a very Methuselah amongst them, and you know it, it must not be referred to as a 'fowl,' it must always be spoken of as a 'chicken.' I cannot say why it is so, but so it is. On the same principle, perhaps, that in any well-conducted establishment the unmarried ladies of the household, if there happens to be a married one, are always called 'the young ladies,' even should their ages be between sixty and seventy. Anyhow, let no consideration for truth or honesty persuade you to speak of your *plat* otherwise than as 'chicken.'

Some self-respecting pieces of furniture would, I am sure, resent being called, and refuse to recognise themselves, under certain names. It must, for instance, have been remarked by every observant person the partiality that certain people have for the word 'couch.' Does not 'couch' raise up in the mind's eye the horsehair atrocities of the lodging-house and the country inn—in company with a 'chiffonnier,' a mysterious *meuble* I have

never identified, but occasionally heard of—and seem utterly inapplicable to one's own reposeful sofas? Why, too, does the word 'mirror' sound so out of place, when the more cumbersome double-barrelled 'looking-glass' sounds quite appropriate? An 'easy-chair' is used by the same people who talk about a 'couch,' and the room conjured up by anyone using the expression has quite a different aspect from one containing 'arm-chairs.' Among their household gods there will be knife-sharpeners 'for table use;' 'rests' for the carving knife and fork; basket-mats under the dishes, which will blossom out into d'oyleys underneath the cake at tea, and everywhere when possible on smart occasions paper-lace mats. Glass shades on every possible and impossible object, coloured wine-glasses, 'jingles' on the chimney-piece, plates hung on the wall (an abomination), fans put to the same incongruous use, basket cake-holders of course. Lamps with voluminous shades, that are left in the room in the day-time, and in the summer-time 'grate decorations.'

'Mantel-shelf' for 'chimney-piece' is also quite a characteristic insult to the noble and long-suffering ally of the hearth. But it is possibly the word 'mantle' which is disconcerting, a word dear to the heart of the awe-inspiring 'saleswomen' of dignified presence, gracious manners, and wonderful figures, but which one never dreams of using in talking of one's own garments any more than one would talk of a 'wrap' or an 'overcoat,' or of 'dress-clothes,' or, worse still, 'dress-suit' for evening clothes. Perhaps the word 'mantle' is shunned on account of its sacred reminiscences. Anyhow, we do know that they do not tolerate such garments in heaven, and even Elijah had to drop his before he was admitted.

Other words used in shops, and which one seldom hears out of them, are purely technical, we suppose—'hose,' for instance, and 'falls' for veils.

Another good illustration of *autre temps, autre mœurs*, is afforded in the matter of expletives. A dignified old friend of mine of the old-fashioned type told me that he was walking one day with the carefully brought-up daughter of a ducal household when she dropped her umbrella. As she stooped quickly and quietly to pick it up, a 'damn' came as quickly and quietly to her lips. Not with any anger or violence, but in the same manner that an 'Oh dear!' would have come from her predecessors under similar circumstances.



Now I remember my first 'damn' quite distinctly. I was alone in the park of my girlhood's home, alone with Nature and my dog; I even forget what had annoyed me—I have often tried to remember, in view of the vivid recollection I have of the sense of awed emancipation which crept over me—my anger utterly dispelled by that one vigorous exclamation. I looked up and around, and I wondered if any other but myself had heard that terrible word, then I whistled to the dog and walked soberly home. Even to-day I confess that it sounds to me strangely ill-bred when a *man* permits himself a 'damn' in polite society. This seems usurping the prerogatives of men with a vengeance—to tolerate a 'swear-word' in a woman and not in a man. But so it is. Let them comfort themselves with the reflection that the reason for this strange perversion lies in the inherent inconsequence of the female sex. When a man swears it is presumably a serious matter; when a woman swears it is often *pour rire*, as are most of the other things she does, they will console themselves—if consolation they need—by saying.

The decrees of fashion are very arbitrary. It is an unexplained mystery why the courtesy title 'Honourable' is not to be mentioned in polite society, and why it should be excluded from the visiting cards of the honourable possessors of such title. A courageous youth once defied this decree and printed his honourableness on his cards. It excited comment if nothing more. But what is there from its intrinsic point of view that should make this so grave a solecism? Why should it be the only title to be ignored in conversation? It is true, however, that of the peerage the dukes and duchesses are the only ones whose exact rank it is permitted to mention in addressing them. All other titles, from a baron's to a marquis's and their ladies, have to be content with the generic prefix of Lord and Lady.

Baron somehow always gives a foreign sound to any name, and yet it is one of the earliest of our English honours. A loquacious tradesman in the 'old furniture line' in our neighbourhood always spoke of all his customers by their correct rank. Thus he would say 'I sold Baron S. a table just like the one I am offering to your ladyship, only the other day; and Viscount P. had a chair very much after this pattern.' 'Baron S.' was frequently referred to in future in the same way by others in consequence of this good man's quaint example. In the same town I took a friend of mine

to a toy-shop. After several purchases had been made, the lady of the shop drew me aside and whispered, 'Am I right in supposing the lady to be the Honourable ——?' On receiving my answer in the affirmative, she exclaimed regretfully, 'I wish I'd 'a known, I'd have put in a "My lady" occasionally to her too.' She evidently deplored this tendency to ignore the least of the courtesy titles.

But to put 'Hon.' on one's cards is not the only outrage that can be committed on visiting cards. One card containing the joint names of husband and wife is very shocking to one's sense of decency. A lady I knew carried this reticence to an extreme when she spent her time separating the works of male and female authors on her bookshelves, but never tolerated their proximity unless—then she was delighted—they happened to be married. But in one of our neighbouring counties a worthy baronet and his lady are in the habit of issuing invitations to their garden parties in their joint names. Whether it is due to modesty on the part of the lady who fears that, without the assurance conveyed on the invitation cards that her lord will also be at home on the day on which they are invited, their neighbours will not respond by their presence to the hospitable call, or whether it is due to vanity on the part of the husband who also suffers from that delusion, I cannot say, but so the invitation reaches and amuses us. That is, however, not nearly so bad as a man alone having the impertinence to intimate that *he* sits at home and receives the ladies to whom he has sent invitations. Let me inform all those guilty of such a barbarism that the proper way to solicit the presence of your friends if you are a lone man is to request the honour of their company. I will say, however, in excuse that men do not seem to know these things by instinct. A woman brought up in a certain *milieu* knows the 'right thing' to do quite instinctively. And as she rules the social world—it is, so far, her only kingdom—that is quite as it should be. It is, therefore, easier for a woman to lift a man than for a man to give a social lift to a woman. Children, too, unconsciously incorporate themselves more with the mother's family than the father's. The relationships are more intimate on the mother's side. And although a woman adapts herself much more quickly to her surroundings, as the things that matter are inborn and not acquired in woman, the man in the end is the more pliant instrument, and unfortunately sinks to the level of the



woman as easily as with a more fortunate choice he would have risen.

The same people who have their cards printed 'Mr. and Mrs. So-and-so' will also talk about 'paying calls' without any idea that they are not saying quite the right thing. They will also inform you that they are 'going to the theatre' instead of going to 'the play'; say they have 'the toothache' instead of 'a toothache,' and will suggest the necessity of having the offending tooth 'drawn,' when others would have theirs 'pulled out.' They will talk about having caught 'the measles' instead of measles *tout court*.

There are expressions, however, that are very much used that one deploras as being merely slovenly, but are becoming so universal as to harden one into hearing them without wincing. The bustle of the busy or the laziness of the idle is the cause of abbreviations which one must accustom oneself to without, however, being reconciled to them. 'Lunch' for luncheon is a very common one, and is somehow much worse than 'bus.' But I know people who cannot bring themselves to speak of the Royal Academy as 'the Academy' any more than they would talk about 'the Row.'

If 'ain't I?' is objected to, surely 'aren't I?' is very much worse, and which of us can always undertake to keep up to the level of those who invariably say 'am I not?' or 'am not I?' Then, if bicycle must be shortened, I admit that I prefer the American 'wheel' to 'bike.' I have, too, often heard well-educated people talk of a 'shut carriage;' but surely it is just as easy and more correct to say a 'closed carriage.'

Not that severe correctness is not more trying sometimes than the most slovenly and slangy expressions. It is very trying when one is reading a really engrossing story that has been quite convincing until some impossible expression jars upon one, and awakens one to the fact that the writer is endeavouring to deal with situations which he has never viewed except from the outside, and of which he is attempting to portray an intimate knowledge, which he obviously lacks. Thus, when the earl's son is made to call his father 'sir' in all his moments of either emotion or respect, it is impossible not to feel that the writer 'has not passed that way.' For I never knew anyone who addressed his father as 'sir,' and so why should a man be made to do so in books? It is equally unpleasant when people say 'uncle' without

any name, or 'aunt.' And what is more terrible than when husbands call their wives 'mother,' or, worse still, oh, piteous sound! 'wife'! You might just as well say 'helpmeet' or 'partner.' Now 'madam' or 'my lady' I don't object to at all; there is a certain stateliness about it altogether lacking in the bald 'wife,' which must be a shocking reminder to have thrust at one every minute. In fact, the repetition of any name, even the most correct and the most legitimate, is a very tiresome habit some people acquire, and it is certainly better to err on the other extreme of never saying a name at all if it can possibly be avoided. It always strikes me, too, as a little jarring when people talk to one about 'your husband' or 'your wife.' Was it in Thackeray's 'Book of Snobs' where Jones, having married 'Lady Dulcima Tomnoddy,' is greeted by Smith after the marriage with the hearty inquiry, 'Well, Jones, and how's your wife?' returns the cold response, 'Do you refer to Lady Dulcima?' and is scored off, as the *raconteur* thinks, by the reply, 'Oh, I thought she *was* your wife?' But although Jones showed questionable taste in his method of snubbing Smith, I can quite understand Jones's feeling of annoyance. If a person has got a name, it is just as well to use it when inquiring after him, and it savours of the cottage, condescension, and the Lady Bountiful when you insist upon the relationship of and to the person you are addressing.

One learns many strange uses and misuses of things at country inns, but let us hope that the following experience related by a friend of mine as having happened to himself is a rare one. He had gone to bed in an Irish inn, bidding the landlady to have him called at eight. At six, however, next morning, she knocked at his door. 'Ye've to git up,' she said. 'What o'clock is it?' 'Six, surr.' 'Go away, I am not going to get up till eight.' At seven she reappeared. 'Indade and ye must git up now, it's seven.' Finding him unmoved at her next return, she said, 'Git up, there's a sweet gintleman; there's two commercial gintlemen waiting for their breakfast, and I can't lay the cloth till I have yer honour's top sheet.'

County balls, too, yield many and wonderful experiences. And while it is permitted to talk about what is 'bad form,' let us never indulge in the opinion that anybody or anything is 'good form.' Likewise, a person may be dubbed second rate, third, fourth, or even fifth, if the scale of condemnation is very heavily



weighted ; but never in the same sense would anyone 'who knew' dream of calling a person 'first rate,' which means something quite different, and would be used only as referring to their attainments and not to their qualities. At a county ball one can hear the lady on guard referred to as 'my chaperone' instead of '*chaperon.*' You will see the dear *débutantes* holding up their skirts with a small ribbon loop attached to the end of the train, and, although I am told that this gruesome sight may be now seen at balls in 'London Society,' I have up to now been spared. I shall be told next that fans tied round the waist with loops of ribbon are *de rigueur* ; that no one who respects himself fails to 'reverse' in valsing, or 'waltzing,' as such offenders would call it, which, however, is a better way of pronouncing it than 'volsing,' which savours of the shopwoman's 'moddam.' We shall be assured that to spread the right hand with fingers well extended, in the middle of the lady's back, is the only correct way to hold your partner, and that if the man sees her trying to do something herself he should come forward and say, 'Can I assist you ?'

We shall be asked to talk about 'going to Court,' or a 'Court ball,' instead of the familiar 'Drawing-room,' and 'Queen's ball.' But I think that even in these demoralised days we may yet be spared all these shocking sights and sounds where we have no reason to expect them.

A somewhat annoying habit peculiar to one's maids consists in calling the name of the country houses one has been staying in by their post towns. In some cases they happen to be identical ; then well and good. But I suffered when a child from this peculiarity to the extent of being lost out for a walk when quite small with a French maid, who had taken a wrong turning, and thenceforward persistently asked for the post town of the place we were staying at, which happened to be some twelve miles off, imagining it to be the name of the house, and thus getting farther and farther away until we were fortunately rescued by a passing waggon.

And, after all, ignorance is the root of all evil, even in such weighty matters as have been dealt with in this paper. No plant flourishes without cultivation except where it is indigenous to the soil, but care and cultivation will produce specimens which it will need all the inherent advantages of time and place to rival even, let alone excel.

*REMINISCENCES OF THE PUNJAUB CAMPAIGN.*

BY MAJOR-GENERAL T. MAUNSELL, C.B.

THE ranks of those soldiers who fought in the Sikh War of 1848-49 are thinning fast, and there are but few now who can speak of the events of that memorable campaign from personal knowledge. Perhaps it is for this reason that I have been asked to recall my own share in those stirring times, and after a lapse of fifty-three years to jot down what I can remember of a famous war, waged when conditions of warfare differed almost more completely from now than they then did from the days of the Peninsular battles.

In the year 1848 my regiment, the 32nd, which I had joined as ensign four years previously, was ordered with three other infantry regiments to India, to reinforce the troops there after the battles of Moodkee, Ferozsha, Aliwal and Sobraon. The Sutlej campaign was still in progress when we left England, and we fervently hoped that it might yet continue to give us a chance of some fighting on our arrival. However, the voyage to India in those days, round the Cape, was of a good four months' duration, and though, to relieve the tedium and by way of exercise, the men were meantime initiated into the mysteries of seamanship, so that by the time we reached Calcutta we were almost as good sailors as soldiers, yet this fact was small compensation to young officers eager for the fray when we found on arrival that hostilities were at an end and peace proclaimed.

But the peace was not to be of long duration. Our destination was Meerut, where we marched from Chinsura, and as there were no railways in India in those times it took us no less than three long months to accomplish this journey, which now can be made in three days. At Meerut we stayed about a year, and at the end of that time rumours began reaching us of unsettled feeling among the natives of the Punjaub, and all things pointed to a renewal of disturbances. Nor had we long to wait. In April 1848 came the tidings of the murder of Mr. Vans Agnew and Lieutenant Anderson at Mooltan, and the rising of the Sikhs under the treacherous Rajah Moolraj. It was therefore determined to send



a British force to Mooltan to restore order and bring the Rajah to terms, and my regiment was ordered to form part of it.

To my vast disappointment I was first ordered, as one of the senior subalterns, to take charge of the depot to be left at Ferozepore, and had I done this I should have had the extreme mortification of seeing my regiment march off without me. Happily for me, however, there was another subaltern needed to take charge of the regimental baggage, which was to be conveyed along the right bank of the Sutlej to a place near Mooltan where it would meet the regiment, who were to be sent down the river by boats. I was senior of the two subalterns ordered for these commands, and as such I begged my colonel to allow me to have my choice between them. To this he fortunately agreed, and needless to say I instantly chose the charge of the baggage, and was thus enabled to go on active duty with the regiment instead of being left behind.

Accordingly I took command of the baggage, and with a troop of cavalry and a native officer under me had it conveyed across the river and to the appointed place, where we arrived a day before the regiment. It was in the midst of the hot weather, and the marches were long and trying, so that many camels died on the way. But more hot marches were before us. On the arrival of the regiment I handed over the command and joined my company, and the next day we moved off to Mooltan, distant about four days' journey. The heat was terrific, so much so that no fewer than 200 men went down with heat-apoplexy. At the end of the day's march I would go round and find the hospital tents crowded with stricken men, and others lying outside, for there was not room for them all. A good many died, including one officer, and we were not sorry to find ourselves at our destination before Mooltan.

Our besieging force was under command of General Whish, and consisted of two brigades of infantry, each formed of one European and two native regiments. Edwards's force of irregular troops was with us, and there were also cavalry and horse and field batteries of artillery. Part of Edwards's troops were a Sikh force under Shere Singh, ostensibly loyal, but in reality disaffected to the core, as we had reason to know later on. A few days after our arrival a parade of the division was ordered, to read a proclamation stating that if the fort and garrison were not immediately surrendered by the Rajah the siege of the town

would at once commence. A square of the troops was formed on a spot which was plainly visible from the fort, and a special messenger was sent to the Rajah to inform him of what was to take place. The proclamation was duly read, but the reading was scarcely finished when an enormous shell was fired from the fort and dropped in the centre of the square. There was no mistaking the meaning of this missive, which was clearly intended both as a reply and a defiance. The preparations for the siege of Mooltan therefore immediately commenced.

It was shortly after this that General Whish took out his first reconnoitring party to examine the other side of the fort and city. It consisted of two companies of infantry, a troop of cavalry, and horse artillery. I did not belong to either of the companies, as it happened, but another officer and myself accompanied the party as spectators merely, and to see what was to be seen. Everything went quietly to begin with; our skirmishers met with no enemy, and we reached the other side of the fort and city without molestation. Arrived here the General and staff climbed to the top of a minaret of a temple called the Eedgah to reconnoitre. This temple, as it happened, was the scene of the murder of Mr. Agnew and Lieutenant Anderson, and while the General was making his sketch above, my friend and I entered the building to look at the bullet marks which were still to be seen on the walls. I well remember that as we entered an owl, scared from its hiding-place, began to fly round and round the circular dome above us, till at length it grew quite giddy and fell to the ground. I was just stooping to pick it up when suddenly we heard the guns of the fort open fire, and immediately a shot came right through the temple, passed just over my head, and buried itself in the floor at the foot of the opposite wall. The enemy were aiming, of course, at the General on the minaret; but by this time he had luckily finished his sketch, and ordered the party to retire; and though the enemy's guns continued to fire upon us during the retirement, so that several of us had some narrow escapes, we reached the camp without casualty. This was the first time in my career that I had found myself under fire, and for many years I preserved the skin of the owl I had picked up in the temple as a memento of the occasion.

The work of commencing the siege and opening the trenches now began in earnest, and just about this time occurred an incident which may be worth relating. A strong position, con-



sisting of a small village strengthened by trenches, was on our right front, and was held by us with a picket, increased at nightfall and relieved at midnight. One night it came to my turn to be on duty there at sunset with my company, the rest of our party consisting of another company of my regiment, two guns, and the wing of a native infantry regiment. Our force was somewhat stronger than usual, for a report had got about that the position was to be attacked that night, and we were all cautioned to be on the alert. The trench on the left flank of the village, where it was considered the attack was most likely to be made, was strongly occupied. My own company was on the right of the trench, the other company on the left, while the native infantry was posted between us, in the centre, as being the strongest point; the men moreover being four deep to give them confidence.

For some hours all went quietly. The night was very dark, and the time was approaching when we should be relieved when the silence was suddenly broken by rifle shots on the left. I was with my company on the right, and anxious to learn what the alarm was about, I hurried across in the rear of the trenches to where the firing proceeded from. I had scarcely gone half-a-dozen paces, however, when I was suddenly overwhelmed and knocked off my feet by a body of men rushing furiously against me in a mad charge to the rear. To my astonishment I found they were our own native troops, who had been seized with sudden panic, had sprung to their feet, fired wildly without aim into the air, and then doubled backwards with their arms at the trail and their bayonets fixed, in several cases injuring each other in their terror-stricken retreat. As soon as I could struggle to my feet I turned to the trench, expecting after all this to see the enemy pouring over it in great force; but there was no enemy or anyone else in the trench, and, though I peered out into the night as far as I could see, everything was quiet and still. I shouted to my company to keep steady, which they certainly did, and then some guns in the fort commenced firing and their shots came over and into the village. Needless to say this night's incident sufficiently impressed me with the mischief which this sort of panic may cause, and with the difference between steady and unsteady troops.

The siege operations, trenches and approaches were pushed on apace, and a few small skirmishes took place, followed by a

night attack, which, however, could scarcely be considered a success; while there were a good many casualties in the darkness. In an attack of this kind the enemy, knowing their ground, may generally be considered to have the advantage, and it was decided to repeat the same attack by daylight in the hope of better success. Two days later, the strength of the troops sent into the trenches being increased, it was whispered that something was going to be done. There were about six companies of my regiment, including my own, present, and at about nine o'clock in the morning we were all moved into position and deployed into the lines required. As soon as the enemy saw the movements taking place they immediately opened fire, and we were ordered to lie down until all was ready for the advance. The colonel of my regiment had the command, and as soon as possible he gave the order for the advance; but its commencement was marked by a sad event.

Our colonel, as it happened, was in front of my company when the advance first began, and with him was the little bugler. We were at the moment under heavy fire, and the colonel, seeing the boy turn pale, said, 'Don't be frightened, my lad; this is soldiers' music!' Almost immediately after he was himself shot dead, as also his aide-de-camp, who was quartermaster of the regiment, and had begged the colonel to allow him to act in that capacity. Both were brave men and their loss was deeply felt. But to return to the advance.

After we had proceeded a short distance we came to the deep dry bed of a nullah running along our front. It was a difficult place to cross, and we had, moreover, to drive back the enemy, who were holding it in numbers. We were consequently ordered to 'Charge!' I was in front of my company, and therefore the first to jump down into the nullah; but so close were my men upon me that, even as I jumped, one of them in his eagerness sprung down on my left side, carrying clean away one of my pistols, as also the scabbard, and leaving me only the belt round my waist and the other pistol. In the excitement of the moment, however, I was unaware of this, nor did I discover the loss till some time after. We drove the enemy from the nullah, and also from the buildings and position we were required to take, and in spite of heavy losses our attack was very successful. I do not think that in any of my later experiences, Alma and Inkerman included, I have ever been under a heavier fire than on this occasion. That



I had had some narrow escapes was fully evident when I had time to examine my clothes and accoutrements. Besides my scabbard and pistol I had also lost my sword-knot, which had clearly been cut off by a bullet. But my narrowest escape of all was from another bullet which went through my left sleeve above the elbow, inside, grazing the arm, for an inch one way and the missile would have broken the bone, or an inch the other way entered the heart.

Perhaps the most difficult work which fell to our lot in this attack was the capture of a large building where the enemy were assembled in great strength. They had removed the flight of steps which led up to the entrance, which was some distance from the ground, so that even if the place had been undefended we should have found it no easy task to get in. As it was it proved a hard nut to crack and cost us a good many lives. Arrived inside a lucky bullet from one of my men just saved me from what would have been an awkward personal encounter. In a corner of a yard belonging to this building we came upon a ghastly pile of some hundred or more of the dead bodies of the enemy, which had for some reason been collected and thrown together here. After the position had been taken we made arrangements to be able to hold it in case of an attempt at re-capture by the enemy, and while so engaged I remember that an officer of another regiment came to me, asking if I could identify the body of an English field-officer lying dead some short distance off. I was shocked to find it was our own colonel, with a bullet wound in his breast and one of his hands cut completely off. Other of our officers had been terribly wounded. One captain of my regiment had a sword-cut through his cap and nearly into his brain, and another cutting off the side of his face and laying it upon his shoulder. Poor man! he was very short-sighted, and unable to make any attempt to defend himself, and, I fancy, knew nothing of fencing or singlestick. In this somewhat ghastly connection I may mention a curious example of the stiffening in the same position that sometimes follows instantaneous death which came under my notice that day. We were in line on a ridge, holding a position we had just taken, and I was aware that the man next me had been hit by a bullet. I turned to see where he had been wounded, and saw blood trickling from behind his right ear. He had made no sound or movement to show he was struck; nevertheless he was dead, shot through the brain, and had stiffened instantaneously in the attitude in which he died, kneeling on one

knee. I saw many instances of the same thing when I went over the field of Inkerman the day after the battle—soldiers struck dead and stiffened in the attitude of loading, and so forth.

Our position once gained, we had to hold it. We spent the rest of the day there, and at night were posted on the banks of the nullah. There was every likelihood of an attack on the part of the enemy, and such sleep as we could snatch after our hard day's fight was with bayonets fixed, and the officers with their drawn swords in their hands. Nevertheless, with the exception of a false alarm, the night passed quietly. After this the trench-making and advance were successfully carried on for some time, and we were drawing close upon the town, preparatory to making breaches, when, one day, Shere Singh and his 5,000 men (natives) suddenly passed over to the enemy. This was a terrible blow to our small force, already weakened by our many casualties, and as with our remaining numbers it was considered impossible to remain where we were and keep our communications open, our General decided to withdraw us to a spot some four or five miles distant, and there to wait for reinforcements. Needless to say it was with much reluctance that we saw ourselves obliged to relinquish the positions we had gained—and after such hard fighting too. But there was small choice left us, and so we accordingly retired to our new position, where we remained quietly for some two or three weeks.

At the end of that time came reports that Moolraj, who had been reinforced and was grown aggressive, was about to turn the tables on us by coming out to besiege his former besieging party; and shortly afterwards, indeed, he came, and took up a position a short distance from our front. We were obliged to send out stronger pickets both night and day, and strengthen our position in front and flanks; but presently the enemy's guns became so annoying, and the picket duties so heavy and hard upon our small force, that we determined on an attack to try and dislodge them. Our force was accordingly paraded as strong as possible, leaving only sufficient to hold the camp, and we were marched off to the right, the infantry, in open order of companies, making a long detour round the left flank and towards the rear of the enemy, who meanwhile fired round shot at us, but without doing much mischief. We marched in order of battle, and as soon as we were in position to turn their flank the infantry was wheeled into line and advanced. The enemy were taken by surprise, got into confusion, made little resistance, and retired, while we captured seven



of their guns. It was a brilliant action and a great success, for the enemy troubled us no more.

In due course our much-desired reinforcements arrived from Bombay, and we immediately advanced to Mooltan and began operations for the second siege. The city was closely pressed and the suburbs captured, though not without loss. Breaching batteries were next constructed and armed. The firing from these was incessant, and many sleepless nights did I spend with my company, guarding the guns, which were firing salvoes as fast as possible all the time. As long as the sentries were on the alert the rest of the guard were permitted to drop off to sleep (if they could find it possible to do so under the circumstances), but each man slept with bayonet fixed and ready in his hand.

As soon as the breaches were reported practicable the grand assault, for which we were so anxiously waiting, was ordered. It proved successful, and my regiment, after the breach was taken, were formed up inside and instructed to take possession of a certain portion of the town. Opposition was of course expected, as the enemy had only been driven from the breach, and would evidently not yield possession of the town without stubborn resistance. We were therefore marched off four deep, with bayonets fixed, and arms, of course, loaded—the streets, as in other Indian cities, being very narrow and not admitting of our marching with a broader front.

We proceeded down a street parallel with the city wall, my company leading. There was no opposition for two or three hundred yards, when suddenly the column halted and the fours began closing up. As lieutenant of the company I was marching on the right flank of the rear section of fours, and I immediately moved up to the front to see what was the matter. I found that we were confronted by a strong body of the enemy, and the colonel was ordering the captain of the company to charge; but some momentary panic seemed to have come over the men, and though every exertion was made by the captain they did not move.

It occurred to me at this juncture that wherever a British soldier was led he would follow, and seeing the state of things, and acting on the impulse of the moment, I rushed forward, but halted at once, as a crowd of Sikh soldiers advancing at the charge with their heads bare and their tulwars drawn and held aloft were close upon me. It was an awkward situation in truth, and

it behoved me to be wary if I wished to escape from it alive. Being to the left of the street my left was guarded; but my front and right side were open to attack, and two of my enemy immediately bore down on me together. One was a little in front of the other, and as he appeared the more forward and dangerous, I was obliged to pay my most particular attention to him. My sword was longer than his, and in order to keep him from closing in before I was ready for him I placed myself in position to meet his attack, feinted with my sword, and succeeded in avoiding his guards, while I cut him smartly with the point of my sword twice on his left temple. This I did to judge distance and to prevent his coming nearer till it suited me. He was, however, determined to get at me, for he went off his guard and prepared to strike me with his tulwar. This gave me my opportunity, and before he could strike I stepped in and cut him with my full force on his bare head, and by so doing broke the blade of my sword.

He fell on his side and right knee, but, partly recovering, still flourished his tulwar backwards and forwards, and as I was now about to be attacked by my second adversary, and had no weapon left with which to defend myself, I perceived that my only chance was to possess myself of this tulwar. Accordingly I struck the man again on the head with the remaining portion of my sword, when he at once dropped his tulwar, which I instantly picked up. Then I turned on my other foe; but he was lying on his back, close to my right foot, quite dead, with a bullet wound in his breast. One of my men, seeing the predicament I was in, had evidently fired and shot him just in time to save my life. I confess I was thankful enough to find him dead, as I could have made but a poor hand with my tulwar against a Sikh who understood the weapon perfectly. I understood fencing and single-stick thoroughly, having been taught by the best masters since I was a boy, but the tulwar is used in quite a different manner.<sup>1</sup> The tulwar and the fragment of my own broken sword are in my possession to this day, and I preserve them as mementos of certainly the 'tightest corner' that I was ever in.

The remainder of the enemy then retired, and we took possession of the town without further opposition. I was not to escape

<sup>1</sup> I may perhaps mention that for my proceedings my Colonel—Colonel Markham, afterwards General Sir Frederick Markham, K.C.B.—highly complimented me in presence of the officers of my regiment.



from the siege of Mooltan, however, wholly unscathed and without one other little souvenir with which at the time I could well have dispensed.

Although the town was ours the fort was still held by the enemy, and remained to be captured. Our attack was accordingly directed against it, and a breach shortly made in its walls. The day before the intended storming I was on duty at the Dowlet Gate—one of our most advanced positions. A messenger from Moolraj had just come in under a flag of truce, and after he had been blindfolded and sent off under escort to the General the firing, which had been temporarily suspended, was recommenced. Shortly after a shell burst just over me, and a splinter struck me on the left shoulder with great force, striking me down insensible. Luckily for me it hit me with its rounded side, and it fell upon the shoulder-cord of the shell-jacket I was wearing at the time. But for these two circumstances I should certainly not have survived to tell the tale. I was speaking to an officer at the moment I was hit, and he had me picked up and put into a doolie. He also put the piece of shell I was wounded with into the doolie with me, for he thought I might like to have it; and I must say when I was able to look at it I was astonished by its size. It weighed seven pounds. I was taken up to my tent, and lay like a log there for about a fortnight—black all over and paralysed, as it were, not able to feed myself, and in the greatest pain. The doctor thought my recovery almost a miracle. The very day I was wounded the fort surrendered, so I cannot say I lost any of the fighting; but I was not able to see the inside of the fort, as I should have liked to do.

Our presence was now much required by Lord Gough, whose army had nearly been defeated at the battle of Chillianwallah, and who was waiting till the siege of Mooltan was over and we could join him, to engage the enemy, who were in great strength before him. Accordingly, in about three weeks' time we were ordered to march. It was with reluctance that the doctor gave me leave to go, and as it was I had to be carried the whole three weeks' march in a doolie, suffering a great deal of pain from the motion. However, on joining Lord Gough's army I came off the sick report, and the very next day the battle of Goojerat was fought.

It was a very brilliant, pretty action, nor did we suffer much loss. Just in front of our regiment, I remember, the enemy, who

had been in line, fancying, I suppose, that cavalry were coming upon them, formed a square. We could have broken them up with our fire, but the General thought that artillery would do more damage; so guns were ordered to pass through our regiment to fire canister or grape into them, and certainly no troops could have dispersed much quicker than they did. There was a general retreat, and our infantry followed for some miles; but the cavalry continued the pursuit until, some days after, the enemy surrendered and laid down their arms. Thus ended the campaign by which the Punjaub was annexed.



## A LONDONER'S LOG-BOOK.

## XIV.

THOSE who have followed the short and simple annals of Stuccovia will perhaps remember the dexterous manœuvres by which my friend Barrington-Bounderley contrived to make himself M.P. for our borough, and the assiduous pains which he and his energetic wife took to retain the seat. At his original election he was opposed by a Social Democrat, who was afterwards convicted of cheating the Metropolitan Railway Company out of a threepenny fare ; but this crystal-souled politician polled a mere handful of votes—for Stuccovian politics are eminently genteel—and since that contest Bounderley has been returned unopposed. Perhaps this absence of opposition has lulled our member into a false security, and has relaxed the fibre of his interest in local affairs. Certainly he is less often seen in the chair at smoking concerts, and when Bumpstead asked him to kick off at the first football-match of the season against the Benevolent Cabdrivers' Orphanage, he declined with an abruptness which caused Bumpstead to ejaculate, 'All right, old chap, keep your hair on.'

Mrs. Barrington-Bounderley has given up her *crèche*, and during 1901 attended only two committee-meetings of the local Association for Reforming Workhouse Bonnets.

There is a rumour in the district that some Companies with which our member is or has been connected have not been very successful. Mrs. Bounderley's victoria seems to have gone into dock ; and though Mrs. Soulsby received the kindest imaginable letter in reply to her reminder about the parochial Christmas Tree, it enclosed a postal order for ten shillings instead of, as on former occasions, a cheque for two guineas.

Now it is not to be supposed that in a district like ours such changes can pass without unfavourable comment. Lady Farringford says, 'I always told you that the man was an impostor. No living creature ever knew where he came from, and for my own part I never believed in his wife's money. I'm convinced that they've been living beyond their means for years, and before long we shall see a crash.' The dear old lady's bitterness is partly due to the fact that she lately went to call on Mrs. Bounderley, and

found a tea-party raging to which she had not been invited. 'Not that I wanted to go to her shabby party, my dear,' she said to Selina. 'But I have no notion of people giving themselves such airs, and I was determined to let her know that I had found her out. So the next time I met her at Mrs. Soulsby's I said, "I came to call on you the other day, dear, but I saw by the look of the women who were going in that you had got a Mothers' Meeting or something of that kind going on. So, of course, I came away."' "

To be sure, Lady Farringford is incurably worldly, and would be by nature disposed to renounce the friendship of people whom she judged to be socially on the down grade. But I was surprised to hear Soulsby, who has always been severe on Mammon-worship and has habitually referred to money as 'dross,' insinuating mild depreciation of his friend and former churchwarden. 'I must confess that I am disappointed in Bounderley. I fear he has missed his predestined perfection. His ideals seem to have lowered since he has been in Parliament. I feel there was an inconsistency in refusing to subscribe for the enlargement of the vestry, and yet taking twenty tickets for the Licensed Victualers' Fancy Dress Ball. I trust I am not censorious, but these things jar.'

When voices of depreciation are in the air it were strange if Selina did not join the chorus. 'As for people's money-matters,' she exclaims, with a fine elevation of tone, 'I know nothing, and care less. But I must say I always thought your friend Mr. Bounderley one of the very vulgarest men I ever knew. He puts his elbows on to the table, and roars as if one was deaf, and is so odiously familiar. I should not be the least surprised to hear that he had cheated everyone. As to his wife, she is not a bad little creature, and I am sincerely sorry for her—though certainly she once tried to patronise me, on the strength of her husband being in Parliament, which was too absurd. No, Robert, it's no good saying they used to be my greatest friends. It was merely political. It's all very well for you to laugh at politics; but there is such a thing as principle. Please remember that, though I am your wife, I am still a Topham-Sawyer, and that Papa sat for Loamshire for thirty years. As long as Mr. Bounderley is our Member I shall do my best to help him; but I confess I think it's high time we had a change, and if only you had played your cards properly you might have succeeded



him. But it's so exactly like you—always throwing away every chance you ever had.'

In the midst of these revilings it is a relief to hear Bertha say that Mrs. Bounderley is a very nice little woman, and has always been very kind to her; while Bumpstead, loyally following suit, protests that though old B.-B. cut up a bit rough about the kick-off, still he's a good old sport at bottom, and his cigars take a lot of beating.

This fidelity of youth to its early benefactors is always a pretty sight; but I cannot conceal from myself that Bertha and Bumpstead are in a minority. Beyond doubt, Bounderley's local popularity is waning. The 'trend' is pointing in another direction. It will be remembered that, just about the time when I began these jottings, an opulent couple called Mr. and Mrs. Cashington settled in Stuccovia. They bought a big corner house in Stucco Gardens, enlarged the stables, and built a billiard-room. They entertain hospitably and subscribe liberally. Their cook is above praise and their wine above suspicion.

Bounderley's extremity is Cashington's opportunity. Local sentiment is ripening for a change, and circumstances seem to indicate that the Hour and the Man have arrived.

Liberalism is a plant of slow growth in a Stuccovian bosom, and I am the sole representative in our district of the cause for which Hampden died on the field and Sidney on the scaffold. I am a Whig *pur sang*. My forefathers helped Henry VIII. to rob the Church, and Edward VI. to despoil the grammar-schools. They contrived to keep their possessions under Mary, and increased them under Elizabeth. They obtained their baronetcy from James I., deserted Charles I. at the psychological moment, lay low under the Commonwealth, hastened to congratulate Charles II. on his return to Whitehall, plotted against James II., held office under William III., early discerned that the Stuarts had no chance of a second Restoration, became staunch supporters of the Hanoverian Succession, and, by judicious alliances with Levesons, and Howards, and Russells, obtained a place in that 'Sacred circle of the Great Grandmotherhood' which acquired the title of the Whig party, and did so uncommonly well for itself between 1830 and 1885.

Everyone who bears my name belongs to Brooks's and reads the 'Edinburgh.' The head of my family, though of course he deserted the Liberal party at the crisis of 1886, still describes

himself as 'a Whig of 1688.' I was trained to believe in the 'glorious and immortal memory of Mr. Fox,' and at home on January 30 we used to drink 'The Man in the Mask.' Selina (who trudges through frost and snow to the Royal Martyr's Memorial Service at St. Margaret Pattens) denounces this toast as brutal and cowardly, and protests that 'The Man who would have done it without a Mask' was a much finer character, for he at least had the courage of his convictions.

If I may for a moment speak egotistically, I believe that my sentiments are truly liberal in the best sense of the word; and when I settled in Stuccovia I willingly joined the local Liberal Association. But the atmosphere of the pot-house is disagreeable to me. I dissented from the philosophy of Mr. Bradlaugh. I had only an imperfect sympathy with the repeal of the Blasphemy Laws or the refusal of grants to the Royal Family, and when the Chairman of the Association pronounced that 'now the Grand Old Man is gone, our leader must be *Lebowcher*,' I felt it was time to withdraw from an environment so eminently uncongenial to Whiggery.

But still my name is on the list of the Association, and I have lately been not a little gratified to find myself recognised as in some sense a leader of local politics. This compliment I have received from my neighbour Mr. Cashington. A few days ago he sent me a brief but courteous note, requesting the favour of a private conversation with me on a matter of urgent business. This I graciously accorded, and my visitor came to the point with commendable promptitude. He said, 'There's no good in beating about the bush, and I may as well say plainly that I am thinking of standing for this borough; and I have come to you because I should like to be supported by a gentleman. You may take it from me that Bounderley won't stand next time—indeed, he may be off before the General Election. He has got into some very queer things in the City; and even if he ventured to face the music he wouldn't get in again. He can't afford to "part" as freely as he used. Soulsby has quarrelled with him for voting for the Deceased Wife's Sister the other day; and the publicans have discovered that he sent a donation on the sly to the Church of England Temperance Society. In short, he's pretty well found out; and I have a great notion that a strong Liberal candidate could carry the seat. Now, for my own part I am a Liberal Imperialist. Rosebery is the man for my money. He is an old friend of mine.



I wasn't actually at Eton with him, because my governor changed his mind at the last moment and sent me to Merchant Taylors'; but I came across him a good deal at Oxford. No, I wasn't at Christ Church; our family college was Queen's. But I've often seen Rosebery—he was Dalmeny then—coming out of Tom Gate; and one Fifth of November I did him a good turn in a row on Folly Bridge. By Jove! he never forgot it. When I went up to him at the City Liberal Club and said that my name was Cashington, he remembered me at once. We got on to politics directly. He said, "No man ever was in such a peculiar position as I am. I wrote a letter to explain that I couldn't speak, and now I must make a speech to explain what I meant by my letter." I said, "You needn't explain yourself to me. I'm with you, heart and soul. Salisbury is played out. Home Rule is dead and buried. Those sneaking Armenians deserve all they get; and the war's just about the best biz. that has happened in our time. Go on with your furrow; and, by jingo, you won't find yourself alone when you reach the end." I saw at a glance that he was impressed. It's wonderful how quick he is at picking up a point.

'I dined in Berkeley Square three days afterwards. There were a lot of pressmen at dinner, and it was simply a marvel to see how Rosebery had the whole conversation to himself; the other fellows never opened their mouths except to eat and drink. It is *glamour*, that's what it is—*glamour*, and if we could only get him to address the Liberal Association here we should win hands down.

'Oh, yes, the Association is all right. It is run by the Secretary, and an extra fiver to his salary will make everything square. He doesn't get much as it is, poor beggar; and he's quite sharp enough to know where the money-bags are.'

Thus Mr. Cashington; and his discourse gave, as the French say, furiously to think. Should I, having so long abandoned politics, return to my earlier activities? Should I unfurl the Whig banner of buff and blue, and wave it over the head of Imperial Cashington? If I undertook any responsibilities in connexion with the contest, should I have to subscribe to the registration expenses? should I have to read the 'Daily Mail'? and, above all, what would Selina say? Chewing the food of these sweet and bitter fancies, I declined to commit myself to Mr. Cashington's cause; but he shook hands with me effusively, and rushed off to

keep an appointment with Sir Wemyss Reid at the chambers of Dr. Heber Hart. Meanwhile, I laid the project, with an air of easy indifference, before Selina, who, to my great astonishment, did not instantly condemn it as at once unpatriotic and expensive. She said that, for her own part, she did not care a jot for Mr. Bounderley. She could see no difference between his Tory Democratic opinions and the Liberal Imperialist creed of Mr. Cashington. On social grounds there was not a pin to choose between them; and, although it was vulgarity itself to think of money in connexion with politics, it certainly would be disagreeable to find that the Member for whom one had slaved was a bankrupt. On the whole, Selina thought she should drop political work for a time. The subscriptions were endless, and she was no longer equal to trapesing about in dog-days and blizzards, trying to secure votes for a candidate who, when he was returned, was barely civil.

In my private opinion, the fact that my family had always been Whigs, and had sometimes contested Loamshire with bygone Topham-Sawyers, was not without its effect on Selina. Though, or because, she is a Conservative, she has a high respect for hereditary principles, even though they be those of 1688; and there was something agreeable to her territorial instincts in the thought that the middle classes and the proletariat of Stuccovia should look for guidance to her husband. 'At any rate, it shows that they know who you are; and, after all said and done, people do like being led by a gentleman.'

So, after full consideration, I informed Mr. Cashington that I would propose his adoption as Liberal candidate for the borough; and perhaps my readiness to do so coexisted with a strong conviction that he would not win. Of electioneering one may say, as Napoleon said of war, 'Eh, bien! C'est un grand jeu—belle occupation.' Selina warned me emphatically against letting myself be induced to give money to the cause. 'Your name is quite as much as they have any right to ask, and people who are as ostentatious as the Cashingtons ought to be able to pay their own election expenses.' Bertha, always loyal to old friends, said that I was treating Bounderley very shabbily. She would have worked enthusiastically for a pro-Boer, and would have got Canon Scott Holland down to speak for a member of the C.S.U.; but Mr. Cashington seemed every bit as much a Tory as Mr. Bounderley, though certainly he used longer words. Thus led,



Bumpstead volunteered his opinion that Cashington was a wrong 'un; that, even if he didn't bolt off the course, he would never run straight; and that, before the show was over, we should find that we had been 'had.'

Undeterred by this warning, I plunged into the fray. The first step was to call a meeting of the Liberal Association to hear an address from Mr. Cashington, and, if his opinions proved acceptable, to adopt him as our candidate at the next election. We met in a small committee-room at the back of the Parochial Hall, and I was voted into the chair. I presided over a meeting composed of the Wesleyan, Baptist, and Congregationalist ministers; an exceedingly raw-boned Scotch youth from the Presbyterian Church; a milkman, a grocer, and a butcher who had experienced some difficulty in getting their accounts settled by Mr. Bounderley; a tipsy tailor, who was locally reputed to beat his wife; and a discharged schoolmaster with a grievance against the Education Department. The Secretary, who wore blue spectacles and a tweed cap, black trousers, and brown boots, read a letter from the Liberal Headquarters, which I am not at liberty to disclose; and handed up the following Resolutions, which, after an oration by Mr. Cashington, were moved, seconded, and carried unanimously: (i.) That this meeting enthusiastically recognises Lord Rosebery's condescension in returning to public life; endorses his repudiation of Mr. Gladstone's policy; and assures him that he is the inevitable Prime Minister of our free, tolerant, and unaggressive Empire. (ii.) That this meeting, having heard the address of Charles Cornelius Cashington, Esquire, and having learnt with satisfaction that he approves of the South African war, and is opposed to Local Option, Home Rule, Free Trade, and Disestablishment, cordially adopts him as Liberal candidate for this borough at the next election, and pledges itself to use all legitimate means to secure his return.'

So far, all was well; but, after all, it is only the first step, and what is to come next I do not exactly see. The figures of the last contest seem to show that the electorate of Stuccovia comprises 9,000 Tories and 1,000 Liberals, Radicals, and Socialists. Whether, out of these discordant elements, Cashington can construct a Third Party of Liberal Imperialists remains to be seen. But he clings desperately to the idea that Lord Salisbury is to resign immediately after the Coronation, and that, in the ensuing confusion, the Ploughman of Berkeley Square will come by his own.

‘ON SAFARI.’<sup>1</sup>

IN ki-Swahili, the coast language of East Africa, a ‘safari’ is a caravan; to be ‘on safari’ means to the ordinary Briton to be on march, a state of life in which we spend a fair proportion of our days in Eastern Equatorial Africa. In the outlying parts safari may be expected to hold its own for the present, but on the main route to Uganda it becomes more a thing of the past with every yard of railway-line laid down. Not without something akin to jealousy do the old pioneers watch the advancing line of rails. A hideousness of galvanised iron springs up in its track, earthworks and embankments scar the plains, hordes of coolies jabber across happy hunting-grounds, and railway camps cumber the ancient feeding-places of game. They who pitched their tents of old foresee the banal day when they will have to book for the coast in a ticket-office on the brink of the Victoria Nyanza, and when personally-conducted trippers will frolic on the lake in pleasure-boats and fire popguns at the hippopotami. Therefore, ere these things come upon us, of the joys of safari let us sing, of the breezy, comical, toilsome days of march, of the hours of wind and sun and wide distances, of times when we washed our shirts ourselves and hung them on our tent-ropes, and when we ate hungrily what came before us—a life, this, which is a grand corrective to super-refinement and luxury run riot, an outdoor treatment which doctors should prescribe to nervous patients as a *régime* unequalled for killing or curing.

What safari meant in more detail was practically this, that the Uganda Railway, by which we travelled from the coast, became one day potential rather than actual,<sup>2</sup> and that therefore we had need to turn out and continue our journey afoot, or by horse, mule or bicycle, while a convoy of mule-carts absorbed

<sup>1</sup> The writer of this article is the wife of Dr, Robert Unwin Moffat, C.M.G., Principal Medical Officer in the Uganda Protectorate, and representative in the third generation of that family of pioneers, who, since Dr. Robert Moffat, the friend and father-in-law of David Livingstone, have laboured unceasingly in South Africa in the cause of religion and civilisation.—ED. CORNHILL.

<sup>2</sup> The laying of the rails of the Uganda Railway has now been completed up to the Victoria Nyanza, the rail-head reaching the shore of the lake on December 19, 1901.—ED. CORNHILL.



our kit. It was then that the humour of East African travel began to reveal itself, though, be it said, the preliminary run on the Uganda Railway was a fitting *hors d'œuvre* to the very lean banquet of Uganda life. Every day we marched from four to six hours, our camps being fixed by the contingencies of wood and water. We probably arrived at these camping-places long before our lumbering convoy, and casting ourselves in the shade of a bush, we awaited its arrival with such patience as Heaven sent us. The way was ever hot, we were tired, we were also dirty and dusty beyond words, we wanted tubs, and cool drinks and ices, and we had them not. Wherefore we sipped tepid pegs of whisky out of hot metal cups, and strove to keep our thoughts from wandering to the fleshpots of civilisation. Presently the cook strolled up with a kettle negligently swinging, presently a little fire began to flicker in the sunshine, and our tempers moderated their prickliness at the thought of tea. Tender thoughts always centred round the battered safari teapot, even when condensed milk with flies in it was the accompaniment. There was often good water, but it was generally on the thirstiest days that we tapped a supply which would have put cocoa to the blush in point of colour and substance. Once it broke our filter, and it was in vain that we strained it through our handkerchiefs; no amount of straining seemed to abate its rich texture. Even to the most parched there is a flavour about tea made with liquid mud which leaves something unattained.

It might be one hour, it might be four hours later, that the carts toiled up amid a pillar of cloud and volleys of yelling and whip-cracking, and tents and baths and chop-boxes<sup>1</sup> were snatched from the ensuing chaos. Some of the carts always managed to stick on the road, and as a rule one turned over the first day and smashed a hole in one's bath, so that for the rest of the journey bathing had to be conducted with despatch. It was distressing to an extremely grubby traveller to have his bath-water lapsing with the seconds, like the sand in an hour-glass. The allowance for bathing purposes was at times short enough anyhow, and when that was much thickened with water-beetles, as sometimes happened, the puzzle was to find anything liquid enough to wash in. Safari meals are always wonderful repasts, and it takes a safari appetite to encounter them successfully. At 4 P.M. our chef used to catch one of the unfortunate fowls that had been

<sup>1</sup> Provision-boxes.

dragged along with us and cook it for dinner at seven. There was always 'soupu,' swimming in grease and compounded, according to popular theory, of a lump of fat, a gallon of water, and one onion. If we except hospitable gifts from the ever-hospitable forts, of fruit and vegetables there were none till we reached the lands of sweet potatoes and bananas. These we at first hailed with ecstasy, only to loathe the very sight of them later. The tinned butter became a revolting oily deposit by luncheon-time, and the milk of course lived in tins, unless we were fortunate enough to include a cow and a calf among our smaller luggage. East African cows are so annoyingly primitive in their habits that nothing but the sight of their calves will induce them to give any milk, consequently on safari the cow-herd frequently has to drive the cow and carry the calf, the latter being too infantile to manage the daily march, though its presence is indispensable. Whenever our supply of tough mutton and fowl gave out we stayed ourselves on army rations and similar tinned delicacies which formed the bulk of our baggage. There were sorrowful times, when the journey having been unduly prolonged, we saw the bottom of our chop-boxes all too soon; pathetic was the solicitude with which we then hoarded our vanishing store. Once, after great consultations, someone's birthday was celebrated in princely style by the opening of a tin of sardines, that being the finest luxury that remained to us.

Things which at home are regarded with the eye of disdain assumed a perfectly disproportionate value on safari. Thus it never occurred to us in more civilised days that we should ever be transported with delight at the gift of half a cabbage or a cupful of milk, or that a luncheon of broad beans only would be likely to induce in us a lively sense of gratitude. But after even a week of tough meat and no vegetables, cabbages came not in their wonted homeliness, but as ambrosial food, fit for the gods. At most of the stations on the way there were Indian traders, who claimed to supply the wants of wayfarers, but having once asked whisky of one of these and been offered vinegar, we deemed it wisdom not to lay ourselves open to further insult.

During the earlier stages of the journey eggs were unknown luxuries, and even when a land of lean fowls was reached, the eggs brought for sale by the natives were usually rotten. We were, however, once blessed with a fowl of distinction, known to fame as 'Mrs. Hen,' who had been given us originally for chicken-



broth, but who, having somehow managed to evade the pot, developed the exemplary habit of laying an egg for us every day on march. The moment the tents were put up she would bustle in and go clucking round in a state of deplorable indecision as to an eligible site for that egg of hers. The half-hour that she spent in going inquiringly over every inch of ground within the canvas was completely wasted, for she always ended by depositing her egg in the most unsuitable place possible. There was, in fact, no irregular spot within the tents where we did not find that daily egg, but our patience came near to giving way when it was discovered in the bath. If she ever displayed a tendency to hunt frivolously for grasshoppers instead of attending to her business, we found it sufficient to talk to her of chicken-broth, and she invariably reverted to duty the next day. Later, presuming upon our weakness, she was wont at sunset to bring two or three extremely select friends and introduce them to roosting-places within the tents. We cavilled at this conduct, for we were not a hen-house, and I, personally, considered that Mrs. Hen's hospitality had gone too far when one morning as the first light came creeping through the chinks in the canvas I was startled by an outburst of stentorian crowing from a cock whom she had surreptitiously roosted beneath my bed. She died at headquarters, full of years and honours. Peace be with thy bones, Mrs. Hen!

Towards evening, camp used to assume a somewhat pastoral aspect. The carts were drawn up as a laager, the forlorn mules were driven in from the plain to receive their rations, the sheep and goats for our future meals were tethered, with other livestock, near the tents to keep them from night attack. The sudden darkness fell, fires shone out fitfully, and lit up the shaven heads and grotesque features of our following, who jabbered lustily over the preparation of weird foods. At dark an askari<sup>1</sup> always went on guard with some antiquated weapon. 'Haloo cumdar!' we heard him enunciating with much vigour, and as the guard changed through the night we had variations of the cryptic challenge. Passers-by were not frequent, but occasionally someone failed to answer the invocation, and in the morning we found the askaris bursting with pride at having secured a prisoner. Generally it was some harmless aborigine making a night-march, too primitive to know the saving grace of the word 'Friend;' or perhaps it was a strapping deserter from some previous

<sup>1</sup> Native policeman ; soldier.

caravan, who had skulked among the rocks till nightfall seemed propitious for pilfering the camp.

