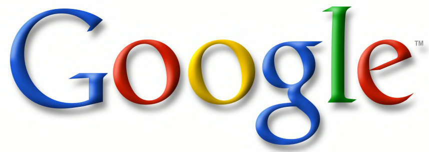

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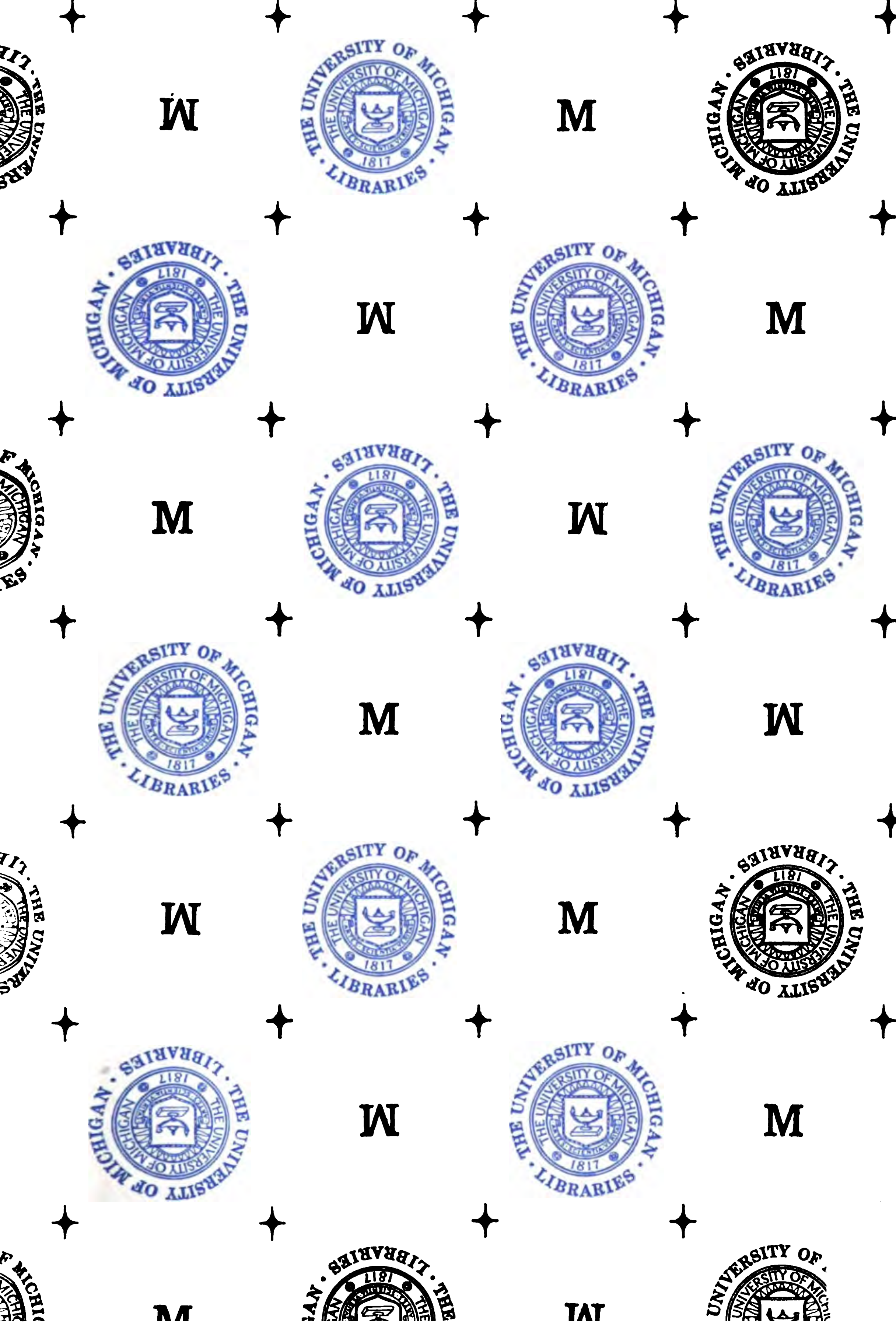

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RYE.

Engraved by O. Lacour, from a Drawing by J. R. Wells.

The English Illustrated Magazine.

OCTOBER, 1885.

THE INTERPRETERS.

I.

Days dawn on us that make amends for many
  Sometimes,
When heaven and earth seem sweeter even than any
  Man's rhymes.

Light had not all been quenched in France, or quelled
  In Greece,
Had Homer sung not, or had Hugo held
  His peace.

Had Sappho's self not left her word thus long
  For token,
The sea round Lesbos yet in waves of song
  Had spoken.

II.

And yet these days of subtler air and finer
  Delight,
When lovelier looks the darkness, and diviner
  The light.

The gift they give of all these golden hours,
  Whose urn
Pours forth reverberate rays or shadowing showers
  In turn.

Clouds, beams, and winds that make the live day's track
  Seem living—
What were they did no spirit give them back
  Thanksgiving?

III.

Dead air, dead fire, dead shapes and shadows, telling
Time nought;
Man gives them sense and soul by song, and dwelling
In thought.

In human thought their being endures, their power
Abides:
Else were their life a thing that each light hour
Derides.

The years live, work, sigh, smile, and die, with all
They cherish;
The soul endures, though dreams that fed it fall
And perish.

IV.

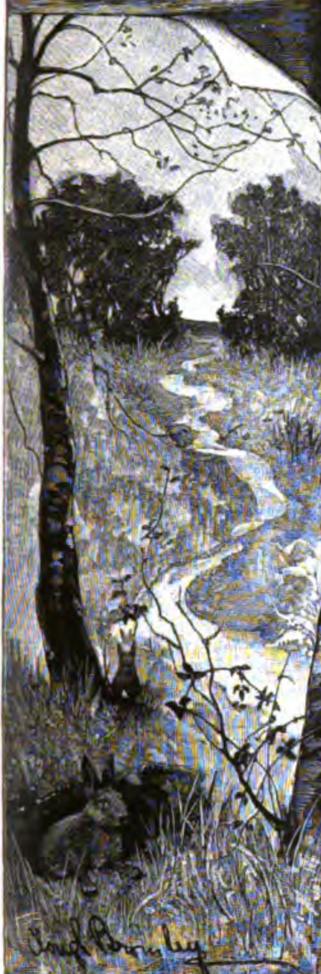
In human thought have all things habitation;
Our days
Laugh, lower, and lighten past, and find no station
That stays.

But thought and faith are mightier things than time
Can wrong,
Made splendid once with speech, or made sublime
By song.

Remembrance, though the tide of change that rolls
Wax hoary,
Gives earth and heaven, for song's sake and the soul's,
Their glory.

ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE.

July 16th, 1885.



London Commons.

Part. 1.

It has been often said that London is peculiarly fortunate in being surrounded by a belt of commons. The expression is hardly accurate, for the arrangement of the metropolitan commons is by no means symmetrical. In the fortunate south-west district every parish has its common—Clapham, Wandsworth, Putney, Barnes, Wimbledon, Mitcham, Tooting, Streatham. Due south the suburbs are poorly off, for the enormous parishes of Lambeth and Camberwell have only such small spaces as Kennington Park (formerly Kennington Common of Chartist notoriety), Camberwell Park (once Camberwell Green, the site of an annual pleasure fair), Goose Green, and Peckham Rye. Further a-field Croydon, at the commencement of the century, consented to a gigantic inclosure, by means of which the woodlands of Norwood passed into private hands; and not content with this mischief a few years later she bartered away some two hundred and fifty acres allotted as parish property for money wherewith to build "a hall for the reception of her majesty's justices." People cannot eat their cake and have it too. Croydon has her Hall and Assize Court, but she is a waste of streets and suburban roads, presenting as few rural attractions as St. John's Wood. The east is not badly off for open spaces. South of the Thames are

Blackheath, Woolwich, and Plumstead commons, and across the river is the far-reaching crescent of Epping Forest touching the squalor of Stratford with its southern horn, while the northern rests upon the secluded village from which the Forest is named. The north of London is in much worse case. Between Hackney and Fulham there is literally no common worthy of the name except Hampstead Heath. Tottenham has some marshes and some green lanes, but Holloway, Islington, Highbury, Highgate, Hornsey, Finchley, present no obstacle in the shape of common land to the constant spread of bricks and mortar ; and unless exceptional steps be taken to supply open spaces, one dense mass of streets and houses will stretch northwards of the metropolis unbroken by a single green spot large enough for a game of cricket or the semblance of a summer evening's ramble.

Still, on the whole it remains true that London has a rich possession in her common lands. Within fifteen miles of Charing Cross there are about 13,000 acres, and within a radius of another ten miles the quantity is more than doubled. And it is not a mere question of acreage. There is a peculiar charm about a common which is not found in any artificial substitute, however lovely in its own way. A common, as Miss Mitford says, is an "islet of wilderness;" it has not been made, but has grown. It owes not only its existence, but its physical condition, to the peculiar ownership to which it has for centuries been subject. It is a bit of history, for it is not only the most palpable relic of the manorial system, but it carries us back to the time when England was tilled in common, and private ownership of land in the modern sense was unknown. Thus something of the sentiment with which we regard a ruined abbey or castle, subtly touches us as we inhale the fresh breeze sweeping over the open expanse and thread our way between furze and bush, or drop down contentedly on a sunny corner of smooth close-cropped turf. Equally agreeable, too, is an undefined sense of ownership, a feeling that we are not here by sufferance, but are exercising all that remains to us of the birthright of primæval man to walk freely over the earth's surface. Our ancestors indeed would have been surprised had they been told that their descendants would value commons mainly as peculiarly charming recreation grounds. The common was as essential to their agricultural system as the ploughed fields or the meadows. Tillage was not then an affair of individual judgment or fancy. Each parish or vill was in fact one farm, cultivated by the inhabitants in common according to strict rules. The arable lands lay in three large fields, or in two or three sets of such fields. One field of each triplet was sown with an autumn crop, one with a spring crop, and the third lay fallow. When the crops were off, the cattle of the village roamed over the stubble; and when the meadows were not shut up for hay, they afforded rich pasture. But in the summer, when corn and grass were growing, the common was the only place where any feed was to be had, for there were no separate inclosures of any size. The oxen which drew the great village ploughs, working eight, twelve, or even sixteen in a team, the dairy cows, the young stock, and the sheep must all to a considerable extent have relied upon the common for support during the early summer months. Nor was it for its feed alone that the common was invaluable. The fencing of the fields to prevent the intrusion of cattle when the crops were growing, the ploughs and carts of the village, and even its houses required a constant supply of wood, and for this recourse was had mainly to the common. In old Court Rolls we find constant directions to the tenants to make up the hedges of the common fields, each owner being responsible for the portion bordering upon the strips which he tilled; and regulations as to the mode of cutting the wood on the common are equally frequent. The furze and smaller scrub, again, were valuable for fuel, and the brake and heath made good litter and served afterwards for manure. Even the wild fruits of the common were not despised. In the time of Henry VIII. persons were fined by the Manor Court for gathering crab-apples on Wimbledon Common, and it is piteously complained that by reason of this lawless act "the tenants of the land cannot have their apples growing upon the common aforesaid according to their rate as from ancient time they were accustomed." Fruit can hardly have been very plentiful when crab-apples were solemnly apportioned to the tenants of a manor within seven miles of the City in accordance with the extent of their holdings.

The transition from such a state of things to the private ownership and inclosed farms of the present day has of course been gradual. Portions of great wastes may have been "approved" in the time of Henry III. under the oft-quoted Statute of Merton; but the first general movement in favour of inclosure seems to have taken place in the fifteenth century. At the close of the Wars of the Roses which decimated the feudal

aristocracy, many causes seem to have combined to make it the interest of a large landowner to turn the arable common fields which were tilled by his tenants into grazing ground. The territorial jurisdiction of great nobles and the custom of maintaining at call large bands of armed followers were dying out, and the possession of an extensive tenantry became less important. At the same time the opening of the Continent to trade stimulated the demand for wool, and thus made wide sheepruns desirable. From the time of Henry VII. to that of Elizabeth inclosure was, next to the religious problems of the Reformation, the leading social question of the day. In Bacon's *History of Henry VII.* we are told "Inclosure at this time began to be more frequent, whereby arable lands which could not be maintained without people and families, were turned into pasture which was easily rid by a few herdsmen; and tenancies for years, lives, and at will, whereupon much of the yeomanry lived, were turned into demesnes. This bred a decay of people, and, by consequence, a decay of towns, churches, tithes, and the like." Apostles of the old and the new faith were at one in their condemnation of the change. Bishop Latimer, in his well-known *Sermon on the Plough*, preached before Edward VI. and his court, reproached the nobles with being "inclosers, graziers, and rent-raisers," who made dowerless slaves of the English yeomanry. Sir Thomas More complained that "noblemen, gentlemen, and even abbots in their eagerness to swell their revenues leave no ground for tillage. They inclose all into pastures; they throw down houses, they pluck down towns, and leave nothing standing." A royal commission was issued at the instance of Protector Somerset "for the redress of inclosures." But it is said that the nobles were so strong and the executive government so weak that no protection was given to witnesses before the commission, and nothing effectual came from its proceedings. The law courts were also either unable or unwilling to stem the tide. Latimer, indeed, charges the judges with injustice and the receipt of bribes. It was a time of great confusion in Church and State, and the weakest seem to have gone to the wall. There can be no doubt that by the end of the Tudor *régime* an inroad had been made upon the old common field system, and inclosed farming had been introduced in many parts of England.

It is probable, however, that the waste lands, the commons of our day, suffered at the time far less than the great arable fields and common meadows. It was the cultivated land which was coveted for sheep-grazing, not the rough scrub and moorland. When the village farm had ceased to exist, and the lord and his farmers had obtained possession of all the cultivated land of the parish, the common continued to be used for the turn-out of stock and the provision of wood and fuel. It played, however, a far less important part in the agricultural system than before, since there was abundance of meadow and grazing ground on the farm itself, and broad hedge-rows to supply wood. Thus the way was paved for the second inclosure movement which began early in the last century, and continued in full vigour till about 1865. The first Inclosure Act, after the modern type, was passed in 1710, and between that date and the middle of the present century about five millions of acres were inclosed. Foreign wars and the consequent necessity of a plentiful supply of home-grown corn were constant and powerful motives to accelerate the process, and some time elapsed after the adoption of free-trade before it was realised, that, while corn could be imported, pure air and space for the inhabitants of over-grown cities could not. It was this second inclosure movement which deprived whole districts of England of every scrap of open land, and has made it in many parts the exception to find a parish still in the enjoyment of its common. In the midland counties the process was especially thorough, probably because the land was best adapted for tillage. Why the neighbourhood of London should have been spared it would be impossible to explain in a single sentence. Undoubtedly one potent cause is a very prosaic one. The London commons lie mostly on the hill-tops, and these are as a rule sandy and barren. Hence when the rage for extending the area of cultivation swept through the country, the heaths and downs of Surrey offered little temptation to the utilitarian legislator or the improving landowner. It was not until their value as building sites became obvious that their inclosure was coveted, and then, fortunately, the importance of open spaces to the health and enjoyment of the country began also to be discovered, and the hot contest which commenced at Wimbledon and culminated in the rescue of Epping Forest saved the metropolitan commons from destruction.

London is so large, and requires so extensive an area of open space to neutralise its constantly increasing smoke and dirt, and to purify its overladen air, that in one sense every common within an easy railway

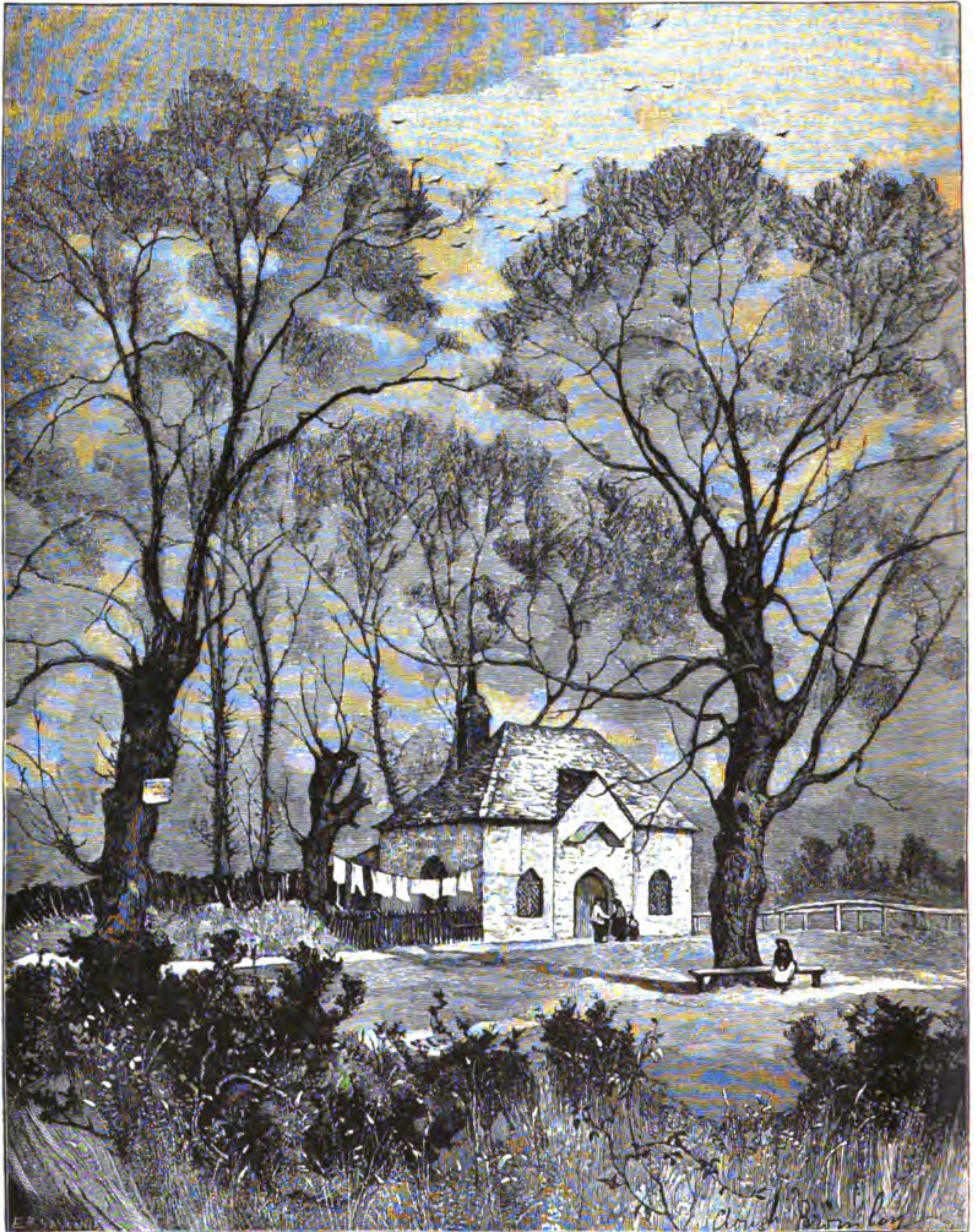
NEAR THE WINDMILL, WIMBLEDON.
From a Drawing by CLOUGH BROMLEY.

journey may be called a London common. For our present purpose, however, we shall adopt a very narrow definition. The Metropolis, the district within which the Metropolitan Board does its work, is the nucleus of London, and the commons within this area or immediately adjoining it are, *par excellence*, London commons. Epping Forest, though in one sense the first of metropolitan open spaces, is not within the Metropolis. Putting the Forest on one side, then, Wimbledon is without a rival amongst London commons. A thousand acres in extent, it presents a combination of the most delightful features of open land. From the broad level plateau, across which the best rifle-shooting in England takes place every year, the ground falls away to the south and west, southwards, towards Putney, gradually and regularly, but westwards in sudden dips and valleys, separated from one another by projecting shoulders of sand. The hollows and slopes thus formed are covered with thick copse-wood of oak and birch, where the birds build and sing, and bluebells tint the ground in spring. At the foot of the hill is a wild bit of open ground covered with coarse grass and bracken, and dotted with bushes and trees, stretching to the Beverley Brook, a rushey, winding stream, half concealed by thickets of thorn and birch and hazel. The birch flourishes like a weed all over the common. Along the high road from Putney to Wimbledon, groups of white stems bear aloft their light feathery foliage. Many of the trunks have been pushed and bent aside by cattle or sheep, and it is rare to find a perfectly straight stem. But the unfailing grace

of the branching and foliage and the silver gleam of the bark compensate for the loss of more stately beauties, and make a drive along the common in the first fresh burst of the leaf a pleasure of no mean order. On Putney Heath, again, young birch shoot up in every direction, and in the more retired copses specimens of somewhat older growth stand side by side with the sturdier oak. There can be no doubt that Wimbledon Common must have been a great storehouse of wood in old days, supplying the fuel and the fences of the neighbourhood. But the fact that the wood was so useful has prevented the growth and exuberance of its young life. Within a stone's throw of the flag-staff or the windmill one may plunge into the heart of genuine woodland, where saplings rise from the midst of thickly-springing shoots of young underwood, or a dense clump of bush contrasts with an open grove of young oak and birch. Through such spots green rides wind in every direction, opening up charming vistas of rustling leaves and walls of woven boughs. An hour or two may very easily be spent in wandering through thicket and glade, and when the green of spring is fresh and tender, it is almost impossible to believe that London

THE "OLD MANOR HOUSE," BARNES COMMON.
From a Drawing by CLOUGH BROMLEY.

of fine timber, and the only trees of any size are to be found in the neighbourhood of the large old houses on Putney Heath, where they have obviously been planted for ornament. Opposite Ashburnham Cottage, for instance, is one of those rectangular ponds of which the gardeners of William and Mary were so fond, flanked by a row of elms on each side, while groups of the same trees with a few poplars diversify the common for some distance around. With a few such unimportant exceptions, all the wood on the common is young and small; but its deficiencies in size and antiquity are compensated by the vigour is so near. Of a different character is the walk along the ridge of the common past the old mill and amongst the Butts of the National Rifle Association. Here the ground is covered with good turf, dotted thickly with furze-bushes, mostly cropped round and close by the sheep. We skirt the edge of the depressions which commence as the ground falls away to the west, and get extensive views over Richmond Park and Coombe Wood and away to the south towards Leith Hill and Holmwood. A few cottages—old encroachments which may well be pardoned—are dotted about, with small



ON BARNES COMMON.
From a Drawing by CLOUGH BROMLEY.

gardens and a fruit-tree or two, and near the Wimbledon edge of the common we come upon the deep, clear spring, which, like the old earthwork hard by, is associated by tradition with the Romans, and goes by the name of Cæsar's Well. Lately the well has been carefully made up with granite, and furnished with a pump by Sir Henry Peek, and to get a draught of its cold pure water is by no means a bad excuse for a walk across the common. A few years ago it would have been a still better object to visit Cæsar's Camp, to examine its ditch and double rampart, and admire the rows of quaint oaks which encircled it. But unfortunately the camp was not part of the common, and its owner, the well-known Mr. Drax, recently saw fit to cut down the trees, and to obliterate as far as possible the lines of the old works. Cæsar's Camp is now declared by Parliament to be an Ancient Monument, but legislation did not come in time to save it from the barbarous treatment which has almost entirely destroyed both its beauty and its antiquarian interest.

Wimbledon Common runs into three parishes. More than half lies in Wimbledon, and of the remainder the greater part is in Putney. But a large triangle of the common, the point of which is the windmill, and the base the high-road from Putney to Wimbledon, is in Wandsworth parish. Wimbledon and Putney are both parts of the huge manor of Wimbledon, which stretches also over the parish of Mortlake, and claims a lordship over the manor and parish of Barnes. Wandsworth parish is in another manor, that of Battersea and Wandsworth. It is significant of the large extent of land which was formerly in the hands of the Church, to find that these extensive manors, together covering six parishes, were, till the time of the Reformation, in ecclesiastical ownership. Wimbledon belonged to the Archbishop of Canterbury, who had a palace at Mortlake and a grange or farm at Wimbledon. Barnes was at an early date granted by the archbishop to the Dean and Chapter of St. Paul's (who still hold it), and Battersea and Wandsworth belonged to the Dean and Chapter of St. Peter's, Westminster. Archbishop Cranmer sold Wimbledon manor to the king, and it subsequently passed through many hands. At one time Henry's prime minister, Thomas Cromwell, whose father is said to have been a butcher of Putney, had the manor; at another, Queen Henrietta Maria, imported trees and flowers from France for the gardens of the manor-house. The Roundhead General Lambert, was subsequently lord, and retired to the comparative seclusion of Wimbledon when he conceived himself slighted by the Protector. At a later date the manor was the property of Sir Theodore Janssen, the chairman of the South Sea Company, and soon after his fall passed to the Duchess of Marlborough, from whose family it came by marriage to its modern owners, the Spencers, also lords of Battersea and Wandsworth. But more interesting than the names connected with the manor are those associated with the common as a place of residence. Up to 1838, when the railway to Southampton was made, Wimbledon was a retired village, lying off any high-road, and served by a coach running in and out of London over Putney Bridge once a day. Putney was more accessible, but even within the last ten years the handsome houses, old trees, and quaint shops which lined the High Street, gave the place the air of a country village rather than that of a London suburb. It is not surprising then that statesmen and authors should a century ago have found rest and change in driving from London to a villa on the great common. The late Mr. Fawcett was very fond of the walk from Putney across the upper part of the common to Cæsar's Well. There are few more lovely prospects than that to be seen from the high ground near the windmill on a fine spring morning. To the west the wooded hills of Richmond are bathed in the soft early light, while in the foreground copse-clad dells suggest a boundless field for sylvan rambles. The flat plateau to the east and north looks large in the slight haze, and the houses and gardens which mark its limits are deprived of all harshness of outline. The air is not yet thickened with the smoke of London, and a pleasant cool breeze steals across from the distant Surrey downs. One can imagine from such a scene the pleasure summed up in the brief entry in Wilberforce's Diary on the 4th April, 1782—"Delicious day; lounged morning at Wimbledon with friends." Wilberforce in his early days had a villa on the south side of the common, at which Pitt and other statesmen of the time were constant visitors. Subsequently Pitt himself took Bowling-green House, in the midst of Putney Heath—a house which had been notorious nearly a century before as a place of public entertainment. Here he was no doubt residing when on the 27th May, 1798, he fought a duel on the common with William Tierney, member for Southwark, in consequence of angry words used by the Minister in the House of Commons—an encounter in which, fortu-

nately, no one was hurt. To Bowling-green House Pitt travelled from Bath less than eight years afterwards, shattered in health and depressed in spirits by the successes of Napoleon at Ulm and Austerlitz. He still hoped to resume his place in the House of Commons on the approaching opening of Parliament. But it was not to be; his strength was spent. Becoming gradually weaker, he took to his bed within a few days of his arrival, and died on the 23rd of January, in his forty-seventh year, having passed nearly twenty years of his short life as Prime Minister of his country. At the time of Pitt's death there was living at the Wimbledon end of the common a champion of the extreme left of the opposite party, Sir Francis Burdett. In the following year he also fought a duel on the common with his close friend, Mr. Paul. On this occasion both parties were wounded, but not seriously, and peace seems to have been restored by the letting of blood, as they drove up to London in the same carriage. Near Bowling-green House Mrs. Siddons once lived; Horne Tooke, again, resided for a time on Wimbledon Green; while two houses, Sir Henry Peek's near the corner of the village, and Gothic House near the "Crooked Billet," contend for the honour due to the birthplace of *Midshipman Easy* and *Peter Simple*. The Putney side of the common, however, can boast the greatest name in literature; for Gibbon was born at Putney on the 27th April, 1747, on his father's estate, which occupied the whole of the left side of the hill between the site of the present railway station and the corner of the heath. Over the heath the future historian was driven, when only eight years old—"in a lucid interval of comparative health,"—to his first school at Kingston-upon-Thames; and a certain spot upon the common was, he tells us, ever after associated in his mind with his mother's warning, that he was about to enter the world, and must think and act for himself.

Twenty years ago Wimbledon Common had a narrow escape. The substitution of villa residences and gardens for farms and large estates threatened to be more fatal to commons near towns than the older conversion of open fields into inclosed farms; and Wimbledon was made the battle-field of conflicting views. At one and the same time commons became of little value for agricultural purposes, and of very high importance as places of recreation. The old manorial management of waste land had reference to the practice of agriculture, and cared nothing for a common as affording means of taking air and exercise. Abuses consequently began to multiply in the case of commons near towns. The orderly town-bred inhabitants of Putney and Wimbledon were scandalised by the irregularities and petty depredations of gipsies and tramps. They demanded a much more stringent guardianship of the common than the lord of the manor was disposed to give, while at the same time they resented the mode in which the lord's agents disfigured the waste by taking gravel and wood for the profit of their master. Lord Spencer hit upon a plan for solving the difficulty. He proposed to turn about two-thirds of the common into a park, and to defray the expenses of fencing and draining by selling for building much, if not all, of the remainder. This plan seemed to the residents to be exchanging bad for worse. As soon as they realised the full effect of the proposal, they united under the leadership of Sir Henry Peek in energetic opposition. The fight was waged in Parliament and in the law courts for six years, till at length in 1870 Lord Spencer came to the wise determination to wash his hands of the matter, and transfer the management of the common to those who were most interested in its well-being—the residents in the neighbourhood. In the following year an Act was passed, which made over the common to a body of conservators mainly elected by the neighbourhood, but leavened by an official element representing the general public. At the same time the Act secured to his lordship an annuity equal to the revenue which he was at the time deriving from the common by way of gravel-digging, wood-cutting, and similar acts. This annuity and the expenses of managing the open space were alike charged upon rates to be levied upon those living near, and therefore especially enjoying the common. The system has worked well. Since the Metropolitan District Railway was extended to Fulham the numbers visiting the common on Sundays and holidays have very largely increased, and during the meeting of the National Rifle Association large crowds come down from London. But order is effectively maintained, while year by year the common becomes a more delightful resort under the fostering care of Conservators who, living on the spot, themselves enjoy the growing beauty of wood and copse, and can judge from personal experience whether a path or ride is wanted to open up a view or lead through some picturesque patch of brake and bush, whether a particular piece of woodland should be

thinned and treated as park land, or left as copse, whether an old tree should be preserved or removed, a seat placed here, a pond made there. Nor has the result of the conflict in which Wimbledon Common stood in the fore-front been to benefit that common alone. The principle was early in the day established in the case of Wimbledon that London commons should not be converted into parks, but should be maintained in their open wild condition, while, at the same time, the necessity of some management to check abuses and preserve order was made clear. In the same year in which the Wimbledon Common Act was passed, Hampstead Heath was placed under the Metropolitan Board of Works, and there are very few commons now within the metropolis which are not definitely set aside as places of recreation, and placed under proper guardianship, while in no case has inclosure been sanctioned. To the sturdy assertion by the inhabitants of Wimbledon of their rights and wishes, it is due in no small degree that London has saved her commons.

WANDSWORTH COMMON.
From a Drawing by CLOUGH BROMLEY.

About a mile to the south of Putney Heath lies another valuable open space. Barnes and Putney Lower Commons, although lying together, are in different manors. To this day may be seen the manorial ditch separating the two commons, and checking the straying of cattle from one to the other. The same ditch marks the boundary of the metropolis, including Putney Lower Common within that area, but placing Barnes outside. Barnes must certainly, however, be ranked as a metropolitan common, for, thanks to the University Boat-race, there are few commons more familiar to Londoners. Twenty years ago, when the crowd was still of moderate proportions, it was possible to see the race at Putney, and then by running across the common, and through Barnes village, to get a good view of the boats not far from the finish; and a pretty sight it was on a bright day to see the crowd of horse and foot streaming over the greensward and amongst the yellow furze-bushes. Barnes is a very different type of common from Wimbledon. It is perfectly flat, and has no copsewood, and scarcely a tree worth the name. In parts there is plenty of furze and a sprinkling of large thorn and bramble bushes, and in other parts there are stretches of smooth turf. On the side towards the river the common abuts on green meadows, dotted with stately trees, and there is a pleasant sense of quiet and spaciousness. But per-

haps the prettiest spot is the green by the village, with its large pond, and quaint, old-fashioned houses. There is an old-time rural air about this corner, which makes us forget the neighbouring railway station and the wantonness with which the South-Western Company have cut the common in two. It is satisfactory to observe that the Conservators here do not banish cows from the common. The warm-brown of these slow-moving animals is just what is wanted to give a bit of colour to the scene. With gravel-digging stopped, and cattle excluded as inconvenient, there is a danger of commons becoming monotonous in tint, especially if the hideous and dirty practice, countenanced at Barnes, of repairing paths with coal-dust instead of gravel should extend to other places. Both Barnes and Putney Lower Common abound in cricket-grounds, and form a most valuable outlet for the rapidly increasing population along the water-side.

From Wimbledon and Putney we must travel some distance to the east before we reach the next London common, that of Wandsworth. Wandsworth Common was once the principal tract of waste land in the large manor of Battersea and Wandsworth which extended from Wimbledon to Clapham; but it is now but a fragment of its former self, for no common round London has been worse treated. It has been cut into ribands by the London and Brighton and South-Western Railway Companies, and the lord of the manor appears to have regarded it as a means of being generous at other people's expense. A huge block cut out of the very heart of the common is in the hands of the Patriotic Fund, while some twenty acres at the Tooting end have been made over to a London parish for the purposes of an industrial school. Not satisfied with such destructive generosity, Lord Spencer granted two large plots to building speculators, besides assenting to that process of rectifying boundaries and taking off ugly corners which is so fatal to the public. This process is indeed spoken of as though it were conceived in the interests of the public alone, but curiously enough it is always found necessary to straighten a fence by taking it outwards on to the open land, and increasing the area in private ownership. Thus, at Wandsworth, instead of a stretch of heath crowning the ridge of the hill, as the Wimbledon ridge is crowned, we have a series of green or furzy strips so far separated that the casual visitor would hardly imagine their common parentage. Still it is something that the process of destruction has at length been stopped. At the top of the hill on the London side of old Wandsworth town there is still a wide playground, bearing evident signs of the care with which it is now guarded by the local Conservators. Old gravel diggings have been sloped off and sown with grass, groups of young trees break up the stretch of green, and seats abound. Not many years ago there was a really delightful pond on this bit of common. It was not venerable from age, for it had been formed from old gravel diggings almost within living memory. But it was large and plentifully dotted with islands, and in the early summer the yellow flags grew thickly about its banks. Unfortunately it was first drained and then inclosed; and a row of villas now marks its site. There are still, however, some good old elms hereabouts, and at present the west side of the common is edged by large gardens. Passing further along the road from Wandsworth to Clapham we come presently, on the left-hand, to another little triangular playground saved from the common, and opposite to it is the entrance to the long strip running from Battersea Rise to Nightingale Lane, the largest portion of the common now left. An avenue of elms—named after Lord Bolingbroke, who was at one time lord of the manor, and lived in his mansion hard by—lines the side of this strip, and groups of the same trees interspersed with poplars diversify its surface. But the best impression of Wandsworth Common is to be gained by a visit while the day is still young to the south or Tooting end. The ground slopes slightly upwards from Wandsworth, and from the top of the rise we look over a wide expanse of broken ground and get something of that idea of roominess and freedom which is so gratefully associated with open heath. To right and left the common is bounded by trees—in a corner to the left once stood a telescope of unusual power, to which half London made pilgrimage—and the houses which may be descried in front of us are not near enough to be offensive. On the open land itself a smooth cricket-ground with its protecting post and chains contrasts pleasantly with a stretch of furze and bracken, while perhaps a laden gravel-cart winds its slow way over the sward, and a touch of yellow shows where the common is made to find material for its own footpaths.

Clapham Common, which lies atop of the next ridge to the east has escaped the depredations from which its neighbour has suffered so severely. Perhaps the fact that it lies in two manors has tended to prevent either of its owners from nibbling at its fair acres.

CLAPHAM COMMON.
From a Drawing by Clough Bromley.

The westernmost half is in the manor of Battersea and Wandsworth, while the eastern is in Clapham, a manor which unlike most in the neighbourhood of the metropolis, seems always to have been in private hands. But probably the chief reason why the common has been left whole, is that for nearly a century it has been surrounded by good houses, the residences of wealthy city bankers and merchants. For, if Wimbledon may boast a connection with more names of first-rate distinction, Clapham Common stands alone amongst Metropolitan open spaces as the centre of an active school of social reformers. The mansion on the common to which Henry Thornton succeeded towards the close of the last century, and for which Pitt planned a saloon, was the meeting-place of the band of ardent men in whom religion neutralised the somewhat brutal tone induced in the nation by the long struggle with Napoleon. From this spot, under the leadership of Wilberforce and Zachary Macaulay, the campaign against slavery was directed. Here was conceived the idea of a society for the promulgation of the Bible throughout the world, and, when the idea took form and substance, from the common was supplied the first president in the person of Lord Teignmouth, the ex-Viceroy of India. To Clapham Common resorted Henry Martyn, the most fervid missionary the Church of England ever sent to the East, and Thomas Gisborne, well known in his day as a refined expositor of the evangelical system, and more highly prized by his friends for his singular beauty of character. Granville Sharpe, by whose unremitting exertions the judges were reluctantly convinced of the doctrine, since so often vaunted, that the slave who touches the shores of Britain is free, and William Smith, the friend and confidant of Fox, were amongst the resident Claphamites, while Lord Brougham was an occasional visitor. It is not surprising that with such supporters the common should be safe. Once indeed, in more recent times, a railway company threatened to treat Clapham as they have treated Wandsworth. The residents met and agreed to oppose the invaders at every stage of their Bill at whatever cost, and the company thought better of the venture. For many years the residents took a lease of the common from the two lords and

relieved them of the trouble of management. Lately a more permanent arrangement has been made, and the common has passed into the hands of the Metropolitan Board, and, though on some points it is to be regretted that the residents did not retain the management—for the Board is fussy and official,—when one sees the crowds which spread over the grass on a fine Saturday in spring, it is not surprising that the burden should have been shifted to metropolitan shoulders. On such a day Clapham Common is one huge cricket-ground. Looking from under the fine trees at the western end across the full length of the common the white flannels of the players are as thickly dotted over the grass as tombstones in a church-yard; wickets are pitched in dangerous proximity, and balls fly in all directions, to the total disregard of certain well-meant notices intended to protect the footpaths. Clapham Common grows a crop of notices. There are a few thorns about the Battersea end of the common, and every thorn-bush has its separate placard warning the sacrilegious that a penalty of £5 waits upon the theft of a flower. The Board it must be supposed finds this necessary, but the effect is a little ridiculous. Notices, however, cannot disfigure the fine row of limes which stand at this end of the common, or destroy the charming view across the smooth greensward alive with eager players to the old houses with their warm tints of red and brown, and their bright flowering trees—white may and yellow laburnum—relieved here and there with the dark foliage of a cedar. Clapham Common is wedge-shaped, one of its three sides abutting upon the main Clapham-road, one upon the road from Clapham to Wandsworth, and the third running from north-west to south-east, joining the two thoroughfares. Upon this side the houses are approached only by a bye-road, and look directly upon the common as a country house looks upon its own park or meadow. Though of no particular beauty, they have, for the most part, a certain mellowed air of quiet respectability. They stand behind neatly-kept lawns and carriage drives, separated from the open land by a low paling or sunk fence. The piece of common in front is protected by posts and chains, and is as clean-shaven as the lawn within; and groups of fine trees—in one place are some remarkably fine black birch—give a park-like appearance to the wide expanse. It is to be feared the extent to which the common has now become a public play-ground may in holiday times somewhat disturb the serenity of these quiet old houses. But as we have said more than once the time to realise the full charm of a London common is the early morning, and as the sun brings out warm tints on the sward and throws soft shadows from the old trees, the resident at his breakfast can afford to forget the crowd of cricketers on the preceding afternoon, even if he wished at the time that they might be taking their enjoyment elsewhere. Changes are inevitable in a city which grows at the rate of 50,000 souls in a year. If the common would not always now form a suitable retreat for the pious reflections and generous dreams of Wilberforce and his associates, we may be quite sure they would be the first to hail with delight the appropriation of the open space they knew so well to the use of the thousands cooped up in narrow streets and lanes, for whom a London park or common is, for months together, the sole representative of green turf and waving tree.

Robert Hunter.

(To be continued.)

SAUCY KITTY CLIVE.

IN the last decade of the seventeenth century there lived in the ancient city of Kilkenny, in Ireland, a gentleman of good family who had been bred to the law, named William Raftor. He might have lived and died in inglorious peace in his native city, had not the unhappy James II. sought to subdue his rebellious subjects by raising an Irish army. William Raftor became enthusiastic in the cause of the throneless monarch, entered into his service, fought for him at the Battle of the Boyne, and followed his fallen fortunes to France. By reason of his adherence to King Jamie, the family estates of the Raftors passed from them for ever, and were appropriated by the Crown. Though William Raftor received a captain's commission in the service of Louis XIV., and met with considerable favour at the hands of that monarch, yet, unlike many of his countrymen, he had no love for the land in which circumstances compelled him to live. After some time, he therefore sought and received pardon from Queen Anne, when, returning to England, he settled in London. His martial figure, the history of his misfortunes, and the renown of his bravery succeeded in winning him in a short time the hand and heart of one Mrs. Daniels, daughter of a goodly citizen and rich, who lived on Fish Street Hill. This lady in the course of years presented him with several children, the most remarkable of whom was born in 1711, baptised Catherine, and eventually became known to the world as Kitty Clive.

From the days when little Kitty was able to toddle across a room to the wonder and delight of her parents, she gave evidence of being a bright vivacious child; she crowed and jumped in her mother's arms, and later on, danced and sang untaught, as if these gifts had been bestowed upon her at birth by a wise and benevolent fairy godmother. Likewise did she possess considerable wit, a temper quick and hot, an imitative genius, and an artistic temperament. The pasteboard kings and queens, the black-cloaked villains, the painted lovers, and the dark-browed deceivers of the stage were to her no ordinary men and women, but beings of another world; and when the great Mr. Wilks passed by her father's house on his way to Drury Lane, she peered at him with wistful eyes that beheld the glory of his genius shine around his great powdered wig. But though unacquainted with Wilks, she had the satisfaction of meeting a lesser theatrical light in the person of Mr. Theophilus Cibber; who observing the bent of her talents, and remarking the sweetness of her voice, commended her to the notice of his father, then one of the ruling fates of Drury Lane playhouse. And so it happened one day, that little Kitty Raftor, then in her seventeenth year, stood in the august presence of Colley Cibber, Esq., poet-laureate, playwright, actor, and manager of Drury Lane Theatre. For this gentleman, who wore a wide-flapped coat, silver buckled shoes, ruffled shirt, and ponderous wig under which great bushy eyebrows protruded, as if the security of their shadow enabled his sharp eyes to peer more keenly at those he addressed, Kitty Raftor sang a song, for singing was in those days essential to an actress, and recited some lines. The result was Mr. Cibber nobbed his be-wigged head, which as all the world knew was full of wise judgments, and pronounced her excellent. At this, the bright-eyed little woman's heart rejoiced within her; and presently, when he offered her an engagement in the playhouse at the salary of twenty shillings a week, her delight knew no bounds.

The part assigned her on the occasion of her first appearance was that of a page, in the dark tragedy bearing the impressive title, long to be remembered by her—*Mithridates, King of Pontus*. The page had a song to sing proper to the circumstances of the scene in which he appeared, which quaint ditty was received with extraordinary applause.

This was a fair beginning: and from pages in silken hose, velvet jerkins, and feathered caps, she fought her difficult way up the ladder leading to theatrical fame. Before the close of her first season she was cast for the character of Phillida in Colley Cibber's *Love in a Riddle;* the first night's representation of which was destined to secure her an unlooked-for triumph.

On the announcement of this "pastoral opera" the town determined it should be damned. Colley Cibber had begun to lose favour with the fickle public: and moreover it was known his latest effort was an imitation of the *Beggar's Opera,* which had been produced the previous year, and had since gained a popularity that rendered rivalry dangerous. Judgment was accordingly passed upon *Love in a Riddle* ere it was heard or seen. It therefore happened on the night of its first production, that as soon as the curtain went up, disturbances commenced in all parts of the house; the pit groaned, the gallery yelled, the boxes fanned themselves with a noisy flutter, offered each other snuff with an air of vast politeness, and conversed with the most courtly indifference. All this lasted till Kitty Raftor appeared as Phillida, looking exceedingly bashful, piquant, and vastly pretty; at the first notes of her song, the monstrous roar which had filled the theatre ceased, when she gained a hearing: and so favourable indeed was the impression she made, that it was feared the opera would be saved through her. "Zounds, Tom, take care," Chetwood heard one of the pretty fellows in a stage-box shout to his friend, "take care, or this charming little devil will save all." This, however, was not in her power, and *Love in a Riddle* was withdrawn after a second representation.

Such success was a prelude of that she was destined to achieve two years later when she undertook the part of Nell in Coffey's one act ballad-farce, *The Devil to Pay.* This was the turning point in her career: as Nell she had for the first time a full opportunity for the exercise of that fund of humour and comic power which afterwards rendered her famous. Even to those who knew her best her performance was a surprise; she carried her audience with her, seemingly without effort, and so secure was her triumph that before she left the theatre that night, the manager doubled her salary.

Two years later merry Kitty Raftor became Mistress Clive, her spouse being brother of Mr. Baron Clive. Her domestic happiness, if indeed it ever existed, was certainly of short duration: yet this happened through no fault of hers, for during an age when licentiousness was the order of the day, and scandal was invariably associated with the names of actresses, no whisper of evil repute ever assailed the fair fame of Mistress Clive. Her private life from first to last was above reproach. Henry Fielding, in a dedicatory epistle prefixed to *The Intriguing Chambermaid,* in which she played Lettice, bears evidence to her moral worth. "Great a favourite as you at present are with the audience," he writes, "you would be much more so were they acquainted with your private character; could they see you laying out great part of the profits which arise to you from entertaining them so well, in the support of an aged father; did they see you who can charm them on the stage with personating the foolish and vicious characters of your sex acting in real life the part of the best wife, the best daughter, the best sister, and the best friend."

Owing to Kitty's vivacious acting, *The Intriguing Chambermaid* became an established public favourite and held the boards for years. George II., witnessing it when he had grown old and testy, fell foul of it one night and threatened it with his royal wrath. His Majesty, who was fond of plays, being at Drury Lane Theatre whilst the witty comedy ran its merry course, gave it his hearty approval, until the delivery of a speech in which a saucy wench says to her somewhat ancient lover, "You are villanously old; you are sixty, and cannot think of living much longer;" on hearing which his sacred Majesty, who was then approaching three score and ten years, bounced up in a passion and cried aloud, "What damn stuff is this?"

In her representations of chambermaids, roguish and romping, pert and brazen-faced, which were such prominent characters of the comedies in the last century, she was most excellent. Her talents were, however, by no means confined to the personation of these alone: her vulgar fine ladies, her innocent country girls, her natural old women, her hoydens, romps, dowdies, superannuated beauties, and viragoes, delighted the frequenters of Drury Lane for many years. Goldsmith avowed that "without exaggeration she had more true humour than any actor or actress upon the English or any other stage that he had seen," whilst Dr. Johnson declared that "in the sprightliness of her humour he had never seen her excelled." Such an admission from the great man was no small meed of praise.

Her natural flow of mirth, melodious

voice, sprightly action, and merry face were especially suited to comedy; but at times her soul soared to loftier flights, and she essayed to play such parts as Desdemona, Zara, and Portia. She was not successful in her representations of these heroines, except when in the latter character she, during the trial scene, resorted to comic talent, and at the expense of dignity mimicked to the life an eminent lawyer of the day.

Perhaps her chief delight lay in her imitations, bordering on burlesques, of Italian opera singers, about whom the fine gentlemen and ladies of quality raved at this period. Opera had become the rage, and the opera house boasted of a company of gentlemen directors, amongst whom were Lords Middlesex, Dorset, and Brooke, with five other men of fashion. The whole town must flock to hear Monticelli, Mingotti, or Muscovita during the season, and in their absence sigh for their happy return. "The folly, injustice, and barbarity of the town," wrote Fielding, "have conspired to sacrifice our own native entertainments to a wanton affected fondness for foreign music, and our nobility seem eagerly to rival each other in distinguishing themselves in favour of Italian theatres and neglect of our own." This state of the public taste was obnoxious to Kitty Clive, who avenged herself by mimicking the airs of sublime consequence and florid graces of the foreign artists with such subtle humour and comic grimaces as made her audiences roar with laughter.

It was while she was imitating the Muscovita in the farce *Miss Lucy in Town* at Drury Lane, that a young man named David Garrick, "a wine merchant who is turned player," as Horace Walpole sneeringly wrote, made his first appearance at Goodman's Fields Theatre as Richard III. With this actor, who came to Drury Lane in the following year, she was to become closely associated as a fellow worker for many a day and long. In a short time it became her greatest desire and keenest pleasure to play in the same pieces with him, she, of course, taking the principal female parts; and it was soon evident she thought to excel this young man who had suddenly become the fashion. He, however, loftily ignored her efforts, because, said Kitty, he feared in the struggle she might become the victor. Garrick used to complain that her acting disconcerted him, inasmuch as she would not look at him in the moment of action, or watch the movement of his eye. Kitty, whether purposely or not, would occasionally, at the most thrilling part of his performance, coolly look round the house, and giving a familiar nod or a respectful curtsey to friends whom she recognised in the pit or boxes, seriously detract from the fine nervous force of his acting. No doubt Dr. Johnson helped to light the fire of rivalry between them in those days of the great actor's earlier career, by saying, "what Clive did best she did better than Garrick"; but added, in justice, "she could not do half so many things well."

But whether Garrick feared to contest for the laurels of comedy with Clive or not, he certainly had a wholesome dread of her tongue, which was as sharp as her heart was kind; and whilst she played under his management at Drury Lane, many were the squabbles they had, out of which she, womanlike, usually came triumphant "You and I, you know, can alter our tempers with the weather-cock," she wrote to him in one of her gentler moods; to which he replied, "My heart is somewhat combustible like your own." This was sunshine after storm, but the tempest was oftentimes rough and threatening whilst it lasted. On one occasion a quarrel arose between them in the green-room just before Garrick went on to play Hamlet. When he was before the footlights she stood at the wings in order to disconcert him by her fixed gaze, which she knew he dreaded; but as she listened to him all spite died out of her heart, and she who had gone to worry remained to admire. "I believe, Davy," she said with a merry laugh as he came off, "you would act on a gridiron."

She delighted in teasing the great man, especially when he at times assumed certain airs of lofty superiority. On the first night of the representation of *Barbarossa*, when he entered the green-room arrayed in all the glory of a "glittering silver-spangled tissue shape," instead of offering him the adulation which he usually received from the members of his company, she cried out at the pitch of her voice, "Make room for the royal lamplighter." This speech disconcerted him much, for on the first nights of new plays he was invariably nervous, or as one of his company wrote, he was "tremblingly alive all over."

No wonder that he feared her, and sometimes retaliated. On one occasion he left her name out of the bill when a new play was about to be produced. This was an injustice and a slight which the hot-tempered Kitty was not inclined to brook, and immediately it came to her knowledge she, as Tate Wilkinson says, "came to the theatre and furiously rang the alarm bell; for her name

being omitted was an offence so serious that nothing but Blood! was the word. Could she have got near him, and he had been severe in his replies, I dare say she would have deranged King David's wig and dress, as adorned for Lord Chalkstone. When her scene of the Fine Lady came on she was received with the usual expression of gladness on her approach, as so charming an actress truly deserved; and her song from the Italian opera, where she was free with a good ridiculous caricature of Signora Mingotti, was universally encored, and she came off the stage much sweetened in temper and manners from her first going on. 'Ay,' said she in triumph, 'that artful devil could not hurt me with the town, though he had struck my name out of the bill.' She laughed and joked about her late ill-humour as if she could have kissed all around her, though that happiness was not granted, but willingly excused; and what added to her applause was her inward joy, triumph, and satisfaction in finding the little great man was afraid to meet her, which was of all consolations the greatest."

At times the great Dr. Johnson, his little scratch wig on one side of his head, his rusty brown coat besmeared with snuff, his breeches opened at the knees, took his slow and ponderous way to the greenroom of Drury Lane playhouse: where, as he told George Steevens, all the wenches knew him, and would drop him a curtsey as they passed on to the stage. Here he enjoyed the squabbles between Clive and Garrick, whom he never liked, and whom he satirised as Prospero in *The Rambler*, and laughed at some keen stroke of Kitty's wit until his burly sides shook with laughter. Being an especial favourite of his, her humour off the stage pleased him as much as her vivacity on it delighted him, and accordingly he confined much of his conversation to her when he went behind the scenes. "Clive, sir," he would remark, "is a good thing to sit by; she always understands what you say." Not to be outdone in courtesy, Mistress Kitty would observe of the learned philosopher, who had as much delight in being flattered by a woman as any other man, "I love to sit by Dr. Johnson, he always entertains me."

At times Mistress Clive and Garrick were the best of friends, when he would humour her and call her his Clivy-Pivy: and she in return would, by her bright wit raise his spirits when he suffered from depression, and by her womanly tact render him forgetful of his cares. What these were she full well knew. In one of her letters she addresses him as "Wonderful Sir," and tells him, "You cannot make brick without straw; but you have done what is infinitely more difficult, for you have made actors and actresses without genius; that is, you have made them pass for such, which has answered your end though it has given you infinite trouble." This flattering unction was laid to the great man's soul only when she was safely removed from all contention with him, and could afford to indulge in such kind words from the peaceful retreat of her house at Twickenham.

Garrick never afforded her the indulgence he extended to Peg Woffington or Mrs. Abington, and though he acknowledged her to be a great actress the salary he allowed her was by no means generous. On the other hand, the fines he levied for her non-attendance at rehearsals or performances were substantial. Once when she had gone to Greenwich to dine with some people of consequence who had sent their equipage for her, the *Devil to Pay* was put on unexpectedly; for she had at the beginning of the season sent her compliments to the managers "to beg that it might not be done till the weather was cool, as the quickness of the shift," she says, "puts me into a flurry, which gives me a violent swimming of the head." Though she rode back post-haste from Greenwich when she heard the play was put on, yet she was too late to make her appearance in it. Therefore on treasury day she was fined, when she wrote to Garrick, "I beg you would do me the favour to let me know if it was by your order my money was stopped last Saturday. You was so good indeed last week to bid me take *care* or I should be catched—I thought you was laughing, I did not know it was a determined thing. It was never before expected of a performer to be in waiting when their names are not in the *papers* or *bills;* the public are witness for me whether I have ever neglected my business. You may (if you please to recollect) remember I have never disappointed you four times since you have been a manager; I always have had good health, and have ever been above subterfuge. I hope this stopping of money is not a French fashion; I believe you will not find any part of the English laws that will support this sort of treatment of an actress, who has a right, from her character and service on the stage, to expect some kind of respect. I have never received any favours from you or Mr. Lacy, nor shall ever ask any of you, therefore hope you will be so good to excuse me for endeavouring to defend

myself from what I think an injury; it has been too often repeated to submit to it any longer. You stopped four days' salary when I went to Dublin, though you gave me leave to go before the house shut up, and said you would do without me. If I had known your intention, I would not have lost any of my salary, as my agreement with Mr. Barry did not begin till our house had shut up. I had my money last year stopped at the beginning of the season for not coming to rehearse two parts that I could repeat in my sleep, and which must have cost me two guineas, besides the pleasure of coming to town.

"I am sure I have always done everything in my power to serve and oblige you: the first I have most undoubtedly succeeded in: the latter I have always been unfortunately unsuccessful in, though I have taken infinite pains. I have never envied you your equipage, nor grandeur, the fine fortune you have already and must be still increasing. I have had but a very small share of the public money. You gave Mrs. Cibber £600 for playing sixty nights, and £300 to me for playing 180, out of which I can make it appear it cost me £100 in necessaries for the stage; sure you need not want to take anything from it."

Whether the fine was remitted or not, record does not state; let us hope that Garrick was not deaf to her pleadings. Time indeed, seemed powerless to blunt the keen edges of their bickerings, as long as she remained a member of the Drury Lane company. Walpole says that Garrick hated her till she quitted the stage, and then cried her up to the skies to depress Mrs. Abington. It is certain that as long as their professional connection existed, their squabbles lasted likewise, and only a year before Clive's retirement they had almost come to an open quarrel regarding the day fixed for her benefit, when the following characteristic letters, never before published, passed between them.

The first, dated February 13, 1768, is from Kitty Clive to David Garrick, whom she coolly addresses as "Sir," and then writes:—

"I am much surprised to hear you have fixed on the 17th of March for my benefit, and that Mrs. Dancer is to have the Monday before, (which as Mr. Hopkins tells me was designed for Mr. Barry). I hope I shall not be guilty of vanity in saying that upon Drury Lane Theatre neither Mr. Barry nor Mrs. Dancer have a right to their benefits before me: I have done you great service this season, and at every call when they either could not or would not play, have been the stop-gap in playing principal parts, and even when I have been extremely ill. I do not suppose that expostulation will have any effect to alter what Mr. Lacy and you have pleased to settle. Therefore all I mean by giving you this trouble is to assure you I will not accept of that day, nor will I advertise for it. If I am wrong in this determination I may lose my friends, and they will naturally think you have acted justly by

"Your humble servant,

"C. Clive."

Receiving no reply to this communication she, after a few days' consideration, addressed herself to both her managers—Garrick and Lacy.

"Gentlemen,—I am advised (I may say it is insisted on by my best friends) not to be a dupe to your ill-treatment of me, by giving up above half my income, at a time when I have no alternative. I know 'tis in vain to expostulate with people in power. Whether I am injured or not will appear to all who are impartial. As to your sneering me about my consequence, you may take what steps you please with your power, but you cannot mortify me. 'Tis necessary for me to explain one thing, which perhaps may be convenient to be forgot by you, that when Mr. Lacy agreed with me in the summer, he gave me his word that everything relating to my engagement this season should stand as it did in my last article, where my benefit is particularised to be on or before the 17th of March. Of the truth of this I will take my oath. As to Mr. Woodward insisting upon having my day—he may insist on having part of my salary. I have nothing to do with him. I have behaved always to the managers of the play-house I belonged to in an honest and open manner, never having had schemes or doings to undermine or disappoint them in their business; therefore, whatever [faults] mine may be, you sha'n't have it to say, I took the advantage of Mrs. Pritchard's illness to distress your plays. As to my benefit you must do as you please, as I have no witness agreement."

This was an unhappy state of feeling between an actress and an actor who had played on the same stage for twenty-six years, and is not by any means creditable to Garrick. Probably he felt the truth of this, for his answer to her letter is written in a conciliatory spirit, and runs as follows:—

"Dear Madam,—You always choose to have some quarrel at your benefit and without reason, but I do not. I am surprised

that you have not thanked the managers for their kindness, instead of writing so peevish a letter. Your benefit is now settled upon the best day in the week, and six days sooner than you were last year. This was meant kindly for you, and everybody must see it in that light. I shall be sorry *that you will not accept of that day* (as you are pleased to say), because I wish you well, and it will be of great service to you. Therefore if you will not advertise and fix your play, your folly be upon your own head. I cannot do more than I have done for you."

This letter, written on the night of Friday the 19th of February, received an immediate answer from Clive, whose temper was evidently roused.

"I am sorry to give you this trouble," she writes, "but I really cannot comprehend what you mean by saying you expected I should have thanked the managers for their tenderness to me. I have always been grateful to any one who has obliged me, and if you will be so good [as] to point out the obligations I have to you and Mr. Lacy, I shall have great pleasure in acknowledging them. You tell me you have done all you *can* for me, and you *can* do *no more*. I don't know how to understand that, any one who sees your letter would suppose that I was kept at your theatre out of charity. If you will look over the number of times I have played this season, you must think I have deserved the money you give me. You say you give me the best day in the week, I am sorry I cannot be of your opinion: St. Patrick's day is the very worst to me that can be, Mrs. Yates' night the strongest benefit, as her interests and mine clash in the boxes. As to my quarreling you were under a very great mistake, there is nothing I dread so much. I have not spirits for that, though I have for acting. You say that you have fixed the day, and have drawn a line under it that I may be sure I can have no other, therefore I must submit, but I must think it, and so will every impartial person, very hard that Mrs. Dancer should have her benefit before Mrs. Clive. You may depend on having no further trouble with me. Indeed I flatter myself that as the greatest part was past of the season, and I had done everything you asked of me, and played a very insignificant part on purpose to please you, I say I was in hopes it would have ended as it had gone so far without any unkindness. But I shall say no more than that I am,

"Your most humble servant,
"C. CLIVE."

This epistle seems to have had the effect of disarming King David's anger, and awakening his sense of justice. Instead of the formal "Dear Madam," he lapses at once into the familiar "Dear Clive" in his reply.

"How can you?" he begins by asking her, "be so ridiculous and still so cross to mistake every word of my letter, that I could have so low a thought as what you suggest about *charity*, and which I am ashamed to read in yours. The insignificant part which you say you acted to oblige me, is very insignificant indeed, as well as the piece it is in, so you have endeavoured to be rude to me without effect. You speak of these things just as you are in or out of humour, so it shall stand for nothing; however, I have still such a regard for you, that I promise you for the future that you shall be no more troubled with any nonsense of mine. I am rejoiced that you have cancelled the obligation you say you conferred on me by accepting the part, by ungenteely telling me of it. You will find in your present humour objections to any day, but we really meant you *kindly* in giving you your own day, that you might avoid opera nights, and have no body to come immediately before or after you.

"This I did not do *out of charity*, but out of that respect which I ever pay to genius; and it is not my fault that Mrs. Clive will not be as rational off the stage as she is meritorious on it.

"I am, dear madam,
"Your sincere well-wisher,
"D. GARRICK."

The soft words with which the note ended turned away Kitty's wrath, and she and Garrick became friends once more. But disturbances of this kind were not the only troubles which embittered the last days of her theatrical career. Shortly before she left the stage she and many others were attacked by Hugh Kelly in a pamphlet called *Thespis*. His doggerel rhymes were abusive and unjust, though it may be noted that "the talents for satire displayed in this work by Mr. Kelly, recommended him at once to the notice of Mr. Garrick." Here is an extract from his satire on Kitty Clive:—

"Form'd for those coarse and vulgar scenes of life
Where low-bred rudeness always breathes in strife,
When in some blessed union we find
The deadliest temper with the narrowest mind;
The boldest front that never knew a fear,
The flintiest eye that never shed a tear,
Then not an actress certainly alive
Can e'er dispute pre-eminence with Clive."

A little while after the publication of this pamphlet, Kelly was anxious that she should appear in his new comedy, *False Delicacy*, knowing that her playing would tend towards making it a success; but now came a revenge which was sweet, especially to Kitty. She refused to read a line of his play, though she was in consequence assailed by the press, threatened with the managerial anger, and, what was more to her, menaced with a heavy fine; but she was "game to the backbone," as Lacy said, and she stoutly refused to help Kelly by exercising the talents he had abused. "I'll see the puppy hanged first," she said, and she remained true to her determination.

After forty years of hard and continuous labour, Kitty Clive, yet in the zenith of her popularity, resolved to leave the stage and enjoy peace and rest for the remainder of her days. Acting had become to her a vanity and vexation of spirit, or to use her own ideas on the subject, expressed in her precise autography, "vexation and fretting in a theatre are the foundations of all Bilious complaints. I speak by expeariance. I have been fretted by managers till my gaul has overflowed like the river Nile."

When news reached Garrick that he was about to lose her valuable services, he was much concerned, and sent Hopkins, the prompter, to learn if she were earnest in her intentions. To such an ambassador Kitty Clive, standing upon her dignity, declined to make reply; the great man then deputed his brother, Mr. George Garrick, to wait upon her with many civil speeches, but to these she made answer, that if the manager wished to know her mind, he must visit her himself. She had long enough eaten humble pie, it was now her turn to help David to the unappetising dish. When Garrick at last called, he made her many fine compliments on her great merit, and wished, for her own sake merely, he said, that she would remain for some years longer on the stage. But Clive was somewhat sceptical regarding his desire for her welfare, and ventured to hint as much in her reply. Then he asked her how much she was worth, to which she answered briskly enough, as much as himself. At this Garrick smiled, believing her to be misinformed regarding the goodly store he had secured unto himself; but she quickly explained her meaning by saying *she* knew when she had enough, though *he* never would. In vain he declared she was but now in the full tide of her popularity, and begged she would renew her engagement for four years, or at least for two. But she would not heed him; she had made up her mind to retire from the tumult and the trouble of theatrical life, and his words could not shake her purpose. He then expressed his regrets at her loss, to which civil speech she made answer that she hated hypocrisy, and was sure he would light candles for joy of her departure, only they would cost him twopence each.

They were, however, determined to end their connection in peace, and on the occasion of her farewell performance, Garrick consented to appear with her, and play Don Felix in *The Wonder*. Gratified and grateful at this arrangement, she wrote to him at once: "I am most extremely obliged to you for your very polite letter, how charming you can be when you are good. I shall certainly make use of the favour you offer me; it gives me a double pleasure—the entertainment my friends will receive from your performance, and the being convinced that you have a sort of a sneaking kindness for your Pivy. I suppose I shall have you tapping me on the shoulder (as you do to Violante), when I bid you farewell, and desiring one tender look before we part." On the back of this note there are two lines in Garrick's handwriting, "A love-letter, the first I ever had from that truly great comedian, Mrs. Clive."

Her farewell performance took place on the 24th of April, 1769. At the conclusion of *The Wonder*, a dance called *The Wake*, by Signor Giorgi, Mrs. King, &c., was performed, to which was added *Lethe*, Mrs. Cibber playing her favourite character the Fine Lady. The advertisements in the journals of that date contain the following quaint notice. "No tickets have been given out but to those Ladies and Gentlemen who have the places secured in the Pit or Boxes; and to prevent any mistakes or confusion, no box tickets will be admitted into the gallery. Mrs. Clive begs the favour of those whose places are in the pit to be there by Half-an-Hour after Five, and to let their Servants come to keep them a Quarter before Four. Pit and Boxes laid together."

Her friend Horace Walpole wrote a prosy epilogue for her, in which she bade farewell to the public. The lines open with a strained comparison of the actress to Charles V., Emperor of Germany, who, quitting the world, retired to the monastery of St. Just. The last two lines concluded with the promise:—

"I will not die, let no vain panic seize you,
If I repent—I'll come again and please you."

She never repented, and never returned to please. She had long maintained a friendship with that courtly cynic and delightful *dilettante*, Horace Walpole, who was looked on as the patron of all the arts, whose mere notice was a favour, whose word helped to a career, whose neglect blighted a life, as in the case of Chatterton. When Kitty Clive made her final bow to the public, she retired to her cottage on his property, a charming little dwelling which, in compliment to her, he called "Clive-den." This was separated only by a green lane and a couple of fields from his residence, Strawberry Hill, a miniature Gothic Castle, "set in enamelled meadows, in filigree hedges." Ever generous-hearted, she shared her home with her brother, Jemmy Raftor, a genial, plain-faced Irish gentleman, an actor who had never achieved success in his profession, but who possessed the traits common to his countrymen, of turning a pretty compliment, or telling an excellent tale. Her disputes with her managers, her wrangles with her fellow-players, her tortures from scurrilous criticisms, were now things of the past: and she had little to trouble the evening of her life, save when the tax-gatherer ran away, and she was obliged to pay her window lights over again, when the road before her door was bad, and the parish refused to mend it, or when she got robbed in her own lane. "Have you not heard of your poor Pivy," she writes to Garrick. "I have been rob'd and murder'd coming from Kingston. Jimey and I in a post chey, at half past nine, just by Teddington Church, was stopt. I only lost a little silver and my senses; for one of them came into the carriage with a great horse pistol, to search for my watch, but I had it not with me." Of which misfortune Walpole jests airily.

Her retirement was by no means solitary. To her neighbour's Gothic Castle by the placid Thames, came day after day a goodly throng of noble lords and ladies fair, princes, poets, and players, authors and artists, philosophers, adventurers, literary hacks, wits, and occasionally royalty itself. And amongst the stately and motley throng that filled the wonderful gallery, of which he was so justly proud, or drank tea in the library, lined with rare and handsomely bound volumes, crowded with objects of art, and fragrant with carraway or orange trees in bloom, the portly bustling figure of Kitty Clive was sure to be seen. Walpole delighted in listening to her piquant anecdotes, her humorous recital of some recent gossip, or her vivid recollections of men and women who had figured on life's stage when all the world was young and fair to her and him. Some of his courtly friends were at times apt to be jealous of the attention he paid the retired actress, loud of voice and showy of presence, but he was never happier than when she brightened his atmosphere: and he wisely turned a deaf ear to the murmurs of his stately friends.

Lady Townshend considered that Strawberry Hill would be perfect, but that Clive's face rose on it and made it sultry; but the owner of that charming retreat thought that rather an attraction, and mentioned Clive as one of the inducements with which to lure his friend, George Montagu, to visit him. "Strawberry is in perfection," he writes, "the verdure has all the bloom of spring; the orange trees are loaded with blossoms; the gallery all sun and gold, Mrs. Clive all sun and vermilion." Her name occurs again and again in those brilliant letters of his, which have thrown such wonderful side lights upon the social life of the eighteenth century. When she was about to take leave of the public, he writes to Montagu: "I have quitted the stage, and Clive is preparing to leave it. We shall neither of us be very grave: dowagers roost all round us, and you could never want cards or mirth." Then he writes to Richard Bentley. "My chief employ in this part of the world is planting at Mrs. Clive's, whither I remove all my superabundances. I have recently planted the green lane, that leads from her garden to the common. 'Well,' said she, 'when it is done what shall we call it?' 'Why,' said I, 'what would you call it but Drury Lane.' Then he must narrate one of the witticisms that fell from her lips. 'My Lady Shelburne has taken a house here, and it has produced a *bon-mot* from Mrs. Clive. You know my Lady Suffolk is *deaf*, and I have talked much of a charming old passion (Madame du Deffand) I have at Paris who is *blind*. 'Well,' said the Clive, 'if the new countess is but *lame* I shall have no chance of ever seeing you.'"

Clive had the greatest admiration for the brilliant epigrammatist. When he walked with her in the evenings across the broad green meadows, she exerted all her powers of humour to amuse him: and on their return to Cliveden she played quadrille with him till supper time, and then sang old ditties, which had once charmed the public, till night came apace.

Her other neighbours "do pick their way to come and see me," she writes, when winter had scattered snow on the frozen ground.

Let us picture the retired actress in her retreat. Her pleasant sitting-room is lit by a great fire, that brightens the dark wood panels, into which are let, here and there, the portraits of contemporary players; wax tapers burn in silver sconces; heavy curtains are drawn across the windows; and over the ruddy embers sit Kitty Clive and her brother Jemmy, who grumbles that fate and his sister's unhappy taste have compelled him to live in the country, which is dark and drear, in comparison to the city with its coffee houses, its theatres, and its brave rows of lamps along the streets. Presently there is a sound of wheels, and the famous Mrs. Abington, who had retired to Twickenham a little while before Clive, enters the room; and by and by arrives Miss Pope, an actress who owed much to Kitty: and finally comes the great Mr. Garrick, now also retired, who has consented to turn his back on the peerage, awaiting his company in town, in order to drink tea, and play quadrille with his old friends.

What wonderful memories they recall of old times, when their fears and hopes made life such a terrible and delightful thing; what stories they narrate of themselves and their fellow-players, so many of whom now lie with dust in their eyes; what anecdotes of play-writers and their hobbies, whose fame they have helped to make; of audiences and their prejudices; of first nights; of their favourite characters; and of their brilliant triumphs. All recollections of the playhouse are now to three of them but as the memory of a dream. They have put aside the pasteboard crown, the tinsel robe, and the rouge pot, and the world shall weep or laugh with them never again.

In the days of her retirement there were no better friends than the Clive and Garrick. "In the height of the public admiration for you," she writes him, "when you were never mentioned with any other appellation but the Garrick, the charming man, the fine fellow, the delightful creature, both by men and ladies; when they were admiring everything you did, and everything you scribbled, at this very time *I, the Pivy*, was a living witness that they did not know, nor could they be sensible of half your perfections. While I was under your control I did not say half the fine things I thought of you, because it looked like flattery, and you know your Pivy was always proud; besides I thought you did not like me then, but *now* I am sure you do, which makes me send you this letter."

Then he writes from Hampton:—

"I will be with you at six this evening, to revive, by the help of those spirits in your tea-kettle lamp, that flame which was almost blown out by the flouncing of your petticoat when my name was mentioned.

'Tea is a sovereign balm for wounded love.'

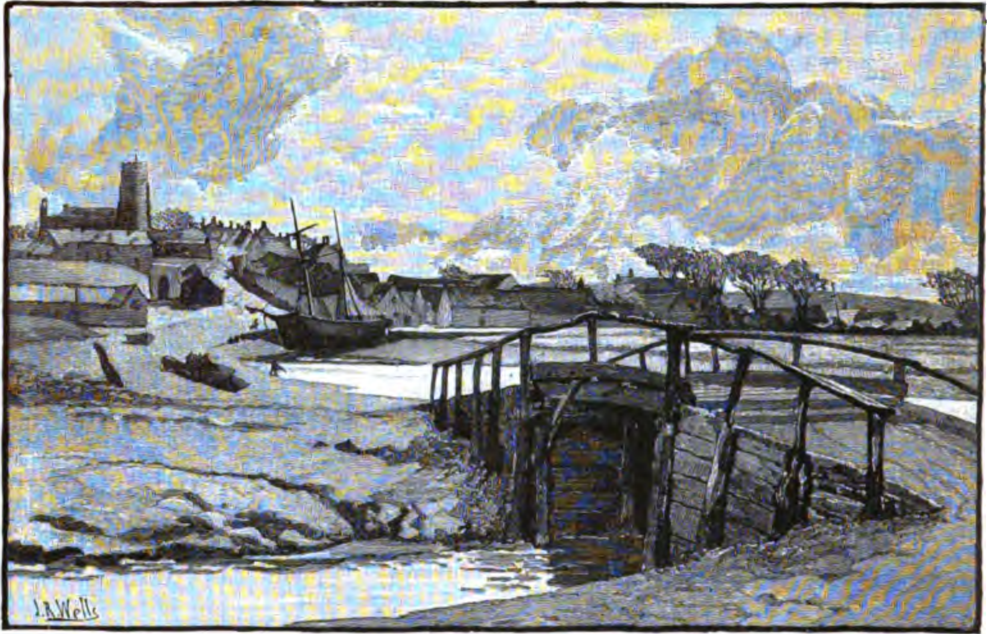
Will you permit me to try the poet's recipe this evening? Can my Pivy know so little of me to think that I prefer the clack of lords and ladies to the enjoyment of humour and genius?"

Time went by, dealing gently with saucy Kitty Clive. Her chief delight during her later years lay in cards, and there were few nights in the year she did not give or attend card parties. In 1777 her face rising on Strawberry Hill, no longer made it sultry. "I assure you," writes Walpole to the Countess of Ossory, "you may sit now in her beams when she is in her zenith without being tanned." Five years later he chronicles the fact that "poor Mrs. Clive is certainly very declining"; but during the next year she was able to come to town to see the great Mrs. Siddons act. When at the close of the performance she was asked what she thought of this famous woman's playing, she answered: "Think—I think it's all truth and daylight." In the December of 1785, the curtain fell upon the blameless life of saucy Kitty Clive. How the end came her friend Horace Walpole's words shall tell.

"My poor old friend, Mrs. Clive, is a great loss," he writes, "but it did not much surprise me, and the manner comforts me. I had played at cards with her at Mrs. Gostling's three nights before I came to town, and found her extremely confused, and not knowing what she did; indeed I perceived something of the sort before, and had found her much broken in the autumn. It seems that the day after I saw her, she went to General Lister's burial and got cold, and had been ill for two or three days. On the Wednesday morning she rose to have her bed made, and while sitting on the bed with her maid beside her, sunk down at once and died without a pang or a groan."

She had reached the seventy-fourth year of her age.

J. FITZGERALD MOLLOY.



BLAKENEY.
From a Drawing by J. R. WELLS.

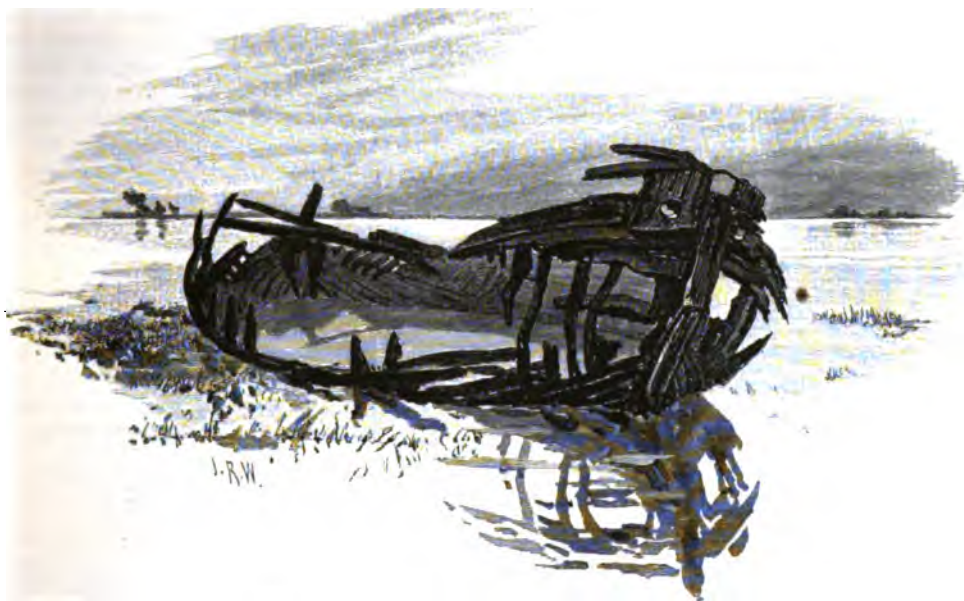
DECAYED SEA-PORTS.