Long after our tin dishes had clattered back into luncheon-baskets, and the water-flasks and the lantern had been placed handy, signifying the end of the day's service; long after the tents were closed and in darkness, the 'boys' still squatted round their fires, chattering and laughing till sleep blotted out their voices, and the solitude of the great plains closed in upon the lonely camp. Myriads of stars shone out over us, the air thrilled with the chirp of innumerable crickets, the mules fidgeted at their halters, or cropped the grass noisily, a breeze rose, flapped the canvas, and fell again. Snores in all keys began to enliven the night. From the bush rose the death-scream of some animal in the grip of its pursuer, jackals yelped in the distance, or the prolonged howl of a hyena broke out close at hand. A wakeful 'boy' imitated it derisively, the snores gave place to a renewed murmur of talk, the askari flung another log on the smouldering fire. Not always did the land lie silent. I have known sleep made difficult by the antics of hundreds of zebra, who thudded hither and thither on the plain like diminutive cavalry, and cried in a succession of little barks, worried perhaps by finding the camp between them and their accustomed watering-place. In some districts when on wet nights rain had swamped the fires, a zoological garden of 'questing beasts' was apt to foregather round the tents. Thus hyenas, jackals, three lions, and a brace of hippopotami contributed intimately to one séance that I wot of, and as the darkness was too thick for vision, that night yielded but scanty peace. Hippo are at all times awkward things to get ravelled up in the tent-ropes.

In the earliest hours the camp lay silent, men and beasts seemingly wrapped in a dead sleep; but the hush was not for long. Before it was light came sounds of awakening, and then the voice of the head-boy raised persistently at the tent-doors. Growls of protest within, some language to fit the occasion, a groping for matches, a sketchy toilet by lantern-light, and we dived out from the comparative warmth of the tents into the chill of the African dawn. The grass was soaked with dew, a grey opacity hung over everything, the moon was paling, but the east brightened. Shivering 'boys' dragged themselves about wrapped in their blankets, mules were being inspanned, and stood with drooping ears and the air of people who had had too



short a night, dazed fowls were secured, and amidst much yelling and reciprocal abuse the tent furniture resolved itself into bundles. Meanwhile we sat at a table in the sopping grass, consuming cocoa and anything that came handy. There were few who revelled in this stage of the day's march; everything was always at sixes and sevens. Someone's only shirt-stud had sprung away into the grass, and remained lost to sight; someone else had mislaid his pipe, and commented on the fact in terms which ought to have warmed him. Tempers were naturally *en déshabillé*, the early morning's chill grasped at our very bones. Yet the start at that raw hour was not without its advantages, even such minor ones as the absence of flies in the milk, or the notable stability of the butter. It was worth turning out at that time to see the light creeping over the vast shadowy plains, to note the fresh spoor of beasts across our track, to surprise herds of antelope feeding within range, and, not least, to breathe the magnificent air, pure as mornings upon clean Egyptian deserts, not perfumed, as comes dawn in India. But chairs and tables collapsed, and were loaded on the carts, tents disappeared into bags of green canvas. Having nothing left to sit on, we must be moving, and as we turned off across the dew to the track that unrolled itself westward, the first rays of the low sun struck on our backs. On the way up to Uganda, how brown the backs of our necks grew, to be sure, and returning when our months of exile had run, how our noses peeled from sunburn, marching eastward to the coast!

Step for step behind us came the gunbearers, padding on tireless brown feet, eyes searching from side to side in quest of game, and behind them again our other henchmen. One very small one in particular, I remember, whom we used to call the 'White Knight'—he being a great deal blacker than our boots. He always insisted upon having a rifle to carry, and with that weight to his shoulder would trudge long miles radiantly, thinking himself in very truth a mighty Bwana.<sup>1</sup> In addition, he had all manner of unconsidered trifles tied and slung and strapped about his person—a stick of his master's, his lady's sun-umbrella and warm coat, a water-bottle, field-glasses, a Kodak, a botanical collecting-case, a stray tin of biscuits, a whisky-bottle half full of milk, and a pair of the cook's boots, which he afterwards stole. Thus trudged he, a universal provider ambulant.

<sup>1</sup> Master; white man.

So, marching, resting, marching again, passed day after day, and ever the brown track crept away from us in front, and ever we were up at sunrise to follow it.

If circumstances forced us to choose the old caravan road to the Uganda capital, there came a day when we left the bullock-convoy which had brought us over the mighty Man Escarpment, and diverging, skirted the north end of the Victoria Nyanza. Our kit now travelled on the heads of Kavirondo porters, a wild, yelling, irrepressible crowd, who could carry sixty pounds' weight on their heads for six hours in the sun as though it were the merest feather, and on arrival in camp were fain to dance prolonged hornpipes out of sheer gamesomeness and freshness of limb. After this they still felt so redundantly fit that they were wont to go off and visit friends in surrounding villages within a ten-mile radius and forget to come back again, so that the next morning the unhappy traveller commonly found himself with all his possessions on the ground, ready packed, and not a creature to carry them. In the course of some hours the truants probably came trickling back by twos and threes, with an engaging air of insouciance, and by midday the safari might be able to make a start if it had luck. Next to this lamentable lack of punctuality, a lack of clothing was—and probably still is—the most salient characteristic of the Wa-Kavirondo. 'I am afraid you will find them *very* naked!' said a missionary to me on the borders of their country; and so we did, nothing could have been nakeder. From their walled villages they issued in swarms, and crowded round the tents to gaze upon us, Monsieur, Madame, and Bébé, without a rag to their names, nor a clout between them, unless indeed a bead necklace, or a hippopotamus tooth stuck behind the ear, could be accounted clothing. An airy, buoyant folk, verily, and to missionary eyes a sad contrast to the semi-civilised Waganda, with their greasy draperies of bark-cloth.

The joys of camp-life became greater as we neared the Victoria Nyanza. Every day terrific storms rolled up from the lake, to fall with fury upon hapless camps. The 'boys' never could see the desirability of trenching round the tents before a storm by way of rough and ready drainage. Once only did they effect this of their own bright wit, and that was when we were camped within a fort on a piece of turf remotely resembling an English lawn, which was the pride of the man in command. A storm breaking while we were out, we returned to find that our 'boys,' with an



unwonted outburst of zeal, had scraped ample trenches around the tents, thus ruining the treasured grass-plot. The storms were enough to drive anyone to good resolutions. They came on at meal-times if they could, and by drenching the fires into darkness, despoiled us of all hopes of cooked food. Hurricanes of wind burst upon us, continuous thunder roared appallingly, the lightning was blue and pink and altogether amazing, and amidst the swashing of descending deluges we could not hear ourselves speak. In the intervals of trying to eat our dinners philosophically, we had to cling to the tent-poles to keep them upright. Sheets of water rushed through the tents, and carried away portable articles. Through the closed tent-door our saturated retainers handed in first a dish of cold, drowned curry, then a derelict piece of soap, or a tooth-brush; we never knew what was coming next. As a rule we were none the worse beyond a general wet muddle, but sometimes the tents were mown down by the gale, and the affronted inhabitants had to fight their way out from a grave of canvas into a watery world, much under the impression that they were living in the days of Noah.

Some of the diversions of the march to Uganda used to be the crossing of papyrus swamps, of rivers without bridges, and of rivers with bridges which only a trained acrobat could hope to tackle successfully. The rivers still run, but the papyrus swamps on the line of route have been filled up, so that nowadays we can pass over dryshod. A swamp is seldom a place in which to pass a happy day, unless it be for the purpose of collecting the larvæ of microbic mosquitos. When it consisted of a forest of dense papyrus, twelve feet high, growing in a channel of murky fluid, perhaps some hundreds of yards wide, it was wont to afford pilgrims plenty of occupation. The novice on horseback looked contemptuously at the puddle, and started in. Two minutes later he found himself hoping for the best. The bottom seemed to ooze away from his horse's feet, and the animal freed itself from one hole only to sink struggling into another. The rider was at last constrained to slip off upon a tussock of papyrus, which at once sank down with him, and, forced to abandon that, he subsided chest-high in the inky mud. Thus, clutching with his feet at tussocks, with his hands at quivering papyrus-stems, he floundered on, trusting that some day a kind fate would place solid earth beneath his feet once more. In course of time the kit and livestock came across somehow. Horses

were wise, as usual, and made the best of these Sloughs of Despond. If the calves were carried across, the cows plunged in and followed, but donkeys were terrible stick-in-the-muds. They clave to dry land with all their obstinate feet, and when forcibly launched, lost their little asinine heads, and wallowed despondently to no good purpose. The mosquitos near the swamps were of the most determined character; in fact, he who goes on safari is all along much chastened by insects and such small game. In the cattle districts ticks seized upon us unawares, swelled revoltingly into blue lumps, and then dropped off after the manner of leeches; or flies fell upon us in marauding swarms till we had to fight with them for our meat and drink. Able-bodied fleas living in the grass made us their happy hunting-grounds, and as a harassed new-comer once said, they were so large one was almost afraid to catch them. Their cousins, the she-chiggers exhibited a reprehensible lack of delicacy about burrowing into passing feet, and swelling up into bags of eggs which had to be excavated at the needle's point, and at the cost of much anguish. Within the tents centipedes and fabulous-looking caterpillars strayed in the path of unwary feet, and mantidæ of all sizes drifted carelessly over the beds, pretending that they were bits of hay till surprised in the act of moving a leg or an eye. To people with no theatres there was diversion to be reaped at times from an obstacle-race of chameleons over a coloured course of red blanket, blue shirt, and brown rug tastefully planned; but the 'boys' looked their disapprobation at this pastime, for to their minds no good could come from playing games with so ill-omened a beast as a chameleon. Along the borders of the lake, midges became one of the plagues. Far away over the water they could be seen hanging in low clouds like the smoke-trail of a steamer, but less fleeting. It was when these living clouds were blown ashore that we breathed midges with our air, and ate them with our soup; they penetrated down our necks and into our eyes and up our sleeves, they put out our candles, and covered our dinner-plates with their burnt bodies, they silted up our ink-pots. The chief consolation for being compelled to eat so many was that they were apparently good for that purpose, though the analysis of their nutritive properties has not as yet been scientifically set forth. On some of the islands on the lake may be found native midge-fishers, evidently prototypes of that gentleman in 'Alice in Wonderland' who was in the habit of making butterflies into mutton-pies, for with primitive



butterfly-nets these men amass countless midges, and make them into cakes for home consumption.

One of the saddest experiences on safari was having to pass through a district where the rainfall had failed, and the curse of famine hung heavy on all sides. A caravan heavily laden and unable to find sufficient food even for its own men could do grievously little to alleviate the horrors which it came across in its line of march. Relief was being distributed, but the natives in the outlying parts had probably not heard of it. The land seemed to lie strangely silent; at the camps no strings of chattering natives brought in grain or bananas to the safari as usual. There were white bones among the bushes, here and there was a corpse fresh fallen by the wayside, holes in the ground showed where the people had dug for roots in their hunger. Now it was a little child, strengthless, nothing but bones and skin, crouched by the road with the flies already clustering upon its dulled eyes. The caravan stopped to laugh when we attempted to succour the mite, for natives are worse than mere beasts in their heartlessness towards one another. One of the askaris brought water; he had a youngster of his own somewhere in the caravan. But we had to pass on; we could not carry all the human wreckage with us, and there was much of it. The little black speck on the hillside faded out of sight. Evening would bring the hyenas. That night we dragged into camp an old woman dying of starvation, and the askaris made merry over reviving her by the fire, and our dinner went down her throat. Wherefore, when we shifted camp late the next morning, she was strong enough to sit up and look around her, stretching out her skinny hands to the blaze, though the sun shone hotly. She made a ghastly picture, huddled there in the brightness of the fresh morning, her sticks of arms and protruding ribs telling of famine, her eyes, with the fear of death in them, following our movements. The camp had emptied, the caravan gone on, soon she would be the only occupant of the already silent place. The 'boys' unwillingly made up the fire, and put wood near her, much diverted at the Englishman who laid his bread-supply beside her, and filled her gourd with water. Evening would bring the hyenas whom we balked last night. We passed on out of the camp.

HILDA V. MOFFAT.

## SCHOOL LIFE A CENTURY AGO.

*Close, Sarum.*

*MRS. VOYSEY, conscious of the vast Importance of properly educating young LADIES, and feeling herself devoted to this arduous, yet pleasing employ, is desirous that all who entrust her with the care of their Children may be acquainted with the mode whereby she endeavours to render them lovely to Society, and pleasing to themselves.*

*PRESUMING, therefore, upon the goodness of her kind FRIENDS and the PUBLIC, the following adopted Plan is, with much respect and grateful consideration, submitted to their inspection:*

### VIZ:

*1st. As early rising hath, in every age, been esteemed by the most able writers to be highly necessary and conducive to health, Mrs. V. induces her Pupils to experience the charming effects thereof by being in School at Six o'clock in the Morning during the Summer Months; and is extremely happy to add, the result has exceeded her most sanguine expectation; Illness being almost a Stranger to the School.*

*2nd. As close Learning and Study ought ever to be accompanied with the alternate relief of innocent freedom, her Pupils are daily refreshed with intervals of cheerful recreation and agreeable exercise, so as to cause the ornamental acquirements to be pursued with fresh avidity, whereby the task of Learning is blended sweetly with real pleasure and delight.*

*3rd. As the whole welfare of the rising generation depends, in a great degree, upon the Seeds of Morality and Virtue which are sown in the tender Mind ere it expands to maturity, Mrs. V.'s unremitting attention is continually fixed on this GRAND POINT, so that no Books which are of the least dissipating tendency, are admitted in the School or suffered to be read; nor shall any be found there, but such as enlarge the Heart to Virtue and excellency of Sentiment.*

*4th. As from the Moral situation of this World, 'tis congenial to the human Mind to meet with a variety of ills in its*



*progress through it, to another, and as no adequate counter-balance to TROUBLE can ever be found under the mere influence of either Learning, or the finest system of ethics, however deservedly admired, Mrs. V. is happy that no blush reddens her Cheek while she declares, that whenever she discovers the smallest glimmering of holy religion within the bosom of any of her Pupils, she carefully strives to nurse it into an infant flame, that it may arise and mingle with the SUPREME; not by necessitating it to glow through fanaticism or error, or any confined channel of human invention, but simply attracting it to the sacred Altar of DIVINE REVELATION.*

TAUGHT AT THE SCHOOL.

*The French and English Languages, Writing, Arithmetic, Music, Dancing, Drawing, Geography, all kinds of Useful and Ornamental Work, Plain Work, Embroidery, Tambour Cloth-work, Filligree, Steel and Varnish Work, &c. &c.*

*Board and Instruction . . . 16 16 0 per ann.*

*Entrance . . . . . 1 11 6*

*French, &c. &c., on the usual Terms.*

It came accidentally into my possession—this old prospectus of a Girls' Boarding School in 1787, just one of those chance lights which go to make up the pictures of history. Dry facts, and dates, and prosaic narration the world's book of life must have; pictures without text would be worse than useless—misleading. But who can deny the palm of interest to the Illustrated Edition?

For what after all is it that we really care most to know about in the lives of our forefathers—we of the average, who live out the daily round of working, loving, and suffering, recognising what we owe to previous generations who have thought for us, and passing on the debt, as best we may, to the next generation? Not in the least which king was contemporary with which Pope; whether Seebohm or Maine is right in his theory of the Teutonic land system; or what was the origin of vestries. Scholars may fight out these battles for us in the seclusion of academic cloisters—what we look for is the personal note of human nature. We of the South and West counties remember our Armada by the beacons marking each height from Dungeness and Beachy Head

to Land's End. We light them up for Jubilees, but no one asks now what had been Philip II.'s political schemes. Sir John Hawkins's noble conduct, which saved the situation for England in the teeth of a niggardly Government and stingy Queen, touches interest and sympathy far more nearly. The patriotism which made him willingly dispense his private fortune in order to feed and clothe and procure medical treatment for the seamen to whom a wretched Government system denied pay, eatable rations, and even medicine, finds a too ready parallel in the wars of to-day within memory of living man! We understand that.

Such side-lights upon the world's history bring before us Life as it was actually lived through: humanity, strong, simple, intrinsically always the same. We cannot do without the pictures that give us this insight into bygone periods—the intimate details of social and domestic life, of character, and upbringing and circumstance—the way, in short, in which our forefathers did the everyday things that we are doing now.

Now this need not necessarily be a typical school of the period; moreover, we get no notion from it of the food, clothing, or accommodation provided. But girls' schools in those days were only for the one section of society, and so must have been on very much the same scale; presumably, therefore, either those harrowing accounts given us in contemporary novels—novels, that is, which draw upon the first quarter, or thereabouts, of the nineteenth century for their material—are the result of peculiar experiences, isolated and individual, as the experience of Genius must be; or we must take for granted that, under such pleasant promises, there frequently existed in reality a seething hotbed of all that was tyrannical and rigorous.

Sixteen guineas a year—less by four than the fees at Dotheboys Hall! If Mrs. Voysey was sending out prospectuses in 1787, or thereabouts, then granting her a term of thirty years or so, hers would not be so very much earlier than that celebrated institution. Are we to believe there was less civilisation in the nineteenth than in the eighteenth century? Or that from the very beginning of things the wants of girls were considered necessarily less, their requirements fewer than those of their brothers, and that so Mrs. Voysey and her kind were able to offer more for sixteen guineas a year and yet draw her pupils from a higher grade of society than Messrs. Squeers, Creakle, & Co. found it possible to do? Though, to be sure, the experience of David



Copperfield at school was a very different one from that of poor Smike.

The fees, with the list of attainments, and the moral butter so carefully spread, excite suspicion, yet Salisbury Close argues a guarantee for some sort of outside coercion and moral ventilation. It is the money that makes one dubious; what could it be that was attainable in board, lodging, *plus* education, at a maximum cost of about one shilling per diem per child? The yearly fees at the Cowan Bridge School, including the cost of the uniform and all personal expenses, came to 18*l.*; but that was an ostentatiously charitable system of education, and scarcely comes under the category of ordinary boarding schools for the daughters of gentlepeople. If boarding schools in those days had been for girls of the upper classes, one might better understand one part of it! Their education cost little beyond an incompetent and generally depraved French governess. Lady Wallace, in one of her novels, puts her satire on this point aptly enough into the mouth of the governess herself; it is a terrible revelation. 'Indeed, Monsieur, she be de foolish baby: I do all I can to teach her de grace, and how she should behave; but she be so very shy, so modest, she can never be de least a Ton lady. I tell her de Ton lady be all small talk, all manière. I teach her to practise de grace; de saucy look for de inferior, de inviting look for de man, de sneer for de unfortunate, and de cringe for de leader of de Ton.'

Any girl of the upper classes who in those days went to a boarding school did so under exceptional circumstances. She might almost safely be considered as having been either too hopelessly intractable in temper to be kept at home; imbecile; or somehow a burden to her family, with the alternative possibility that she was dependent upon rich relations who took this readiest means of conveniently forgetting while they provided for the existence of an indigent member of the family. Otherwise, the delightful ease with which all idea of any real imparting of knowledge is swamped in the 'relief of innocent freedom' is only too characteristic of what was the prevailing sentiment respecting the education of girls of good family then, as indeed it too frequently is now, and the line of demarcation in those days was drawn hard and fast.

Nobody belonging to the privileged rank of society need ever have feared for the health of their daughters from overstudy.

Gone was the Elizabethan ideal of the cultured gentlewoman ; the eighteenth century had no Lady Jane Greys to set the fashion. Far removed even was the English from the French model of *La Grande Dame*, who must hold her own in her salons by culture pretended or real.

‘ Though thought is my foe, and the pen my aversion,’ naïvely wrote a ‘ fine lady ’ of Dublin to her husband—the poetical effusion is published in the ‘ Gentleman’s Magazine ’ for 1797—giving him the account of a masquerade. The sentiment merely gave expression to that of the majority of her sex.

Mrs. Voysey’s seems a candid and simple schedule. But, granted that, like Mr. Squeers and Mr. Brocklehurst of evil fame (’twould be unfair to quote the ingenuous Misses Pinkerton, or the inimitable Madame Beck, in this connection), her ethical outpourings were not genuine, still other contemporary literature on the subject of the education of children is to be trusted if only as showing there *was* an attempt at theory in the minds of some, even though purely unpractical philosophers, which compares quite favourably with our own ideas and practice. In a little pamphlet, published in 1762, on the ‘ Education of Children,’ this is the opening paragraph :

‘ In order to be happy in the world we should endeavour to preserve a sound mind in a sound body.’ Cold water ablutions, daily and regular exercise are then recommended, with plenty of sleep and *no physic!* Then follows a carefully planned regimen laid down under headings of thirdly, fourthly, and lastly. It is meant pre-eminently, so it would seem, for boys—not boys of the Dotheboys stamp, presumably—but the theories are worth a moment’s consideration, partly because they foreshadow the dawn of that broadening influence which the French Revolution was in a few years to exercise upon English insularity.

With that wave of turbulent upheaval stirring every pulse to activity, crystallising every dormant theory into imperative need for instant realisation, everywhere and in all departments of thought breaking down old-rooted prejudices between class and class, nation and nation, race and race before its own imperious torrent of expanding sympathies, sympathies that must spring up with knowledge, prejudices that must melt as ignorance lessens, there came in as a lever to education in England the element that had hitherto been wanting to it. Not only was there desire, but



a field opened out for ambition. The notion of *a career* was now deliberately set before the eyes of young men. They must needs be educated, even though only to become proficient as those professional idlers whom Beau Brummell headed, and who are so tersely described by 'Punch's' American Girl as the 'leisured class whom we call tramps'!

Dancing was to be learnt—so we read in this pamphlet—as imparting 'manly thoughts and carriage.' Writing, when the child could read; reading, by the way, so soon as he could talk! Drawing and shorthand are to come next. Then French, and then Latin—this latter as 'essential for a gentleman as well as for a scholar,' after which he might begin Greek. He was then to try a little arithmetic, as 'an easy science, without which no business can be done,' and so pass on to geography—ancient geography being 'enough for schoolboys.' It is worth noting that the reading of a good weekly newspaper was considered absolutely necessary, and then comes a long list of 'ologies' which would make one have a great respect for the boys of that day, if it were not for the recollection of that easy dismissal of the usual bugbear to youth—arithmetic. Probably with no terrors of coming competitive examinations to spoil the trowelling, these subjects were one and all merely smeared in upon the brain. Logic, ethics, mathematics, physics, and metaphysics are the finishing items of necessity; while painting, architecture, music, and heraldry are to be added as 'amusements to a scholar, and a part of a gentleman's conversation.'

Gardening was to be considered as a 'healthy provision for old age,' to which proposition Fox in his historic green baize apron enjoying the rural delights of Strawberry Hill would certainly have given a hearty assent.

Fencing—necessary in those days of duelling—and riding 'the Great Horse' (whatever that may be!) finish the school curriculum.

After school was to come travel, and here rings out that special note of enlightenment which brings the author into sympathy with us to-day. 'He should endeavour,' says he, 'to learn something of everyone he converses with; and this is best done by hearing men talk of their own professions.'

'Yes, I despise the man to books confin'd,' as Pope, who hardly stirred beyond his own four walls, is so emphatic in telling us. However, doubtless he was resting upon Lady Mary Wortley's adventures at second hand.

A quaint book bearing the title of 'The New London Spelling Book,' published in 1806, gives us a curious insight into the practical bringing-up of English boys and girls of that period. It throws too, incidentally, a painful light, even allowing for the exaggerated phraseology of the times, upon the lax state of society towards the close of the eighteenth century. When we find in a book of rules of conduct for little children such maxims as these: 'Squander not thy money at the gaming-table, nor hazard thy fortune on a card'; 'Drown not thy senses in wine, nor intoxicate thyself with the juice of the grape,' it gives us a shock to have to remember that such unbridled warnings were only in keeping with the object-lessons their seniors so often were in conduct and person to the children of that day.

One catches the Calvinistic note of pessimism in the opening exhortation: 'It behoveth thee, O child of calamity, early to fortify thy mind with courage and patience, that thou mayest support with a becoming resolution thy allotted portion of human evil.' And the query 'What is man?' with its answer, 'Originally dust, engendered in sin, helpless in his infancy, extravagantly wild in his youth, mad in his manhood, decrepit in his age,' strikes a chord of gloomy unrest in the contemplation of human nature and the course of things, only to be explained perhaps by the actual strenuous times Europe generally was then passing through. With the century behind him which had seen Marlborough's wars and the Jacobean insurrections of 1715 and 1745, the Thirty Years' War and the American struggle for independence, the French Revolution and the rise of Napoleon, with all the attendant circumstances of disruption in politics, churchmanship, and society, the writer was not likely perhaps to have had an optimistic and serene temper of mind.

The rules of 'polite usages' laid down illustrate very amusingly the attitude of children towards their elders, combining worldly wisdom and ethical teaching in a manner worthy of Solomon: 'The first rule of wisdom is to know yourself, and in order to do this you are to consider your station and rank.' 'You are placed above vulgar children (who run wild in the street) by being brought up at school; but be not proud because you are above the vulgar, for there are others above you.'

Towards his superiors the boy was to show humility void of meanness, and 'to inferiors, an affable behaviour, avoiding familiarity.'



A profound obeisance opened the day on entering the school-house, which had been 'attained by decently advancing'—not running. Bows were to preface all speech. In church, after having repeated a short prayer, the boy was to rise and bow to all in order of precedence, and this was to be repeated before leaving 'softly and discreetly' and returning home. There he was to 'knock once, and not too loud,' and was to bow on entering a room, and never sit till told to do so, even then only after accepting the favour with a deep obeisance. He was never to 'slip private' from the room, that being 'mean and unhandsome,' and was to sit in a genteel and easy position—putting one hand in the bosom of his waistcoat, and letting the other fall easily on his knee. If he wished to laugh, he was to turn his face from the company, and not to yawn if tired, 'as it looks as if you were tired of being with them.' 'If you *cannot* conquer it, turn aside and hide it as much as possible.'

To come back to feminine education, there is an amusing play, published in 1785, called 'The Boarding-School Dissected,' which is satirically instructive.

The mistress, Mrs. Teachwell, is a type of what we hope Mrs. Voysey may have been. Her idea of her duties (and her material) is ably portrayed in her opening speech :

'How few do we find of our sex, whose education surpasses a minuet, cotillon, talking a little French, playing a few airs on the harpsichord, and an easy deportment. Mental knowledge and fashioning the soul are esteemed as trivial and unnecessary. Do but speak of a young lady at school, the reply is, Oh! how well she dances; how she excels in all sorts of needlework, and I'm sure you would be charmed to see how gracefully she enters a room and retires. As if forms and ceremonies, needlework and a genteel carriage, added to gross and barbarous corruption in their own language, as well as in others, incapable to write two lines correct in either, was, as is now called, a finished education.'

The names of the *dramatis personæ* are all bestowed to denote the peculiar dominant moral quality of each individual—a survival perhaps of the Elizabethan simplicity in scene-making: 'This is a Wood;' 'This is a Palace'; and which found its fullest development perhaps as a completed scheme of nomenclature in the 'Pilgrim's Progress.' It is a scheme which shows with delightful *naïveté* the exact nature of the satire intended.

So we have a set of young ladies—Miss Dullbright, Miss

Skilful, Witty, Friendly, Fièrè, Maligne, Fullgold, Captious, Simple, Avidè, and so on, whose conversation corresponds exactly and sadly to their labels, and emphasises very painfully just what the author describes as the 'Errors in the present mode of Female Education.'

Miss Fullgold indeed, who bears a strong resemblance to the family type of Thackeray's 'Osbornes,' expresses the sentiment of a whole class in her one speech :

'What has a person of two thousand a year to do with wit and judgment? They can have them for pay. Why, there are many poor wits who will exhaust themselves for a good dinner in a great family; and, as for manners, people of rank and fortune may assume what manners they please.'

Does it not seem by the way that such words as *modern* and *fin-de-siècle* are unnecessary to our vocabulary after all? Or, is it that every phase of human nature is perennial, always in touch somewhere throughout every succeeding century?

It is interesting to note here a French definition of education of about the same date—partly by way of contrast, partly because it is good to realise that the same ideas and ideals were then in the minds of the noble-hearted which in our English system of education to-day are actually being put into daily practice.

'Donner à l'homme une existence digne de son être, étendre, agrandir et perfectionner ses facultés physiques, morales, et intellectuelles—tel est le but de l'éducation.' We who have actually in our own lives experienced and felt the forces of that noble and high ideal of education—education in its true, its rightful sense—which is upheld by those in our universities who have thought it good and right to admit girls to share in their privileges, gladly bear witness to the realisation to-day of what is the only right way of regarding the attainment of every sort of knowledge. It is not learning, not pedantry, not the mere acquisition of facts, certainly not a feeling of self-aggrandisement and congratulation that a share in university privileges should give, is meant to give—but that higher moulding of character and taste, and the uplifting of every innate power which shall tend to make the individual more conscious of her responsibility towards life, herself and her fellow-creatures, and more capable of supporting it: a being stronger than before in moral worth.

The mind is its own place, and of itself  
Can make a Heaven of Hell, a Hell of Heaven.



But whether French youth was really trained in this ideal system of ethics is difficult to say. It is worth while as a mere comparison quoting in this connection from an amusing little book, a sort of 'grown-up' 'Child's Guide,' published in Paris about 1770, and calling itself a 'Dialogue de Morale à l'usage de la Jeune Noblesse,' and which begins:—

'Qu'est-ce la Vertu ?

*Answer.*—'C'est une heureuse disposition de l'esprit qui nous porte à remplir les devoirs de la Société *pour notre propre avantage* !

The last phrase is irresistible (the italics are mine), and quite Chesterfieldian. But one wonders as one reads. Surely it is legitimate to look to fiction for contemporary manners, yet how do our most celebrated descriptions of school-life—at first hand too—tally with the exalted sentiments actually, as we have seen, professed by the educators of youth themselves? The later eighteenth and early nineteenth century were not specially given to moralising in England: want of sentiment marks that period rather. The first volume of the least sentimental book of genius ever written, its author the least sentimental of men, saw the light in 1777—Gibbon's 'Roman Empire.' Wars and rumours of wars filled the air rather—the 'Practic part of life Mistress to the Theoric.'

Certainly, one might say, such novels as 'Jane Eyre,' 'Villette,' or 'David Copperfield' portray life twenty or forty years later. But was life physically harder or easier then for children? The golden age had not begun for them before the middle of the century at least.

Charlotte Brontë was at Cowan Bridge in 1824, and 'Jane Eyre's' school-life would be fairly contemporaneous with that date. I myself have had the pleasure and interest of being personally acquainted with a lady, now of course far advanced in years, who had actually been at Cowan Bridge with all three Brontës, and is probably now the last living contemporary of that period of their lives. Mrs. Routh—Miss Whaley as she then was, though it is under her married name only that I have known her—was kind enough to try and recall all that she could of her school-life and the sisters. Her impressions were that the treatment was Spartan certainly, but neither cruel nor peculiarly harsh, and that the teaching was very sound. I may say at once that I understood from her that she was not a delicate

child, and already accustomed at home to a very frugal *régime*, besides being naturally so docile and studious that school-life in any case must have been as easy for her as it could be for any girl. She went at the age of nine and outstayed Miss Evans. Charlotte Brontë was there all the time that she was, but she only recollected her as a small and not particularly pretty or noticeable child one way or another. Neither could she remember that her cleverness was in any way remarkable. Mrs Routh allowed that the premises were badly warmed, and colds and chills frequent, while she herself often went to bed feeling very hungry, but she almost indignantly repudiated the idea of the girls ever having had anything uneatable put before them. She never remembered the porridge being burnt, or the meat sent from table as bad; if plain, everything was quite wholesome. For breakfast, by the way, she distinctly remembered that for those who did not like porridge an alternative of bread-and-milk was always provided. She described something of the curriculum of the school-hours, and it seems that French, music, and water-colour sketching were all included and not at all badly taught. Needlework was the invariable employment for all spare time—not charity work however, but the making and mending of their own clothes—though, as Mrs. Routh remarked, the girls always brought so many with them that it was not much that was needed to be done during term. She laughed and seemed amused, by the way, at the notion of the needles provided being otherwise than always perfectly good and suitable for what was required. Mrs. Routh said they all loved Miss Evans (Miss Temple) dearly, but that Miss Andrews (Miss Scatcherd) was hated, describing this latter as a handsome-looking, rather tall woman, who she could quite believe might have been cruel to any weak or dull girl, though she had never herself seen her do anything specially harsh. For Mr. Carus Wilson Mrs. Routh had nothing but praise, remembering him as a big handsome man, kind and gentle, but not often at the school. On the whole, she had been contented and happy there, though, like most school-girls after all, utterly loathing the return after holidays. However, the best proof of what she felt she did owe to the institution lies in the fact that for years after her marriage she continued her subscriptions to its support. That the life there was very hard no one could deny, and undoubtedly it was one only fitted for strong children. But no trace of bitterness about



it remained in any of Mrs. Routh's reminiscences, and one is rather driven to ask whether 'Jane Eyre's' experience may not have been at least an exceptional one. Or may we not rather believe that it was written as the result of hardships which might have been and were forgotten with years by the average girl, but which were bitten in upon the supersensitive soul of genius?

Perhaps genius, when drawing pre-eminently upon its own experiences, must needs become caricature—tragedy if bitter, something of parody when it is a Dickensonian humour that colours the brush. For observe, the school of Thackeray's Miss Pinkerton, both as regards date and general tone, might almost be that of Mrs. Voysey or Teachwell. And the account of it is the result of dispassionate survey, not memory. Thackeray drew as a spectator. His genius was that, mainly, of observation. Again, the inimitable Mr. Collins, limned in from the quiet chimney-corner by that shrewdness of instinct in genius which needs but one letter to make an alphabet—the portrait untinged by personal resentment—is a type for all time. While, on the other hand, 'Shirley's' curates, whose prototypes had pestered the poor authoress with unwelcome attentions, are merely caustic absurdities. Or is it that genius in character-portraying is most out of proportion to truth and reality when most inspired? We know that a *roman à clef* is the most misleading of directories. Skimpole was a Leigh Hunt out of all perspective. Macaulay, as a comparative stranger to Leigh Hunt, might comment in contemptuous surprise, writing to Macvey Napier, the then editor of the 'Edinburgh Review,' upon 'two guineas borrowed and lent'; but Dickens had seen the seamy side of life, and himself knew both poor Leigh Hunt's necessities and happier qualities. It was not fair to label him as Skimpole; he was not Skimpole; but as Skimpole he will probably go down to generations.

It is not quite fair nor is it easy to disprove fiction, but here is a chance at least for Madame Beck. Read this prospectus of a Parisian school in 1802 or thereabouts, considering not only the moral sentiments, but the practical arrangements, and then ask yourself if 'Villette' rings quite true. The whole scheme does credit to heart and common-sense alike. The date is about the opening of the nineteenth century. A lease of life extending only through the working powers of one Madame Bourdoy would make it fairly contemporaneous with Charlotte Brontë's reminiscences, since it must be remembered that the date of the

published novel by no means tallies with the memories it calls up again into existence. Charlotte was in Brussels about the year 1840.

*‘Education de Jeunes Personnes.*

‘Cet établissement, particulièrement destiné aux étrangères, à tous les soins de santé, d’intérêt et d’agrément que peuvent désirer pour leurs enfans des parens éloignés, réunit un choix de ces artistes les plus estimés.

‘Je suis seule, tous les momens de ma vie sont à moi. Ces momens appartiendront à mes jeunes amies: je trouverai mon bonheur en m’occupant sans cesse des moyens d’assurer le leur.

‘. . . Le local que j’ai choisi est vaste, sain et commode, tout est neuf, simple et propre.

‘Deux grands salons sont destinés pour les études, un autre pour la musique: il y a aussi une bibliothèque qui ne sera composée que de livres analogues au but que je me propose.

‘L’établissement fournit les lits, pour qu’ils soient uniformes. Les parens ne recevront aucuns mémoires, les livres, cartes, musiques, papiers, crayons, couleurs, cadres, pupitres, modèles, plumes, accord et entretien des instruments: comme aussi les gants, chapeaux, rubans, blanchissage et petits ustensiles nécessaires seront aux frais de la maison, ainsi que les maladies. . . .’

The choice of doctors in individual cases of illness was, however, we learn, to be left to the parents—‘je ne m’exposerai point aux reproches’—but a doctor and a dentist were attached to the school. One cannot but notice the motherly and conscientious common-sense revealed in this.

‘Les élèves recevront ici le premier jour de chaque mois 6 francs jusqu’à douze ans, et 12 francs ensuite pour leurs menues dépenses. Elles auront toutes un livret pour en écrire l’emploi. Ce moyen servira à connoître leur penchant soit à la bienfaisance, à l’économie, à l’avarice ou à la coquetterie: il faut que de jeunes personnes aient un peu d’argent à leur disposition pour en apprendre la valeur, contracter l’habitude de l’ordre et connoître le plaisir de donner à propos. . . .’ Very sensibly Madame protests against too generous parents giving their children a larger allowance, since it would introduce an element of inequality—‘Et trop au-dessus de la portée des enfans, ils étonnent leur imagination, leur donnent de fausses idées du monde, qu’ils ne jugent que de là, et leur rendent maussade et insipide tout ce



qui n'est pas aussi piquant à leurs yeux.' For the same reason Madame protests against her pupils accepting outside social engagements. 'Elles trouveront ici des amusemens conformés à leur âge, et qui leur suffiront, tant qu'elles n'auront pas connu les autres. Jeux de toute espèce, assemblées, danses, concerts, déclamations, petites pièces, voilà de quoi remplir l'intervalle des études. . . . On verra broder, faire de la tapisserie, des nattes, des découpures. L'instant du travail est aussi celui des lectures d'agrément; le développement des idées, les réflexions morales: je crois qu'il est aisé, quand on raisonne les enfans avec amitié, de les porter au bien: le plus sûr moyen c'est de gagner leur confiance, en leur montrant cet intérêt qui attire à tout âge: c'est de se prêter aux confidences *comme amie*, afin d'étudier leur caractère, c'est de faire parler la raison, et jamais l'humeur, mais c'est aussi de tenir strictement aux choses convenues dans le principe. . . .

'J'ai reçu dans le monde et dans les couvents, j'ai étudié les jeunes personnes dans les différentes situations où je les ai vues, et j'ai remarqué que la trop grande sévérité en perdoit autant pour les mœurs, que la trop grande liberté et le désœuvrement pour le bonheur domestique. Du premier de ces inconvéniens naît la dissimulation, de l'autre les mauvaises habitudes. Si l'on veut approfondir mes réflexions, j'ose croire qu'on les trouvera justes. J'en conclus qu'il faut éviter les extrêmes. . . . je chercherai à leur applanir les difficultés de la vie si je puis m'exprimer ainsi. . . .'

The description of the practical arrangement of the establishment follows.

'Chaque élève apportera avec son trousseau l'instrument dont elle aura fait choix. Elles auront toutes leur linge en compte et sous leur clef pour s'habituer à le soigner. Les femmes de service recevront d'elles chaque jour ce qui aura besoin de réparations, et s'en occuperont de suite pour le leur rendre après. La règle prescrit de ne jamais porter de vêtement déchiré, ni qui sente le désordre. Elles auront toutes des tabliers de taffetas noir à poches.

'Il y a une grande pièce destinée à la toilette commune, dans laquelle se trouvera tout ce qui est nécessaire à son usage: des femmes sûres veilleront à tous les soins qu'elle exige: de plus une salle de bains et une infirmerie séparées. Je mangerai toujours avec les jeunes personnes: les aînées feront habituellement

avec moi les honneurs de la table : et quand elles auront quinze ans, elles auront chacune à leur tour, pendant une décade, l'inspection de la maison, afin de ne pas se trouver étrangères à la leur quand elles se marieront.'

The last sentence gives the keynote to what was, and perhaps still is, the only practical *ultimatum* from the French point of view of all feminine education. And in sympathy with it so far indeed is our English ideal, in that we do recognise and believe that the highest calling of all for a good and well-brought up woman is that of the Wife and Mother. Only we would aim, in our ideal of education, at making first and foremost the *Good Woman*, loyal from her own nature to her principles, responsibilities, and duties ; sure that, whatever be her path in life, happiness can only result in her obedience and acquiescence therein.

The *régime* for the day was as follows :—

- ' A 7. Le Lever, premier Devoir, toilette, arrangemens, &c.
- 8.30. Déjeuner, avec thé, lait, beurre, ou fruits.
- 9. Entrée au salon d'études jusqu'à midi.
- 12. Une heure de repos, on mangera si l'on en a besoin.
- 1. Etude jusqu'à trois.
- 3. Le Dîner, jeux et promenades jusqu'à cinq heures.'

Then follow the subjects to be studied—a truly formidable array, but the hours of study being what they were, one must conclude that the pupils learnt only from merest textbooks.

#### *' Objets des études.*

Religion ; histoires ancienne et moderne ; littérature, géographie, mythologie.

L'arithmétique et les élémens de la géométrie.

La langue Française.

„ „ Anglaise.

„ „ Allemande.

„ „ Italienne.

La lecture de la prose et de la poésie.

L'écriture.

Le dessin, la peinture (figure, paysage ou fleurs), nuits, mignature, gouache.

La musique, vocale, composition et goût de chant.



Le forte piano.

La harpe, la guitare.

La danse, graces et maintien.

Et tous les ouvrages dont une femme peut s'occuper.

On fera écrire les jeunes personnes régulièrement à leur famille. Leur correspondance avec père et mère, ou ceux qui en tiennent lieu, sera parfaitement libre, dès qu'elles seront en état d'écrire seules.

ROSALIE BOURDOUY.

Rue de l'université, Maison Mailley,  
No. 279, f. B. Saint-Germois.'

Certainly if kindly discipline, surveillance, and thoughtful observation of character could produce a perfect type of *Une Demoiselle*, Madame Bourdoy seems to have known the secret.

If carried out with fidelity, this prospect of school days would certainly be not only alluring, but would oblige us to give to the French system of education in those days the first place. It is at any rate comforting to remember that it was not a 'School of Fiction.'

VIOLET A. SIMPSON.

*A FREE-TRADER IN LETTERS.*

BEING no more than a modest man of commerce, I suppose I take the E.C. view of the glorious profession; but I find my excuse in the irreverent view of his toil taken by a young scribbler for whom I entertain a sincere affection and regard. It was the eve of a new year of toil and moil, a strained moment of weird analyses and introspection of work done, illusions destroyed, hopes clung to, by the individual, the nation, humanity at large; and he had been depressed by the reading of some reminiscences in which a veteran publisher told of how that unconventional editor, Thackeray, had been offered thousands on a slip of paper, and how Trollope had been offered the chance of tossing for a thousand under the chaste *ægis* of the Reform Club. Such readings of the successful pilgrims on the literary highway had sent my young friend, whimsically enough, to his pass-book (showing a defiant end-year's overdraft); and to him, thus absorbed, I entered last New Year's Eve at his seaside house, he in dressing-gown and slippers, the green light from his reading-lamp falling on little heaps of tobacco ash, and on slips of paper bearing quaint, untidy and inconclusive calculations, scrawled in characters that would have assured summary notice to an office boy earning half a sovereign a week.

'Come in!' he sings out; 'come in, and drink of Dundee milk, and help me to bare some of the naked truths of that "fine independent career" of mine that you laud so smugly from your gold mills high up in Eastcheap! And, first, lend me fifty pounds to meet an overdraft, which the most useless of bankers has just brought to my notice—I repay you before the end of January—and run up those columns in your best three-rows-at-a-time style, while I mix your grog.'

I sank in the comfortable embrace of a deep easy-chair, lit one of my friend's pungent cigarettes, gathered up his slips of rebellious arithmetic, and even mentally wrote that 50*l.* cheque; for I liked this quaint young man, and was not in the least disturbed by an unstudied abruptness of manner, acquired, as I knew, under many skies and in pursuit of rough sport that lacked the nicer etiquettes of moor or covert. The figures on the slips



related, as was soon clear, to his earnings with the pen over a period embracing the last four preceding years, six months out of which he had been away from Europe—or from Fleet Street, as he preferred more narrowly to put it—on his travels. In three and a half years, therefore, he appeared to have earned precisely 2,567*l.* 5*s.* 11*d.*; and when I had reached this total—by which time the glasses were sparkling, and he was buried in another deep chair on the other side of the hearth—I tried to cheer him from his low spirits with some commonplace epitaph of the Grub Street hack, long since, I protested, biologically extinct. He glared. ‘Many thanks,’ he growled; ‘I work on an average ten hours of the day, seven days of the week, and forty-eight weeks of the year. I earn, as you have shown me, rather less than eight hundred a year. What do you, who are but ten years my senior, make?’

As I did not satisfy this sudden curiosity, having the commercial reticence on such subjects, but merely laid due stress on this ten years’ difference, as well as on the hitherto-ignored capital already sunk in my father’s business when I succeeded to it, he resumed:

‘But stay; you will find on that other sheet there five columns, in which I was trying to arrive at the amounts that I had made in the period under notice from five very different sources of literary income. The figures were getting a bore—I told you that I once made 10 marks out of a possible 1,000 in the India Civil Open Competition, didn’t I?—but, now that I have trapped an arithmetician second only to Carl Meyer, I’ll go through with them.’

Of a truth his exercises in compound division and addition were not appalling, with such poor little totals did they deal, and I was in a few moments able to cast out for him these five heads:—

1898–1901, less six months:

Daily Papers.	Weekly Reviews.	Magazines.	Books.	Editing.
£417 0 <i>s.</i> 4 <i>d.</i>	£180 4 <i>s.</i> 7 <i>d.</i>	£191 3 <i>s.</i> 6 <i>d.</i>	£365 10 <i>s.</i> 0 <i>d.</i>	£1,413 7 <i>s.</i> 6 <i>d.</i>

and further, for 1901 alone these respectively showed:

Daily Papers.	Weekly Reviews.	Magazines.	Books.	Editing.
£254 13 <i>s.</i> 3 <i>d.</i>	£50 1 <i>s.</i> 10 <i>d.</i>	£113 11 <i>s.</i> 0 <i>d.</i>	£100 0 <i>s.</i> 0 <i>d.</i>	£135 0 <i>s.</i> 0 <i>d.</i>

‘Good,’ said the owner of all this wealth, silently admiring the ease with which, having been bred to such work, I ran up his

columns without even putting pen to paper. 'I wanted those totals made out, so that, on the basis of an average remuneration—fee, honorarium, call it what you like!—of two guineas a thousand words from the magazines and reviews, and a guinea and a half from the papers for every thousand words contributed, I might calculate how many thousands of words of original matter I had contributed in a twelvemonth. The reckoning would have carried me an hour or two into the next century, but you will do it in ten minutes.'

Ten seconds sufficed for this simple problem of mental arithmetic, and I wrote down some 170,000 against the daily papers, 25,000 against reviews, and rather over 50,000 against the magazines, or not far short of a quarter of a million words in all.

'You see,' he went on, in the bitter tone of one who has to prove a case against himself; 'you see what my work has been. And let me tell you that the mere clicking out of those words on a typewriter does not represent the half of even the mechanical work of the year. What of all the correspondence and interviewing that goes to the placing of those words, the mechanical reading of proof and writing of letters to unknown correspondents, to disoblige whom is to entail trouble with one's editor! What, too, of the not inconsiderable number of letters to the Press that must be written in the course of a year by any knight of the pen who, while eschewing any Quixotic tilting at windmills, should be sufficiently jealous of his good name to be ready at a moment's notice to engage, like the good Sir Nigel Loring, in such encounters as offer goodly thrusts, with perchance some knightly advancement!'

All this, he went on to say, was more or less mechanical work, carrying with it no great exercise of the brain. But what of the thought and reading, the study of the ancients, and the wide-awakeness to everything of modern interest, that went to the writing of those quarter of a million words! The works in two volumes that had to be read ere he could write a review of at most a thousand words! The racking of weary brains for new subjects or for new readings of old ones! The correspondence and research, and even travel, that sometimes went to verifying a point seemingly trivial! Yes, he concluded, if one allowed on an average two hours of reading for every hour of actual production, a kind of mental ploughing and sowing, in fact, of two acres for



every acre ever reaped, a continuous exploiting of lands never allowed to lie fallow, that would be, if anything, to understate the work involved.

I was saddened. For there slept at that moment in his little cot at Streatham a small heir, for whom I had dreamed of a career of letters, far removed from the dens of clamorous bulls and bears and squealing guinea-pigs, among whom I have scored a few notable successes.

I argued the point with my Scribbler, and he, dear soul! went round from his sombre deprecation of his vocation (which, for all his pose, he would not have exchanged, emoluments and all, for that of the Lord Chancellor or Commander-in-Chief!) to an equally immoderate condemnation of every other calling in life!

Incidentally we had discussed the relations between authors and the publisher on the basis not alone of the aforementioned retrospect of Thackeray, but also of the recent attempts by a union of idealists to eliminate the personal element and place every literary transaction on a cut-and-dried basis, with a rendering of vouchers and accounts as precise as we should exact between Temple Bar and the Tower.

'See here,' says Scribbler; 'that is all rot!' He has never embroidered his friendly intercourse with the more elaborate periphrasis reserved for his work. 'Just listen to this.' And he took from his table a recently published collection of essays on 'The Struggle for Existence,' that had come to him for review.

'Stodart Walker is talking of the relative mortality of different occupations, and he says, "Amongst those of low mortality we find publishers and booksellers. They are generally masters, in better circumstances than their confederates." So far, so good. I, you see, am one of the "confederates"! Yet I do not feel any predisposition to an early decease. Of course, publishers last longer. They eat more and drink less, and generally lead a far more regular life than we could—even,' he added, with his usual honesty, 'if we wanted to. But no one who attempts to encourage suspicion between author and publisher can have the faintest notion of the needs of either. He must be independent or a fool. As long as publishers hold the capital, as long as the best writers cannot often come in touch with the best readers unless they risk that capital, so long, in a measure, is the "Grub Street hack" of your earlier imaginings extinct only in name and appearance.

This, to a certain extent, is fair. I have never kicked against it. For every publisher who takes advantage of the position—not, as he fondly imagines, without my plainly seeing that which I feel in no position to check—I find quite half a dozen who treat me as one gentleman has a right to expect of another.’

I always liked his somewhat cynical justice towards the publishers, for the morbid recriminations that sometimes rage in the daily papers between the two branches of the service of letters have often seemed to me despicable. And I knew that he had, in the course of his work, had one or two keen disappointments that would have affected one of less buoyant temperament. On one occasion he had been duped out of his American rights and some not inconsiderable Australian sales by the apparently unintentional omission of a semicolon in his contract. On another—and this he admitted to be, as indeed it was, entirely his own fault—he had spent many weeks over a record of his own travels, had succeeded in placing it with a firm in whose list it greatly pleased him, all question of remuneration apart, to figure, and had not only completed the book, but had even corrected several revises of proof, before he discovered that he could not publish the work without gravely offending one for whom he entertained the deepest affection. So hopefully had he built on the appearance of the book to bring him some measure of fame, that he assured me that the sacrifice of a month’s income, the price of suppressing the book from the public eye, was quite the least factor in his discomfiture. In a third case he had proposed a magazine to a publisher, who thought very highly of it, but was taken ill while still considering the proposal. My young friend felt himself morally bound to give him the chance of taking it up on recovery—a scruple that did neither of them any good, for another firm had, before the publisher returned convalescent from a trip in Southern France, announced a monthly production with an almost identical programme. Yet these and many other disappointments left him without a grudge, and I always set that down not a little to his credit. Much of his hardest work, too, was, I knew from his own admissions, unremunerative, undertaken solely in order to keep himself sufficiently before his public. One or two seasons he lectured all over the country, and he frankly owned that the ten-guinea-fee commonly given barely covered his travelling expenses. Then, too, he had a fancy for embellishing some of his articles with the most remarkable photographs he could get, and for these



he often paid two or three times the fee that he received for them from his editors. Columns of *obiter dicta*, too, news and theories on every conceivable subject of peace or war, written by the man in the crowd for the man in the crowd, would often cost him, in his endeavour to keep them bright and interesting, fully as much as he got for them, so that he had the mental and mechanical work of writing them out for nothing.

I was recalled from these reminiscences of his past confessions by the droning of one of those endless monologues that one ought always to forgive in men who work out most of their life alone. He was saying that the editor of a magazine would always treat you decently if you were not a 'perfect rotter'—which elegant term he explained by pointing out that many fools think to trick experienced editors with furbished-up articles that other men had, to all intents and purposes, already written for other magazines, doing a kind of unconfessed brokerage in the brains of others, since they had none of their own; yet, not contented with brokerage commission, they must needs lay fraudulent claim to the profits of merchants. This commercial parallel was so evidently drawn for my special benefit that I had not the heart to point out its more than slight discrepancies. And then there came the optimistic conclusion to his meanderings which, while making me rejoice that I had come upon him this last evening of the dying year to turn his musings into channels of brighter hope, was not soothing to my dormant and not unwarranted pride in a commercial escutcheon that had been kept free from stain.

'You may laugh at the earnings of these three and a half years,' he wound up, utterly forgetting, in his altered mood, that the laugh had been his own; 'but the consolations of the literary life, even where literature and pot-boiling are of dire necessity often synonymous, are not all written on cheque forms. Think of the mysterious joy of correcting your first proof! True, it doesn't last long,' he added regretfully, with a wave of his hand in the direction of some festoons of proof-slips pinned on the wall above his typewriter; 'but the first is just immense! Then, again, there is the equally transient pleasure of seeing yourselves on the bookstalls, in the shop-windows, even in people's hands.'