THE philosopher who remarked that it was strange that all the great rivers should run past the great cities, might well have occupied his valuable time in pondering on the vicissitudes of seaports—their rise, progress, decay, and sometimes redintegration. Byron, in a line made famous by misprinting, wrote of some cities of the Mediterranean that "the waters washed them power when they were free," converted through sundry editions into "the waters wasted them when they were free," which is equally harmonious, but has the slight defect of being nonsense. The waters of the Mediterranean have, as a rule receded from the ancient seaports, which have become silted up or too shallow for modern tonnage. Tyre and Sidon, Jaffa and Acre, like Carthage, like Venice, are no more thought of as seaports. Yet there are Mediterranean ports which seem as immortal as London. Massilia still holds her own despite the revival of Brundusium, and is as great, or greater, than she was under Phœnician or Roman rule, and Alexandria, like Byzantium, is still among the ports of the world, despite apocryphal library-burnings and more recent bombardments. London, Antwerp and Amsterdam, the latter having had difficulties now needless to discuss, have had good times, increasing like smaller Bordeaux in importance. Cities situated on a river, and not too near the sea, have certain advantages. They care nothing for winds, and if the river be tidal, or, as the Frenchman oddly put it, "a moving highway taking everybody whither he wants to go," they have a vast advantage over exposed harbours and roads. London, it is true, has become far from the sea, but she has met the difficulty by gradually moving her docks down as far as Tilbury, as Liverpool has constructed her docks to fight against the danger of being close to the embouchure of the Mersey into the stormy Irish Sea. Backed by railroads such ports are likely to last long, yet it is not easy to forget the fate of many of their predecessors, once famous in history and song.

Decay sets in according to circumstances in various ways. A neighbouring port may prove too strong in its rivalry to be resisted. Caravans or other lines of traffic

may be diverted from their ancient course, and may in time return again; as at Barrow-in-Furness, one of the oldest ports in Great Britain, but which sank into nothingness for some four hundred years, until the railway system and hæmatite iron ore made it what it is. On the other hand Bristol, once the great emporium of the sugar and tobacco trades, of buccaneering, piracy and the slave-trade, has sadly dwindled in the face of Liverpool, every stone in which was once said to be "cemented by the blood" of a negro. For centuries before Liverpool emerged from its condition of a marsh, inhabited by that fabulous bird have seen the waters gradually retire until their castled crags rise from an ocean of verdure, tenanted by large-eyed lowing kine, instead of a port alive with snake-like piratical craft, and heard their steps resound to the laughter of country girls, instead of the hoarse oaths and heavy tread of the "shipman" of Chaucer, of whom the poet wrote:

"Ful many a draught of wyn had he drawe
From Burdeux-ward, whil that the chapman sleep
Of nyce conscience took he no keep.
If that he foughte, and hadde the heigher hand,
By water he sente hem hoom to every land."



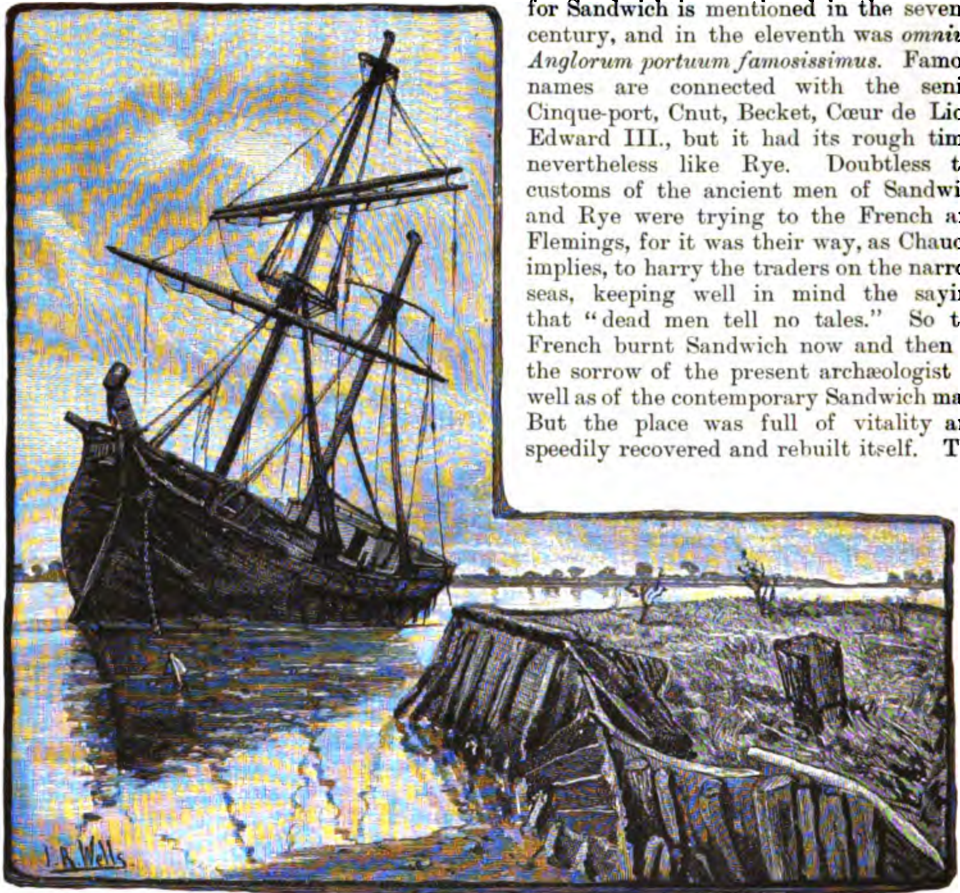
DECAY.
From a Drawing by J. R. WELLS.

the "liver," Bristol had been the most important port in the west of England, and actually retained its pre-eminence long enough to send the first steamship across the Atlantic. Yet no one would now think of comparing the commercial importance of the two cities—albeit Manchester purposes to be a seaport as Bruges once was, and John Law, of Lauriston, proposed that Paris should be made. Often the decay of antique seaports has arisen from purely natural causes, such as the advance of the sea at Seaford and its retrogression at Sandwich and at Rye. Some sea-born cities have been overwhelmed by the waves, while others

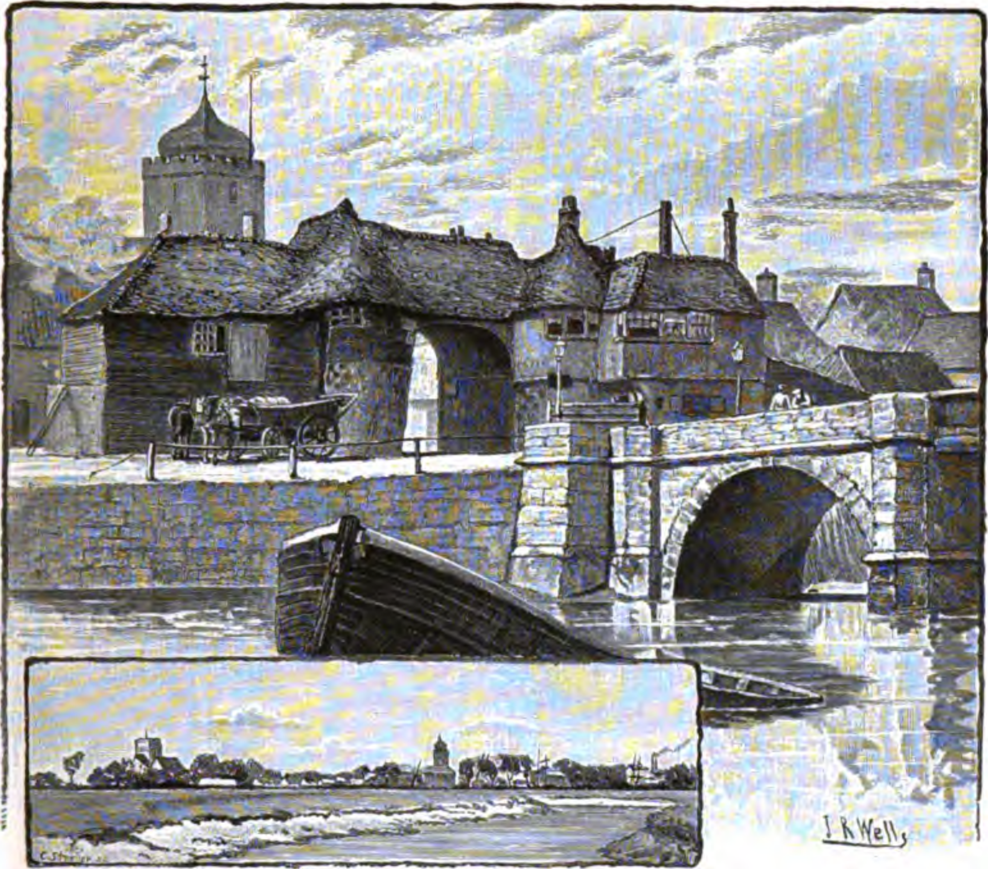
It is very curious that English authors from Chaucer to Dibdin, Gay's *Black-Eyed Susan* only excepted, invariably describe a sailor as the greatest ruffian unhanged.

There are few pleasanter excursions than that—by no means to be missed, when Saturday-to-Mondaying at "The Granville" —from Ramsgate to Sandwich. The road lies close to the sea, and the air is as full of ozone as the bath one has taken in the morning. And the trip has the inestimable advantage of being easily compassed in three or four hours, about an hour to drive each way, and an hour, or an hour and a-half, to dawdle about the most ancient of the Cinque-ports.

or "stink-ports" as a savage sanitarian of my acquaintance once called them. To geologically-minded persons the coast line is full of interest, as, lying between Reculver, where the sea is gnawing greedily at the shore, and Deal where it is nearly as aggressive, it presents at Sandwich a perfect picture of a port which the waters have forsaken, rising above flat marsh pasturage reclaimed from the sea and, at the moment of writing, dotted with thousands of lambkins skipping round their serious mothers as if no such things as mint-sauce entered into the scheme of life. It is needless to do more than allude to the identity of Sandwich with the Roman port and stronghold of Rutupiæ or Richborough, famous for its oysters which, I apprehend, came in all probability from Whitstable by water along the Wantsome—the passage from Regulbium or Reculver to Sandwich which once made Thanet a veritable island. The Roman castrum or its remains are seen at Richborough as it is now called, a little more than a mile from the Fishergate of Sandwich (village-on-the-sands) which followed the retreating sea after it had forsaken Richborough, to be in its turn left forlorn at least two miles from the bight or bay between Ramsgate and Deal, called The Little Downs. The water receded from Rutupiæ at an early date, for Sandwich is mentioned in the seventh century, and in the eleventh was *omnium Anglorum portuum famosissimus.* Famous names are connected with the senior Cinque-port, Cnut, Becket, Cœur de Lion, Edward III., but it had its rough times nevertheless like Rye. Doubtless the customs of the ancient men of Sandwich and Rye were trying to the French and Flemings, for it was their way, as Chaucer implies, to harry the traders on the narrow seas, keeping well in mind the saying that "dead men tell no tales." So the French burnt Sandwich now and then to the sorrow of the present archæologist as well as of the contemporary Sandwich man. But the place was full of vitality and speedily recovered and rebuilt itself. The last great burning and massacre took place in 1456, but the town revived so rapidly, that it yielded Edward IV. annually £17,000. Shortly afterwards the harbour became difficult of access, and in another century its prosperity was on the wane. Of late it has been disfranchised, but Sandwich is not dead yet, although a ribald visitor once declared it "a town to let." It is on the line of railway, the Stour brings coal and timber



CONDEMNED.
From a Drawing by J. R. WELLS.



SANDWICH. 1. THE OLD BRIDGE AND BARBACAN; 2. SANDWICH FROM THE MARSHES.
From a Drawing by J. R. WELLS.

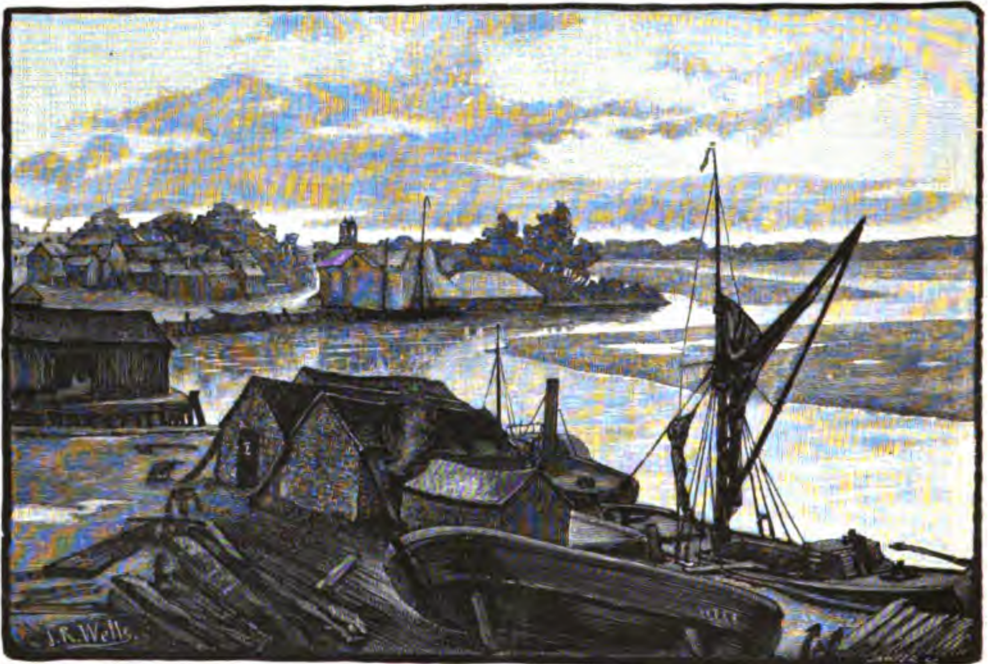
ships up to the picturesque old bridge, and there is an important cattle-market held on Monday in the old market-place, with its curious Dutch houses, built by men who fled from Alva, as the French dwellers in Pondicherry Row, as it was called, escaped to Sandwich from the Grand Monarque's *dragonnades* bringing with them the arts of baize-making and market-gardening.

Sandwich has also another connection with the Dutch, for De Ruyter and his men slew in the great battle off Solebay, that first of the Montagues who bore the title of Earl of Sandwich—Samuel Pepys's "my lord" and chief at the Admiralty. This was the nobleman whose body was found floating on the sea still wearing the insignia of the Garter. There was another Earl of Sandwich (the fourth) who invented the viand which naturally cannot be obtained in perfection in the place which gives it a name, had the Sandwich Islands called after him, entertained the Miss Reay, murdered by Hackman, and provoked a terrible retort from Wilkes—altogether a distinctly noteworthy person.

Few places bear more clearly the marks of the foreign exile than Sandwich. The burnings of the French destroyed almost every vestige of remote days except the Fishergate and St. Clement's Church, part of which is early English. It is a very fine old church and is especially venerated by the sexton, whose father was sexton before him, and who not only buries the Sandwichers when dead, but shaves them while alive. He showed me a quaint old register with entries in sixteenth century handwriting in which frequent foreign names are seen often with the description "a foreign mayde" or "a Flemyshe widowe" superadded. The Town Hall is also well worthy of a visit with its oaken furniture, and quaint pictures cut from the panels of an old house in the town.

Very odd, too, is St. Peter's Church, with a preposterous tower, but some interesting monuments. The most picturesque object in Sandwich is, however, the old bridge, formerly a drawbridge with its Barbacan and flanking turrets, with the Fishergate grooved for portcullis near at hand. This "bit" and the Dutch houses in the market-place, are the most striking things in quaint old Sandwich.

Of all the sometime seaports which the tide has left high and dry, amid smiling meadows and fruitful orchards, the most beloved of artists is the acropolis of Rye, towering red-roofed over the surrounding marshes, and still having steps leading down to the pleasant gardens replacing the angry grey flood which once lashed her sturdy sides. From any point of view Rye makes a picture. This fine old English Algiers, after piracy and smuggling goods over Romney Marsh ceased to be lucrative callings, seemed threatened with extinction. But it took heart of grace when the railway was made, remembered that it still had the river Rother, and became famous for its close political contests, the last of which was won by Mr. Inderwick, Q.C. By the Redistribution Bill Rye will lose its individual representation in Parliament but it is yet a well-to-do place of some eight or nine thousand inhabitants, having a delightful old church, endless old houses and towers, and one of the picturesque streets of the world, to wit Mermaid Street. And everywhere I meet that queer cognisance of the Cinque Ports, an object resembling in some measure both a hermit crab and Dagon of the Philistines, the half-lion and half-boat borne by all of the brotherhood, whether original members or the "limbs," extending from Seaford to Brightlingsea, as well as the royal flag of England, the St. George's red cross on a white ground. The half-lion and half-boat pervades Sandwich, and actually appears as a badge on the helmets of the two or three policemen who keep the peace of Her Majesty the Queen among eight or nine thousand people. This island stronghold was, however, not one of the original Cinque Ports whereof, only one, Dover, yet remains a port worth mentioning. Of the remaining four Hastings is an open roadstead, and Sandwich, Hythe and Romney, are deserted



MISTLEY.
From a Drawing by J. R. WELLS.

by the sea which once gave them importance. Rye and Winchelsea were subsequently added to the original number, but still at a very remote date, for William of Ypres built his still-extant tower in the reign of Stephen.

As Rye makes a picture whencesoever looked upon, so does it afford a view over the curious region of Romney Marsh, extending from it to Hythe, and comprising within the great semi-circle of pastures, which was once a bay of the sea washing the foot of the hills beyond the canal, the present townlets of Old and New Romney, and Lydd, as well as the extraordinary promontory called Dungeness, stretching into the sea like the tail of an enormous crocodile. There is nothing very picturesque in a mass of boulders, but it is interesting because showing at this moment in actual operation forces to which many of the changes on the earth's crust are due. Owing to the action of the tide up channel, bringing ever more and more boulders to erect a barrier against itself, Dungeness grows every year longer and longer, protecting the land behind it, and, in fact, turning the strength of the waves aside, and favouring the increase of land in the direction of Dymchurch and Hythe. To see Dungeness in perfection, however, one should take a good field-glass, and climb the church-tower of Lydd now easily accessible by railway.

RYE. YPRES TOWER AND ENTRANCE TO THE HARBOUR.
From a Drawing by J. R. WELLS.

While all views of Rye itself are good, perhaps the best is that obtainable from a queer little ruin called Cumber Castle, one of the family of small fortresses like Deal, Sandown, and Walmer, the latter the official residence of the Lord-warden of the Cinque Ports, a post held successively by the younger Pitt, Lord Liverpool, the great Duke of Wellington, who died at Walmer, and Lord Palmerston. It now gives Lord Granville the right to wear a naval uniform, and to preside at the Court of Lode-Manage for the licensing and discipline of pilots. From Cumber Castle, where, I believe, nobody ever did anything, any more than in the Martello Towers dotted along this coast, one sees to perfection the noble outline of ruddy Rye, its irregular pyramid of scarlet tiles surmounted by its mighty square church-tower, and the ancient grey tower of William of Ypres beyond it. These two objects, with the Land Gate, Mermaid Street, and numerous old houses, make an afternoon stroll in Rye one of the most agreeable jaunts imaginable.

Let us ascend one of the flights of steps, say those rising from near the riverside to the Ypres Tower, at the foot of which the old sea-dogs moored their craft. The air is full of the scent of blossoming orchards and trim gardens—an odour differing widely from the aroma of salt and pitch coupled with other fish-like smells, and the occasional foul reek of blood, pestilence, and fire, which pervaded Rye in the old time when it was crowded with people, and the French burnt it now and again, and put the bold rovers to the sword without mercy. The approach to and ascent to the Ypres Tower is delightful, Rye,

with its rugged acclivities and jagged roofs and gables, being always in front. This grey tower is probably the oldest thing in Rye. Once the watch-tower from which the corsair espied his quarry from afar, as well as the place of strength at which, when brought to bay, he met his foe with sharp shot and flashing steel, the relic of William of Ypres, Earl of Kent, appears to have escaped the successive burnings of the town in some miraculous manner. Perhaps it is too hard Huguenot refugees, two distinct colonies of whom came over and settled at Rye after the Massacre of St. Bartholomew's Day, and the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes. There are pretty bits of old world house-building almost everywhere round the corner, but our course is entirely up-hill, and as it is a warm and sunny afternoon the shade of the grand old church, severely burnt on several occasions, is doubly grateful. I had almost admired the stillness as well as the

WELLS AND THE ENTRANCE TO THE HARBOUR.
From a Drawing by J. R. WELLS.

or too tough to burn. At any rate there it is erect and valid, having served in latter days first as a prison, and then as a station for the policemen with the god Dagon on their helmets.

But everywhere else in old Rye are the marks left by the flames. Traces of conflagration are easily found in the grand old church of Rye, said to be the largest parish church in England. On our way we pass quaint old red-tiled houses, some apparently of foreign build, the work probably of the coolness of the massive edifice, but I remember me that the streets of old Rye are marvellously quiet, the stir of business lying nearer to the dock and the railway station. From the "George" to the church, and thence to the Ypres (my guide pronounces it "Why-press") Tower, all is peaceful enough to charm the most antiquarian of souls. Yet the very church which boasts an Elizabethan clock, said to be the oldest in England, still going, is by no means free from a latent odour of "villainous saltpetre" and a far-

WOODBRIDGE AND THE ENTRANCE TO THE DEBEN.
From a Drawing by J. R. WELLS.

away echo of the "clink and fall of swords." Setting aside the variety of styles in the church, speaking of successive repairs after French burnings, the scorched and blackened fragments of the old woodwork, and the marks of intense heat left on the solid stone, the very communion table itself is said to be made from the wreck of one of the mighty galleons of the Invincible Armada. In like fashion Mermaid Street, a rare spot for a desperate defence, shows marks of successive partial conflagrations, and has doubtless flowed many a time and oft with blood in the old days, as in the later smuggling period of Romney Marsh with "right Nantz" and fragrant Schiedam, after the Frenchmen had given short measure of brandy, and the Marshmen had "gotten square" with them by "ringing in" among others a few special guineas manufactured by themselves for negotiation in the course of their peculiar business.

There is no lack of decayed seaports beyond the limits sometime ruled over by the *Comes littoris Saxonici*. Away beyond Brightlingsea on the estuary of the Essex Stour is a village or quay called Mistley, a kind of suburb of the port of Manningtree just above it, and lying between that bustling little place and the greater port of Harwich, which has also had its ups and downs, once on the highway from London to the Hague, and the rest of the grand tour, then forsaken as the tide of travel shifted to Calais, Boulogne, and Ostend, and again revived by the energy of the Great Eastern Railway.

In the next county, Suffolk, the traveller by rail suddenly becomes conscious that he is passing through a country not unlike Holland. Between the light green foliage of the trees, and beyond the metallic glint of the growing corn, he sees masts and sails flitting ghost-like, and betraying no other sign of water or ships. Already in this part of the Eastern Counties the land shows

a tendency to get mixed up with river and sea, in the toast-and-watery fashion which impressed David Copperfield so unfavourably on his first visit to Yarmouth. Presently comes Woodbridge, on the right bank of the Deben, ten miles from the sea, and only accessible to small vessels, in which trade in corn and coals is carried on. There is also a great deal of boating going on just under the shadow of the noble church tower, a landmark for many miles around soaring proudly aloft, almost as Christchurch dominates the Mesopotamia of the Hampshire Avon, and Stour. These various Avons and Stours are as confusing as the Ouses, and the various and sundry places called Whitchurch. By the way, just as there is a river in Macedon, and a river in Monmouth, so is there a Wells in Norfolk as well as in Somersetshire. Wells, in Norfolk, is a little trading port lying on a creek in the remote region near Holkham, the famous agricultural estate made by the skill and liberality of that Earl of Leicester who died in 1842, out of an open and barren "rabbit and rye country." The best idea of the locality of Wells is conveyed to the general reader by the statement that it is on the north coast of the great sporting county of Norfolk, between Cromer and Hunstanton, in the range of country composed mainly of sandhills, stones, and weeds.

On the same coast lies Cley-next-the-sea, the decay of which is marked by a tell-tale church of magnificent dimensions. Around Cley the country is simply a marsh. Blakeney another port close to Cley, does very little business now, and what interest centres in it is confined to the ornithologist, as the mud-flats attract swarms of various kinds of birds. The wild North Sea gnaws away the cliffs on this coast, and converts their fragments into huge banks, a different process of obstructing and destroying harbours from that which acted upon those fine "old crusted ports," so to speak, of Sandwich, Hythe, and Rye.

BERNARD H. BECKER.

CLEY-NEXT-THE-SEA.
From a Drawing by J. R. WELLS.

SINGING AND LOVING.

I.

I dreamt a strange, strange dream of bliss,
  I thought that some one came
And held my soul in one long kiss
  And softly spoke my name.

II.

The voice still haunts my waking ear,
  I feel the long embrace,
But daylight veils the thing most dear,
  I cannot see the face!

III.

Whence did she come? who might she be?
  Ah! still my fancy deems
'Twas my "twin soul" who came to me
  Across the land of dreams.

IV.

After long days of storm and rain
  Of grey and gloomy weather
The blessed sun shines out again,
  The glad birds sing together.

V.

So fairly, perfectly are blent
  The lights of earth and skies,
The angels must have surely lent
  A day from Paradise!

VI.

I find no words that I may tell
  How dear she is to me;
My lips are laid beneath a spell
  And vowed to secrecy.

VII.

But what is lost though I be dumb,
  Since nightingale and dove
And all the winds that go and come
  Sing her a wealth of love?

VIII.

I envy not the joys that meet
  To make a gifted life completer;
To be my lady must be sweet,
  But to be hers is surely sweeter!

IX.

Where my love is plucking flowers
  With the sun above her,
All the birds in all the bowers
  Sing as though they love her.

X.

And I watch her, oh! my heart,
  Down the sunny meadow,
Watch her standing far apart
  For ever in the shadow.

XI.

The hedges all are white with may,
  The very air is glad,
The birds are making holiday,
  And yet my thoughts are sad.

XII.

Down where the alders sweep the stream
  The light-winged swallows dart;
I lie upon the grass and dream
  With trouble at my heart.

XIII.

Oh! life is young and love is fair
 And bright the coming years;
Then why this weight of strange despair,
 And these unbidden tears?

XIV.

As yesterday with listless feet
 My steps were homeward bent,
A little lad ran down the street
 And whistled as he went.

XV.

My heart was stung with sudden pain
 Hearing the simple thing,—
It was a little quaint refrain
 My dead Love used to sing.

XVI.

In my dreams I held her
 When the night was dying,
Dreamt I held her, lying
 On her breast.

XVII.

In my dreams I kissed her,
 Kissed her as though never
From her lips could sever
 Mine that pressed.

XVIII.

In my dreams I held her,
 In my dreams I kissed her;
But the waking missed her—
 Dreams were best!

D. F. B.

MR. TRIMMER AND WHITE-HEADED BOB WAITING FOR A WHOPPER.
From a Drawing by HUGH THOMSON.

THE INCOMPLETE ANGLER.

BROKEN MEMORIES OF PEACEFUL DAYS.

HOW varied, how extensive, how apparently exhaustive is the literature of fishing. From a glance at the *Bibliotheca Piscatoria* one would imagine that the modern disciple of the "gentle craft," without master or practice, without having matriculated in minnows or [graduated] in gudgeon, might from private study alone pass muster in the art of fishing with an angle. From the reed of the poet or more prosaic willow wand of boyhood, learned authors trace the development of the rod to its perfection in the mighty Castle Connell. They indicate the appropriate lure for every fish from stickleback to salmon. They devise and describe knots difficult to execute and impossible to untie, and devote to the breeding, scouring, and bringing into condition of the offspring of a domestic house-fly a mass of learning that might be considered excessive if applied to the training of a "'Varsity crew." Nor is this all. The student may select a tutor whose style is congenial to his taste. If an F.S.A., with a fondness for quaint and musty tomes (fancy book-worming for trout!), he may struggle through the "Treatyse of Fysshynge wyth an Angle" in the *Booke of St. Albans.* If a lover of all that is pure, earnest, and unaffectedly simple he may wander by the banks of the Lea, and in imagination wet his line with dear old Izaak Walton. If of the slangy school, he may read the modern books in which a trolling rod is spoken of as a "pike staff," an angler as a "rodster," while his quarry is wittily described as "Mr. Gills, the member for Finsbury."

Then why, it will be asked, add to the existing plethora of angling literature? Because the personal observations and experience of any sportsman truthfully set down, must, I believe, be of interest to many followers of the same pursuit. But enough of preface. *Qui s'excuse s'accuse!* I will put up my rod and venture my first cast.

What a paradox is fishing! An angler's brightest moments are when the sun is hid; his hopes least ruffled whilst wading through

troubled water, and his reflections dullest when the pool is like a mirror. Yet (and this lends angling half its charm) art may, and sometimes does, command success under the most unfavourable conditions of nature. I do not, however, remember ever to have risen a single trout in actual fog, or when the evening mist has spread from the water meadows and crept over the surface of the river like a cold, white shroud—a veritable wet blanket to the angler's hopes, whether bent on salmon or on trout. It is true I once caught a salmon in the Usk in September, many years ago, in a thick mist or sea fog, but as I was using a fly dressed on double hooks, and the fish was foul-hooked in the dorsal fin, I cannot be sure whether he was attracted by the "Jock Scot," or was caught simply because he "happened to be there at the time," as the native of Tipperary is reported to have told the judge when pressed for an explanation of his statement that he was born in London. However, I shall never forget the excitement of the first few minutes' struggle. The mist was too thick for me to see, and I was at that time too inexperienced to feel what had happened. The fish in his first mad rush striking across and down the stream, presented the whole of his side to the current, thus offering a resistance to the pressure of my rod that made me think I was "into" the father of all salmon. The next minute he dashed up stream, and again turning, struck out for the opposite bank. The current now helped me, and the line came in so easily as I reeled up the slack that my heart came into my mouth, for I thought we had parted company. No; there he is, and stronger than ever! By this time a glimmering of the truth dawned upon me, and as I was in a position whence I could not follow my fish down stream, I knew I should be broken unless I could coax him up again before he became too exhausted to fight against the force of the current. To this intent I slackened my line, when he, of course, at once headed up stream, as a fish always must do, in order to use his gills freely. (Hence if you want to drown a tired fish drag him down stream as fast as you dare.) By putting just sufficient pressure on to incite him to further combat without exasperating him too much, and never forgetting to slacken my line when he showed a disposition to turn, I persuaded him to get well above me; fully resolved to risk breaking hold or tackle rather than let him again pass below me out of gaffing distance. With a little humouring he drifted close under me, and I first saw my victim as I gave him the *coup de grace*. He was a miserable little red cock, only 7lbs. in weight, with a jaw hooked like the bill of a parrot! But I had had the excitement of *believing* I had a large fish on, and I had learned a lesson, applicable to fairly hooked as well as foul hooked fish, that has stood me in good stead many a time since—namely, if you want at any risk to stop a fish in a rush down stream, pull as hard as you dare and then suddenly give him slack line by throwing the point of the rod forward and running line off the reel. When he feels the resistance cease, nine times out of ten he will head up stream at once, and if tenderly handled may generally be induced to take up ground, or rather water, more favourable to the angler before active hostilities are recommenced.

With mist are often coupled hail and snow as enemies to sport. More than once, however, have I known trout in Wales to rise, or, more accurately speaking, to take a large fly under water greedily during a heavy fall of snow. Of hail—save such as at times accompanies a thunder-storm—I have no experience, but I am quite prepared to believe it does not conduce to sport. Almost as bad is the fall of the leaf in "chill October," when the morning sun dazzles, but gives no warmth, and the bitter wind still tasting of the night's frost at every gust literally strews the surface of the river with fallen leaves.

Beautiful without question is the sight when a cloud of many-tinted leaves, deserted by the fitful and fickle wind that has raised it, hovers for a moment in mid-air, and silently descends on the water, each individual leaf performing its own waltz, reel, or jig as it falls, gleaming meanwhile like a gem in the autumn sun. Beautiful also, though mournful, is the sound of the wind coursing through the woods and groves as it gathers its victims. Less beautiful and far more irritating, however, to the angler's ear is the whirr of a leaf firmly impaled on his salmon fly, impeding his backward cast, and causing the slack of his line to fall helplessly in many a coil on furze, blackthorn, or bramble. Nor is his case improved when the leaves have become sodden, and have sunk to the bottom of the river. There they rot, tainting the water, and making the fish too sick to think of food, until a heavy flood shall have purged the stream of decaying vegetable matter, and renovated their jaded appetites. To those who think it sport to kill red fish heavy in spawn, an early frost

causing the leaf thus to fall, is a serious trouble. To my mind salmon fishing should end when pheasant shooting begins, at any rate in the south of England.

In thundery weather fish seldom feed well. Just before a storm they exhibit great restlessness, leaping from the water and breaking its surface in a thousand circles, but the fly-fisher will find to his disappointment that their observations are meteorological rather than entomological. After a heavy downpour, when myriads of dead or drowning insects are swept down by the swollen current, a good basket may occasionally be made. This is, however, rarely the case when there is still thunder in the air, but occurs more frequently after the clearing shower.

Once more let us change the scene.

A glaring sun; a steely sky without a cloud; not a breath of wind, but a coldness of tone and absence of reflected light in the shadows that mark the east as the quarter whence the wind should come—were there any; a shallow stream of water, pure, clear, and hard as that born of the chalk alone can be, leisurely and placidly flowing without dimple or eddy over a bed of gravel all but bare of weeds; grassy banks, scarcely higher than the river, without tree, bush, or even tuft of rushes on the brink—have I not sketched a scene to make an angler's heart sink within him? And yet on such a day and in such a place as I have attempted to describe I once had excellent sport. An account of this day's fishing may be of interest as illustrating the glorious uncertainty of angling with its attendant hopes and fears, failures and success. For a full month before this eventful day the "ticket-of-leave" was a delight to me. How often in the intervals of business, when alone in my office did I furtively gloat over the plan engraved on the "permit," wherein were shown three distinct casts or sections of water seductively coloured sky blue. How often in imagination did I walk up those yellow-ochre roads and drop in at the rose-pink cottage of the keeper! The superscription "Permit Piscator Imperfectus, Esq., to fly-fish in waters Nos. 1, 2, and 3," was good; but observe the foot-note, "A day's sport limited to six brace; all fish less than twelve inches to be returned."

"Limited to six brace!" What do you say to that, brother angler? Would it not suggest grassing many a speckled beauty, and returning with indifference all but the tritons with red spots as big as wafers?

How many evenings did I spend in sorting and selecting flies—in soaking, re-tying, and testing the finest-drawn gut casting-lines!

The morning came at last. An ominously high barometer and the slightest suspicion of London fog suggested east wind, though breeze there was none. A few miles from the terminus the fog had vanished. A grey hazy thin mist bounded the horizon—the sun above shining fiercely all the while.

Had I brought those olive-quill gnats? In a minute the cushion of the opposite seat might have been taken for the web of a spider doing a wholesale business in fancy goods. Yes, there they were, and with them some beautiful red spinners with ginger legs and wings of hackle points from a grizzly silver-grey bantam—the very thing for a hot, still day in June.

"Beg pardon, sir," said an amphibious-looking man in moleskin vest and porpoise-hide water-boots, on my alighting at Trunkmore Station—"beg pardon, sir, but be you the gentleman as were to fish at the 'Beeches'?"

The habitual caution of the attorney was too strong to be entirely merged in the candour of the angler. I admitted my identity, but only *argumenti causâ*, or hypothetically. "What if I am?" said I.

"Well, sir, I'll tell you how it is. 'Tis just like this here. His lordship's a seen Mr. Trimmer. He's the keeper, Mr. Trimmer is, you know, sir; I be the under-keeper, that's what I be—out o' nights, wet, and dark, and cold, and all manner. That's just when they does it, you know, if you ain't there. And not so much as a 'alf a pint. For say you looks in at the 'Red Lion,' or the 'Dun Cow,' which ain't much out of the way, you know, sir, if you takes athwart the meadows, and over the stile by the 'Picked Piece,' and is both straight and fair, particularly the 'Cow,' as will always tell you honourable if they's any of them lurching loafers about. And would you believe it, sir, down they slips and pops their night-lines in, afore you've time to swallow two two's of rum, let alone a pint of old-and-mild. And you take my word for it, sir, it's across the lines you feel it—that's where it is—couched up for hours in a bunch of rushes, and afeared to move head or foot like a hare."

My garrulous friend in the moleskins had evidently listened so long to the babbling of brooks that he had caught the trick o't, and had I been less intent on filling my creel I might have filled my common-place book. As it was I cut him short and cross-examined him as to the purport of his mission, if mission he had, qualifying the abruptness

of my interruption with a suggestion of beer.

"Thank ye, sir, I don't mind if I do have just a half-a-pint."

Mr. Moleskins *thought* there was a hostelry round the corner, and his surmise proved to be correct. The young lady behind the bar must have been a "thought-reader." Without a word being said she filled a quart pot with a foaming mixture blended from two taps in unequal portions, and setting it before my companion turned to me and asked me with a smile what I would please

Thursday week! When I had been struggling for days to get my work done or shunted in order to take a holiday. When I had been wrestling for nights with tangled and disorganised tackle. Thursday week! with those gossamer gut casting-lines packed between pieces of wet spongio-piline now in my creel, and ready for immediate use.

"Thursday week! Perish the thought! Lead me to the river."

The surprise of Moleskins was intense. He uttered no sound; but placing his pot on the counter walked out of the bar. I

MR. STUBBS.
From a Drawing by HUGH THOMSON.

to take? What I took is now of no consequence—I say *now* deliberately, because I still remember—but no matter.

"You see, sir," said Moleskins, "it's just like this. What with the weeds cut, and the water as clear as gin, let alone the sun a scorching and frizzing up everything, and not wind enough to cool the lungs of a midge, his lordship says it ain't no more use than nothing at all, and I was to just nip up to the station, and would you like to fish Thursday week and he'll keep the water for you?"

paid, and followed, the young lady remarking as I pocketed my change, "Anything wrong, sir? He don't often leave heel-taps—Stubbs don't!"

From this moment I found it impossible to get more than monosyllables from Mr. Stubbs. He walked sullenly beside me towards the river, eying me from time to time as a dog that has just had a beating eyes his master, and when he got within sight of the keeper's cottage he pointed it out to me, got over a stile, and left me by a green path across a rushy field, muttering

that he had to see nothing was going on wrong at the watercress beds. I could see no watercress beds, nor have I ever been able to ascertain their exact position, but from what I have since learned of the lie of the land, including the not unimportant fact that the rushy field is described on the tithe-map as the "Picked Piece" I think it not improbable they are situated somewhere near the "Dun Cow."

Mr. Trimmer having despatched his messenger, had no longer considered my coming as within the range of practical possibilities, and had gone on urgent private business to a dentist's in the neighbouring market-town. This I learned from Mrs. T., who was engaged in "airing-off" as she called it, that is, in pegging damp and mysterious articles of underclothing on a line. Through her instrumentality a small shock-headed urchin, locally known as "White-headed Bob," was found to carry my creel. He professed himself able to show me not only the water but some "jolly whoppers!" Nor did he exaggerate. No sooner did we approach the brink of the stream than off shot something like a torpedo, startling in its flight other submerged monsters, who joined the stampede till the whole water was in commotion. One might have imagined a regatta of invisible baby steam launches was taking place.

"There they goes! there they goes! Oh, my eye, there's a whopper!" said Bob, running forward and pointing, as an exceptionally large trout, that had doubtless thought it beneath his dignity to leave sooner, swam lazily up the stream.

"Hold your tongue, and stand still, can't you?" said I somewhat crossly; "you frightened him away." I had no sooner said this than I felt I had made a mistake. I had not only lost my temper, but I had lost caste in Bob's estimation. He knew, as well as I did, that the fish would have followed the others in any event, and he now knew I was deficient in an angler's first qualification—patience.

"Never mind, my boy," said I, trying to regain lost ground by assuming an unnatural cheerfulness of tone, "I dare say he would have gone any way."

"Please sir, he was a-going afore I hollered out. I won't skeare him when he do come back again, but I allow he won't come whoam while we do stand here."

"What makes you think he will come back?"

"Please sir, they allus does when I do drive the cows in this here meadow of a morning."

In further proof that his belief was well grounded "White-headed Bob" added:

"When Muster Trimmer do want a trout particular for the House, you know, sir, he most allus drives them off their nesties with his rod and chucks his worm in, and do walk little ways athwart the meadow and let the rod bide, and do sit under yon hedge. And, please, sir, he ain't a half a-smoked his pipe when his reel do begin to twizzle and twirl, and he ups and has him out in a minute."

"The deuce he does! Then we will have a basket of trout after all."

This burst of genuine enthusiasm failed to awaken confidence in my shock-headed little friend.

"Please sir," said he, with diffidence, "I don't allow they would take hold, if you does let your flyhook bide in their nesties. T'idden like a worm, you do know, sir."

"Never you mind, my boy, just show me that fish's lair, and see if I don't have him, that's all!"

"What do you please to say, sir?"

"Where did he bolt from? Where is his nestie as you call it?"

"Behind that gert stone—quite handy to it," said Bob, pointing to a lump of chalk some eighteen feet from the bank, behind which the water formed a scarcely perceptible eddy.

"All right, then I'll catch him to begin with," said I, pacing six yards inland, depositing my pocket handkerchief on the grass, then stepping twelve yards further on the same alignment, and marking the spot by laying down my tobacco-pouch.

I then retired still further from the water, and having jointed my rod, and "put-up" an olive dun with upright wings, I proceeded to give Bob a lesson in lightly holding the fly by the bend of the hook between the tips of his second finger and thumb, so that I could disengage it in making a cast without danger to his digits. At first he was rather nervous, and apt to drop the fly in the buttercups and thistles, to the great peril of my top-joint, when he thought a cast was imminent; but by twitching it away once or twice at irregular intervals when he did not expect it, without misadventure, I convinced him that his fears were groundless.

When we were perfect in "field-practice," I explained that the distance from the pouch to the handkerchief was, as nearly as I could guess, equal to that from the handkerchief to the fish; and therefore that if I made a cast from the handkerchief while he held the hook at the pouch, the fly when

cast should "cover" the fish, or, at any rate, pass within range of his vision.

The plan of attack being arranged and rehearsed, we took up our respective posts —the front rank kneeling, the rear rank standing at "attention."

ARE YOU READY?
From a Drawing by HUGH THOMSON.

Caution: "Are you ready?"
Command: "Off!"
The cast is made.

The fly retarded in its flight by the slightest backward motion of the rod-top hovers for a moment, and drops on the water as lightly as a snowflake some six feet above the enemy's strönghold. The point of the rod is then gradually lowered to prevent the weight of the line checking the fly in its course down the stream. Onward floats the buoyant little dun, its upright wings looking like a diminutive lateen sail in a calm.

Now is the critical moment. It has passed and been refused. No! A sound like a baby's kiss, but a thousand times more musical to an angler's ear, followed by a tiny vibration in the line, communicating a thrill to the arm that makes one's heart thump, is answered by a firm but tender stroke.

Then what a rush! Up on your legs and run to the music of the reel. Talk of the bagpipes! How I love to hear the reel run up an octave *crescendo* like the wind in the keyhole of a stormy night. It braces me up to the fight more than would all the military bands in Christendom and Heathendom to boot!

Out he jumps, flashing in the sun, time after time, till, too exhausted to leap, he skates along the surface of the water and at last is drawn to the landing-net rolling over and over.

"Three pounds and a quarter, Master Bob—that's not a bad beginning. And now you run and ask Mrs. Trimmer for a bundle of firewood or a score of her clothes-pegs, and we will mark out the haunts of all the other monsters and serve them with the same sauce."

We did so; and caught fourteen brace and a half, not counting undersized fish!

I had left with six brace of "selected" before either Mr. Trimmer returned from the market-town or Mr. Stubbs from his long watch at the watercress beds. I learned, however, some time afterwards from Lord Blackmore's agent, that white-headed Bob had been severely cross-examined on their return as to the use I had made of the clothes-pegs, and that for a time he had lain under a grave suspicion of having been privy to an act of poaching.

I gladly avail myself, therefore, of this opportunity of clearing his character and my own.

BASIL FIELD.

(*To be Continued.*)

PRINCIPAL STREET IN ELOPURA.
Drawn by HELEN H. HATTON, *from a Photograph by* MR. ROBSON.

ADVENTURES ON THE EQUATOR.

BEING CHIEFLY EXTRACTS FROM THE UNPUBLISHED DIARIES AND LETTERS OF THE LATE FRANK HATTON.

[The *Melbourne Argus* publishes the report of a paper read by Mr. de Lissa, at a meeting of the Geographical Society of Australia, containing an eloquent tribute to a young London "scientist," whose accidental death in the interior of North Borneo will be remembered. "Among the intrepid explorers and scientific men who have done so much for Sabah," said the speaker, "can never be forgotten the brave, young, and clever FRANK HATTON, who at the early age of twenty-two had already made a name in Europe for his scientific abilities, and who with his chosen Malay followers intrepidly explored the unknown regions of Borneo. Never shall I forget my intense sorrow, shared as it was by a sobbing community, when his death was announced at Elopura. He will be always remembered among the pioneers of Borneo as the gentle and heroic FRANK HATTON." The Singapore branch of the Asiatic Society recently recorded in their minutes a note of the society's high appreciation of FRANK HATTON's work, and during an official survey of the Segama country, a range of hills was named after the young explorer and "blood brother" of many native tribes — *Daily News*, Oct. 11, 1884.]

I.

THE following notes of travel and exploration are chiefly extracted from such papers and diaries as have reached England since the sad death of the young scientist on the then unexplored Segama river. The fact that Borneo is at the present time much in evidence in connection with our Eastern trade, adds to the importance of its exploration and government; but the death of the young traveller at the close of the series of remarkable expeditions which he conducted along the Sabah rivers, and far into the interior, gives pathetic interest to his experiences and impressions.

"Labuan is an island lying a few miles north-west of Borneo. It is one of the smallest and least known of the British Colonies. Ceded to her majesty in 1847, it possesses the privilege of English government, and at one time promised to be an important coaling station for the fleet. Approaching it from the European route, you make the little harbour in a steamer plying thither from Singapore. Landing at the only town in the island, Victoria, a row of houses, dignified by the name of the Bazaar, is the first thing one sees. All the trade and commerce of Labuan is transacted in this combination of stores. Most of the establishments are in the hands of the Chinese. The locality is redolent of their food and their tobacco. The celestial shop-

keepers describe themselves as 'general dealers,' which means that bad tinned milk, biscuits of ancient date, curious wines, fossilised potted meats, gunpowder, shot, old muskets, Manchester cotton goods, and 'Sarongs' are to be had from them at various prices. Over each shop door are pasted Chinese characters in black, on a red ground. Two of these I found stood for 'good luck' and 'salve.'

"The Klings are by far the finest type of natives in Labuan. They are rather darker in complexion than the Malays, and are on the whole a sturdier and finer-looking race of people. The accompanying illustration is a portrait of my Kling *syce*, or stableman. It is from a photograph. I had much difficulty in persuading the subject to let me take a picture of him, as he said it was wicked. But *backsheesh* induced him to overlook the sin. When, some days afterwards, I showed him a print of himself, he merely asked if it was intended for him, and did not express any surprise or astonishment at all, although it must have been the first time he had ever seen a picture of his own face.

"One of the pleasantest and coolest places in Labuan is Tanyong Kubong, or Coal Point, on the north-east side of the island. Here coal mining operations on an extensive scale were formerly conducted; here are four seams of coal, and a most expensive plant is on the ground; but the apparatus, machinery, buildings, and engines are now all going to ruin. At one time the mines were leased to the Oriental Coal Company of London and Leith at a yearly rental of £1000. In 1876 as much as 5,800 tons were turned out; and in 1877 a larger output than this was made. In 1878 the colliery was given up, the miners were sent away, the Europeans left the place, and now, in 1881, jungle covers a large portion of the houses and plant. The great drawback to successful mining was water; although the mine had, I am told, only two 14-inch lifts to combat this difficulty. It was proposed, when the pits were in full swing, to make nine miles of railway through dense jungle to Labuan, to convey the coal, instead of bringing it round the coast in lighters, as had previously been done; and, indeed, a tunnel was commenced through one of the tree-covered hills, and was carried within eight feet of completion, when the ruling powers at home sent out orders to abandon the works. Traction engines were also tried along roads on which there was no possibility or probability of their ever running. It is a melancholy thing to see a deserted pit at any time; but here, in these out-of-the-way regions, where labour is so scarce and transport so expensive, it is very depressing to see thousands and thousands of pounds worth of gear rusting and decaying, with tall ferns and great weeds growing out of long-silent boilers and disused cylinders.

HEAD OF A KLING.
Drawn by HELEN H. HATTON *from a Photograph.*

"There are often very brilliant sunsets in the far East. I noticed a most impressive effect at Labuan. The sun was setting in the west. The sky was tinted with brilliant lines of gold, and blue, and green; the moon pale, and giving apparently no light, had risen in the south-east. Right under the moon appeared a cloud illuminated with a silvery light. In singular contrast to the

hot red glow in the west was this cool yellow light, which showed in the east. The sea was a deep green from the reflected sunset, and on the distant coast of Borneo a dark cloud hung heavily: lightning was visible at intervals, and the far-off thunder rumblings gave signal of an approaching storm.

"In due course I am to penetrate these strange regions, that indicate themselves in that long wild coast-line. Labuan is the look-out upon unexplored Borneo. I stand here and wonder what it is like to be a pioneer in an unknown land, and I recall the sensation that thrilled me on hearing the cantata of *The Ancient Mariner* where the chorus sing:—

> "'We were the first that ever burst
> Into that silent sea.'"

II.

Elopura is the chief station of British North Borneo. A few years ago Mr. Pryer, the Resident there, was comparatively alone with a handful of natives. He now has the administration of some thousands of natives and coolies, traders and residents, and a fine town is springing up. Mr. Governor Treacher has removed his official residence from Kudat to Elopura, which will give a fresh impetus to the progress of the district. As an example of how the English Company is sowing the seed of a new world, the formal account of a Resident's stewardship at one of the newest stations in North Borneo is worth examination. "The past six months," says the Resident, "have been marked by rapid progress in Elopura, progress more rapid than any one could have been justified in predicting even in so short a time as eighteen months ago. This improvement denotes not so much an advance in Elopura itself as an increasing prosperity throughout the country inland, Elopura being but the index of affairs generally in this part of Sabah. The population is permanently increased with the arrival of every steamer. Many of the immigrants go up country gutta hunting. The Chinese are coming in rapidly. The population generally is a miscellaneous one—Sooloos, Bugis, Sarawak men, Bajaus, Banjermassing and Manilla men, Tidong and Booloongan men. An attempt to take the census failed, but the inhabitants of Elopura now number about three thousand." Besides this the settlements in other parts of Sandakan Bay are constantly increasing, over sixty-three arriving in one day. "I may be pardoned for recalling to mind the time, not three years ago," adds the Resident, "when, there being an alarm of pirates at Balhalla,

AT COAL POINT, LABUAN.
Drawn by HELEN H. HATTON, *from a Sketch by* FRANK HATTON.

I went round the only three villages that existed then and found that, besides my own one or two men, there were not even ten male adults in the whole bay."

The native town is very picturesque, as will be gathered from our illustrations of the wharf and the principal street. The buildings along the quay are made of bamboo with Nipa palm "attaps." The principal street is little more than a palm-stem gangway, elevated on piles above the water. It is a curious sight when crowded, as it is now and then, and it is none the less strange in the early morning when the earliest risers are abroad. The new town which is being built by the Company is on the slope of the hill that rises above the native village. It was from Elopura that Frank Hatton set forth on his latest expedition; it was to Elopura that his body was brought by his native followers in that fatal month of March, 1883.

Mr. Hatton conducted an expedition of exploration from March 1st until June 17th, 1883, which had some important geological, geographical, and other results. The space at our disposal will only permit of a few brief but characteristic extracts from the explorer's diary of this remarkable trip.

"*April 2nd.*—To-day I was initiated into the brotherhood of the Bendowen Dusuns. The old men and all the tribe having assembled, the ceremonies began. First the jungle was cleared for about twenty yards, and then a hole dug about a foot deep, in which was placed a large water-jar. In this country these jars are of enormous value: $30, $40, and even $100 of gutta being given for a single jar. The bottom of the jar in question was knocked out so as to render it useless in future. The clay taken out to make the hole was thrown into the jar, and now the old men commenced declaiming, 'Oh, Kinarringan, hear us!'—a loud shout to the Kinarringan. The sound echoed away down the valleys, and as it died, a stone was placed near the jar. Then for half an hour the old men declared that by fire (which was represented by a burning stick), by water (which was brought in a bamboo and poured into the jar), and by earth, that they would be true to all white men. A sumpitum was then fetched, and an arrow shot into the air to summon the Kinarringan. We now placed our four guns, which were all the arms my party of eight mustered, on the mouth of the jar, and each put a hand in and took a little clay out, and put it away. Finally several volleys were shot over the place, and the ceremony was complete. . . . I could not tell how long a journey I had before me. On thinking it over I gave up going after the antimony at present, but its search shall be prosecuted from Kinoram at a future day. I tried to get Degadong to part with his specimen, but he would not, although he would go with me to find more whenever I liked.

"We left Toadilah and proceeded on our journey, following a high ridge of hills in a S.S.W. direction. The whole way lay through vast primæval forests, in which I noticed many tree-ferns twenty and more feet high. The general character of the forest was almost Australian, judging from the solitude and unbroken silence which reign in the depths of these trackless woods. The only sounds come from insects. Parrots, monkeys, wild cats, bears, deer, and other usual denizens of tropical jungle are here entirely absent. The tracks of a large animal were seen—they appeared to me to be those of a tapir. I got a bearing of Mentapok. It was 75°.

"The Dusuns at Toadilah were afraid to receive a note which I wanted to leave for Smith, should he come in this direction. They were afraid there was a charm in it. After much persuasion, however, they took it in, and placed it carefully away in a bamboo.

"It is impossible to reach any house to-night, as the next place is too far, and there is no water; we therefore prepared to camp in the jungle. There was a small stream called Tadjum in our vicinity, and as it did not rain, a night in the woods was not at all unpleasant.

"*April 4th.*—A beautiful day broke upon us in our forest beds. We awoke early, and our friends the Dusuns soon came up. Away we went in a W.S.W. direction, the path as usual leading over ridges and hills varying from 1000 to 2000 feet, Tadjum and Labuk vales away in the distance. At 2.30 we descended into the Bendowen vale. The place was surrounded by hills, some rising as high as 4000 feet. We shortly after arrived at the banks of the Bendowen River, a rushing stream about forty yards broad; in the wet season more than 100. It comes down from the Bendowen hills, which are about three days' journey away, if one follows the river. To-day we have been travelling over a clayey country, the clays getting harder and harder, until here at Bendowen the transition into slate is complete. The cause of metamorphism is also at hand in the shape of vast masses of quartz. The slate at Bendowen is excellent,

and an extended search for minerals is advisable all up the river.

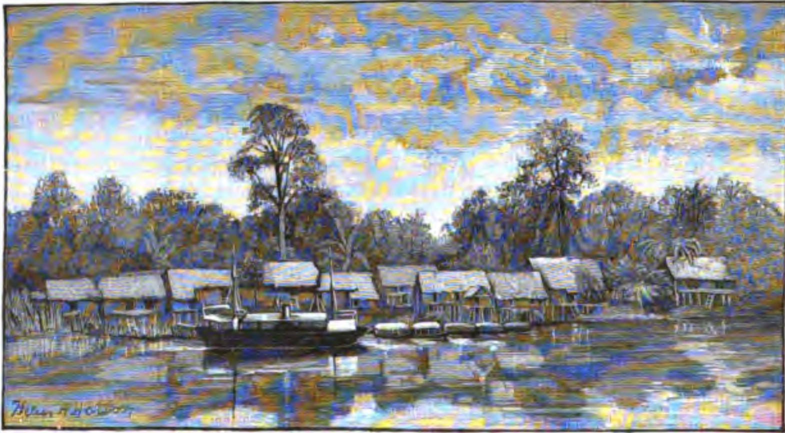
"At 12.25 sighted Habalu, bearing 335°, and soon after caught sight of the Labuk or Liogon, which we had not seen for so long. The country is all cleared here, and ancient paddy-fields with long cutting grass six feet high for miles and miles was our road. In the afternoon we arrived at Ghanaghana, on the right bank of the Labuk. We were wet through, tired and dirty, and on taking off my boots I found my socks literally drenched with blood from leeches. The leech is the true pest of the traveller in Borneo; but just now I feel the constant stirring of the people rather oppressive. Wherever I go and whatever I do, a crowd of some eight or ten follow to stare and wonder. At Ghanaghana the people received us rather churlishly, but Durrok of Niasanne left us with friendly adieus and the gift of a spear. At Ghanaghana the natives are all in the middle of their paddy harvests, and men, women, and children busily engaged in storing the rice cut during the day. At six o'clock they all begin drinking a kind of arrak. They prepare it by placing cooked rice and water with cocoanut milk in a bamboo, which they then seal up; fermentation commences, and in a week or so a spirit is produced, which smells very much of ethylic acetate. At seven o'clock the whole household was drunk; men, women, and children rolling on the floor, laughing and shouting. I have one man who has broken down; he can scarcely drag himself along; so we are very short-handed—only seven in all.

"Got but little sleep for the noise and shouting, which was going on all night. Ghanaghana boasts seventy men; women, fifty-five; houses, twelve; headman, Pindar. We had some difficulty in procuring men to carry the things, and all wanted a fathom of cloth each and their wages beforehand. There were strings of human heads in all the houses in Ghanaghana. I was not sorry to cross the Labuk and leave the place. Crossed the stream Kinarang, flowing west, and descended from the tableland Batokan. This tableland is elevated about 400 feet above the Danao plain. Leaving it, we struck the Labuk River again. The stream is now about forty yards wide and some two feet deep. In the wet season it always overflows and floods the whole surrounding district. We followed the Labuk for some distance, crossing and recrossing several times. The boulders of phosphyrite granite in the river are large, and are washed, I expect, from Nabalu, which, from our present position bears 335°. At length we left the Labuk to the south of us, and followed a tributary, the Todongon, for some distance, leaving it eventually behind us, and going up to Tuntoul. The Ghanaghana men here refused to carry our things any further, and as five men out of the nine had already got their wages (a fathom of red cloth for a whole day), and it was now only 11.50 o'clock, I told them that if they persisted in deserting me the other four would get nothing. Finally I had them sent away and would hear no more from them. They talked a good deal and loudly, but did nothing, and presently disappeared. The Ghanaghana men have a general bad character. I noticed that scarcely one of them was untatooed. Their enemies are the Loba Muruts, and the Menkabong Dusuns and Badjows."

The river adventures which the young explorer met with were many and exciting. Here is the story of one of them, which we get from a private letter, though the diaries are full of battles with torrents and cataracts as little known as were the falls on the rivers which Stanley navigated in the early days of the African exploration:—

"We arrived at my men's camp from our short trip at 10.30. The place was well posted below a bend in the river, at the foot of a hill 4,000 feet high. Potatoes, kaladi, melons, cucumbers were now plentiful, and my famished men got a feed of something more than rice, for which they were very thankful. The country here is very mountainous, and as the river is restricted by high banks, the current is tremendous; and all the Dyaks, Sulus, &c., said I was very brave to go up at all. It was about 11.30 when we started on again, my prahu leading; a little prahu with Datu Mahmad followed; then came Smith and the police, and lastly the mandore and coolies in a large prahu full of things. We had just passed a difficult bit of river when I heard a cry, and looking round I saw several heads bobbing up and down in the rushing river, and a prahu, bottom upwards, floating down the stream, and dashing among the boulders in the distance. I jumped from my prahu and rushed to the spot, but before I arrived the gobang had gone out of sight, and most of the men had got ashore, some with great difficulty and many narrow escapes. The missing goods were many, the severest losses being two bags of rice, three guns, six axes, some panangs, blankets, and all the men's little things. The Dumpas and Sulumen, whom I was protecting against the Dyaks, dived all day, getting things out, and we recovered

a little. The Dyaks gave us no assistance; in fact they were waiting down the river to get stray goods. The Dyaks here are true head hunters, and only a few days ago a head was taken at a bridge over a torrent. The man was walking over the felled tree, which in this country always constitutes a bridge, when four men rushed on him, pushed him down the steep bank, and, jumping down after him, took his head off in a twinkling. I saw the victim's head and hand in a house not far from the scene of the murder. The headman said himself that three weeks ago seven heads had been taken from slaughtered men of Tingara, with which country he, Sogolitan, was fighting. The bodies of these men were thrown into the wood near us, and all the men said that at night, when the wind blew from a certain quarter, there was a fearful smell of dead animal matter. The Dyaks here all eat monkeys, the skins of which they tie round their waists, letting the tails hang down behind. This, no doubt, is the origin of the reported existence of 'men with tails.'"



THE QUAY, SANDAKAN BAY.
Drawn by HELEN H. HATTON, *from a Photograph by* MR. ROBSON.

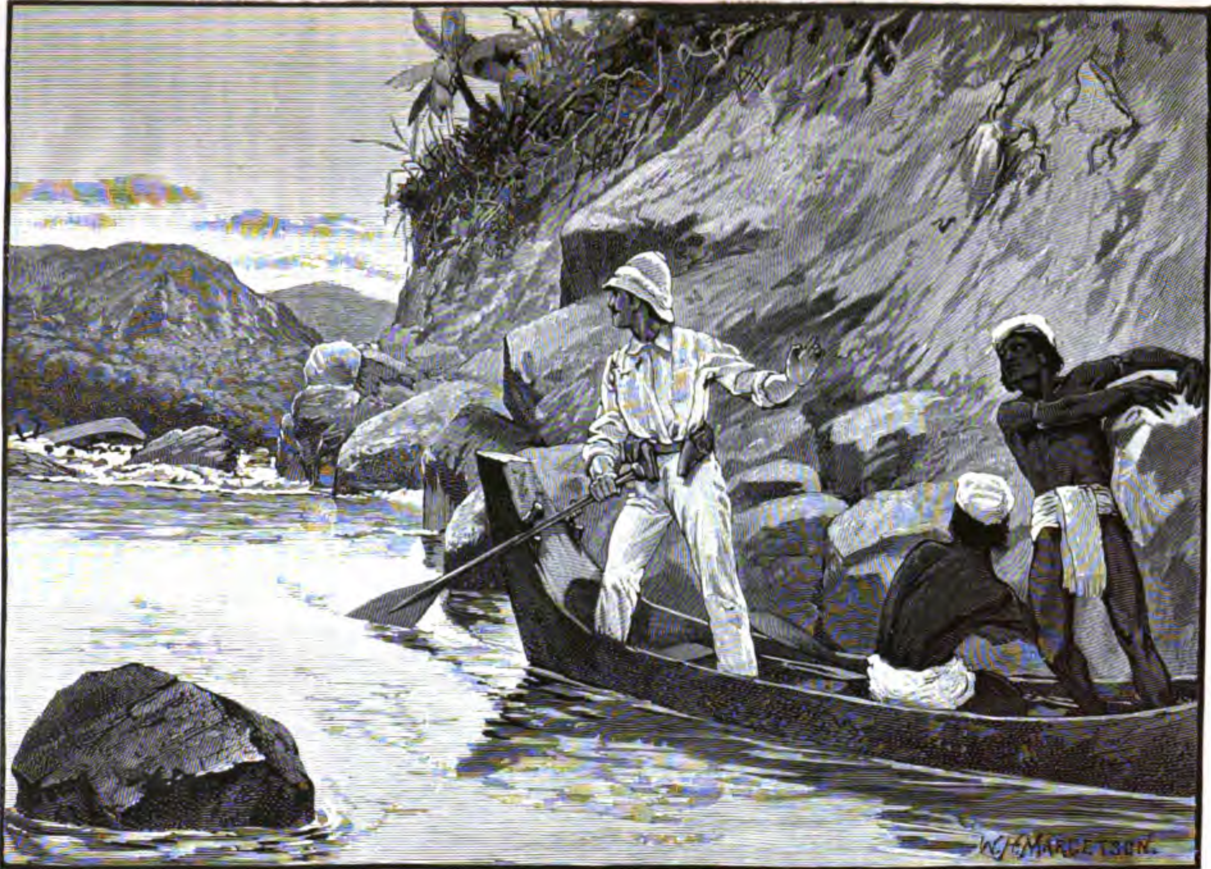
III.

Mr. Herbert Ward, a young cadet in the service of the British North Borneo company, was the last officer who saw Frank Hatton during the expedition which ended with his death. He has related to me the circumstances of their meeting and parting, and his narrative will be printed as a "Postscript" to the volume on *North Borneo*, which is shortly to be published, dealing with Frank Hatton's life and work.

"Six months elapsed, and I was at Penungah—a little native settlement, hitherto, I believe, unvisited—about 700 miles up the Kinabatangan River. I was lying in my hammock about sundown, on the 29th of January, 1883, feeling sick, miserable, and lonely, and wondering how long it would be before I should again hear my own language spoken. All around was very calm and quiet; the sky was clear, and hardly a sound was to be heard. In front of my rude hut the sun was setting in all its glory behind the thickly wooded hills that intervened between Penungah and Kimanis. To the eastward the sharp outline of the mountain of Impak stood in bold relief. My men, some fifteen Brunei Malays (dubbed Matamatas by the Bornean officials in their youthful pride), were lying idly upon the verandah of their rough barracks. Suddenly I heard some voices coming nearer, and, looking up, I saw two Tumbunwahs approaching from the river. They came straight towards me, sat down, and looked as if they had something to say.

"I called Hassan, my corporal, to interpret for me into Malay; and, owing to my limited knowledge of that language, I had some difficulty in understanding their mission. I at last gathered that two days down the river was an *orang-putih*, or white man, with two canoes, plenty of men, and a large flag.

"This was news indeed. I grew excited, and wondered who could possibly be the



ON THE KINARAM RIVER.

From a Drawing by W. H. MARGETSON.

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visitor. My informants, however, were totally unacquainted with detail. I had to content myself with looking longingly in the distance, and wishing heartily for the time when this unknown should arrive.

"I interrogated Hassan as to the white man's name, but could get no further information than that the stranger had thirty men and two gobangs, and that he spoke Malay very fluently. The white man was evidently a person of distinction, and I wondered what could possibly bring him away thus far into the unknown interior. I had never in my dreams even expected a visitor, and had almost come to the conclusion that I had seen a white man for the last time, so ill was I, and so far from all ideas of civilisation.

"No sleep, no food could I take for the next two days. I was in feverish excitement, and towards the close of the second day I stationed myself upon the highest point, with my men around me, with their guns ready to fire a salute of welcome. By and by, in the dim distance, I could hear shouts, and see three or four small canoes approaching rapidly against the stream. My excitement was intense, and at last I was rewarded by seeing a large prahu slowly turn the bend of the river, manned by some twenty *orang-dyang*, or paddlers, who occupied the forepart of the canoe. Amidships a roof of leaves, and astern stood the form of my unknown visitor, bareheaded, and in white. I gave the word, 'Fire!' and never was there such a row in Penungah before. 'Bang! bang!' at irregular intervals was kept up during the quarter of an hour it took for the prahu to arrive alongside the landing-place. There, stepping lightly ashore, was Frank Hatton once more; and again we grasped hands, this time with an indescribable feeling of thankfulness. He looked well and strong, and was in high spirits.

* * * *

"I noticed when it was quite dark that two or three of Frank's men kept dropping a kind of powder into the fire, and asking him what it meant and what the powder was, he said his natives were very superstitious, and were afraid of ghosts. The powder which they threw into the fire was, he said, composed of bits of worsted, the bark of the upas-tree, and an occasional glass bead. This they believed pleased the deity, who in return for this attention kept watch over them through the night, to protect them from the attack of the spirits of their departed relatives. This led to Frank telling me many interesting things about the superstitious fears of the natives. The fitful firelight and the intense outer darkness made the stories all the more impressive. My visitor and fellow-countryman also taught me many Malay words, and gave me many valuable hints in regard to the language, all of which I thoroughly remember to this day.

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"At last, Frank's arrangements being quite completed, the date was fixed for his departure, to investigate the Seguama River on the 14th of February. He collected a few things together, which he said he would not require upon that journey, and asked me to take care of them and send them down to Sandakan at the first opportunity. Then came the time for our parting, and we walked together sadly down the hill to the boats, and stood for some minutes grasping hands and wishing each other good-bye. His last words to me were 'Good-bye, old chap, till we meet again in London. We'll have jolly times then.' His boat pushed off, and he glided slowly with the stream.

"As I stood there, watching him disappear round the bend in the distance, a feeling of sadness and a strange foreboding came over me, such a feeling that I had never had before, and I wondered how long it would be before I once again would see him. I was very sad as I walked up the hill to the hut. I rested many times, and felt a choking sensation in my throat. I, however, lay down in my hammock and spent the remainder of that night gazing listlessly at the sky, feeling down-hearted and thoroughly miserable; till, all at once, I heard the splash of a canoe, and, jumping up, found that Bongsu had just arrived with his two sons. They approached me in an agitated manner, and told me in Malay that they had dived in the river where Frank's canoe was upset, and they showed me a prismatic compass and a flat compass, and an aneroid which they had recovered from the bottom of the river. I immediately whistled up my men, and gave orders to Hassan, my corporal, to immediately start off and try and overtake Frank and give him these things, which I knew were a serious loss to him. Half an hour afterwards all was quiet again, and Hassan was well on his way down the river.

"On the third day Hassan returned, and brought me a note, upon which was written, '4 A.M. Dear Ward—Thanks for the things, but I fear they are sadly damaged.' I took this note, folded it carefully, and stowed it away. Everything was miserable for the next week. I was sad, ill, and down-hearted. I wanted

to return to Sandakan, but feared to leave the place on account of rumours of a band of desperadoes from a neighbouring tribe coming up and docking off our heads.

"Whilst in this uncertain state of mind a man arrived at Penungah, whom I recognised, and who proved afterwards to have been one of Frank Hatton's followers. He was in a terrible state of excitement, and spoke so quickly I was unable to understand a single word he said. At last, by the aid of Hassan, I was told that poor Frank was dead, and was made acquainted with the sad details of his sad accident. I then made up my mind, at all hazards, to try and return as soon as possible, and about a month afterwards I was on my way down the river to Sandakan, prostrated with the jungle fever. I then found that the tale was only too true."

ON HIS LAST EXPEDITION.—"GOOD-BYE."
Drawn by W. H. MARGETSON, *from a Sketch by* H. WARD.

* * * *

"You said that Frank was reticent as to his mission on the Segama?"

"Yes, but hopeful, evidently."

"Did he speak of a possible gold find?"

"No, he did not talk much of the business of his expedition; he examined the banks of the river and the bed whenever he could, and regretted that it was the rainy season. He spoke once of the great mineral promise of the Kina Balu country. He talked more of London than of Borneo, though he spoke of an intended visit to Java and Siam. I heard from others more of his expedition than from himself, but he said that a little opium pipe that he bought from the Tungara men nearly cost him his life. He was remarkably cool-headed, I thought, and brave, and his men loved him. Passing one of the rapids, I saw his boat slew round towards a jutting rock. I saw him bend down and speak to one of his men, the strongest and biggest of them. The man leaped from the boat, clung to the rock, and received the shock of the collision with his feet, and saved the boat. He had been upset himself more than once or twice on his river expeditions. You see, nobody knew what there was to encounter in the way of currents, cataracts, floating timber, snags."

Only portions of two of Frank Hatton's diaries have as yet reached England, and the Governor and officers of Sabah give no hopes of the discovery of the remainder. Fortunately, however, extracts from the lost diaries, and reports founded upon them, were from time to time sent to the Governor by the young explorer, the interest and importance of which are suggested in the foregoing notes and illustrations.

JOSEPH HATTON.

AUNT RACHEL.

A RUSTIC SENTIMENTAL COMEDY.

CHAPTER I.

A QUARTETTE party—three violins and a 'cello—sat in summer evening weather in a garden. This garden was full of bloom and odour, and was shut in by high walls of ripe old brick. Here and there were large-sized plaster casts—Venus, Minerva, Mercury, a goat-hoofed Pan with his pipes, a Silence with a finger at her lips. They were all sylvan green and crumbled with exposure to the weather, so that, in spite of cheapness, they gave the place a certain old world and stately aspect to an observer who was disposed to think so and did not care to look at them too curiously. A square deal table with bare top and painted legs was set on the grass plot beneath a gnarled apple-tree whose branches were thick with green fruit, and the quartette party sat about this table, each player with his music spread out before him on a portable little folding stand.

Three of the players were old, stout, grey, and spectacled. The fourth was young and handsome, with dreamy grey-blue eyes, and a mass of chestnut-coloured hair. There was an audience of two—an old man and a girl. The old man stood at the back of the chair of the youngest player, turning his music for him, and beating time with one foot upon the grass. The girl, with twined fingers, leaned both palms on the trunk of the apple-tree, and reposed a clear-coloured cheek on her rounded arm, looking downward with a listening air. The youngest player never glanced at the sheets which the old man so assiduously turned for him, but looked straight forward at the girl, his eyes brightening or dreaming at the music. The three seniors ploughed away business-like, with intent frownings, and the man who played the 'cello counted beneath his breath, "One two three four—one two three four," inhaling his breath on one set of figures, and blowing on the next.

The movement closed, and the three seniors looked at each other like men who were satisfied with themselves and their companions.

"Lads," said the man with the 'cello, in a fat and comfortable voice, "that was proper! He's a pretty writer, this here Bee-thoven. Rewben, the hallygro's a twister, I can tell thee. Thee hadst better grease thy elbow afore we start on it. Ruth, fetch a jug o' beer, theer's a good wench. I'm as dry as Bill Duke. Thee canst do a drop, 'Saiah, *I* know."

"Why, yes," returned the second fiddle. "Theer's a warmish bit afore us, and it's well to have summat to work on."

The girl moved away slowly, her fingers still knitted, and her palms turned to the ground. An inward-looking smile, called up by the music, lingered in her eyes, which were of a warm soft brown.

"Rewben," said the second fiddle, "thee hast thy uncle's method all over. I could shut my eyes an' think as I was five-and-twenty 'ear younger, and as he was a playin'. Dost note the tone, Sennacherib?"

"Note it?" said the third senior. "It's theer to be noted. Our 'Saiah's got it drove into him somehow, as he's the one in Heydon Hay as God A'mighty's gi'en a pair of ears to."

"An' our Sennacherib," retorted Isaiah, "is the one as carries Natur's license t' offer the rough side of his tongue to everybody."

"I know it's a compliment," said the younger man, "to say I have my uncle's hand, though I never heard my uncle play."

"No, lad," said the old man who stood

behind his chair. "Thee'rt a finer player than ever I was. If I'd played as well as thee I might have held on at it, though even then it ud ha' gone a bit agen the grain."

"Agen the grain?" asked the 'cello player, in his cheery voice. "With a tone like that? Why, I mek bold to tell you, Mr. Gold, as theer is not a hammerchewer on the fiddle, not for thirty or maybe forty mile around, as has a tone to name in the same day with Rewben."

"There's a deal in what you say, Mr. Fuller," said the old man, who had a bearing of sad and gentle dignity, and gave, in a curious and not easily explainable way, the idea that he spoke but seldom and was something of a recluse. "There's a deal in what you say, Mr. Fuller, but the fiddle is not a thing as can be played like any ordinary instryment. A fiddle's like a wife, in a way of speaking. You must offer her all you've got. If she catches you going about after other women—"

"It's woe betide you!" Sennacherib interrupted.

"You drive her heart away," the old man pursued. "The fiddle's jealouser than a woman. It wants the whole of a man. If Reuben was to settle down to it twelve hours a day, I make no doubt he'd be a player in a few years' time."

"Twelve hour a day!" cried Sennacherib. "D'ye think as life was gi'en to us to pass it all away a scrapin' catgut?"

"Why, no, Mr. Eld," the old man answered, smilingly. "But to my mind there's only two or three men in the world at any particular space o' given time as has the power gi'en 'em by Nature to be fiddlers; that is to say, as has all the qualities to be masters of the instryment. It is so ordered as the best of qualities must be practised to be perfect, and howsoever a man may be qualified to begin with, he must work hour by hour and day by day for years afore he plays the fiddle."

"I look upon any such doctrine as a sinful crime," said Sennacherib. "The fiddle is a recrehation, and was gi'en us for that end. So, in a way, for them as likes it, is skittles. So is marvils, or kite-flyin', or kiss-i'-the-ring. But to talk of a man sittin' on his hinder end, and draggin' rosined hoss-hair across catgut hour by hour and day by day, for 'ears, is a doctrine as I should like to hear Parson Hales's opinion on, if ever it was to get broached afore him."

"Ruth," called the 'cello player, as the girl reappeared, bearing a tray with a huge jug and glasses, "come along with the beer. And when we've had a drink, lads, we'll have a cut at the hallygro. It's marked 'vivaysy,' Reuben, an' it'll tek thee all thy time to get the twirls and twiddles i' the right placen."

Ruth poured out a glass of beer for each of the players, and, having set the tray and jug upon the grass, took up her former place and position by the apple-tree.

"Wheer's your rosin, 'Saiah?" asked Sennacherib.