I sighed, and was again lost in reverie over the little vanities of some of his class. I had even on one occasion seen a third-rate (if, as in railway carriages, there is no fourth!) novelist reading his own rubbish in all the tremor of the 'Tube.' I knew

the fellow, having once sat opposite him at a Livery dinner, at which he bravely vindicated the catholic tastes to which, I believe, he laid claim in his stories. He reminded me on the occasion of our meeting in the 'Tube' of a very dirty crossing-sweeper who had once fascinated me as a boy at Piccadilly Circus, as I watched him licking his fearful fingers and marvelled how he was not taken sick! I pondered, too, on other literary vanities: on ladies who ignored reviews and reviewers (except when they could make copy out of reviling them), and of men who had a weakness for long hair and long nails and the cloaks of Pyrenean bandits. And here I became aware of a shock, as my friend was deliberately saying:

' . . . and the clean way in which one makes it. You don't mind, old man, I know, but it *is* impossible, isn't it [this, naïvely], unless you are a clerk or a peer, to make a shilling in the City nowadays without soiling your hands a bit?'

And now, at last, I had something to say. I have since had a horrible suspicion that an editor who had employed him in such work once praised loudly his tact in interviewing *difficile* subjects; but had he plotted to elicit by indirect challenge the answer to his straight and unappreciated question touching my income, that had earlier failed to draw me, he could not have gone to work better.

True, I told him in my heat, I made perhaps ten, perhaps eleven, times his income; and true, also, I had my evenings and my Sundays to myself. True, lastly, a brief telegram to my stock-broker despatched only a few days before, while the 'Times' and a private cablegram that threw such singular and precious light on one of its political messages from the beleaguered capital of a South American State yet lay on my breakfast-table, would enable me on settling day to pay into my bank a difference representing his earnings for about seven years. All this I granted. But where was the soiling? Very special information and knowledge went to the sending of that innocent-looking wire, and the private message on my table would have cost me more than ever he got for a book, even had the deal gone against me. Over and above all this special knowledge a cool calculation and a passionless facing of great risks, of all of which this dreamy weaver of words could know nothing! All this I told him, and more: of the capital sunk in our firm, a family affair covering three generations, as generations count in this age of hurry; of the risks and



disappointments, of which he seemed to take no account. He, as I showed him, ran no risks, embarked no capital, and encountered disappointments that were for the most part, however he might choose to regard them, purely affairs of sentiment. And as for 'smart practice,' that moral borderland between the straight and crooked—was there nothing of the kind in his world? Might I not quite fairly avail myself of knowledge imparted on other occasions by himself: little tricks of advertising, suppression of the adverse comments in reviews liberally, but discriminatingly, quoted; phenomenal sales of six editions (of how many copies each?); omissions to state on the title-page the fact of a previous appearance in serial form, an innocent oversight by which, even where not strengthened by the yet more questionable expedient of a change in title, the public was sometimes induced to buy in cloth covers that which it had already read unbound?

Of course *he* did not lend himself to practices worthy only of very successful novelists; yet why, on the same principle, tar all commercial men with one brush?

Here, just as the temperature of our discussion promised to rise in the neighbourhood of boiling-point, the crisp pealing of the New-Year bells came to us through the salt air, and we both sprang to the window and forgot our slight differences in a parting glass, as the inrush of cold breeze made strange wreaths of the tobacco smoke. And we agreed that the literary life had its consolations, and that the literary income cannot, even though its purchasing power be no greater, be measured by quite the same standards as those that rule the returns on other forms of labour. For man, we are told, values money by the difficulty with which he acquires it; and, if this be the truth, those who live by spreading gallons of ink over acres of paper, or punching holes in miles of typed ribbon—the statistical form of reasoning seemed best suited to the last minutes of the old year—must find satisfaction in a far more modest income than would content him whose wealth was already amassed for him by those who bore his name before he carried a cheque-book. Consolations, however, or no consolations, those who would lightly put to sea in the literary ship, with the futile idea that success may be commanded by a little impudence and a little more log-rolling, may certainly take warning by the figures given here. They show, at any rate, that the literary life is about the last resource for those without very special qualifications and some sort of private stand-by.

It has from time to time been the fashion for successful and altruistic writers to invite all and sundry to join the ranks and partake of the good things of the literary career. The latest example of this fine fooling takes the form of a practical manual by an author who professes to make an income of six hundred a year from the magazines. I do not, as did my young friend, question the writer's probable claim to his modest pen-name. But, if we eliminate some useful hints that any working writer can pick up for himself by the time he is making fifty pounds a year, what, after all, does this mysterious writer tell us beyond the somewhat patent fact that anyone having something to say and knowing how to say it can command the attention of an editor? Even we in the City know that, though we find, as a rule, a better way of investing our special information than in the columns of the Press.

And as I buttoned up my ulster and took leave of my young friend on the doorstep, we wished each other all manner of luck in the second year of the century, which was to see him editor of the 'Times,' and myself (Goodness forbid!) Lord Mayor of London! This year was to bring him its own particular chances, for the Coronation would, apart from the creation of a demand for special literature of fact and fancy, prose and poetry, bearing on that great event, give a general fillip to the making of books all round. And I went out of the gate and towards my hotel, leaving my young squire of the pen not ill-pleased with his own work in life, and already dreaming, as he bolted his front door, of his coming knighthood, when he would vanquish many a famous jousting in the world's arena. May luck attend him!

S. DE J.



*THE FOUR FEATHERS.*<sup>1</sup>

BY A. E. W. MASON.

## CHAPTER VII.

## THE LAST RECONNAISSANCE.

'No one,' said Durrance, and he strapped his glasses into the leather case at his side.

'No one, sir,' Captain Mather agreed.

'We will move forward.'

The scouts went on ahead, the troops resumed their formation, the two seven-pounder mountain guns closed up behind, and Durrance's detachment of the Camel Corps moved down from the gloomy ridge of Khor Gwob, thirty-five miles south-west of Suakin, into the plateau of Sinkat. It was the last reconnaissance in strength before the evacuation of the Eastern Soudan.

All through that morning the camels had jolted slowly up the gully of shale between red precipitous rocks, and when the rocks fell back between red mountain-heaps all crumbled into a desolation of stones. Hardly a patch of grass or the ragged branches of a mimosa had broken the monotony of ruin. And after that arid journey the green bushes of Sinkat in the valley below comforted the eye with the pleasing aspect of a park. The troopers sat their saddles with a greater alertness.

They moved in a diagonal line across the plateau towards the mountains of Erkoweet, a silent company on a plain still more silent. It was eleven o'clock. The sun rose towards the centre of a colourless, cloudless sky, the shadows of the camels shortened upon the sand, and the sand itself glistened white as a beach of the Scilly Islands. There was no draught of air that morning to whisper amongst the rich foliage, and the shadows of the branches lay so distinct and motionless upon the ground that they might themselves have been branches strewn there on some past day by a storm. The only sounds that were audible were the sharp clank of weapons, the soft ceaseless padding of the camels' feet, and at times the whirr of a flight of pigeons disturbed by the approaching

cavalcade. Yet there was life on the plateau, though of a noiseless kind. For as the leaders rode along the curves of sand, trim and smooth between the shrubs like carriage drives, they would see from time to time, far ahead of them, a herd of gazelle start up from the ground and race silently, a flash of dappled brown and white, to the enclosing hills. It seemed that here was a country during this last hour created.

'Yet this way the caravans passed southwards to Erkoweet and the Khor Baraka. Here the Suakis built their summer-houses,' said Durrance, answering the thought in his mind.

'And there Tewfik fought, and died with his four hundred men,' said Mather, pointing forwards.

For three hours the troops marched across the plateau. It was the month of May, and the sun blazed upon them with an intolerable heat. They had long since lost their alertness. They rode rocking drowsily in their saddles and prayed for the evening and the silver shine of stars. For three hours the camels went mincing on with the queer smirking motions of their heads, and then quite suddenly a hundred yards ahead Durrance saw a broken wall with window-spaces which let the sky through.

'The fort,' said he.

Three years had passed since Osman Digna had captured and destroyed it, but during these three years its roofless ruins had sustained another siege, and one no less persistent. The quick-growing trees had so closely girt and encroached upon it to the rear and to the right and to the left, that the traveller came upon it unexpectedly, as Childe Roland upon the Dark Tower in the plain. In the front, however, the sand still stretched open to the wells, where three great Gemeiza trees of dark and spreading foliage stood spaced liked sentinels.

In the shadow to the right front of the fort, where the bushes fringed the open sand with the level regularity of a river bank, the soldiers unsaddled their camels and prepared their food. Durrance and Captain Mather walked round the fort, and as they came to the southern corner, Durrance stopped.

'Hallo,' said he.

'Some Arab has camped here,' said Mather, stopping in his turn. The grey ashes of a wood fire lay in a little heap upon a blackened stone.

'And lately,' said Durrance.

Mather walked on, mounted a few rough steps to the crumbled



archway of the entrance, and passed into the unroofed corridors and rooms. Durrance turned the ashes over with his boot. The stump of a charred and whitened twig glowed red. Durrance set his foot upon it and a tiny thread of smoke spurted into the air.

‘Very lately,’ he said to himself, and he followed Mather into the fort. In the corners of the mud walls, in any fissure, in the very floor, young trees were sprouting. Rearwards a steep glacis and a deep fosse defended the works. Durrance sat himself down upon the parapet of the wall above the glacis, while the pigeons wheeled and circled overhead, thinking of the long months during which Tewfik must daily have strained his eyes from this very spot towards the pass over the hills from Suakin, looking as that other general far to the south had done, for the sunlight flashing on the weapons of the help which did not come. Mather sat by his side and reflected in quite another spirit.

‘Already the Guards are steaming out through the coral reefs towards Suez. A week and our turn comes,’ he said. ‘What a God-forsaken country!’

‘I come back to it,’ said Durrance.

‘Why?’

‘I like it. I like the people.’

Mather thought the taste unaccountable, but he knew nevertheless that, however unaccountable in itself, it accounted for his companion’s rapid promotion and success. Sympathy had stood Durrance in the stead of much ability. Sympathy had given him patience and the power to understand, so that during these three years of campaign he had left far quicker and far abler men behind him, in his knowledge of the sorely harassed tribes of the eastern Soudan. He liked them; he could enter into their hatred of the old Turkish rule, he could understand their fanaticism, and their pretence of fanaticism under the compulsion of Osman Digna’s hordes.

‘Yes, I shall come back,’ he said, ‘and in three months’ time. For one thing, we know—every Englishman in Egypt too knows—that this can’t be the end. I want to be here when the work’s taken in hand again. I hate unfinished things.’

The sun beat relentlessly upon the plateau; the men, stretched in the shade, slept; the afternoon was as noiseless as the morning; Durrance and Mather sat for some while compelled to silence by the silence surrounding them. But Durrance’s eyes turned at last from the amphitheatre of hills, they lost their abstraction, they

became intently fixed upon the shrubbery beyond the glacis. He was no longer recollecting Tewfik Bey and his heroic defence, or speculating upon the work to be done in the years ahead. Without turning his head, he saw that Mather was gazing in the same direction as himself.

‘What are you thinking about?’ he asked suddenly of Mather.

Mather laughed, and answered thoughtfully:

‘I was drawing up the menu of the first dinner I will have when I reach London. I will eat it alone, I think, quite alone, and at Epitaux. It will begin with a water-melon. And you?’

‘I was wondering why, now that the pigeons have got used to our presence, they should still be wheeling in and out of one particular tree. Don’t point to it please! I mean the tree beyond the ditch, and to the right of two small bushes.’

All about them they could see the pigeons quietly perched upon the branches, spotting the foliage like a purple fruit. Only above the one tree they circled and timorously called.

‘We will draw that covert,’ said Durrance. ‘Take a dozen men and surround it quietly.’

He himself remained on the glacis watching the tree and the thick undergrowth. He saw six soldiers creep round the shrubbery from the left, six more from the right. But before they could meet, and ring the tree in, he saw the branches violently shaken, and an Arab with a roll of yellowish dammar wound about his waist, and armed with a flat-headed spear and a shield of hide, dash from the shelter and race out between the soldiers into the open plain. He ran for a few yards only. For Mather gave a sharp order to his men, and the Arab, as though he understood that order, came to a sudden stop before a rifle could be lifted to a shoulder. He walked quietly back to Mather. He was brought up on to the glacis, where he stood before Durrance without insolence or servility.

He explained in Arabic that he was a man of the Kababish tribe named Abou Fatma, and friendly to the English. He was on his way to Suakin.

‘Why did you hide?’ asked Durrance.

‘It was safer. I knew you for my friends. But, my gentleman, did you know me for yours?’

Then Durrance said quickly, ‘You speak English,’ and Durrance spoke in English.



The answer came without hesitation.

‘I know a few words.’

‘Where did you learn them?’

‘In Khartum.’

Thereafter he was left alone with Durrance on the glacis, and the two men talked together for the best part of an hour. At the end of that time the Arab was seen to descend the glacis, cross the trench, and proceed towards the hills. Durrance gave the order for the resumption of the march.

The water-tanks were filled, the men replenished their zamshyehs, knowing that of all thirsts in this world the afternoon thirst is the very worst, saddled their camels, and mounted to the usual groaning and snarling. The detachment moved north-westwards from Sinkat, at an acute angle to its morning’s march. It skirted the hills opposite to the pass from which it had descended in the morning. The bushes grew sparse. It came into a black country of stones scantily relieved by yellow tasselled mimosas.

Durrance called Mather to his side.

‘That Arab had a strange story to tell me. He was Gordon’s servant in Khartum. At the beginning of 1884, eighteen months ago in fact, Gordon gave him a letter which he was to take to Berber, whence the contents were to be telegraphed to Cairo. But when the messenger arrived, Berber had just fallen. He was seized upon and imprisoned the day after his arrival. But during the one day which he had free he hid the letter in the wall of a house, and so far as he knows it has not been discovered.

‘He would have been questioned if it had been,’ said Mather.

‘Precisely, and he was not questioned. He escaped from Berber at night, three weeks ago. The story is curious, eh?’

‘And the letter still remains in the wall? It is curious. Perhaps the man was telling lies.’

‘He had the chain mark on his ankles,’ said Durrance.

‘The cavalcade turned to the left into the hills on the northern side of the plateau, and climbed again over shale.

‘A letter from Gordon,’ said Durrance in a musing voice, ‘scribbled perhaps upon that rooftop of his palace, by the side of his great telescope—a sentence written in haste, and his eye again to the lens, searching over the palm trees for the smoke of the

steamers—and it comes down the Nile to be buried in a mud wall in Berber. Yes, it's curious,' and he turned his face to the west and the sinking sun. Even as he looked, the sun dipped behind the hills. The sky above his head darkened rapidly to violet; in the west it flamed a glory of colours rich and iridescent. The colours lost their violence and blended delicately into one rose hue, the rose lingered for a little, and, fading in its turn, left a sky of the purest emerald green transfused with light from beneath the rim of the world.

'If only they had let us go last year westward to the Nile,' he said with a sort of passion. 'Before Khartum had fallen, before Berber had surrendered. But they would not.'

The magic of the sunset was not at all in Durrance's thoughts. The story of the letter had struck upon a chord of reverence within him. He was occupied with the history of that honest, great, impracticable soldier, who, despised by officials and thwarted by intrigues, a man of few ties and much loneliness, had gone unflinching about his work, knowing the while that the moment his back was turned the work was in an instant all undone.

Darkness came upon the troops, the camels quickened their pace, the cicadas shrilled from every tuft of grass. The detachment moved down towards the well of Disibil. Durrance lay long awake that night on his camp bedstead spread out beneath the stars. He forgot the letter in the mud wall. Southwards the Southern Cross hung slanting in the sky, above him glittered the curve of the Great Bear. In a week he would sail for England; he lay awake, counting up the years since the packet cast off from Dover pier, and he found that the tale of them was good. Kassassin, Tel-el-Kebir, the rush down the Red Sea, Tokar, Tamai, Tamanib—the crowded moments came vividly to his mind. He thrilled even now at the recollection of the Haden-dowas leaping and stabbing through the breach of McNeil's zareba six miles from Suakin; he recalled the obdurate defence of the Berkshires, the steadiness of the Marines, the rallying of the broken troops. The years had been good years, years of plenty, years which had advanced him to the brevet-rank of lieutenant-colonel.

'A week more—only a week,' murmured Mather drowsily.

'I shall come back,' said Durrance with a laugh.

'Have you no friends?'

And there was a pause.



‘Yes, I have friends. I shall have three months wherein to see them.’

Durrance had written no word to Harry Feversham during these years. Not to write letters was indeed a part of the man. Correspondence was a difficulty to him. He was thinking now that he would surprise his friends by a visit to Donegal, or he might find them perhaps in London. He would ride once again in the Row. But in the end he would come back. For his friend was married, and to Ethne Eustace, and as for himself his life’s work lay here in the Soudan. He would certainly come back. And so, turning on his side, he slept dreamlessly while the hosts of the stars trampled across the heavens above his head.

Now, at this moment Abou Fatma of the Kababish tribe was sleeping under a boulder on the Khor Gwob. He rose early and continued along the broad plains to the white city of Suakin. There he told the same story which he had told Durrance to one Captain Willoughby, who was acting for the time as deputy governor. After he had come from the Palace he told his story again, but this time in the native bazaar. He told it in Arabic, and it happened that a Greek seated outside a café close at hand overheard something of what was said. The Greek took Abou Fatma aside, and with a promise of much merissa, wherewith to intoxicate himself, induced him to tell it a fourth time and very slowly.

‘Could you find the house again?’ asked the Greek.

Abou Fatma had no doubts upon that score. He proceeded to draw diagrams in the dust, not knowing that during his imprisonment the town of Berber had been steadily pulled down by the Mahdists and rebuilt to the north.

‘It will be wise to speak of this to no one except me,’ said the Greek, jingling some significant dollars, and for a long while the two men talked secretly together. The Greek happened to be Harry Feversham, whom Durrance was proposing to visit in Donegal. Captain Willoughby was Deputy-Governor of Suakin, and after three years of waiting one of Harry Feversham’s opportunities had come.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## LIEUTENANT SUTCH IS TEMPTED TO LIE.

DURRANCE reached London one morning in June, and on that afternoon took the first walk of the exile, into Hyde Park, where he sat beneath the trees marvelling at the grace of his countrywomen and the delicacy of their apparel, a solitary figure, sunburnt and stamped already with that indefinable expression of the eyes and face which marks the men set apart in the distant corners of the world. Amongst the people who strolled past him, one, however, smiled, and, as he rose from his chair, Mrs. Adair came to his side. She looked him over from head to foot with a quick and almost furtive glance which might have told even Durrance something of which he was not aware. She was comparing him with the picture which she had of him now three years old. She was looking for the small marks of change which those three years might have brought about, and with signs of apprehension. But Durrance only noticed that she was dressed in black. She understood the question in his mind and answered it.

‘My husband died eighteen months ago,’ she explained in a quiet voice. ‘He was thrown from his horse during a run with the Pytchley. He was killed at once.’

‘I had not heard,’ Durrance answered awkwardly. ‘I am very sorry.’

Mrs. Adair took a chair beside him and did not reply. She was a woman of perplexing silences; and her pale and placid face with its cold correct outline gave no clue to the thoughts with which she occupied them. She sat without stirring. Durrance was embarrassed. He remembered Mr. Adair as a good-humoured man, whose one chief quality was his evident affection for his wife, but with what eyes the wife had looked upon him he had never up till now considered. Mr. Adair indeed had been at the best a shadowy figure in that small household, and Durrance found it difficult even to draw upon his recollections for any full expression of regret. He gave up the attempt and asked:

‘Are Harry Feversham and his wife in town?’

Mrs. Adair was slow to reply.



‘Not yet,’ she said after a pause, but immediately she corrected herself, and said a little hurriedly, ‘I mean—the marriage never took place.’

Durrance was not a man easily startled, and even when he was, his surprise was not expressed in exclamations.

‘I don’t think that I understand. Why did it never take place?’ he asked. Mrs. Adair looked sharply at him as though inquiring for the reason of his deliberate tones.

‘I don’t know why,’ she said. ‘Ethne can keep a secret if she wishes,’ and Durrance nodded his assent. ‘The marriage was broken off on the night of a dance at Lennon House.’

Durrance turned at once to her.

‘Just before I left England three years ago?’

‘Yes. Then you knew?’

‘No. Only you have explained to me something which occurred on the very night that I left Dover. What has become of Harry?’

Mrs. Adair shrugged her shoulders.

‘I do not know. I have met no one who does know. I do not think that I have met anyone who has seen him since that time. He must have left England.’

Durrance pondered on this mysterious disappearance. It was Harry Feversham then whom he had seen upon the pier as the Channel boat cast off. The man with the troubled and despairing face was after all his friend.

‘And Miss Eustace?’ he asked after a pause, with a queer timidity. ‘She has married since?’

Again Mrs. Adair took her time to reply.

‘No,’ said she.

‘Then she is still at Ramelton?’

Mrs. Adair shook her head.

‘There was a fire at Lennon House a year ago. Did you ever hear of a constable called Bastable?’

‘Indeed, I did. He was the means of introducing me to Miss Eustace and her father. I was travelling from Londonderry to Letterkenny. I received a letter from Mr. Eustace, whom I did not know, but who knew from my friends at Letterkenny that I was coming past his house. He asked me to stay the night with him. Naturally enough, I refused, with the result that Bastable arrested me on a magistrate’s warrant as soon as I landed from the ferry.’

‘That is the man,’ said Mrs. Adair, and she told Durrance the history of the fire. It appeared that Bastable’s claim to Dermod’s friendship rested upon his skill in preparing a particular brew of toddy, which needed a single oyster simmering in the saucepan to give it its perfection of flavour. About two o’clock of a June morning the spirit lamp on which the saucepan stewed had been overset; neither of the two confederates in drink had their wits about them at the moment, and the house was half burnt and the rest of it ruined by water before the fire could be got under.

‘There were consequences still more distressing than the destruction of the house,’ she continued. ‘The fire was a beacon warning to Dermod’s creditors for one thing, and Dermod, already overpowered with debts, fell in a day upon complete ruin. He was drenched by the water hoses besides, and took a chill which nearly killed him, from the effects of which he has never recovered. You will find him a broken man. The estates are let, and Ethne is now living with her father in a little mountain village in Donegal.’

Mrs. Adair had not looked at Durrance while she spoke. She kept her eyes fixed steadily in front of her, and indeed she spoke without feeling on one side or the other, but rather like a person constraining herself to speech because speech was a necessity. Nor did she turn to look at Durrance when she had done.

‘So she has lost everything,’ said Durrance.

‘She still has a home in Donegal,’ returned Mrs. Adair.

‘And that means a great deal to her?’ said Durrance slowly. ‘Yes, I think you are right.’

‘It means,’ said Mrs. Adair, ‘that Ethne with all her ill-luck has reason to be envied by many other women.’

Durrance did not answer that suggestion directly. He watched the carriages drive past, he listened to the chatter and the laughter of the people about him, his eyes were refreshed by the women in their light-coloured frocks; and all the time his slow mind was working towards the lame expression of his philosophy. Mrs. Adair turned to him with a slight impatience in the end.

‘Of what are you thinking?’ she asked.

‘That women suffer much more than men when the world goes wrong with them,’ he answered, and the answer was rather a question than a definite assertion. ‘I know very little, of course.’



I can only guess. But I think women gather up into themselves what they have been through much more than we do. To them, what is past becomes a real part of them, as it were, as much a part of them as a limb; to us it's always something external, at the best the rung of a ladder, at the worst a weight on the heel. Don't you think so too? I phrase the thought badly. But put it this way: Women look backwards, we look ahead, so misfortune hits them harder, eh?'

Mrs. Adair answered in her own way. She did not expressly agree. But a certain humility became audible in her voice.

'The mountain village at which Ethne is living,' she said in a low voice, 'is called Glenalla. A track strikes up towards it from the road halfway between Rathmullen and Ramelton.' She rose as she finished the sentence and held out her hand. 'Shall see you?'

'You are still in Hill Street?' said Durrance. 'I shall be for a time in London.'

Mrs. Adair raised her eyebrows. She looked always by nature for the intricate and concealed motive, so that conduct which sprang from a reason, obvious and simple, was likely to baffle her. She was baffled now by Durrance's resolve to remain in town. She heard of his continual presence at his Service Club, and could not understand. She did not even have a suspicion of his motive when he himself informed her that he had travelled into Surrey and had spent a day with General Feversham.

It had been an ineffectual day for Durrance. The General kept him steadily to the history of the campaign from which he had just returned. Only once was he able to approach the topic of Harry Feversham's disappearance, and at the mere mention of his son's name the old General's face set like plaster. It became void of expression and inattentive as a mask.

'We will talk of something else, if you please,' said he, and Durrance returned to London, not an inch nearer to Donegal.

Thereafter he sat under the great tree in the inner courtyard of his club, talking to this man and to that, and still unsatisfied with the conversation. All through that June the afternoons and evenings found him at his post. Never a friend of Feversham's passed by the tree but Durrance had a word for him, and the word led always to a question. But the question elicited no

answer except a shrug of the shoulders, and a 'Hanged if I know!'

Harry Feversham's place knew him no more; he had dropped even out of the speculations of his friends.

Towards the end of June, however, an old retired naval officer limped into the courtyard, saw Durrance, hesitated, and began with a remarkable alacrity to move away.

Durrance sprang up from his seat.

'Lieutenant Sutch,' said he. 'You have forgotten me?'

'Colonel Durrance, to be sure,' said the embarrassed lieutenant. 'It is some while since we met, but I remember you very well now. I think we met—let me see—where was it? An old man's memory, Colonel Durrance, is like a leaky ship. It comes to harbour with its cargo of recollections swamped.'

Neither the Lieutenant's present embarrassment nor his previous hesitation escaped Durrance's notice.

'We met at Broad Place,' said he. 'I wish you to give me news of my friend Feversham. Why was his engagement with Miss Eustace broken off? Where is he now?'

The Lieutenant's eyes gleamed for a moment with satisfaction. He had always been doubtful whether Durrance was aware of Harry's fall into disgrace. Durrance plainly did not know.

'There is only one person in the world, I believe,' said Sutch, 'who can answer both your questions.'

Durrance was in no way disconcerted.

'Yes. I have waited here a month for you,' he replied.

Lieutenant Sutch pushed his fingers through his beard, and stared down at his companion.

'Well, it is true,' he admitted. 'I can answer your questions, but I will not.'

'Harry Feversham is my friend.'

'General Feversham is his father, yet he knows only half the truth. Miss Eustace was betrothed to him, and she knows no more. I pledged my word to Harry that I would keep silence.'

'It is not curiosity which makes me ask.'

'I am sure that, on the contrary, it is friendship,' said the Lieutenant cordially.

'Nor that entirely. There is another aspect of the matter. I will not ask you to answer my questions, but I will put a third one to you. It is one harder for me to ask than for you to answer.'



Would a friend of Harry Feversham be at all disloyal to that friendship, if'—and Durrance flushed beneath his sunburn—'if he tried his luck with Miss Eustace?'

The question startled Lieutenant Sutch.

'You?' he exclaimed, and he stood considering Durrance, remembering the rapidity of his promotion, speculating upon his likelihood to take a woman's fancy. Here was an aspect of the case, indeed, to which he had not given a thought, and he was no less troubled than startled. For there had grown up within him a jealousy on behalf of Harry Feversham as strong as a mother's for a favourite second son. He had nursed with a most pleasurable anticipation a hope that, in the end, Harry would come back to all that he once had owned, like a rethroned king. He stared at Durrance and saw the hope stricken. Durrance looked the man of courage which his record proved him to be, and Lieutenant Sutch had his theory of women. 'Brute courage—they make a god of it.'

'Well?' asked Durrance.

Lieutenant Sutch was aware that he must answer. He was sorely tempted to lie. For he knew enough of the man who questioned him to be certain that the lie would have its effect. Durrance would go back to the Soudan, and leave his suit unpressed.

'Well?'

Sutch looked up at the sky and down upon the flags. Harry had foreseen that this complication was likely to occur, he had not wished that Ethne should wait. Sutch imagined him at this very moment, lost somewhere under the burning sun, and compared that picture with the one before his eyes—the successful soldier taking his ease at his club. He felt inclined to break his promise, to tell the whole truth, to answer both the questions which Durrance had first asked. And again the pitiless monosyllable demanded his reply.

'Well?'

'No,' said Sutch regretfully. 'There would be no disloyalty.' And on that evening Durrance took the train for Holyhead.

---

## CHAPTER IX.

## AT GLENALLA.

THE farm-house stood a mile above the village in a wild moorland country. The heather encroached upon its garden, and the bridle-path ended at its door. On three sides an amphitheatre of hills, which changed so instantly to the season that it seemed one could distinguish from day to day a new gradation in their colours, harboured it like a ship. No trees grew upon those hills, the granite cropped out amidst the moss and heather; but they had a friendly sheltering look, and Durrance came almost to believe that they put on their different draperies of emerald green, and purple, and russet brown consciously to delight the eyes of the girl they sheltered. The house faced the long slope of country to the inlet of the Lough. From the windows the eye reached down over the sparse thickets, the few tilled fields, the white-washed cottages, to the tall woods upon the bank, and caught a glimpse of bright water and the gulls poising and dipping above it. Durrance rode up the track upon an afternoon and knew the house at once. For as he approached, the music of a violin floated towards him from the windows like a welcome. His hand was checked upon the reins, and a particular strong hope, about which he had allowed his fancies to play, rose up within him and suspended his breath.

He tied up his horse and entered in at the gate. A formless barrack without, the house within was a place of comfort. The room into which he was shown, with its brasses and its gleaming oak and its wide prospect, was bright as the afternoon itself. Durrance imagined it, too, with the blinds drawn upon a winter's night, and the fire red on the hearth, and the wind skirling about the hills and rapping on the panes.

Ethne greeted him without the least mark of surprise.

'I had a thought that you would come,' she said, and a smile shone upon her face.

Durrance laughed suddenly with a great contentment as they shook hands, and Ethne wondered why. She followed the direction of his eyes towards the violin which lay upon a table at her side. It was pale in colour, there was a mark, too, close to the bridge, where a morsel of worm-eaten wood had been replaced.



'It is yours,' she said. 'You were in Egypt. I could not well send it back to you there.'

'I have hoped lately, since I knew,' returned Durrance, 'that, nevertheless, you would accept it.'

'You see I have,' said Ethne, and looking straight into his eyes she added: 'I accepted it some while ago. There was a time when I needed to be assured that I had sure friends. And a thing tangible helped. I was very glad to have it.'

Durrance took the instrument from the table, handling it delicately like a sacred vessel.

'You have played upon it? The Musoline overture perhaps,' said he.

'Do you remember that?' she returned with a laugh. 'Yes, I have played upon it, but only recently. For a long time I put my violin away. It talked to me too intimately of many things which I wished to forget,' and these words, like the rest, she spoke without hesitation or any down-dropping of the eyes.

Durrance fetched up his luggage from Rathmullen the next day, and stayed at the farm for a week. But up to the last hour of his visit no further reference was made to Harry Feversham by either Ethne or Durrance, although they were thrown much into each other's company. For Dermot was even more broken than Mrs. Adair's description had led Durrance to expect. His speech was all dwindled to monosyllables; his frame was shrunken, and his clothes bagged upon his limbs; his very stature seemed lessened; even the anger was clouded from his eye; he was become a stay-at-home, dozing for the most part of the day by a fire, even in that July weather; his longest walk was to the little grey church which stood naked upon a mound some quarter of a mile away and within view of the windows, and even that walk taxed his strength. He was an old man fallen upon decrepitude, and almost out of recognition, so that his gestures and the rare tones of his voice struck upon Durrance as something painful, like the mimicry of a dead man. His old collie dog aged in company, and, to see them side by side, one might have said, in sympathy.

Durrance and Ethne were thus thrown much together. By day, in the wet weather or the fine, they tramped the hills, while she, with the colour glowing in her face, and her eyes most jealous and eager, showed him her country and exacted his admiration. In the evenings she would take her violin, and sitting as of old with an averted face, she would bid the strings speak of

the heights and depths. Durrance sat watching the sweep of her arm, the absorption of her face, and counting up his chances. He had not brought with him to Glenalla Lieutenant Sutch's anticipations that he would succeed. The shadow of Harry Feversham might well separate them. For another thing, he knew very well that poverty would fall more lightly upon her than upon most women. He had indeed had proofs of that. Though the Lennon House was ruined altogether, and its lands gone from her, Ethne was still amongst her own people. They still looked eagerly for her visits; she was still the princess of that country side. On the other hand, she took a frank pleasure in his company, and she led him to speak of his three years' service in the East. No detail was too insignificant for her inquiries, and while he spoke her eyes continually sounded him, and the smile upon her lips continually approved. Durrance did not understand what she was after. Possibly no one could have understood unless he was aware of what had passed between Harry Feversham and Ethne. Durrance wore the likeness of a man, and she was well nigh sick with anxiety to know whether the spirit of a man informed it. He was a dark lantern to her. There might be a flame burning within, or there might be mere vacancy and darkness. She was pushing back the slide so that she might be sure.

She led him thus to speak of Egypt upon the last day of his visit. They were seated upon the hillside, on the edge of a stream which leaped from ledge to ledge down a miniature gorge of rock, and flowed over deep pools between the ledges very swiftly, a torrent of clear black water.

'I travelled once for four days amongst the mirages,' he said. 'Lagoons, still as a mirror and fringed with misty trees. You could almost walk your camel up to the knees in them, before the lagoon receded and the sand glared at you. And one cannot imagine that glare. Every stone within view dances and shakes like a heliograph; you can see—yes, actually see—the heat flow breast high across the desert swift as this stream here, only pellucid. So till the sun sets ahead of you level with your eyes! Imagine the nights which follow—nights of infinite silence with a cool friendly wind blowing from horizon to horizon—and your bed spread for you under the great dome of stars. Oh,' he cried, drawing a deep breath. 'But that country grows on you. It's like the Southern Cross—four over-rated stars when first you see



them, but in a week you begin to look for them, and you miss them when you travel north again.' He raised himself upon his elbow and turned suddenly towards her. 'Do you know—I can only speak for myself—but I never feel alone in those empty spaces. On the contrary, I always feel very close to the things I care about and to the few people I care about too.'

Her eyes shone very brightly upon him, her lips parted in a smile. He moved nearer to her upon the grass, and sat with his feet gathered under him upon one side, and leaning upon his arm.

'I used to imagine you out there,' he said. 'You would have loved it—from the start before daybreak, in the dark, to the camp-fire at night. You would have been at home. I used to think so as I lay awake wondering how the world went with my friends.'

Her bosom rose as she drew in a breath.

'And you go back there?' she said.

Durrance did not immediately answer. The roar of the torrent throbbed about them. When he did speak, all the enthusiasm had gone from his voice. He spoke gazing into the stream.

'To Wadi Halfa. For two years. I suppose so.'

Ethne kneeled up on the grass at his side.

'I shall miss you,' she said.

She was kneeling just behind him as he sat on the ground, and again there fell a silence between them.

'Of what are you thinking?' she asked, and she bent forward at the moment, so that all unawares her breast lightly touched his shoulder. He was thinking indeed of the words which she had spoken at their first meeting. There had been a time when she had sorely needed her friends. Now she told him that she would miss him. He put those sayings together.

'That you need not miss me,' he said, and he was aware that she drew back and sank down upon her heels. 'My appointment at Halfa—I might shorten its term. I might perhaps avoid it altogether. I have still half my furlough.'

She did not answer nor did she change her attitude. She remained very still, and Durrance was alarmed, and all his hopes sank. For a stillness of attitude he knew to be with her as definite an expression of distress as a cry of pain with another woman. He turned about towards her. Her head was bent, but she raised it as he turned, and though her lips smiled, there was

a look of great trouble in her eyes. Durrance was a man like another. His first thought was whether there was not some obstacle which would hinder her from compliance, even though she herself were willing.

‘There is your father,’ he said.

‘Yes,’ she answered, ‘there is my father too. I could not leave him.’

‘Nor need you,’ said he quickly. ‘That difficulty can be surmounted. To tell the truth, I was not thinking of your father at the moment.’

‘Nor was I,’ said she.

Durrance turned away and sat for a little while staring down the rocks into a wrinkled pool of water just beneath. It was after all the shadow of Feversham which stretched between himself and her.

‘I know, of course,’ he said, ‘that you would never feel trouble, as so many do, with half your heart. You would neither easily care nor lightly forget.’

‘I remember enough,’ she returned in a low voice, ‘to make your words rather a pain to me. Some day perhaps I may bring myself to tell everything which happened at that ball three years ago, and then you will be better able to understand why I am a little distressed. All that I can tell you now is this: I have a great fear that I was in some way the cause of another man’s ruin. I do not mean that I was to blame for it. But if I had not been known to him his career might perhaps never have come to so abrupt an end. I am not sure, but I am afraid. I asked whether it was so, and I was told “no,” but I think very likely that generosity dictated that answer. And the fear stays. I am much distressed by it. I lie awake with it at night. And then you come whom I greatly value, and you say quietly, “Will you please spoil my career too?”’ And she struck one hand sharply into the other and cried, ‘But that I will not do.’

And again he answered:

‘There is no need that you should. Wadi Halfa is not the only place where a soldier can find work to his hand.’

His voice had taken a new hopefulness. For he had listened intently to the words which she had spoken, and he had construed them by the dictionary of his desires. She had not said that friendship bounded all her thoughts of him. Therefore he need not believe it. Women were given to a hinting modesty of speech, at all events the best of them. A man might read a little more



emphasis into their tones, and underline their words and still be short of their meaning, as he argued. A subtle delicacy graced them in nature. Durrance was near to Benedick's mood. 'One whom I value'; 'I shall miss you'; there might be a double meaning in the phrases. When she said that she needed to be assured that she had sure friends, did she not mean that she needed their companionship? But the argument, had he been acute enough to see it, proved how deep he was sunk in error. For what this girl spoke, she habitually meant, and she habitually meant no more. Moreover, upon this occasion she had particularly weighed her words.

'No doubt,' she said, '*a* soldier can. But can this soldier find work so suitable? Listen, please, till I have done. I was so very glad to hear all that you have told me about your work and your journeys. I was still more glad because of the satisfaction with which you told it. For it seemed to me, as I listened and as I watched, that you had found the one true straight channel along which your life could run swift and smoothly and unharassed. And so few do that—so very few!' And she wrung her hands and cried, 'And now you spoil it all.'

Durrance suddenly faced her. He ceased from argument; he cried in a voice of passion:

'I am for you, Ethne! There's the true straight channel, and upon my word I believe you are for me. I thought—I admit it—at one time I would spend my life out there in the East, and the thought contented me. But I had schooled myself into contentment, for I believed you married.' Ethne ever so slightly flinched, and he himself recognised that he had spoken in a voice overloud, so that it had something almost of brutality.

'Do I hurt you?' he continued. 'I am sorry. But let me speak the whole truth out, I cannot afford reticence, I want you to know the first and last of it. I say now that I love you. Yes, but I could have said it with equal truth five years ago. It is five years since your father arrested me at the ferry down there on Lough Swilly, because I wished to press on to Letterkenny and not delay a night by stopping with a stranger. Five years since I first saw you, first heard the language of your violin. I remember how you sat with your back towards me. The light shone on your hair, I could just see your eyelashes and the colour of your cheeks. I remember the sweep of your arm. . . . My dear, you are for me; I am for you.'

But she drew back from his outstretched hands.

‘No,’ she said very gently, but with a decision he could not mistake. She saw more clearly into his mind than he did himself. The restlessness of the born traveller, the craving for the large and lonely spaces in the outlandish corners of the world, the incurable intermittent fever to be moving, ever moving amongst strange peoples and under strange skies—these were deep-rooted qualities of the man. Passion might obscure them for awhile, but they would make their appeal in the end, and the appeal would torture. The home would become a prison. Desires would so clash within him, there could be no happiness. That was the man. For herself, she looked down the slope of the hill across the brown country. Away on the right waved the woods about Ramelton, at her feet flashed a strip of the Lough; and this was her country; she was its child and the sister of its people.

‘No,’ she repeated as she rose to her feet. Durrance rose with her. He was still not so much disheartened as conscious of a blunder. He had put his case badly, he should never have given her the opportunity to think that marriage would be an interruption of his career.

‘We will say good-bye here,’ she said, ‘in the open. We shall be none the less good friends because three thousand miles hinder us from shaking hands.’

They shook hands as she spoke.

‘I shall be in England again in a year’s time,’ said Durrance. ‘May I come back?’

Ethne’s eyes and her smile consented.

‘I should be sorry to lose you altogether,’ she said, ‘although even if I did not see you I should know that I had not lost your friendship.’ She added, ‘I should also be glad to hear news of you and what you are doing, if ever you have the time to spare.’

‘I may write?’ he exclaimed eagerly.

‘Yes,’ she answered, and his eagerness made her linger a little doubtfully upon the word. ‘That is, if you think it fair. I mean, it might be best for you, perhaps, to get rid of me entirely from your thoughts,’ and Durrance laughed and without any bitterness, so that in a moment Ethne found herself laughing too, though at what she laughed she would have discovered it difficult to explain. ‘Very well, write to me then.’ And she added drily, ‘But it will be about—other things.’

And again Durrance read into her words the interpretation



he desired; and again she meant just what she said, and not a word more.

She stood where he left her, a tall, strong-limbed figure of womanhood, until he was gone out of sight. Then she climbed down to the house, and going into her room took one of her violins from its case. But it was the violin which Durrance had given to her, and before she had touched the strings with her bow she recognised it and put it suddenly away from her in its case. She snapped the case to. For a few moments she sat motionless in her chair, then she quickly crossed the room, and, taking her keys, unlocked a drawer. At the bottom of the drawer there lay hidden a photograph, and at this she looked for a long while and very wistfully.

Durrance meanwhile walked down to the trap which was waiting for him at the gates of the house, and saw that Dermod Eustace stood in the road with his hat upon his head.

‘I will walk a few yards with you, Colonel Durrance,’ said Dermod. ‘I have a word for your ear.’

Durrance suited his stride to the old man’s faltering step, and they walked behind the dogcart, and in silence. It was not the mere personal disappointment which weighed upon Durrance’s spirit. But he could not see with Ethne’s eyes, and as his gaze took in that quiet corner of Donegal, he was filled with a great sadness lest all her life should be passed in this seclusion, her grave dug in the end under the wall of the tiny church, and her memory linger only in a few white cottages scattered over the moorland, and for a very little while. He was recalled by the pressure of Dermod’s hand upon his elbow. There was a gleam of inquiry in the old man’s faded eyes, but it seemed that speech itself was a difficulty.

‘You have news for me?’ he asked after some hesitation. ‘News of Harry Feversham? I thought that I would ask you before you went away.’

‘None,’ said Durrance.

‘I am sorry,’ replied Dermod wistfully, ‘though I have no reason for sorrow. He struck us a cruel blow, Colonel Durrance. I should have nothing but curses for him in my mouth and my heart, a black-throated coward my reason calls him, and yet I would be very glad to hear how the world goes with him. You were his friend. But you do not know?’

It was actually of Harry Feversham that Dermod Eustace

was speaking, and Durrance, as he remarked the old man's wistfulness of voice and face, was seized with a certain remorse that he had allowed Ethne so to thrust his friend out of his thoughts. He speculated upon the mystery at times as he sat in the evening upon his verandah above the Nile at Wadi Halfa, piecing together the few hints which he had gathered. 'A black-throated coward,' Dermot had called Harry Feversham, and Ethne had said enough to assure him that something graver than any dispute, something which had destroyed all her faith in the man, had put an end to their betrothal. But he could not conjecture at the particular cause, and the only consequence of his perplexed imaginings was the growth of a very real anger within him against the man who had been his friend. So the winter passed, and summer came to the Soudan, and the month of May.

*(To be continued.)*



THE  
CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

---

APRIL 1902.

---

*AT CASTERBRIDGE FAIR.*

SING, Ballad-singer, raise a hearty tune!

Make me forget that there was ever a one

I walked with in the meek light of the moon

When the day's work was done.

Rhyme, Ballad-rhymer, start a country song!

Make me forget that she whom I loved well

Swore she would love me dearly, love me long;

Then—what I cannot tell.

Sing, Ballad-singer, from your little book!

Make me forget those heartbreaks, achings, fears;

Make me forget her name, her sweet, sweet look;

Make me forget her tears.

· THOMAS HARDY.

<sup>1</sup> Copyright, 1902, by Thomas Hardy in the United States of America.

*THE INTRUSIONS OF PEGGY.*<sup>1</sup>

BY ANTHONY HOPE.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## USURPERS ON THE THRONE.

AIREY NEWTON was dressing for dinner, for that party of his which Tommy Trent had brought about, and which was causing endless excitement in the small circle. He arrayed himself slowly and ruefully, choosing with care his least frayed shirt, glancing ever and again at a parcel of five-pound notes which lay on the table in front of him. There were more notes than the dinner would demand, however lavish in his orders Tommy might have been; Airey had determined to run no risks. He was trying hard to persuade himself that he was going to have a pleasant evening, and to enjoy dispensing to his friends a sumptuous hospitality. The task was a difficult one. He could not help thinking that those notes were not made to perish; they were created in order that they might live and breed; he hated to fritter them away. Yet he hated himself for hating it.

To this pass he had come gradually. First the money, which began to roll in as his work prospered and his reputation grew, had been precious as an evidence of success and a testimony of power. He really wanted it for nothing else; his tastes had always been simple, he had no expensive recreations; nobody (as he told Tommy Trent) had any claim on him; he was alone in the world (except for the rest of mankind, of course). He saved his money, and in that seemed to be doing the right and reasonable thing. When the change began or how it worked he could not now trace. Gradually his living had become more simple, and passed from simple to sparing; everything that threatened expense was nipped in the bud. It began to be painful to spend money, sweet only to make it, to invest it, and to watch its doings. By an effort of will he forced himself to subscribe with decent liberality to a fair number of public institutions—his bankers paid the subscriptions for him. Nor did he fail if a

<sup>1</sup> Copyright, 1902, by A. H. Hawkins, in the United States of America.



direct appeal was made for an urgent case ; then he would give, though not cheerfully. He could not be called a miser, but he had let money get altogether out of its proper place in life. It had become to him an end, and was no longer a means ; even while he worked he thought of how much the work would bring. He thought more about money than about anything else in the world ; and he could not endure to waste it. By wasting it he meant making his own and other people's lives pleasanter by the use of it.

Nobody knew, save Tommy Trent. People who did business with him might conjecture that Airey Newton must be doing pretty well ; but such folk were not of his life, and what they guessed signified nothing. Of his few friends none suspected, least of all Peggy Ryle, who came and ate his bread-and-butter, believing that she was demanding and receiving from a poor comrade the utmost stretch of an unreserved hospitality. He suffered to see her mistake, yet not without consolation. There was a secret triumph ; he felt and hated it. That had been his feeling when he asked Tommy Trent how he could continue to be his friend. He began to live in an alternation of delight and shame, of joy in having his money, of fear lest somebody should discover that he had it. Yet he did not hate Tommy Trent, who knew. He might well have hated Tommy in his heart. This again was peculiar in his own eyes, and perhaps in fact. And his friends loved him—not without cause either ; he would have given them anything except what to another would have been easiest to give ; he would give them even time, for that was only money still uncoined. Coin was the great usurper.

The dinner was a splendid affair. Airey had left all the ordering to Tommy Trent, and Tommy had been imperial. There were flowers without stint on the table ; there were bouquets and button-holes ; there was a gorgeously emblazoned bill of fare ; there were blocks of ice specially carved in fantastic forms ; there were hand-painted cards with the names of the guests curiously wrought thereon. Airey furtively fingered his packet of bank-notes, but he could not help being rather pleased when Tommy patted him on the back and said that it all looked splendid. It did look splendid ; Airey stroked his beard with a curious smile. He actually felt now as though he might enjoy himself.

The guests began to arrive punctually. Efforts in raiment

had evidently been made. Mrs. John was in red, quite magnificent. Elfreda had a lace frock, on the subject of which she could not be reduced to silence. Miles Childwick wore a white waistcoat with pearl buttons, and tried to give the impression that wearing it was an ordinary occurrence. They were all doing their best to honour the occasion and the host. A pang shot through Airey Newton; he might have done this for them so often!

Trix came in splendour. She was very radiant, feeling sure that her troubles were at an end, and her sins forgiven in the popular and practical sense that she would suffer no more inconvenience from them. Had not Beaufort Chance raved his worst? and was not Fricker—well, at heart a gentleman? asked she with a smile. There was more. Triumph was impending; nay, it was won; it waited only to be declared. She smiled again to think that she was going to dine with these dear people on the eve of her greatness. How little they knew! In this moment it is to be feared that Trix was something of a snob. She made what amends she could by feeling also that she was glad to have an evening with them before her greatness settled on her.

Peggy was late; this was nothing unusual, but the delay seemed long to Tommy Trent, who awaited with apprehension her attitude towards the lavishness of the banquet. Would she walk out again? He glanced at Airey. Airey appeared commendably easy in his mind, and was talking to Trix Trevala with reassuring animation.

‘Here she comes!’ cried Horace Harnack.

‘She’s got a new frock too,’ murmured Elfreda, regarding her own complacently, and threatening to renew the subject on the least provocation.

Peggy had a new frock. And it was black—plain black, quite unrelieved. Now she never wore black, not because it was unbecoming, but just for a fad. A new black frock must surely portend something. Peggy’s manner enforced that impression. She did indeed give one scandalised cry of ‘Airey!’ when she saw the preparations, but evidently her mind was seriously preoccupied; she said she had been detained by business.

‘Frock hadn’t come home, I suppose?’ suggested Miles Childwick witheringly.

‘It hadn’t,’ Peggy admitted, ‘but I had most important letters to write too.’ She paused, and then added, ‘I don’t sup-



pose I ought to be here at all, but I had to come to Airey's party. My uncle in Berlin is dead.'

She said this just as they sat down. It produced almost complete silence. Trix indeed, with the habits of society, murmured condolence, while she thought that Peggy might either have stayed away or have said nothing about the uncle. Nobody else spoke; they knew that Peggy had not seen the uncle for years, and could not be supposed to be suffering violent personal grief. But they knew also the significance of the uncle; he had been a real, though distant, power to them; the cheques had come from him. Now he had died.

Their glances suggested to one another that somebody might put a question—somebody who had tact, and could wrap it up in a decorous shape. Peggy herself offered no more information, but sat down by Tommy and began on her soup.

Conversation, reviving after the shock that Peggy had administered, presently broke out again. Under cover of it Peggy turned to Tommy and asked in a carefully subdued whisper:—

'How much is a mark?'

'A mark?' repeated Tommy, who was tasting the champagne critically.

'Yes. German money, you know.'

'Oh, about a shilling.'

'A shilling?' Peggy pondered. 'I thought it was a franc?'

'No, more than that. About a shilling.'

Peggy gave a sudden little laugh, and her eyes danced gleefully.

'You mustn't look like that. It's not allowed,' said Tommy firmly.

'Then twenty thousand marks——' whispered Peggy.

'Would be twenty thousand shillings—or twenty-five thousand francs—or in the depreciated condition of Italian silver some twenty-seven thousand lire. It would also be five thousand dollars, more cowrie shells than I can easily reckon, and, finally, it would amount to one thousand pounds sterling of this realm, or thereabouts.'

Peggy laughed again.

'I'm sorry your uncle's dead,' pursued Tommy gravely.

'Oh, so am I! He was always disagreeable, but he was kind too. I'm really sorry. Oh, but, Tommy——'

The effort was thoroughly well-meant, but sorrow had not

much of a chance. Peggy's sincerity was altogether too strong and natural. She was overwhelmed by the extraordinary effect of the uncle's death.

'He's left me twenty thousand marks,' she gasped out at last. 'Don't tell anybody—not yet.'

'Well done him,' said Tommy Trent. 'I knew he was a good sort—from those cheques, you know.'

'A thousand pounds!' mused Peggy Ryle. She looked down at her garment. 'So I got a frock for him, you see,' she explained. 'I wish this was my dinner,' she added. Apparently the dinner might have served as a mark of respect as well as the frock.

'Look here,' said Tommy. 'You've got to give me that money, you know.'

Peggy turned astonished and outraged eyes on him.

'I'll invest it for you, and get you forty or fifty pounds a year for it—regular—quarterly.'

'I'm going to spend it,' Peggy announced decisively. 'There are a thousand things I want to do with it. It is good of uncle!'

'No, no! You give it to me. You must learn to value money.'

'To value money! Why must I? None of us do.' She looked round the table. 'Certainly we've none of us got any.'

'It would be much better if they did value it,' said Tommy with a politico-economical air.

'You say that when you've made poor Airey give us this dinner!' she cried triumphantly.

With a wry smile Tommy Trent gave up the argument; he had no answer to that. Yet he was a little vexed. He was a normal man about money; his two greatest friends—Peggy and Airey Newton—were at the extreme in different directions. What did that signify? Well, after all, something. The attitude people hold towards money is, in one way and another, a curiously far-reaching thing, both in its expression of them and in its effect on others. Just as there was always an awkwardness between Tommy and Airey Newton because Airey would not spend as much as he ought, there was now a hint of tension, of disapproval on one side and of defiance on the other, because Peggy meant to spend all that she had. There is no safety even in having nothing; the problems you escape for yourself you raise for your friends.

Peggy, having sworn Tommy to secrecy, turned her head



round, saw Arty Kane, could by no means resist the temptation, told him the news, and swore him to secrecy. He gave his word, and remarked across the table to Miles Childwick: 'Peggy's been left a thousand pounds.'

Then he turned to her, saying, 'I take it all on myself. It was really the shortest way, you know.'

Indescribable commotion followed. Everybody had a plan for spending the thousand pounds; each of them appropriated and spent it on the spot; all agreed that Peggy was the wrong person to have it, and that they were immensely glad that she had got it. Suggestions poured in on her. It may be doubted whether the deceased uncle had ever created so much excitement while he lived.