"I forgot to bring it wi' me," said Isaiah. "I took it out of the case last night, and was that neglectful as I forgot to put it back again."

"My blessid!" cried Sennacherib, "I niver see such a man!"

"Well, well!" said the 'cello player, "here's a bit. You seem to ha' forgot your own."

"What's that got to do wi' it?" Sennacherib demanded. "I shall live to learn as two blacks mek a white by an' by, I reckon. There niver was a party o' four but there was three wooden heads among 'em."

The girl glanced over her arm, and looked with dancing eyes at the youngest of the party. He, feeling Sennacherib's eye upon him, contrived to keep a grave face. The host gave the word, and the four set to work, Reuben playing with genuine fire, and his companions sawing away with a dogged precision which made them agreeable enough to listen to, but droll to look at. Ruth, with her chin upon her dimpled arm, watched Reuben as he played. He had tossed back his chestnut mane of hair rather proudly as he tucked his violin beneath his chin, and had looked round on his three seniors with the air of a master as he held his bow poised in readiness to descend upon the strings. His short upper lip and full lower lip came together firmly, his brows straightened, and his nostrils contracted a little. Ruth admired him demurely, and he gave her ample opportunity, for this time he kept his eyes upon the text. She watched him to the last stroke of the bow, and then, shifting her glance, met the grave fixed look of the old man who stood behind his chair. At this, conscious of the fashion in which her last five minutes had been passed, she blushed, and to carry this off with as good a grace as might be, she began to applaud with both hands.

"Bravo, father! Bravo! Capital, Mr. Eld! Capital!"

"Theer," said Sennacherib, ignoring the compliment, and scowling in a sort of dogged triumph at the placid old man behind

Reuben's chair, "d'ye think as *that* could be beat if we spent forty 'ear at it? Theer wa'n't a fause note from start to finish, and time was kep' like a clock."

"It's a warmish bit o' work, that hallygro," said old Fuller, in milder self-gratulation, as he disposed his 'cello between his knees, and mopped his bald forehead. "A warmish bit o' work it is."

"Come now," said Sennacherib; "d'ye think as it could be beat? A civil answer to a civil question is no more than a beggar's rights, and no less than a king's obligingness."

"It was wonderful well played, Mr. Eld," the old man answered.

"Beat!" said Isaiah. "Why it stands to Natur' as it could be beat. D'ye think Paganyni couldn't play a better second fiddle than I can?"

"Ought to play second fiddle pretty well thyself," returned Sennacherib. "Hast been at it all thy life. Ever since thee wast married, annyway."

"Come, come, come," said the fat 'cello player. "Harmony, lads, harmony! How was it, Mr. Gold, as you come to give up the music? Theer's them as is entitled to speak, and has lived i' the parish longer than I have, as holds you up to have been a real noble player."

"There's them," the old man answered, "as would think the parish church the finest buildin' i' the kingdom. But they wouldn't be them as had seen the glories of Lichfield cathedral."

"I'm speakin' after them as thinks they have a right to talk," said the other.

"I might at my best day have come pretty nigh to Reuben," the old man allowed, "though I never was his equal. But as for a real noble player——"

"Well, well," said Fuller, "it ain't a hammerchewer in a county as plays like Reuben. Give Mr. Gold a chair, Ruth. I should like to hear what might ha' made a man throw it over as had iver got as far."

"I heard Paganini," the old man answered. "I was up in London, rather better than six-and-twenty year ago, and I heard Paganini."

"Well?" asked Fuller.

"That's all the story," said the old man, seating himself in the chair the girl had brought him. "I never cared to touch a bow again."

"I don't seem to follow you, Mr. Gold."

"I have never been a wine-drinker," said Gold, "but I may speak of wine to make clear my meanin'. If you had been drinkin' a wonderful fine glass of port or sherry wine, you wouldn't try to take the taste out of your mouth with varjuice."

"I've tasted both," said the 'cello player, "but they niver sp'iled my mouth for a glass of honest beer."

"I can listen to middlin' class music now," said Gold, "and find a pleasure in it. But for a time I could not bring myself to take any sort of joy in music. You think it foolish? Well, perhaps it was. I am not careful to defend it, gentlemen, and it may happen that I might not if I tried. But that was how I came to give up the fiddle. He was a wonder of the world was Paganini. He was no more like a common man than his fiddlin' was like common fiddlin'. There was things he played that made the blood run cold all down the back and laid a sort of terror on you."

"I felt like that at the 'Hallelujah' first time I heerd it," said Isaiah. "Band an' chorus of a hundred. It was when they opened the big Wesley Chapel at Barfield twenty 'ear ago."

"We'll tek a turn at Haydn now, lads," said the host, genially.

"I'm sorry to break the party up so soon," Reuben answered, "but I must go. There are people come to tea at father's, and I was blamed for coming away at all. I promised to get back early and give them a tune or two." He arose, and taking his violin-case from the grass wiped it carefully all over with his pocket-handkerchief. "I was bade to ask you, sir, if Miss Ruth might come and pass an hour or two. My mother would be particularly pleased to see her, I was to say."

The young fellow was blushing fierily as he spoke, but no one noticed this except the girl.

"Go up, my gell, and spend an hour or two," said her father. "Reuben 'll squire thee home again."

"Wait while I put on my bonnet," she said, as she ran past Reuben into the house. Reuben blushed a little deeper yet, and knelt over his violin-case on the grass, where he swaddled the instrument as if it had been a baby, and bestowed it in its place with unusual care and solicitude.

"Reuben," said his uncle, as the young man arose, "that's a thing as never should be done." The young man looked inquiry. "The poor thing's screwed up to pitch," the old man explained, almost sternly. "Ease her down, lad, ease her down. The strain upon a fiddle is a thing too little thought upon. You get a couple o' strong men one o' these days, and make 'em pull at a set of strings, and see if they'll get them up to

concert pitch! I doubt if they'd do it, lad, or anything like. And there's all that strain on a frail shell like that. I've ached to think of it, many a time. A man who carries a weight about all day puts it off to go to bed."

"Wondrous delicate an' powerful thing," said old Fuller. "Reminds you o' some o' them delicate-lookin' women as'll goo through wi' a lot more in the way o' pain-bearin' than iver a man wool."

"Rubbidge!" said Sennacherib. "You'd think the women bear a lot. They mek a outcry, to be sure, but theer's a lot more chatter than work about a woman's sufferin', just as theer is about everythin' else her does. Dost remember what the vicar said last Sunday was a wick? It 'ud be a crime, he said, to think as the Lord made the things as is lower in the scale o' natur' than we be to feel like us. The lower the scale the less the feelin'. Stands to rayson, that does. I mek no manner of a doubt as he's got Scripter for it."

"Lower in the scale of natur', Mr. Eld?" said Gold, turning his ascetic face and mournful eyes upon Sennacherib.

"Theer's two things," returned Sennacherib, "as a man o' sense has no particular liking to. He'll niver ask to have his cabbage twice b'iled, nor plain words twice spoke. I said, 'Lower in the scale o' natur'.' Mek the most on it."

Sennacherib was short but burly, and between him and Gold there was very much the sort of contrast which exists between a mastiff and a deerhound.

"I will not make the most of it, Mr. Eld," the old man said, with a transient smile. "I might think poorlier of you than I've a right to, if I did. When a rose is held lower in the scale of natur' than a turnip, or the mastership in music is gi'en in again the fiddle in favour o' the hurdy-gurdy, I'll begin to think as you and me is better specimens of natur's handiwork than this here gracious bit o' sweetness as is coming toward us at this minute. Good evenin', Mr. Eld. Good evenin', Isaiah. Good evenin', Mr. Fuller. Good evenin', Reuben. No, I'm not goin' thy way, lad. Call o' me to-morrow; I've a thing to speak of. Good evenin', Miss Ruth."

When he had spoken his last good-bye he folded his gaunt hands behind him and walked away slowly, his shoulders rounded with an habitual stoop and his eyes upon the ground. Ruth and Reuben followed, and the three seniors re-seated themselves, and each with one consent reached out his hand to his tumbler.

"Theer's a kind of a mildness o' natur' in Ezra Gold," said Isaiah, passing the back of his hand across his lips, "as gives me a curious sort o' likin' for him."

"Theer's a kind of a mildness o' natur' in a crab-apple," said Sennacherib, "as sets my teeth on edge."

"Come, come, lads, harmony!" said Fuller. He laid hold of his great waistcoat with the palms of both hands and agitated it gently. "It beats me," he said, "to think of his layin' by the music in that way, and for sich a cause."

"Well," said Sennacherib, "*I'll* tell thee why he laid by the music. I wonder at Gold settlin' up to git over men like we with a stoory so onlikely."

"What was it, then?" asked Isaiah, bestowing a wink on Fuller.

'It was a wench as did it," said Sennacherib. "He was allays a man as took his time to think about a thing. If he'd been a farmer he'd ha' turned the odds about and about wi' regards to gettin' his seed into the ground till somebody 'ud ha' told him it 'ud be Christmas Day next Monday. He behaved i' that way wi' regards to matrimony. He put off thinkin' on it till he was nigh on forty—six-an'-thirty he was at the lowest. Even when he seemed to ha' made up what mind he'd got he'd goo and fiddle to the wench instead o' courtin' her like a Christian, or sometimes the wench 'ud mek a visit to his mother, and then he'd fiddle to her at hum. He made eyes at her for all the parish to see, and the young woman waited most tynacious. But when her had been fiddled at for three or four 'ear, her begun to see as her was under no sort o' peril o' losin' her maiden name with Ezra. So her walked theer an' then—made up her mind, an' walked at once—went into some foreign part of the country to see if her couldn't find somebody theer as'd fancy a nice-lookin' wench, and tek less time to find out what he'd took a likin' for."

"Was that it?" asked Isaiah, with the manner of a man who finds an explanation for an old puzzle. "That 'ud be Rachel Blythe."

"A quick eye our 'Saiah's got," said Sennacherib. "He can see a hole through a ladder when somebody's polished his glasses. Rachel Blythe was the wench's name. Her was a little slip of a creatur', no higher than a well-grown gell o' twelve, but pretty in a sort o' way."

"Why, Jabez, lad," cried Isaiah, "thee lookest like a stuck pig. What's the matter?"

The host's eyes were rounded with astonish-

ment, and he was staring from one of his guests to the other with an air of fatuous wonder.

"Why," said he, with an emphasis of astonishment which seemed not altogether in keeping with so simple a discovery; "this here Rachel Blythe was my first wife's second cousin. Our Fanny Jane used to be talkin' about her constant. Her had offers by the baker's dozen, so it seemed, but her could never be brought to marry. Fanny Jane was a woman as was gi'en a good deal up to sentiment, and her was used to say the gell's heart was fixed on somebody at Heydon Hay. It 'ud seem to come in wi' the probability of things as they might have had a sort of a shortness betwixt 'em, and parted."

"Theer was nobody after her here but Ezra Gold," said Sennacherib. "Nobody. I niver heard, howsever, as they got to be hintimate enough to quarrel. But as for Paganyni, that's rubbidge. The man played regular till Rachel Blythe left the parish, and then he stopped."

"Well, well," said the host, contemplatively. "It's too late in life for both on 'em. Her's back again. Made us a visit yesterday. Her's took that little cottage o' Mother Duke's on the Barfield Road."

"Bless my soul," said Isaiah. "I seen her yesterday as I was takin' my walks abroad. But Jabez, lad, her's as withered as a chip! The littlest, wizenedest, tiniest, little old woman as ever I set eyes on. Dear me! Dear me! To think as six-an'-twenty 'ear should mek such a difference. Her gi'en me a nod and a smile as I went by, but I niver guessed as it was Rachel Blythe."

"Rachel Blythe it was though," returned old Fuller. "Well, well! To think as her and Mr. Gold should ha' kep' single one for another. Here's a bit of a treeho, lads, as I bought in Brummagem the day afore yesterday. It's by that new chap as wrote *Elijah* for the festival. Let's see. What's his name again? Mendelssohn. Shall us have a try at it?"

CHAPTER II.

THE Earl of Barfield stood at the lodge-gate on a summer afternoon attired in a wondrously old-fashioned suit of white kerseymere and a peaked cap. He was a withered old gentleman, with red-rimmed eyes, broad cheek-bones and a projecting chin. He had a very sharp nose, and his close-cropped hair was of a harsh sandy tone and texture. He was altogether a rather ferret-like old man, but he had, nevertheless, a certain air of dignity and breeding which forbade the least observant to take him for anything but a gentleman. His clothes, otherwise spotless, were disfigured by a trail of snuff which ran lightly along all projecting wrinkles from his right knee to his right shoulder. This trail was accentuated in the region of his right-hand waistcoat-pocket, where his lordship kept his snuff loose for convenience' sake. He was over eighty, and his head nodded and shook involuntarily with the palsy of old age, but his figure was still fairly upright, and seemed to promise an activity unusual for his years. He rested one hand on the rung of a ladder which leaned against the wall beside him, and glanced up and down the road with an air of impatience. On the ground at his feet lay a billhook and a hand-saw, and once or twice he stirred these with his foot, or made a movement with his disengaged right hand as if he was using one of them.

When he had stood there some ten minutes in growing impatience, a young gentleman came sauntering down the drive smoking a cigar. Times change, and nowadays a young man attired after his fashion would be laughable, but for his day he looked all over like a lady-killer, from his tasselled French cap to his pointed patent leathers. Behind him walked a valet, carrying a brass-bound mahogany box, a clumsy easel, and a camp-stool.

"Going painting again, Ferdinand?" said his lordship, in a tone of some little scorn and irritation.

"Yes," said Ferdinand rather idly; "I am going painting. Your man hasn't arrived yet?" He cast a glance of lazy amusement at the ladder and the tools that lay at its feet.

"No," returned his lordship, irritably. "Worthless scoundrel. Ah! here he comes. Go away. Go away. Go and paint. Go and paint."

The young gentleman lifted his cap and sauntered on, turning once or twice to look at his lordship and a queer lopsided figure shambling rapidly towards him.

"Joseph Beaker," said the Earl of Barfield, shaking his hand at the lopsided man, "you are late again. I have been waiting ten minutes."

"What did I say yesterday?" asked Joseph Beaker. His face was lopsided, like his figure, and his speech came in a hollow mumble which was difficult to follow. Joseph

was content to pass as the harmless lunatic of the parish, but there was a shrewdly humorous twinkle in his eye which damaged his pretensions with the more discerning sort of people.

"I do not want to know what you said yesterday," his lordship answered, tartly. "Take up the billhook and the saw. Now bring the ladder."

"What I said yesterday," mumbled Joseph, shambling by the nobleman's side, a little in the rear.

"Joseph Beaker," said the earl, "hold your tongue."

"Niver could do it," replied Joseph; "it slips from betwixt the thumb and finger like a eel. What I said yesterday was, 'Why doesn't thee set thy watch by the parish church?' Thee'st got Barfield time, I reckon, and Barfield's allays a wick and ten minutes afore other placen."

The aged nobleman twinkled and took snuff.

"Joseph," said his lordship, "I am going to make a new arrangement with you."

"Time you did," returned Joseph, pausing, ostensibly to shift the ladder from one shoulder to the other, but really to feign indifference.

"I find ninepence a day too much."

"I've allays said so," Joseph answered, shambling a little nearer. "A sinful sight too much. And half on it wasted o' them white garmints."

"I find myself a little in want of exercise," said his lordship. "I shall carry the ladder from the first tree to the second, and you will carry it from the second to the third; then I shall carry it again, and then *you* will carry it again. We shall go on in that way the whole afternoon, and shall continue in that way so long as I stay here."

Joseph laughed. It was in his laugh that he chiefly betrayed the shortcomings of character. His smile was dry and full of cunning, but his laugh was fatuous.

"Naturally," pursued the earl, "I shall not pay you full wages for a half day's work." Joseph's face fell into a look of ludicrous consternation. "I shall be generous, however—I shall be generous. I shall give you sixpence. Sixpence a day, Joseph, and I shall do half the work myself."

"It ar'nt to be done, gaffer," said Joseph, resolutely stopping short, and setting up the ladder in the roadway.

The old nobleman turned to face him with pretended anger.

"You are impertinent, Joseph."

"It caw't be done, my lord," his assistant mumbled, thrusting his head through a space in the ladder.

"Times are hard, Joseph," returned his lordship.

There had been a discernible touch of banter in his voice and manner when he had rebuked Joseph a second or two before, but he was very serious now indeed.

"Times are hard; expenses must be cut down. I can't afford more. Sixpence a day is three shillings a week, and three shillings a week is one hundred and fifty-six shillings a year—seven pounds sixteen. That is interest at three per cent. on a sum of two hundred and fifty-nine pounds ten shillings. That is a great amount to lie waste. While I pay you sixpence a day I am practically two hundred and fifty-nine pounds ten shillings poorer than I should be if I kept the sixpence a day to myself. I might just as well not have the money—it is of no use to me."

"Gi'e it to me, then," suggested Joseph, with a feeble gleam.

"Sixpence a day," said his lordship, "is really a great waste of money."

"It's cruel hard o' me," returned Joseph, betraying a sudden inclination to whimper. 'If I was a lord I'd be a lord, I would."

"Joseph! Joseph! Joseph!" cried his lordship, sharply.

"It's cruel hard," said Joseph, whimpering outright. "I'd be a man *or* a mouse if I was thee."

"I shall be generous," said the aged nobleman, relenting. "I shall give you a suit of clothes. I shall give you a pair of trousers and a waistcoat—a laced waistcoat—and a coat."

Joseph laughed again, but clouded a moment later.

"Theer's them as pets the back to humble the belly, and theer's them as pets the belly to humble the back," he said, rubbing his bristly chin on a rung of the ladder as he spoke. "What soort o' comfort is theer in a laced wescut, if a man's got nothing to stretch it out with?"

"Well, well, Joseph," returned the earl, "sixpence a day is a great deal of money. In these hard times I can't afford more."

"What I look at," said Joseph, "is, it robs me of my bit o' bacon. If I was t'ask annybody in Heydon Hay, 'Is Lord Barfield the man to rob a poor chap of his bit o' bacon?' they'd say, 'No.' That's what they'd say. 'No,' they'd say; 'niver dream of a suchlike thing as happenin', Joseph.'"

His lordship fidgeted and took snuff.

"What his lordship 'ud be a deal likelier to do," pursued Joseph, declaiming, in imita-

tion of his supposed interlocutor, with his head through the ladder and waving the billhook and the saw gently in either hand, "'ud be to say as a poor chap as wanted it might goo up to the Hall kitchen and have a bite—that's what annybody 'ud say in Heydon Hay as happened to be inquired of."

Joseph's glance dwelt lingeringly and wistfully on his lordship's face as he watched for the effect of his speech. The old earl took snuff with extreme deliberateness.

"Very well, Joseph," he said, after a pause, "we will arrange it in that way. Sixpence a day. And now and then—now and then, Joseph, you may go and ask Dewson for a little cold meat. There is a great deal of waste in the kitchen. It will make little difference—little difference."

Things being thus happily arranged, his lordship drew a slip of paper from his pocket and began to study it with much interest as he walked. He began to chuckle, and the fire of strategic triumph lit his aged eye. The day's itinerary was planned upon that slip of paper, and Lord Barfield had so arranged it that Joseph should carry the ladder all the long distances, whilst he himself should carry it all the short ones. Joseph on his side was equally satisfied with the arrangement so far as he knew it, and gave himself up to the sweet influences of fancy. He saw a glorified edition of himself, attired in my lord's cast-off garments, and engaged in the act of stretching out the laced waistcoat in the kitchen at the Hall. The prospect grew so glorious that he could not hold his own joy and gratulation. It welled over in a series of hollow chuckles, and his lordship twinkled dryly as he walked in front, and took snuff with a double gusto.

"We will begin," said his lordship, "at Mother Duke's. That laburnum has been an eyesore this many a day. We must be resolute, Joseph. I shall expect you to guard the ladder, and not to let it go, even if she should venture to strike you."

"Her took me very sharp over the knuckles with the rollin' pin last time, governor," said Joseph. "But her'll be no more trouble to thee now. Her's gone away."

"Gone away! Mother Duke gone away?"

"Yes," mumbled Joseph. "Her's gone away. There's a little old maid as lives theer now. Has been theer a wick to-day."

"That's a pity. That's a pity," said his lordship. "I should have liked another skirmish with Mother Duke. At least, Joseph," he added, with the air of a man who finds consolation in disappointment, "we'll trim the laburnum this time. At all events, we'll make a fight for it, Joseph. We'll make a fight for it." Here he took the billhook and the saw from his assistant, and strode on, swinging one of the tools in either hand.

"Theer'll be no need for a fight," returned Joseph. "Her's no higher than sixpenn'orth o' soap after a hard day's washing."

"That's wrong reckoning, Joseph," said the earl. "Wrong reckoning. The smaller they are the more terrible they may be."

"I niver fled afore a little un," said Joseph. "I could allays face a little un." He spoke with a retrospective tone. His lordship eyed him askance with a twinkle of rich enjoyment, and took snuff with infinite relish, as if he took Joseph's mental flavour with it and found it delightful. "Mother Duke could strike a sort of a fear into a man," pursued Joseph.

"What did you say was the new tenant's name, Joseph?" his lordship demanded presently.

"Dunno," said Joseph. "Her's a little un. Very straight up. Go's about on her heels like, to mek the most of herself."

A minute's further walk brought them to a bend in the lane, and passing this they paused before a cottage. The front of this cottage was overgrown with climbing roses, just then in full bloom, and a disorderly patch of overgrown blossom and shrub lay on either side the thread of gravel walk which led from the gate to the door. A little personage, attired in a tight-fitting bodice and a girlish-looking skirt was busily reducing the redundant growth to order with a pair of quick-snapping shears. It gave his lordship an odd kind of shock when this little personage arose and turned. The face was old. There was youth in the eyes and the delicate dark brown arch of the eyebrows, but the old-fashioned ringlet which hung at either cheek beneath the cottage bonnet she wore was almost white. The cheeks were sunken from what had once been a charming contour, the delicate aquiline nose was pinched ever so little, the lips were dry, and there were fine wrinkles everywhere. There was something almost eerie in the youthfulness of the eyes which shone in the midst of all her faded souvenirs of beauty. Had the eyes been old the face would have been beautiful still, but the contrast they presented to their setting was too striking for beauty. They gave the old face a curiously exalted look, an expression hardly indicative of complete sanity, though every feature was expressive in itself of keen good sense, quick apprehension, and strong self-reliance.

The figure in its tight-fitting bodice looked like that of a girl of seventeen, but the stature was no more than that of a well-grown girl of twelve. The movement with which she had arisen and the attitude she took were full of life and vivacity. His lordship was so taken aback by the extraordinary mixture of age and girlishness she presented that he stared for a second or two unlike a man of the world, and only recovered himself by an effort.

"Set up the ladder here, Joseph," he said, pointing with the billhook to indicate the place. Joseph set down the ladder on the pathway, and leaning it across the close-clipped privet hedge where numberless small staring eyes of white wood betrayed the recent presence of the shears, he propped it against the stout limb of a well-pruned apple-tree. His lordship, somewhat ostentatiously avoiding the eye of the inmate of the cottage, tucked his saw and his billhook under his left arm and mounted slowly, whilst Joseph made a great show of steadying the ladder. The little old woman opened the garden gate with a click and slipped into the roadway. His lordship hung his saw upon a rung of the ladder, and leaning a little over took a grasp of the bough of a sweeping laburnum which overhung the road.

"My lord," said a quick, thin voice, which in its blending of the characteristics of youth and age matched strangely with the speaker's aspect, "this tenement and its surrounding grounds are my freehold. I cannot permit your lordship to lay a mutilating hand upon them."

"God bless my soul!" said his lordship. "That's Rachel Blythe! That must be Rachel Blythe."

"Rachel Blythe at your lordship's service," said the little old lady. She dropped a curt little courtesy, at once as young and as old as everything about her, and stood looking up at him, with drooping hands crossed upon the garden shears.

"God bless my soul! Dear me," said his lordship. "Dear me. God bless my soul!" He came slowly down the ladder, and, surrendering his billhook to Joseph, advanced and proffered a tremulous white hand. Miss Blythe accepted it with a second curt little courtesy, shook it once up and down and dropped it. "Welcome back to Heydon Hay, Miss Blythe," said the old nobleman, with something of an air of gallantry. "You have long deprived us of your presence."

Perhaps Miss Blythe discerned a touch of badinage in his tone, and construed it as a mockery. She drew up her small figure in exaggerated dignity, and made much such a motion with her head and neck as a hen makes in walking.

"I have long been absent from Heydon Hay, my lord," she answered. "My good man," turning upon Joseph, "you may remove that ladder. His lordship can have no use for it here."

"Oh, come, come, Miss Blythe," said his lordship. "Manorial rights, manorial rights. This laburnum overhangs the road and prevents people of an average height from passing."

"If your lordship is aggrieved, I must ask your lordship to secure a remedy in a legal manner."

"But really now. Observe, Miss Blythe. I can't walk under these boughs without knocking my hat off." He illustrated this statement by walking under the boughs. His cap fell on the dusty road, and Joseph, having picked it up, returned it to him.

"Your lordship is above the average height," said Miss Blythe, "considerably."

"No, no," the earl protested. "Not at all, not at all."

"I beg your lordship's pardon," said the little old lady, with stately politeness. "Nobody," she added, "who was not profoundly disloyal would venture to describe the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty as undersized. I am but a barleycorn less in stature than her Most Excellent Majesty, and your lordship is yards taller than myself."

"My dear Miss Blythe—" his lordship began, with hands raised in protest against this statement.

"Your lordship will pardon me," Miss Blythe interposed swiftly, "if I say that at my age—forgive me if I say at your lordship's also—the language of conventional gallantry is unbecoming."

The little old lady said this with so starched and prim an air, and through this there peeped so obvious a satisfaction in rebuking him upon such a theme, that his lordship had to flourish his handkerchief from his pocket to hide his laughter.

I have passed the last quarter of a century of my life," pursued Miss Blythe, "in an intimate if humble capacity in the service of a family of the loftiest nobility. I am not unacquainted with the airs and graces of the higher powers, but between your lordship and myself, at our respective ages, I cannot permit them to be introduced."

His lordship had a fit of coughing which lasted him two or three minutes, and brought the tears to his eyes. Most people might

have thought that the cough bore a suspicious resemblance to laughter, but no such idea occurred to Miss Blythe.

"You are quite right, Miss Blythe," said the old nobleman, when he could trust himself to speak. He was twitching and twinkling with suppressed mirth, but he contained himself heroically. "I beg your pardon, and I promise that I will not again transgress in that manner. But really, that—that—fit of coughing has quite exhausted me for the moment. May I beg your permission to sit down?"

"Certainly, my lord," replied the little old lady, and in a bird-like fashion fluttered to the gate. It was not until she had reached the porch of the cottage that she became aware of the fact that the earl was following her. "Your lordship's pardon," she said then; "I will bring your lordship a chair into the garden. I am alone," she added, more prim and starched than ever, "and I have my reputation to consider."

Miss Blythe entered the cottage and returned with a chair, which she planted on the gravelled pathway. The old nobleman sat down and took snuff, twitching and twinkling in humorous enjoyment.

"How long is it since you left us?" he asked. "It looks as if it were only yesterday."

"I have been absent from Heydon Hay for more than a quarter of a century," the little old lady answered.

"Ah!" said he, and for a full minute sat staring before him, rather forlornly. He recovered himself with a slight shake and resumed the talk. "You maintain your reputation for cruelty, Miss Blythe?"

"For cruelty, my lord?" returned Miss Blythe, with a transparent pretence of not understanding him.

"Breaking hearts," said his lordship, "eh? I was elderly before you went away, you know, but I remember a disturbance—a disturbance." He rapped with the knuckles of his left hand on his white kerseymere waistcoat. Miss Blythe tightened her lips and regarded him with an uncompromising air.

"Differences of sex, alone, my lord," she said, with decision, "should preclude a continuance of this conversation."

"Should they?" asked the old nobleman. "Do you really think so? I forget. I am a monument of old age, and I forget, but I fancy I used to think otherwise. You were the beauty of the place, you know. Is that a forbidden topic also?"

Miss Blythe blushed ever so little, but her curiously youthful eyes smiled, and it was plain she was not greatly displeased. The Earl of Barfield went quiet again, and again stared straight before him with a somewhat forlorn expression. The little old lady reminded him of her mother, and the remembrance of her mother reminded him of his own youth. He woke up suddenly. "So you've come back?" he said, abruptly. "You've bought the cottage?"

"The freehold of the cottage was purchased for me by my dear mistress," said the little old lady. "I desired to end my days where I began them."

"H'm!" said my lord. "We're going to be neighbours? We *are* neighbours. We must dwell together in unity. Miss Blythe—we must dwell together in unity. I have my hands pretty full this afternoon, and I must go. I'll just trim these laburnums, and alter—"

"I beg your lordship's pardon," said Miss Blythe, with decision, "your lordship will do nothing of the sort."

"Eh? Oh, nonsense, nonsense! Must clear the footway. Must have the footway clear. Really must. Besides—it improves the aspect of the garden. Always does. Decidedly improves it. Joseph Beaker, hold the ladder."

Talking thus, the old gentleman had arisen from his chair, and had re-entered the roadway, but the little old lady skimmed past him and faced him at the foot of the ladder.

"If your lordship wants to cut trees," she said, "your lordship may cut your lordship's own."

"Up thee goest, gaffer," said Joseph, handing over the little old lady's head the billhook and the saw.

Miss Blythe turned upon him with terrible majesty.

"Joseph Beaker?" she said, regarding him inquiringly. "Ah! The passage of six-and-twenty years has not improved your intellectual condition. Take up that ladder, Joseph Beaker. If you should ever dare again to place it against a tree upon my freehold property I shall call the policeman. I will set mantraps," pursued the little old lady, shaking her curls vigorously at Joseph. "I will have spring guns placed in the trees."

"Her's wuss than t'other un," mumbled the routed Joseph, as he shambled in his lopsided fashion down the road. "I should ha' thought you could ha' done what you liked wi' a little un like that. I niver counted on being forced to flee afore a little un."

The earl said nothing, and Miss Blythe, satisfied that the retreat was real, had already gone back to her gardening.

CHAPTER III.

In the meantime the young man in the tasselled cap and the patent leathers had strolled leisurely in the opposite direction to that the earl had taken, and in a little while—still followed by the valet, who bore his painting tools—had climbed into a field knee-deep in grass which was ready for the scythe. At the bottom of this meadow ran a little purling stream with a slant willow growing over it. In obedience to the young gentleman's instructions, the valet set down his burden here, and having received orders to return in an hour's time departed. The young gentleman sketched the willow and the brook in no very masterly fashion, but at a sort of hasty random, and tiring of his self-imposed task before half an hour was over, threw himself at length beside the brook, and there, lulled by the ripple of the water and the slumberous noise of insects, fell asleep. The valet's returning footsteps awoke him. He rolled over idly, and lit a new cigar.

"Shall I take back the things to the Hall, sir?" asked the servant.

"Yes, take them back to the Hall," said the young gentleman, lazily. Rising to his feet he produced a small pocket-mirror, and having surveyed the reflection of his features, arranged his scarf, cocked his cap, and sauntered from the field. His way led him past a high time-crumbled wall, over which a half score of trees pushed luxuriant branches. The wall was some ten feet in height, and in the middle of it was a green-painted door, which opened inwards. It was not quite closed, and a mere streak of sunlit grass could be seen within.

As the idle young gentleman sauntered along with his hands folded behind him, his eyes half closed, and his nose in the air, a sudden burst of music reached his ears and brought him to a standstill. It surprised him a little, partly because it was extremely well played, and partly because the theme was classic and but little known. He moved his head from side to side to make out, if possible, the inmates of the garden, but he could see nothing but the figure of a girl, who leaned her hands upon a tree and her cheek upon her hands. This, however, was enough to pique curiosity, for the figure was singularly graceful, and had fallen into an attitude of unstudied elegance. He pushed the door an inch wider and so far enlarged his view that he could see the musicians—three old men and a young one—who sat in the middle of a grassy space and ploughed away at the music with a will. Not caring to be observed in his clandestine espial he drew back a little, still keeping the figure of the girl in sight, and listened to the music.

He was so absorbed that the sudden spectacle of the Earl of Barfield, who came round the corner with a ladder on his shoulder, startled him a little. His lordship was followed by Joseph Beaker, who bore the saw and the billhook, and the old nobleman was evidently somewhat fatigued, and carried the ladder with difficulty. Seeing his young friend he propped his burden against the wall and mopped his forehead, casting an upward glance at the boughs which stretched their pleasant shadow overhead.

"Well, Ferdinand," he said, in a discontented voice, "what are you doing here?"

"I am listening to the music," said Ferdinand in answer.

"The music?" said his lordship. "That caterwauling?" He waved a hand towards the wall. "Old Fuller and his friends."

"They play capitally," said Ferdinand; "for country people they play capitally. They are amateurs, of course?"

"Do they?" asked the earl, somewhat eagerly; "do they really? Tell 'em so, tell 'em so. Nothing so likely"—he dropped his voice to a whisper—"nothing so likely to catch old Fuller's vote as that. He's mad on music. I haven't ventured to call on him for a long time. We had quite a little fracas years ago about these overhanging boughs. They're quite an eyesore—quite an eyesore—but he won't have 'em touched. Won't endure it. Joseph, you can carry the ladder home. We'll go in, Ferdinand. It's an admirable opportunity. I've been wondering how to approach old Fuller, and this is the very thing—the very thing."

"Wait until they have finished," said the younger man, and Joseph having shouldered the ladder and gone off with it in his own crab-like way, the two stood together until the musicians in the garden had finished the theme upon which they were engaged.

The earl pushed open the garden door and entered, Ferdinand following in the rear. The girl turned at the noise made by the shrieking hinges and stood somewhat irresolutely, as if uncertain. Finally, she bowed in a manner sufficiently distant and ceremonious. Ferdinand put up an eyeglass, and surveyed her with an air of criticism, whilst the old nobleman advanced briskly towards the table around which the musicians were seated.

"Good day, Fuller, good day," he said, in a hearty voice; "don't let me disturb you,

I beg. We heard your beautiful music as we passed by, and stopped to listen to it. This is my young friend Mr. de Blacquaire, who's going to stand, you know, for this division of the county. Mr. de Blacquaire is a great amateur of music, and was delighted with your playing—delighted."

"I was charmed, indeed," said Ferdinand. "There are lovers of music everywhere, of course, but I had not expected to find so advanced a company of amateurs in Heydon Hay. That final passage was exquisitely rendered."

The earl stood with a smile distorted in the sunlight, looking alternately from the candidate to the voters.

"Exquisitely rendered, I am sure," he said; "exquisitely rendered. Praise from Mr. de Blacquaire is worth having, let me tell you, Fuller. Mr. de Blacquaire is himself a distinguished musician. Ah! my old friend Eld? How do you do? how do you do?"

This greeting was addressed to Sennacherib, who had arisen on the earl's arrival, had deliberately turned his back, and was now engaged in turning over the leaves of music which lay on the table before him.

"Sennacherib," said Isaiah, mildly, "his lordship's atalking to thee."

"I can hear," responded Sennacherib, "as he's atalking to one on us. As for me, I'm none the better for being axed."

"And none the worse, I hope," said his lordship, as cheerily as he could.

"Nayther wuss nor better, so far as I can see," replied Sennacherib.

"Come, come, Mr. Eld," said Fuller. "Harmony! harmony!"

"I was atekin' my walks abroad this mornin'," said Sennacherib, still bending over his music, "when I see that petted hound of the vicar's mek a fly at a mongrel dog as had a bone. The mongrel run for it and took the bone along with him. It comes into my mind now as if the hound had known a month or two aforehand as he'd want that bone, he'd ha' made friends wi' the mongrel."

This parable was so obviously directed at his lordship and his young *protégé* that Senacherib's companions looked and felt ill at ease. Fuller was heard to murmur "Harmony!" but a disconcerted silence fell on all, and his lordship took snuff whilst he searched for a speech which should turn the current of conversation into a pleasanter channel. The Earl of Barfield was particularly keen in his desire to run Mr. Ferdinand de Blacquaire for the county, and to run him into Parliament. Ferdinand himself was much less keen about the business, and regarded it all as a mingled joke and bore. This being the case, he felt free to avoid the ordinary allures of the parliamentary candidate, and apart from that, he had, with himself at least, a reputation to sustain as a man of wit.

"Has this mongrel a bone?" he asked, in a silky tone. "Let him keep it."

His lordship shot a glance of surprised wrath at him, almost of horror, but Sennacherib began to chuckle.

"Pup's got a bite in him," said Sennacherib. "Got a bite in him."

His lordship felt a little easier, and looking about him discovered that everybody was smiling more or less, though on one or two faces the smile sat uneasily.

"Come, come, Mr. Eld," said Fuller, "harmony!"

"Ah!" cried the earl, seizing gladly on the word. "Let us have a little harmony. Don't let our presence disturb your music. Mr. Eld is a local notability, Ferdinand. Mr. Eld speaks his mind to everybody. I'm afraid he's on the other side, and in that case you'll have many a tussle with him before you come to the hustings. Eh? That's so, isn't it, Eld? Eh? That's so?"

"Oh," said Sennacherib with the slow local drawl; "we'll tek a bit of a wrastle, now and again, I mek no manner of a doubt."

"And in the meantime," said his lordship, "let us start harmoniously. Give us a little music, Fuller. Go on just as if we were not here."

"Ruth, my wench," said Fuller, "fetch his lordship a chair, and bring another for Mr. ———." He hung upon the Mr., searching to recall the name.

"Devil-a-care!" suggested Sennacherib.

"De Blacquaire," said the earl, correcting him. "Mr. Ferdinand de Blacquaire."

The girl had already moved away, and Ferdinand, with an air in which criticism melted slowly into approval, watched her through his eyeglass. The only young man in the quartette party, Reuben Gold, eyed Ferdinand with a look in which criticism hardened into disapproval, and turning away fluttered the edges of the music sheets before him with the tip of his bow.

"Look here, lads," said Fuller. "We'll have a slap at that there Sonata of B. Thoven's. Eh?"

"Beethoven?" asked Ferdinand, with a little unnecessary stress upon the name to mark his pronunciation of it. "You play Beethoven? This is extremely interesting."

He spoke to the earl, who rubbed his hands and nodded. The young first violin tossed his chestnut-coloured mane on one side with a gesture of irritation. Ruth reappeared with a chair in either hand. They were old-fashioned and rather heavy, being built of solid oak, but she carried them lightly and gracefully. Ferdinand started forward and attempted to relieve her of their burden. At first she resisted, but he insisting upon the point she yielded. The young Ferdinand was less graceful than he had meant to be in the carriage of the chairs, and Ruth looked at Reuben with a smile so faint as scarcely to be perceptible. Reuben with knitted brows pored above his music, and the girl returned to her old place and her old attitude by the apple-tree.