'I propose to do no work for weeks,' said Miles Childwick. 'I shall just come and dine.'

'I think of an *édition de luxe*,' murmured Arty Kane.

'I shall take nothing but leading business,' said Horace Harnack.

'We shall really have to make a great effort to avoid being maintained,' murmured Mrs. John, surprised into a remark that sounded almost as though it came from her books.

Trix Trevalle had listened to all the chatter with a renewal of her previous pleasure, enjoying it yet the more because, thanks to Fricker's gentlemanly conduct, to the worst of Beaufort Chance being over, and to her imminent triumph, her soul was at peace and her attention not preoccupied. She too found herself rejoicing very heartily for Peggy's sake. She knew what pleasure Peggy would get, what a royal time lay before her.

'She'll spend it all. How will she feel when it's finished?'

The question came from Airey Newton, her neighbour. There was no touch of malice about it; it was put in a full-hearted sympathy.

'What a funny way to look at it!' exclaimed Trix, laughing.

'Funny! Why? You know she'll spend it. Oh, perhaps you don't; we do. And when it's gone——'

He shrugged his shoulders; her last state would be worse than her first, he meant to say.

Trix stopped laughing. She was touched; it was pathetic to see how the man who worked for a pittance felt a sort of pain at the idea of squandering—an unselfish pain for the girl who would choose a brief ecstasy of extravagance when she might ensure a permanent increase of comfort. She could not herself feel like

that about such a trifle as a thousand pounds (all in, she was wearing about a thousand pounds, and that not in full fig), but she saw how the case must appear to Airey Newton; the windfall that had tumbled into Peggy's lap meant years of hard work and of self-respecting economy to him.

'Yes, you're right,' she said. 'But she's too young for the lesson. And I—well, I'm afraid I'm incurable. You don't set us the best example either.' She smiled again as she indicated the luxurious table.

'A very occasional extravagance,' he remarked, seeing her misapprehension quite clearly, impelled to confirm it by his unrelenting fear of discovery, fingering the packet of five-pound notes in his pocket.

'I wish somebody could teach me to be prudent,' smiled Trix.

'Can one be taught to be different?' he asked rather gloomily.

'Money doesn't really make one happy,' said Trix in the tone of a disillusionised millionaire.

'I suppose not,' he agreed, but with all the scepticism of a hopeless pauper.

They both acted their parts well; each successfully imposed on the other. But pretence on this one point did not hinder a genuine sympathy nor a reciprocal attraction between them. He seemed to her the haven that she might have loved, yet had always scorned; she was to him the type of that moving, many-coloured, gay life which his allegiance to his jealous god forbade him to follow or to know. And they were united again by a sense common to them, apart from the rest of the company—the sense of dissatisfaction; it was a subtle bond ever felt between them, and made them turn to one another with smiles half-scornful, half-envious, when the merriment rose high.

'I'm glad to meet you to-night,' she said, 'because I think I can tell you that your advice—your Paris advice—has been a success.'

'You seemed rather doubtful about that when we met last.'

'Yes, I was.' She laughed a little. 'Oh, I've had some troubles, but I think I'm in smooth water now.' She hardly repressed the ring of triumph in her voice.

'Ah, then you won't come again to Danes Inn!'

There was an unmistakable regret in his voice. Trix felt it echoed in her heart. She met his glance for a moment; the



contact might have lasted longer, but he, less practised in such encounters, turned hastily away. Enough had passed to tell her that if she did not come she would be missed, enough to make her feel that in not going she would lose something which she had come to think of as pleasant in life. Was there always a price to be paid? Great or small perhaps, but a price always?

‘You should come sometimes where you can be seen,’ she said lightly.

‘A pretty figure I should cut!’ was his good-humoured, rather despairing comment.

Trix was surprised by a feeling stronger than she could have anticipated; she desired to escape from it; it seemed as though Airey Newton and his friends were laying too forcible a hold on her. They had nothing to do with the life that was to be hers; they were utterly outside that, though they might help her to laugh away an evening or amuse her with their comments on human nature and its phases. To her his friends and he were essentially a distraction; they and he must be kept in the place appropriate to distractions.

At the other end of the table an elementary form of joke was achieving a great success. It lay in crediting Peggy with unmeasured wealth, in assigning her quarters in the most fashionable part of the town, in marrying her to the highest bigwig whose title occurred to any one of the company. She was passed from Park Lane to Grosvenor Square and assigned every rank in the peerage. Schemes of benevolence were proposed to her, having for their object the endowment of literature and art.

‘You will not continue the exercise of your profession, I presume?’ asked Childwick, referring to Peggy’s projected lessons in the art of painting and a promise to buy her works which she had wrung from a dealer notoriously devoted to her.

‘She won’t know us any more,’ moaned Arty Kane.

‘She’ll glare at us from boxes—boxes paid for,’ sighed Harnack.

‘I shall never lose any more frocks,’ said Elfreda with affected ruefulness.

Trix smiled at all this—a trifle sadly. What was attributed in burlesque to the newly enriched Peggy was really going to be almost true of herself. Well, she had never belonged to them; she had been a visitor always.

The most terrible suggestion came from Mrs. John—rather

late, of course, and as if Mrs. John had taken some pains with it.

‘She’ll have her hair done quite differently.’

The idea produced pandemonium.

‘What of my essay?’ demanded Childwick.

‘What of my poem?’ cried Arty Kane.

Everybody agreed that a stand must be made here. A formal pledge was demanded from Peggy. When she gave it her health was drunk with acclamation.

A lull came with the arrival of coffee. Perhaps they were exhausted. At any rate when Miles Childwick began to talk they did not stop him at once as their custom was, but let him go on for a little while. He was a thin-faced man with a rather sharp nose, prematurely bald, and bowed about the shoulders. Trix Trevala watched him with some interest.

‘If there were such a thing as being poor and unsuccessful,’ he remarked with something that was almost a wink in his eye (Trix took it to deprecate interruption), ‘it would probably be very unpleasant. Of course, however, it does not exist. The impression to the contrary is an instance of what I will call the Fallacy of Broad Views. We are always taking broad views of our neighbours’ lives; then we call them names. Happily we very seldom need to take them of our own.’ He paused, looked round the silent table, and observed gravely, ‘This is very unusual.’

Only a laugh from Peggy, who would have laughed at anything, broke the stillness. He resumed:—

‘You call a man poor, meaning thereby that he has little money by the year. Ladies and gentlemen, we do not feel in years, we are not hungry *per annum*. You call him unsuccessful because a number of years leave him much where he was in most things. It may well be a triumph!’ He paused and asked, ‘Shall I proceed?’

‘If you have another and quite different idea,’ said Arty Kane.

‘Well, then, that Homogeneity of Fortune is undesirable among friends.’

‘Trite and obvious,’ said Manson Smith. ‘It excludes the opportunity of lending fivers.’

‘I shall talk no more,’ said Childwick. ‘If we all spoke plain English originality would become impossible.’

The end of the evening came earlier than usual. Peggy was



going to a party or two. She had her hansom waiting to convey her. It had, it appeared, been waiting all through dinner. With her departure the rest melted away. Trix Trevalla, again reluctant to go, at last found herself alone with Airey Newton, Tommy having gone out to look for her carriage. The waiter brought the bill and laid it down beside Airey.

'Is it good luck or bad luck for Peggy?' she asked reflectively.

'For Peggy it is good luck; she has instincts that save her. But she'll be very poor again.' He came back to that idea persistently.

'She'll marry somebody and be rich.' A sudden thought came and made her ask Airey, 'Would you marry for money?'

He thought long, taking no notice of the bill beside him. 'No,' he said at last, 'I shouldn't care about money I hadn't made.'

'A funny reason for the orthodox conclusion!' she laughed. 'What does it matter who made it as long as you have it?'

Airey shook his head in an obstinate way. Tommy Trent, just entering the doorway, saw him lay down three or four notes; he did not look at the bill. The waiter with a smile gave him back one, saying '*Pardon, monsieur!*' and pointing to the amount of the account. Tommy stood where he was, looking on still.

'Well, I must go,' said Trix, rising. 'You've given us a great deal of pleasure; I hope you've enjoyed it yourself!'

The waiter brought back the bill and the change. Airey scooped up the change carelessly and gave back a sovereign. Tommy could not see the coin, but he saw the waiter's low and cordial bow. He was smiling broadly as he came up to Airey.

'Business done, old fellow? We must see Mrs. Trevalla into her carriage.'

'Good-bye to you both,' said Trix. 'Such an evening!' Her eyes were bright; she seemed rather moved. There was in Tommy's opinion nothing to account for any emotion, but Airey Newton was watching her with a puzzled air.

'And I shall remember that there's no such thing as being poor or unsuccessful,' she laughed. 'We must thank Mr. Childwick for that.'

'There's nothing of that sort for you anyhow, Mrs. Trevalla,'

said Tommy. He offered his arm, but withdrew it again, smiling. 'I forgot the host's privileges,' he said.

He followed them downstairs, and saw Airey put Trix in her carriage.

'Good-bye,' she called wistfully, as she was driven away.

'Shall we stroll?' asked Tommy. The night was fine this time.

They walked along in silence for some little way. Then Airey said:—

'Thank you, Tommy.'

'It was no trouble,' said Tommy generously, 'and you did it really well.'

It was no use. Airey had struggled with the secret; he had determined not to tell anybody—not to think of it or to take account of it even within himself. But it would out.

'It's all right. I happened to get a little payment to-day—one that I'd quite given up hope of ever seeing.'

'How lucky, old chap!' Tommy was content to say.

It was evident that progress would be gradual. Airey was comforting himself with the idea that he had given his dinner without encroaching on his hoard.

Yet something had been done—more than Tommy knew of, more than he could fairly have taken credit for. When Airey reached Danes Inn he found it solitary, and he found it mean. His safe and his red book were not able to comfort him. No thought of change came to him; he was far from that. He did not even challenge his mode of life or quarrel with the motive that inspired it. The usurper was still on the throne in his heart, even as Trix's usurper sat still enthroned in hers. Airey got no farther than to be sorry that the motive and the mode of life necessitated certain things and excluded others. He was not so deeply affected but that he put these repinings from him with a strong hand. Yet they recurred obstinately, and pictures, long foreign to him, rose before his eyes. He had a vision of a great joy bought at an enormous price, purchased with a pang that he at once declared would be unendurable. But the vision was there, and seemed bright.

'What a comforting thing impossibility is sometimes!' His reflections took that form as he smoked his last pipe. If all things were possible, what struggles there would be! He could never be called upon to choose between the vision and the pang. That would be spared him by the blessing of impossibility.



Rare as the act was, it could hardly be the giving of a dinner which had roused these new and strange thoughts in him. The vision borrowed form and colour from the commonest mother of visions—a woman's face.

Two or three days later Peggy Ryle brought him seven hundred pounds—because he had a safe. He said the money would be all right, and, when she had gone, stowed it away in the appointed receptacle.

'I keep my own there,' he had explained with an ironical smile, and had watched Peggy's carefully grave nod with an inward groan.

---

## CHAPTER IX.

### BRUISES AND BALM.

GOSSIP in clubs and whispers from more secret circles had a way of reaching Mrs. Bonfill's ears. In the days that followed Mr. Liffey's public inquiry as to who Brown, Jones, and Robinson might be, care sat on her broad brow, and she received several important visitors. She was much troubled; it was the first time that there had been any unpleasantness with regard to one of her *protégés*. She felt it a slur on herself, and at first there was a hostility in her manner when Lord Glentorly spoke to her solemnly and Constantine Blair came to see her in a great flutter. But she was open to reason, a woman who would listen; she listened to them. Glentorly said that only his regard for her made him anxious to manage things quietly; Blair insisted more on the desirability of preventing anything like a scandal in the interests of the Government. There were rumours of a question in the House; Mr. Liffey's next article might even now be going to press. As to the fact there was little doubt, though the details were rather obscure.

'We are willing to leave him a bridge to retreat by, but retreat he must,' said Glentorly in a metaphor appropriate to his office.

'You're the only person who can approach both Liffey and Chance himself,' Constantine Blair represented to her.

'Does it mean his seat as well as his place?' she asked.

'If it's all kept quite quiet, we think nothing need be said about his seat,' Blair told her.

There had been a difference of opinion on that question, but the less stringent moralists—or the more compassionate men—had carried their point.

‘But once there’s a question, or an exposure by Liffey—piff!’ Blair blew Beaufort Chance to the relentless winds of heaven and the popular press.

How did he come to be so foolish?’ asked Mrs. Bonfill in useless regretful wondering.

‘You’ll see Liffey? Nobody else can do anything with him, of course.’

Mrs. Bonfill was an old friend of Liffey’s; before she became motherly, when Liffey was a young man and just establishing the ‘Sentinel,’ he had been an admirer of hers, and, in that blameless fashion about which Lady Blixworth was so flippant, she had reciprocated his liking; he was a pleasant witty man, and they had always stretched out friendly hands across the gulf of political difference and social divergence. Liffey might do for Mrs. Bonfill what he would not for all the Estates of the Realm put together.

‘I don’t know how much you know or mean to say,’ she began to Liffey, after cordial greetings.

‘I know most of what there is to know, and I intend to say it all,’ was his reply.

‘How did you find out?’

‘From Brown, a gentleman who lives at Clapham, and whose other name is Clarkson. Fricker’s weak spot is that he’s a screw; he never lets the subordinates stand in enough. So he gets given away. I pointed that out to him over the Swallow Islands business, but he won’t learn from me.’ Mr. Liffey spoke like an unappreciated philanthropist. The Swallow Islands affair had been what Fricker called a ‘scoop’—a very big thing; but there had been some trouble afterwards.

‘Say all you like about Fricker——’

‘Oh, Fricker’s really neither here nor there. The public are such asses that I can’t seriously injure Fricker, though I can make an article out of him. But the other——’

‘Don’t mention any public men,’ implored Mrs. Bonfill, as though she had the fair fame of the country much at heart.

‘Any public men?’ There was the hint of a sneer in Liffey’s voice.

‘I suppose we needn’t mention names. He’s not a big fish, of course, but still it would be unpleasant.’



‘I’m not here to make things pleasant for Farringham and his friends.’

‘I speak as one of your friends—and one of his.’

‘This isn’t quite fair, you know,’ smiled Liffey. ‘With the article in type, too!’

‘We’ve all been in such a fidget about it.’

‘I know!’ he nodded. ‘Glentorly like a hen under a cart, and Constantine fussing in and out like a cuckoo on a clock! Thank God, I’m not a politician!’

‘You’re only a censor,’ she smiled with amiable irony. ‘I’m making a personal matter of it,’ she went on with the diplomatic candour that had often proved one of her best weapons.

‘And the public interest? The purity of politics? Cæsar’s wife?’ Liffey, in his turn, allowed himself an ironical smile.

‘He will resign his place—not his seat, but his place. Isn’t that enough? It’s the end of his chosen career.’

‘Have you spoken to him?’

‘No. But of course I can make him. What choice has he? Is it true there’s to be a question? I heard that Alured Cummins meant to ask one.’

‘Between ourselves, it’s a point that I had hardly made up my mind on.’

‘Ah, I knew you were behind it!’

‘It would have been just simultaneous with my second article. Effective, eh?’

‘Have you anything quite definite—besides the speculation, I mean?’

‘Yes. One clear case of—well, of Fricker’s knowing something much too soon. I’ve got a copy of a letter our gentleman wrote. Clarkson gave it me. It’s dated the 24th, and it’s addressed to Fricker.’

‘Good gracious! May I tell him that?’

‘I proposed to tell him myself,’ smiled Liffey, ‘or to let Cummins break the news.’

‘If he knows that, he must consent to go.’ She glanced at Liffey. ‘My credit’s at stake too, you see.’ It cost her something to say this.

‘You went bail for him, did you?’ Liffey was friendly, contemptuous, and even compassionate.

‘I thought well of him, and said so to George Glentorly. I ask it as a friend.’

‘As a friend you must have it. But make it clear. He resigns in three days—or article, letter, and Alured Cummins!’

‘I’ll make it clear—and thank you,’ said Mrs. Bonfill. ‘I know it’s a sacrifice.’

‘I’d have had no mercy on him,’ laughed Liffey. ‘As it is, I must vamp up something dull and innocuous to get myself out of my promise to the public.’

‘I think he’ll be punished enough.’

‘Perhaps. But look how I suffer!’

‘There are sinners left, enough and to spare.’

‘So many of them have charming women for their friends.’

‘Oh, you don’t often yield!’

‘No, not often, but—you were an early subscriber to the “Sentinel.”’

It would be untrue to say that the sort of negotiation on which she was now engaged was altogether unpleasant to Mrs. Bonfill. Let her not be called a busybody; but she was a born intermediary. A gratifying sense of power mingled with the natural pain. She wired to Constantine Blair, ‘All well if X. is reasonable,’ and sent a line asking Beaufort Chance to call.

Chance had got out of Dramoffskys prosperously. His profit was good, though not what it had been going to reach but for Liffey’s article. Yet he was content; the article and the whispers had frightened him, but he hoped that he would now be safe. He meant to run no more risks, to walk no more so near the line, certainly never to cross it. A sinner who has reached this frame of mind generally persuades himself that he can and ought to escape punishment; else where is the virtue—or where, anyhow, the sweetness—that we find attributed to penitence? And surely he had been ill-used enough—thanks to Trix Trevalla!

In this mood he was all unprepared for the blow that his friend Mrs. Bonfill dealt him. He began defiantly. What Liffey threatened, what his colleagues suspected, he met by angry assertions of innocence, by insisting that a plain statement would put them all down, by indignation that she should believe such things of him, and make herself the mouthpiece of such accusations. In fine, he blustered, while she sat in sad silence, waiting to produce her last card. When she said, ‘Mr. Fricker employed a man named Clarkson?’ he came to a sudden stop in his striding about the room; his face turned red, he looked at her with a quick furtive air. ‘Well, he’s stolen a letter of yours.’



‘What letter?’ he burst out.

With pity Mrs. Bonfill saw how easily his cloak of unassailable innocence fell away from him.

She knew nothing of the letter save what Liffey had told her.

‘It’s to Mr. Fricker, and it’s dated the 24th,’ said she.

Was that enough? She watched his knitted brows; he was recalling the letter. He wasted no time in abusing the servant who had betrayed him; he had no preoccupation except to recollect that letter. Mrs. Bonfill drank her tea while he stood motionless in the middle of the room.

When he spoke again his voice sounded rather hollow and hoarse.

‘Well, what do they want of me?’ he asked.

Mrs. Bonfill knew that she saw before her a beaten man. All pleasure had gone from her now; the scene was purely painful; she had liked and helped the man. But she had her message to deliver, even as it had come to her. He must resign in three days—or article, letter, and Alured Cummins! That was the alternative she had to put before him.

‘You’ve too many irons in the fire, Beaufort,’ said she with a shake of her head and a friendly smile. ‘One thing clashes with another.’

He dropped into a chair, and sat looking before him moodily.

‘There’ll be plenty left. You’ll have your seat still; and you’ll be free to give all your time to business and make a career there.’

Still he said nothing. She forced herself to go on.

‘It should be done at once. We all think so. Then it’ll have an entirely voluntary look.’

Still he was mute.

‘It must be done in three days, Beaufort,’ she half-whispered, leaning across towards him. ‘In three days, or—or no arrangement can be made.’ She waited a moment, then added, ‘Go and write it this afternoon. And send a little paragraph round—about pressure of private business, or something, you know. Then I should take a rest somewhere, if I were you.’

He was to vanish—from official life for ever, from the haunts of men till men had done talking about him. Mrs. Bonfill’s delicacy of expression was not guilty of obscuring her meaning in the least. She knew that her terms were accepted when he took his hat and bade her farewell with a dreary heavy awkwardness

On his departure she heaved a sigh of complicated feelings : satisfaction that the thing was done, sorrow that it had to be, wonder at him, surprise at her own mistake about him. She had put him in his place ; she had once thought him worthy of her dearest Trix Trevalla. These latter reflections tempered her pride in the achievements of her diplomacy, and moderated to a self-depreciatory tone the reports which she proceeded to write to Mr. Liffey and to Constantine Blair.

Hard is the case of a man fallen into misfortune who can find nobody but himself to blame ; small, it may be added, is his ingenuity. Beaufort Chance, while he wrote his bitter note, while he walked the streets suspicious of the glances and fearful of the whispers of those he met, had no difficulty in fixing on the real culprit, on her to whom his fall and all that had led to it were due. He lost sight of any fault of his own in a contemplation of the enormity of Trix Trevalla's. To cast her down would be sweet ; it would still be an incentive to exalt himself if thereby he could make her feel more unhappy. If he still could grow rich and important although his chosen path was forbidden him, if she could become poor and despised, then he might cry quits. Behind this simple malevolence was a feeling hardly more estimable, though it derived its origin from better things ; it was to him that he wanted her to come on her knees, begging his forgiveness, ready to be his slave and to take the crumbs he threw her.

These thoughts, no less than an instinctive desire to go somewhere where he would not be looked at askance, where he would still be a great man and still be admired, took him to the Frickers' later in the afternoon. A man scorned of his fellows is said to value the society of his dog ; if Fricker would not have accepted the parallel, it might in Chance's mind be well applied to Fricker's daughter Connie. Lady Blixworth had once described this young lady unkindly ; but improvements had been undertaken. She was much better dressed now, and her figure responded to treatment, as the doctors say. Nature had given her a fine poll of dark hair, and a pair of large black eyes, highly expressive, and never allowed to grow rusty for want of use. To her Beaufort was a great man ; his manners smacked of the society which was her goal ; the touch of vulgarity, from which good birth and refined breeding do not always save a man vulgar in soul, was either unperceived or, as is perhaps more likely, considered the hall-mark of 'smartness' ; others than Connie Fricker



might perhaps be excused for some confusion on this point. Yet beneath her ways and her notions Connie had a brain.

Nobody except Miss Fricker was at home, Beaufort was told; but he said he would wait for Mr. Fricker, and went into the drawing-room. The Frickers lived in a fine, solid, spacious house of respectable age. Its walls remained; they had gutted the interior and had it refurnished and re-bedecked; the effect was that of a modern daub in a handsome antique frame. It is unkind, but hardly untrue, to say that Connie Fricker did not dispel this idea when she joined Beaufort Chance and said that some whisky-and-soda was coming; she led him into the smaller drawing-room where smoking was allowed; she said that she was so glad that mamma was out.

‘I don’t often get a chance of talking to you, Mr. Chance.’

Probably every man likes a reception conceived in this spirit; how fastidious he may be as to the outward and visible form which clothes the spirit depends partly on his nature, probably more on his mood; nobody is always particular, just as nobody is always wise. The dog is fond and uncritical—let us pat the faithful animal. Chance was much more responsive in his manner to Connie than he had ever been before; Connie mounted to heights of delight as she ministered whisky-and-soda. He let her frisk about him and lick his hand, and he conceived, by travelling through a series of contrasts, a high opinion of canine fidelity and admiration. Something he had read somewhere about the relative advantage of reigning in hell also came into his mind, and was dismissed again with a smile as he puffed and sipped.

‘Seen anything of Mrs. Trevalla lately?’ asked Connie Fricker.

‘Not for a week or two,’ he answered carelessly.

‘Neither have we.’ She added, after a pause, and with a laugh that did not sound very genuine, ‘Mamma thinks she’s dropping us.’

‘Does Mrs. Trevalla count much one way or the other?’ he asked.

But Connie had her wits about her, and saw no reason why she should pretend to be a fool.

‘I know more about it than you think, Mr. Chance,’ she assured him with a toss of her head, a glint of rather large white teeth, and a motion of her full but (as improved) not ungraceful figure.

'You do, by Jove, do you?' asked Beaufort, half in mockery, half in an admiration she suddenly wrung from him.

'Girls are supposed not to see anything, aren't they?'

'Oh, I dare say you see a thing or two, Miss Connie!'

His tone left nothing to be desired in her eyes; she did not know that he had not courted Trix Trevalle like that, that even his brutality towards her had lacked the easy contempt of his present manner. Why give people other than what they want, better than they desire? The frank approval of his look left Connie unreservedly pleased and not a little triumphant. He had been stand-offish before; well, mamma had never given her a 'show'—that was the word which her thoughts employed. When she got one, it was not in Connie to waste it. She leant her elbow on the mantelpiece, holding her cigarette in her hand, one foot on the fender. The figure suffered nothing from this pose.

'I don't know whether you've heard that I'm going to cut politics?—at least office, I mean. I shall stay in the House, for a bit anyhow.'

Connie did not hear the whispers of high circles; she received the news in unfeigned surprise.

'There's no money in it,' Beaufort pursued, knowing how to make her appreciate his decision. 'I want more time for business.'

'You'd better come in with papa,' she suggested half-jokingly.

'There are worse ideas than that,' he said approvingly.

'I don't know anything about money, except that I like to have a lot.' Her strong hearty laughter pealed out in the candid confession.

'I expect you do; lots of frocks, eh, and jewels, and so on?'

'You may as well do the thing as well as you can, mayn't you?'

Chance finished his tumbler, threw away his cigarette, got up, and stood by her on the hearthrug. She did not shrink from his approach, but maintained her ground with a jaunty impudence.

'And then you have plenty of fun?' he asked.

'Oh, of sorts,' admitted Connie Fricker. 'Mamma's a bit down on me; she thinks I ought to be so awfully proper. I don't know why. I'm sure the swells aren't.' Connie forgot that there are parallels to the case of the Emperor being above grammar.

'Well, you needn't tell her everything, need you?'

'There's no harm done by telling her—I take care of that; it's when she finds out!' laughed Connie.



‘You can take care of that too, can’t you?’

‘Well, I try,’ she declared, flashing her eyes full on him.

Beaufort Chance gave a laugh, bent swiftly, and kissed her.

‘Take care you don’t tell her that,’ he said.

‘Oh!’ exclaimed Connie, dárting away. She turned and looked squarely at him, flushed but smiling. ‘Well, you’ve got——’ she began. But the sentence never ended. She broke off with a wary frightened ‘Hush!’ and a jerk of her hand towards the door.

Mrs. Fricker came sailing in, ample and exceedingly cordial, full of apologies, hoping that ‘little Connie’ had not bored the visitor. Beaufort assured her to the contrary, little Connie telegraphing her understanding of the humour of the situation over her mother’s shoulders, and laying a finger on her lips. Certainly Connie, whatever she had been about to accuse him of, showed no resentment now; she was quite ready to enter into a conspiracy of silence.

In a different way, but hardly less effectually, Mrs. Fricker soothed Beaufort Chance’s spirit. She too helped to restore him to a good conceit of himself; she too took the lower place; it was all very pleasant after the Bonfill interview and the hard terms that his colleagues and Liffey offered him. He responded liberally, half in a genuine if not exalted gratitude, half in the shrewd consciousness that a man cannot stand too well with the women of the family.

‘And how’s Mrs. Trevalla?’ Evidently Trix occupied no small place in the thoughts of the household; evidently, also, Fricker had not thought it well to divulge the whole truth about her treachery.

‘I haven’t seen her lately,’ he said again.

‘They talk a lot about her and Lord Mervyn,’ said Mrs. Fricker, not without a sharp glance at Beaufort.

He betrayed nothing. ‘Gossip, I daresay, but who knows? Mrs. Trevalla’s an ambitious woman.’

‘I see nothing in her,’ said Connie scornfully.

‘Happily all tastes don’t agree, Miss Fricker.’

Connie smiled in mysterious triumph.

Presently he was told that Fricker awaited him in the study, and he went down to join him. Fricker was not a hard man out of hours or towards his friends; he listened to Beaufort’s story with sympathy and with a good deal of heartfelt abuse of what

he called the 'damned hypocrisy' of Beaufort's colleagues and of Mrs. Bonfill. He did not accuse Mr. Liffey of this failing; he had enough breadth of mind to recognise that with Mr. Liffey it was all a matter of business.

'Well, you sha'n't come to any harm through me,' he promised. 'I'll take it on myself. My shoulders are broad. I've made ten thousand or so, and every time I do that Liffey's welcome to an article. I don't like it, you know, any more than I like the price of my champagne; but when I want a thing I pay for it.'

'I've paid devilish high and got very little. Curse that woman, Fricker!'

'Oh, we'll look after little Mrs. Trevala. Will you leave her to me? Look, I've written her this letter.' He handed Beaufort Chance a copy of it, and explained how matters were to be managed. He laughed very much over his scheme. Beaufort gave it no more explicit welcome than a grim smile and an ugly look in his eyes; but they meant emphatic approval.

'That's particularly neat about Glowing Stars,' mused Fricker in great self-complacency. 'She doesn't know anything about the trifling liability. Oh, I gave her every means of knowing—sent her full details. She never read 'em, and told me she had! She's a thorough woman. Well, I shall let her get out of Dramoffskys rather badly, but not too hopelessly badly. Then she'll feel virtuous—but not quite so virtuous as to sell Glowing Stars. She'll think she can get even on them.'

'You really are the deuce, Fricker.'

'Business, my boy. Once let 'em think they can play with you, and it's all up. Besides, it'll please my womankind, when they hear what she's done, to see her taken down a peg.' He paused and grew serious. 'So you're out of work, eh? But you're an M.P. still. That's got some value, even nowadays.'

'I shouldn't mind a job—not this instant, though.'

'No, no! That would be a little indiscreet. But presently?'

They had some business talk and parted with the utmost cordiality.

'I'll let myself out,' said Beaufort. He took one of Fricker's excellent cigars, lit it, put on his hat, and strolled out.

As he walked through the hall he heard a cough from half-way up the stairs. Turning round, he saw Connie Fricker; her finger was on her lips; she pointed warily upwards towards the



drawing-room door, showed her teeth in a knowing smile, and blew him a kiss. He took off his hat with one hand, while the other did double duty in holding his cigar and returning the salute. She ran off with a stifled laugh.

Beaufort was smiling to himself as he walked down the street. The visit had made him feel better. Both sentimentally and from a material point of view it had been consoling. Let his colleagues be self-righteous, Liffey a scoundrel, Mrs. Bonfill a prudish woman who was growing old, still he was not done with yet. There were people who valued him. There were prospects which, if realised, might force others to revise their opinions of him. Trix Trevala, for instance—he fairly chuckled at the thought of Glowing Stars. Then he remembered Mervyn, and his face grew black again. It will be seen that misfortune had not chastened him into an absolute righteousness.

As for the kiss that he had given Connie Fricker, he thought very little about it. He knew just how it had happened, how with that sort of girl that sort of thing did happen. The fine eyes not shy, the challenging look, the suggestion of the jaunty attitude—they were quite enough. Nor did he suppose that Connie thought very much about the occurrence either. She was evidently pleased, liked the compliment, appreciated what she would call 'the lark,' and enjoyed not least the sense of hoodwinking Mrs. Fricker. Certainly he had done no harm with Connie; nor did he pretend that, so far as the thing went, he had not liked it well enough.

He was right about all the feelings that he assigned to Connie Fricker. But his analysis was not quite exhaustive. While all the lighter shades of emotion which he attributed to her were in fact hers, there was in her mind also an idea which showed the business blood in her. Connie was of opinion that, to any girl of good sense, having been kissed was an asset, and might be one of great value. This idea is not refined, but no more are many on which laws, customs, and human intercourse are based. It was then somewhat doubtful whether Connie would be content to let the matter rest and to rank his tribute merely as a pastime or a compliment.

*(To be continued.)*

ALMS FOR OBLIVION.

BY RICHARD GARNETT, C.B., LL.D.

II.

TRAVELS OF A GERMAN PRINCE IN SPAIN AND ENGLAND IN THE  
SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

Time hath, my Lord, a wallet on his back,  
Wherein he puts alms for oblivion.

*Troilus and Cressida.*

THERE can have been but few German princes who in the sixteenth century thrice visited Spain. Nor, even in the age of Henry VIII., can it have been common for a prince to propose marriage successively to seven princesses, be rejected by six, and find his suit frustrated in the seventh instance by parental opposition. Neither can it often have happened that at the eighth attempt the prince so little in Hymen's good graces should at the age of fifty-three have won the hand of a princess of fifteen. All these circumstances, however, with many others of much singularity, concurred in the eventful history of Frederick II., Elector Palatine. Our present concern is solely with his adventures in Spain and his brief visit to England—pilgrimages of which we should have known nothing but for his factotum and historiographer Hubertus Thomas, surnamed Leodius from his birth at Liège. Leodius's account of the Prince's sayings and doings for seventy-three years, though evidently leaving much untold, is a mine of interest and information into which many shafts besides ours might be sunk, and deserves to rank among the most conspicuous instances of a valuable book becoming 'alms for oblivion.'

The adage 'Like master like man' fails in the case of the Elector and his retainer. The former (born December 9, 1482) was a characteristic specimen of the young German bloods of his day—handsome, thoughtless, extravagant, self-indulgent, devoted to jousts and athletic exercises, of whose hardships and dangers he was always ready to take his full share, and from which he did not escape unscathed. Though careless and headstrong, he does not seem to have wanted sense; his deficiency in learning was attributed by himself to the severity of his masters. Leodius



concurr, and (with the unanimous assent of the learned world) subjoins that it is no small part of the character of an erudite prince to reward erudition in others, as Frederick would undoubtedly have done if he had not been so horribly in debt. And, in fact, it is but just to record that in Frederick's latter years, after he had become Elector, the University of Heidelberg was much indebted to him. His biography, as narrated by Leodius, falls into three portions, the pre-matrimonial period, while he is pursuing princesses under ever-increasing embarrassments and discouragements; the days of marriage, while he is still the cadet of an electoral house running to and fro in hopes of coaxing something out of more opulent princes; and his electoral period (1544-1556), when he has to front grave questions of policy, and, without serious conviction, to make up his mind whether he will be Catholic or Protestant. On the whole, an unlucky, ineffectual person, an example in his latter days of joviality stunted and geniality turned sour, in framing whose destiny Nature and Fortune had been sadly at odds. The biographer is quite another kind of being—an old confidential servant, not too devoted to his master to grumble at his infirmities and hint at his ingratitude, but really loyal and faithful in his plodding way. Having been a *Kammergerichtsath* he is a thorough man of business, and his racy Latinity attests literary power, if falling short of the standard of accomplished scholarship.

The future Elector's first visit to Spain was made in 1502, in the train of the Archduke Philip I., father of Charles V., bound to the court of his formidable father-in-law Ferdinand the Catholic. The account given of it by Leodius is so graphic and circumstantial as evidently to proceed from an eye-witness, though, as he was only seven years old at the time, it can at most have been rewritten by the historian himself. The way lay through France, where the travellers, looking in upon Louis XII., who, though crippled with gout, entertained them at a ball, beheld his Majesty playing for stakes of many thousand crowns at a game of cards most popular in that day, says Leodius, writing fifty years afterwards. He adds that it was still played, and known as *fluere*, in the vernacular *flux*, a word surviving in English to this day as a *flush* at cribbage. He also remarks upon the difference between the methods of hunting in France and Germany, which may be compendiously expressed by terming the former a *chase* and the latter a *drive*. On entering Spain the august party was received

with songs and dances by Basque girls, whose heads Leodius positively asserts to have been shaved in defiance of Apuleius's verdict that a bald Venus would not commend herself even to her own Vulcan. The burden of their Euskarian ditties was to the effect that all Biscayan damsels were fully as noble as Philip himself, and that it consequently behoved him to give them something wherewith to spend a happy day. A curious parallel to the Irish ballad of the wren caught on St. Stephen's day—

Although he is little, his family's great.  
Ladies and gentlemen, give us a *trate*.

King Ferdinand was found at Madrid, amusing himself with hawking at cranes, and giving proof of great temperance and endurance in the pursuit of his favourite sport. From Madrid the royal party proceeded to Barcelona, where they were received with a display of fireworks, magnificent for that age. Leodius's description, and his very particular account of the *ex papyro factæ machinulæ*, known to us as rockets, should not be overlooked by the historians of pyrotechnics. The fiery glories of Barcelona, however, were outdone at Perpignan, which welcomed Philip on his way home with a grand representation of various passages of sacred history, and one which will not be found there—namely, the storming of the infernal regions by an army of white-robed angels. The demons' dresses were embroidered with gold and silver. Most curiously anticipating Milton, the infernal hosts defended themselves by artillery, indistinguishable from real cannon, but in fact constructed *ex papyro* (which perhaps should here be understood as pasteboard), and crammed to the muzzle with rockets. These were discharged all together with such effect that earth, air, and sky seemed to be in simultaneous conflagration, and when the smoke had cleared away nothing could be more startling than the utter disappearance of the gorgeous show, unsubstantial as Prospero's.

There is no trace of any personal connection between Leodius and Frederick for twenty-four years, until, in 1526, he tells us that he was appointed the Prince's secretary upon his second Spanish expedition, undertaken with the double object of vindicating his brother the Elector from the imputation of having conspired against the Emperor Charles V., then in Spain, and of inducing his Imperial Majesty to pay his debts; both, especially the latter, commissions of delicacy and difficulty. Frederick was



now to find the difference between travelling in Spain in the retinue of the heir apparent to the kingdom and having to depend upon his own resources. After passing the Pyrenees the journey is the record of a constant struggle for the necessaries of life, as soon, at least, as the party had finished the enormous carp they had laid in at Bayonne, which Leodius protests weighed no less than thirty-six pounds—a fish proper to be cooked in the wine-jar they subsequently found at Ocana, wherein, for want of a tub (*quia Hispania tota fere ligno caret*), seven of the Prince's suite bathed together. On reading his account of the nakedness of the land, the great emigration to America which at this time was draining Spain of her life-blood appears no less intelligible than similar phenomena in Scotland. It does not appear whether the travellers enjoyed the consolation of Pascasius Justus, who observes in his treatise 'De Alea' (1560) that he had often found a Spanish village without victual or drink, but never one without a pack of cards.

The first of the *Cosas de España* which presented itself to the attention of the travellers was a battle-field near Pampeluna, white with the unburied bones of Frenchmen slain in the preceding year. At Cervera, where they halted a day, the magistracy waited upon them to request them to move on before they should have devoured everything in the town, and the public flocked in to contemplate dining Germans as great natural curiosities. At Matalabres the fields were traversed by rustics, men, women, and children in a state of nudity, flagellating themselves in the hope of extorting rain from the compassion of Heaven. At a town which Leodius calls Gomorrah, probably meaning Gomara, his confiding master despatched him with orders to buy 'a mule-load of butter'; he might just as well, like the injured lady in 'The Mysteries of London,' have 'sent out the servant for a pint of prussic acid.' 'A mule-load of butter!' exclaimed the *aromatarius*, 'there is not so much in all Castile; how should there be, when we have no grass? If you want butter you must go to Estremadura, whence we import as much as we require for dressing sores, for which it is, indeed, a sovereign remedy.' And in proof of the assertion he produced a goat's bladder filled with a substance resembling waggon-grease. In the next town there was provender but no fuel, and Leodius and the cook, sacrilegiously trying to pull a beam out of the ceiling of the parish church, nearly brought the entire roof upon their heads. A little farther

on the party were honourably received by the local authorities, who quartered them upon a wealthy inhabitant, who produced a single silver cup for the whole company. Dinner over, the host locked the cup up in a casket, and thinking that no one had seen him, made a great clamour, affirming it to be lost. When taken to task, he positively refused to open the casket, declaring that he would submit to the loss a thousand times over rather than put up with such an insult. An alguazil was summoned, the cup was found in the coffer, and the host was left studying to find something to say in his defence.

The goal of the Prince's journey was Granada, where the Emperor Charles V. was then residing. To reach this city it was necessary to penetrate the defiles of the Sierra Morena, where occurred the adventures of the serpents and the Spanish venison, which Leodius shall narrate in his own words.

'There are no villages hereabout,' he says, 'and no inns, except those built by the Government to provide travellers with shelter for the night. Sometimes there is a host inside these caravanserais, and sometimes not. The Prince, therefore, sent me on ahead to procure, if possible, necessaries against his arrival. Passing through a vast desert, I arrive at an inn called Evolla, and find the innkeeper within. He says he has room enough and food enough for us all, and promises wine of surpassing coolness, and salted and smoked venison. I taste and find the venison excellent, and the wine colder than ice. I hasten back to the Prince with the good news; he comes on, and we have a capital supper. By-and-by, however, the Prince learns that the coldness of the wine is owing to the flagons being immersed in a lake full of serpents. Upon this he resolves to put up with the calidity of the wine he has brought with him, but orders the remainder of the venison to be packed up, and resumes his march at midnight, leaving me to pay the bill. The host brings it, and I read, "so much for the donkey." "Donkey," I exclaim; "what donkey?" "The donkey your worships had for supper." "I thought it was venison." "Venison! and how should we have venison, seeing that we have no deer?" And opening the door of a cupboard, he displayed an undeniable leg of a newly slaughtered donkey hanging up. "We hunt them with dogs and think them very good." The bill was paid, but neither the Prince nor his suite partook further of the cold donkey, which they had relished so highly under another name. Leodius adds that the Spaniards of this



region pursued game with poisoned arrows, probably a custom adopted from the Moors.

The next day Leodius and the butler, being sent forward to reconnoitre, found themselves without provisions under a blazing sun in a frightful desert without grass or tree. 'I shall die,' quoth the butler, 'I am dying, I am dead. Leave me in the middle of the road that the Prince may see me when he passes, and give sepulture to my poor remains.' Leodius lifts up his eyes and beholds an ancient ruin with a tree sprouting out of it. The tree proves to be a mulberry tree, and the fruit brings the fainting travellers back to life. 'Whence,' he says, 'I have ever since had a special esteem for mulberries, and acknowledge that I owe my life to them.' Like an Arctic voyager, he builds a little cairn and leaves a notice of the existence of the mulberries for the Prince, who takes full advantage of it. 'I cannot,' he adds, 'omit another singularity of this part of our journey. Before arriving at the banks of the Guadiana, we passed through many brakes and thickets, among which grew shrubs bearing red flowers. We hastened to put them into our hats in the German fashion, when country people, seeing from a distance what we were about, ran up crying to us to throw them away, saying that they were aconite, and that we should all be poisoned if we did not alight and rub our hands with earth, which we did right vigorously. They say that this is the place where Hercules dragged Cerberus to the upper world, and that the aconites were engendered by the slaver of that infernal quadruped. They also show the caves where he stalled the oxen he had taken from Geryon, which fable I conceive to denote the great paucity of cattle in Spain, Hercules having carried them all off to Italy.'

Notwithstanding Leodius's lamentations on this topic, bulls must have existed in Spain after the days of Hercules (from which circumstance the naturalist infers the existence of cows also), inasmuch as when Rodrigo Borja was elected Pope, the inhabitants of his native town celebrated the event by giving a bull-fight on a Sunday. It is strange that Leodius only in one place alludes to this national amusement. This notice of the tauro-machic sport occurs in connection with the Prince's arrival at Granada, just in time for the festivities with which the recovery of the city from the Moors was annually celebrated. The bull-fight, however, if such it may be called, appears not to have been of the orthodox pattern, but rather of that represented in a

humorous picture attributed to Velasquez, and recently shown at the Spanish exhibition at the New Gallery, when, after the regular sports were over, a bull was turned loose among the crowd. On this occasion seven bulls were so treated and baited with dogs into the bargain, the sport culminating in their destruction after they had themselves occasioned the deaths of some few of the Spanish public. All of which was considered exactly as it ought to be. This humane entertainment was followed by one of more refinement, in which the Emperor himself took part—the equestrian contest of the *djerrid*, borrowed by the Spaniards from the Moors, and frequently described by Oriental travellers. Even this spirited and graceful amusement was fatal to one of the cavaliers engaged, upon which the Empress, who watched the proceedings from a balcony, sent word to the Emperor that it seemed time to leave off; which suggestion, Leodius hints, was by no means unwelcome to him. *Quod ille lubens annuit.*

Leodius represents Granada as the largest and most populous city in Spain, a credible statement, considering the extent of its silk manufactures, until folly and bigotry destroyed them in the following century. It must have worn a thoroughly Oriental aspect with its Moresque palaces, its bazaars resembling Cairo and Damascus, and its narrow streets obstructed with chains at night. There was scarcely one house without a lemon-tree and a fountain, although drinking-water was chiefly supplied by the river Darro, whose salubrity was vaunted by the Spaniards and gravely questioned by Leodius, seeing that it killed the Prince's physician. Leodius himself was grievously afflicted with some complaint of the nature of colic, and, ungratefully deserted by his master on his departure, might, he thinks, have died on the floor but for the accidental return of the Prince's barber to look for something forgotten. This illegitimate son of Æsculapius afforded relief by a dose of *nescio quid de suis catapotis (pills)*, and completed the cure by the exhibition of roasted kid with oranges and vinegar, washed down with generous wine. One is reminded of Peacock's prescription for Shelley's ailments: 'Three mutton chops, well peppered.'

Having failed to extract anything from the Emperor, the Prince and his retinue returned by way of Toledo, encountering at Almagro, it is interesting to learn, a branch of the great Fugger bank, which supplied them with every necessary. At Toledo the traveller notes the ruins of the aqueduct and amphitheatre.



theatre, the hundred and fifty towers, the seventeen markets, the ancient school of magic, now shut up, the narrow streets, the superiority of the private dwelling-houses, four thousand of which possess inner courts, the use of vine-stalks for fuel for want of wood, the ten thousand weavers of silk and wool, and the six thousand who get their livelihood by vending water. With their families these would represent nearly twenty thousand persons, or about as much as the entire present population of Toledo. This, contrasted with the desolate condition of the rural districts, suggests that the aggregation of the population in towns is not entirely a modern phenomenon. If anything further of note occurred during the return to France, Leodius omits to record it.

Frederick's next expedition to Spain was undertaken in 1538. It was principally prompted by the desperate state of his pecuniary affairs, and the hope that the Emperor would assist him in a claim he had preferred to the Danish throne in right of his wife, or at least quiet him with a Spanish viceroyalty. He had married a daughter of the dethroned tyrant Christian, and his wife and his wife's female jester were of the party. The season was winter, and upon their arrival in Biscay the travellers found themselves obliged to contend with a new description of hardships. Blinded by snow, buffeted by tempests, now taking shelter in caverns, now in woods, they made their way with the greatest difficulty through the mountains, the faithful secretary pulling his master up the steeps with a stick, and the Prince sliding down on the other side with the staff between his legs. The Princess was continually falling, but displayed a most courageous spirit. The voyagers struggled through everything, and arrived at a town *tam debiles quam virgines*, in British parlance, 'as weak as a cat.' A characteristically Spanish scene occurred at this place, where the Alcalde, being asked what he considered due to him for the entertainment he had provided for the party, replied that he was as noble as the Prince himself, and should consider it derogatory to accept anything; but, upon being taken at his word, straightway presented a demand for seventy crowns, which the Prince had to pay, impotently threatening vengeance on his arrival at court. A pleasing contrast was presented by a grateful Spaniard to whom Leodius had done some small kindness in Germany, who insisted on carrying him off to his house, more below the ground than above it, but containing a hare, a capon, and a brace of partridges.

Leodius's description of this amiable family is truly idyllic. The Señora was pleased to say that all Germans were honourable and high-minded men; the son tramped home through the snow laden with *mala Arecontica* (which we are unable to define, unless there is some allusion to the story of Acontius and Cydippe), olives, and capers; the master of the house quoted Xenophon and gaveLeodius good advice. It seems surprising that a native of the North should have needed to learn from a Spaniard to wear a veil in a desert of snow, and not to go to bed in his boots, but such appears to have been the case. This piece of wintry mountaineering cost the Prince altogether five hundred crowns, and conveyed the painful impression that he was leaving more money in Spain than he was ever likely to take out of it. Through the favour of the Empress, nevertheless, he obtained a monthly allowance from Charles V., for the support of his retinue at Toledo, and when after a while the Imperial treasurer became unruly, and the hopes of a Spanish viceroyalty dissolved into air, he received seven thousand ducats to take him home: nearly all of which, however, was spent in Spain to very little purpose.Leodius, importing æsthetic enthusiasm into money matters, thought to please the Prince by drawing his attention to the beauty of the broad pieces, double ducats every one, and fresh, it may be, from some American mine. The Prince answered that he could not comprehend how anybody could care for money for its own sake, that his sole concern with it was to spend it, and that he purposed to lay this out upon a pilgrimage to Compostella. If he ever went there,Leodius either did not accompany him or has suppressed the particulars.

Such a peregrination might have been distasteful to the secretary on other than financial grounds, for indications are not wanting of his inclination to the Reformers' doctrines. This may perhaps have led him to depict Spanish bigotry in too forbidding hues; yet, with every allowance, there is sufficient proof of its hideousness. In one town the travellers lodged for some time at the house of a widow whose husband had been lately burned on an accusation of secret Judaism. If, saysLeodius, the accused person denies the charge, he is burned, but his family retain his goods. If he confesses, he goes to the galleys, and his property is confiscated. There is but one way of escape, if he should allege that he has malicious enemies, and name the very persons who have brought the accusation, he may be acquitted, but otherwise



the accusers are for ever unknown to him. When, afterwards, certain persons took umbrage at the attention paid to the Prince and his suite at the Emperor's own court, their readiest weapon was an imputation of heresy grounded on the most frivolous indications; but to the Spanish mind German and Lutheran were almost convertible terms. At one time the charge was that some of them had gone out of church and come back. It was pointed out that the Spaniards habitually did the same. 'Yes, but the Spaniards are not Germans.' At another time a poor German who had gone upon his knees at the passing of the Host was collared by a *sacrificulus*, who denounced him as a heretic because he had not laid down a parcel he was carrying. On appeal to the Cardinal Archbishop of Toledo, a liberal ecclesiastic, his Eminence said that such things must needs be, and that the remedy was to keep away from divine service altogether. But this advice must on no account be revealed, or he himself might be accused of heresy, as actually happened to the next but one of his successors in the archbishopric. The Emperor said nearly the same thing, but added that when he got more authority he hoped to rectify this and some other matters. At present he must be upon his guard; certain of his subjects were wont to call him 'Flemish swine.' In fact, observes Leodius, many of them disputed his right to the throne during the life of his mother, the mad Juana. This anecdote helps to explain how the unimpeachably orthodox Philip II. was able to destroy the liberties of Spain, and why Granada and Toledo are no longer great cities.

Before his return to Germany, the Prince was persuaded by letters from Henry VIII. himself to visit England, where the Germans were just then in high favour on account of the negotiations for the King's marriage with Anne of Cleves. Leodius himself had previously visited England on an errand of his master's, had been most kindly received by Cromwell, and had had long conversations with Henry, who, in support of his proposition that the English were no wise inferior to the Germans as toppers, emptied at one draught a flagon of beer for which the envoy, 'trying it in wine,' required four. From the references in the State Papers calendared in the Rolls Series, the Prince's visit appears to have been the subject of speculation for some time before it took place. Foreign ambassadors were dying to find out all about its object, whether to recommend a bride to Henry VIII., or to seek aid for his father-in-law, the deposed Christian, or to promote his

nephew's marriage with the Princess Mary. The latter was all but effected, but at a later period, and not by Frederick's instrumentality. It would have produced no political result, as the poor young Prince, a mere bundle of diseases, died in 1548.

Giving the Spanish Viceroy of the Netherlands the slip, the Prince and his suite, after a week's detention at Calais, ostensibly for a fair wind, but really for the permission of the King of France, one September day in 1539 entered the port of Dover, and were received with such a salute 'that the coasts of England were blotted out by smoke, and the flashes dazzled our eyes as it were with lightning.' The party were taken charge of by Lord and Lady Lisle, friendly and liberal hosts, until, arrived in London, they were consigned to a wealthy merchant, whose especial care it was to guard against their spending a penny, alleging that if he suffered this the King would certainly behead him. Like almost all other old travellers, Leodius tells us nothing of London except its sights, the Tower and Westminster Abbey. The Abbey tombs impressed him, but the Prince, an ardent sportsman, was grievously disappointed at being unable to see a famous pair of antlers of twenty-eight points, a trophy of victory over France, and asserted to have belonged to a stag taken by King Dagobert, which wore a golden collar engraved with an inscription testifying that the noble animal had been captured and released by Julius Cæsar. The excuse was that the King had removed it, fearing lest it should be stolen by the monks. Perhaps they had been beforehand with him. Dean Stanley is silent on the subject.

Although King Dagobert is actually the hero of a memorable legend about a stag,<sup>1</sup> there seems no reason for connecting the Westminster antlers with him. They more probably belonged, or were supposed to have belonged, to the stag captured by Charles VI. of France, equipped, as was gravely asserted, with a collar and inscription emanating from Julius Cæsar, according to which the antlered patriarch would be in about the fifteen

<sup>1</sup> His prowess as a sportsman, nevertheless, does not seem to be highly estimated by the author of the 'Chanson du Roi Dagobert':—

King Dagobert went to the chase,  
 And far o'er hill and dale did race.  
 'Methinks, my liege,' a courtier saith,  
 'Your Majesty is out of breath.'  
 'No wonder,' says the King, says he  
 'A hare was running after me.'



hundredth year of its age. The incident is attributed to a time so near the English Conquest that the horns would be extremely likely to cross the Channel as spoil of war. The idea of the collared stag at large came down from antiquity, is recorded in connection with Alexander the Great, and is found in Petrarch :

*Libera farmi al mio Cesare parve.*

Neither did the antlers turn up at Windsor, where the Prince and his retinue were splendidly entertained in company with the ambassadors who had come upon the inauspicious match with Anne of Cleves. Carpets, though mentioned in a letter of Lady Lisle's, were not yet in common use, and Leodius notes with amazement that not only the walls but the floors were covered with embroidered tapestry. There was every imaginable dainty, and every imaginable musical instrument. Some days later the Prince and the ambassadors picnicked with the King 'in a most pleasant valley by the Thames,' in huts constructed of green boughs, especially laurel, which Leodius says was very abundant in England. (It must be remembered that the laurel cannot be reared in Middle Germany.) As the guests were at luncheon, blasts upon the horn were heard, and deer appeared closely pursued by hounds. Encountering another party of huntsmen, who prevented their taking to the river, they were compelled to enter a long narrow passage leading to an open space, where they were either entangled in nets, or leaped the barriers, or were pulled down by the dogs. The sport lasted three hours, and resulted in the capture of thirty-four deer, which the King distributed among his guests.

Fortunately for the Prince, Henry was not yet undeceived as to the personal attractions of Anne of Cleves, and, in the mood befitting an ardent though elderly bridegroom, gave Frederick a viaticum of six thousand crowns. This is Leodius's statement. Lord Lisle says in a letter to Lady Lisle, 'The Palsgrave has received two thousand marks for his reward, no ill journey for him.' Lady Lisle bestowed a token which a true knight ought to have regarded as more precious. 'I send you,' she writes to her husband, 'my tooth-picker, which I thought to have given to the Palsgrave while he was here, but it was not then at my hand. Please present it to him. I send it because when he was here I did not see him wear a pen or call [quill ?] to pick his teeth with. Tell him I have had it seven years.' An infinite quantity of silver

plate was shown, but not presented; and the Prince conjectured that it was appropriated by *Grunvallis* (Cromwell). There is a most interesting notice of this ill-starred and enigmatic man, a figure less easy to realise than that of almost any other great English statesman. 'Cromwell,' says Leodius, 'suspecting that the King's favour towards him was too excessive to be durable, meditated flight from the kingdom, and, as I believe, wished to disclose his design to me, but Fate would not suffer him. For, while we were in London, he sent for me, and, taking me by the hand, led me up and down, now into halls and alleys, now into groves and gardens. Ever absorbed in thought, and seeming to have something upon his mind which he was desirous but afraid to express, he stopped from time to time and uttered broken words, and kept asking whether the Prince had any castles or districts which he would sell or let. At last he vehemently urged me to find some pretext for returning to England at Christmas, for my Prince's advantage and my own, and gave me a silver goblet for my wife, to bring him to my remembrance if he should ever come to Germany.' A graphic sketch, and historically important as showing that Cromwell entertained well-grounded apprehensions of his ruthless and capricious master even before the great misadventure with Anne of Cleves.

Frederick succeeded his brother as Elector Palatine in 1544. Always prone to visionary schemes, he vainly tried to obtain the throne of Denmark. His domestic policy was one of opportunism; he favoured the Reformation without openly espousing it, took arms against Charles V. and submitted to him, rejoiced in the deliverance of Protestant Germany by Maurice of Saxony without in any way contributing to it, and, if performing nothing memorable, might at all events say with Sieyès, 'J'ai vécu.' In 1555, at the age of seventy-three, he celebrated his jubilee, and here Leodius concludes his history with the wish that the Elector, whom he describes as still robust, may live to keep many more birthdays. This was not to be; he died on February 26 following.

Leodius seems to have died about the same time. Notwithstanding the liberties he has occasionally taken with his master, he appears to have entrusted his history to the Elector himself, for not only is it dedicated to him, but the MS. must have been deposited in the Electoral Library at Heidelberg, the pillage of which in the Thirty Years' War, fatal to so many books and



manuscripts, released this from its seclusion, and sent it forth upon the world. It fell into the hands of Joannes Ammonius, publisher at Frankfort, by whom it was printed in 1624, with a preface pointing out that Germany had now no need to envy France for her Comines. Partial as we are to Leodius, we cannot deem his work much more nearly on a par with Comines' in the republic of letters than his master with Louis XI. in the republic of Europe; but if infinitely less important in the departments of history and politics, he casts more light on the condition of manners and culture.

IN PRAISE OF BIRDS.

THERE are not many lovers of beautiful things that are not made continually to feel in their heart 'it is misery to love!' I do not mean the romance of love that belonged to our youth; *that* remains the same as ever, divinely happy, imperishably beautiful. But for such as know what it is to love and sympathise deeply with the lower creation—as it is called—they recognise at every turn the law, hard and fast like a law of Nature itself—causing that which most they love to become a source of greater pain than pleasure. Life would certainly be less hard for some of us did we not care as we do for God's creatures of the animal world. And this leads up to the love most fraught with pain—at least to members of the Society for the Protection of Birds—the love which is almost universal, the love of birds.

Much of our trouble must be thus explained: that while we know Nature to be so careful of the type that scarcely ever is it lost, the relentless persecution with which birds of all kinds are pursued does threaten the loveliest of their race with extinction and the world with the loss of its best charm on land and sea.

The love of birds is the earliest fancy of our childhood, the love which grows with our growth, and grows still warmer as we ourselves get older. And the older we are, the sorer the grief we have with it.

There is something so engaging, so strange, so unknowable about the birds. The attraction of them, I believe, is felt in some ways even more generally now than formerly; and it spreads in these days in wider circles. An observation I remember hearing from a friend one winter's day as we passed by a holly tree all scarlet with its fruit—a redbreast sitting in the midst and singing his little song—would scarcely be ventured now. My friend said, 'Do you *really* care for birds? They seem so dull to me!'

A dull world indeed it would be without them! In 'L'Oiseau,' by the French author Michelet, occurs a passage which might be thus translated: 'Human life becomes commonplace as soon as



man is no longer surrounded by the great company of birds—those innocent beings whose movement and whose voices and playfulness are like the smile of Creation.' In the country the wild birds are always about us, tame or shy, as the case may be. They always look quite young and happy, taking the liveliest interest in the grass and the flies, and in the labourer's work, or whatever happens to be going on in field or garden. We do not tire of admiring their grace and their quaint ways; and it is only when some blackbird uses 'the golden dagger of his bill' to dig out a poor worm from the lawn that—well, we look the other way! While free in the open air the birds seem never to be ill, never to die unless by accident; they are scarcely ever found 'self-dead'—not even under the bushes, where one might think they would often creep away to die. Only in the great frost three or four winters back in many places some were said to be starved to death, and lay dead upon the ground. In that year, even in gardens where food was regularly put out for them and their various tastes consulted, they starved in numbers. Green plover would come close about the very doors and windows, and yet refuse even the chopped meat and bread; and I fear it was a few thrushes and blackbirds who grew fat, and prevented the many sharing their feast.

Birds are for ever flitting in and out of the trees, or singing among the branches, or flying happily through the air—who knows whither? Once, for full seven years a black and white blackbird lived in peace in our garden; then suddenly the others began to attack him and pull out his feathers. We saw him no more; and the body of even *that* remarkably piebald bird was never found. The poet Burns may have had something of this in mind when he wrote:

Ilk happing bird, wee helpless thing  
That i' the merry month o' spring  
Delighted me to hear thee sing,  
                                  What comes o' thee?  
Where wilt thou cower thy chittering wing,  
                                  And close thy e'e?

The birds are ever round us, but we don't understand them much; and when kept prisoned for years in our cruel cages, cheering us by their song and liveliness, how often do they at last elude our best care, drop from the perch, and die, while we sadly feel we have known nothing about them all the time.

Matthew Arnold, in his pathetic lines on a dead canary, says—how truly too many of us might well confess—

Birds, companions all unknown,  
 Live beside us, but alone ;  
 Finding not, do all they can,  
 Passage from their soul to man !  
 Kindness we bestow and praise,  
 Land their plumage, greet their lays ;  
 Still beneath their feathered breast  
 Stirs a history unexpressed ;  
 What they want we cannot guess,  
 Fail to mark their deep distress,  
 Dull look on when death is nigh,  
 Note no change, and let them die.

Yet, little as we understand birds, they assuredly know pretty well all about us ; and they never mistake their friends. A happy few there are, possessors of some kind of secret fascination, whom the whole world of birds will follow and will trust. Of this strange influence the naturalist Charles Waterton is known to have been a memorable example. When he walked in the woods the birds came out to meet him, settling on his shoulder, and coming to his call from any distance. It is told in his memoirs that when the good man died and his body was conveyed in a boat across the lake to the spot where his father was buried, and where he himself desired he might be laid in a sequestered nook of the park, a flight of birds suddenly appeared, gathering as it went, and followed the boat to its destination. The species to which these birds belonged is not recorded ; most likely they were various. Many kinds of birds there are who hook themselves on to us as it were, in some strange, slight way, taking part as well as they can in the lives of their human neighbours. There is the swallow, herald of spring, who builds under our eaves or in corners of our windows and doorways. The first swallow is hailed with joy, for does she not bring summer from across the sea ? In the Roman calendar, I believe, the only mention of natural history is that on February 24 swallows appear. (In France she is called 'the messenger of life,' and in Ireland 'the devil's bird.') Nightingales, who prefer the come and go of busy life, and delight to nest within sound of a railroad. Tomtits, whose pleasure it is to nest in our garden pumps or convenient letter-boxes near our gates. Sparrows—of course, they possess themselves of all. I know a first-rate gardener who, strange to tell, has a liking for them. 'Sparrows,' he says, 'have



more sense than parrots, only they can't speak.' Above all other birds, the robin, as all the world knows, shows most trust and confidence in us.

The pious bird with the scarlet breast,  
Our little English robin,  
The bird that by some name or other  
All men who know thee call thee brother,  
The darling of children and men.

In winter, if allowed to enter at door or window, the robin will come in, will warm itself on our hearthrug, and if permitted will roost every night, for weeks perhaps, perched somewhere in the room. It simply knows not what fear means in the garden when at watch over a man with a spade.

Last winter a robin tapped at our dining-room window, and insisted upon being let in. In the house it lodged and made itself at home until the April following. Every night the bird roosted in a different corner in a different room, upstairs or downstairs. Every day at breakfast and luncheon it hopped on to the table and feasted, helping itself largely to butter in the morning and to cake at luncheon, &c. The confidence shown by such a little thing in trusting itself among a household of large human people, was indeed touching. In February, when the family went south, the robin descended to the kitchen, living contentedly with the servants until wide-opened doors and windows proclaimed the spring.

But the most singular instance that I have known of a robin's fearlessness was the kind of military instinct, which some years ago led a pair to make their nest at the back of a target at Aldershot! It was in the shooting range of the 4th battalion of the 60th Rifles; and the Colonel of the regiment told me of it at the time. The little pair paid not the least attention to the shots thundering on the target just at the back of their nest. The soldiers were careful not to meddle with them, and the young brood hatched and were brought up in safety. (It may be hoped that they did not all hatch out stone deaf!)

Of ill-omened birds, so called, we need not say much, for it is only by the superstition of man that they are said to be so. It has nothing to do with their feeling for us. The handsome black and white magpie is nearly killed off from our woods and fields, and the coming generation will probably know little about its unlucky reputation, though they may chance to find in some antiquated book of north-country folk-lore, that the magpie was

the only bird who did not go into the ark with Noah. It preferred to sit outside on the roof, jabbering over the drowned world; and so it has been unlucky ever since. 'The boding raven,' however, still is likely to survive, since it has been pushed back by civilisation into solitary places and inaccessible crags. In one such haunt, the Raven's Craig, just above a wild lake in Inverness-shire, I have seen them hovering like black blots on the face of the cliff. I have not learning enough to know whether in the earliest times ravens were accounted 'unlucky.' If so, why were they chosen from among all the birds of the air for the merciful errand of carrying bread to Elijah in the wilderness? (Did they steal it? They are given to theft!) Also in the Written Word we are assured that 'God heareth the young ravens when they cry out unto Him.' And nothing of this is said of doves, or of any other white or heavenly kind of bird. An explanation is given in the Egyptian commentary on St. Luke, in the Coptic script by Epiphanius, A.D. 368-402. The passage<sup>1</sup> is certainly very curious, and I am permitted to transcribe it here. 'Why then did the evangelist mention no name amongst the birds except ravens only? Because the hen raven, having laid her eggs and hatched her young, is wont to fly away and leave them on account of the hue of their colour, for when hatched they are red in appearance. Then the Nourisher of all Creation sends to them a little swarm of insects, putting it by their nest, and thus the little ravens are fed until the colour of their body is, as it were, dyed and becomes black. But after seven days the old ravens return, and, seeing that the bodies of their young have become perfectly black like their own, henceforward they take to them and bring them food of their own accord.' It is for naturalists to ascertain whether or no this strange account of the young ravens holds good in our day.

It is a long step from the fourth century to the days of Shakespeare and 'Macbeth.' Lady Macbeth says:

. . . . The raven himself is hoarse  
That croaks the fatal entrance of Duncan  
Under my battlements.

Farther yet to the ballad quoted by Sir Walter Scott:

And thrice the raven flapped its wing  
Around the towers of Cumnor Hall.

---

<sup>1</sup> Translated by the Rev. George Horner.



The appearance of solitary birds in the Forum at Rome was believed to presage the death of Cæsar. Also 'the many-wintered crow' shares fully in the un-luck of blackness. In Plutarch's Lives it is told how Cicero went on shore, and entering his house, lay down to repose himself, and how a number of crows settled in the chamber window and croaked dismally in most doleful manner. 'One even entered in, and alighting on the bed, sought with its beak to draw off the clothes with which he covered his face. On sight of this the servants began to reproach themselves: "Shall we remain spectators of our master's murder? Shall we not protect him, so innocent and so great a sufferer, when the brute creatures give him marks of their care and attention?" They carried him towards the sea,' &c.

The downy-feathered, silent-flying bird of wisdom, the owl, is feared by many—"the obscure bird that clamours the livelong night.'

It was the owl that shrieked, the fatal bellman  
Which gives the stern'st good-night.

In India the white owl, however, always brings good luck. By the Hindoos it is held sacred to the goddess of prosperity; and for luck's sake it is welcomed to nest and breed in their houses, while the midnight cry of 'the Seven Sisters,' whoever those strange birds may be, makes those who hear it tremble.

Greater in number, as one likes to believe, are on the other hand the fortunate birds. There are few, let us hope, among our friends who have not, at some time in their lives, known the meaning of 'halcyon days.' The halcyon is thus described by Pliny: 'This bird, so noticeable, is little bigger than a sparrow. For the more part of her pennage, blew intermingled yet among with white and purple feathers. . . . They laie and sit in mid-winter when daies be shortest; and the times when they are broodie is called halcyon daies; for during that season the sea is calm and navigable, especially on the coast of Sicilie.' What visions of calm sea-born loveliness does the quaint old translation call up for us! And is there not a haunting music in these lines?

Blow, but blow gently, oh fayre winde,  
From the forsaken shore,  
And be as to the halcyon kinde  
Till we have ferried o'er.

The Swan, in legend, is fortunate. In a poetic dream of the ancients it was the birds flying up and down the banks of the river

of Lethe that 'caught the names of the departed, and, carrying them for a little while in their beaks, let them fall into the river, where they would have been lost only that the swans watching near caught a few names and carried them to temples, where they were consecrate.' Amongst 'the fortunate birds,' the dove must be counted as supreme in its peaceful prestige. It is the type of gentleness and innocence, and of faithful, devoted love. And are we not exhorted to be 'wise as serpents and harmless as doves'? Every movement of the dove is full of grace. It is the emblem of Peace. (Alas, that in fairness we have to own the amazing fact of the parent doves' cruel and quarrelsome behaviour!) The drying-up of the waters after the flood was signified to Noah when the dove came to him in the evening, 'and, lo, in her mouth was an olive leaf pluckt off.' To this day, year after year for love-seasons immemorial, the dove, when nesting, has carried flowers and leaves in her mouth. In gardens where these birds are allowed their freedom, they will often fly through the windows into the house, and carry off spoil from the flower-glasses. Pink is their favourite colour. I have often seen a pink sweetpea laid by the male dove tenderly across the neck of his mate as she sits on the nest. It happened only last summer in London, that early one morning a young lady, sleeping with the window open in an upper room in Lowndes Street, awoke to find a stray dove sitting at the foot of her bed—and the bird held a rose-leaf in its bill.

Instances of the old belief in birds and their human sympathies might well be multiplied. Aldovrandi (1527) tells us of the parakeet 'who so moved the heart of the Oriental emperor Basilius—the bird repeating for his condemned and incarcerated son, Leo, those lamentations it had heard from the sorrowing women—that Basilius again took his son to his bosom, leaving him his empire as an inheritance.' In more recent times there is the extraordinary tale, to be taken for what it is worth, of a parrot who served as chaplain in some ship, reciting prayers to the sailors, and afterwards telling the rosary! Then there is the legend of a white-breasted bird that is said to appear invariably in the death-chamber, when the death occurs of any member of the family it haunts.

In Dean Stanley's 'Historical Memorials of Westminster Abbey,' it is recorded, concerning the funeral of Queen Mary II., 1695, that 'a robin-redbreast, which had taken refuge in the Abbey, was seen constantly on her hearse, and was looked upon with tender affection for its seeming love to the lamented queen.' And I may



be pardoned for quoting from one of the morning papers an incident which was remarked by many at Queen Victoria's funeral at Windsor on February 4, 1901 : ' And then befell a thing so strange and beautiful as to almost pass belief. Just as the jewelled crown upon the coffin passed into the open air a dove flew out from over the chapel door. There it circled for a moment, when its mate flew out, and both together, those grey birds flew slowly side by side, over the quarters of the Military Knights and on towards the tomb at Frogmore.'

There is more to tell about birds than may be said in a day. Volumes might be filled with the wonders of their life-histories, with the endless story of their intelligence, their power of affection to man, or of devotion to their offspring. I have for long known the story of two incidents illustrating these two qualities in birds. The first<sup>1</sup> is told by a relative of my own, and happened many long years ago when she was a child. She writes :

' I was walking with my mother, when we were attracted to a small cottage by the exquisite singing of a thrush, which hung in a wicker cage outside the door. We stood listening, and then my mother entered and made acquaintance with the old couple within, asking would they be willing to part with the thrush to her ? At first a blank look came over the old man's face ; but he was poor and ailing, and at last a sum was named, the double of which was paid by my mother, who sent a servant next morning for the bird. Disappointment resulted. The cage was placed in our drawing-room window, but not a sound, not a note came from the melancholy thrush, who drooped and hung his head as if moulting. We fed it, we coaxed it ; but it remained silent. My mother was indignant. She had not pressed the old people ; she had but asked were they willing to sell the bird ; she had given them double the sum asked ; it looked as if another had been palmed off instead of the magnificent songster.

' We gave the thrush several days' trial, but at length we sent for its late owner. The door opened ; in he came, hat in hand. My mother rose, armed with some mild rebuke. But neither could speak, for no sooner did the old man appear than the bird leaped down from its perch, spread its wings, and broke into so triumphant a song of joy that the whole room vibrated. " What, pretty Speckledy," said the old man approaching, " you know me, then, do you ? " And the thrush kept flapping his wings, dancing with

From Mary Boyle's Autobiography.

joy. It was without a doubt the same bird, but, like the Hebrew captives, it could not sing in a strange land. "Take it back," said my mother; "I would not part such friends for all the world."

The other anecdote used to be told by the late Lady Elizabeth Villiers, and occurred on her own property in Holland. On a tree close to a house, within a short distance of the river or canal, there was a storks' nest, with young ones. The roof of the house caught fire one day; and though the flames did not actually reach the tree, the heat became scorching. So the mother stork flew down to the water, got into it, and drenched her breast; then, returning to her young, she spread the mass of cool wet feathers all over them. This she repeated over and over again, flying to the river, going down into the water, and returning, her plumage drenched with wet. And thus the nest was saved, and the tender nestlings were preserved alive until the fire had been got under and all was safe. The truth of this remarkable story was vouched for by more than one eye-witness.

One need not, indeed, be surprised at anything a bird does, when we consider the commoner everyday marvels of their unerring instinct, the whole mystery of their lives.

The Greeks believed that birds were created first of all things—'an airy ante-mundane throng'—and the Latin poet Lucretius held that it was from birds men first learned music. Matthew Arnold wrote:

Proof they give, too, primal powers  
Of a prescience more than ours.  
Teach us while they come and go  
When to sail and when to sow.  
Cuckoo calling from the wild,  
Swallow trooping in the sedge,  
Starling swirling from the hedge,  
Map our seasons, make our year.

In all ages birds have been the poet's favourites. At the dawn of English poetry, half a thousand years ago, Chaucer, with his passionate love of Nature, says, in 'The Fowles' Assembly':

On every bough the birdes I heard sing  
With voice of angel in their armonie,

and then he makes a list of about thirty-seven 'fowles,' with their personal characteristics, sketched in one or two lines each—done to the life, as none but a poet and acute observer of Nature could do; as, for instance, 'The false lapwing full of trecherie,' 'The cuckoo ever unkind,' 'The frostie feldefare,' and so on.



After Chaucer came other of our poets: a long procession whose praise of birds, enshrined in lovely thoughts and undying numbers, is left to us and to all time, a legacy of delight.

To name but a few amongst some of the best-known lines. Who can forget Keats's Nightingale?—

Light-wingèd Dryad of the trees,  
In some melodious plot  
Of beechen green and shadows numberless  
Singest of summer in full-throated ease.

Or Wordsworth to the same sylvan minstrel?—

O Nightingale, thou surely art  
A creature of a fiery heart.  
These notes of thine, they pierce and pierce,  
Tumultuous harmony and fierce.  
Thou sing'st as if the god of wine  
Had helped thee to a valentine!

And in another exquisite little poem of Wordsworth's the Lark is

Ethereal minstrel, pilgrim of the sky,  
and

Type of the wise, who soar but never roam,  
True to the kindred points of heaven and home.

Shelley, in his Ode to the Lark, addresses it as 'Thou scorner of the ground.' And F. Tennyson:

How the blythe lark runs up the golden stair  
That leans through cloudy gates from Heaven to earth.

Stray fragments these, from rich stores of song, by poets inspired with 'all that ever was of joyous, clear, and fresh,'—by the music of those very skylarks that all the world orders without a pang as a dainty dish for dinner, whose bodies the careless crowd sees and passes by unmoved, lying heaped in every poulterer's window or piled in open crates beside the door.

In an old bird-book of 1791 (in which, by the way, are figured in colour two sorts of dodo) we find that 'in the neighbourhood of Dunstable, 4,000 dozens of larks have been taken for the London market, between September and February.' (A trifle indeed, those 48,000, compared to the 116,000 humming-birds that were sold in London wholesale shops only a year or two ago for ornamenting ladies' attire!) If so many skylarks over a hundred years ago were required for the table or for confinement in cages, what must the consumption now be! The old book adds that 'in summer they fly and sing so much, and are so

much engaged in the care of their young, they are always lean.' Poor devoted little songsters! Nest and multiply as they may, a check must come sooner or later if the ever-increasing population of our cities persist in eating them; and even the blue heavens where they sing will at last be empty of their music. We are often assured that the larks sold for cooking are mostly fieldfares. This may be true, just in the same way that 'plover's eggs are oftener jackdaws'!

In Lockhart's life of Sir Walter Scott it is told how, at the funeral of his daughter, the wild music of a lark singing in the sky above the open grave mingled with the solemn service for the dead, and how Scott's friend, Dean Milman, as he read the service, heard the singing and was profoundly touched. One does not read Milman much now, but he described the incident well in the little poem he wrote afterwards:

I watch thee lessening, lessening to the sight,  
Still faint and fainter winnowing  
The sunshine with thy dwindling wing,  
A speck, a movement in the ruffled light,  
Till thou wert melted in the sky,  
An undistinguished part of bright infinity.

Mrs. Browning has a lovely thought about England and her migrant birds (I think it occurs in 'Aurora Leigh'):

Islands so freshly fair  
That never hath bird come nigh them,  
But from his course in air  
Hath been won downward by them.

The name of wellnigh every English bird, whether common or unfamiliar, is found scattered throughout the best poetry of our land—immortalised in song. Burns has here and there an exquisite touch, such as:

Within the bush, her covert nest  
A little linnet fondly prest,  
The dew all chilly on her breast,  
Sae early in the morning. . . .

Tennyson knew well our birds, and loved them; and he watched them with the keenest observation. Browning also loved them. Everyone knows his lines about the thrush:

That's the wise thrush; he sings each song twice over,  
Lest we should think he never could recapture  
The first fine careless rapture.

The least observing of us all knows the joy of listening in the spring to those first delightful notes; and often would we express



our pleasure, if we could, with something of the tender charm of Mortimer Collins's lines to a thrush singing in the lime-trees—often would we say with him :

God's poet hid in foliage green  
Sings endless songs himself unseen ;  
Right seldom come his silent times.  
Linger, ye summer hours serene!  
Sing on, dear thrush, amid the limes!

Thou mellow angel of the air!  
Closer to God art thou than I;  
His minstrel thou, whose brown wings fly  
Through silent æther's sunnier climes.  
Ah, never may thy music die!  
Sing on, dear thrush, amid the limes!

That lover of the beautiful, Lord Leighton—himself an ardent and accomplished musician—delighted in the music of birds. I remember, years ago, at the time when people used to bore their friends by inducing them to catalogue their likes and dislikes in a tiresome drawing-room album, young Leighton wrote down as his greatest pleasure, 'To walk in the garden and listen to the birds singing.'

Amongst modern artists of fame, Landseer felt the joyous beauty of their wings, and painted them to the life. In the house where Landseer lived in St. John's Wood (since pulled down) there was a fresco, painted by him on the wall in the dining-room, of long-winged sea-gulls in undulating flight above a breaking sea. After him, Stacy Marks distinguished himself by his paintings of every species and kind of bird. Lear and others devoted their art to portraiture of the many-coloured parrots.

After dwelling thus on the true appreciation of birds by some of the first intellects of our time—and before—the contrast is sharp indeed when we turn to consider the manner of appreciation of them, common (especially with women) nowadays. For some of us the love of birds is accompanied by the intense pain of realising how their lives are everywhere wasted: a pain which must surely be unknown to the thousands who, without the least compunction, crown their heads with dead birds, and glory in that badge of cruelty—an egret's plume. This particular plume—'all imitation now,' the milliners say!—I never see, without thinking of the African tribe who carry within their mat of hair a store of some kind of feathers, and who, whenever they kill a man, take out a feather, dip it in his blood, and stick it on their head.

So the white egret plume, worn in hat or bonnet, is always to my fancy dyed red by the sacrifice of unhappy birds, bleeding and perishing near their desolated nests.

I was told a year ago by a London milliner, that 'ladies now refused to wear "ospreys,"' as she called them; 'so much had been said. But they were insisting on whole birds in their hats.' There will yet be enough for them—*while they last*. An estimate of the quantities still sold, I fear, in London alone, is nothing less than appalling. Amongst a number of other birds, 11,352 ounces of egret, and 110,490 humming-birds. No market in the world can long supply a demand so huge as this. Few need now to be reminded that the foolish word osprey, used in relation to plumes, is purely shopkeeper's ornithology. They mean egret—a name of most evil repute since the cruelties connected with the killing of them have been made public. Yet so ignorant is the world at large of the natural history of birds, that some are still taken in by the name. A very charming lady, whose hats are certainly guiltless of aught but ostrich feathers, stared with surprise when I explained that the milliner's osprey is in reality a small species of white stork, a native of Syria, Florida, and other hot countries. 'Why,' said she, 'I've seen them alive! and they are nothing of the sort. They are dark-coloured birds, like hawks; I saw them flying about a loch in Scotland; the gillie pointed them out to me, and he said they were ospreys!'

In London, when one sees the fashionable world of women driving about the streets or piously attending church service, in hats crowned with egret, or with long bird-of-paradise plumes bleached white and streaming in the wind, one marvels how it should be possible that these distinguished dames can possess minds so untrained—in a sense so uneducated—be so relentless, so lost to pity, as not to know or care whether whole races of birds, the loveliest and most innocent of created beings, be killed off (and mostly under circumstances of great barbarity), simply in order to make trimming for their hats!

I have wondered also if the ladies of 'London Society' are aware of the fact that they are by no means supreme in this deplorable fashion; if they really know that in the matter of feathers they are far outdone by their suburban and country-town imitators. Crossing a common near Windsor the other day, a girl on a bicycle passed me, wearing on her head about half-a-dozen long-winged kitty-wakes or sea-gulls. And I am haunted



still by the nightmare of a lady (a very short lady) I met one day in Maidenhead, who wore two large pairs of broad white extended wings in front of her hat, with a kind of breastwork between them made of a large bunch of egret, mixed in with a bundle of non-descript feathers and down in black. I believe such an erection as this would be now (or at least not long ago) classed in a shop as 'elegant,' or 'chaste'! Suburban railway platforms are generally crowded with this sort of hat, piled up in feathers. And the fashion lasts till summer brings artificial roses to replace the bird-skins. It seems a little singular that apparently the only class who still habitually wear ostrich feathers—but never a bird-skin—are, or until recently were, the flower-sellers of Oxford Street and elsewhere. Their narrow means can scarcely account for it, for the rarest kingfisher or most brilliant ruby-crested humming-bird costs but fourpence! Thus it is, however. For my own part, I would a thousand times rather copy those poor drooping plumes of the London flower-girls—if plumes must be worn—than flaunt in the finest 'creation' of dried birds and egrets that the most fashionable of London shops could supply.

It is agreed by all, I believe, that any appeal to woman, as woman, to give up for humanity's sake any practice however cruel, if sanctioned by custom, is absolutely unavailing. As well attempt to melt with tears the core of the living rock!

An example, however, has been set by men; and in the army, egret plumes are ordered to be no longer worn. Yet women, who so readily emulate their brothers in sport or smoke, have failed to follow, whole-hearted, a lead like this.

To an increasing scarcity in foreign hat-birds, rather than to any appreciable decrease of demand, is due, one fears, the less universal wear of egret. I was lately told that while two years ago the going out after service at St. Paul's, Knightsbridge, might be compared to a tempest of egret, last year only three or four were to be counted.

Could English women oftener seek to apply their hearts to the wisdom of showing mercy to their helpless little brothers and sisters the birds, or sometimes find a moment's time to think over the thousands of beautiful lines, in which our greatest poet-teachers have sung the praise of birds, could they less seldom remember this, they would surely entirely cease to follow the senseless dictates of fashion in feminine attire, before it is Too Late.

E. V. B.

31—2

*A LONDONER'S LOG-BOOK.*

XV.

I AM having an unusually pleasant Lent. There is a perceptible mitigation in that fury of church-going which in former years has seized Selina at this season. We no longer have High Tea on Wednesday and Friday, and I am not dragged off in a rickety four-wheeler to abnormal devotions at St. Alban's or St. Barnabas'. Selina, who thinks increasingly of her health, declares that for her own part she believes that to keep well is the first duty of a Christian, and that to have one's dinner in peace is really a much more religious act than to ruin one's digestion and catch endless colds by 'trampolining' away to churches a hundred miles off. In the substance, if not in the form, of this sentiment I seem to recognise an echo from my former self; but Selina has worked herself into believing that I and not she was responsible for those Lenten irregularities.

Meanwhile the excellent Soulsby is putting forth unusual exertions. On Ash Wednesday he announced to his congregation that, rightly considered, Lent was not so much a Fast as a Feast—yes, a Feast of Fat Things—oh, yes! a Banquet of Spiritual Delights. These delicacies are this year mainly provided by his own skill. He finds (as he tells us, with a modest pride which is peculiarly winning) that strangers, though incomparably greater men than he—deeper theologians, more arousing orators—yet cannot feel the pulse of the St. Ursula's congregation quite as accurately as one who has lived and loved and laboured in our midst for more than two long decades. Accordingly he is taking all the Lent sermons himself, with only very occasional aid from his old friend Jem Jawkins, whose chief delight is to escape from Loamshire and wag his head in a metropolitan pulpit. On Sunday mornings Soulsby is giving us a course of sermons on the Seven Corporal Works of Mercy. Last Sunday he enforced the duty of feeding the hungry with almost exaggerated earnestness. This emphasis rather nettled Selina, who remarked as we were walking home that if having Mr. Bumpstead to supper Sunday after Sunday wasn't 'feeding the hungry' she didn't know what was, and that



it would be more to the point if Mr. Soulsby would preach on the Seven Deadly Sins, and give his Curate a hint about gluttony. I confess I thought this outburst a little unfair on Bumpstead, who certainly works hard for his victuals, and is fully justified in 'doing himself honourably' (the phrase is his own) when the faithful entertain him. Nor do I think that Selina would have expressed herself with quite so much vivacity if Bertha had been with us; but the dear girl had just popped in to see Mrs. Soulsby, who is recovering from a domestic crisis. Well may poor Soulsby say, with picturesque emotion, 'The blessings of the man who hath his quiver full of them are mine in rich abundance.'

So marked is the abatement of Selina's zeal for the Church, its ministers, and its ministrations, that, did I not know her principles to be firmly grounded, I might begin to feel a little uneasiness. Long experience has taught me to avoid unnecessary questions, but I maintain my lifelong habit of observation and form my own conclusions. In the small 'third room' on the drawing-room floor which she uses as a boudoir—a snug apartment consisting of two windows, a door, and a fire-place—I occasionally cast my eye on the current literature which my womankind affect. There I find the 'Queen,' the 'World,' 'Classy Cuttings,' and the 'St. Ursula's Parish Magazine,' which are my Selina's oracles; and the 'Table-Tennis and Pastimes Pioneer,' which Bertha takes in. This journal announces as its aim 'to advance the best interests of a popular game, and to secure for it its rightful place among those international sports which have so great a bearing upon the building up of Great Empires.' There I learn that at the Second Ping-Pong Tournament at Queen's Hall 'long rallies in a spirited encounter between Miss Florence Lacy and Mrs. Alfred drew loud applause yesterday afternoon, while much enthusiasm was also evoked by Miss Violet Farr's cruel smashes, Miss Lily Weisberg's demon deliveries, and Miss Helena Maude Smith's back-hand returns.' Such is the literature, 'lambent yet innocuous,' which delights my wife and her sister; but great was my consternation when the other day I found added to the collection a pamphlet entitled 'The Wonders of Thought-Force.' The title startled me. Since she was vaccinated, Selina has lost all fear of small-pox, declares that she was a goose for giving way to Dr. Snuffin's nonsense, and affirms her belief that, if people would only set to work the right way, they could be perfectly healthy without any doctors' abominations. True it is that Grape-nuts have proved a

failure, and the Salisbury Treatment has palled; but I am not free from apprehension that she is turning her mind in directions even less compatible with orthodoxy. This I trace to the influence of young Lady Farringford (*née* Sally Van Oof), who, I feel certain, has given her the pamphlet on 'Thought-Force,' setting forth the miraculous cures of physical and mental ailments effected by Helen Wilmans Post, Sea Breeze, Florida, U.S.A.

From that pamphlet I cull two or three quotations—'racy,' as Pennialinus would say, of the Great Republic—and of that 'high faith' which Mr. Lowell commended.

John M. White, North Wales, Pa., S.S.—Mrs. Wilmans Post,—I most cheerfully give you my testimonial of the great good you have done me by your absent treatment. Five years ago I was a physical wreck beyond the reach of the best medical doctors, as five years of experience proved. I went to the best doctors to be found here and in Philadelphia, and as a last resort I went before a clinic of doctors and the late Prof. Pepper, at the University of Pennsylvania, and they all pronounced my case incurable, as they said the stomach *was gone*; therefore nothing to build on; then I gave up in despair until I found one of your circulars, and, like a drowning man, grasped it, and I bless the event ever since, for you built me up beyond my hopes—yes, saved my life. To-day my stomach can digest almost any kind of food, and I am in high hope of being a stronger man than ever I was, As you know, my case was a desperate one, and I had lost all interest in life.

Ermine J. King, 318 York Ave., Chicago, Ill., S.S.—To whom it may concern,—I have for the last five months been receiving absent treatments from Helen Wilmans Post, for ailments which the medical profession could not reach, and I have received great benefit from the same, and I believe that Mrs. Wilmans Post is doing a great good through the power of her kindly, uplifting thought. She is a true healer in every sense of the word, and the treatments are well worth the modest sum which she accepts for them.

Mary C. Wiley, Columbia, S.C., S.S.—Mrs. Wilmans Post,—I am so glad that I can say I am better of my nervousness and weakness. I think your treatment the most wonderful thing! I study daily to learn more about it. I don't think another dose of medicine will ever pass my lips. All your reasoning is so natural and good. The truth proves as I never saw it before. How can anyone doubt when you prove everything? I assure you I watch you with a jealous eye—have seen nothing but your wonderful truth and love.

Mrs. B. C. Copeland, Evansville, Ind., S.S.—I can truly say that I have been successfully treated and *cured* by you of diseases that the old-school doctors have failed to cure, and even went so far as to say I could *not* be cured. I am now almost 72 years of age and am feeling well, and can stand more work than the generality of younger people, and people who do not know me take me to be about fifty years of age. And in truth I must give the power of your mind the honour and credit of all my good health and youthful appearance. Ten years ago I was a perfect wreck—could not walk any distance without stopping for breath and strength. I now can walk miles with comparative ease.

Mrs. Jane Walker, Petrolia, Cal.—Many disorders: Weak lungs, diseased



bronchial tubes. Has been benefited beyond any power of medical aid. Is still improving. Thinks Mrs. Helen Wilmans Post stands first in the ranks of the magnanimous, and ahead in the world of advanced thought.

On the attractions of this system it were superfluous to enlarge. To have one's stomach restored to one after it was 'gone'; to be able to digest 'almost any kind of food'; never to need another dose of medicine; and to look fifty when one is really seventy-two, these are boons not lightly to be esteemed. But what most attracted the pensive taxpayer over whom an impending War-Budget begins to cast its shadow is Helen Wilmans Post's treatise on 'The Conquest of Poverty.' Of this its gifted authoress boasts, and probably with justice, that it is 'the most popular book in the range of mental science literature. It brings freedom to the mind, and through the mind to the body.' With a steadily decreasing income, and an expenditure pitched high enough to satisfy the social demands of Stuccovia, that is, indeed, a freedom devoutly to be wished, but not, I fear, to be attained.

As far as I can judge, none of these erroneous and strange doctrines has produced the slightest effect on Bertha. Indeed, that excellent girl has no inconsiderable share of the high and spirited perverseness which characterises the whole house of Topham-Sawyer. As Selina's zeal for Lenten church-going diminishes, Bertha's increases. As Selina hankers more and more after new and heterodox teachings, Bertha develops her bump of orthodoxy, and, encouraged by Bumpstead, wages remorseless war against heresy and schism. The local papers have lately reported a sermon preached at the 'Presbyterian Church of England' in Stucco Road by Mr. Ramshorn—the raw-boned young minister who supported me at Cashington's meeting last month. This youth, who was reared at North Berwick, thus effectively drew upon the memories of his youth: 'I am sure if you have ever paid any attention to the game you will be struck by the way in which the game of golf seems to reproduce the common scenes of life. Those of you who don't play may know that the great object is to put the little white ball into the little hole. And so long as you are short of that, if you don't do it—well, the other man does it before you. He has won the hole. And in doing this, when you come to what is called the "putting green," and you take your putt—it may be a beautiful putt, it may run straight for the hole, but if it stops short you will say to yourself, and your partner will say to you, 'Never up; never in. It is a beauty, but it wants legs.' And

that is just exactly the situation here—"not far from the Kingdom." You may be "lying dead" as we say. The next shot is sure to do it. "Never up; never in."

Bertha, herself no mean proficient with the club, stigmatised this illustration from one of her favourite games as absolutely profane; and sarcastically supposed that Mr. Ramshorn would soon be trying to get a spiritual meaning out of Ping-Pong. Bumpstead chimed in, saying that that kind of thing was well enough for the old Vicar, because he's a mystic and a thinker, and all that sort of game; but when that red-headed rotter from the Presbyterian shop went in for it, it was getting a bit too thick, and next time they met he'd give young Ramshorn a bit of his mind. The mention of the Presbyterian Church in Stucco Road reminds me of Miss Scrimgeour, the Scotch lady who a few months ago was distributing rhymed leaflets against 'The Coming of the Monks.' She has been on her rounds again quite lately, and created not a little emotion at the vicarage by dropping into the letter-box the following statement, which, being inscribed to 'H. H. H.,' 'in grateful recognition of his brotherly advances,' would seem to indicate some further development of anti-Sacerdotalism in our beloved Establishment.

#### WHY I AM NOT A CHURCHMAN!

Because the Triple Ecclesiastical Apostasy, made up of the Roman, Greek and Anglican hierarchies, though claiming to be the true church, is nothing better than the manufacture of a man-made and self-styled priesthood, whose object is by patronising the masses, and flattering the classes, to obtain political power, personal advantage, social prestige, public money, and control of the human conscience.

They, however, clearly prove the fraud and fallacy of their pretensions, by reversing the order and use of the Old and New Testaments, assuming by gorgeous ceremonial displays, in semi-pagan imitation of Jewish worship, to set forth the glorious gospel. Thus do they endeavour to entangle us in a yoke of bondage.

*What would be thought of a man who, investigating the beauties of some priceless gem, persisted in using a brick, or a frying-pan, for an eyeglass?*<sup>1</sup> Surely he would display the folly of a fool! yet are the wise of this world, who judge by the light of their own eyes, more foolish than he; when they attempt to read the Word of God, through the deceptive and obscuring optics of a formula of traditional canons, creeds, and catechisms, which have their origin in the corruptions of the dark ages of mediævalism, when—

Monks and Friars (rogues and liars)  
 Martyred faithful men,  
 And had they power, they'd light the fires,  
 And do the same again.

<sup>1</sup> The italics are ours.—ED.



While my womankind are thus absorbed in the high things of Science and Theology I have been taking a turn at Politics, which Bacon pronounced to be 'of all pursuits the most immersed in matter.' And if by 'matter' Bacon meant that particular form of matter which we call money, my experience quite tallies with his. The Primrose League, once a flourishing feature in the life of Stuccovia, has been voted a nuisance on account of the exactions which it levies. Poor Bounderley can no longer send indiscriminate cheques to all who apply, but has to pick and choose, and thereby has made enemies and lost his popularity. A temporary difficulty in getting their little accounts settled by the Tory M.P. has kindled a flame of Liberalism among the local tradesmen to whom Mr. Lloyd-George's most inflammatory rhetoric would have appealed in vain. Cashington for the moment carries all before him by dint of his brougham and his billiard-room, his wife's sables and son's chargers. 'There's money in the thing,' says the Liberal agent to his friend the Solicitor's clerk; 'only work it properly, and we're on velvet. Start a branch of the Liberal League. Make Rosebery President. Get Asquith down to blackguard Home Rule, and Grey to show up Free Trade, and the trick's done. Out goes Bounderley; enter Cashington; and, if I know my man, he means winning the seat, and keeping it—and that means spending money, my boy, or you and I don't know our business.'

---

I had written so far when an event occurred which knocked me, as the phrase is, all of a heap. I could not honestly affirm that it was wholly unexpected, and yet, as people say when their friends die of lingering illnesses, it was 'sudden at the last.'

Those who have the happiness to dwell in London will recollect that the evening of Thursday, March 6, was signalised by a fog which would have been thick for mid-winter.

Thursday is the evening when a social entertainment is always given at the Parochial Club. This entertainment is not intermitted in Lent, for Soulsby says that he would not impose on the youth of his flock a yoke which he at their age would have found grievous. 'Nay, my spiritual children shall not say in the dim hereafter that St. Ursula was a hard task-mistress, or their religion a thing of austerity and gloom.' So on Thursday evening the Club always provides a Variety Entertainment. Soulsby recites, Bumpstead boxes, Bertha sings, and Mrs. Soulsby (when she is

strong enough) plays the concertina. Cashington, who has suddenly developed a keen interest in our parochial life, has given us two lectures on 'Imperial Expansion' and 'A Protest against Gladstonianism'; and Bounderley, not to be outdone by his rival, has promised a Comic Sketch of the House of Commons, with Imitations of Lord Percy and Lord Hugh Cecil obstructing the Deceased Wife's Sister.

On the evening of March 6, Bertha was engaged to sing 'Drink, Puppy, drink,' and 'The Lost Chord.' She arrived under Selina's wing just before the boxing was over; and though, as a rule, 'Blazer' Bumpstead can take uncommonly good care of himself in a physical encounter, he was at that instant levelled to the earth by a converted coal-heaver, whose recent adhesion to the Club had been regarded as a beautiful result of Soulsby's Lenten eloquence. At the unexpected sight, Bertha grasped her sister's arm, and exclaimed in a voice made tremulous by emotion, 'Oh, Selina! dear Mr. Bumpstead will be killed!' It is true that when, a few minutes afterwards, that hero came up grinning and expressed himself as gratified by the epithet, Bertha altered the punctuation of her sympathy, and declared that she had said, 'Oh, Selina dear! Mr. Bumpstead will be killed!' But that good young man had heard the original version, and governed himself accordingly. On emerging from the Club at the conclusion of the entertainment, we found Stuccovia wrapped in a thick blanket of yellow fog. Selina hung on to me like grim death, and Bumpstead and Bertha disappeared together into the surrounding gloom. They emerged from it engaged. Our labours for our sister have not been in vain. Stuccovia has been fruitful while Loamshire was barren. Dear old Mrs. Topham-Sawyer will go down to her grave happy in the knowledge that her youngest daughter will some day reign at The Foxholes. Though Bertha is not marrying into *the* County, at least she is marrying into *a* County. Selina is unexpectedly enthusiastic, and Bumpstead keeps on murmuring, in a kind of rapturous chuckle, 'Good Old Fog.'



*MADAME DE MAINTENON.*

BISHOP CREIGHTON used to say that, apart from the founder of Christianity, no historical character gains on a nearer acquaintance; and certainly very small experience is needed to show how ruthlessly macadamising is the progress of Research, how the 'bad' men of our childhood are crushed up, and the 'good' men crushed down, till they meet in one monotonous level of moral mediocrity. But even Research has its compensations. What our heroes lose in dim grandiosity will be more than repaid to them in vividness and life, once the clear sunlight is let in; and Madame de Maintenon need not complain if more than one biographical Pygmalion had recently arisen to transform her chilly statue into flesh and blood.

For a long while the bizarre uniqueness of her career stood in the way of all attempt to see it in a rational light. Adventurers and ruling royal mistresses were common enough in the seventeenth century; but Madame de Maintenon was never a mistress, and is unlike the common run of adventuresses in that she rose by her virtues, not by her vices. And certainly virtue carried her further than ever vice did them. At the moment when the French Monarchy reached its zenith of splendour, she emerged from the very dingiest surroundings to become Queen of France in all but name—and that as wife of Louis XIV., the proudest and most kingly prince who ever occupied a throne. In her own day a triumph so amazing seemed to be due to more than natural causes. She herself attributed her whole success to the guiding Hand of God; while her enemies spoke of her reign as 'a mystery of iniquity,' and 'the most awful humiliation ever designed by Fortune—not here to say Providence—for the most arrogant of kings.' Even many latter-day historians have left her a figure unnecessarily mysterious, still clad in the same great cloak of sable draperies in which contemporaries describe her flitting through the galleries of Versailles. And it still seems a little sacrilegious to look at her as she really was—a woman of rather noble, and rather morbid, but still quite ordinary character, borne into greatness by the play of very extraordinary circumstances.

There was no particular reason why she should be otherwise. Hereditary genius—that modern apology for the fairy godmother—

never stood by her cradle ; the family were wholly undistinguished till her grandfather, Agrippa d'Aubigné, made a great name for himself, fighting by the side of Henry IV., in the later Wars of Religion. But he was a strange enough progenitor for a decorous Catholic lady—this tough, hard-living, old Huguenot—and a still stranger was her father ; vices, crimes, and imprisonments make up the whole of Constant d'Aubigné's life. Even his marriage bears the taint of the gaol. His wife was the daughter of his keeper, and gave birth to their illustrious child in Niort prison on November 27, 1635. Fortunately for herself, however, the young Françoise had little to do with her parents ; though she saw enough of her mother's misfortunes to convince her that marriage proves a curse to three-quarters of the human race. She was brought up by a Huguenot aunt, until a Catholic relative, one Mme. de Neullant, got possession of her, in virtue of an order from the bitterly anti-Protestant Court, with a view to her conversion to the Roman Church. This lady's proselytising methods, being chiefly scanty fare and insufficient clothing, failed to impress a precocious maiden of fourteen ; Françoise thought it due alike to her conscience and her sense of self-importance to hold out, Bible in hand, until the priests had fairly worsted her in argument.

A couple of years later she was of marriageable age, and soon the strangest of suitors presented himself. Paul Scarron was a burlesque writer and coffee-house wit of great celebrity, but elderly, and so crippled by rheumatism as to be 'more like the letter Z than a man.' In such a marriage there could be no talk of affection. Scarron pretended only to a friendly interest in the handsome, clever, ill-used girl, and owned that his appearance as a bridegroom was the greatest poetical licence he ever took in his life. Françoise repaid him by becoming an admirable nurse, and equally admirable hostess to the miscellaneous polite society that gathered round his mattress-grave ; more than once, it is said, she managed to cover the absence of a joint from dinner by her fascinating stories. But she was strict enough in her behaviour ; and when Scarron died without a penny—'having sunk all his fortune in search of the philosopher's stone, or something else as practical'—it was only fair that her 'glorious and irreproachable poverty' should be lightened by a small pension from the Court.

Left a widow at twenty-five, she could for the first time taste the sweets of independence. Her pension just allowed her to live



in modest comfort; it is noticed, for instance, that she always burned wax-candles in her rooms, instead of the more usual tallow—no small consideration to a lady who hated the grime of shabby gentility almost as much as running into debt. But her charms could afford to be independent of wax-candles—while as to her dresses, her ingenuous old confessor once said that, plain as they were, there was somehow such *bonne grâce* about them that he felt attracted more than was right. For her social qualities Madame de Sévigné will answer; that incomparable judge of breeding found her company ‘delicious.’

Society, in fact, was now the one occupation of her life; *elle voyait furieusement du monde*, says a contemporary gossip. To the end of her days she was a votary of the art of conversation, and held (as all good talkers should) that it can only be really enjoyed among friends of the opposite sex. Without being learned or very brilliant, she had a lively intellectual curiosity, and was easily taken with new ideas. At this time she was much attracted to the high-flown, romantic notions of the *Précieuses*, the æsthetes of the age; later on, she became enthusiastic for Racine’s poetry and Fénelon’s mysticism. But her judgment always told her when to stop. She threw over Racine so soon as he was suspected of Jansenist heresy, and Fénelon long before he was condemned by the Church; nor did her *préciosité* ever become ridiculous—her language is always terse and graphic, if it smells a little of the lamp. Judgment, too, gave her that placid sense of her own deficiencies which goes to make the excellent listener; she boasted herself one of the few women left in France who dare confess that there were limits to her knowledge. Added to this, hers was the blessing of an equable temper, which never ‘philosophised over an air,’ or took offence at accidental slights; she was capricious enough to be interesting, and sufficiently reserved to make her friendship a distinction. But a stormy youth had left her with too much cynical shrewdness and self-dependence to allow of her ever being monopolised by any single person. ‘I could not love anyone I did not respect,’ she says, ‘and I know so much evil about those around me that it is the rarest of pleasures to be able even to praise them.’ It was to an abstract idea that Mme. Scarron’s heart was really given—to a craving, passionate, almost hysterical, for the world’s honour and esteem. ‘I never wished to be loved by any particular person,’ she wrote, late in life; ‘I wished to be thought well of by all. Honour was my folly,

honour was my idol, for which perhaps I am now punished by excess of greatness. Would to God I had done as much for Him as I have done for my reputation !'

This longing is the basis of the proverbial philosophy she afterwards condensed into copy-book headings for her girls. 'Discretion is the most hard-worked of the virtues.' 'Have nothing to fear, nothing to hide, and nothing to regret.' 'There is nothing so clever as never being in the wrong.' It explains her rather cynical courtship of the respectable ; 'to a young woman in my position,' she used to say, 'a respectable peeress cannot be dull.' It was the secret of worthier social successes. No one steered a more careful course than Madame Scarron between odious self-assertiveness and self-effacement ; no woman ever put greater constraint on herself to become *droite, douce, commode*. Sometimes there was not even need for constraint, and the æsthetic pleasure of the exercise became its own reward—as when she once amused herself by nursing a casual acquaintance through the small-pox, partly to test her own strength of purpose, partly to impress the world.

But no one can live wholly on such flaccid diet as esteem ; and Madame Scarron, having refused to love her neighbours, was fain at times to win some human sympathy by serving them. Out of her usual isolation she would suddenly plunge into ruthless self-sacrifice—so ruthless, indeed, that some of her early performances as a schoolgirl, and some of her later as the wife of Louis, recall that 'sensual lust of self-abnegation,' over which the doctors are wont to look grave. But in her best days this morbid element was translated into a restless, superabundant energy, that threw its whole forces into every trifle—just as other loveless women have washed floors with their empty hearts. We hear only of most practical services to deformed little children, like Madame de Chevreuil's daughter (whose legs she often left a party to bandage, because no one else could do it as well), or else to inexperienced brides like Madame d'Heudicourt, to whom she acted as an amateur housekeeper. 'Six o'clock never found me in bed, though the young mistress of the house seldom appeared before twelve. I used to give all the orders of the day, and set the carpenters and upholsterers to work, helping them with my own hands, whenever necessary. . . . I little thought that the first step towards my present astonishing greatness had been taken, when Madame de Montespan noticed my usefulness to our common friend.'



Such, however, was the case. A new and far vaster field was opened for the display of Madame Scarron's virtues, when the moral frailties of Madame de Montespan led to her introduction to Louis XIV. In 1668 that lady's intrigue with her Olympian paramour began, and in due time a nurse was needed for the resulting children. Madame de Montespan proposed Madame Scarron, and Madame Scarron accepted a post then in no wise thought discreditable, least of all to ladies with a very narrow income. At first the existence of the children was kept secret, and their governess, with characteristic caution, had herself bled, so as not to blush at inconvenient questions. But in 1673 they were legitimised, and she appeared openly at Court. Next year the King's gratitude bought her the small estate of Maintenon, which carried a title with it. Henceforward she is *Madame de Maintenon*.