Ferdinand, having the placing of the chairs in his own hands, took up a position in which, without being obtrusively near, he was close enough to address her if occasion should arise, as he was already fairly resolved it should. The three elders were most drolly provincial, to his mind, and their accent was positively barbarous to his ears. Reuben was less provincial to look at, but to Mr. de Blacquaire's critical eye the young man was evidently not a gentleman. He had not heard him speak as yet, and could well afford to make up his mind without that. Nobody but a boor could have employed Reuben's tailor or his shoemaker. As for the girl, she looked like a lily in a kitchen garden, a flower among the coarse and commonplace things of everyday consumption. It would be a deadly pity, he thought, if she should have an accent like the rest. Her dress was perfectly refined and simple, and Ferdinand guessed pretty shrewdly that this was likely to be due to her own handiwork and fancy.

"What a delightful, quaint old garden you have here, to be sure," he said.

With a perfect naturalness she raised a warning palm against him, and at that instant the quartette party began their performance. She had not even turned an eye in his direction, and he was a little piqued. The hand which had motioned him to silence was laid now on the gnarled old apple-tree, and she rested her ripe cheek against it. Her eyes began to dream at the music, and it was evident that her forgetfulness of the picturesque young gentleman beside her was complete and unaffected. The picturesque young gentleman felt this rather keenly. The snub was small enough in all conscience, but it *was* a snub, and he was sensitive, even curiously sensitive, to that kind of thing. And he was not in the habit of being snubbed. He was accustomed to look for the signs of his own power to please amongst young women who moved in another sphere.

It was a very very small affair, but then it is precisely these very small affairs which rankle in a certain sort of mind. Ferdinand dismissed it, but it spoiled his music for the first five minutes.

The Earl of Barfield was one of those people to whom music is neither more nor less than noise. He loved quiet and hated noise, and the four interpreters of the melody and harmony of Beethoven afforded him as much delight as so many crying children would have done. It had been a joke against him in his youth that he had once failed to distinguish between *God Save the King* and the *Old Hundredth.* Harmony and melody here were alike divine in themselves, and were more than respectably rendered, and he sat and suffered under them in his young friend's behoof like a hero. They bored him unspeakably, and the performance lasted half an hour. When it was all over he beat his withered white hands together once or twice, and smiled in self-gratulation that his time of suffering was over.

"Admirably rendered!" cried Ferdinand. "Admirably — admirably rendered. Will you forgive me just a hint, sir?" He addressed Sennacherib. "A leetle more light and shade! A performance less level in tone."

"P'r'aps the young man 'll show us how to do it," said Sennacherib, in a dry, mock humility, handing his fiddle and bow towards the critic.

The critic accepted them with a manner charmingly unconscious of the intended satire, and walked round the table until he came behind Reuben, when he turned back the music for a leaf or two.

"Here, for example," he said, and tucking the instrument beneath his chin played through a score of bars with a certain exaggerated *chic* which awakened Sennacherib's derision.

"What dost want to writhe i' that fashion for?" he demanded. "Dost find thine inwards twisted? It's a pretty tone, though," he allowed. "The young man can fiddle. Strikes me, young master, as thee'dst do better at the Hopera than the House o' Commons. Tek a fool's advice and try."

Ferdinand smiled with genuine good-humour. This insolent old personage began to amuse him.

"Really, I don't know, sir," he answered. "Perhaps I may do pretty well in the House of Commons, if you will be good enough to

try me. One can't please everybody, but I promise to do my best."

"The best can do no more," said Fuller, in a mellow, peacemaking kind of murmur. "The best can do no more."

"I've no mind for that theer whisperin' and shoutin' in the course of a piece of music," said Sennacherib. "Pianner is pianner, and forte is forte, but theer's no call to strain a man's ears to listen to the one, nor to drive him deaf with t'other. Same time, if the young gentleman 'ud like to come an' gi'e us a lesson now and then we'd tek it."

"I'm not able to give you lessons, sir," returned Mr. de Blacquaire, with unshaken good-humour, "but if you will allow me to take one now and then by listening, I shall be delighted."

"Nothin' agen that, is theer, Mr. Fuller?" demanded Sennacherib.

"Allays pleased to see the young gentleman," responded Fuller.

"When may I come to listen to you again, gentlemen?" asked Ferdinand. His manner was full of *bonhomie* now, and had no trace of affectation. It pleased everybody but Reuben, who had conceived a distaste for him from the first. Perhaps, if he had not placed his chair so near to Ruth, and had regarded her less often and with a less evident admiration, the young man might have liked him better.

"Well," said Fuller, "we are here pretty nigh every evenin' while the fine weather lasts. We happen to be here this afternoon because young Mr. Gold is goin' away for to-night to Castle Barfield. You'll find we here almost of any evenin'—to-morrow to begin with."

"We had better be going now, Ferdinand," said his lordship, who dreaded the new beginning of the music. "Good afternoon, Fuller. Good afternoon, Eld. Good afternoon, Gold."

"Good day, my lord," said Reuben, rather gloomily. He had not spoken until now, and Ferdinand had wished to note the accent. There was none to note in the few words he uttered.

"Your little girl is growing into a woman, Fuller," said his lordship.

"That's the way wi' most gells, my lord," said Fuller.

"Good afternoon, Miss Ruth," said the old nobleman, nodding and smiling.

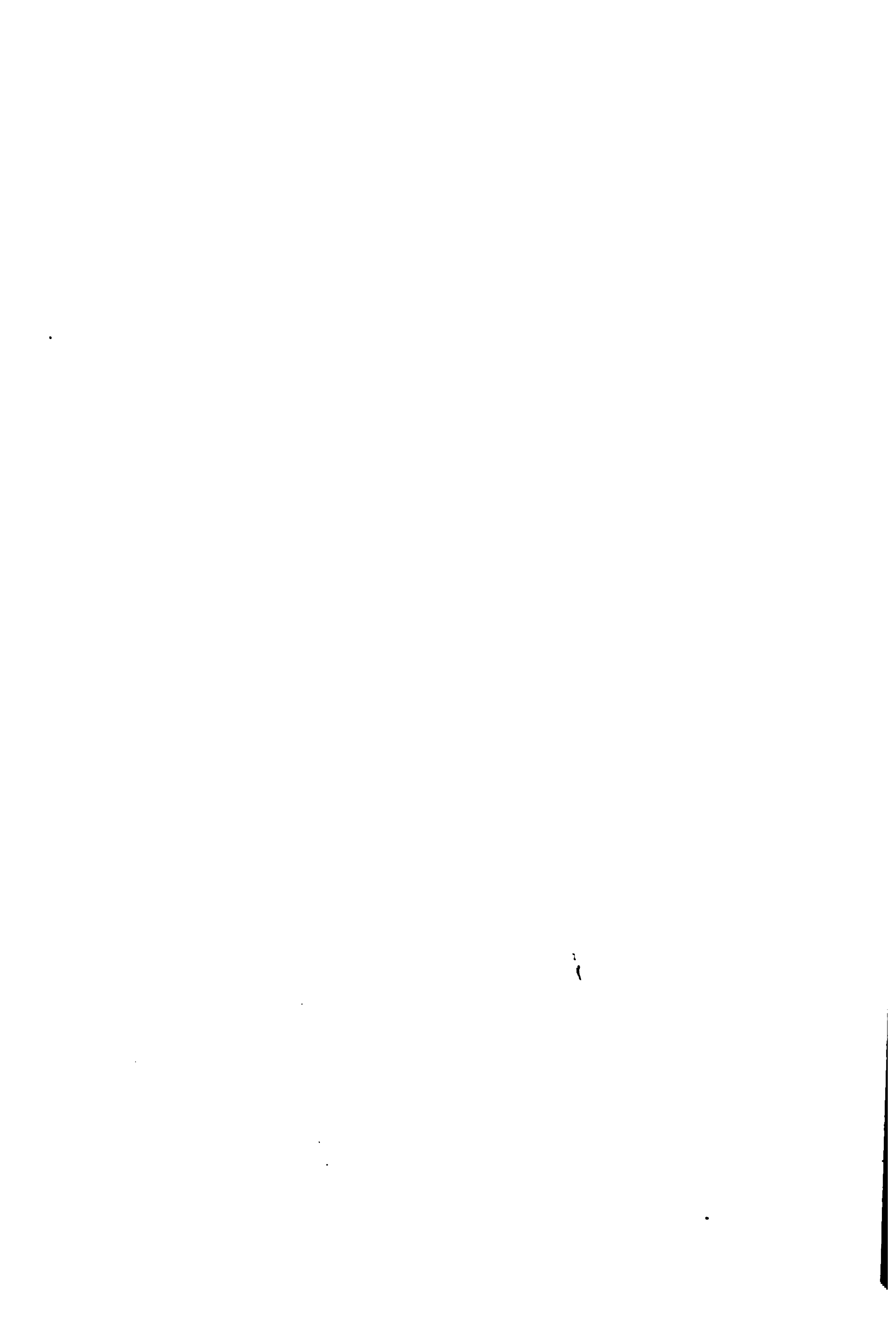
"Good afternoon, my lord," said Ruth. Ferdinand's attentive ear noted again the absence of the district accent. He removed his cap and bowed to her.

"Good afternoon. I may come to-morrow evening, then?" The query was addressed to her, but she did not answer it, either by glance or word. She had answered his bow and turned away before he had spoken.

"Ay!" said Fuller, "come and welcome."

He bowed and smiled all round and walked away with his lordship. He turned at the garden door for a final glance at the pretty girl, but she had her back turned upon him, and was leaning both hands on her father's shoulder.

(*To be continued.*)



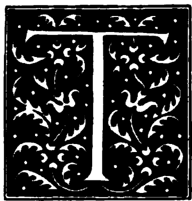
LADY SARAH BUNBURY.

Engraved by T. JOHNSON, *from the Picture by* SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

The English Illustrated Magazine.

NOVEMBER, 1885.

AN ADVENTURE IN AFGHANISTAN.



HE 40th Regiment, in which I was then a subaltern, arrived at Candahar in October, 1841. We had been encamped at Quetta since the month of February, and our first experiences of Afghanistan were by no means pleasant. During the six months we were at Quetta, the battalion, which on its arrival at that place numbered 1,000 effective rank and file, lost no less than a hundred men and three officers, nearly all of whom died from a very virulent kind of dysentery, said to be brought on by the water of the locality, which was chiefly composed of melted snow from the mountains. When we arrived at Quetta in February, there were not more than two per cent. of the whole corps on the sick list. But when we started to march for Candahar in the following September, at least a fourth of the regiment had to be carried on doolies, or camels, and quite as many more were allowed to get along on foot as best they could, without arms or accoutrements, being all what in England would be called out-door patients of the regimental hospital. In the ranks, and fit for duty, we had not more than five hundred men out of the thousand we had mustered a few months previously. The march to Candahar lasted about thirty days. Our commanding officer, acting on the advice of the medical men, ordered that the regiment should halt every fourth day, and the result of this judicious arrangement, together with the climate, which improved more and more as we got further to the north, was that nearly all the men who had started from Quetta, more or less sick, were fit for duty, and able to take their place in the ranks before we arrived at Candahar. When our corps arrived at the latter place, we found, to our great delight, that cantonments, such as they were, had been provided for us. We had all been upwards of a year under canvas, and a wing of the regiment, that had preceded the other half of the corps, had been for more than two years dwellers in tents. It is only those who have gone through a prolonged trial of the kind that can appreciate the blessing of having a roof over their heads, and being surrounded with stone, instead of canvas walls. Our cantonments at Candahar were very much the reverse of what can be termed luxurious; they had been built for Shah Sooja's native troops, and could boast of not even the most common conveniences of Indian life. But the very fact of every officer having a room to himself, and of the men having space to hang up their arms and stow away their other belongings, made them appear veritable palaces to us. At Candahar we found none save Bengal troops. General Nott was in command of the garrison and the division. The latter consisted of the 2nd, 16th, 42nd and 43rd Bengal Native Infantry, together with some few local corps, raised for the service of Shah Sooja, the king whom we had placed on the throne of Afghanistan, and who eventually cost us so much in money, men, and prestige, by trying to maintain him as ruler of that country. The 40th had since its arrival in India, some ten or more years previous to the period I am writing of, served in the Bombay Presidency, and was looked upon as a regular Bombay regiment. But nothing could exceed the kindness and good fellowship of the Bengal officers, amongst whom we were now thrown. General Nott in particular was most kind and considerate in the manner he received us, and the invitations to different messes, as well as the

offers to make us honorary members of the same, were so numerous that it took the president of our mess-committee no little time to reply to them. I make mention of all these details, trifling as some of them may appear, in order to let my readers understand the exact state of the case as regards Candahar and its garrison when we arrived there; and, as will be seen presently, to show the why and the wherefore of certain events which took place shortly after we formed part of the force that held the place. Since the days of which I write the world is some forty-four or forty-five years older. Men who were then young smooth-faced lads, fresh from school, with their lives all before them, are now long past middle age, and are looking forward to the probably not far-off end of their sojourn in this world. Hence it is that what was then a mere matter of passing history must be now pretty well forgotten, and the prologue of the drama has to be told before the present generation can be expected to take any interest in what happened so long ago.

In less than a month after our arrival at Candahar we heard the news from Cabul that our army there, under General Elphinstone, was daily getting into worse and worse trouble, and that their total defeat was merely a matter of time. Coming as these reports did through natives, and our communication with British India being cut off, we hardly knew what to believe. But in time, and before long too, the very worst news we had heard proved only too true. The story of the English force, trying to retreat to the Khyber Pass, being cut up almost to a man, and many of the principal officers being taken prisoners, reached us in due time; and very shortly our own troubles commenced, although certainly on a smaller scale than those of the Cabul force. By the first days of December, Candahar was surrounded by thousands of Afghans. It is true that they kept a comparatively respectful distance from us. But they were not more than a very few miles from the city, and at times were quite close to our quarters. Our force was divided into two brigades; one of these, consisting of the 40th Regiment, the 2nd, 16th, and 38th Native Infantry, occupied the cantonments; the other, composed of the 42nd and 43rd Bengal Native Infantry, together with two of Shah Sooja's regiments, which were officered by Englishmen, was in the town, which was surrounded by high walls, and was not more than five hundred yards from the cantonments. Two or three times General Nott led a large portion of the force under his command against the enemy, but so little good was effected by the movement, and there was so much danger of our stores and supplies falling into the enemy's hands, that this plan of operation was abandoned, and we remained throughout the winter on the defensive.

As a matter of course it was strictly forbidden for any one to go beyond a certain distance from the town or the cantonments; but what will not Englishmen venture in search of sport? About three miles from our lines there was a broad but very shallow river, on the banks of which snipe, it was reported, were very numerous, and of a size rarely if ever seen in other parts of the world. Now and again, when the enemy was reported to be a considerable distance off, a few venturous spirits amongst us would risk our lives, to say nothing of the certainty of being tried by a court-martial if we were found to have disobeyed orders, for the purpose of bagging a few of these birds. One of these adventures I have a very vivid recollection of, as it very nearly proved not only the last day's shooting I should ever do, but for some time made me and my companion believe that our respective careers in this world had come to an end.

A camp-follower who had a couple of dozen or so of snipe for sale came to the cantonments one afternoon and, as he could speak a little Hindustanee, gave us to understand that he had shot these birds in the course of about four hours. The birds were certainly very fine indeed of their kind; no snipe of such a size or in such admirable condition had ever been seen by even the most experienced shots amongst us, either in India or England. The gun with which he had killed his game was a wretched old single barrelled affair, with a very bad flint-lock, and the only shot he had was much larger than ordinary peas. The temptation proved too strong, at any rate for two of us, of which I was one. It seemed that if this half-caste camp-follower, with his almost useless gun, could make a good bag of snipe, we, with our percussion well-made fowling-pieces, would be able to do a very great deal better. As a matter of course the intended trip had to be kept a secret, for it was a direct violation of orders. But as none of the enemy had been seen for some days past, we thought that a venture to try what could be done was practicable, and determined to try our luck. My companion, and the leader and director of the affair, was also a 40th man, "Horace" Seymour, a brother, if I am not mistaken, of General Sir Frank

Seymour, who holds a high position as Master of Ceremonies to Her Majesty. Seymour—dead I am sorry to say long years ago, when he was quite a young man—was one of the kindest-hearted men, as well as one of the truest gentlemen and most gallant soldiers it has ever been my lot to meet with during a life of threescore years. He was a few years my senior, both in the service and in age, and took upon himself all the details of the expedition. We started as soon as morning parade was over, about 10 A.M. We had not more than four or five attendants, which for an Indian shooting party was unusually small; with a view to the possibility that we might have to beat a very hasty retreat, we took care to provide a tattoo, or pony, for each of our followers; we ourselves being, as a matter of course, also mounted. Having got quietly clear of the lines, twenty minutes or so sufficed to take us to the river. The latter was a broad, but very shallow stream, with a considerable stretch of marshy ground on each side. It was very evident that if the Afghans did surprise us, the sportsman who was shooting on the bank furthest from Candahar would run by far the greatest risk of being cut off. As a matter of course my friend Seymour, like the plucky fellow he was, volunteered, and for some time insisted that he should take the post of danger. But to this I would not listen, and declared that unless he drew lots for sides I would at once go back to the cantonments. After some little discussion we tossed up, and the side where as we thought the danger lay fell to me. We had arranged our plan of campaign against the snipe. We dismounted, each having our horse near us in charge of our respective "syces" or native grooms, who were mounted. Of the three followers who remained, we each kept one to carry our extra ammunition, and to pick up the birds. The fifth, and last, we ordered to remain mounted, and to proceed slowly abreast of us, in order to beat up the snipe. That the latter were most plentiful, and by no means wild there could be no doubt whatever. During the ten minutes or so that we stood making the above arrangements, not fewer than a score of birds rose, all more or less close to us, and after a short flight settled down again, showing by their tameness that they had no fear or anxiety about being shot at. It must have been about eleven o'clock when we commenced operations, and I have never seen or heard of snipe in such quantities, or so large and in such admirable condition. As fast as we could load and fire, we added to the number of the booty in our game bags. My friend Seymour, who was a first-rate shot, must have bagged at least fifty birds in about twice that number of minutes. Even I, whose shooting left much to be desired, whose aim was by no means certain, but very much the reverse, killed no fewer than a couple of dozen snipe before we had been an hour on the ground. As to labour or walking there was little or none. The birds rose at our very feet, and as fast, or even faster, than we could load, fresh victims took the place of those we had knocked over. If instead of two there had been half-a-dozen sportsmen, and each of these had behind him a couple of attendants with spare guns ready loaded, there would have been sport and to spare for all. The condition of the birds was also something wonderful. If our sport could have lasted some four or five hours, we should no doubt have made, both in quantity and quality, bags which would have been historical in the annals of sport. As it was, notwithstanding that we were ill-provided with ammunition, had no good markers of the game, and also had to keep an outlook for the Afghans, who might at any moment be down upon us, we made much larger bags than we could have done on any ground that it was ever my luck to see in India or England. We had got well to work, but halted for half-an-hour to eat a mouthful of lunch and smoke our cheroots, and had resumed our shooting, when a very unpleasant stoppage was put to our sport. Happening to look towards my friend Seymour, I saw that he was making signs to me in a most urgent manner. We were too far apart, the river being too wide, to hear what he said, but I came to the conclusion that he was in need of powder, or shot, or perhaps both. To the best of my ability I made signs asking what it was he needed; but he shook his head and made gestures with his hand, which showed that it was something else—evidently more serious—that he wished me to notice. He had stopped shooting and was looking through his binocular glasses very earnestly at something on my side of the river. At last what turned out afterwards to be a happy thought seized me, and I resolved to mount my nag and cross to where he was, I had hardly gone fifty yards in that direction, when I got a practical intimation as to what he wanted me to do, and whence the danger he had seen was to be expected. All at once four or five bullets from behind whistled past me, causing me instantly to quicken my pace. I looked over

my shoulder as soon as I got some little distance, and saw half-a dozen Afghans armed to the teeth, making after me as fast as they could. Fortunately they were not mounted, so that I had the best of the case thus far. In a very few minutes I had joined Seymour, who greeted me with a "Now then, old fellow, we must ride for it, for there are a dozen or more of those ruffians following those who fired at you." Our first care was to see that none of our followers were left behind. These individuals had, however, taken alarm in time, and were making their way towards Candahar much in advance of ourselves. Not that we were slow to follow them, for the first shots from the Afghans had been quickly followed by others, and as we could now perceive, those who had fired at us were making their way to the river, and evidently intended, if they could, to capture us. As they were on foot, we had the best of the race, and galloped on towards the cantonments, feeling certain that we could not be overtaken; but we had very soon reason to take a less cheerful view of our position.

The ground between the river and the cantonments was, as is very common in Afghanistan, undulating to a degree seldom seen in any other country. So much so is this the case, that the pathways or tracts—for they can hardly be called roads—look as if they were almost level, and hundreds of men or animals might be within a very short distance of each other, and yet have no idea whatever of the fact. We had just reached the top of a gently undulating piece of ground, and were congratulating ourselves at being within measurable distance of home, when all of a sudden we saw about fifty or sixty armed horsemen drawn up in line, and barring our further progress towards the cantonments. They were evidently waiting for us, and seemed certain they could capture us with ease. To be made a prisoner by any one is far from pleasant, but to be taken by the Afghans meant, as we knew, a cruel and prolonged death, so brutal in details that it could not be described in print. About a month previous to our expedition three young lads, private soldiers in the 40th Regiment, had, in defiance of orders, gone out on a wandering expedition. Their bodies were found the next day not more than a mile from the cantonments. They had been murdered; but, as the medical officer who examined the corpses said, they had evidently been tortured in the most brutal manner it was possible to imagine, before being put out of their pain.

Nor were these poor fellows the only example of what the Afghan savage will do in order to torment his enemy when living, and insult his corpse when dead. Such being the case, the prospect of being taken by the horsemen who were so evidently on the look-out for us was anything but pleasant. "There is only one hope for us," said my companion, shortly after he saw the men in front of us; "we must do our best to ride through them, and make for the cantonments. Let us walk our horses quietly until close upon them, and then make a start for it. Our chance of escape is small, but it is the only one we have. If I fall you will write to my friends, and if you are killed I will do the same to yours." Seymour happened to have with him a brace of double-barrelled pistols. He drew these from his holsters and gave one to me, saying, "In any case let us sell our lives as dearly as we can, for to be killed on the spot would be infinitely better than to be taken prisoner by these cruel miscreants." We had one thing in our favour, although our horses were not by any means large they were both tolerably fleet, and would be able to hold their own for a certain distance. Another fact that Seymour reminded me of, was that at a certain ruin a little more than half way between where we were and the cantonments, there was very often a picket of Skinner's Horse, consisting of a havildar or sergeant, and a dozen or fifteen troopers. "If either of us escape," he said to me—for it seemed far too much to hope for that both of us could by any possibility do so—"let him ride straight for that ruin, and bring down the picket of horsemen with him. It is just possible, although not very probable, that the one who remains with the Afghans may be saved." Thus my plucky friend tried to make the best of what was, at the best, a very desperate position to be in. With a "now, good-bye, old fellow," from one to the other, we rode quietly on, having arranged that Seymour would give the word when we were to start off in a gallop, and try to shake off the enemy.

As we approached the Afghans they evidently thought we intended to give ourselves as prisoners. They shouted at, and abused us after their fashion, using the most brutal epithets towards us in a sort of mongrel Hindostanee, so that we might understand them the better. Half-a-dozen shots were fired at us but they went so wide of the mark that they were evidently meant to intimidate rather than absolutely to injure us. One thing—as we found out afterwards, when comparing notes—struck us both, and gave us very much better hopes than we had

before dared to entertain of getting away safe if it came to a race for life, the horses of the Afghans were very dusty, had evidently come a long way, and were, compared with our own, very much done up.

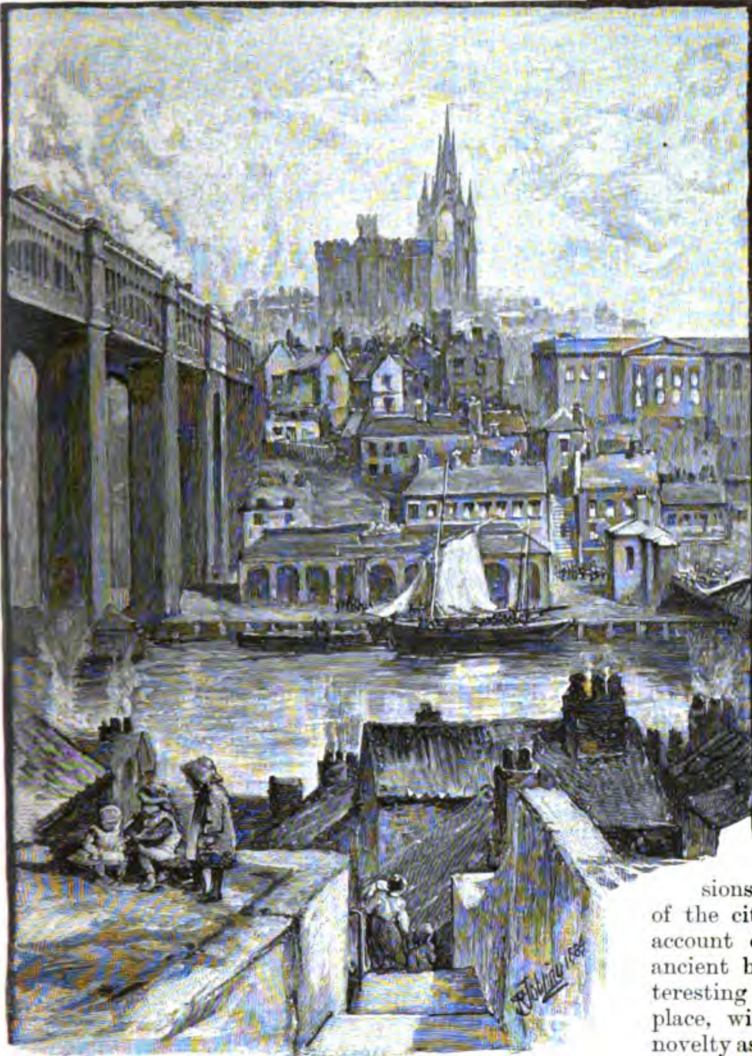
"Now for it," said Seymour, as we got within thirty yards or so of the line—a line formed by single horsemen some ten or a dozen yards apart—"now for it, old fellow, turn sharp to the right when you get near them, and go as hard as you can." It is wonderful what effect the words of a cool-headed man have on desperate occasions, like the one I am endeavouring to describe. My plucky companion had—as he afterwards told me—seen at a glance that the Afghans were slowly closing in to the point opposite to which we were advancing; thus leaving, as it were, their flank exposed. Towards, or rather, at that flank we rode, spurring for dear life to get clear of the ruffianly gang. In far less time than it takes to relate what happened we *were* clear, and, what was better, we felt that we were increasing the distance between our pursuers and ourselves at every stride. The four or five horsemen through whom we dashed, struck at us with sword and lance, but all to no purpose, neither our horses nor ourselves were touched. The enemy then tried to fire at us, but their doing this was so much in our favour. Every horseman when he fired had to stop his horse, and thus we had for the moment one pursuing enemy the less. But what really saved us—for saved we were, and although poor Seymour did not live many years afterwards; I have survived forty odd years to tell the tale—was the superior freshness and speed of our horses. Half-an-hour's riding brought us safe to the cantonments. A few of our more intimate friends heard of the escape we had had, but as disobedience of orders in the field is a serious matter, the affair was never talked about. During a campaign like that of 1841-42 in Afghanistan, when every man feels that his life is in his hands, and no one can tell what a day may bring forth, the private adventures of either officers or men are quickly forgotten, no matter how interesting they may be to those, or to the friends of those, chiefly concerned.

M. LAING MEASON.

NEWCASTLE FROM THE RIVER.
From a Drawing by R. JOBLING.

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE (OLD BITS IN A NEW CITY).

"I CONSIDER," said our friend from Chicago, "it's about the most interesting thing I've seen since I've been on this side." He was speaking to a party of Newcastle citizens, of the old Norman Keep which stands in the midst of the busy city on the Tyne, and which, though black with the smoke, and worn by the storms and struggles of seven centuries, is still as stable and strong as when it *was* the New Castle on the Tyne, and gave its name to the town which lay under its protecting shadow. The citizens opened their eyes incredulously as the stranger from the far west delivered this opinion, pretty much as a group of Indians might have opened their eyes at a missionary who told them that he never tasted a better glass of fire-water in his life than one he had just drawn from the creek running through the village. What! This old black tower, which they passed by regardless every day of their lives, was the most interesting thing he had seen—he who had just seen London and Paris with all their wonders! Was it delicate flattery, or deliberate irony? Neither it would seem, for he spoke with unaffected enthusiasm as he described the massive thickness of the walls, the ingenious contrivances for defence, the wealth of antique weapons, and other objects within the castle: the dungeon, the chapel, the king's chamber, the Roman altars and memorial tablets, the ancient British shields and urns and arms—in short a perfect treasure-house of relics, embodying and illustrating the history of the town, and of England from the earliest times. It was noticed that while he spoke, the listeners all nodded assent to what he said, as though perfectly familiar with the objects he described, though we have a shrewd suspicion that none of them had ever been in the Castle, except perhaps years ago as boys; for when he would have asked for further information on any point, it was just this particular point that all his listeners had not noticed during their visits, though where his knowledge was clear, they were unanimous



NEWCASTLE FROM GATESHEAD.
From a Drawing by R. JOBLING.

in confirming his observations. "And what do you think was the strangest thing I noticed when in your Castle?" asked the visitor as he concluded. "It was this, that Jones here, who, at my request, took me to the place, a place worth crossing the Atlantic to see, informed me he was never in it before—your fellow-citizen, Jones, who passes it every day of his life!" Jones blushed, but quickly recovered his usual self-possession. "And pray, sir," said he, "how often, may I ask, have you been inside the Chicago stockyards?" The citizen of Chicago smiled. "Well, Mr. Jones," he replied, "I must confess I never was in one of them in my life." "How strange!" cried Jones, triumphantly. "And yet I, though I have never been in the Castle here, have visited the famous stockyards of your native city, and consider it was worth crossing the Atlantic to see them, while you have never thought it worth the trouble of walking a few hundred yards."

"It only goes to show," said the sage of the party, with the air of having made a new and startling discovery, "that a stranger on a visit sees and gets to know far more of a place than its inhabitants do in a lifetime."

To a great extent we believe our sage friend was right in his conclusions, and that upon many of the citizens of Newcastle an account of the picturesque and ancient buildings, and other interesting objects of their native place, will come with as much novelty as upon the outside world; and though we cannot go as far as our American friend in saying that it surpasses in interest such places as London and Paris, yet there are as many quaint old-world relics, strangely mingled up with the latest developments of modern civilisation in this city of strange contrasts, as are to be seen in most towns.

Newcastle-upon-Tyne is well known the wide world over as the great emporium of the coal trade, which has been carried on here since the days of Henry the Third, and is popularly supposed in the south of England to be a city peopled by coal miners, and having coal mines, in full tide of work, plentifully scattered amongst her streets. Yet you will rarely see a pitman there, except on market days, when they flock in

from the country round, easy to recognise by their gait and their peculiar complexion, which is pale, yet robust and healthy looking; while as for coal pits, there is only one within the city bounds, and that only started work about two years ago, after lying idle some quarter of a century. In the neighbouring country side they are plentiful enough; in some directions as you approach or leave the city, you will see their engine-houses, and the tall skeleton frame-work of their coal-drawing gear, looming black against the sky on every side. On Newcastle Quay, the headquarters of the Great Northern coal field, you will scarcely see a single piece of coal, though as for the offices of the coal-fitters—the successors of the ancient hoastmen of the town, who regulated the vend of coal far back in mediæval times—their name is legion. All down the Tyne and in the docks you will see huge spouts projecting over the water at the ends of the long railways or waggon ways, which run from the collieries, sometimes miles away; and under these spouts you will see vessels lying, taking in the coal for transport to the furthest ends of the earth.

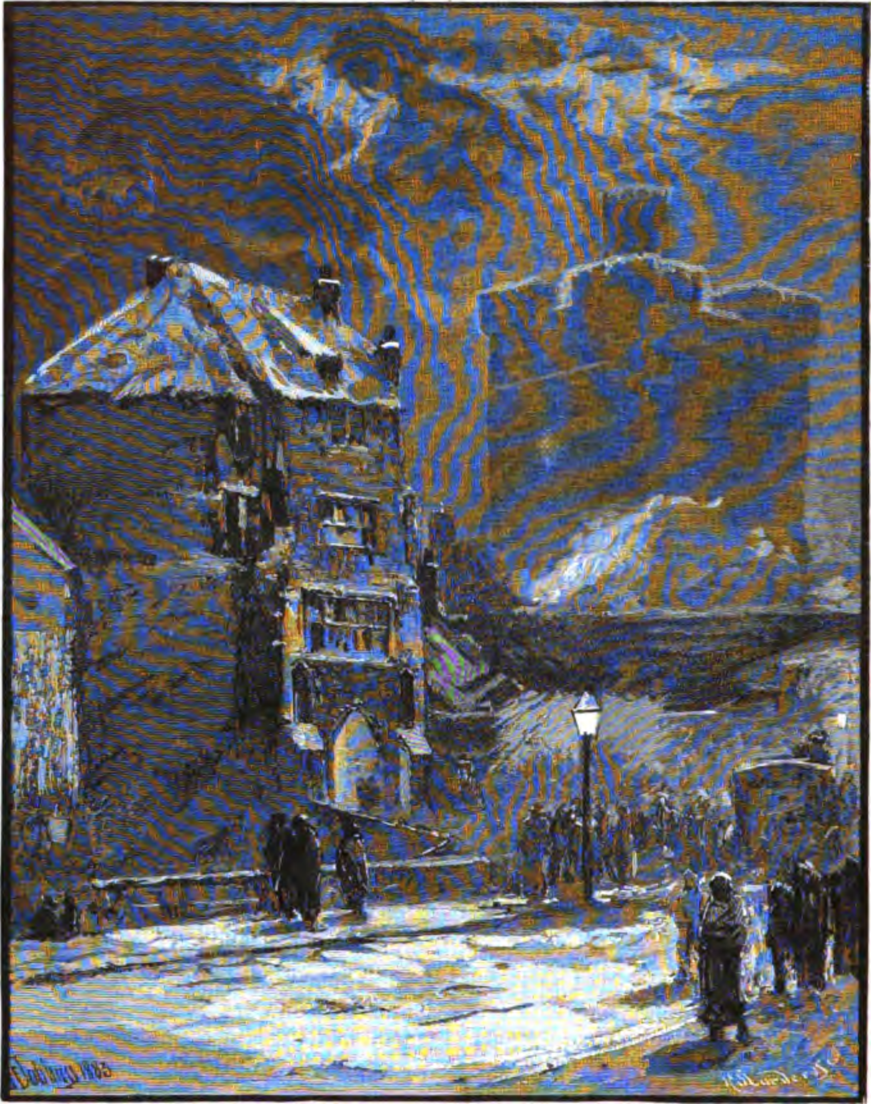
Besides that fiction concerning the coal mines, there is another prevalent in the south, that Newcastle is in Scotland, and the Newcastle man visiting the metropolis, is universally looked upon as a Scotchman, though in truth his native city is fifty good miles from the border, and there is no town of England which has been more anti-Scotch, and has in the old times exchanged harder blows with these once inveterate foes of England. Happily her only rivalry with them now is in more peaceful matters. The Tyne and the Clyde, the greatest shipbuilding rivers in the country, have of late years contended for supremacy with varying success, the Tyne last year being ahead. It is indeed a wonderful river, its banks on both sides being one continuous workshop for ten good miles and more. Three miles above Newcastle, at Scotswood, the shipbuilding yards commence; at Elswick are the immense works of Sir William Armstrong, Mitchell, & Co., the birthplace of the Armstrong Gun, which extend for fully a mile along the northern bank. The shipbuilding yard of the same firm is at Low Walker, a few miles below Newcastle, and they are able to build and equip, and do build and equip, ironclads and gunboats complete with engines, guns, torpedoes, and all the destructive armament of modern naval warfare, as well as vessels for the more peaceful pursuits of commerce. Sailing from Newcastle to the sea, you will see on either side, ship-yards, iron-works, chemical-works, glass-houses, potteries, cement-works, coal staithes and docks; and the air is dark with the smoke from a thousand chimneys. The amount of shipping to be seen is enormous, for in the Port of Newcastle the number of vessels cleared is only surpassed by that of London.

It is not, however, of the trade and commerce of Newcastle that we would now speak, but more of the wonderful wealth of picturesque beauty to be found in her streets, of the relics of antiquity which yet survive in many a nook and corner, and above all to point out the violent contrasts between the old times and the new, which are to be met with at every turn. We fancy there are many who will smile as they hear of the picturesque beauty of the metropolis of the north, which stands on the banks of "coaly Tyne;" but speaking in sober earnest, though there are few places which have suffered more from the effects of modern manufactures and improvements, there are few that yet retain so many interesting relics of bygone times, beautiful and picturesque in their decay. It is true that the sylvan beauty which once marked the town, and which caused the good John Wesley to say, "that if he were not journeying in hope of a better world, here he would be content to live and die," has passed away; but there are scenes of the utmost natural beauty in the suburbs and outskirts even now, and standing here on the south side of the Tyne, in Gateshead—styled by some captious cynic "a dirty lane leading to Newcastle—" and looking over upon the piled-up masses of buildings before us, we know that not far beyond, the green trees wave, and the green grass spreads away in many a rolling acre. The Newcastle of Wesley's time must have been indeed one of the most beautiful spots under the canopy of heaven, with its Castle and its churches, and quaint groups of red-tiled, old-timbered houses, nestling amongst orchard trees, with patches of meadow and garden here and there, and all hemmed in by the encircling wall, with its gateway towers and its turrets, which an old writer tells us was the finest town wall in Europe, and very like those of Avignon and Jerusalem in appearance. It was in 1745 that the great methodist lived over there at the Orphan House just outside the Pilgrim Street Gate—the year of the invasion of England by the young Pretender. The walls and gates were strengthened, and cannon planted in anticipation of attack, and the preacher's friends in this conjunction besought him to

remove within the walls for greater safety; but he refused, even when the alarm was raised that the enemy was within sight. As all the world knows, Charles Edward was diverted from his projected advance on Newcastle, and proceeded on his ill-starred march to Derby by way of Carlisle instead. When the danger was past, Wesley made an examination of the town's defences, and gives it as an especial mark of the watchful providence of God over His servants that his dwelling, the Orphan House, was out of the line of fire of the guns of the Town Gate, and would have been out of that of the enemy's batteries had they attacked the town. A hundred years before this the town did not escape so easily, for, in 1644, after the battle of Marston Moor, it was besieged by the Scotch allies of the Parliamentarians and carried by assault after a desperate resistance. To stout Sir John Marley, the mayor and defender of the town at that time, the people of Newcastle owe a debt of gratitude which ought never to be forgotten. But for his ready presence of mind the beautiful lantern of the cathedral church of St. Nicholas, the crown and pride of the city, which we see rising there in majesty beyond the turrets of the Castle, might have been battered down and destroyed by the Scottish cannon. Irritated by the prolonged defence of the town, Lord Leven, the commander of the besieging force—that brave old soldier, better known as Alexander Leslie, who had fought in many a desperate battle under Gustavus Adolphus—sent a trumpeter to announce to the garrison that if the town was not surrendered at once he would open fire on the steeple of St. Nicholas. Sir John Marley immediately ordered his Scottish prisoners of war to be carried up and placed in the lantern of the church, and returned answer to the Scottish general, that he might fire on and destroy the steeple, but in its fall his countrymen and friends should perish. Thus was the steeple of St. Nicholas saved to beautify the view now before us. It was built by Robert de Rhodes, a munificent lawyer of Newcastle, in the reign of Edward VI. and has been the admiration and despair of architects ever since. Many attempts to imitate it have been made, but all have failed to reproduce the bold and elegant grace of the flying buttresses which carry the lantern, and it stands unique throughout the world, with its thirteen spires, each surmounted by its gilded vane. We know how Sir Christopher Wren essayed to imitate it in the steeple of St. Dunstan's in the east, and how he stood on London Bridge, and through a telescope watched with fear and trembling while the scaffolding was being removed, lest his feeble copy might, when derived of its outer supports, come tumbling to the ground. And still St. Nicholas stands, and as William Gray, the first historian of Newcastle, wrote in the year of the execution of Charles I. "It lifteth up a head of Majesty above the rest as a Cypresse Tree above the low Shrubs."

From looking at the old church and the still older Castle beside it, which carry the mind far back into the past amongst scenes of mediaeval religiòn and warfare, there is a strange shock of contrast in looking at the stupendous High Level Bridge of Robert Stephenson, along which the railway runs, a hundred feet above the river, and then down at the massive Swing Bridge with which Sir William Armstrong has spanned the stream, and which turns on its centre as smoothly and as easily as a door on well oiled hinges, and allows great ships to pass where once the way was stopped by old Tyne Bridge. At this point a bridge has crossed the river for the last eighteen hundred years. The first was built by the Emperor Hadrian, and called after the name of his family, Pons Elii, by which name Roman Newcastle was also designated. The second was built during the middle ages, and there are many drawings of it extant, which show it crowded with houses along either side like old London Bridge, and with a gateway tower at either end, and another in the middle, together with a chapel to the Virgin, and a hermitage. On one of the towers of this bridge, the strong right arm of Sir William Wallace—that arm which had fought so well for Scotland—was exposed after the execution and quartering of that brave patriot. Here, too, was exposed a quarter of the Earl of Northumberland, who fell in the Battle of Bramham Moor in 1408—the father of Shakspeare's Harry Hotspur. In 1771, a tremendous flood carried away the old bridge, with many of the houses, and several of the inhabitants were drowned. Then was built a stone bridge, still well remembered in Newcastle, which was removed to make room for the present structure.

Alongside the quay we see the huge iron leviathans of modern times lying, taking in cargo, or underneath the cranes, waiting to receive their boilers and machinery, and there, in strange contrast, floats downwards on the tide one of the old keels, with its square sail and its great heaped-up cargo of coal amidships, a lineal descendant of the chiuls of the hardy Norsemen in which they invaded England shortly after the Roman



THE CASTLE.
From a Drawing by R. Jobling.

evacuation. They came to the Tyne to help the trembling Britons of Pons Elii to repel the Picts and Scots, and here the chiuls, and their crews too for that matter, have remained ever since.

But let us now cross the High Level Bridge and enter the city. Here we are beneath the Black Gate, once the entrance to the Castle yard, but not originally so, for there was another called the Baillie Gate, so used, long before Henry III. built this. The upper portion of the gate was rebuilt in the time of James I., as will be seen by the style of the square mullioned windows, but the lower part still shows the beautiful early decorated work of Henry III. The massive keep we see towering above us, was, of course, only part of the castle. The outer wall surrounded it at some distance, extending from the Black Gate to near the end of the High Level Bridge, and thence sweeping round the edge of the projecting plateau, by way of the Moot Hall to the Black Gate again. In some places the remains of this wall are still visible, and at the head of the Castle garth stairs, the south

postern is in fair preservation, and is interesting as being perhaps the only Norman postern in Great Britain. Where the Moot Hall now overlooks the Sand-hill and the river, stood once a British fort, which was succeeded by one of Roman construction; afterwards here was the great hall of the Castle where John Baliol, King of Scotland, did homage to King Edward I. Adjoining the great hall was the king's chamber, the abode of royalty when visiting the Castle, and on the extreme verge of the bank was the Half Moon Battery, mentioned as doing good service during the siege of the town. In the great hall, in after days were held the assizes of the county of Northumberland, for it must be understood that the precincts of the Castle were in the jurisdiction of the county, and not of the town of Newcastle. In 1810 it was pulled down, and the present Moot Hall built. We have said that the Castle yard was beyond the jurisdiction of the town, though situated right in its centre. This fact made it a sort of sanctuary—the Alsatia of Newcastle. It was also a harbour of refuge for many persecuted tradesmen, who were prevented from plying their trades within the town proper, by the tyrannical enactions of the Trades' Guilds. Shoemakers would seem to have most affected it. In the time of Charles II., a French traveller records that in the Castle garth were congregated together, as he thought, all the shoemakers of Newcastle. Visit the Castle garth stairs to-day, and you might make the very same remark.

As to the keep itself—the huge square, frowning structure built by Henry II. on the site of an earlier castle built by William Rufus, itself having a predecessor erected by the unfortunate Robert of Normandy, eldest son of the Conqueror—as to this place, we hesitate to enter upon a description, so many are the points of interest connected with it. We can do no more than give a mere glance at a few of them. Ascending the steep and well-worn outer staircase, we enter by a magnificent transitional doorway (restored) the great hall of the Castle, and as we gaze upwards into the dark space overhead, where hang in the dim light the dusty banners of the old-time lordly custodians of the Castle, we are struck by the cold quietude of the place; everything is so calm and still after the noisy traffic of the streets—as well it may be, seeing that we are shut in by walls of some seventeen feet in thickness. Pikes and halberts, steel caps and coats, swords and shields hang on the walls, and there, in that deep window recess, is one of the wheels of Conway's cannon, which he sunk in the Tyne in 1640, when General Leslie's troops were on their way to enter Newcastle after Newburn fight. Here, in the thickness of the wall, we find the King's Chamber, so called perhaps, because King David of Scotland occupied it during his short stay here after his capture at Alnwick. Here, up a few steps, is the well-chamber, and here is the well itself, going down through the solid masonry of the wall, and ninety feet more down into the solid rock on which the Castle stands. In every chamber we see precious stores of Roman antiquities—altars, and tablets, and statues, and vases, and coins—for Newcastle, standing on, and having been, a station of the great wall of Hadrian, is rich in such treasures. They are so crowded here in the Castle, that the Black Gate is being restored and fitted up by the Society of Antiquaries for their better bestowal. Down this winding staircase from the hall and we reach the floor below, on which is the library of the Society of Antiquaries (tenants of the Corporation), which is a perfect museum of antique curiosities. Then down again deep below into the dungeon, a great room with a vaulted ceiling resting on one huge pillar in the centre, and with iron rings fastened into its wall, to which the poor prisoners were tied up when it was used as a gaol for the county. Here John Howard, the philanthropist, saw a crowd of poor wretches, both men and women, huddled on a little straw on the wet stone floor for days together, while the rain and snow fell through the chinks in the decayed roof above, for at that time the castle was a mere shell, the roof and the various floors having decayed and fallen in, only the lower, or first floor, being left to form a roof to the gaol. Now through this dark apartment, where stands the battered old figure of James I., taken from the front of Newgate when it was pulled down, and so into the chapel. A beautiful little chapel it is, with its round arches and zigzag ornamentation, as fresh and clean as if last week from the mason's chisel. It looks very strange to see this clean masonry after the black, smoke-begrimed work we have been so long looking at, and this sharpness of detail where we have seen crumbling stone—for even in the interior of the Castle there are places where the cold draughts of centuries have worn hollows in the walls of passages and galleries. By the winding staircase, which goes straight up from the basement to the top of the building, we reach the roof. Coming suddenly out of the darkness the glare of light dazzles and

blinds us for a while, but presently we regain our sight and see Newcastle spread out beneath us. Far down below on the south we see the river winding away to right and left, the white sails of the ships flashing out in the sunshine, and beyond the town of Gateshead, with its venerable parish church of St. Mary's, and the dark fell stretching away behind. There are the Windmill Hills on our right, though no windmills wave their arms there as of yore, and further away the green woods of Ravensworth look down on the valley of the Teams, that little tributary of the Tyne in which the Danish fleet wintered centuries on centuries ago. Turning to the west we look from our perch on this seven hundred year old Norman pile upon the Central Railway Station, and see the gleaming railroad lines converging on it from all points. Just in behind it there are the famous engineering works which George Stephenson, the father of railways, founded, and which are still carried on by his descendants. Turn now to the north, and not far from where yonder iron-crowned dome rises above the central police offices there is a narrow court, and at the entrance of that court is a sign which announces that there is to be found a certain Sedan-chair proprietor—and this in the city of Stephenson and his locomotives! We do not know of our own knowledge that this Sedan-chair proprietor is ever troubled or the reverse by applicants for seats in his antiquated conveyances. We never saw them in use except on certain May Day processions and the like, but there his sign hangs, and there he waits in hope of fares. Wait and hope on, proprietor of Sedan-chairs! From certain signs of the times which point to the fact that all things, be they in the shape of pictures, china, furniture, fashion of dress, or style of printing, are considered good and worthy of imitation in proportion as they are old, we judge that even your Sedan-chairs, stuffy, cramped, confined, slow, and uncomfortable though they be, may one day become the rage. Worse things have had better fortune.

ST. MARY'S CHURCH FROM NEWCASTLE QUAY.
From a Drawing by R. Jobling.

Down below us there is another sharp contrast. On its pedestal, at the end of the High Level Bridge, stands the primitive number one engine of George Stephenson, and tearing past it, and within a few yards of it, comes the Flying Scotsman, England's swiftest train—the highest development of railroad mechanism beside its germ.

The finest sight of all to be seen from the Castle top is the steeple of the cathedral church of St. Nicholas, which towers gracefully upwards, almost within a stone's throw of where we stand. We do not wonder at the admiration it has raised in so many breasts, as evidenced by the eulogiums we so often see quoted in the histories of the city. Ben Jonson wrote a rhyming riddle on it when he passed through Newcastle on his way to visit Drummond of Hawthornden, and many other writers have eulogised it both in prose and poetry. Within its venerable walls how many notable personages have worshipped! Here the Princess Margaret, daughter of Henry VII., attended in great state when on her way to wed the ill-starred James IV. of Scotland, who afterwards fell on Flodden Field. Here James VI. of Scotland and the First of England sat and listened to the loyal sermon of Toby Matthews, Bishop of Durham, with which he welcomed the British Solomon into his new kingdom. And here sat Charles I., the unfortunate son of that sapient monarch, and listened to sermons preached in quite another strain than that of the loyal bishop, by the Scotch covenanting clergy; for Charles was long a captive in Newcastle, and, within the memory of living men, the mansion where he was lodged was to be seen, standing within its own grounds in the middle of the town, and the king's apartments and the very bed he lay in were pointed out. The quaint Elizabethan mansion, Anderson Place as it was called, was razed to the ground about 1835, and over the site once occupied by it and its gardens and pleasaunce now runs Grey Street, the principal thoroughfare of Newcastle, and one of the handsomest in the kingdom. The walls of St. Nicholas Church have echoed, too, to the fiery eloquence of John Knox, the great Scottish Reformer. He was afternoon lecturer here for some time, as was also the famous George Wishart. Close by the church, in a house overlooking the churchyard, Thomas Bewick, the great wood-engraver, worked for many a year producing those wondrous pictures of bird and animal life, and those quaint tailpieces, which give us such charming glimpses of homely country life. The house is still to be seen as when he left it. Nearer to us, and hidden from view behind the Black Gate, is the house in which Admiral Lord Collingwood was born. The gallant and gentle sailor, Nelson's bosom friend and "dear Coll," was educated at the Grammar School, which then stood in Westgate-street, and his schoolmates were William and John Scott, afterwards Lord Stowell and Lord Eldon, High Chancellor of England. It was a strange coincidence that these three Newcastle fellow schoolboys should all rise to such high dignity, and their worthy master, Hugh Moises, had just cause to be proud, as he was, of the schoolboys he turned out, to add their names to the long list of their native town's celebrities.

Eldon, and Stowell, and Collingwood, and many another worthy of the town are gone, but the Newcastle of the present day is not behind her ancient renown in the matter of possessing distinguished citizens. She has for one Sir William Armstrong, the inventor of the Armstrong gun, and for another, Mr. J. W. Swan, the solver of the great problem of the subdivision of the electric light. Yet in the city of the Armstrong gun and the Swan lamp, those latest phases of the arts of war and peace, we find customs as old as the Plantagenets still surviving. For instance, that crowd you see gathered beside the post- and telegraph-office, surrounds his Worship the Mayor, who, attended by his sword and mace-bearers, and other officials in quaint and antique garb, is "calling the fair." And that bell which tolls from the cathedral tower overhead is called the reiver's bell, and proclaims to the moss-troopers and reivers of Northumberland—if there are any now left—that they may freely enter the city during fair time without fear of unpleasant consequences.

In walking through the streets of the city you cannot fail being struck again and again by the way in which the new and the old appear in such close conjunction. In other cities, such as Edinburgh, you find the old parts and the new quite apart from one another. Not so here. Hard by, and on either side of the Central Railway Station, with its constant flow of incoming and outgoing trains, and its crowds of busy and pleasure-seeking people, you may see portions of the old town walls, standing black and time-worn, where they have stood since the days of the Edwards. You may step out of the tramcar in the midst of one of the busiest thoroughfares, and in a couple of minutes find yourself in the midst of the quiet convent Close of the Black Friars, and gaze around

KING JOHN'S PALACE.
From a Drawing by R. JOBLING.

on the remains of the buildings which once sheltered the brethren of the powerful order of St. Dominic, and on their chapel, in which, in 1333, Edward Baliol did homage to King Edward III. for the crown of Scotland. Another minute's walk will take you to a long line of the west walls of the town, with several of the towers and turrets still existing, from which the defenders of the town have many a time looked down upon and defied the foe without. You may enter old churches and see worshippers gathered together, decked out in all the latest Paris fashions, within the hoary walls where congregations of their ancestors have gathered together, arrayed in all the various fashions of the last six-hundred years. Off a long narrow stair which runs down the hill-side overhanging the ancient street called the Close, you may chance upon an old brick and timber house, built by a wealthy Newcastle merchant in the days of good Queen Bess, and afterwards used, in the reign of James II. as a Baptist chapel, where now no worshippers gather at all, for it is converted into a tenement dwelling-house, and fast going to decay. Once it must have been a most delectable place, surrounded by its gardens and orchards, and overlooking the shining waters of the river. Opposite it, across the Close, stands the old Mansion House, once the residence of the Mayor, and the scene of joyous festivities, at which princes and dukes and great generals have shone, but now presenting a contrast to all that—strong enough in all conscience, in its bare and empty rooms, stripped of their oaken paneling, their fire-places, and of their very wall-papers. Over the end of the street which contains these two ancient buildings one of the gigantic arches of the High Level Bridge is flung, and as the trains pass high overhead, the sound of their whistles echoes shrill and weirdly in the empty and desolate abodes of departed grandeur.

Perhaps there is no part of Newcastle where the juxtaposition of modern improve-

ments to ancient landmarks is so apparent as the Sand-hill. It is a triangular open space close by the Swing Bridge end, and was once, as its name implies, a sandy beach by the river's edge, much resorted to by the citizens in early times as a place of recreation. There are regulations concerning it as far back as the days of Richard II. Along its north side now runs a range of old houses, one of which is said to have been the abode of the Earls of Derwent-town-worthy of the times of Henry IV. Where we now stand on the east side of the sand-hill, with our backs to the river, we see how the new is encroaching on the old. That old tottering house with the projecting upper stories will soon give way, as its neighbours have done, to a handsome modern building like this nearer to us, with its richly carved stone work, and that row of quaint gabled houses facing us beyond, has not long to live, for some day soon it too will fall before the

THE GREEN WATER POOL, NEWCASTLE.
From a Drawing by R. JOBLING.

water, and another which is known to have been the dwelling-house of Aubone Surtees, banker, of Newcastle, in 1772, when his daughter eloped with young John Scott, who afterwards made her Countess of Eldon. The very window from which the young lady descended into the arms of her bridegroom-elect, is pointed out, and is marked by a blue pane of glass. Opposite these houses is the Guildhall, which stands on the site of an ancient "*Maison Dieu,*" or hospital, founded by Roger Thornton, a well-known destroyer, and a block of new offices stand in its place.

We have said the Sand-hill was once a place of recreation for the people. Of course they have now their public parks, but even these offshoots of modern ideas are in Newcastle associated with relics of antiquity. The Elswick Park and the Leazes Park both stand on historic ground. The former is on a site which is mentioned as far back as the time of Henry II., as being the property of the priors of Tynemouth on which they

mined for coal, and the latter is on the Castle Leazes, which from time immemorial has belonged to the townsmen, and on which were erected some of the batteries of Lord Leven's besieging army during the Great Rebellion. In the Armstrong Park at Heaton, the most beautiful of them all, with its wealth of old timber, and sloping banks, and bosky dells, stands an ancient ruined tower, overgrown with ivy, within sight of where the gay crowds congregate round the band-stand, and play croquet and lawn-tennis on the lawn. Tradition calls this old pile King John's palace, and certain it is that Sir Robert de Gaugy, a favourite of that monarch, resided at Heaton, and was visited there by the king. Not far away stands Heaton Hall, where another of our kings, James I., once visited a subject, Henry Babbington, Esq., and rewarded his hospitality with the honour of knighthood. It stands on the site of an ancient chapel, wherein it is recorded that Edward I. once went to hear a boy bishop perform vespers. The ruined chapel of St. Mary the Virgin near the opposite end of the park, stands amidst a clump of embowering trees overlooking the little dell in which is Our Lady's Well. In the middle ages the shrine and well were largely resorted to by pilgrims. They came from all parts of the country, and the street in Newcastle called Pilgrim-street got its name because it was the way by which they passed through the town on their way hither. It may be that Chaucer's *Wife of Bath* had come thus far, for we know she was an enthusiastic pilgrim, and had visited many continental shrines before setting out on that memorable pilgrimage to Canterbury. Why not then the shrine of Our Lady of Jesmond? The valley of the Ouseburn, along the eastern slope of which the Heaton Park stretches, is a lovely spot. Old inhabitants of Newcastle talk of its beauty in their youthful days when they roamed amongst its woods, and bathed in the Green Water Pool, but it is now lovelier than ever, and its luxuriant foliage, its bright green swards, its waterfalls, and quaint moss-grown bridges, form a picture in refreshing contrast to the crowded streets of the busy city which extends its fast-growing suburbs on either side of it. The greater portion of the park was the princely gift of Sir William and Lady Armstrong to the people of Newcastle, after they had by their fostering care enriched and improved its many natural beauties, and brought it to perfection.

GLASSHOUSE BRIDGE AND BATTERY QUAY.
From a Drawing by R. JOBLING.

Perhaps the most interesting part of the old border-town of which we are now writing, is that which lies along by the river-side. It was the Tyne which made Newcastle, and naturally the evidences of its antiquity, and memorials of its past history cluster thickest on the margin of its stream. The quay-side runs from the end of the Swing Bridge eastward, to the mouth of the Ouse Burn. In strange contrast with the huge iron structure at the one end, is the little Glasshouse Bridge, which crosses the Burn at the other. It was built in the seventeenth century, on the site of an older one, by Thomas Wrangham,

styled on his tombstone, "the beloved shipbuilder of Newcastle, who built five and forty sail of ships, and died of a Feaver in the fifty-sixth year of his life." The old bridge forms a picturesque sight with the old Battery Quay beyond, from which, during the siege of 1644, the Scotch cannon defended their bridge of boats which here crossed the Tyne. On many parts of the quay-side the curious old houses, which once stood facing the defending wall, which with its water-gates and towers ran along the water-side, still stand and look down on the hurrying crowds of merchants and clerks who here most do congregate, and on the busy workers loading or discharging the ships lying alongside. Passing from this scene of noise and confusion down a narrow lane or "chare" as they are here called, we may come upon a scene of almost monastic quietude and seclusion in the precincts of the Trinity House, where the aged brethren have their comfortable dwellings. The chapel here was originally built in 1491, but was rebuilt in the seventeenth century, the black oak fittings of the older structure being preserved. Here the ancient mariners may sit, and in imagination feel themselves once more on board one of the old "wooden walls" in which many of them have served, for the ceiling is exactly like the under part of a ship's deck, with its beams stretching across from side to side. It was in this chapel that the Solemn League and Covenant was administered during the Scottish occupation of the town, and, as showing how the whirligig of time brings about its revenges, it was in the Trinity House that many of Oliver Cromwell's prisoners, taken at Dunbar, and belonging to the Covenanting Army, were bestowed a little later on.

There is an old part of Newcastle close by the Trinity House, which is called Pandon. It was in the times of the Heptarchy a royal town, and the site of the palace of the Saxon kings of Northumbria is pointed out; parts even of its walls are to be seen surmounted by a block of mean buildings. The Sally Port Gate, the only remaining gateway of the town walls, looks down on the once royal town, which lost its independence when it was annexed to Newcastle by Edward I. This gateway is in itself an epitome of great part of the history of Newcastle, its upper part being of Queen Anne's time, its lower mediaeval, and its foundation is said to be Roman, for tradition says that one of the towers of the great wall occupied the same site.

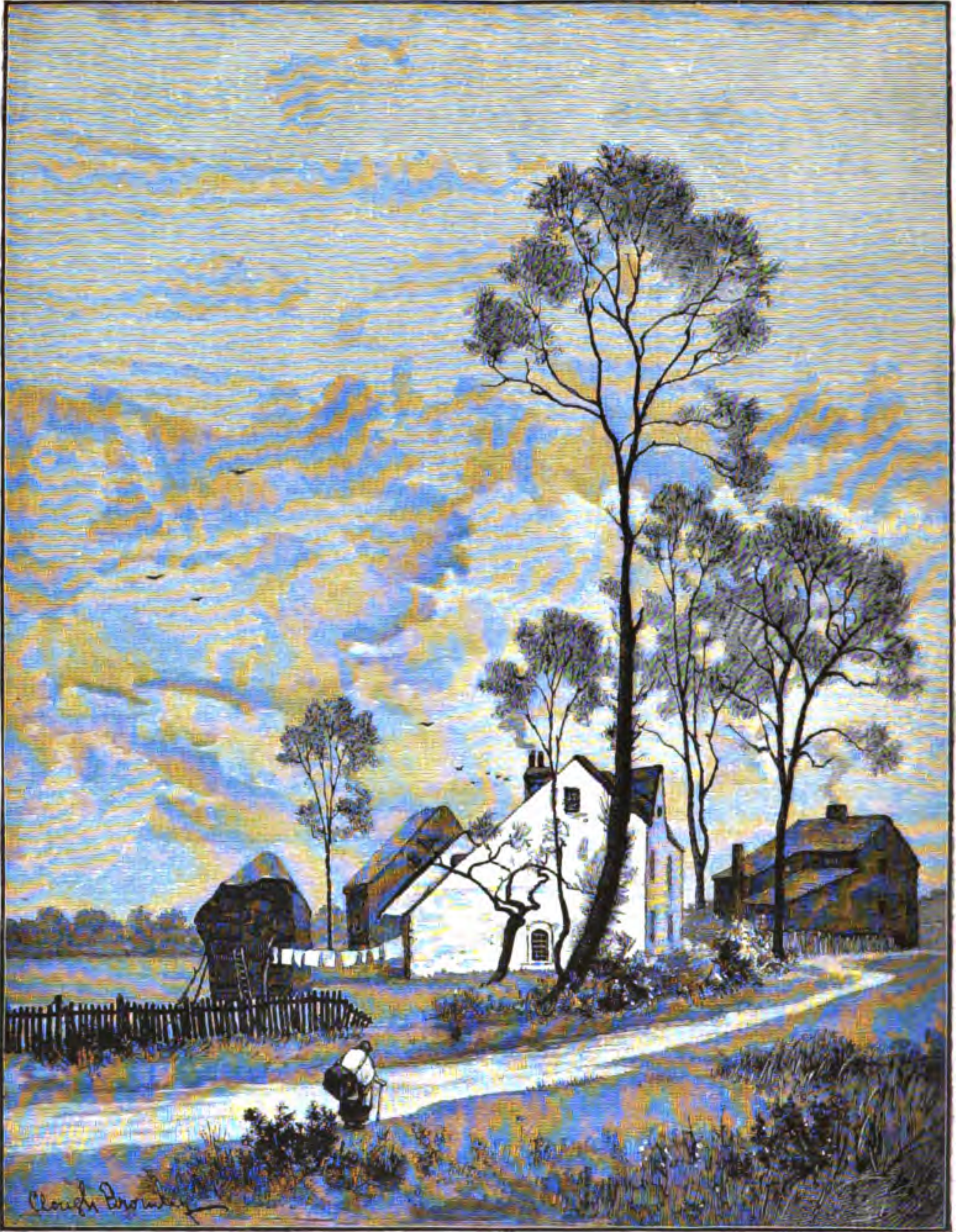
We might carry the reader to many another spot in old Newcastle, where he might find relics without number of historical personages, buildings, and events, full of romantic and antiquarian interest. We might show him the sites and the remains of monasteries, hospitals, nunneries, and chapels, for in old times, before it received its present name, the town, from the number of its religious houses, was called Monkchester; also of fortifications, towers, and residences, famous in old border song and story. Or we might show him sights connected with more recent times, and perhaps as interesting, for we could point him out the very barber's shop in which Roderick Random found the faithful Strap, or the locality in which was the tavern where poor Oliver Goldsmith was taken prisoner by a party of soldiers, on suspicion of being a Scotchman in the French service; we could show him in the Butcher Bank, the house in which Akenside the poet, author of the *Pleasures of the Imagination*, was born, or take him to see the house in which lived George and Robert Stephenson, illustrious father and son, and the workshop in which Thomas Bewick, the father of modern wood-engraving made his great name. We might show him the house where John Forster, the friend and biographer of Charles Dickens, and a native of the town, lived before he went to London and became famous, and many another memorial connected with names well known in the rolls of science, art, and literature, but our space is exhausted, and here we must perforce take our leave of the old town, and newly made city of Newcastle-on-Tyne.

R. J. Charleton.

If it is desired to find a common where cricket reigns less supreme than at Clapham, a short drive will take us to the spot. On the left of the Clapham Road a mile or two beyond the common, a narrow lane passing for the most part between park palings and high, old-fashioned walls—if the gate happens to be open we may get a glimpse of a really fine old brick house standing behind a bold carriage-sweep with lawn and flower-beds and a wealth of wistaria—leads in a very short time to the twin commons of Tooting Graveney and Tooting Bec. As we enter the common at its west corner a triangle of open land stretches away to the left, the base being formed by a noble avenue of elms marking the boundary between the two manors, while the side to our left is bounded by the low fence of a spacious park. On the right a bank of smooth turf flanks the road and separates it from a broad raised footpath, on the further side of which, again, stand pleasant-looking houses with large leafy gardens. We have left the activity and bustle of Clapham Common for something like rural retirement. Presently the houses and gardens on the right come to an end, and give place to another large corner of open land. If we take the road to the right through furze and fern we shall come to the church of the tiny parish of Tooting Graveney, and shall eventually find ourselves again on the high road to Epsom, having seen the whole of Tooting Graveney Common. This small parish, with its pretty little common, gives some support to the theory that parishes originated in private estates, for the name Graveney is obviously derived from the family of De Gravenell to whom the manor was granted soon after the

Conquest, while the apparently more generic name of Tooting seems to have nothing to do with parochial considerations, the adjoining manor of Tooting Bec lying in the parish of Streatham. The whole parish of Tooting Graveney does not contain 600 acres, a very moderate family estate. One of the holders of this small property, however, had the expensive honour of a visit from Queen Elizabeth, who, in the year 1600, is said to have come down from London to see Sir Henry Maynard (secretary to her minister, Lord Burleigh), at his Manor House at Tooting. Tooting Graveney Common has had a stirring history of late years. Any one who looks at the two pieces into which the common is divided will be struck with a difference in their appearance. The irregular part to the right has the proper look of a common. There is soft turf and much furze. The triangle to the left is bare and scarred, having neither good turf nor any of the rough growth which marks old waste land. It looks, in fact, like what it is, a common recovering from the effects of a brutal assault. A few years since, any one visiting the common would have found it surrounded with a hideous fence made of gas-pipes, while its surface was pock-marked with gravel-digging and scored with cart-ruts. An enterprising merchant of Mincing Lane had it in his mind to turn a penny by the common. Not long before the manor had been put up for sale. The residents round the common, to whom it was of vital importance to preserve the open space which gave both charm and value to their houses, made some motion towards buying the manor. There was, however, no effective organisation for the purpose, and they finally contented themselves with allowing the property to pass into the hands of a neighbour who, they seem to have thought, would pay the same regard to their interests as to his own. But whatever his views may have been before the purchase, the possession of the manor produced that curious inability to see more than one side of a question which often afflicts the landowner. He told his neighbours he must inclose some of the common, but if they behaved well and did not thwart his wishes he would leave them half. Some sort of agreement was come to, and the gas-pipes were put up. Fortunately the contract was not binding on all the commoners. Mr. Thos. Betts, an intrepid butcher, of Tooting, supported by many residents, challenged the feudal oppressor. A lawsuit ensued; the courts held that the inclosure was illegal, and the fence was removed. There was a less conclusive verdict as to the digging of gravel, and the common still continued to suffer some ill-treatment in this respect. At length for a moderate sum the Metropolitan Board of Works bought out the lord, and so put the land under the same management as the adjoining tract of Tooting Bec which they had previously acquired.

Tooting Bec Common (which acquires its odd name from the fact that the manor of which it is part formerly belonged to the Norman Abbey of Bec founded by Lanfranc, William the Conqueror's ally), is much more extensive than Tooting Graveney, and is, in its way, one the prettiest of London commons. Snugly hidden away between the two high roads to Epsom and Croydon, its turf is of the softest and greenest, and it is dotted over with large bushes of briar and bramble and thorn and with fine old oaks and elms. It is almost a little piece of woodland, and yet preserves a character of its own, distinct from that of a large waste like Wimbledon or a piece of an old forest like Epping. One fancies the soil must be better than on most of the London commons. It is not, like so many, the cap of a hill, but lies on a slope gently rising towards the east. One cannot wonder that Dr. Johnson, who had no taste for grand or rugged scenery, should have found in Mrs. Thrale's house, which stood on this common, a spot as congenial in its natural surroundings as in the human companionship it afforded, and should have loved to pace under the elms and to let the soft beauties of the place sink into his soul. Unfortunately, since Dr. Johnson's days one grievous injury has been done to the common. The Brighton Railway Company has pierced it through with two of its suburban lines, one traversing it from end to end and leaving it only to intersect Mrs. Thrale's estate, and the other cutting off and completely isolating a corner at the Balham end. There was of course not the slighest necessity for this attack upon a public playground. At the present day it would not be suffered, and it is satisfactory to think that though the Commons Preservation Society came into existence too late to prevent the greater evil, it was able to prevent the sacrifice by the Metropolitan Board (which always wants watching in its treatment of open spaces) of the triangle at Balham which the railway had cut off. The common is now carefully tended by the Board. Its management is not so obtrusive as at Clapham, probably because the common is not so much frequented. Everything possible seems to have been done to repair the disastrous effects of the inclosure on Tooting Graveney Common,



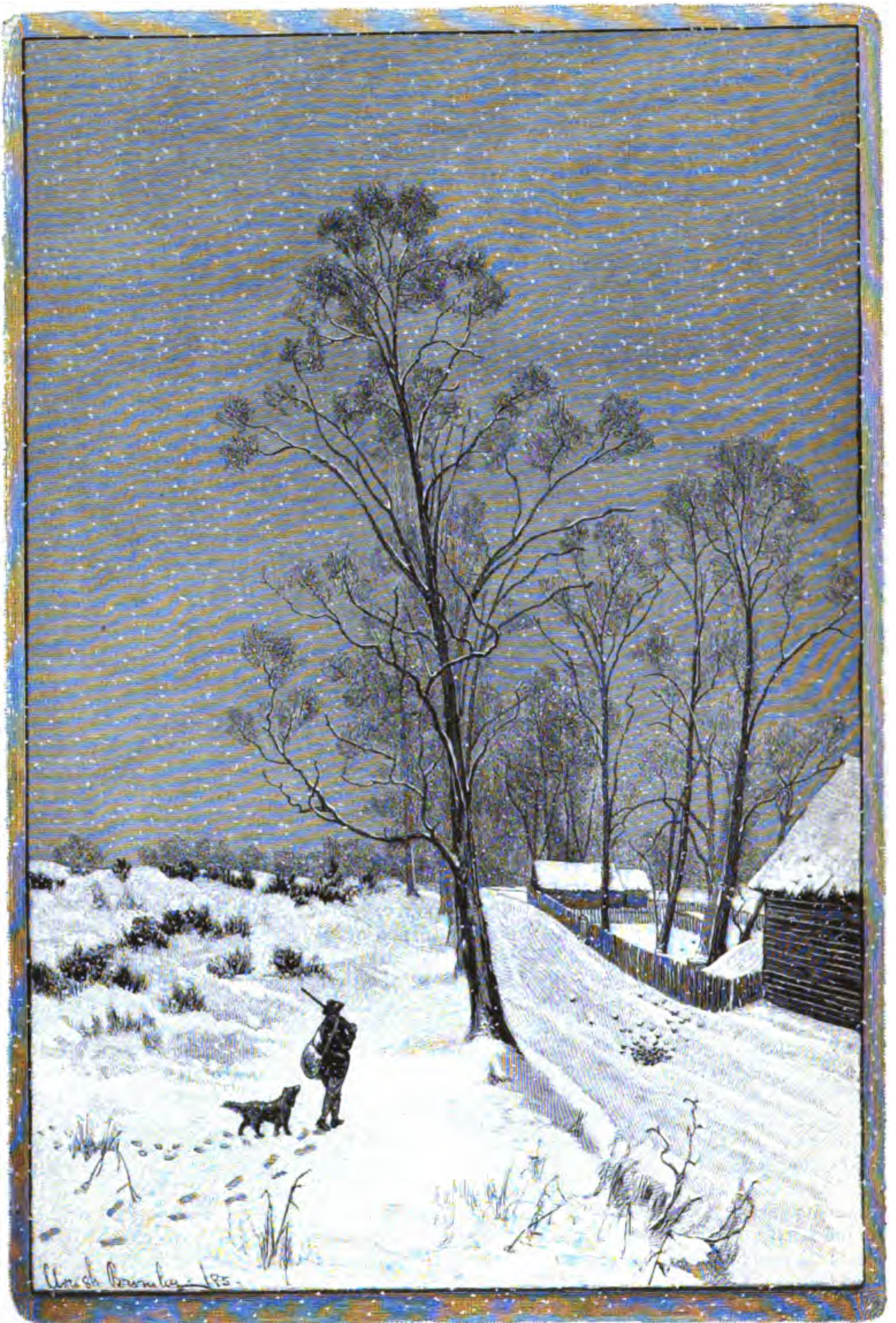
HYDE FARM, TOOTING BEC COMMON.
From a Drawing by CLOUGH BROMLEY.

and to preserve the semi-sylvan character of Tooting Bec. The only fault that strikes one is that there are too many poplars among the newly-planted trees. No doubt they grow quickly and their light, quivering foliage forms a pleasant contrast with that of other trees, but one may easily have too much of them, and at best they form a poor substitute for the oaks and elms which flourish so well on this soil.

At the top of Tooting Bec Common is Streatham Church and a few steps lead us into the

great South Road near where the Sutton and Croydon branches fork. At this juncture is Streatham Green, a tiny remnant, boasting some fine old elms, and preserved, one is glad to notice, from further encroachments. It is difficult to over-estimate the value of even such little corners as this in preventing a suburb from becoming monotonous and dull. Let us take the main Croydon road, the left hand prong of the fork. Here we may see London in actual growth. Old park-like meadows are lying unfenced and gashed with new-made roads; and an eruption of modern Queen Anne houses is breaking out. We have not to proceed far along the road before we reach another common. On the left-hand side a broad lawn of smooth bright turf slopes upwards. At either edge of it is a roadway not too straight or formal, giving an approach to comfortable-looking villas of respectable age—by no means unenviable retreats after a hard day's work in the City. Strolling at leisure up the greensward, we presently find that we have come unawares on to the westward edge of the high ground which lies due south of London, and which we are accustomed to associate with Sydenham and the Crystal Palace. To the west we look away to the long wooded ridge of Wimbledon Hill, picked out with white houses, while to the south-west the eye ranges over a wide expanse of flat country—the plain of Surrey which lies between the North Downs and the river. But the common does not end here. The summit of the hill is more broken and furzy than the slope. Presently the ground falls away to the south and we have another view of undulating fields and meadows. We pass a pond with the picturesque stump of an old willow, and a row of limes and chestnuts, and if we like to pursue the lane which leaves the east corner of the common we shall soon find ourselves in Norwood and in full view of the Crystal Palace. Streatham Common has certainly suffered less from the hands of the spoiler than any other London common, except perhaps Clapham. There are no signs of encroachments, or of gravel digging. The surface seems to be that which nature gave to the common and not the scarified distortion which has in too many cases been substituted by man's agency. Nor is the care which thus efficiently protects the common made too evident by staring pieces of white paper headed "Penalty." No notice-board indicates the necessity of keeping marauders in check. The common is quiet and rural, and might, save for the greater number of houses around it, be situated in a secluded country parish. This good fortune is we believe owing to the same system which produced such beneficial results at Clapham. The common has been leased by the lords of the manor to a committee of residents who have zealously been on the watch to prevent depredations. The Metropolitan Board has now taken permanent charge of the place, and though the common will no doubt soon be the subject of a mild attack of notice-boards, the public are to be congratulated on an arrangement which will secure for their use in perpetuity a most delightful stretch of open land. It is much to be wished that one of the local authorities would do a like good turn for another common part of which is situated in the same manor as Streatham—the manor of Walworth or Vauxhall. Mitcham Common, at no great distance to the south-west, is devastated by gravel-digging, being, in fact the last gravel-producing common in the neighbourhood of London which, as the contractors and gardeners say, is not shut up. But we should be travelling beyond the limits we have assigned to ourselves were we to enter upon a description of the woes by which one of the largest commons near London is afflicted. Mitcham lies too far a-field to be included in our present tour.