This present was Louis' first mark of favour to his future wife. He had begun by disliking her as a literary prude, and Madame de Montespan told him terrible stories of her temper—for contiguity had wrought its usual effects on two ladies so clever and so determined. But he was touched by her devotion to his children, especially to the eldest boy, the Duke of Maine—that bastard, says St. Simon, being the son of his loins, while the Dauphin was only his heir—and a correspondence sprang up between them during the summer of 1675, which she spent with the young Duke in the Pyrenees. Very little was enough to show him that he had cruelly misjudged her, and to incline his impressionable heart to make *amende honorable* in the opposite direction; that winter Madame de Sévigné's letters are full of his sudden interest in Madame de *Maintenant*. A twelvemonth later the interest had deepened into passion; she is pronounced his 'first or second friend.' By 1680 she had become 'the soul of this Court,' recognised as his 'chief confidante' both by Madame de Montespan and the Queen.

To this bare narrative of her triumphs contemporaries would add many notes of exclamation; to us it will seem less surprising that she rose than that she did not rise before. Louis had outgrown the sensualities of youth; in 1680 he was forty-two, she three years older, Madame de Montespan thirty-nine. She had all the qualities that suited him best, while only great beauty saved her rival from being a continual irritation to his nerves. The mistress possessed a brilliant intellect, but little sense; the homelier talents of the 'confidante' were built up on her tact and

self-control. Madame de Montespan had a bitter, caustic tongue, and proved in a rage a very 'tigress in ringlets': Madame de Maintenon was never out of temper, and only used her wit for purposes of flattery. Madame de Montespan, when other means of holding Louis failed, fled to love-philtres—some say even to poisons. Madame de Maintenon 'guided him into an unknown country, into an intercourse of friendship and conversation, where there was no intriguing and no constraint.'

Lastly, it must be remembered that Louis' conscience, though always tortuous and always torpid, was never wholly asleep; and it was to his conscience that Madame de Maintenon specially appealed. 'I accepted his friendship,' she says, 'to give him good counsels, break the chain of his mistresses, and lead him back to the Queen.' Nor is there room to doubt her absolute sincerity, though we might have wished her a little less self-consciously unselfish, less pleased at her triumph over Madame de Montespan. But neither Louis nor his wife was disposed to be critical. The neglected Queen blessed her as an angel sent from Heaven, and the King might have said to the second Esther what Racine's Ahasuerus says to the first:—

Je ne trouve qu'en vous je ne sais quelle grâce  
 Qui me charme toujours, et jamais ne me lasse—  
 De l'aimable vertu doux et puissants attraits . . .  
 Et crois que votre front prête à mon diadème  
 Un éclat qui le rend respectable aux dieux même.

The actual sharing of the diadem (in so far as Madame de Maintenon can ever be said to have shared it) was due to the very sudden death of the Queen in the summer of 1683. Louis soon found his position as a widower 'repugnant both to his inclinations and his habits,' and his passion for Madame de Maintenon had not had time to cool. So he decided on a secret marriage, which took place in an improvised chapel at Versailles in the dead of a January night of 1684.

Of the depth and endurance of his affection there can be no doubt. Madame de Maintenon's bitterest enemy, the Duchess of Orleans, declares again and again that he loved 'Old Madam Wish-wash' infinitely more than ever any of his mistresses. With her the case was different. Her second marriage proved the culmination of that crisis, so common in the characters of women, when the habits and certainties of youth have passed away, and life re-forms, with new necessities and fresh ideals.



Especially was this the case with her dominant passion for 'honour.' Ten years' experience of Versailles had lowered her (never very high) opinion of her fellow-creatures, till she cared no more for their esteem. What was the use of courting the praises of the virtuous where there was scarcely a virtuous tongue to praise? On the other hand, she could not live without appreciation; so she drifted slowly towards religion, in the hope of winning applause more worth the having from her Maker. But first there was a period of doubt and despondency, where she 'feared she was doing little credit either to herself or her confessor.' Only when the friendship with Louis began did this hesitation vanish; thenceforward all anxiety about her own soul was merged in the greater responsibility of his. The moral enthusiasm, with which she began, steadily deepened in intensity during the thirty-one years of their married life; she was an instrument of Providence for his regeneration—the keeper of his conscience in a literal sense—charged to 'encourage and console him, or, if it were God's pleasure, to grieve him with reproaches that none but she dare utter.' And as she grew older and feebler, she clung with more and more despairing energy to her mission; the one recurring burden of her letters is, '*Il me prend des frayeurs extrêmes sur le salut du Roi.*'

Yet it is difficult to believe that she ever governed the King, except in so far as a wife better than himself becomes the moral lode-stone of whatever good there is in a man—especially if he be such a man as Louis, always unusually responsive to the influence of women. To her fine-spun lectures on the Love of God (inspired by Fénelon and St. Francis of Sales) he preferred the 'metallic beliefs and regimental devotions' of his Jesuit confessor, Father La Chaise, who also managed the Church patronage—much to her disgust—on the truly Jesuit principle that saintliness is the poorest of recommendations to a bishopric. In secular matters she was still more helpless. Louis disliked her knowing much about business, and on the two recorded occasions when she ventured to remonstrate (once about his expenditure on building, once about his persecution of the Protestants) cut her very short—the last time with a curt reminder that she had begun life as a Protestant herself. Yet it may be doubted whether France lost much by Louis' inattention to his wife. When zealous young philanthropists like Fénelon tried to make her 'a sentinel in the midst of Israel'

and patroness of their schemes of social reform, she answered—truly enough—that she had neither taste nor talent for public affairs. The few political utterances in her letters are almost childishy sentimental; typical of them is her enthusiasm for the restoration of the exiled Stuarts, due solely to the tearful and incompetent piety of James the Second's Queen. The most that can be claimed for her is a knowledge of the *molles aditus et tempora*, when the King would listen without disguise to things which his ministers could not well say at the Council-board. And perhaps, had a Walpole been forthcoming, she might have made a humbler Caroline of Anspach.

As it was, there is something infinitely pathetic in the contrast between her great aims and their petty realisation. Instead of ministering to Louis' spiritual, she had to be content with attending to his bodily health; it was a triumph if she could restrain his truly royal appetite for strawberries and mushrooms, and 'teach him how to be ill.' It is true she had her fill of adulation from Versailles, where the King was for ever discovering little expedients for paying her semi-royal honours. St. Simon and the Duchess of Orleans grow pale with anger as they tell how—in a Court where spoons and cushions had a mystic significance, where the stool of the mere Duchess was carefully distinguished from the straight-backed chair of the Princess, and an armchair was the sacramental symbol of a reigning Sovereign—Madame de Maintenon's drawing-room was furnished with only two of these last, one for the King and one for herself. But both her enemies admit that she cared very little for such distinctions, and that nothing could be more modest than the place she took at the few State functions she attended.

But these uncoveted honours were bought at a heavy price. She herself said of her position that it had no neutral point, but must either intoxicate or crush; and her letters leave us little doubt that the latter was its more usual effect. For this her husband was chiefly to blame; autocratic inconsiderateness, joined to fanatical love of etiquette and order, had made him the most remorseless of domestic tyrants. At seventy-five, although racked by rheumatism from head to foot, she must still go with him to meets of the royal hounds; for, as she says, 'no tastes are allowed here but the master's, and I must confess that stag-hunting was never one of mine.' At home she had to resign her-



self to 'die symmetrically of draughts,' since Louis' sense of the fitness of things could not tolerate a screen in front of her big, ill-fitting windows. He spent hours daily in the one large room that served her both for sitting in and sleeping; often he stayed there working with his ministers till it was time for her to go to bed. 'I call in my maids to help me to undress,' she says, 'knowing all the time that he is in a fever lest they should overhear something. I have to hurry almost to the point of making myself ill—you know how I have hated hurry all my life. Even when I have got to bed, my troubles are not yet over. Often I should like a warming-pan, but there is no maid within call, and the King never suspects that I want anything. Being master everywhere, and always doing what he likes, he has not the slightest notion how much others have to put themselves out in his service. Sometimes, during my heavy colds, I have choked down a cough until I was almost suffocated, and the minister in attendance has had to call his attention to it.'

If the King haunted her in the evenings, the minor royalties never left her alone by day. 'They think,' she said, 'that Vision of themselves is Beatific, and compensates for everything else.' It was seldom enough she sat down to dinner without having that elderly lout, the Dauphin, lolling speechless in a corner, or the King's brother, the Duke of Orleans, fidgeting round her with a shower of questions, as to why she took one dish and not another. Or else the young Duchess of Burgundy, wife of the Dauphin's eldest son, burst in with her ladies, and 'I am treated to an account of somebody's jokes, and somebody else's satirical speeches, and the good stories of a third, until I am ready to drop with fatigue at never hearing a word of sense. . . . At last they begin to drift away, but one of them has always something special—sure to be tiresome or unpleasant—to confide to me; either she has quarrelled with her husband, or been libelled, or else she wants me to ask for something from the King. . . . The curse of my life is that I have neither leisure nor occupation; no monastic Rule could be harder than Versailles.'

The one relief from this intolerable monotony was her great girls' school of St. Cyr, established by Louis within an easy distance of Versailles, as a kind of wedding present to his wife. She had always had a special taste for education, for which her leading qualities well fitted her; the old social elasticity and judgment, the old desire at once to influence and to sacrifice herself for

others, all reappear in her little informal lectures to the mistresses.

All you have to teach your pupils,' she said to them, 'is Christianity and reason; but to do that you must use every means in your power, excepting harshness, which never yet brought anyone to God. . . . Try to be good mothers to good children, and dare to order them to respect you. . . . Remember that, nuns as you are, the girls have the first claim on you; and let untiring devotion to them take the place of ordinary convent austerities.'

And not only did old qualities come to light, but kept their freshness untarnished by Versailles. There every year added to her stiffness and reserve—she herself uses the expression, *sèche comme moi*, as a kind of proverb. At St. Cyr she was at everyone's service, and never happier than when 'teaching Mlle. de la Tour to read, or examining a Postulant on her vocation.' The school represented a far sounder political idea than usually emanated from her brain. It was established for the daughters of impecunious nobles, but its benefits were also intended for their future children and dependents; returned to her home, each pupil was to become a centre of provincial enlightenment, and do her best towards giving France the two things France most needed—'broth and education.' The same spirit of ardent, yet sensible and candid, patriotism inspired all the lessons of St. Cyr. Madame de Maintenon brought the national triumphs vividly before her girls by sketches of the great men she had known, such as Condé and Turenne; but she never allowed them to forget the national disgraces—everyone was a Frenchwoman, and must learn to suffer with the rest. During the disastrous War of the Spanish Succession each of Marlborough's victories meant a Day of Humiliation to the school; and even its dinner-table bore eloquent witness to the universal misery and famine that followed in the train of the war.

Lastly, St. Cyr shows Madame de Maintenon's religion in its best and brightest form. At Court—what with the ennui of her myriad petty duties, and her anxiety about Louis' soul—she sank into something little better than a narrow, timorous devotee, morbidly keen to shift whatever burdened her conscience on to the shoulders of her priests. At St. Cyr the more objectionable forms of clericalism were sternly repressed. There were no agnuses or reliquaries or other 'trumpery convent amusements'; the girls were taught that reason was the best auxiliary to piety. Nothing angered Madame de Maintenon more than the fatuities



of ordinary convent schools—unless it was their prurient shame-facedness. ‘The pupils,’ she wrote, ‘learn by heart the First Commandment, and adore the Virgin; they say “Thou shalt not steal,” and see no harm in cheating the King out of his taxes. One little girl was scandalised because her father spoke of his breeches before her. Another, when I asked her to name the Sacraments, would not mention marriage, and said, with a simper, that it was not the custom to do so at the convent where she was before. This is the sort of thing that makes conventual education ridiculous. When these young ladies get husbands themselves, they will find that marriage is no joke.’

To this moral training of her girls her later energies were all directed. She drove over daily from Versailles; at Louis XIV.’s death (A.D. 1715), she retired altogether to St. Cyr; there she died (April 15, 1719) and was buried in the chapel. Indeed, the one reproach against her is that she made herself too indispensable. During her lifetime she had been the one organic force in the place; once she was gone, petrification quickly set in. Exactly half a century after her death, Horace Walpole visited the school, to find the imprint of her dead hand everywhere—portraits of her in all the rooms, her proverbs and maxims the chief intellectual food of the girls. ‘She was not only their foundress, but their saint,’ he says, ‘and their adoration of her memory has quite eclipsed the Virgin Mary.’ None of her wishes was worse fulfilled than the prayer that St. Cyr might be able to do without her.

Still, in its own modest way, St. Cyr did France long and valuable service. Before it was swept away by the Revolution, many hundreds of young ladies had learnt there how to be good Christians and good Frenchwomen. And its foundress takes an honourable place in history, as a woman who, in all the relations of life, did her duty gallantly and uncomplainingly according to her lights, narrow and ungracious as those lights might sometimes be. Both as educationalist and wife of Louis XIV., she compels our decent admiration; while as a victim to the wear and tear of Courts—to what her own letters call the unendurable ennui of unimaginable greatness—she has claims upon our sympathy equal to any modern Martyred Empress.

ST. CYRES.

*MY FRIEND YOSHOMAI,<sup>1</sup>**A TALE OF MIND AND LONGITUDE.*

WITHIN the strait walls of Herr Gravin's riding school at Bonn on the Rhine I came across Yoshomai—came across him in more ways than one; for he having fallen off his horse when Fräulein Gravin, cracking her whip, uttered the dread word 'Galopiren,' and my careful steed checking her stride to avoid him, I dismounted parabolically and he broke my fall. He received my sulky apology silently, but with the sweetest smile, and was in his saddle, and out of it again as before, while I was nervously hopping to get into mine.

I was not a great horseman, but, while I smote the tan only at intervals, Yoshomai hammered it incessantly; over and over again he must have hurt himself, but always he sprang up as smartly as he slammed down, and was running after his mount, crying, 'Geht es besser, Fräulein?' And although she invariably answered, 'Nein, mein Herr,' he still smiled, if sometimes a little sadly. For a time I regarded this as the care-moulded simper of the ballet girl, but in the end I found it the genuine product of a quite limitless good nature.

We were both of an age, and not an old one—somewhere under twenty; but as I tumbled less frequently from my horse I felt it within my rights to patronise Yoshomai, and now and then I would give him little hints to which he listened with rapt attention, although I do not remember that he ever adopted them. Experience has taught me that he was right, but at the time I took this somewhat amiss, and one day I ridiculed him to red-haired, lean Miss Gravin, who startled me by answering that he rode better than I.

Reflecting that it was useless to argue with a woman, particularly if your knowledge of her language is limited to the idiomatic but trite observations at the back of Otto's Grammar, and a confused recollection of the weak and consequently facile verbs, I confined my reply to the useful monosyllable 'So!' whereupon she answered as laconically, 'Doch!'

At last the time came when I was allowed to ride forth on the

<sup>1</sup> Copyright, in the United States of America 1902, by F. Norreys Connell.



most sagacious and trustworthy animal in Mr. Gravin's establishment, an old puce-coloured mare with legs as long as church steeples, but less elastic. My vainglory prompted me to suggest that Yoshomai should come too: I never dreamt that he would take up the challenge, but he did.

'I would not have you run any risk,' I pointed out as an afterthought.

'It has been run,' he answered, and for the moment I did not take his meaning, but when he pushed his parti-coloured gelding into the street after me I perceived that he had been there before. In fact, Yoshomai was a different man in the open air from what he had been in the *manège*; and if he still looked so ridiculous that the street boys cackled at him, I could not help thinking that even I would have lost some dignity astride of a circus horse.

My discreet courser was docile as a Lowther Arcade cow, but her paces as we broke into a trot on the paved Coblentzer Strasse brought back a vivid recollection of some less pleasant incidents of my schooldays. Yet so long as friend Yoshomai went bobbety-bob on his tricolour, I could not as a Briton relinquish the task of beating the same measure on my puce. Ye gods, who for his pleasure would be whipped with a blunt razor fixed in a frying pan? It was a level road to Godesberg, without a hill to break the stride, and Yoshomai bobbed on and on every inch of the four miles.

I once bubbled out the deceitful plea, 'M—m—mein puff-puff Pferd scheint müde,' but Yoshomai seemed deaf and I needs must jiggety-jig in his wake until at last he drew rein at the Hotel Adler. Even then he did not dismount, but waiting till I came alongside said apologetically that he was conscious of fatigue and would be glad if I could see my way to allow a short halt. I answered as I clambered pitifully to earth, 'O certainly, since you wish it,' and I reflected on the idleness of Browning's poem, 'How We Brought the Good News,' reckoning the distance from Ghent to Aix at not less than twenty times the journey we had made; but then the chaps had galloped, which is pleasanter than trotting, provided you don't slip off.

Yoshomai and I were relieved of our steeds by a stable boy old enough to have performed the same service for Frederick the Great, and we sate ourselves at a garden table with a bottle of Zeitlinger and two of Victoria water between us. Although we had seen each other every other day for some weeks past, it was, I think, the first time we had indulged in any social intercourse.

He was frankly shy, and I was also, for I doubted he might have caught a glimpse of my uncavalier-like performance on the road. After a little while it dawned upon me that so far was he from being conscious of my shortcomings that he awaited in dread my criticisms of his own. I could not in the circumstances be very severe, and I drew his gratitude by my praise and encouragement, while adding a rider that by trotting for long at a time one is prone to acquire ungraceful motions.

'It is true,' he answered eagerly. 'You are right, you are always right ——': his opinion on this subject practically coincided with my own, but I had the grace to say, 'Not always; sometimes, perhaps often, but not always.'

'But,' he burst out, 'is it not good to ride in the fresh air! I do not love riding in Herr Gravin's *manège*. You remember what Goethe says about riding indoors and out,' and here he rattled off a long quotation, of which, although I nodded my head intelligently at every pause, I scarcely understood a word. Later I chanced on the passage in 'Wahrheit und Dichtung,' and luckily found myself in agreement with it; at the moment I thought it good to ask him whether he spoke English as fluently as his German.

'I can speak it a very little,' he modestly replied. 'I have no practice with it.'

'If you would like to try it with me,' I cunningly suggested, 'I should be very pleased to help you with it.'

'O, I thank you, sir,' returned Yoshomai, eagerly. 'If you will please.'

After this the conversation, flowing easily, interested me more.

'If you hate Gravin's place so, why do you go there?' I asked.

'Because,' said he, 'I want to be able to ride anywhere, even within horrible walls. Besides, Mr. and Miss Gravin, they learn me tetchnicallities.'

'Technicalities,' I corrected. 'They teach you technicalities.'

'Ah, thank you,' cried Yoshomai, as though I had given him some gorgeous present. 'Technicalities, technicalities. Mr. and Miss Gravin, they teach me technicalities. Goes it better?'

'Much better,' I nodded, and Yoshomai thanked me again.

I took stock of his appearance as I had never done before: he was far from tall, and what length he had was in the body, the shortness of his stumpy legs accounting for his clumsiness on horseback, which all his pluck and pertinacity could not diminish.



His countenance might loosely be described as that of a low comedian, were it not that vulgarity was supplanted by amiability, and in contrast with the broad mouth and splayed nostrils beamed Sphinx-like eyes, full of the material sensuality of the Orient. The whole personality was absurdly fascinating, what little in it was repellent serving only to heighten what was alluring by making it illusive. His clothes lent no aid to his appearance: the hat was an absurd German coalscuttle, on the rim of which a regiment might have formed square; his coat, though cut à l'anglaise, made no pretence to fit, and his legs resembled twin sponge bags. I wondered if he were made of iron that he could straddle a horse in such a kit. His stitched bow tie was a monstrosity, but the collar and the shirt under it caught my eye and puzzled me; they were of an extremely fine linen and might have come from the best Belfast loom, but the shape of the collar as well as the shirt front and cuffs forbade the assumption. My curiosity was pricked. 'Do you happen to know any shop here in Bonn where I could get some decent linen underclothing?' I asked.

'Jaeger has a place near the town hall,' he answered. 'I have not bought anything here.' Then, seeing that I awaited further enlightenment, he added, 'What I wear I bought in Holland.'

'So you have lived in Holland also?' I asked.

'Not lived, sir; studied. I was at Leyden before I came here.'

Chiefly to kill the time we had to spend on horseback, but also partly from interest in Yoshomai, I led him to talk on and on about himself. It transpired that he had been reading law at Leyden; yet when I bantered him as a coming legal light he shook his head. 'Oh, no,' he said; 'oh, no.' I asked him why he exchanged Leyden for Bonn.

'I do not belong to the university here,' he said. 'I study with Colonel Menzel.'

Now Menzel was one of Von Bredow's squadron-leaders at Rezonville, who eked out his pension by taking army pupils: and a queer lot they were—Germans, English, Spanish, Italians, with a sprinkling of Asiatics.

My interest in Yoshomai deepened, for his studies were kindred to my own; and I expressed my lack of comprehension why a candidate for the military profession should commence his studies by attending law lectures in a Dutch university.

Yoshomai smiled. 'It was the idea of my father,' said he. 'My father is very liberal. He delights in modern things, but his education is of the past. He has read very little, and travelled less. In spite of himself, his ideas are old-fashioned. He still thinks the modern officer has no more to learn than the ancient Samurai, the leader of swordsmen. So when he sent me to Europe he bade me, besides my military studies, acquire some learned profession; as if my own profession were not to be a learned one. Why, if I live to be a hundred, I shall never know half enough about it.'

The severity of this view startled me. I could not claim to be a hard worker, but I considered myself in a fair way to some acquaintance with the contents of Clery's 'Minor Tactics' within a few years' time. And I was of opinion that beyond the covers of that work military erudition could not go. How Yoshomai purposed to spend his time I could not imagine.

'Well,' said I, trying to conceal my puzzlement; 'and was it also your father who selected Leyden for the venue of your studies?'

'It was, sir,' Yoshomai answered. 'You see, Holland was, in his youth, the European country best known in Japan. Indeed, it was almost the only country, except China and Corea, known at all until the American ships appeared off Yedo, 1853.'

'Did not the Portuguese have a settlement somewhere?'

I hazarded. It was more than half a guess.

'Yes,' Yoshomai replied. 'And we had St. Francis Xavier and the Jesuits; but in the end we caught them intriguing in our politics, and we cleared out all Europeans except the Dutch, who kept strictly to business at Nagasaki and never interfered on any pretence—not even during the Christian persecutions, except to lend us guns to batter the Christian fortress.'

My religious feelings were shocked. 'That was a bit thick,' I said.

'I think they were right,' he said thoughtfully. 'You sell arms to the Turks and Chinese to use against Christians. They lent theirs to save their factory. Besides, these same Christians were Spanish and Portuguese converts who injured the Dutch whenever they had a chance.' He had delivered this argument very seriously, but the smile reappeared as he added, 'Besides, the guns were no use.'

'I see you admire the Dutch,' I observed.

Again Yoshomai shook his head. 'No, I cannot admire. I



like and respect, but I do not admire. I admire some episodes in their history—some men who stand out from the crowd; but my admiration is with the past. Now the Dutch live in an intellectual fool's paradise.'

Yoshomai's talk had gone over my head, and I did not pursue the subject.

'Do you know England too?' I asked.

'I have not been there, but I have read enough to know that she too lives in a fool's paradise, and not an intellectual fool's paradise.'

This sounded to me sheer cheek, and a little warmly I begged to be informed what country he considered did not live in a fool's paradise, ironically suggesting China.

His smile broadened. 'China,' he declared, 'lives in what you call a dam-fool's paradise. Three countries that do not live in a fool's paradise are Prussia, Russia, and Japan. And Prussia shall acquire Holland's paradise, Russia yours, and we China's.'

I could scarcely control my temper at this prophetic redistribution of the earth. 'I do not think these interesting events will take place in our time,' I suggested scathingly.

'Perhaps not,' Yoshomai admitted, without offence at my tone. 'It depends whether "our time" ends in half an hour or half a century.'

'Do you mean to tell me,' I cried, 'that half a century hence England will be a Russian province?'

'I am not brain-cracked,' Yoshomai said. 'I tell you that half a century hence the Russian flag will fly in certain places where the Union Jack flies now; that Friesland, Gröningen and Overyssel will belong to the German Empire; and that my country will possess Korea, Formosa, Shingking and Shantung.'

He was going on to tell me what would have come to pass in a century and a half, when I, whose geographical knowledge was insufficient to follow his argument, much less confute it, suggested that it was time to be getting home.

He immediately dropped the contention, and made ready to be gone. He insisted on paying for what we had drunk, and he would likewise have insisted on trotting all the way home, only that by good fortune his mount was discovered to have developed sore-back. Gravin told me the next day that he had found mine in the same condition; but I was careful not to look for any sign

of it while in Yoshomai's company, although he was very anxious for me to do so, being, naturally, a shade put out by this evidence of his clumsy equestrianism.

After leaving our horses at the riding school we adjourned to the Café Tewele, and over a bottle of sparkling Moselle made many plans in earnest of future good-fellowship.

A few days later he called on me at my rooms in Friedrich Wilhelm Strasse, and we went together to the gardens of the Hotel Kley to hear the band. Here occurred the incident which set a seal upon our friendship.

I had observed that, notwithstanding his semi-barbarous appearance, his outrageous costumes, and his ungainly seat, Yoshomai had won some favour from Miss Gravin; and now that we were together I could see that she was not the only woman to fall under the fascination of the Jap's eyes.

At a table near us sat three *Corpsstudenten*—'Green Caps,' if my memory serves me; and with them was a fluffy, fair-haired, plump, and pretty maiden, whose mother kept a fancy stationer's shop under the shadow of the steeple of the Münster Kirche.

Now I had some trifling knowledge of this young lady, but my acquaintance with student etiquette forbade my displaying it. Yoshomai was less discreet. Seeing a pretty girl, he fixed his eyes on her, and caught hers, which yielded at once. From that time she lost touch with her own party, and whenever Yoshomai troubled to turn to them her eyes were always ready to receive him.

Yoshomai's misconduct did not amount to more than a display of doubtful taste, but it was easy for me to see whither it would lead him. Two of the Green Caps wore the ugly badges of the *Schwingsübel*; the third I judged to be a Freshman, yet un-blooded. It would be the aim of his seniors to fix a quarrel on him if they could.

'If you don't want a duel in the morning,' I said to Yoshomai, 'you'd better take your eyes off that flaxy, waxy doll over there.'

This warning did not produce the effect for which I looked.

'A duel,' Yoshomai echoed. 'A duel. Can I get a duel by just looking at her like this? Will you be my second?'

'Can you handle the student's sword?' I asked.

Yoshomai's face fell. 'Oh, is it that sort of duel? Blades without points; that is nonsense.'



'It's not nonsense,' I observed; 'if you have your nose snipped off, as I saw happen three days ago, to Dulheuer, the jurist.'

'Ugh!' Yoshomai snorted, passing his fingers over his face. 'I heard nothing of his death.'

'Oh, he wasn't killed,' I answered. 'Only disfigured.'

Yoshomai stared at me, really horror-stricken. 'Do you mean that he went on living without a nose?'

'Certainly,' I answered. 'It's a bit inconvenient, and to my mind, it's not pretty; but I've no doubt you'll see him walking about here as proud as Punch as soon as the doctor lets him out.'

'Oh,' Yoshomai cried, almost piteously. 'They are mad, these students,' and mechanically repeated the statement in German: 'Sie sind verrückt. Die Studenten sind verrückt.'

This incautiously loud speech precipitated the catastrophe.

The words were barely said when I saw our neighbours busy with their card cases, and while one of the elder students settled up with the waiter, and went off with the girl, the other and the Freshman came over to our table and asked our names, or rather at first they asked only for Yoshomai's, and then requested, in a somewhat supercilious tone, to be informed whether I considered myself to be his friend. To which I answered, certainly that I did.

The younger of the students, the actual challenger, was well-mannered enough, and I recognised that the truculence of his air was only to mask his nervousness; but the other was a beer-bloated swaggerer of the most offensive type.

I very much disliked the position in which I found myself, for, my principal being undoubtedly in the wrong, I had not the freedom of action which would have been mine if the quarrel had been entirely unprovoked. Natheless, I kept my wits about me, and, insisting on the choice of weapons, declined absolutely the *Schwingsäbel*. For this attitude the Green Caps were unprepared, and as the incident had drawn too much attention for them to let the matter drop without exposing themselves to ridicule, the argument tended towards the personal.

I was accordingly relieved when my friend the Freiherr Von Mondenstein, the adjutant of the local battalion of the Regiment von Göben, happening to pass, came to offer me his services.

His arrival put quite another complexion on the matter, and the overbearing Green Cap stilling his voice I explained rapidly to Von Mondenstein who Yoshomai was and what had happened.

Von Mondenstein smiled and gave judgment in a moment. 'The Japanese gentleman is certainly seriously at fault,' said he. 'He must give the student gentleman satisfaction with pistols. I hope that will satisfy you,' he said to the Freshman, who seemed in doubt; and as he did not answer the Freiherr added easily, 'If that does not satisfy you, I shall be very happy to serve you with the *Schwingsäbel*.'

The Freshman hastily declared that he was satisfied; and I thought he was wise, for it was Von Mondenstein I had seen carve Dulheuer the jurist.

I thoroughly enjoyed the turn things had taken, for the students, who had counted on bleeding Yoshomai to make sport, now found themselves saddled with a serious affair. To do the blusterer justice, he tried to get his principal out of the scrape by reminding Von Mondenstein that the pistol was not a student's weapon, but the Baron was inexorable: 'You have challenged this gentleman, sir,' said he. 'You must take the consequences. For my part I do not think students should fight at all. They should have nurses to keep them from quarrelling.'

'He insulted the lady who was with us,' said the student, angrily.

The Baron grinned a deliciously provoking grin: 'What sort of lady? A student's lady?'

The Freshman, evidently in his calf love, fired up at this: 'My card, sir,' said he, and thrust it into the Baron's hand.

'I thank you,' said Von Mondenstein, imperturbably. 'If you are alive the day after to-morrow——.' He paused.

'Well, sir?' snapped the student. 'If I am?'

'You will not be the next day,' the Freiherr lisped, and, turning his back on both, chatted with Yoshomai while I arranged with the elder student the time and conditions of the duel.

That done the three of us left the gardens, Von Mondenstein accompanying us as far as the Infantry Barracks. When we had parted company with him I talked to Yoshomai as seriously as I could.

'Are you anything of a pistol shot?' I asked.

'I can kill him at the distance,' he answered.

'And do you intend to do so?' I inquired.

Yoshomai did not miss the suggestion in my tone: 'Why not? He will try to kill me.'

I said at once that I did not believe for a moment he would.



And that even if he wished to he could not for want both of skill and of nerve.

Yoshomai walked a whole street in silence.

‘Why, why, why did he challenge me?’ he asked.

‘He challenged you,’ said I, endeavouring to find words for the complicated train of ideas, ‘firstly because he was egged on to it by the other two.’

‘Why did not either of them challenge me?’

‘Because they wanted him to fight. And they thought we would be foolish enough to let them name their weapon.’

‘Yes,’ said Yoshomai, trembling with indignation. ‘They thought to cut off my nose. He thought to cut off my nose.’ He burst out laughing. ‘Now I will cut off his life.’

‘I should sleep on it,’ said I, ‘before you make up your mind.’

‘But if I do not kill him,’ Yoshomai argued, ‘the Freiherr Von Mondenstein will.’

‘I’m not so sure,’ I said. ‘Besides, Von Mondenstein, for all his good points, is a bit of a swashbuckler, and in my country anyway we do not think that good form.’

Yoshomai pricked his ears, much interested. ‘Is that so? Shakespeare or Edmund Burke, or Nelson or Mr. Gladstone, you think, would not approve of my killing him?’

I answered unhesitatingly that every one of the four would cordially condemn such an act.

‘Ah, then, I must reconsider the matter,’ agreed Yoshomai, as we parted for the night.

The next morning at five o’clock I called for him in a closed carriage, and having picked up at the Caserne Von Mondenstein, who had expressed a desire to be present, we drove to a certain spot on the Rhine bank where a boat waited to ferry us across. Near Bühl was the meeting place.

It was a fragrant, early summer morning, and although I did not anticipate any very bloody ending to the foolish business, untoward things will happen, and I was glad it was not I who had to stand up and be shot at. The pleasures of sun and air and water as we ripped across the current were mottled by the lugubrious humour which Von Mondenstein, after the manner of fire-eaters, thought appropriate to the occasion.

Our opponents were waiting us: they had brought not only a doctor but a clergyman, the sight of whom drove from my mind

all thought of dangerous intent on the part of the young student.

The preliminaries took a little time, the duel itself was over in a second. When Von Mondenstein dropped his handkerchief the Freshman shut his eyes and fired in the air; Yoshomai did not fire at all, but, having stood steadily to receive the bullet if it fell his way, handed his loaded pistol to me and stepped over to his opponent.

'If I have given you offence, I did it without malice,' he said. 'And I am very sorry.'

'Thank you, sir,' the student replied very readily, and offered his hand.

Von Mondenstein shook his head gravely: 'This will never do; very irregular,' he said.

'O come,' I said, in a low voice. 'My man would have killed him, and he's only a boy.'

'Boys should be boys, then,' snorted Von Mondenstein. 'But of course it's not my business. Only please, my dear kind sir, don't say I was present when this farce took place.' He went over to the Freshman. 'I have chosen single sticks for our meeting,' he said brutally.

The Freshman flushed to the temples. 'Do you object to my using a whip?' he retorted.

Von Mondenstein was a gentleman under his swaggering exterior, and did not resent the justifiable snub; indeed, he admired the other's spirit.

'Sir, if you will allow it,' he said, 'we will postpone our meeting until you are old enough to handle dangerous weapons.'

'I am quite old enough to receive your fire,' said the student proudly.

'Thank you,' laughed Von Mondenstein. 'I am not a chicken butcher.'

'You take advantage of your cloth, sir, to insult me,' cried the student, meaning, of course, that he dared not sully the Emperor's uniform with a blow. It was Von Mondenstein's turn to redden now, and his truculent manner fell from him. 'That it should be possible for you to say that,' he said courteously, 'proves me in the wrong. Your life is in my hands. I give it to you with an apology.'

All things considered, this was handsome of him, and the Freshman appreciated it. Five minutes later the whole party,



including the doctor and clergyman, left the field and recrossed the Rhine together as friendly as if nothing in the world could lead us to disagree on any subject whatsoever. The Freshman entertained us at breakfast, and the affair ended in all cosiness.

I should not have described the incident between Von Mondenstein and the student so minutely only that Yoshomai was much impressed by it.

The breakfast terminated hilariously past noon, and the necessity of going to bed to digest it prevented all private discussion between Yoshomai and myself that day, but the following evening he came to see me and we talked things over.

'I do not understand you Europeans in the very least,' he sighed, wringing his hands. 'It is incomprehensible. I have thought, and thought, and thought, but I understand nothing.'

'I find these German students a bit ridiculous, too,' said I. 'But of course we all see things from different points of view. Even, you observe, the officer and the student affect different standpoints?'

'Yes, yes,' Yoshomai assented, 'but with us it is not so. In my country, if a man put a quarrel on me, I should kill him or he would kill me.'

'But not such a foolish quarrel!' I protested.

'If fools quarrel foolishly, fools are better dead,' Yoshomai declared sententiously.

'Yes, fools are better dead,' I agreed. 'All the same, one doesn't care to have the deading of them.'

'Why not?' quoth Yoshomai's inquiring spirit, 'as a soldier you will have to kill fools and wise men too.'

'One never knows,' I said; 'it may be that I shall never kill as much as a West African nigger. And anyway there's no personal animosity in it.'

'Personal animosity!' Yoshomai echoed. 'I never felt personal animosity in my life. I liked the young student. I could love him as a brother, but I would have killed him had it not been for you.'

'Let brotherly love continue,' said I, and tried to explain things to him and to myself. 'The fact is,' said I, 'the difference between East and West is that you hold life cheap. We don't; being a pious Christian people, with a firm belief in Heaven, we try to keep out of it as long as we can. You are brought up to regard death as an unavoidable incident of

secondary importance. We—I speak now for my own people—think it rather morbid to make a will.’

‘I think,’ said Yoshomai, ‘in this we are wiser than you.’

‘I daresay you are,’ I answered; ‘have a drink,’ and I led him to other subjects.

From that time Yoshomai and I spent a part of almost every day in each other’s society, and my affection for him grew, as did also, I like to think, his for me. He was, however, an exceedingly hard worker, and would shut himself up now and then for a week on end. This was generally after I had tempted him to waste a day with me in Cologne or up the river. ‘I cannot understand how you will pass your exams.,’ he would exclaim; ‘you are so very idle, my dear friend, you are so very idle.’

‘O come,’ I returned, ‘I work as much as is necessary; I have my studies well in hand.’ Whereupon Yoshomai would say that he would like to see me tackle a Japanese or even a German examination paper. Once he was reduced to the depths of despair because Menzel had discovered an error in his calculation of the dimensions of a field work.

‘After all,’ I pointed out, ‘it’s the merest slip of the pen in setting down the terms of the proposition.’

‘That’s not the point,’ Yoshomai groaned: ‘the point is that men who make mistakes are not to be trusted with the honour of their country.’

‘We don’t look at it that way,’ I laughed. ‘We regard a man who never does anything foolish as a pretentious prig. In fact, we employ fools for preference, in the hope of their having good fortune.’

‘O, you are mad,’ Yoshomai declared again, ‘you are mad, and the gods will destroy you.’

‘If the gods are set on our destruction,’ I contended, ‘what availeth wisdom?’

‘To bother the gods,’ was Yoshomai’s prompt reply, and he went off to take such precautions as might preclude further error in the calculation of the dimensions of field works.

A few weeks later came the time when fate parted us—he returning East to enter the military college at Tokyo, I a little later coming back to England.

This was eleven years ago, when it was not quite so easy to get into the army as it is now. I suppose I really had idled my



time in Bonn, for to my surprise I was ploughed for Sandhurst, and, trying the alternative door of the Militia, I only succeeded at the third shot in qualifying for a cavalry commission. This I was too poor to accept, and so I found myself at twenty-two an aimless waif, with the unearned reputation of a good-for-nothing.

They would not enlist me because of some defect in my eyesight, the nature of which I have never been able to understand, and which I have been credibly informed exists only in the imagination of certain distinguished oculists of the Army Medical Service, so, having no influence to procure me a colony to govern, there was nothing left for me but to go on the stage. Eighteen months of this brought me to India, where I disagreed with my manageress and fell in with a newspaper editor whose son had been in my militia. He sent me to write up a hill war, and for once in my life someone was satisfied with me besides myself. Another followed, and my success was not impaired, so when the Chino-Japanese hostilities broke out in 1894 I was emboldened to ask my chief whether he would risk a few hundred to plant me in the thick of it. He rose like a bird: I packed and sailed first steamer, feeling I had won my right to walk the earth at last.

My chief was in favour of my seeing things from the Chinese side, as he had some acquaintance with one of the military Mandarins, and this influence, eked out by bribery, corruption, and sheer bluff, carried me through Shingking to Korea—that is to say, to the boundary of that unquiet empire of the Morning Calm, for at the other side of the Yalu river we found the Japanese, and after some desultory warfare the Chinese Commander abandoned the contest and fell back.

I have always respected my personal safety as far as was compatible with plying my trade, so I seized this opportunity to shift my standpoint to the conquering side, surrendering to a patrol of Japanese lancers and requesting to be favoured with an interview by their Commander-in-Chief. This was Marshal Yamagata, who received me kindly, although he could not resist a sarcasm at the idea of anyone trying to describe what the Chinese Generals were doing when they themselves had no conception of it. And not only was Marshal Yamagata courteous, but he was so unselfish as to advise me that his future operations would be less worth following than those of Count Oyama, who

by that time had landed in the Liao-Tung peninsula, on his way to attack the northern defences of the Gulf of Pechili. Accordingly, I availed myself of his safe conduct to Ping Ying, where the skipper of a Cardiff tramp, chartered as transport by the Mikado's Government, stowed me away as a coolie and gave me a passage to Hua-yuan-kon. I reached the front on the evening of November 6, the day Kinchow had fallen; and the following morning was a spectator of the bloodless capture of Talienwan. The succeeding days there was little doing, and I used them to sleep away the fatigues of my journey, for I had not had a decent night's rest since leaving the Indian mail boat.

Recognising that I knew something about soldiering, and had not been sent to report the campaign as one reports a police case or a charity dinner, the Japanese officers treated me with every consideration, and vied with each other in supplying me with information, though now and then it was saddled with a time proviso. In return it was my custom to send no line to my paper which I had not shown to some officer of field rank; and in consequence my lot was as pleasant as could be.

Fresh troops arrived to share in the attack on Port Arthur, and they had hardly taken their ground when a troop of their horse was very roughly handled by the Chinese, and only escaped disaster by the brilliant handling of half a company of infantry by a young lieutenant, who, seeing their scrape, doubled out on his own responsibility to their rescue.

I scribbled an account of the affair as well as I could piece it together from the camp rumours, and was sending it off when it occurred to me that I had not mentioned the name of the officer, and I asked what it was. They told me, 'Yoshomai.'

Curiously enough, the sound did not at once strike me as familiar, and it was not until I had asked the spelling and had written it down that I remembered my Bonn acquaintance. My first thought was the humiliating one that I who had been his patron five years before should now find myself the mere chronicler of his exploits; and this, coupled with the reflection that he had not answered the letter in which I told him of the failure of my last exam., prompted me to avoid him. It was decreed, however, that we should meet, for, business bringing me into the neighbourhood of the headquarters tent, I encountered him coming from it. The Count had sent for him to be congratulated on his adventure.



When he saw me he started violently, and the colour went out of his face.

‘What’s the matter?’ I asked. ‘Don’t you know me?’

For an answer he dropped his forefinger tentatively on my shoulder. ‘You are flesh and blood?’ he queried.

‘Of course,’ I answered, a little tickled by the absurdity of his doubt.

‘I thought you were dead.’

‘Who told you that?’

‘Didn’t you fail in your exams., after all?’

‘Yes, but not in my heart,’ I smirked.

‘Oh, you Europeans!’ cried Yoshomai, just like the old Yoshomai of Bonn. ‘I cannot, cannot understand you.’

‘Did you think I was going to blow out my brains because of a durned exam.?’ I blurted.

‘When I read your letter,’ Yoshomai said, ‘I weeped because I could not make you the friendly office, being so far, far away.’

‘And that was why you didn’t write?’ said I.

‘You would not have me write to a defunct corpse?’ said Yoshomai. ‘And I thought you would have been a defunct corpse.’

I suggested that he might have given me the benefit of the doubt, and then turned the talk into the channel of things of the moment. First and foremost, I complimented him on his new-won fame, and he swallowed the phrases with childish delight. ‘You found it good?’ he murmured. ‘You found it good? I too find it not what you used to call half bad.’

‘It was tremendous,’ I reiterated. ‘I have sent an account of it to my paper.’

‘To your paper. Have you a paper, a journal, a real journal? Shall my name appear in it—please mention Olonghi too.’ Yoshomai frothed with excitement.

‘Who’s Olonghi?’ I asked.

‘My orderly: he was killed. I was attacked by four Chinese; he came to help and was killed.’

‘I never heard of him before,’ I admitted. ‘But if you tell me all about it I’ll try to work him in later.’

So our talk went on: Yoshomai was full of himself and the glory of his country. ‘What do you think of Japan now? Goes it best, eh? Remember you what I prophesied that day at Godesberg? We shall have Laotong too: you will see our flag

over Peking. I may not see it, but it will be there. Poor Olonghi he said he would see it. Man knows what will be seen, but not what he will see. Those days at Bonn, and the duel, and the foolish student with his clergyman. And the pretty girl; she was a doll, as you said. I found that out afterwards. What you said was always right. And yet you did not pass your exam. And yet you are here alive. O my dear, dear friend, how strange are Europeans. Poor Olonghi. Would you like to see his noble head?’

‘Not particularly, thanks,’ said I. ‘Who cut it off?’

‘I did,’ said Yoshomai. ‘He was a Samurai, you know, and when he was wounded he claimed the friendly office from me lest he should fall into the hands of the enemy. I have his head in my uniform case wrapped in a flag he captured. I will send it to-morrow to his home in Kiu-shiu. You really would not wish to see it? It is no trouble.’

I felt that I dared not refuse a second time this honour to Yoshomai’s *protégé*, so I went and inspected the poor grisly relic of a brave man, with the result that I was off my feed and out of temper for the rest of the day.

Yoshomai could not understand my moroseness: he told me Olonghi’s brother would avenge him in the next fight, and chattered on and on until my head was splitting, and he was recalled to duty by the announcement that on the morrow Port Arthur should be assailed.

That morrow left a deep impression on my mind. To begin with, to see troops moving to the attack at two o’clock in the morning by the light of Chinese lanterns was in itself remarkable. Moreover, I had never seen operations on such a large scale before; and, again, the peculiar conditions which allowed a huge fortress to be stormed by a combined naval and military assault are of a nature to strike the memory. I was standing near the heavy battery in the Shui-shih-ying valley when, as dawn whitened the sea at half-past six, they opened fire. This was not the best standpoint to take up, for the earlier interest of the fight lay with Nogi’s and Nishi’s brigades, sent far away on the right against the forts on the great hill, supposed to be the key of the enemy’s position. My reason for choosing it was that Hosegawa’s brigade, to which Yoshomai’s regiment, the 24th, belonged, would pass it as they swept on to storm the Cock’s Comb and Dragon works on the eastern face of the town. It was past nine when this attack was



developed, and Nishi and Nogi had already effected their lodgement on the western heights, from which their guns took the other defences in reverse; yet this frontal attack of Hosegawa's was no vain parade. I followed now the Brigadier's mountain battery and could see the track of the three battalions of the 24th, covered with casualties, as closing up their skirmishing lines they swarmed up the steep ascent to the forts. Then a faint echo of voices reached us as the gunfire stilled.

Spurring my thirteen-hand nag to his best speed, I rode now straight to the road leading between the silenced defences into the town. At a bridge there was a savage little fight between the 2nd Japanese and some Chinese, who, dropping their arms at last, were butchered to a man. I could not help a cry of remonstrance at this barbarity, whereupon the Japanese commander, turning on me, in indignant surprise, said, 'Why, sir, it is what you call tit-for-tat.'

This excuse was not without some colour, but the scene which followed in the town was unspeakably horrid; not soldiers, nor even only male civilians, fell victims to the Japanese: men, women, children, dogs, pigs—every living thing to be found in the streets of Port Arthur was blasted by their fury. I had already seen grim and ghastly episodes in our own Indian warfare, but there useless slaughter was the exception, here it was the rule. And the extraordinary thing was that the Japanese officers, those soft-spoken, intellectual gentlemen with whom it was a pleasure to mix and converse, seemed absolutely unconscious that there was anything outrageous in the conduct of their men. They certainly did not abet, but they made little or no effort to restrain.

It was not my business to get my throat cut in the effort to teach the Japanese humanity; but once, in spite of myself, I had to interfere. A young woman with a babe at breast rushed past me, pursued by a howling infantryman of Yoshomai's regiment waving a Samurai's sword. The wretched creature gained the shelter of a house and shut the door in the Jap's face, but it was a feeble protection, and he would have had it down in a breath only that I caught him from behind and flung him away.

Of course he turned his rage on me, and the next instant I was running at top speed to the place I had left my horse, with the swordsman at my heels and the swish of his blade in my ears.

With such a spur it is easy to run, but difficult to think

where : I took the wrong turn, and instead of reaching the open ground, where I had left my servant and horse, I plunged into a labyrinth of lanes.

The chase must have lasted some minutes, when some one stepped between me and my pursuer : there was a burst of voices in contention ; but I ran on unheeding until I heard Yoshomai's voice calling me to come back.

Slowly and cautiously I retraced my steps, revolver in hand, ready for a renewed onslaught, but I found my assailant dead in a puddle of blood which oozed from beneath his breastbone, and Yoshomai standing over him with a frightened, pitiful look in his eyes.

'Why did you provoke him ?' Yoshomai asked.

'I didn't provoke him,' I answered. 'I only kept him back from murdering a woman and child.'

'It was not your business,' Yoshomai murmured.

This answer seemed to me ridiculous, but I could hardly squabble with the man who had just saved my life, so I told him that, having seen the man belonged to his regiment, I thought I would save him from a crime.

'Yes, he does belong to my regiment,' agreed Yoshomai bitterly. 'It is the brother of Olonghi, and he is dead by my hand.'

'Was it necessary to kill him ?' I asked, a little startled.

Yoshomai bowed his head. 'He struck me, and so I had to kill him. And so I must kill myself too.'

'What !' I cried dumbfounded.

'I must kill myself—do *hari-kari*,' reiterated Yoshomai firmly. 'A Japanese officer cannot in honour be stricken by his own man and live.'

'Come, my dear fellow,' I returned. 'That's all primeval nonsense. Put the idea out of your head. Why, no one in the world will ever know that he did strike you.'

Yoshomai did not argue, he merely asked whether I would do him the friendly office, or in other words cut off his head after he had opened his body with his sword.

'I'm hanged if I do,' I answered, almost laughing at the craziness of the thought.

On this an extraordinary change came over Yoshomai's face.

His eyes blazed as he waved his still dripping sword. 'Go,



then, beloved but faithless friend,' he cried imperiously. 'Fool that I was to give my life for yours.'

'Yoshomai, old chap!' I exclaimed entreatingly; but there was a look on his face which quenched my arguments in fear, and I turned on my heel and fled as fast and faster than before.

The next day among the slain at the taking of Port Arthur I read the name of Lieutenant Yoshomai. He and the brother of Olonghi were said to have been murdered by the Chinese, and this supposed crime was balanced in the official reports against the atrocities committed by the troops.

F. NORREYS CONNELL.

*THE LUXURY OF DOING GOOD: COROLLARY.*

[NOTE.—Readers of the CORNHILL will remember an article in the February number by Mr. Stephen Gwynn on 'The Luxury of Doing Good,' in which, taking for his text Hobbes' dictum that 'Benevolence is a love of power and delight in the exercise of it,' he upholds the paradox that men do good not from pure and disinterested kindness, but for the gratification of the pleasurable, and therefore intrinsically selfish, instinct of action and self-expression. The essay has provoked the following verses.—ED. CORNHILL.]

PHILOSOPHER.

SAY, whither with those bags of gold,  
 Proprietor of wealth untold?  
 Tell one who knows of no such things  
 As Booms and Corners, Trusts and Rings,  
 What happy Rails, what lucky Mines,  
 What high capitalist's designs,  
 What province of finance or trade,  
 Expects your vivifying aid?  
 Oh, tell me, in what shy resort,  
 Victoria Street or Capel Court,  
 You go to buy th' augmenting share?  
 Tell me, my multi-millionaire!

MILLIONAIRE.

Excuse me, Sir: you wrongly guess;  
 This gold is for the C.O.S.  
 Think you the rich no object know  
 Save that they still may richer grow?  
 Nay, for myself—when shares are high  
 I hear the call of Charity;  
 And when I've given the humble poor  
 Some fraction of my golden store,  
 Full well I deem that fraction spent—  
 For I have been benevolent.



PHILOSOPHER.

Benevolent! 'Tis quite absurd  
 How people use that stupid word!  
 Read, to correct your boastful mood,  
 'The Luxury of Doing Good,'  
 Where Mr. Gwynn and Thomas Hobbes  
 Prove that the seeming-generous throbs  
 Which agitate at times your breast  
 Proceed from mere self-interest.  
 Learn that the man who helps his friends  
 Does it to serve his proper ends;  
 What aid you give, in power or pelf,  
 Is simply given to please yourself.  
 It shows a kind of moral twist  
 To think that you're an altruist;  
 Let such ideas at once take wing—  
 Because, of course, there's no such thing!

MILLIONAIRE.

Forgive me, if perhaps I err—  
 I am not a philosopher—  
 The gentle art of splitting hairs  
 Is not for multi-millionaires.  
 Yet, say,—if this your conduct guide,  
 Such rules, consistently applied,  
 Play, if conclusion right I draw,  
 The dickens with the Moral Law;  
 For how, on your peculiar plan,  
 Define the Bad or Virtuous man?

PHILOSOPHER.

You touch the spot; 'tis even so:  
 That's just the thing I meant to show;  
 I hardly thought to find so swift  
 A readiness to take my drift.  
 Both Good and Bad are really based  
 On mere discrepancy of taste;

That Virtue which your pulpits praise  
 Is simply a misleading phrase,  
 For so-called Vice is every bit  
 As justly laudable as it ;  
 And in a quite especial sense  
 This holds of your Benevolence.

## MILLIONAIRE.

Dear me! dear me! You're right, no doubt . . .  
 But leave the moral question out,  
 And think of my relations with  
 Impoverished Jones and blighted Smith,  
 Who, freed by me from misery's mesh,  
 Are started on their legs afresh:  
 Surely, it's reasonably plain  
 Some gratitude from them I gain?  
 They'll bless the man *qui cito dat*—  
 There's something, after all, in that!

## PHILOSOPHER.

Dismiss at once these notions crude:  
 This is no case for gratitude.  
 Here's Smith, or Jones (I care not which,  
 I mean the man who's far from rich),—  
 With his affairs ('tis kindness sheer)  
 He suffers you to interfere,  
 By loaves of bread and pounds of tea  
 To vex his love for liberty,  
 With bounty arrogantly doled  
 His personality to mould—  
 That you, my friend, may feel thereby  
 Your finger in an alien pie,  
 May find, forsooth! an active sphere  
 By feeding him with beef and beer,  
 Which gratifies your selfish sense  
 Of Pride and Power and Influence:—  
 And is it then your curious view  
 That he should grateful be to you?



Let no such mists your brain bedim:  
 'Tis you should render thanks to him!

MILLIONAIRE.

If this be so, I plainly see  
 Benevolence is not for me;  
 It is a thing which happy makes  
 Nor him that gives nor him that takes.  
 For if 'tis based on motives low,  
 Nor e'en affords a *quid pro quo*,  
 Why should I pay a longish price  
 For unremunerative Vice?  
 Oh, no! I'll do what's wiser far,  
 And buy another motor car.  
 In vain may paupers throng my door—  
 I've sinned enough, I'll sin no more;  
 And when starvation makes them thin  
 Blame Thomas Hobbes and Mr. Gwynn!

A. D. GODLEY.

### A FEW CONVERSATIONALISTS.

If it be true that the art of conversation is declining among us, that it has become one of the old-fashioned things for which we have 'no time;' if that intellectual enjoyment, perhaps one of the greatest of which the mind is capable, has lost its place in our esteem and pursuit, it is only natural that those who can remember with an undying memory the talk of such men as Browning, Leighton, Ruskin, Monckton Milnes, Sir Alexander Cockburn, Dr. Jowett, Thackeray, and Richard Doyle, should regard that memory as a precious inheritance, and even regretfully wonder what may not be the result of the loss of conversation upon the future culture of society. Through these men, and perhaps even more through the brilliant women who adorned their society—Lady Taylor, Mrs. Procter, Mrs. Sartoris, Lady Dufferin, Mrs. Norton—we received the tradition of the talk—perhaps more brilliant still—of Macaulay, Brougham, Rogers, Sydney Smith and Lord and Lady Holland, Coleridge and Charles Lamb. With but little effort we seemed to be carried on that flowing stream to the days of Sir Joshua, Sheridan, Burke, Garrick, and Dr. Johnson, until we almost seemed to hear Fanny Burney exclaim, after a party at Sir Joshua's with the Sheridans, &c.: 'I have no time or room to go on, or I could write a folio of the conversation at supper, when everybody was in spirits, and a thousand good things were said.'

It is interesting to remember that the period when in England conversation was at its best—between the middle of the eighteenth and of the nineteenth centuries—was also the time when most of the great libraries of the country were formed, proving the intimate alliance between literature and conversation and forcibly bringing to mind Addison's words: 'Conversation with men of a polite genius is another method of improving our natural taste. It is impossible for a man of the greatest parts to consider anything in its whole extent and in all its variety of lights. Every man, besides those general observations which are to be made upon an author, forms several reflections that are peculiar to his own manner of thinking; so that conversation will naturally furnish us with hints which we did not attend to, and make us



enjoy other men's parts and reflections as well as our own. This is the best reason I can give for the observation which several have made, that men of great genius in the same way of writing seldom rise up singly, but at certain periods of time appear together, and in a body; as they did at Rome in the reign of Augustus, and in Greece about the age of Socrates. I cannot think that Corneille, Racine, Molière, Boileau, La Fontaine, Bruyère, Bossu, or the Daciens, would have written so well as they have done had they not been friends and contemporaries.'

Addison also gives us the number of *five* as best fitted for the enjoyment of good talk in the delightful 'Tatler' (April 1710), comparing conversation to a concert of music. His favourite talker is evidently he whom he compares to a lute: 'Its notes are exquisitely sweet and very low, easily drowned in a multitude of instruments and even lost among a few, unless you give a particular attention to it. A lute is seldom heard in a company of more than five. . . . The Lutanists therefore are men of a fine genius, uncommon reflection, great affability, and esteemed chiefly by persons of good taste, who are the only proper judges of so delightful and soft a melody.'

The sense of leisure, without which conversation is well-nigh impossible, strikes us again and again in the memoirs of the past and in the recollections of our elders. Men still living can remember the long and uninterrupted hours spent in the libraries of country houses, and tell us of the genial hours of talk after dinner—eaten then at five o'clock—when in winter a narrow table, semi-circular in shape,<sup>1</sup> was placed before the hearth, snugly enclosing the fire, and the gentlemen drew their chairs around and placed their glasses on it, and conversed—'and there would be some very good talk,' with no interruption but that of the watchman as he went round the house calling the hours.

When Dr. Johnson said of Burke: 'If a man were to go by chance at the same time with Burke under a shed, to shun a shower, he would say: "This is an extraordinary man;"' and again: 'If Burke should go into a stable to see his horse dressed, the hostler would say: "We have had an extraordinary man here,"' the compliment was not to the great statesman or orator, but to Burke the conversationalist. 'That fellow calls forth all my powers. Were I to see Burke now it would kill me,' he cries

<sup>1</sup> Sir Algernon West tells us in his *Memoirs* that these tables were in use at Latimer, Lord Chesham's charming place in Bucks, until 1864.

when ill and unable to exert himself as usual. Another of Burke's contemporaries paid him the compliment of addressing Milton's words to him :

With thee conversing, I forget all time.

So highly did our ancestors rate the pleasure of conversation that the difficulty of enjoying it was considered one of the penalties of royalty. Queen Charlotte complains to her old friend Mrs. Delany of the difficulty with which she can get any conversation, as she not only has to start the subjects, but commonly to support them as well ; and she says there is nothing she so much loves as conversation, and nothing she finds it so hard to get. So Mrs. Delaney repeats this to Miss Burney, and adjures her to speak freely with the Queen, not to draw back from her, nor to stop conversation with only answering yes or no.

It is a noteworthy fact that in considering English conversationalists we find ourselves almost entirely among men. From Dean Swift to Sydney Smith, Macaulay and Rogers, we move in a masculine atmosphere—of snug coffee-houses and ordinaries in the days of Swift and Steele and Addison, of the club of the Johnsonian era, the tavern's best room its *habitat*, with rules which now excite a smile: the twenty-four members of the Essex Street Club, founded by Johnson shortly before his death, to meet three times a week—'he who misses forfeits twopence'—the library at Streatham, Coleridge's table, Rogers's breakfasts, and, later still, those of Monckton Milnes. It is true that Swift pays compliments to Stella on her conversational powers ; that Dr. Johnson spoke highly of Mrs. Montagu's wit ; that, in his day, the Duchess of Portland and Mrs. Delany went by the name of the 'old wits ;' that Mrs. Thrale's conversation was delightful, and that Mrs. Chapone, in spite of her infirmities and uncommon ugliness, charmed all who approached her with her silver speech. At all times there have been women who have made their mark among the conversationalists of their day, but their position was a subordinate one, and it is evident that in that 'concert' the part they played was very generally that of the second violins. So much is this the case that a writer of the present day, in a chapter on Conversation, speaking of Bowood, Panshanger, and Holland House, reminds us that 'the society of Lord Lansdowne, Lord Holland, and Lord Melbourne was also the society of Brougham and Mackintosh, Macaulay and Sydney Smith, Luttrell



and Samuel Rogers,' but mentions none of the women who also helped to compose it.

The moment we cross the Channel all is changed. From Mesdames de Rambouillet and de Sévigné to Madame Mohl we move in a womanly atmosphere, and have the impression that for some two centuries all the good conversation of Paris took place in some lady's *salon*; that it was led, controlled, and directed by her, while neither rank, wealth, nor beauty were indispensable qualifications for admitting her into that magnificent sisterhood which in an unbroken succession possessed the art of *tenir un salon*.

All the most famous men made part of this brilliant company; but it would seem that, with the true French gallantry of other days, they had effaced themselves before posterity, so as to leave the undivided renown to the women. Those queens of conversation sprang from so many different ranks and conditions of life! Some, like the Marquises de Rambouillet and de Sévigné, the Duchesse de Duras and Madame de Staël, born in the purple of high rank and state, breathing the atmosphere of Court and politics from their earliest years; some, and they were not the least powerful, attaining to sovereignty by their own talents. Among these we count Madame Roland, Mademoiselle Lespinasse, Sophie Arnould, and Madame Mohl. The holder of a *salon* might be old and blind, rich and powerful, poor and risen from the smallest *bourgeoisie*, a duchess or an opera singer; she need not even be very clever, but three qualities were indispensable—great tact, a sincere desire to please, and, above all, that quality so essentially French that there is no word for it in any other language—*esprit*.

One of the most brilliant of all these queens of conversation must have been Sophie Arnould; and it is thanks to a happy accident which placed her unfinished journal and a packet of her letters into the hands of the brothers De Goncourt that they were able to give to the world that short biography which ranks among the most charming of their works. Not even the 'Arnouldiana,' that collection of her *bons-mots* published in 1813; not even the life-like portrait which forms its frontispiece, with its sparkling eyes, brimming with mirth, and the parted lips, on which some brilliant witticism or repartee seems trembling, gives us so real an impression of what her genius must have been as that which the intuition of these two brother men-of-letters was able to

seize and so happily to render. Our attention is held and fascinated as they so rapidly bring before us, with the precision of a well-cut gem, the rare native qualities and gifts, the educational advantages, the fortunate circumstances of environment, that go to make up the charm of a perfect mistress of the art of conversation.

Sophie Arnould was born February 14, 1740, in the Rue des Fossés St. Germain l'Auxerrois, in the very room in which Admiral Coligny had been killed, and which had long served Vanloo as a studio, thus giving its four walls a threefold celebrity. Her parents were well-to-do *bourgeois*, and her mother seems to have been early bitten with the philosophical ideas of the day; Voltaire was among her friends, Diderot and D'Alembert were received at her table, and old Fontenelle, a few days before his death, brought her the MS. of a tragedy of Corneille's. From this strong atmosphere, all impregnated with the *Encyclopédie*, little Sophie, at the age of five, was suddenly transplanted into that of a Court.

The Princess of Modena, the separated wife of the Prince of Conti, begged the pretty, precocious child from her parents, to be her plaything, and the *distraction* of her childless and monotonous life. The talent for music, already strongly marked in the little damsel, made her a source of amusement to the Princess and her guests; sometimes she would be set to the *clavecin* and made to sing and play, sometimes for days she would be her patroness's inseparable companion, delighting her with her gay babble and pretty ways; then suddenly thrust into the ante-room among the servants, to await a fresh royal caprice of fondling and endearments.

Happily, Madame Arnould was sensible of the disadvantages of this system, and had the courage to withdraw her little daughter gradually and tactfully from its influences. Nothing was neglected for Sophie's education. At ten years of age she could speak—she tells us in her journal—Latin, English, and Italian fluently, and had learned to sing. When, the following year, she was sent to the Ursuline Convent at St. Denis to prepare for her First Communion, the fame of her lovely voice in the chapel choir soon spread abroad, and on a certain Feast of St. Augustine the Court and the town flocked to hear it, the echo reaching Voltaire in his retreat of Ferney and drawing from him a letter of congratulation to the little songstress.



At last the day came when the Queen desired to hear her, saying to the Duchesse de Conti: 'Je la veux pour moi, ma cousine, vous me la donnerez.' So, with the pomp and circumstance befitting the occasion, the Princess took Sophie in her State chariot to present her to Marie Leczinska, who received her with gentle, stately kindness and commended her singing. But, as the De Goncourts remark, there was another Queen in France—Madame de Pompadour; and the very next day she sent a letter to the Duchesse de Conti, couched in terms of supplication, such as she well knew how to use, pen in hand, entreating her to '*lend* her her young singer until the evening.' The request was embarrassing. The Princess could not without a breach of *les grandes convenances* and a want of respect to the Queen take Sophie to call upon the favourite, and at the same time she seems to have had a salutary fear of offending the latter lady. The upshot of the debate strikes us nowadays as strange—it was that Madame Arnould should herself take her daughter to Madame de Pompadour. The journal gives an interesting account of this interview, which proved the turning-point in the young *bourgeoise's* career. After hearing her, the Marquise strongly urged her to make singing her profession, saying: 'Ma chère enfant, le bon Dieu vous a faite pour le théâtre; vous êtes née délibérée comme il faut y être; vous ne tremblerez pas devant le public.' Sophie describes the room, draped with green, heavily fringed with gold; the balustrade of white marble and gold, the Marquise's own desk, at which she was made to sit while singing; the conversation, which ran from subject to subject; Madame de Pompadour's tears as she interrogated her as to her singing-masters and found they were the same as those of her own young daughter, who had died a year before. Then several times such words escaped her as: 'Au premier jour on dira de moi: "feu madame de Pompadour," ou "la pauvre marquise!"' At one moment she said in a hasty aside to Madame Arnould: 'Si la reine vous demandait votre fille pour la musique de sa chambre, n'ayez pas l'imprudence d'y souscrire. Le roi vient de temps en temps à ces petits concerts de famille; et alors au lieu d'avoir donné cette enfant à la reine, vous en auriez fait présent au roi!'

A few days later a missive from the *gentilshommes de la Chambre de la Reine* arrived and spread consternation in the quiet household of Monsieur Arnould. It contained Sophie's appointment to the Queen's *Musique de Chambre*. At first there

were thoughts of flight, of hiding the young girl in a convent, for the last wish of her parents was that she should encounter the dangers of a Court or those of the theatre. After a time other counsels prevailed; the Duchesse de Conti and the other persons consulted by the anxious parents seem at last to have persuaded them that it is possible to 'faire son salut' in any state of life, that it would be dangerous to offend the Queen, and that Sophie's talents were too great to remain for ever concealed.

On December 15, 1757, Sophie Arnould made her *début* in Gluck's opera *Iphigenia in Aulis*, and took the town by storm. Shortly afterwards came the romantic episode of her first love affair; the young Comte de Brancas, hiding his title and quality under the assumed name of Dorval, getting admission, under some pretence of study, into the Arnould household, and finally running away with the daughter. She seems to have returned no more to the paternal roof, and before very long her own *salon* became the rendezvous of the most brilliant society of Paris, over which she reigned like a veritable queen. 'Elle régnait donc, et de toutes les façons,' say the De Goncourts. 'Elle ordonnait de la vogue et du goût. Elle semblait descendre à l'amitié d'illustres dames. Elle avait une cour, un petit coucher de son esprit, de sa jeunesse, de sa grâce.' There, Rousseau became tamed, and reconciled to civilisation; Garrick, when in Paris, brought thither all the hours he could spare; her Tuesdays were the 'revue merveilleuse des grands hommes, petits et grands;' the Prince de Ligne, 'ce passant de tant d'esprit,' was a constant guest; Dorat (little Dorat, said Sophie, is like a marble column, he is dry, cold and polished); D'Alembert, Duclos, and Diderot's best eloquence resounded there; Beaumarchais and Luignet, Sophie's 'frères d'esprit,' were her intimate friends and counsellors.

Some of her *mots* are current still. It was she who, in answer to the saying, 'L'esprit court les rues,' first retorted: 'C'est un bruit que les sots font courir.' Her remark on poor La Harpe's leprosy stings his literary memory still: 'C'est tout ce qu'il a des anciens;' and when she was shown a snuff-box with a portrait of Sully on the one side and Choiseul on the other: 'Oui, c'est la recette et la dépense.' More refined and delicate was the irony of her answer to the poet Bernard, whom she one day found writing his 'Art d'Aimer' under the shade of an oak tree. 'Je m'entretiens avec moi-même,' says the poet. 'Prenez garde, vous causez avec un flatteur.' Chévrier, the pamphleteer,



who had lampooned her unmercifully and written bitter satires on the principal personages of the time, died in Holland in 1762, not without suspicion of poison. 'Juste ciel!' cried Sophie Arnould, on hearing the news, 'il aura sucé sa plume.'

In one of the happiest pages that ever escaped from their pen, her two biographers give us a wonderful little study of her mind and her wit: 'Comment le saisir et le dire, cet esprit de Sophie Arnould? Il était un éblouissement, un prodige, une source intarissable de tous les esprits de la France! Il était impromptu, courant, volant; une envolée de guêpes! . . . Il était une massue et un poignard, une malice et un supplice. Il enfermait une larme dans un lazzi, une idée dans un calembour, un homme dans un ridicule. Du sublime de la gaminerie il allait à l'exquis du goût, du gros sel à l'ironie divine, de l'Opéra à Athènes. Jamais au monde si merveilleuse machine à mots que cet Sophie! et si bien dotée et si bien armée! Elle-même comparait sa tête à un miroir à facettes. Que d'étincelles et de flammes! . . . Tant de phrases, tant de mots bondis de sa bouche, gardés par l'anecdote comme la chanson, l'écho et le testament libre du xviii<sup>e</sup> siècle! . . . Une verve argent comptant, une vision instantanée de l'intention, du sens, et de l'orthographe des paroles, des bonnes fortunes de termes, des mariages d'inclination de mots, des saillies et des épigrammes qui s'échappaient de ses lèvres, sur l'aile de la plus jolie voix du monde . . . des satires d'une ligne, des épitaphes dont les vivants ne revenaient pas, des épithètes mortelles, des riens qui sont devenus des proverbes! . . . des paroles qui ont fait l'esprit de bien des sots et la fortune de bien des causeurs; des drôleries à la pointe du mot, qui enlevaient le rire; notre jolie langue de finesses et de sous-entendus maniée dans le meilleur de ses délicatesses; un tribunal enfin, l'esprit de Sophie!'

Caught up in the whirlwind of the Revolution, her profession saved her life; but she was flung poor and destitute—robbed of patrons, admirers, and almost all her friends by the cruel guillotine—into the humble refuge of a country farm. But the finely-tempered, indomitable spirit carried her bravely through, and she could write in the fourth year of this seclusion and solitude, in a letter to her old lover Bellanger, now married to Mademoiselle Dervieux, the singer, that she had never felt one moment of *ennui*. 'Everything that surrounds me is full of variety. I had first to build . . . I have planted, cleared, sown; I have reaped, and moreover I have a poultry yard; my courtiers are numerous:

cocks and hens, turkeys, pigs, sheep, rabbits ; I had some pigeons, but the cost of their keep forced me to give them up.' The last line indicates what some of her other letters sufficiently prove : that the pinch of poverty was sometimes severe. Nothing could be more charming than her letter to an *ex-admirer*, a member of the new Government, seeking to obtain the payment of the pension to which she was entitled as a *sociétaire* of the Opera. She treats her penury almost as a joke, and there is a humorous pathos in the way she says that 'it is hardly worth while dying of hunger—if one can help it !' The Bellangers have discovered the greatness of her need at a time of illness, and have, out of their own poverty, sent her a gold piece. Her answer, accepting it 'as a souvenir,' is a very model of frank grace and simple gratitude and affection.

Sophie's letters after the Revolution are indeed, as the De Goncourts say, '*le mets des plus délicats ;*' her observations on the stirring events of the time are often worthy of the keenest politician and statesman. She was one of the very first to recognise the genius of the youthful artillery officer, Napoleon. She writes of him that he is not much to look at, and that everybody is speaking ill of him. '*Mais, c'est un homme, si je m'y connais.*' And from her poor solitude she writes to Bellanger the often-quoted lines accompanying a lock of her grey hair, ending :

Et l'on joint sous les cheveux blancs  
Au charme de s'aimer le droit de se le dire.

Once, in mid-career, Sophie Arnould had made a sudden halt in her life of sovereign triumph, pleasure, and disorder, and had become pious. The phase was not long-lived, and, after one or two changes of confessor, she dismissed it, as usual, with an epigram to the effect that directors of consciences were as difficult to please as directors of theatres. But with age, poverty, and sorrow, the old faith returned with a sweet and invincible power. She crept back to Paris, and to her old parish to die ; and there, not far from the historical room in which she had first seen the light, ministered to by the Curé of St. Germain l'Auxerrois, she breathed her last at the age of fifty-eight. We know little beyond the bare facts of that closing scene, but she no doubt brought to it those qualities of whole-heartedness and fine intelligence which had always been hers. She was the epitome of her time, of its dazzling brilliancy, its striking contradictions, and her memory as a conversationalist deserves to outlast her tomb :

Embalmed for ever in its own perfume.



It was a quaint freak of destiny which ordained that this French sceptre should have last been held by a little ugly Irish-woman, Madame Mohl, *née* Mary Clarke, and that since it fell from her reluctant grasp there has been no one to take it up, for the one or two political *salons* still existing in Paris do not come within our category. Just as strange is it that the official announcement, so to speak, of this lapse of the crown should have been made by the Emperor of the country to a foreign Queen. 'Are there any *salons* left in Paris?' asked the then Queen of Holland of Napoleon III. during her last visit at the Tuileries. 'Yes, there is one, Madame Mohl's, but she does not do me the honour of inviting me.'

The name of Madame Mohl is the link between the conversationalists of the second half of the eighteenth century and those whom we of the present day have known and have admired. From Chateaubriand to Browning, from Madame Roland and Humboldt to Huxley and Dean Stanley, who better than she could have preserved for us the memory of their talk, had it not absorbed her too intently to leave her time or liberty to record it!

For more than twenty years Browning was so prominent a figure in English society that few of those who frequented it between 1865 and 1889 can have helped preserving a vivid recollection of that king of conversationalists. The sight of his face upon entering a room, the sound of his strong and pleasant, though not musical voice, were sufficient to arrest the most casual attention, and were a sure promise of pleasure to those who knew him.

No poet that ever lived can have been freer from the slightest trace of what the French call *pose*; strong common-sense, a real intense interest in the subject he might be discussing, and—perhaps here the poetic mind unobtrusively made itself felt—conveyed in language which seemed to leave nothing unsaid that could make his meaning clearer or more complete. No one better than he could cleave at once to the heart of a question, blow away the froth of passion from an argument, or explain the causes or the consequences of some current of popular opinion or fanaticism.

Perhaps his power was the greater because it seemed so singularly free from passion; his mastery over no subject was greater than his mastery over himself, for all his intense human sympathy and vitality. Instinctively his hearers knew that the annihilated antagonist had met his fate because his cause was bad, foolish, or

otherwise unfit to live—never because it had had the ill-luck to offend Robert Browning. Even when the onslaught was most deadly, as in his attacks upon Spiritualism, that fine and ennobling characteristic was never wanting.

The obscurity, the curious fantasy which sometimes led him in his verse to discard the right word for one less apt never appeared in his discourse. There was never any need to plead, as his future wife pleads in one of the lately-published letters, for 'a flash more light on the face of Domizia,' or begs him not to be too disdainful to explain his meaning in the title of Pomegranates; adding, with graceful humility: 'Consider that Mr. Kenyon and I may fairly represent the average intelligence of your readers, and that *he* was altogether in the clouds as to your meaning . . . had not the most distant notion of it, while I, taking hold of the priest's garment, missed the Rabbin and the distinctive significance as completely as he did.' Another time, she urges the claim of the word 'spirits' in lieu of 'sprites,' in one of his verses: 'Why not "spirits" instead of "sprites," which has a different association by custom? 'Spirits' is quite short enough for a last word; it sounds like a monosyllable that trembles, or thrills, rather.'

In his talk there was nothing of this; the spring gushed freely, pure and strong, and there could never be a moment's doubt or hesitation as to its course or limpidity.

One of Browning's recorded sayings is that he liked religious questions treated seriously, and we know by his letters that his own belief was sincere and strong. Some twenty years ago, he told his neighbour at a dinner-party that on his way home to dress he had stopped to hear an open-air preacher in Hyde Park. The man was developing free-thinking theories, and at the moment Browning arrived was emphatically inveighing against the possible existence of God, and defying his hearers to disprove his arguments. 'At last I could stand it no longer,' said Browning, 'so I asked him to get off his tub and to let me get up and try to answer him. He did so, and I think,' he added modestly, 'that I had the best of it.' Scraps of his conversation stand out like charming pictures, defying the lapse of time. His fondness for flowers was great, and he gleefully told—one evening—how a short while before he had made the acquaintance of some charming ladies who had spoken of a wildflower growing in their part of the country, with which he was unacquainted. They had promised to send him a specimen, and duly fulfilled the promise; it



was no unimportant thing to introduce a new flower to a poet. In writing to acknowledge the pretty gift, Browning asked them to send him, as well as the botanical name they had already given, the country-people's name for the little flower. 'It shows how we should never inquire too closely into things. The ladies wrote, quite in distress, to say they had purposely avoided giving me the common name of the flowers, because the country-people called them *bloody noses*. And the worst of it was,' he added with a burst of his own hearty and infectious laughter, 'it was not at all a bad name for them. The blossom was a little double valve, not unlike a nostril in shape, and its edge was tinged with red.' But the poetry of the thing was hopelessly destroyed.

Browning tells Miss Barrett in one of his earliest letters that he 'hates dinner-parties.' His taste must have greatly changed in later years, for there was no more inveterate diner-out than he in London; and it must, for many years, have been the rarest of events for him to dine anywhere else than at a dinner-party. His conversation was there at its best, and its echo must linger yet in the ears of those who are happy enough to have known it. An odd little human trait about him was his habit of putting his *menu* into his pocket at the end of the dinner. 'I collect them,' he said simply, to a lady in answer to a somewhat amused smile of inquiry.

It was not always a happy thing to have Browning and Leighton at the same dinner, if the party was a small one. They both answered too well to the description of the 'harpsichord' in that same 'Tatler' of 1710: 'The very few persons who are masters in every kind of conversation and can talk on all subjects'—comparing them, 'endowed with such extraordinary talents,' to 'harpsichords, a kind of music which everyone knows is a concert by itself.'

The striking characteristic of Leighton's conversation was its cosmopolitanism. He was equally at home in the various subjects which most interested the principal nationalities of Europe, and he seemed literally to speak to every man in his own tongue as well as or better than he could himself, and with a purity of accent that often led to amusing mistakes. Italians took him for an Italian until they heard his German or his French; and the way in which, when his studio was filled with a crowd of visitors from all parts of the world, he darted from language to language in his hospitable welcome and explanations of his pictures, was marvellous.

He knew several dialects and *patois* as well, and for some years had a servant, a Roumanian or Hungarian, with whom he could speak freely in his own *patois*.

If Browning's talk left behind it an impression of power and strength and clear-mindedness which would make a man or woman go to him most readily for counsel or advice, that of Leighton made anyone ready to appeal to him for an act of kindness or good-nature with the certainty that he would attempt the impossible to accomplish it. He had the happy knack of always saying the right thing, and a royal memory, not only of faces but of the histories of even his more insignificant acquaintances. 'I had not seen Leighton for years,' exclaimed a gratified little man, 'when I met him in the street the other day, and he immediately stopped and congratulated me on my appointment, saying I was the right man in the right place,' &c. Such instances might be multiplied indefinitely, and were the secret of his popularity.

His urbanity and tact as a host were exquisite, whether he was receiving the whole world of fashion and art as President of the Royal Academy, or at his musical parties in his studio, or, again, at his dinners. On an occasion when a very awkward social difficulty had arisen, sufficient to nonplus the most tactful, a lady paid him the compliment of saying: 'Even Leighton's *savoir-faire* was almost at fault—but it carried him through.' At his dinners there was, perhaps, a trifle of what the French call *apprêt*, his own seat raised a little higher than that of his guests, his *rôle* of Amphitryon taken perhaps a thought too seriously, raising a smile in the irreverent, as there was sometimes in his Academy dinner speeches a lack of spontaneity and a certain searching after effect, which 'Punch' once caricatured by representing him seated in his study 'seeing how many beautiful new words he could invent for his next speech.'

These were only the 'defects of his qualities' as a speaker and a converser, and all who knew him would endorse the exclamation of a young girl many years ago, who, on hearing the description of a thoroughly kind-hearted and good-natured man read out from a letter at a Scotch breakfast-table, cried out: 'That is why *everybody* likes Fay!' the name he was known by among the children of his acquaintance. The sunny, genial gladness in his quiet 'That's very nice of you!' would have gone far to prove the truth of her words, even without the murmur of acquiescence that went round the table.



The qualities of the late Lord Coleridge as an agreeable talker have been widely and deservedly proclaimed. Those of his predecessor in the high office of Chief Justice of England—Sir Alexander Cockburn—were at least equal, if not superior. His store of varied knowledge was as great, and dated back to a remoter epoch, his voice and elocution were as perfect as Lord Coleridge's, and he was more a man of the world, being, indeed, one of the leaders of the society of his day. The *soirées* and dinners at his house in Hertford Street were things to be remembered by those who were privileged to be his guests, and to meet at his table such people as Sir William and Lady Molesworth, Bulwer Lytton, Mr. and Mrs. Sartoris, Lady Waldegrave, Chorley, Richard Doyle, Sir Charles Hallé, leading statesmen, *littérateurs*, and artists. He was a charming host, unsurpassed as a storyteller. To hear him relate some humorous anecdote of the lawyers of bygone days, 'when St. Martin's-in-the-Fields was still surrounded with open ground,' was an incomparable treat. His stories occasionally dated from a time when language was a little more forcible and picturesque than at present, and he used more action in speaking than is usual among Englishmen, though his gestures were never more emphatic than the occasion required, and always gave the completest point to his story. There was one about a starched old lawyer and a street Arab, in which his mimicry of both was equally perfect and finished.

His table was never too large to permit him to take part in the conversation at any part of it, and he had the happiest faculty of joining in at the right moment to add life and interest to a subject. On one occasion his ear caught an exclamation of regret from one of his guests that judges had not the prerogative of mercy. The lady had seen a postman condemned to five years' imprisonment for stealing a letter containing a few shillings, and the man's evident remorse, his wife's scream from the gallery, the scene of her being carried out fainting, had made her feel that if mercy could have been extended to the culprit he would have lived honestly ever after. Cockburn, in a few feeling words, explained the extent and limitations of human justice with so much humanity and insight into the workings of the mind, that it seemed as if nothing further could be said on the subject, and then turned easily and lightly to some less serious topic.

A well-marked place among the conversationalists of his day

was held by Henry Fothergill Chorley, the once formidable critic of the 'Athenæum.' His dinners at his tiny house in Eaton Place West, all 'white and gold and crimson satin,' as Mrs. Browning describes it in one of her letters, were famous. Notabilities from every land met there, men and women belonging to the three aristocracies of birth, talent, and wealth—that of talent so often the link between the other two—and delightful was the talk. So competent a judge as Sir Charles Hallé, writing of Chorley in his memoirs, describes him as 'a man of strong views, fearless in his criticism, perfectly honest, although often and unconsciously swayed by personal antipathies and sympathies.'

Of his oddities, of the whimsical tone and gestures with which his tart and often paradoxical little sentences were delivered, it is almost hopeless to attempt to convey an idea. In face, figure, manners, and voice he was quite unlike anybody else. The meagre body always moved in jerks, or remained in absolute immobility according to the mood of the moment, and the head, small, red-haired, when to be red-haired was considered almost a disgrace, with curiously-slit eyes and pointed ears, had a brick-hued complexion, which, combined with his love for gorgeous colour in his dress, gave rise to the saying that 'everything about Chorley was red but his books,' with reference to the curious want of success of his not uninteresting works.

Perhaps the quaintness with which he loved to clothe his sentiments was less successful in his writing than in his speech; and it says much for the genuine qualities and cleverness of his talk that he should have held the place he did in society despite such natural disadvantages. He bore the little rubs which they unavoidably occasioned with absolute imperturbability. On one occasion a little child, seeing him for the first time, after a few minutes' fascinated contemplation, suddenly burst out with 'Why *is* you so like a monkey?' and when its agonised mother tried to stop the question, turned to her with almost tearful persistency: 'But, mamma, why *is* he so like a monkey?'

His love of colour was, according to Richard Doyle, the natural consequence of his coming of a Quaker family; and Doyle had a story of a brother of Chorley's who caused scandal among the Society of Friends by wearing a red coat for fox-hunting. When remonstrated with, he explained that his coat 'was only of a fiery drab!' Chorley continued to wear velvet waistcoats of



gorgeous colour in the evening long after they had ceased to be the fashion, and one night at some great party he was leaning against the wall of the staircase in an attitude of immobility, when some young men began to whisper remarks to each other on his appearance. His motionless impassiveness led them on, and when one of them had suggested that 'he must be a foreigner,' the tongues wagged more freely still. When they had exhausted their remarks about himself, one cried: 'And just look at his waistcoat. Was there ever such a waistcoat to be seen?' At this, Chorley slowly detached himself from the wall, stepped silently forward, and with his usual spasmodic waving of his hand in front of his face, said in his high thin voice: 'Gentlemen, say what you please of myself, but pray spare my waistcoat,' and then returned to his place, while his young critics hastened from the scene. He used to tell this story himself.

Even when illness and infirmity had clouded his closing years, there were times when the old wit and eccentric pungent criticism still flashed out, and made one apprehend something of their former charm. The honesty and good faith of his most wayward opinions were always indisputable.

The memory of so many eloquent voices that have passed into the great silence, and of the kindly hearts which prompted their best utterances, might lead one on indefinitely to recall the scattered fragments of their talk, and to forget how hopeless is the task of reproducing more than the very faintest echo of that 'Concert's music.'

PROVINCIAL LETTERS.

VII.—FROM BATH.

FROM early childhood Bath has been associated with some of my happiest and some of my most disconcerting experiences. As far back as I can remember there were buns and there were Bath buns ; and the aunt who would offer a mere bun took a far lower place in the hierarchy of relationship than the uncle who administered the bun of Bath. Then again, by a trick of memory for which I can find no sufficient reason, the sole remaining impression of my first pantomime is the entry of Clown pushing along Pantaloon in a Bath chair (which he soon took occasion to upset), and shouting, 'Here's a Bath chap going to Bath in a Bath chair.' It certainly was not the pun that took my fancy, for I could not have known at that tender age what a Bath chap was. Probably the dramatic *peripeteia* was carefully noted for repetition at home with the perambulator, and the words were retained as a necessary part of the piece. But, on the other hand, how disagreeable it was at school to be told to go to Bath. From the tone in which the words were said, it was certain that nothing pleasant was meant ; and hence disagreeable associations gradually superseded the more pleasant ones of earlier childhood. Bath grew to be another Coventry : a place to which a person of honour must not be sent ; and although in later years I came to understand the phrase as a polite euphemism for Purgatory—no doubt suggested by the hot springs—yet in the inscrutable working of desire, that schoolboy saying has operated to prevent my visiting Bath, until I am driven there by causes which I will not detail. But now, having seen Bath, I am overcome with remorse at the long delay. If only I had years ago taken my playmates at their word instead of suffering myself to be deterred by their spiteful tone, how different my life might have been ! Austin became a saint through paying heed to a chance sentence overheard in a children's game ; Whittington became Lord Mayor of London through not despising the suggestion of Bow Bells. If I, in like manner, had gone to Bath in boyhood, what might I not have become ?



Still, though late, I am here at last ; and already I am become a devout Bathonian. It so happened that my course from the railway station lay across Pulteney Bridge to the eastern side of the town, and at once I acknowledged the superiority of the architecture to anything I had seen in Bloomsbury. At first it was Pulteney Street that captured my admiration. The façades were magnificent, but saved from being grandiose by the niceness of their proportion and the delicacy of the ornament. Then, on retracing my steps, I discovered Pulteney Bridge. On first crossing I had not recognised it for a bridge at all because of the houses on either side ; but on turning to the left I saw the river, and, walking along the embankment for a hundred yards and then turning, I was arrested by the beauty of what revealed itself as a bridge. I have since learned that the architect was Adam, and the design is indeed worthy of Paradise. The Pulteney whose name is thus commemorated was an heiress of the house of Bath, who, having a property on the east bank of the river, resolved, like Dido, to build a city there that should preserve her memory and augment the fortune of her descendants ; and to that end she had the wisdom to employ the best architects of her time. She threw this graceful street upon three piers across the river, and continued it in a succession of palaces to the Sydney gardens, which were the Vauxhall of Bath. After feasting my eyes upon the fine proportions of the bridge, and endeavouring to be blind to the presence of the modern spirit in three disfiguring advertisements upon it, I turned away and saw upon the right hand a mammoth building. If the bridge suggested Paradise, here was undoubtedly the Tower of Babel. What did it mean ? I searched my guide-book, but its date was 1762, while the building in question was glistening with newness. I soon discovered it to be an hotel, 'replete with every modern convenience,' and a little later I discovered from an old print that it had taken the place of a beautiful old mansion, called popularly the Prince of Orange House, where a Prince of the House of Nassau was reputed to have stayed while he took the waters. In memory of his successful treatment an obelisk was reared in the centre of what is still called Orange Grove, though the grove has vanished. In the print of which I speak, a party of delightful children are being ferried across from the house to play and drink tea in the meadows. Will anyone ever cross from the Tower of Babel for so innocent a diversion ? O ! ghost of Frances Pulteney

and ghost of Robert Adam, if any rumour of these things touch your minds among the asphodels, can you not contrive some significant omen that shall shake the knees of the Mayor and Corporation and prevent their pursuing so vandal-like a policy of destruction? Turn the turtle-soup at their feasts to mock-turtle before their eyes; send a frenzy of anti-vaccination upon the Board of Guardians, and frighten away all the visitors; cry 'Revenge' in a hollow voice whenever a spinster of nervous complexion enters the hotel. It is worth while adventuring some notable step to persuade the authorities that they are on a wrong tack. For the beauty of Bath is the beauty of an age when architects had both taste and science, and nothing that can be erected to-day is able to compensate for the loss of a single house of the great period.

The name of the great builder of Bath, as we at present know that 'pleasurable city,' has yet to be mentioned; it was John Wood. There were two John Woods, father and son; but they worked together, and the son in many cases finished what the father planned. The elder Wood came to Bath in 1727 at a time when the city was rapidly becoming a fashionable watering-place, under the judicious management of Beau Nash and the recommendation of Court physicians; so that no fairer field could have been open to his talents. The North and South Parades were the first witnesses to his skill in designing streets which should be something more than an agglomeration of houses. In contemporary prints we see the beaux and nymphs disporting themselves on the flags and leaning upon the balustrades. Now the flags are up and the balustrades are down, and a dead level of macadamised road has turned the parades into commonplace streets. *O miseris hominum mentes! O pectora cæca!* Here, O! town councillors, is a riddle for you: When is a parade not a parade? The answer is, When it has been so improved that all its beauty is gone, and no one cares to parade there any longer. Not the least of the beauties of Bath are the streets and courts which still remain flagged, such as Duke Street, which unites these two Parades and silently testifies against the modern spirit that has destroyed them. But to return to John Wood. His second enterprise was Queen Square, and beyond that to the north he designed what is known as the Circus, on the summit of the hill up which Gay Street climbs from Queen Square. The Circus is an ellipse composed of thirty houses, of three storeys. The windows are separated by double



columns, those on the ground floor being Doric, on the first floor Ionic, and on the second floor Corinthian, while round the top runs a balustrade. The effect is singularly rich. John Wood, Junior, completed the Circus after his father's death, but his own name is best connected with the two vast crescents which crown the heights and command the prospect of the city. There is no need to enumerate here the other masterpieces of these men of worship. The visitor to Bath has but to look around him, and the stranger to Bath would gain no pleasure from a bare enumeration. The two houses, nevertheless, must not be omitted which Wood built for Ralph Allen, the 'man of Bath.' The one in Prior Park, with its magnificent Corinthian columns, three feet in diameter, is visible from the city except in a fog; but where is the town-house? Here is another riddle which I respectfully offer to the Mayor and Corporation.

So far nothing has been said in my letter about what is the heart and soul of Bath, namely, its bathing. The story of King Bladud of Britain, father of the better known King Lear, who was driven from court for his leprosy, and, after turning swineherd and infecting his master's pigs, was cured by following their example and wallowing in the hot marsh, will be found in the guide-books diversified with many picturesque details. King Bladud, then, founded Bath; but the Bath of King Bladud was assuredly what Plato called 'a city of pigs.' The first city of men here was built by the Romans. It is only within the last twenty years that the inhabitants have become aware to what admirable use the Romans had put the Bath springs. In the middle of the eighteenth century the Duke of Kingston, in digging the foundations of a new building, found a Roman bath twenty feet underground, which was converted into the present Kingston Bath. The more recent discoveries are exposed to view, and left in their original state; indeed, so keen has become the antiquarian frenzy that what was long known as the Queen's Bath has been sacrificed in order to uncover a circular Roman bath that lay beneath it. As I have hinted above a certain dislike of the modern methods of the Bath Corporation, it is but justice to give them credit for their public spirit in laying bare these most interesting relics. There stands the bath now, as it stood at the date of the Christian era, in a hall 120 feet long and 70 feet wide. But even here the fathers of the city have shown how little they are to be trusted in matters of taste. All round the bath, at a great height, are

ranged upon pedestals the statues of distinguished Romans, as though making up their minds to the plunge. Julius Cæsar, for some reason, looks especially reluctant.

The first person of quality of whom we are told as resorting here for the benefit of the waters was Queen Anne, wife of James I., after whom the Queen's Bath was named; and she was followed by the consorts of the remaining Stuart kings. The historians of Bath do not tell us whether the King's Bath was so called after King Bladud; but from his statue being erected there the unlearned visitor is inclined to draw that inference. At any rate there is no record of any British monarch since Bladud having patronised the bath, though several have visited the city. The aspect of the baths in the seventeenth century is admirably given in a drawing preserved in the British Museum, dated 1675, and reproduced in Major Davis's book on 'The Mineral Baths of Bath.' All round the baths is a handsome balustrade upon which people of fashion are leaning to watch the bathers. In the Queen's Bath they are so close packed that there is little room for the water; but in the King's some persons are floating or swimming, and boys are taking headers off the balustrade. The baths are closely hemmed in by houses in which the bathers lodged; and most of the windows are occupied by interested spectators. The scene, in fact, is pretty much what Pepys described on his visit a few years previously:

June 13th, 1668.—Up at four o'clock, being by appointment called up to the Cross Bath; where we were carried after one another, myself and wife and Betty Turner, Willet, and W. Hewer. And by and by, though we designed to have done before company come, much company come; very fine ladies; and the manner pretty enough, only methinks it cannot be clean to go so many bodies together in the same water. Good conversation among them that are acquainted here and stay together. Strange to see how hot the water is; and in some places, though this is the most temperate bath, the springs so hot as the feet not able to endure. But strange to see, when women and men here, that live all the season in these waters, cannot but be parboiled and look like the creatures of the bath! Carried away wrapped in a sheet, and in a chair home; and there one after another thus carried (I staying above two hours in the water) home to bed, sweating for an hour. And by and by comes musick to play to me, extraordinary good as ever I heard at London almost anywhere: 5s.

15th.—Looked into the baths, and find the King and Queene's full of a mixed sort of good and bad, and the Cross only almost for the gentry. So home with my wife, and did pay my guides, two women 5s.; one man 2s. 6d.; poor 6d.; woman to lay my foot cloth, 1s. Before I took coach I went to make a boy dive in the King's bath, 1s.

For the eighteenth century bathing the classical place is a



once very popular but now little read poem by Christopher Anstey, called 'The New Bath Guide.' Considering its date, it is singularly free from coarseness, and the rhymes canter along with a good deal of humour. Its alternative title is 'Memoirs of the B-r-d Family,' which a London bookseller once explained to me as 'Bernard'; but Anstey meant 'Blunderhead.' For a specimen we may take the passage where Mr. Simkin Blunderhead writes home to his mother an account of his commencing *beau garçon*.

So lively, so gay, my dear mother, I'm grown,  
 I long to do something to make myself known ;  
 For Persons of *Taste* and true *Spirit*, I find,  
 Are fond of attracting the Eyes of Mankind.  
 What numbers one sees who for that very reason  
 Come to make such a figure at *Bath* every season.  
 Thank Heaven! of late, my dear Mother, my Face is  
 Not a little regarded at all public places ;  
 For I ride in a Chair with my Hands in a Muff,  
 And have bought a Silk Coat and embroidered the Cuff ;  
 And what can a man of true Fashion denote  
 Like an ell of good Ribbon ty'd under the throat ?  
 My Buckles and Box are in exquisite taste ;  
 The one is of Paper, the other of Paste ;  
 But sure no *Camayeu* was ever yet seen  
 Like that which I purchased at Wicksted's Machine :  
 So I'd have them to know when I go to the Ball,  
 I shall show as much *Taste* as the best of them all :  
 For a Man of great Fashion was heard to declare  
 He never beheld so engaging an Air,  
 And swears all the World must my Judgment confess,  
 My *Solidity*, *Sense*, *Understanding* in Dress,  
 My manners so form'd, and my Wig so well curl'd,  
 I look like a Man of the very first World.

The literary associations of Bath are almost overwhelming. Everybody who was anybody went to Bath in the eighteenth century, and where people of leisure congregate there also will authors be gathered together. Roughly, the chief periods of literary interest in Bath are those of Beau Nash, who, if not literary in himself, was the cause of literature in others, of Dr. Johnson, of Miss Austen, and of Dickens. Beau Nash, however, craves a moment's attention on his own account. A recent authority upon Bath, Mr. R. E. Peach, in whose 'Historic Houses' the reader will find a vast store of amusing information, loses no opportunity of vilipending Nash, and will have it that his influence upon the prosperity of Bath has been greatly overrated. But Goldsmith's charming *Life* was written the year after Nash's death, when the

facts were readily ascertainable and when there was nothing to be gained by exaggerating his importance. Moreover, the Bath guide (1762) amply confirms Goldsmith. As this authority is less easy to consult, and may be reckoned a more unprejudiced witness, I shall take leave to extract a few sentences :

About the year 1703 the City of Bath became in some Measure frequented by People of Distinction. The Company was numerous enough to form a Country-Dance upon the Bowling-Green ; they were amused with the Violin and Hautboy, and diverted with the romantic Walks around the City. Captain Webster was the Predecessor of Mr. Nash. This Gentleman in the year 1704 carried the Balls to the Town-Hall, each man paying half-a-guinea a Ball. The Amusements of the Place were neither elegant, nor conducted with Delicacy. This was the Situation of Things when Mr. Nash began to preside over the Amusements of the Place. His first care was to promote a Music Subscription ; the Pump-room was put under the Care of a proper Officer ; large Sums were raised for repairing the Roads about the City ; the Houses and Streets began to improve, and ornaments were lavished upon them even to profusion.

He was born to govern. His Dominion was not like that of other Legislators over the servility of the Vulgar, but over the Pride of the Noble and the Opulent. By the force of Genius he erected the City of BATH into a Province of Pleasure, and became by universal consent its Legislator and Ruler. He plann'd, improv'd, and regulated all the Amusements of the Place ; his fundamental Law was that of Good-Breeding ; hold sacred Decency and Decorum his constant Maxim ; nobody, however exalted by Beauty, Blood, Titles, or Riches, could be guilty of a Breach of it unpunished : The Penalty, *His Disapprobation and Public Shame*. To maintain the Sovereignty he had established he published Rules of Behaviour, which (from their Propriety) acquired the force of Laws ; and which the Highest never infring'd, without immediately undergoing the Public Censure. He *kept the Men in Order* ; by wisely prohibiting the wearing Swords in his Dominion : by which Means he prevented sudden Passion from causing the Bitterness of un-availing Repentance. He *kept the Ladies in Good Humour and Decorum* ; by a nice observance of the Rules of Place and Precedence ; by ordaining Scandal to be the infallible Mark of a foolish Head and a malicious Heart ; always rendering more suspicious the Reputation of her who propagated it than that of the Person abused. Of the young, the gay, the heedless Fair, just launching upon the dangerous Sea of Pleasure, he was ever unsolicited (sometimes unregarded) the kind Protector ; humanely correcting even the Mistakes in Dress, as well as Improprieties in Conduct. Nay, often warning them, tho' at the Hazard of his Life, against the artful snares of designing men. Thus did he establish his Government on Pillars of Honour and Politeness, which could never be shaken. And maintained it for full half a century with Reputation, Honour, and undisputed Authority, beloved, respected, and revered.

Goldsmith's Life contains many anecdotes which illustrate the portrait here drawn, and show Nash to have been an ideal master of ceremonies, not to be disobeyed by Princesses of the blood, or brow-beaten by duchesses, or bullied by rakes, and always good-natured. It is not affirmed that he was either a wise or a religious man ; in an attempt to interfere with John Wesley he came badly



off<sup>1</sup>; and it is not denied that he depended for a living upon the profits of the card-tables.

The literary world of Bath at this period found its Mæcenas in a very remarkable man, Ralph Allen, the son of a small Cornish innkeeper, who as a postmaster of Bath devised and farmed a system of cross-country posts by which he made an income of 12,000*l.* a year, which he spent generously. He owned also the quarries from which the stone came for the improvements of Bath. He is admitted to be the Squire Allworthy of 'Tom Jones'; and Fielding dedicated to him his 'Amelia.' Pope made Allen's acquaintance in 1736 and put him into his 'Satires of Horace':

Let low-born Allen, with an awkward shame,  
Do good by stealth and blush to find it fame;

subsequently amending the epithet to 'humble'; not, it is said, by request. Of course, Pope quarrelled with him, but a quarrel with Allen could not last long. Unfortunately, while it lasted Pope made his will, by which he bequeathed to Allen 150*l.*, 'being to the best of my calculation the amount of what I have received from him, partly for my own and partly for charitable uses.' Upon which Allen is said to have remarked with a smile that Pope had forgotten the final '0.' While Pope was staying at Prior Park he summoned Warburton to his side to aid in the annotation of his 'Moral Essays,' and this was the foundation of that divine's fortune. For Allen induced Pitt to make him Bishop of Gloucester, and he married Allen's favourite niece, and succeeded to Prior Park. Allen died in 1764, so that Dr. Johnson, whose first visit to Bath was in 1776, did not meet him. A link between the two eras is found in the person of Richard Graves, the rector of Claverton, near Bath, who was a literary person of enormous output, but is now chiefly remembered as the friend and correspondent of Shenstone, and the author of 'The Spiritual Quixote,' a skit upon Methodism. He was a constant visitor at Prior Park, and numbered among his

<sup>1</sup> Wesley's Journal, June 5, 1739: 'There was great expectation at Bath of what a noted man was to do to me there; and I was much entreated not to preach, because no one knew what might happen. . . . Many of them were sinking apace into seriousness when their champion appeared, and, coming close to me, asked by what authority I did these things. . . . "Your preaching frightens people out of their wits." "Sir, did you ever hear me preach?" "No." "How then can you judge of what you never heard?" "Sir, by common report." "Common report is not enough. Give me leave, sir, to ask: Is not your name Nash?" "My name is Nash." "Sir, I dare not judge of *you* by common report."

many pupils the sons of both Allen and Warburton. On account of the distance of Claverton from Bath, he was allowed the privilege of dining in boots; and, being an absent-minded person, is reported on more than one occasion to have left the dining-room with his napkin caught upon his spurs. I have, I confess, a tenderness for Mr. Graves on more accounts than one. A print after his picture by Gainsborough, himself a noted resident, hangs among my worthies, and shews the high forehead and refined features of the scholar and gentleman that he was, while his eye and mouth testify to his kindly humour. His verses are no longer read, being amateurish at best; but one piece I know too well, as it was the occasion of the first copy of Latin verses I ever perpetrated. ‘Again the balmy zephyr blows,’ sang the poet; ‘Iam iterum Zephyrus,’ began my version; and my teacher was not pleased. For the rest there are occasional verses on Bath and his Bath acquaintance, interesting to those who know the set he lived in, but caviare to the general reader. There are lines to Bull, the bookseller, where the wits assembled, chief among them Harington, the doctor and musician, who wrote Beau Nash’s epitaph<sup>1</sup>; lines to Mr. W[alker] on his Roman medals; to Mrs. M[iller] on her *bouts-rimés* at Bath-easton; to Mrs. B[amfylde], on her exquisite needlework; to Mrs. W[arburton], as Venus; to Mrs. C. Macaulay, on her scheme for popular government, not so trenchant as Dr. Johnson’s invitation to her to summon her footman to join the party at dinner; to Molly at Nando’s; to —, Esq., the quack doctor; to the Bishop of Cloyne on his tar-water; to Mr. Gainsborough, equally excellent in landskip and portraits; and to many fair ladies half-revealed and half-concealed by initials and asterisks.

Of Mrs., better known as Lady, Miller a word must be said. Her husband, afterwards created a baronet, had purchased in Italy

<sup>1</sup> Adeste O cives, adeste Lugentes!  
Hic silent Leges

RICARDI NASH, Armig.

Nihil amplius imperantis;

Qui diu et utilissime

Assumptus Bathoniæ

Elegantiaë Arbiter

Eheu!

Morti (ultimo designatori)

Haud indecore succubuit

Ann. Dom. MDCCLXI, Ætat. suæ LXXXVII.



an antique vase, and this being set up in the garden, it was the fashion for the company at fortnightly parties to place therein poetical effusions upon a suggested subject, or *bouts-rimés*, which were then read in public and judged by a committee, the victor being crowned with myrtle by her ladyship. Miss Burney tells us in her diary that, although Bath-easton was laughed at in London, nothing was more tonish at Bath than to visit Lady Miller. She goes on to describe her with feminine unkindness as 'a round, plump, coarse-looking dame of about forty' [in 1780], whose aim was to appear an elegant woman of fashion, 'but all her success is to seem an ordinary woman in *very* common life with fine clothes on.' Perhaps, by the side of this description, it may be wise to set Mr. Graves' poetical tribute and then strike a balance:

Myra, by ev'ry art refin'd,  
That Science can dispense;  
Genius with various Learning join'd;  
Politeness with good sense.

What Dr. Johnson thought of these Olympic contests and the share taken in them by her Grace of Northumberland, Boswell has told us. 'Sir, I wonder how people were persuaded to write in that manner for this lady. Sir, the Duchess of Northumberland may do what she pleases; nobody will say anything to a lady of her high rank. But I should be apt to throw . . . 's verses in his face.' This was in 1775; Horace Walpole in the same year devotes a few biting sentences to Mrs. Calliope Miller and the flux of quality at her Parnassus Fair. Of Johnson himself at Bath there is nothing especial to relate, but his friend Mrs. Thrale was a personage there, and after her first husband's death and her marriage with Piozzi lived there permanently. We are allowed to see her attending the ministrations of the Rev. Dr. Randolph, at Laura Chapel, where she occupied a 'recess'—*i.e.* a furnished apartment with fireplace, armchairs, and everything handsome about her. One characteristic story is told of Goldsmith at Bath, that while a visitor at Lord Clare's in the North Parade he inadvertently entered the house of the Duke of Northumberland, who lived next door, and did not find his mistake till the supposed guest whom he discovered in the room invited him to stay breakfast.

It would be a labour of love to chronicle all the streets and houses in Bath immortalised by the characters in Miss Austen's novels; for I agree with Miss Mitford that her 'celebrities' are

more real than those who actually lived. I visited all the historic sites with emotion, and was seized with an impulse to reside myself for the rest of my natural life at 4 Sydney Place, which happened to be to let. But the task I speak of has been quite recently performed by a more elegant pen than mine in Miss Constance Hill's admirable book, to which I refer the interested reader. Instead let me spend a few moments in the Abbey Church. As a church it has certain peculiarities which I prefer to describe in the phrases of my guide-book. 'This church may be justly called the lantern of England, for its lightness, stateliness, and elegance of structure, and is reckoned by all Judges who have seen it, to yield the curious Stranger as much Speculation as perhaps can be met with in any Parochial Church of the same Standing in the World.' The Abbey Church, that is to say, like Sir Andrew Aguecheek, will not compete with 'an old' church; for it is late perpendicular Gothic of the most debased kind, and is undoubtedly the parent of both Fonthill and Strawberry Hill. The walls are lined with eighteenth-century monuments, and these yield the curious stranger a vast amount of speculation. Here are to be found Garrick's celebrated lines on Quin, to whom many pages are devoted in any book of Bath anecdotes; here are Harington's lines on Beau Nash, already quoted; a long Latin epitaph on Dr. Harington himself, a longer one still on Dr. Oliver, the father of the inventor of the biscuit; and there are innumerable other doctors immortalised among the spinsters, relicts, and major-generals whose bathing they superintended; but I found two small tablets which gave me peculiar pleasure—one was to the memory of Mrs. Rebecca Cowper, widow of the late Rev. Dr. John Cowper, rector of Great Berkhamsted in Hertfordshire; the other belonged to a certain Edward Jesup, Esq., who amid columns of panegyric all about him is described simply as 'a man of strict honour and probity.'

P.S.—I remarked in the Pump-room a ticket on an antique 'incised inscription,' that would have delighted Dickens. It was as follows: 'Read by Prof. Sayce as a record of the cure of a Roman lady by the Bath waters, attested by three witnesses; read by Prof. Zangermeister as a curse on a man for stealing a tablecloth.'

URBANUS SYLVAN.



*THE FOUR FEATHERS.*<sup>1</sup>

BY A. E. W. MASON.

## CHAPTER X.

## THE WELLS OF OBAK.

IN that month of May Durrance lifted his eyes from Wadi Halfa and began eagerly to look homewards. But in the contrary direction, five hundred miles to the south of his frontier town, on the other side of the great Nubian desert and the Belly of Stones, the events of real importance to him were occurring without his knowledge. On the deserted track between Berber and Suakin the wells of Obak are sunk deep amongst mounds of shifting sand. Eastwards a belt of trees divides the dunes from a hard stony plain built upon with granite hills; westwards the desert stretches for fifty-eight waterless miles to Mahobey and Berber on the Nile, a desert so flat that the merest tuft of grass knee-high seems at the distance of a mile a tree promising shade for a noonday halt, and a pile of stones no bigger than one might see by the side of any roadway in repair achieves the stature of a considerable hill. In this particular May there could be no spot more desolate than the wells of Obak. The sun blazed upon it from six in the morning with an intolerable heat, and all night the wind blew across it piercingly cold, and played with the sand as it would, building pyramids house-high and levelling them, tunnelling valleys, silting up long slopes, so that the face of the country was continually changed. The vultures and the sand-grouse held it undisturbed in a perpetual tenancy. And to make the spot yet more desolate there remained scattered here and there the bleached bones and skeletons of camels to bear evidence that about these wells once the caravans had crossed and halted; and the remnants of a house built of branches bent in hoops showed that once Arabs had herded their goats and made their habitation there. Now the sun rose and set and the hot sky pressed upon an empty round of honey-coloured earth. Silence brooded there

<sup>1</sup> Copyright, 1902, by A. E. W. Mason in the United States of America.

like night upon the waters; and the absolute stillness made it a place of mystery and expectation.

Yet in this month of May one man sojourned by the wells and sojourned secretly. Every morning at sunrise he drove two camels, swift riding mares of the pure Bisharin breed, from the belt of trees, watered them, and sat by the well-mouth for the space of three hours. Then he drove them back again into the shelter of the trees, and fed them delicately with dhoura upon a cloth; and for the rest of the day he appeared no more. For five mornings he thus came from his hiding-place and sat looking towards the sand-dunes and Berber, and no one approached him. But on the sixth, and as he was on the point of returning to his shelter, he saw the figure of a man and a donkey suddenly outlined against the sky upon a crest of the sand. The Arab seated by the well looked first at the donkey, and, remarking its grey colour, half rose to his feet. But as he rose he looked at the man who drove it, and saw that while his jellab was drawn forward over his face to protect it from the sun, his bare legs showed of an ebony blackness against the sand. The donkey driver was a negro. The Arab sat down again and waited with an air of the most complete indifference for the stranger to descend to him. He did not even move or turn when he heard the negro's feet treading the sand close behind him.

'Salam aleikum,' said the negro as he stopped. He carried a long spear and a short one, and a shield of hide. These he laid upon the ground and sat by the Arab's side.

The Arab bowed his head and returned the salutation.

'Aleikum es salam,' said he, and he waited.

'It is Abou Fatma?' asked the negro.

The Arab nodded an assent.

'Two days ago,' the other continued, 'a man of the Bisharin, Moussa Fedil, stopped me in the market-place of Berber, and seeing that I was hungry gave me food. And when I had eaten he charged me to drive this donkey to Abou Fatma at the wells of Obak.'

Abou Fatma looked carelessly at the donkey as though now for the first time he had remarked it.

'Tayeeb,' he said no less carelessly. 'The donkey is mine,' and he sat inattentive and motionless as though the negro's business were done and he might go.

The negro, however, held his ground.



'I am to meet Moussa Fedil again on the third morning from now, in the market-place of Berber. Give me a token which I may carry back, so that he may know I have fulfilled the charge and reward me.'

Abou Fatma took his knife from the small of his back, and picking up a stick from the ground, notched it thrice at each end.

'This shall be a sign to Moussa Fedil;' and he handed the stick to his companion. The negro tied it securely into a corner of his wrap, loosed his water-skin from the donkey's back, filled it at the well and slung it about his shoulders. Then he picked up his spears and his shield. Abou Fatma watched him labour up the slope of loose sand and disappear again on the further incline of the crest. Then in his turn he rose and hastily. When Harry Feversham had set out from Obak six days before to traverse the fifty-eight miles of barren desert to the Nile, this grey donkey had carried his water-skins and food.

Abou Fatma drove the donkey down amongst the trees, and fastening it to a stem examined its shoulders. In the left shoulder a tiny incision had been made and the skin neatly stitched up again with fine thread. He cut the stitches, and pressing open the two edges of the wound, forced out a tiny package little bigger than a postage stamp. The package was a goat's bladder, and enclosed within the bladder a note written in Arabic and folded very small. Abou Fatma had not been Gordon's body servant for nothing; he had been taught during his service to read. He unfolded the note, and this is what was written:

'The houses which were once Berber are destroyed and a new town of wide streets is building. There is no longer any sign by which I may know the ruins of Yusef's house from the ruins of a hundred houses; nor does Yusef any longer sell rock-salt in the bazaar. Yet wait for me another week.'

The Arab of the Bisharin who wrote the letter was Harry Feversham. Wearing the patched jubbeh of the Dervishes over his stained skin, his hair frizzed on the crown of his head and falling upon the nape of his neck in locks matted and gummed into the semblance of seaweed, he went about his search for Yusef through the wide streets of New Berber with its gaping pits. To the south, and separated by a mile or so of desert, lay the old town where Abou Fatma had slept one night and hidden the letters, a warren of ruined houses facing upon narrow alleys and winding

streets. The front walls had all been pulled down, the roofs carried away, only the bare inner walls were left standing, so that Feversham when he wandered amongst them vainly at night seemed to have come into long lanes of five courts, crumbling into decay. And each court was only distinguishable from its neighbour by a degree of ruin. Already the foxes made their burrows beneath the walls.

He had calculated that one night would have been the term of his stay in Berber. He was to have crept through the gate in the dusk of the evening, and before the grey light had quenched the stars his face should be set towards Obak. Now he must go steadily forward amongst the crowds like a man that has business of moment, dreading conversation lest his tongue should betray him, listening ever for the name of Yusef to strike upon his ears. Despair kept him company at times, and fear always. But from the sharp pangs of these emotions a sort of madness was begotten in him, a frenzy of obstinacy, a belief fanatical as the dark religion of those amongst whom he moved, that he could not now fail and the world go on, that there could be no injustice in the whole scheme of the universe great enough to lay this heavy burden upon the one man least fitted to bear it and then callously to destroy him because he tried.

Fear had him in its grip on that morning three days after he had left Abou Fatma at the wells, when coming over a slope he first saw the sand stretched like a lagoon up to the dark brown walls of the town, and the overshadowing foliage of the big date palms rising on the Nile bank beyond. Within those walls were the crowded Dervishes. It was surely the merest madness for a man to imagine that he could escape detection there, even for an hour. Was it right, he began to ask, that a man should even try? The longer he stood the more insistent did this question grow. The low mud walls grew strangely sinister; the welcome green of the waving palms, after so many arid days of sun and sand and stones, became an ironical invitation to death. He began to wonder whether he had not already done enough for honour in venturing so near.

The sun beat upon him; his strength ebbed from him as though his veins were opened. If he were caught, he thought, as surely he would be—oh, very surely! He saw the fanatical faces crowding fiercely about him . . . were not mutilations practised? . . . He looked about him, shivering even in that strong heat, and



the great loneliness of the place smote upon him, so that his knees shook. He faced about and commenced to run, leaping in a panic alone and unpursued across the naked desert under the sun, while from his throat feeble cries broke inarticulately.

He ran, however, only for a few yards, and it was the very violence of his flight which stopped him. These four years of anticipation were as nothing then? He had schooled himself in the tongue, he had lived in the bazaars to no end? He was still the craven who had sent in his papers. The quiet confidence with which he had revealed his plan to Lieutenant Sutch over the table in the Criterion Grill Room was the mere vainglory of a man who continually deceived himself. And Ethne? . . .

He dropped upon the ground, and drawing his coat over his head lay, a brown spot indistinguishable from the sand about him, an irregularity in the great waste surface of earth. He shut the prospect from his eyes, and over the thousands of miles of continent and sea he drew Ethne's face towards him. A little while and he was back again in Donegal. The summer night whispered through the open doorway in the hall; in a room near by people danced to music. He saw the three feathers fluttering to the floor; he read the growing trouble in Ethne's face. If he could do this thing, and the still harder thing which now he knew to lie beyond, he might perhaps some day see that face cleared of its trouble. There were significant words too in his ears: 'I should have no doubt that you and I would see much of one another afterwards.' Towards the setting of the sun he rose from the ground, and walking down towards Berber, passed between the gates.

---

## CHAPTER XI.

### DURRANCE HEARS NEWS OF FEVERSHAM.

A MONTH later Durrance arrived in London and discovered a letter from Ethne awaiting him at his club. It told him simply that she was staying with Mrs. Adair, and would be glad if he would find the time to call, but there was a black border to the paper and the envelope. Durrance called at Hill Street the next afternoon and found Ethne alone.

'I did not write to Wadi Halfa,' she explained at once, 'for I

thought that you would be on your way home before my letter could arrive. My father died towards the end of May.'

'I was afraid when I got your letter that you would have this to tell me,' he replied. 'I am very sorry. You will miss him.'

'More than I can say,' said she with a quiet depth of feeling. 'He died one morning early—I think I will tell you if you would care to hear,' and she related to him the manner of Dermod's death, of which a chill was the occasion rather than the cause; for he died of a gradual dissolution rather than a definite disease.

It was a curious story which Ethne had to tell, for it seemed that just before his death Dermod recaptured something of his old masterful spirit. 'We knew that he was dying,' Ethne said. 'He knew it too, and at seven o'clock of the afternoon after——' she hesitated for a moment and resumed: 'after he had spoken for a little while to me, he called his dog by name. The dog sprang at once on to the bed, though his voice had not risen above a whisper, and crouching quite close, pushed its muzzle with a whine under my father's hand. Then he told me to leave him and the dog altogether alone. I was to shut the door upon him. The dog would tell me when to open it again. I obeyed him and waited outside the door until one o'clock. Then a loud sudden howl moaned through the house.' She stopped for a while. This pause was the only sign of distress which she gave, and in a few moments she went on, speaking quite simply without any of the affectations of grief. 'It was trying to wait outside that door while the afternoon faded and the night came. It was night, of course, long before the end. He would have no lamp left in his room. One imagined him just the other side of that thin door-panel, lying very still and silent in the great four-poster bed with his face towards the hills, and the light falling. One imagined the room slipping away into darkness, and the windows continually looming into a greater importance, and the dog by his side and no one else right to the very end. He would have it that way, but it was rather hard for me.'

Durrance said nothing in reply, but gave her in full measure what she most needed, the sympathy of his silence. He imagined those hours in the passage, six hours of twilight and darkness; he could picture her standing close by the door, with her ear perhaps to the panel, and her hand upon her heart to check its loud beat-



ing. There was something rather cruel he thought in Dermot's resolve to die alone. It was Ethne who broke the silence.

'I said that my father spoke to me just before he told me to leave him. Of whom do you think he spoke?'

She was looking directly at Durrance as she put the question. From neither her eyes nor the level tone of her voice could he gather anything of the answer, but a sudden throb of hope caught away his breath.

'Tell me!' he said in a sort of suspense as he leaned forward in his chair.

'Of Mr. Feversham,' she answered, and he drew back again, and rather suddenly. It was evident that this was not the name which he had expected. He took his eyes from hers and stared downwards at the carpet, so that she might not see his face.

'My father was always very fond of him,' she continued gently, 'and I think that I would like to know if you have any knowledge of what he is doing or where he is.'

Durrance did not answer nor did he raise his face. He reflected upon the strange strong hold which Harry Feversham kept upon the affections of those who had once known him well; so that even the man whom he had wronged, and upon whose daughter he had brought much suffering, must remember him with kindness upon his death-bed. The reflection was not without its bitterness to Durrance at this moment, and this bitterness he was afraid that his face and voice might both betray. But he was compelled to speak, for Ethne insisted.

'You have never come across him, I suppose?' she asked.

Durrance rose from his seat and walked to the window before he answered. He spoke looking out into the street, but though he thus concealed the expression of his face, a thrill of deep anger sounded through his words, in spite of his efforts to subdue his tones.

'No,' he said, 'I never have,' and suddenly his anger had its way with him; it chose as well as informed his words. 'And I never wish to,' he cried. 'He was my friend, I know. But I cannot remember that friendship now. I can only think that if he had been the true man we took him for, you would not have waited alone in that dark passage during those six hours.' He turned again to the centre of the room and asked abruptly:

'You are going back to Glenalla?'

‘Yes.’

‘You will live there alone?’

‘Yes.’

For a little while there was silence between them. Then Durrance walked round to the back of her chair.

‘You once said that you would perhaps tell me why your engagement was broken off.’

‘But you know,’ she said. ‘What you said at the window showed that you knew.’

‘No, I do not. One or two words your father let drop. He asked me for news of Feversham the last time that I spoke with him. But I know nothing definite. I should like you to tell me.’

Ethne shook her head and leaned forward with her elbows on her knees. ‘Not now,’ she said, and silence again followed her words. Durrance broke it again.

‘I have only one more year at Halfa. It would be wise to leave Egypt then, I think. I do not expect much will be done in the Soudan for some little while. I do not think that I will stay there—in any case, I mean, even if you should decide to remain alone at Glenalla.’

Ethne made no pretence to ignore the suggestion of his words. ‘We are neither of us children,’ she said; ‘you have all your life to think of. We should be prudent.’

‘Yes,’ said Durrance with a sudden exasperation, ‘but the right kind of prudence. The prudence which knows that it’s worth while to dare a good deal.’

Ethne did not move. She was leaning forward with her back towards him, so that he could see nothing of her face, and for a long while she remained in this attitude quite silent and very still. She asked a question at the last, and in a very low and gentle voice.

‘Do you want me so very much?’ And before he could answer she turned quickly towards him. ‘Try not to,’ she exclaimed earnestly. ‘For this one year try not to. You have much to occupy your thoughts. Try to forget me altogether’; and there was just sufficient regret in her tone, the regret at the prospect of losing a valued friend, to take all the sting from her words, to confirm Durrance in his delusion that but for her fear that she would spoil his career, she would answer him in very different words. Mrs. Adair came into the room before he could reply, and thus he carried away with him his delusion.



He dined that evening at his club, and sat afterwards smoking his cigar under the big tree where he had sat so persistently a year before in his vain quest for news of Harry Feversham. It was much the same sort of clear night as that on which he had seen Lieutenant Sutch limp into the courtyard and hesitate at the sight of him. The strip of sky was cloudless and starry overhead; the air had the pleasant languor of a summer night in June; the lights flashing from the windows and doorways gave to the leaves of the trees the fresh green look of spring; and outside in the roadway the carriages rolled with a thunderous hum like the sound of the sea. And on this night, too, there came a man into the courtyard who knew Durrance. But he did not hesitate. He came straight up to Durrance and sat down upon the seat at his side. Durrance dropped the paper at which he was glancing and held out his hand.

‘How do you do?’ said he. This friend was Captain Mather.

‘I was wondering whether I should meet you when I read the evening paper. I knew that it was about the time one might expect to find you in London. You have seen, I suppose?’

‘What?’ asked Durrance.

‘Then you haven’t,’ replied Mather. He picked up the newspaper which Durrance had dropped and turned over the sheets, searching for the piece of news which he required. ‘You remember that last reconnaissance we made from Suakin?’

‘Very well.’

‘We halted by the Sinkat fort at mid-day. There was an Arab hiding in the trees at the back of the glacis.’

‘Yes.’

‘Have you forgotten the yarn he told you?’

‘About Gordon’s letters and the wall of a house in Berber. No, I have not forgotten.’

‘Then here’s something which will interest you,’ and Captain Mather, having folded the paper to his satisfaction, handed it to Durrance and pointed to a paragraph. It was a short paragraph; it gave no details; it was the merest summary, and Durrance read it through between the puffs of his cigar.

‘The fellow must have gone back to Berber after all,’ said he. ‘A risky business. Abou Fatma—that was the man’s name.’

The paragraph made no mention of Abou Fatma, or indeed of any man except Captain Willoughby, the Deputy-Governor of Suakin. It merely announced that certain letters which the

Mahdi had sent to Gordon summoning him to surrender Khartum, and inviting him to become a convert to the Mahdist religion, together with copies of Gordon's curt replies, had been recovered from a wall in Berber and brought safely to Captain Willoughby at Suakin.

'They were hardly worth risking a life for,' said Mather.

'Perhaps not,' replied Durrance a little doubtfully. 'But after all, one is glad they have been recovered. Perhaps the copies are in Gordon's own hand. They are, at all events, of an historic interest.'

'In a way, no doubt,' said Mather. 'But even so, their recovery throws no light upon the history of the siege. It can make no real difference to anyone, not even to the historian.'

'That is true,' Durrance agreed, and there was nothing more untrue. In the same spot where he had sought for news of Feversham news had now come to him—only he did not know. He was in the dark; he could not appreciate that here was news which, however little it might trouble the historian, touched his life at the springs. He dismissed the paragraph from his mind, and sat thinking over the conversation which had passed that afternoon between Ethne and himself, and without discouragement. Ethne had mentioned Harry Feversham, it was true—had asked for news of him. But she might have been—nay, she probably had been—moved to ask because her father's last words had referred to him. She had spoken his name in a perfectly steady voice, he remembered; and, indeed, the mere fact that she had spoken it at all might be taken as a sign that it had no longer any power with her. There was something hopeful to his mind in her very request that he should try during this one year to omit her from his thoughts. For it seemed almost to imply that if he could not, she might at the end of it, perhaps, give to him the answer for which he longed. He allowed a few days to pass, and then called again at Mrs. Adair's house. But he found only Mrs. Adair. Ethne had left London and returned to Donegal. She had left rather suddenly, Mrs. Adair told him, and Mrs. Adair had no sure knowledge of the reason of her going.

Durrance, however, had no doubt as to the reason. Ethne was putting into practice the policy which she had commended to his thoughts. He was to try to forget her, and she would help him to success so far as she could by her absence from his sight. And in attributing this reason to her Durrance was right. But



one thing Ethne had forgotten. She had not asked him to cease to write to her, and accordingly in the autumn of that year the letters began again to come from the Soudan. She was frankly glad to receive them, but at the same time she was troubled. For in spite of their careful reticence, every now and then a phrase leaped out—it might be merely the repetition of some trivial sentence which she had spoken long ago and long ago forgotten—and she could not but see that in spite of her prayer she lived perpetually in his thoughts. There was a strain of hopefulness too as though he moved in a world painted with new colours and suddenly grown musical. Ethne had never freed herself from the haunting fear that one man's life had been spoilt because of her; she had never faltered from her determination that this should not happen with a second. Only with Durrance's letters before her she could not evade a new and perplexing question. By what means was that possibility to be avoided? There were two ways. By choosing which of them could she fulfil her determination? She was no longer so sure as she had been the year before. The question recurred to her again and again. She took it out with her on the hill-side with the letters, and pondered and puzzled over it and got never an inch nearer to a solution. Even her violin failed her in this strait.

---

## CHAPTER XII.

### DURRANCE SHARPENS HIS WITS.

IT was a night of May, and outside the mess-room at Wadi Halfa three officers were smoking on a grass knoll above the Nile. The moon was at its full and the strong light had robbed even the planets of their lustre. The smaller stars were not visible at all, and the sky, washed of its dark colour, curved overhead, pearly-hued and luminous. The three officers sat in their lounge chairs and smoked silently, while the bull-frogs croaked from an island in mid-river. At the bottom of the small steep cliff on which they sat the Nile, so sluggish was its flow, shone like a burnished mirror, and from the opposite bank the desert stretched away to infinite distances, a vast plain with scattered hummocks, a plain white as a hoar frost on the surface of which the stones sparkled like jewels. Behind the three officers of the garrison

the roof of the mess-room verandah threw a shadow on the ground ; it seemed a solid piece of blackness.

One of the three officers struck a match and held it to the end of his cigar. The flame lit up a troubled and anxious face.

‘ I hope that no harm has come to him,’ he said as he threw the match away. ‘ I wish that I could say I believed it.’

The speaker was a man of middle age and the colonel of a Soudanese battalion. He was answered by a man whose hair had gone grey, it is true. But grey hair is frequent in the Soudan, and his unlined face still showed that he was young. He was Lieutenant Calder of the Engineers. Youth, however, in this instance had no optimism wherewith to challenge Colonel Dawson.

‘ He left Halfa eight weeks ago, eh ? ’ he said gloomily.

‘ Eight weeks to-day,’ replied the Colonel.

It was the third officer, a tall, spare, long-necked major of the Army Service Corps, who alone hazarded a cheerful prophecy.

‘ It’s early days to conclude Durrance has got scuppered,’ said he. ‘ One knows Durrance. Give him a camp fire in the desert, and a couple of sheiks to sit round it with him, and he’ll buck to them for a month and never feel bored at the end. While here there are letters, and there’s an office, and there’s a desk in the office and everything he loathes and can’t do with. You’ll see Durrance will turn up right enough, though he won’t hurry about it.’

‘ He is three weeks overdue,’ objected the Colonel, ‘ and he’s methodical after a fashion. I am afraid.’

Major Walters pointed out his arm to the white empty desert across the river.

‘ If he had travelled that way, westwards, I might agree,’ he said. ‘ But Durrance went east through the mountain country towards Berenice and the Red Sea. The tribes he went to visit were quiet even in the worst times when Osman Digna lay before Suakin.’

The Colonel, however, took no comfort from Walters’ confidence. He tugged at his moustache and repeated ‘ He is three weeks overdue.’

Lieutenant Calder knocked the ashes from his pipe and re-filled it. He leaned forward in his chair as he pressed the tobacco down with his thumb, and he said slowly :

‘ I wonder. It is just possible that some sort of trap was laid



for Durrance. I am not sure. I never mentioned before what I knew, because until lately I did not suspect that it could have anything to do with his delay. But now I begin to wonder. You remember the night before he started ?'

'Yes,' said Dawson, and he hitched his chair a little nearer. Calder was the one man in Wadi Halfa who could claim something like intimacy with Durrance. Despite their difference in rank there was no great disparity in age between the two men, and from the first when Calder had come inexperienced and fresh from England, but with a great ardour to acquire a comprehensive experience, Durrance in his reticent way had been at pains to show the newcomer considerable friendship. Calder therefore might be likely to know.

'I, too, remember that night,' said Walters. 'Durrance dined at the mess and went away early to prepare for his journey.'

'His preparations were made already,' said Calder. 'He went away early as you say. But he did not go to his quarters. He walked along the river bank to Tewfikieh.'

Wadi Halfa was the military station, Tewfikieh a little frontier town to the north separated from Halfa by a mile of river-bank. A few Greeks kept stores there, a few bare and dirty cafés faced the street between native cook-shops and tobacconists; a noisy little town where the negro from the Dinka country jostled the fellah from the Delta and the air was torn with many dialects; a thronged little town which yet lacked to European ears one distinctive element of a throng. There was no ring of footsteps. The crowd walked on sand and for the most part with naked feet, so that if for a rare moment the sharp high cries and the perpetual voices ceased, the figures of men and women flitted by noiseless as ghosts. And even at night, when the streets were most crowded and the uproar loudest, it seemed that underneath the noise, and almost appreciable to the ear, there lay a deep and brooding silence, the silence of deserts and the East.

'Durrance went down to Tewfikieh at ten o'clock that night,' said Calder. 'I went to his quarters at eleven. He had not returned. He was starting eastwards at four in the morning, and there was some detail of business on which I wished to speak to him before he went. So I waited for his return. He came in about a quarter of an hour afterwards and told me at once that I must be quick since he was expecting a visitor. He spoke quickly and rather restlessly. He seemed to be labouring under

some excitement. He barely listened to what I had to say, and he answered me at random. It was quite evident that he was moved, and rather deeply moved, by some unusual feeling, though at the nature of the feeling I could not guess. For at one moment it seemed certainly to be anger, and the next moment he relaxed into a laugh, as though in spite of himself he was glad. However, he bundled me out, and as I went I heard him telling his servant to go to bed, because, though he expected a visitor, he would admit the visitor himself.'

'Well!' said Dawson, 'and who was the visitor?'

'I do not know,' answered Calder. 'The one thing I do know is that when Durrance's servant went to call him at four o'clock for his journey, he found Durrance still sitting on the verandah outside his quarters, as though he still expected his visitor. The visitor had not come.'

'And Durrance left no message?'

'No. I was up myself before he started. I thought that he was puzzled and worried. I thought, too, that he meant to tell me what was the matter. I still think that he had that in his mind, but that he could not decide. For even after he had taken his seat upon his saddle and his camel had risen from the ground, he turned and looked down towards me. But he thought better of it, or worse, as the case may be. At all events, he did not speak. He struck the camel on the flank with his stick, and rode slowly past the post-office and out into the desert, with his head sunk upon his breast. I wonder whether he rode into a trap. Who could this visitor have been whom he meets in the street of Tewfikieh, and who must come so secretly to Wadi Halfa? What can have been his business with Durrance? Important business, troublesome business—so much is evident. And he did not come to transact it. Was the whole thing a lure to which we have not the clue? Like Colonel Dawson, I am afraid.'

There was a silence after he had finished, which Major Walters was the first to break. He offered no argument—he simply expressed again his unalterable cheerfulness.

'I don't think Durrance has got scuppered,' said he as he rose from his chair.

'I know what I shall do,' said the Colonel. 'I shall send out a strong search party in the morning.'

And the next morning, as they sat at breakfast on the verandah,



he at once proceeded to describe the force which he meant to despatch. Major Walters, too, it seemed, in spite of his hopeful prophecies, had pondered during the night over Calder's story, and he leaned across the table to Calder.

'Did you never inquire whom Durrance talked with at Tewfikieh on that night?' he asked.

'I did, and there's a point that puzzles me,' said Calder. He was sitting with his back to the Nile and his face towards the glass doors of the mess-room, and he spoke to Walters, who was directly opposite. 'I could not find that he talked to more than one person, and that one person could not by any likelihood have been the visitor he expected. Durrance stopped in front of a café where some strolling musicians, who had somehow wandered up to Tewfikieh, were playing and singing for their night's lodging. One of them, a Greek, I was told, came outside into the street and took his hat round. Durrance threw a sovereign into the hat, the man turned to thank him, and they talked for a little time together':—and as he came to this point he raised his head. A look of recognition came into his face. He laid his hands upon the table-edge, and leaned forward with his feet drawn back beneath his chair as though he was on the point of springing up. But he did not spring up. His look of recognition became one of bewilderment. He glanced round the table and saw that Colonel Dawson was helping himself to cocoa, while Major Walters' eyes were on his plate. There were other officers of the garrison present, but not one had remarked his movement and its sudden arrest. Calder leaned back, and staring curiously in front of him and over the Major's shoulder, continued his story. 'But I could never hear that Durrance spoke to anyone else. He seemed, except that one knows to the contrary, merely to have strolled through the village and back again to Wadi Halfa.

'That doesn't help us much,' said the Major.

'And it's all you know?' asked the Colonel.

'No, not quite all,' returned Calder slowly; 'I know, for instance, that the man we are talking about is staring me straight in the face.'

At once everybody at the table turned towards the mess-room.

'Durrance!' cried the Colonel, springing up.

'When did you get back?' said the Major.

Durrance, with the dust of his journey still powdered upon

his clothes, and a face burnt to the colour of red brick, was standing in the doorway, and listening with a remarkable intentness to the voices of his fellow-officers. It was perhaps noticeable that Calder, who was Durrance's friend, neither rose from his chair nor offered any greeting. He still sat watching Durrance; he still remained curious and perplexed; but as Durrance descended the three steps into the verandah there came a quick and troubled look of comprehension into his face.

'We expected you three weeks ago,' said Dawson, as he pulled a chair away from an empty place at the table.

'The delay could not be helped,' replied Durrance. He took the chair and drew it up.

'Does my story account for it?' asked Calder.

'Not a bit. It was the Greek musician I expected that night,' he explained with a laugh. 'I was curious to know what stroke of ill-luck had cast him out to play the zither for a night's lodging in a café at Tewfikieh. That was all,' and he added slowly in a softer voice, 'Yes, that was all.'

'Meanwhile you are forgetting your breakfast,' said Dawson as he rose. 'What will you have?'

Calder leaned ever so slightly forward with his eyes quietly resting on Durrance. Durrance looked round the table, and then called the mess-waiter. 'Moussa, get me something cold,' said he, and the waiter went back into the mess-room. Calder nodded his head with a faint smile, as though he understood that here was a difficulty rather cleverly surmounted.

'There's tea, cocoa, and coffee,' he said. 'Help yourself, Durrance.'

'Thanks,' said Durrance. 'I see, but I will get Moussa to bring me a brandy-and-soda, I think,' and again Calder nodded his head.

Durrance eat his breakfast and drank his brandy-and-soda, and talked the while of his journey. He had travelled further eastwards than he had intended. He had found the Ababdeh Arabs quiet amongst their mountains. If they were not disposed to acknowledge allegiance to Egypt, on the other hand, they paid no tribute to Mahommed Achmet. The weather had been good, ibex and antelope plentiful. Durrance on the whole had reason to be content with his journey. And Calder sat and watched him, and disbelieved every word that was said. The other officers went about their duties; Calder remained behind, and waited



until Durrance should finish. But it seemed that Durrance never would finish. He loitered over his breakfast, and when that was done he pushed his plate away and sat talking. There was no end to his questions as to what had passed at Wadi Halfa during the last eight weeks, no limit to his enthusiasm over the journey from which he had just returned. Finally, however, he stopped with a remarkable abruptness, and said with some suspicion to his companion :

‘ You are taking life easily this morning.’

‘ I have not eight weeks’ arrears of letters to clear off, as you have, Colonel,’ Calder returned with a laugh; and he saw Durrance’s face cloud and his forehead contract.

‘ True,’ he said, after a pause. ‘ I had forgotten my letters.’ And he rose from his seat at the table, mounted the steps, and passed into the mess-room.

Calder immediately sprang up, and with his eyes followed Durrance’s movements. Durrance went to a nail which was fixed in the wall close to the glass doors and on a level with his head. From that nail he took down the key of his office, crossed the room, and went out through the further door. That door he left open, and Calder could see him walk down the path between the bushes through the tiny garden in front of the mess, unlatch the gates, and cross the open space of sand towards his office. As soon as Durrance had disappeared Calder sat down again, and, resting his elbows on the table, propped his face between his hands. Calder was troubled. He was a friend of Durrance’s; he was the one man in Wadi Halfa who possessed something of Durrance’s confidence; he knew that there were certain letters in a woman’s handwriting waiting for him in his office. He was very deeply troubled. Durrance had aged during these eight weeks. There were furrows about his mouth where only faint lines had been visible when he had started out from Halfa; and it was not merely desert dust which had discoloured his hair. His hilarity, too, had an artificial air. He had sat at the table constraining himself to the semblance of high spirits. Calder lit his pipe, and sat for a long while by the empty table.

Then he took his helmet and crossed the sand to Durrance’s office. He lifted the latch noiselessly; as noiselessly he opened the door, and he looked in. Durrance was sitting at his desk with his head bowed upon his arms and all his letters unopened at his side. Calder stepped into the room and closed the door

loudly behind him. At once Durrance turned his face to the door.

‘Well?’ said he.

‘I have a paper, Colonel, which requires your signature,’ said Calder. ‘It’s the authority for the alterations in C barracks. You remember?’

‘Very well. I will look through it and return it to you, signed, at lunch-time. Will you give it to me, please?’

He held out his hand towards Calder. Calder took his pipe from his mouth, and, standing thus in full view of Durrance, slowly and deliberately placed it into Durrance’s outstretched palm. It was not until the hot bowl burnt his hand that Durrance snatched his arm away. The pipe fell and broke upon the floor. Neither of the two men spoke for a few moments, and then Calder put his arm round Durrance’s shoulders, and asked in a voice gentle as a woman’s:

‘How did it happen?’

Durrance buried his face in his hands. The great control which he had exercised till now he was no longer able to sustain. He did not answer, nor did he utter any sound, but he sat shivering from head to foot.

‘How did it happen?’ Calder asked again, and in a whisper.

Durrance put another question:

‘How did you find out?’

‘You stood in the mess-room doorway listening to discover whose voice spoke from where. When I raised my head and saw you, though your eyes rested on my face there was no recognition in them. I suspected then. When you came down the steps into the verandah I became almost certain. When you would not help yourself to food, when you reached out your arm over your shoulder so that Moussa had to put the brandy-and-soda safely into your palm, I was sure.’

‘I was a fool to try and hide it,’ said Durrance. ‘Of course I knew all the time that I couldn’t for more than a few hours. But even those few hours somehow seemed a gain.’

‘How did it happen?’

‘There was a high wind,’ Durrance explained. ‘It took my helmet off. It was eight o’clock in the morning. I did not mean to move my camp that day, and I was standing outside my tent in my shirt-sleeves. So you see that I had not even the collar of a coat to protect the nape of my neck. I was fool enough to run



after my helmet ; and—you must have seen the same thing happen a hundred times—each time that I stooped to pick it up it skipped away ; each time that I ran after it, it stopped and waited for me to catch it up. And before one is aware what one is doing one has run a quarter of a mile. I went down, I was told, like a log just when I had it in my hand. How long ago it happened I don't quite know, for I was ill for a time, and afterwards it was difficult to keep count, since one couldn't tell the difference between day and night.'

Durrance, in a word, had gone blind. He told the rest of his story. He had bidden his followers carry him back to Berber, and then, influenced by the natural wish to hide his calamity as long as he could, he had enjoined upon them silence. Calder heard the story through to the end, and then rose at once to his feet.

'There's a doctor. He is clever, and, for a Syrian, knows a good deal. I will fetch him here privately, and we will hear what he says. Your blindness may be merely temporary.'

The Syrian doctor, however, pursed up his lips and shook his head. He advised an immediate departure to Cairo. It was a case for a specialist. He himself would hesitate to pronounce an opinion, though, to be sure, there was always hope of a cure.

'Have you ever suffered an injury in the head?' he asked. 'Were you ever thrown from your horse? Were you wounded?'

'No,' said Durrance.

The Syrian did not disguise his conviction that the case was grave ; and after he had departed both men were silent for some time. Calder had a feeling that any attempt at consolation would be futile in itself, and might, moreover, in betraying his own fear that the hurt was irreparable, only discourage his companion. He turned to the pile of letters and looked them through.

'There are two letters here, Durrance,' he said gently, 'which you might perhaps care to hear. They are written in a woman's hand, and there is an Irish postmark. Shall I open them?'

'No,' exclaimed Durrance suddenly ; and his hand dropped quickly upon Calder's arm. 'By no means.'

Calder, however, did not put down the letters. He was anxious, for private reasons of his own, to learn something more of Ethne Eustace than the outside of her letters could reveal. A few rare references made in unusual moments of confidence by

Durrance had only informed Calder of her name, and assured him that his friend would be very glad to change it if he could. He looked at Durrance—a man so trained to vigour and activity that his very sunburn seemed an essential quality rather than an accident of the country in which he lived; a man, too, who came to the wild, uncultured places of the world with the joy of one who comes into an inheritance; a man to whom these desolate tracts were home, and the fireside and the hedged fields and made roads merely the other places; and he understood the magnitude of the calamity which had befallen him. Therefore he was most anxious to know more of this girl who wrote to Durrance from Donegal, and to gather from her letters, as from a mirror in which her image was reflected, some speculation as to her character. For if she failed, what had this friend of his any longer left?

‘You would like to hear them, I expect,’ he insisted. ‘You have been away eight weeks.’ And he was interrupted by a harsh laugh.

‘Do you know what I was thinking when I stopped you?’ said Durrance. ‘Why, that I would read the letters after you had gone. It takes time to get used to being blind after your eyes have served you pretty well all your life.’ And his voice shook ever so little. ‘You will have to answer them, Calder, for me. So read them. Please read them.’

Calder tore open the envelopes and read the letters through and was satisfied. They gave a record of the simple doings of her mountain village in Donegal, and in the simplest terms. But the girl’s nature shone out in the telling. Her love of the countryside and of the people who dwelt there was manifest. She could see the humour and the tragedy of the small village troubles. There was a warm friendliness for Durrance moreover expressed, not so much in a sentence as in the whole spirit of the letters. It was evident that she was most keenly interested in all that he did, that, in a way, she looked upon his career as a thing in which she had a share, even if it was only a friend’s share. And when Calder had ended he looked again at Durrance, but now with a face of relief. It seemed, too, that Durrance was relieved.

‘After all, one has something to be thankful for,’ he cried. ‘Think! Suppose that I had been engaged to her? She would never have allowed me to break it off, once I had gone blind. What an escape!’

‘An escape?’ exclaimed Calder.



‘You don’t understand. But I knew a man who went blind, a good fellow, too, before—mind that, before! But a year after! You couldn’t have recognised him. He had narrowed down into the most selfish, exacting, egotistical creature it is possible to imagine. I don’t wonder, I hardly see how he could help it, I don’t blame him. But it wouldn’t make life easier for a wife, would it? A helpless husband who can’t cross a road without his wife at his elbow is bad enough. But make him a selfish beast into the bargain, full of questions, jealous of her power to go where she will, curious as to every person with whom she speaks—and what then? My God, I am glad that girl refused me. For that I am most grateful.’

‘She refused you?’ asked Calder, and the relief passed from his face and voice.

‘Twice,’ said Durrance. ‘What an escape! You see, Calder, I shall be more trouble even than the man I told you of. I am not clever. I can’t sit in a chair and amuse myself by thinking, not having any intellect to buck about. I have lived out of doors and hard, and that’s the only sort of life that suits me. I tell you, Calder, you won’t be very anxious for much of my society in a year’s time,’ and he laughed again and with the same harshness.

‘Oh, stop that,’ said Calder; ‘I will read the rest of your letters to you.’

He read them, however, without much attention to their contents. His mind was occupied with the two letters from Ethne Eustace, and he was wondering whether there was any deeper emotion than mere friendship hidden beneath the words. Girls refused men for all sorts of queer reasons which had no sense in them, and very often they were sick and sorry about it afterwards; and very often they meant to accept the men all the time.

‘I must answer the letters from Ireland,’ said Durrance, when he had finished. ‘The rest can wait.’

Calder held a sheet of paper upon the desk and told Durrance when he was writing on a slant and when he was writing on the blotting-pad; and in this way Durrance wrote to tell Ethne that a sunstroke had deprived him of his sight. Calder took that letter away. But he took it to the hospital and asked for the Syrian doctor. The doctor came out to him, and they walked together under the trees in front of the building.

‘Tell me the truth,’ said Calder.

The doctor blinked behind his spectacles.

'The optic nerve is, I think, destroyed,' he replied.

'Then there is no hope?'

'None, if my diagnosis is correct.'

Calder turned the letter over and over, as though he could not make up his mind what in the world to do with it.

'Can a sunstroke destroy the optic nerve?' he asked at length.

'A mere sunstroke? No,' replied the doctor. 'But it may be the occasion. For the cause one must look deeper.'

Calder came to a stop, and there was a look of horror in his eyes. 'You mean—one must look to the brain?'

'Yes.'

They walked on for a few paces. A further question was in Calder's mind, but he had some difficulty in speaking it, and when he had spoken he waited for the answer in suspense.

'Then this calamity is not all. There will be more to follow—death or——' but that other alternative he could not bring himself to utter. Here, however, the doctor was able to reassure him.

'No. That does not follow.'

Calder went back to the mess-room and called for a brandy-and-soda. He was more disturbed by the blow which had fallen upon Durrance than he would have cared to own; and he put the letter upon the table and thought of the message of renunciation which it contained, and he could hardly restrain his fingers from tearing it across. It must be sent, he knew, its destruction would be of no more than a temporary avail. Yet he could hardly bring himself to post it. With the passage of every minute he realised more clearly what blindness meant to Durrance. A man not very clever, as he himself was ever the first to acknowledge, and always the inheritor of the other places—how much more it meant to him than to the ordinary run of men! Would the girl, he wondered, understand as clearly? It was very silent that morning on the verandah at Wadi Halfa; the sunlight blazed upon desert and river; not a breath of wind stirred the foliage of any bush. Calder drank his brandy-and-soda and slowly that question forced itself more and more into the front of his mind. Would the woman over in Ireland understand? He rose from his chair as he heard Colonel Dawson's voice in the mess-room, and taking up his letter walked away to the post-office. Durrance's letter was



despatched, but somewhere in the Mediterranean it crossed a letter from Ethne, which Durrance received a fortnight later at Cairo. It was read out to him by Calder, who had obtained leave to come down from Wadi Halfa with his friend. Ethne wrote that she had, during the last months, considered all that he had said when at Glenalla and in London; she had read, too, his letters and understood that in his thoughts of her there had been no change, and that there would be none; she therefore went back upon her old argument that she would by marriage be doing him an injury, and she would marry him upon his return to England.

‘That’s rough luck, isn’t it?’ said Durrance, when Calder had read the letter through. ‘For here’s the one thing I have always wished for, and it comes when I can no longer take it.’

‘I think you will find it very difficult to refuse to take it,’ said Calder. ‘I do not know Miss Eustace, but I can hazard a guess from the letters of hers which I have read to you. I do not think that she is a woman who will say “yes” one day, and then because bad times come to you, say “no” the next, or allow you to say “no” for her either. I have a sort of notion that since she cares for you and you for her, you are doing little less than insulting her if you imagine that she cannot marry you and still be happy.’

Durrance thought over that aspect of the question, and began to wonder. Calder might be right. Marriage with a blind man! It might, perhaps, be possible if upon both sides there was love, and the letter from Ethne proved—did it not?—that on both sides there was love. Besides there were some trivial compensations which might help to make her sacrifice less burdensome. She could still live in her own country and move in her own home. For the Lennon house could be rebuilt and the estates cleared of their debt.

‘Besides,’ said Calder, ‘there is always a possibility of a cure.’

‘There is no such possibility,’ said Durrance with a decision which quite startled his companion. ‘You know that as well as I do,’ and he added with a laugh, ‘you needn’t start so guiltily. I haven’t overheard a word of any of your conversations about me.’

‘Then what in the world makes you think that there’s no chance?’

‘The voice of every doctor who has encouraged me to hope. Their words—yes—their words tell me to visit specialists in

Europe, and not lose heart, but their voices give the lie to their words. If one cannot see, one can at all events hear.'

Calder looked thoughtfully at his friend. This was not the only occasion on which of late Durrance had surprised his friends by a certain unfamiliar acuteness. Calder glanced uncomfortably at the letter which he was still holding in his hand.

'When was that letter written?' said Durrance suddenly, and immediately upon the question he asked another. 'What makes you jump?'

Calder laughed and explained hastily. 'Why, I was looking at the letter at the moment when you asked, and your question came so pat that I could hardly believe you did not see what I was doing. It was written on the fifteenth of May.'

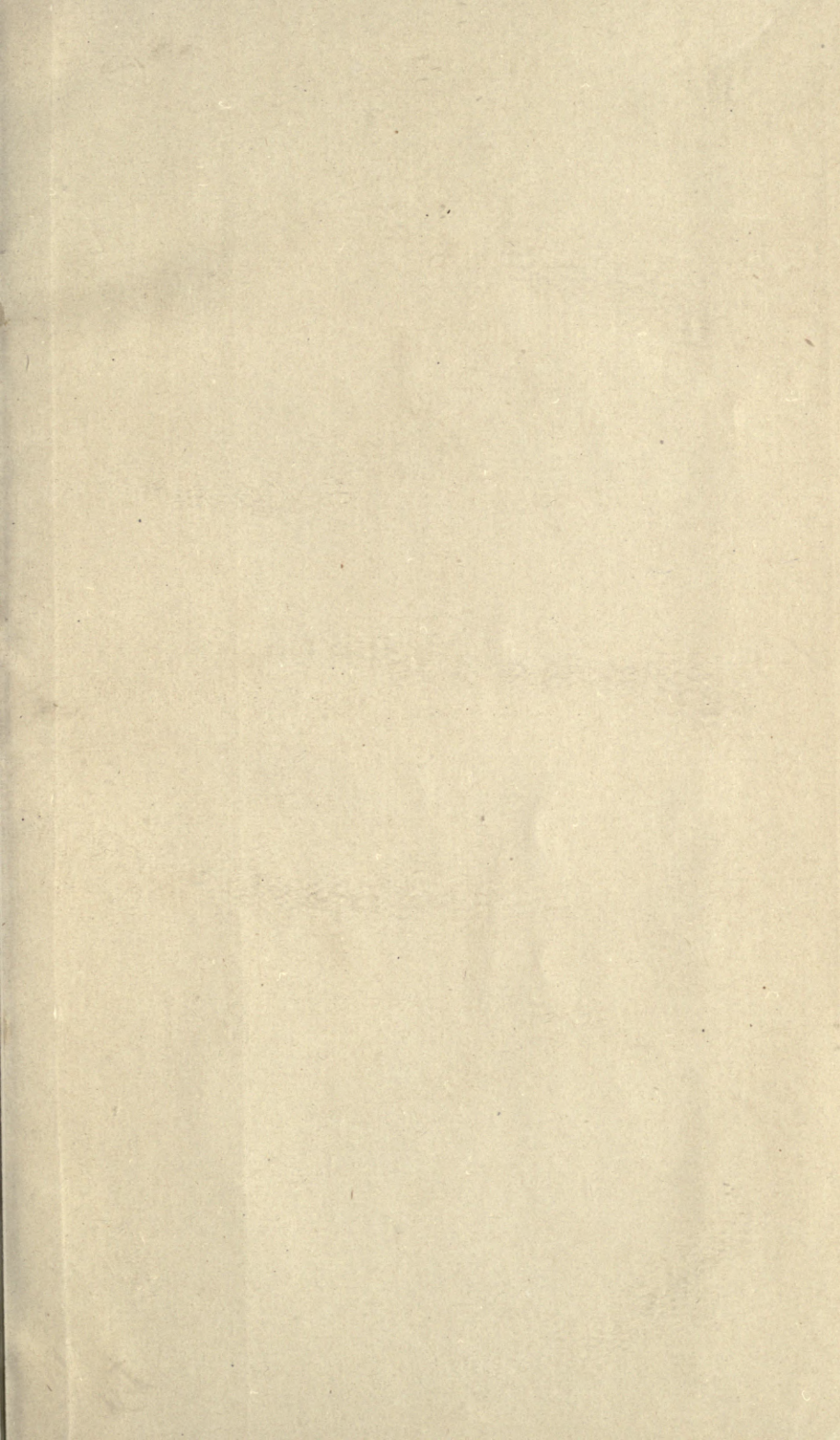
'Ah,' said Durrance, 'the day I returned to Wadi Halfa blind.'

Calder sat in his chair without a movement. He gazed anxiously at his companion, it seemed almost as though he was afraid; his attitude was one of suspense.

'That's a queer coincidence,' said Durrance with a careless laugh; and Calder had an intuition that he was listening with the utmost intentness for some movement on his own part, perhaps, a relaxation of his attitude, perhaps, perhaps a breath of relief. Calder did not move, however; and he drew no breath of relief.

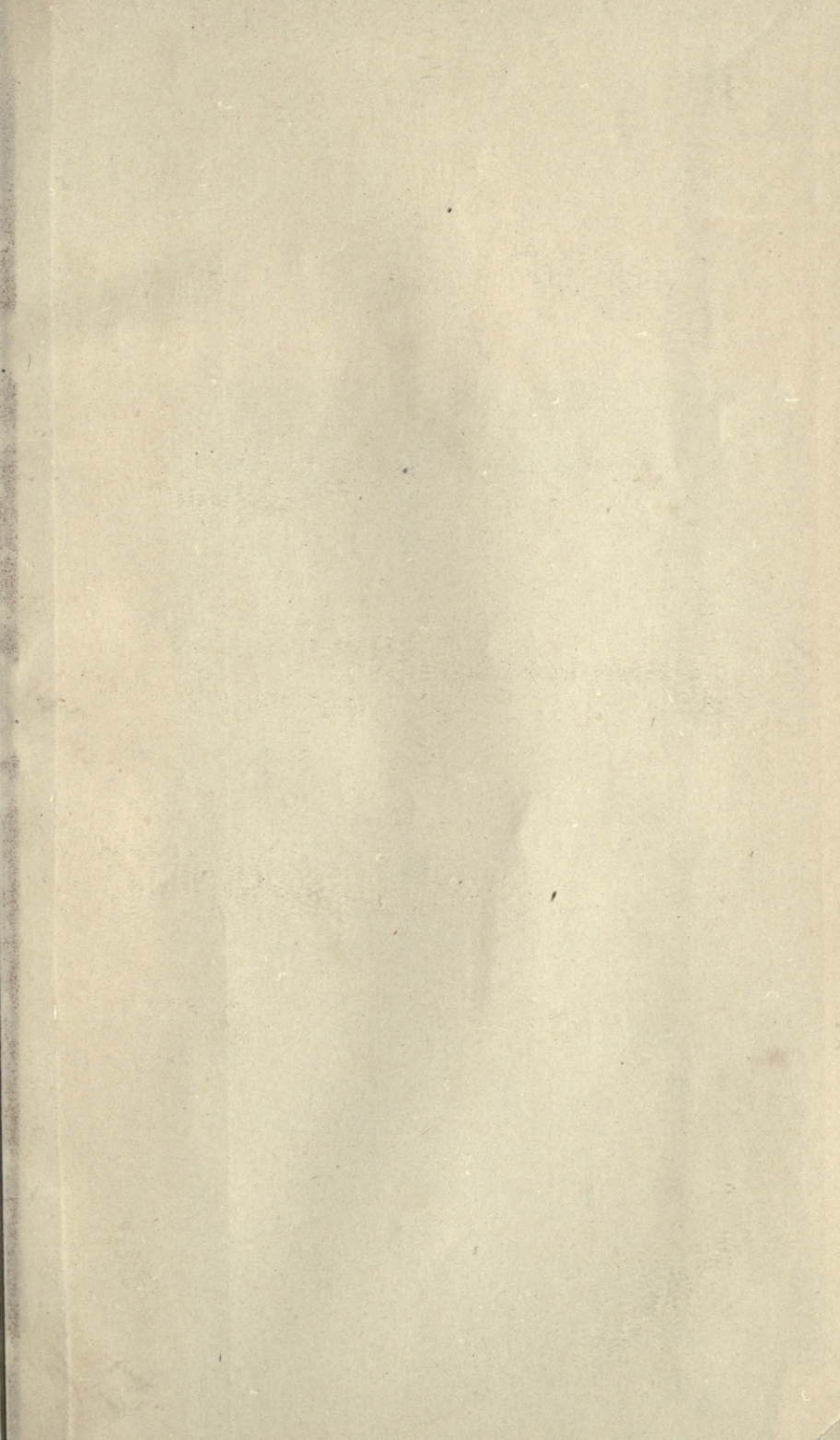
*(To be continued.)*















AP  
4  
C76  
v.85  
no.1-4

The Cornhill magazine

PLEASE DO NOT REMOVE  
CARDS OR SLIPS FROM THIS POCKET

---

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO LIBRARY

---