We have now reached the end of the group of commons in the south western district, and must travel some distance before we can again set foot on public land. If we strike in towards London along the Croydon road till we come to Kennington we shall find Kennington Park, and bearing off to the east we may come to Camberwell Green, on which the late Emperor of the French lived in retirement before his successful snatch at power, and whence, if we mistake not, he turned out as special constable during the Chartist disturbances of 1848. Further on, still keeping eastwards, we may reach the other small commons in the huge Parish of Camberwell, Goose Green, Peckham Rye, and Nunhead Green. Camberwell Green is now a park, and the Rye has been a favourite cricket-ground for the boys of South London for many years. But the wants of this district are by no means sufficiently supplied by these very small open spaces, and it is much to be desired that one or two of the hills in the neighbourhood of Deptford could be secured before they are covered with houses. Further to the east, happily, the hill-tops are crowned with common land, and Blackheath, Woolwich Common, Plumstead Common and Bostal Heath, form a second group of breathing-grounds. These Kentish commons have a character of their own. They may be generally described as situate on the



STREATHAM COMMON.
From a Drawing by CLOUGH BROMLEY.

edge of the sand hills which rise up abruptly from the bed of the Thames. Each gives some more or less striking view, and there is a pleasant sense of breeziness and elevation. As we wander over the smooth well-used turf of Blackheath, thinking perhaps of the time when Monk's forces were paraded there to hail their returning king, we come suddenly upon a steep descent, rendered almost precipitous by the removal of the gravel which forms the face of the slope; and across the Lewisham and Sydenham hills we see the Crystal Palace (which we almost reached just now by way of Streatham Common) standing to realise how charming is the site which London occupies. It is well that some few open spots remain from which one can look over the tops of houses and escape from the straight vistas of roads and streets. Views, too, are generally popular, and this corner is no doubt a favourite one, though many come to the Heath solely to play at some game, for Blackheath vies with Clapham Common as a playground. Its surface is absolutely guiltless of furze or bush, and, except where gravel has been dug, is unusually level. Cricket and football may be played almost anywhere, while the hollows from

CHESTERFIELD WALK, BLACKHEATH.
From a Drawing by CLOUGH BROMLEY.

clear and gleaming against the sky. The west wind is blowing the smoke of London down the river, and a heavy, dun-coloured pall lies over the city and drifts towards the sun. Masses of clouds cut off in a straight line at their lower edge but cresting up into billows of dusky white and bronze tipped with pale gold, hang in mid sky, and the light is paled and sicklied around us, while the yellow haze gives size and impressiveness to the southern hills overlapping one another in bold curves. It is only when one gets some chance glimpse of this kind and is able to dissociate what one sees from names of familiar suburbs that it is possible which gravel has been taken are invaluable for golf. The Blackheath Golf Club boasts an unbroken existence since the time of James I., and as the game is essentially Scotch, it goes without saying that it is the oldest Golf Club in England. One cannot help anticipating, however, that the game must before long be crowded out from such a place as Blackheath. On Wimbledon Common where it is of comparatively recent origin, complaints of the terror which it inspires have been rife, and when it is remembered that a man has before now been killed on the spot from the blow of a golf-ball, it is impossible to say that the fear is

altogether without foundation. Meantime the red coats of the players, besides acting as a danger-signal, give a welcome touch of colour to the surface of the common. For there is certainly a tendency to monotony both of colour and form about Blackheath. The eye sweeps over a large expanse of green sward, so spacious and unbroken that the white rows of houses which edge the heath on most sides have the appearance of sea-side terraces. On the south, indeed, the thick green foliage of Greenwich Park gives some warmth to the picture, and the Ranger's Lodge, a fine old red-brick house within the park inclosure, lights up the Lewisham side of the Heath. At the entrance to the park the Metropolitan Board have adopted a formal arrangement of posts and rails and gravelled road which is in keeping with the stately avenue within the great gates, while a bright pond with a few light weeping trees and some scarlet geraniums safely ensconced on a little island give a pleasant touch of gaiety, suggesting a Parisian garden. In another part of the heath there is a Rotten Row for riders, and one feels that more can scarcely be done to render a great public playground attractive and useful to persons of all tastes. The heath must indeed present a very different appearance from that which it assumed in 1865, when a Committee of the House of Commons reported that it was being literally carted away. Blackheath is situate partly in the manor of Lewisham, of which Lord Dartmouth is lord, and partly in the great Crown manor of East Greenwich. The Commissioners of Woods and Forests managed the manor on behalf of the crown, and it is quite in harmony with their treatment of the New Forest, Epping Forest, and other royal wastes, that they should have allowed gravel to be dug to an unlimited extent for a paltry revenue of less than £60 a year. No doubt the Commissioners could defend this state of things on principles perfectly satisfactory to themselves, but Parliament, happily, was not convinced by their arguments. The conduct of the Department was censured by the Committee, and a few years later the Metropolitan Board obtained those powers of management which they have turned to such good account.

The great Dover Road traverses Blackheath, which has no doubt in its time been a terror to many a benighted traveller from the Continent. If the straight broad line of this road be followed for about three miles, we shall touch the top of the next Kentish Metropolitan open space, Woolwich Common. A prettier approach, however, is obtained by diverging from the Dover Road to the left, and following the winding lane which skirts the fine old wall of Charlton House, a noble mansion built for Prince Henry, the eldest son of James I. As we enter the common from this road we see in front of us the heights of Woolwich and Plumstead. Trees and houses in a picturesque mingling of green and white seem to cling to the abrupt slopes, and almost to hang over the common. For the rest, the common is an unbroken slope of turf rising to the south, but not affording any such southward view as we have described at Blackheath. There are no bushes, trees, or furze, and the turf, though not badly poached, shows signs of wheel-tracks and horses' hoofs. Woolwich Common in fact is a drill-ground. It belongs to the War Office, and not to the London public. Nevertheless it is a considerable open space, and cannot be omitted in any list of London commons. The wind blows fresh across it, and its existence must tend to neutralise the volumes of smoke poured out of the chimneys of the neighbouring dockyard.

It is but a short walk from Woolwich to Plumstead Common. We descend a steep hill, and mount one still steeper, so steep indeed that the gardens of the cottages built in the hollow seem to consist of nothing but blackish sand and stones with a few struggling trees. On the summit of this sandy hill is Plumstead Common, not, it must be confessed, a very inviting open space at first sight. The Woolwich end of the common consists of a series of small plots of poor grass, surrounded with posts and rails and cut up with roads. A sudden dip in the surface suggests that there may once have been a picturesque hollow, but nothing more inviting is now to be found than one or two red-tiled cottages with that patched-up hap-hazard appearance about them which tells its own tale. These cottages and gardens have undoubtedly been cribbed from the common; they were once the abodes of squatters who subsequently either acquired a title by lapse of time or obtained a grant from the manor court on easy terms. Further on we come to a tile-yard on one side of the common flanked by a square house of forbidding aspect. Ugly as it is, lovers of open spaces should look upon this house with some reverence, for it was the abode of one of the three champions who delivered Plumstead common from inclosure, Mr. Joseph Dawson. This part of the common is dominated to the south by the wooded heights of Shooter's Hill the best

feature in the landscape, for as yet the views river-wards are indistinct, and the common itself is little more than a play-ground. Presently the place is redeemed from dulness by a sudden ravine which cuts across it. The Slade—a name to be found locally in many places as indicating narrow valleys through which water runs—has every appearance of having been scoured by floods. The sides are very steep and are formed of loose gravel and sand with a very slender covering of turf, and at the bottom are numerous water-runnels. On the further side we catch the best view we have yet had of the low-lying marsh land to the north and the river in the distance. On a fine day the water glistens and the sails glide along white in the sunshine, but too often London smoke throws a dubious haze over the scene. This further part of the common would, however, but for one circumstance, be open and pleasant enough. The edge towards the river breaks away here and there, making miniature slades and projecting knolls, while eastwards and southwards beyond the few rather mean-looking houses scattered about the common are woods and fields, London seeming to have been suddenly left behind. But the surface of the common disturbs our enjoyment. Instead of turf, furze, and fern, nothing is to be seen but sandy gravel cut up everywhere with wheel tracks, and here and there ploughed and churned into mud and pools of water. The reason is not far to seek. The military authorities at Woolwich do not like to destroy the smooth expanse of grass which stretches before their eyes and which is their own property. So, on wet days, they send their heavy guns to manœuvre on Plumstead Common, which has been bought, not by them, but by the Metropolitan Board on behalf of the London public. A more wanton attack upon the rights of the metropolis can hardly be conceived, and one cannot but think poorly of the Metropolitan Board for submitting to such treatment. Plumstead Common has indeed had a hard time of it, and though by the exertions of a few public-spirited men it has been rescued from inclosure, its beauty has suffered grievously. Thirty years ago it afforded good pasturage for cattle, and was plentifully sprinkled with furze and fern. The Manor of Plumstead, which prior to the Reformation belonged to the Monastery of St. Augustine at Canterbury, was in an ill-starred moment, devised by one John Michel, in the year 1735, to the Provost and Scholars of Queen's College, Oxford. The College allowed things to take their course for more than a century, but about five-and-twenty years ago they appear to have been seized with a desire to turn their property to account, for the benefit, presumably, of sound learning, but to the injury, most certainly, of their neighbours at Plumstead and of the inhabitants of the metropolis. Their zeal was great, but was not according to knowledge. They contested the rights of those who had enjoyed the pasturage and scrub of the common uninterruptedly for years. They sanctioned inclosure and the digging of gravel, and rapidly destroyed much of the value of Plumstead Common both as a grazing ground and as an outlet for Woolwich. Their purpose was avowedly to reduce the common to the condition of private property, and had it not been for the newly-awakened appreciation of the value of open spaces on the part of the London public, and for the intrepidity and resolution of two or three commoners, they would no doubt have achieved their end. Fortunately the Commons Preservation Society had come into existence, and fortunately also the late Mr. Frederick Goldsmid was a commoner of the manor. Acting under the advice of the society Mr. Goldsmid, with Mr. Warrick and Mr. Dawson, threw down some of the fences erected by the College, and showed an unmistakable determination to submit the claims of that learned body to the arbitrament of the law. After some preliminary skirmishing the commoners commenced a suit to establish their rights against the College, Sir Julian Goldsmid taking the place of his father, who had died; and in the year 1870, a Decree was obtained from the Court of Chancery vindicating the commoners' view of the case, and restraining the lords of the manor from inclosing or devastating the common. Unfortunately the commoners did not immediately follow up their advantage by obtaining statutory powers of management. Some delay ensued, and finally the Metropolitan Board undertook the guardianship of the common. Meantime the War Office continued to exercise their heavy guns over the turf. The College, angry at its defeat, supported them in this aggression; the Metropolitan Board would not fight, and the commoners were not inclined for a second essay in litigation. A compact was finally come to, under which the military authorities were restricted to the end of the common furthest removed from Woolwich, and the consequence is that by far the finest part of the open space is now reduced to a sandy desert. It is to be hoped that London will some day be represented by a central authority which will not allow itself to be thus

bearded in its own territory. What the common was once may be seen from the delightful piece of broken ground which forms the eastern slope of the little table-land. The sandy plateau sinks abruptly into a broad valley through which runs the road to Wickham and Welling. The common extends no farther than the top of the hill, but the side of the valley beneath is over-grown with furze and fern and heath, and studded with young oak-scrub and thorns and brambles. This piece of ground cannot be worth much, as the pitch is too steep for either cultivation or building, and the Metropolitan Board should gorges which penetrate its sides are covered with wild verdure. Young birch wave their delicate leaves and reflect the light from their silvery stems. Purple heather mingles with bright green or yellowing bracken and dark furze, young oaks give richness of foliage, and sandy scaurs add a touch of orange. On the west the common is flanked by the Scotch firs of a plantation of Sir Julian Goldsmid's, while one or two modern villas of bright red brick with gabled roofs do no harm to the scene. The heath is small, only fifty-five acres, but it would be difficult to find a more delightful example of the wild, wooded

LONDON FROM BOSTAL HEATH.
From a Drawing by CLOUGH BROMLEY.

lose no time in securing it by way of addition to the common.

A mile or so beyond Plumstead Common lies another piece of waste in the same manor. Bostal Heath was wholly inclosed by Queen's College, but the fence was removed in obedience to the order of the Court of Chancery. Fortunately it is too far from Woolwich and too hilly, and perhaps too small, to offer any temptation to drill-sergeants. It has therefore been left in its natural condition, and a most charming little common it is. Situated, like Plumstead, on the top of the sand hills, its knolls are higher, and most delightful views of the marshes and river may be had from then. On the other hand the little common. The Kentish group is redeemed by Bostal Heath from the charge of bareness and monotony, and may boast that it contributes to the circle of London commons one of the prettiest little bits to be found anywhere.

But it is time we crossed the water. The north side of London, as we have said, is badly off for commons. Epping Forest is outside our present limit and moreover belongs distinctly to the east, the valley of the Lea severing it from north London. There are left only the Hackney Commons, Wormwood Scrubs, and Hampstead Heath. Wormwood Scrubs has suffered a fate not wholly unlike that of Plumstead Common. Once a

wood in the great ecclesiastical manor of Fulham—a possession of the Bishop of London from time immemorial—it is now bare grass. It has been seized upon for drilling and rifle-shooting, and though the Metropolitan Board has obtained a species of subsidiary right to protect it in the public interests so far as is consistent with its use for military purposes, the Scrubs must be considered, like Woolwich Common, as valuable chiefly for the barrier it presents to the unbroken spread of buildings. The Hackney Commons are more interesting. In the first place, if the Irishism may be excused, they are not commons at all. They are survivals of the common field, or, to speak more accurately, the common meadow. They are not waste of a manor and do not belong to the lord. On the contrary, they are divided into many strips, each of which had at one time a separate owner. These strips were originally marked out on the ground by little stumps of wood or iron, and many of such boundary marks are now to be seen on the marshes. From Lady Day to Lammas Day the fields are shut up, all cattle being driven off. During this time each owner of a strip has possession of his own grass and may mow and carry it. Indeed it has been alleged that the land may even be tilled and sown. It is said that one year Hackney Downs was sown with a crop of oats, but that it could not be carried before Lammas Day and the commoners, who resented the proceeding, rushed in and burnt the grain. It is not likely that any such tillage is in accordance with ancient custom, unless the close time was formerly longer than at present. The common arable fields of Hackney have probably long since been made private property, and the open lands now remaining are no doubt ancient hay meadows, which have escaped inclosure in consequence of the lengthened period during which they have been wont to remain common. The marshes are still of value as grazing ground, and any one approaching them at the south end by way of Homerton will find across the road a bar by the side of which is a gate-house occupied by the officer whose duty it is to mark the cattle at the proper times of the year for the purpose of the turn-out. Cattle not so marked are liable to be impounded, and there are long lists of fees and penalties. A similar practice exists in Epping Forest where each parish appoints its reeve, whose passport is necessary to entitle a beast to the run of the forest. Such customs are probably of very old date, relics of that system of communal land-holding which is crystallised for us in the term village community.

The Hackney Commons have another title to notice. They are of all the metropolitan commons surrounded by the densest population. The small open space called London Fields is close to the Station of that name on the Great Eastern Railway, and is in the midst of small houses. So continuous was the trample and patter of feet upon the turf, that when the Metropolitan Board took charge of the place it was worn bare like a school playground. The Board ploughed it up and are endeavouring to produce a sward. The Hackney Downs are surrounded by detached and semi-detached villas and are a pleasant open spot lying on the top of the hill above the marshes. They are, however, of small extent, less than fifty acres, and must be looked upon merely as another very valuable playground. The same may be said of Hackney or Well Street Common, but the marshes and their adjuncts, North and South Mill Fields, have a different character. As we follow the narrow winding High Street of Homerton, with its curious mixture of quiet old private houses wearing an air of decayed gentility, one-storied cottages, and small shops, and passing from a muddy lane, which runs suddenly down hill by a row of old elms, enter, through a turnstile by the cattle-marker's bar, upon the marshes, we have that sense of getting to the end of all things which is associated with a large tract of flat low-lying land. There are rough-looking men of the bargee type hanging about, and wild, half-clad girls and boys looking after the cattle. Before us is a high-pitched bridge spanning the artificial navigable channel of the Lea, a broad, full-flowing stream. On the further side of the bridge the marshes spread out on both sides, a level surface of thick, coarse grass, indicating a heavy, wet soil, though after the long drought of summer there are many cracks in the ground. At some little distance in front is an old low white house picturesquely situated in the midst of a few willows by the side of an old wooden bridge. Here we come to the old branch of the Lea, a winding, sedgy stream near which the cows love to congregate. Bounding the flat expanse are many very ugly things, lines of railroad crowded with coal trucks, and tall chimneys, but there are also rising hills pleasantly dotted with trees and houses with here and there a spire or church tower. The breeze blows freshly across the marshes, and save for a boy or man looking after the cattle the place is deserted of human kind—a solitude in the midst of millions. Leaving the

marshes at the northern end by Pound Lane we come upon South Mill Field, and crossing this we may gain the Lea Bridge Road on the further side of which is North Mill Field. These fields lie on the slope of the hill. Looking up from the bottom of South Mill Field the houses and gardens of Clapton form a warm and agreeable background to the intervening bright green meadows. In the opposite direction from the top of North Mill Field a pretty view of the red-tiled cottages at Lea Bridge and the wooded hills of Epping Forest beyond is to be had. We regain the High Street of Clapton and are reminded by old red-brick houses and carefully-guarded ponds and grass plots of the days when Hackney was a rich village.

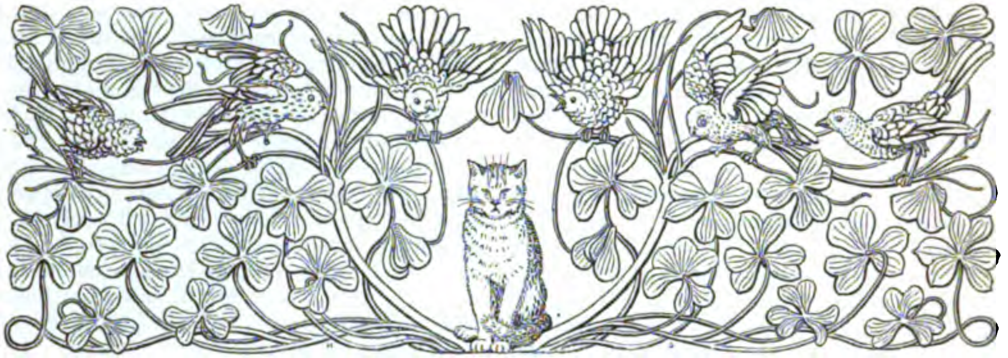
From the flat, open, deserted expanse of Hackney Marshes, we turn by way of contrast to the hilly, irregular, much-frequented Heath of Hampstead. There can hardly be a question that, speaking of natural advantages alone, Richmond and Hampstead are the two most charming suburbs of London. Against the view from the Terrace at Richmond, and the stately glories of the park, may fairly be set the open hill-side at Hampstead, dominating the great city, the noble breezy promenade from the Spaniards to "Jack Straw's Castle,"—where the ground falls away on either side, and the eye roams northwards across the furzy hollows of the Heath, over an unlimited expanse of open fields and meadows—and the steep, narrow streets, and old-fashioned small houses and large gardens of Hampstead village. It is probably owing to the steepness of the hill that Hampstead has maintained so much of its peculiarly retired character. Certainly London, which sets in full tide to the foot of Haverstock Hill, breaks but feebly on its slope, and has till lately made scarcely any impression on the Heath and its surroundings. Now, it is said, improvements are to begin in Hampstead village, and building projects affecting some of the fields adjoining the Heath are in the air. Moreover, the great popularity of the Heath in itself makes it difficult to maintain its peculiar charms. Hampstead Heath has always figured in the minds of Londoners side by side with Epping Forest. If the Forest is the place for a great outing, the Heath is available for a half-day's excursion; and it may be reached in a walk without any expense. Its situation on a hill, and its nearness to the crowded northern suburbs, no doubt, laid the basis of its popularity, and the proceedings of the late Sir Thomas Wilson, as lord of the manor, made its position secure. Hampstead is a copyhold manor, originally belonging to the Abbot and Convent of Westminster. Towards

THE "WHITE HOUSE," HACKNEY MARSHES.
From a Drawing by CLOUGH BROMLEY.

the end of the last century it came into the Wilson family, and from 1821, for nearly fifty years, was the property of Sir Thomas Maryon Wilson as tenant for life. Many influential persons have resided at Hampstead from time to time, and the copyholders, who formed what is known as the homage of the manorial court, were unusually active in preserving the Heath from encroachments and disfigurement. When application was made for leave to inclose small pieces of waste the homage surveyed the land, and, if they reported in favour of the application, generally imposed conditions tending to preserve the character of the neighbourhood. Not unfrequently building was prohibited, and it is owing to this cause that many plots of smooth greensward edged with fine trees are to be seen on the outskirts of the Heath. This was not a condition of things favourable to inclosure on the part of the lord, and very likely Sir Thomas Wilson had originally little idea of taking any such step. But as tenant for life he could not build even on his inclosed lands at Finchley. He applied to Parliament for the necessary powers, and in a thoughtless moment included the Heath in his bill. Hampstead and London were up in arms. The Bill was thrown out. Not only so, but Sir Thomas could not subsequently induce the legislature to give him the power of building even upon his private lands. The feud became a deadly one, and when in 1865 sweeping theories as to the rights of lords of manors were broached in connection with Lord Spencer's project for emparking Wimbledon Common, Sir Thomas determined to assume a bold front, and began to build a house on the summit of the Heath. The copyholders, headed by the late Mr. Gurney Hoare, the banker, took up the challenge. Legal proceedings were commenced, and the building of the house was temporarily stopped. The questions raised were never, however, fought out. Sir Thomas died, and his brother who succeeded him sold the heath to the Metropolitan Board for the very substantial price of 45,000*l*. All these occurrences served but to heighten the popularity of the Heath, and the consequence is that on high-days and holidays the place is like a fair, and the Lower Heath, which forms, as it were, an approach to the hill, is worn threadbare. Other dangers also threaten the Heath. Hitherto it has been flanked on the eastern side by a noble tract of hill and meadow and wood belonging to Lord Mansfield. This is purely private property, and it is not in the nature of things that it will, if left in its owner's hands, be suffered to lie idle for ever. The same thing may be said of a small estate of the Wilson family adjoining the Heath. Unfortunately the views from the Heath depend for much of their attractiveness on the surrounding lands. If bricks and mortar take the place of green sward on the neighbouring slopes and hill-tops, the Heath will assume a strangely confined aspect, and much of it will degenerate into little more than a bare playground like London Fields. On the other hand, if the adjoining land which is still free from building could be secured, and notably the round clay eminence known as Parliament Hill, which gives a panoramic view including London on the south, and the heights of Hampstead and Highgate on the north, an open space would be secured for north London which would vie in beauty, though not in extent, with Wimbledon and Epping. Steps have already been taken to test public opinion on the subject, and it is much to be wished that those who desire London to be adequately supplied with open spaces, should select some fine day—a morning, if possible—for a visit to Hampstead Heath and the adjoining fields.

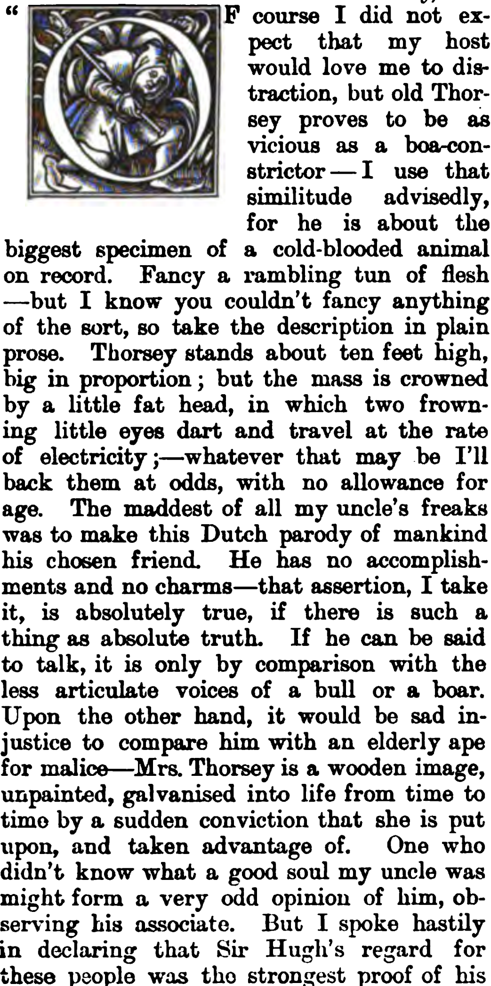
But it is the object of this paper to describe London commons as they are. Attention has been drawn only to those which lie in the inner circle of the Metropolis. Further off are charming spots of vital importance to an all-devouring city like London—beautiful commons like Chiselhurst and Hayes, extensive tracts of furze and heather—such as Banstead Downs and Walton Heath—lying on the slopes and even on the summit of the Surrey Downs. But we have endeavoured to show how rich a heritage of open land London possesses, even within the narrowest limits. Twenty years ago scarcely a common near London was safe. The builders and the lords of manors had cast their eyes upon them, and a single false step would have resulted in wholesale inclosure. Fortunately the defence of the public inheritance fell into good hands. The unfaltering courage and sound judgment of such men as Mr. Shaw Lefevre, the first chairman of the Commons Preservation Society, the late Mr. Fawcett, whose intrepidity saved Epping Forest, Lord Mount-Temple, and the late Mr. Locke, and the exceptional skill with which they were advised by the first solicitor of the society, Mr. Philip Lawrence, have saved for London—as a fraction of a much larger possession—broad acres of playground and breathing-space within or immediately upon her own bounds.

ROBERT HUNTER.



ALCOMBE'S CHANCE.

"Alcombe Manor,
"*Saturday*, 12*th*.



"OF course I did not expect that my host would love me to distraction, but old Thorsey proves to be as vicious as a boa-constrictor — I use that similitude advisedly, for he is about the biggest specimen of a cold-blooded animal on record. Fancy a rambling tun of flesh —but I know you couldn't fancy anything of the sort, so take the description in plain prose. Thorsey stands about ten feet high, big in proportion; but the mass is crowned by a little fat head, in which two frowning little eyes dart and travel at the rate of electricity;—whatever that may be I'll back them at odds, with no allowance for age. The maddest of all my uncle's freaks was to make this Dutch parody of mankind his chosen friend. He has no accomplishments and no charms—that assertion, I take it, is absolutely true, if there is such a thing as absolute truth. If he can be said to talk, it is only by comparison with the less articulate voices of a bull or a boar. Upon the other hand, it would be sad injustice to compare him with an elderly ape for malice—Mrs. Thorsey is a wooden image, unpainted, galvanised into life from time to time by a sudden conviction that she is put upon, and taken advantage of. One who didn't know what a good soul my uncle was might form a very odd opinion of him, observing his associate. But I spoke hastily in declaring that Sir Hugh's regard for these people was the strongest proof of his queerness—to suggest hopefully that I should marry their daughter, is evidence on which a writ of *de lunatico* might be issued against Solomon.

"By the by, that young lady is not obtruded on my notice. I have been here now a fortnight, and the only creature I have seen, besides the Thorsey pair, is a bad copy from the antique, rather deaf, rather blind, and a martyr to toothache. This is the only servant Thorsey keeps, barring his wife; you know that my uncle pensioned off all his household, and I should fancy that none of them would be tempted to stay by affection for the new master. The dear old place is quite as fine and almost as big as I used to imagine it, and old Betty's broom makes just as much impression on the dust as Mrs. Partington's did on the Atlantic. The house will soon fall into a state which it is almost sinful to think of. Thorsey has it for life, but it belongs to me, and surely I have a right to prevent him letting it fall to pieces? You might give me a hint of the law in such a case. There is no hurry at present, and it is not worth while to raise the question prematurely. I have no means of knowing whether Thorsey has a private income sufficient to keep up the place, but my uncle knew his circumstances, I suppose. If not, I would allow what is necessary. But it seems quite possible that he would like the house to fall into decay through spite. . .

"Yours, bored to death,
"Hugh Alcombe."

"Alcombe,
"*Saturday*, 26*th*.

" . . Things are not quite so dull as you suggest. My excellent forefathers collected

a prodigious library, which is abandoned to me, and you know, if no one else would credit it, that I am something better than a lively fellow. You know, in fact, that I am not fast, really. In a world better organised, I should be accounted a thoughtful young man, blessed with the spirits becoming his age. . .

"But the situation becomes embarrassing. It is ridiculous to find one's self a guest in one's own house for a stated period of six months, in order to make acquaintance with a young lady, but I find no words to express the absurdity of the combination when the young lady declines to show herself. Miss Thorsey may be at school, of course—I don't know her age—or she may be on a visit; but even your well-disciplined mind will admit that some explanation of her absence might naturally be expected under the circumstances. And to tell truth, I am just a very little curious. After studying her parents with my artist-eye—you know well that your friend has more eyes than most people, an advantage which gives him that varied grasp of things which is so generally acknowledged—I say, that after studying the parents, I am not at all satisfied that the daughter must needs be ugly. . .

"*Saturday evening.*

"I have invited an explanation, and it has come with a vengeance. After supper—which is solemnised at seven o'clock—I said something light and cheerful to the effect that destiny had not proved kind to my uncle s plans, since nearly a month had gone out of the six he allowed me, and I have not yet seen Miss Thorsey. That remark stirred fires which, as I suspected, had been smouldering. Mrs. Thorsey replied, with a warmth like that of crackling sticks, 'I don't understand Pagan allusions! If you are waiting to see my daughter, I can tell you we don't expect her for five months, one week and one day precisely!' And her husband burst out, after the preliminary rumbling: 'Times and again Sir Hugh declared that this place should be ours! At the last moment he cheated us, and about that I say, I only wish we'd known it! Ah! But when you come to claiming our daughter, then I say, to begin with, that you're a dissipated young jackanapes, and if that isn't enough I tell you that the sooner you take your impudent face out of this the better!'

"I was a little startled, but that mild dignity which you and others have admired in secret, came to my support. I said: 'If Sir Hugh's will disappointed you, I regret it to the utmost extent which an unselfish regard for my own interest will allow. I have the honour to offer you my hand on that, Mr. Thorsey!' He did not meet it, but quite the reverse, and I continued blandly. 'You resent the condition imposed under circumstances which are not those you expected. But I, upon the other hand, have every cause to respect it. My uncle requested me to stop six months here, and I gratefully propose to carry out his desire. Allow me to suggest, however, that since Miss Thorsey's absence is explained in this straightforward manner, its prolongation is quite unnecessary, if that causes any inconvenience. I recognise with enthusiasm that an uncle's wish should give way to a parent's will, and though I have evident reason to think that Miss Thorsey is as amiable as charming, I promise to resist her *à outrance*.

"The reply of my gentle host was checked by old Betty, who brought one of her whispered confidences to Mrs. Thorsey. 'Tell him we'll go down to the cottage,' that lady exclaimed, in tones suggestive of an addition in five words beginning with 'and' and ending with 'him.' When Betty had withdrawn, the husband growled to me, 'And you mean to stop, whether or no?'

"'Subject,' said I, 'to the conditions piously and prudently stipulated in legal Articles of Assurance, I do!' And so, after five minutes of frowning silence and smiling expectancy, I went out for a cigar.

"It is needless to say that I had no intention of remaining after this, but odd things have happened. As I returned to the house, I heard a fresh young voice singing merrily, and with no small science, mind you! Imagine my astonishment! It seemed to come from the west wing and thither I hurried; but all was empty! I went down to the Thorsey quarters, and taking advantage of their absence, examined it from top to bottom, excepting the bed-room. Then I looked into the kitchen, where Betty was reading a tract in spectacles. Not a sign anywhere of the owner of that voice! And so came up here again, to consult you—that is, to put my ideas on paper and see what they come to.

"It may seem absurd to fancy that the celebrated Mabel has been hidden somewhere in the house all this time, but I am sure it is not impossible—a troop of girls might be concealed here if no one watched for them specially. We may put aside the feelings of the young lady; whatever they might be, her parents would not take them into account. The question is this, Could the

Thorseys conceive such a—I don't quite find the word—say, such a plan? If you had studied them as I have, you would admit the possibility. They are characters of the old stamp. It would not occur to them to consider that an action might be unusual or eccentric. What they wish, or what they think right, that they would proceed to carry into execution without regard to the opinions of other people. I confess that it does not seem so strange now that the Thorseys got an influence with my poor old uncle, when, by circumstances or means unknown to me, they had obtained the spot for their fulcrum, so to speak. Having obtained it, backed by the charm of that admirable voice, their sheer strength of character mastered him. You will understand, my friend, that I am talking to myself, under pretence of writing to you. I foresee the conclusion, but I want to have the arguments down in black and white, and to work them logically through. This incident upsets all my ideas.

"The Thorseys expected—upon what exact grounds I know not—that the house would be left to them absolutely, if not the estate; but at the last moment my uncle recollected that what he had received from his forefathers without special merit belongs to their descendant. He threw off the yoke, but offered a compensation, requesting his heir to stay six months with the Thorseys, and to marry their daughter, if he could make up his mind to it. Perhaps Sir Hugh had no doubt of that, but the Thorseys utterly refused the idea. To make certain, they determined that I should not even see the girl. But to dispose of a grown-up person, alive or dead, is not easy—I suppose, on reflection, that Mabel is grown up, since the period of acquaintance and preliminary courtship is limited to six months. The Thorseys have no friends, I suspect; I suspect also that they would not trust their own daughter readily; and again, she has possibly inherited a temper that would not give her parents confidence to send her away for so long a time. I can imagine the secret councils of the elders, when the will became known. I can imagine also that secret councils were held by the young lady, but what was the purport of them passes my ability. The parents had ample time to concert, since I was in India, you know; but this did not smooth the difficulty, if they had no trusty friend to whom they could confide their daughter at a moment's notice; for my arrival might be, and was, in fact, announced without time for preparation. If the thought of hiding Mabel in the house itself occurred to them, it must have been welcomed as a relief. Why not, supposing that she consented?

"Upon the other hand, you may urge that the voice is not proved to have been Mabel's; on that point I need not enlarge. The Thorseys were both out, for the first time to my knowledge since I have been here. Moreover, they have no visitors, much more young lady visitors so familiar as to sing; and much more again, young lady visitors who can sing like that! Furthermore, the voice was in the west wing, far from the Thorsey quarters. The only question to be seriously entertained is, whether or no I was mistaken; and that, with the sincerest respect, I decline to discuss.

"From the considerations foregoing, I draw a positive conclusion, thus: Mabel has been here all the while, and is here now.

"An argumentative conclusion: Why didn't the Thorseys accept my offer, and produce her?

"A suggestive conclusion, formulated in my capacity of 'impudent jackanapes'—Because they do not feel assurred that Mabel quite shares their view upon this matter! *Enfin, suffit!* I will go to bed.

"Yours, amused,

"HUGH ALCOMBE."

"P.S. to above. I closed my desk ten minutes ago, went to the bookshelf, and took down a volume of Macaulay's *Essays*. In drawing it out a photograph came with it, the likeness of a girl. I want to tell you this quite calmly and prosaically, as an odd incident, and I shall not dilate upon the facts. This photograph is inscribed, in my uncle's writing, 'Mabel, on her seventeenth birthday.' It represents a being lovelier than you ever read of, than I ever dreamed. It is the *ikon* of Beauty's self, the young Aphrodite, tall and willowy, yet deep-chested, yellow-haired, I'll be sworn, and blue-eyed, with brows of darkest chestnut, and lips like a pink flower. I have imagined that face as the incarnation of my most despairing ideal, but never dared try to sketch it even in my mind. The lines are not yet quite rounded, but so exquisite in symmetry that I dread to fancy a change. But the supremest type cannot go astray in developing. When nature has done her utmost in the sketch, she will not suffer her design to be marred. Prettiness may run wild, but perfect beauty is bound fast within its own conditions. My friend, I have seen a vision, and I am possessed. . .

"Needless to say, that I have given up the idea of leaving. But let us think! I was reading the book this afternoon, I remember taking it down, and there was no photograph beside it! Moreover, it is not my habit to put books away; this was certainly left upon the table. Whoever replaced it, laid the photograph there, in the expectation—is it not so?—that I should find it. Who could this have been? Not the Thorseys evidently. Either the antique model, or the girl singing in this quarter of the house must have done it; and with what object?

"The old woman overheard my remarks—some of them, at least—this evening, and she may have designed to show me that Mabel is worth an effort. If so, I have an ally in the house. But Betty does not look the sort of person to undertake even the smallest *rôle* in a drama of romance, unless upon demand of somebody she loves; and if that somebody wished to give me a hint, she had no occasion to ask aid from any one if my careful arguments are sound. Is it possible, then, that Mabel placed the photograph herself, and sang aloud to let me know her presence? Oh, this way madness lies! I will go to bed and not write another line!"

"Tuesday.

"Thanks for your note and the legal opinion inclosed. I hope that circumstances may arise that will cause me to regard Mr. Thorsey's proceedings with indifference, though he let the old house tumble to pieces. But it is well to know that I can threaten him without talking actual nonsense, should it be convenient to do so.

"Whilst they were at church on Sunday I took advantage of the moment to examine every corner of the building except their bedroom and the old woman's—no trace of Mabel anywhere! My hosts came in just as I was making up my mind to violate the sanctity of their apartment. Is it possible they keep her there all day, letting the poor darling out for a run when all is safe, and putting her to sleep in one of the damp old bedrooms? Not unlikely in itself. But I keep her photograph before me, and its every line is studied twenty times a day. A girl with such a figure would find it real pain to be shut up these long summer days, and a girl with such a face would not long submit. If Mabel bears it, for reasons which I can hardly judge, it is not surprising to one who reads her likeness that she should make consolations for herself. . .

"I have offered old Betty lots of opportunities for confidence, which she steadily ignores. I almost incline to think that the antique copy is a fraud in that respect. But the case is pressing. I will make a definite trial on the first occasion. . ."

"Friday.

"There was an explosion to-day at the ceremony which is called dinner in this eccentric household. Thorsey is particular about eating in his way, and he complained of the fare, which, as you may be interested to know, was stewed rabbit. 'One would think that honest sheep and bullocks were extinct,' he grumbled, ponderously. 'I call this rats.'

"'And if it was, it would be good enough for your company!' replied his wife.

"'Quite good enough for me,' I said, in a pleasant tone. 'Rats so agreeably flavoured make a dish for a king!' and, to do Betty justice, her stew was excellent.

"'That's right!' Thorsey roared; 'beggars mustn't be choosers!'

"'Proverbial wisdom offers a good deal of sound advice to beggars up and down,' I said. 'They're recommended not to get on horseback, for instance.'

"'And how long do you calculate we are to put up with your impertinence and your prying, Mr. Alcombe?' exclaimed Mrs. Thorsey, with the concentrated essence of hatred and malice in her tone. 'I wish you to know, sir, that this house is ours, and you have no more right to go ferreting up and down than any other fellow who can't take a hint to go when he's not wanted,' &c., &c.; there was a good deal of it.

"'Your suggestion comes in handy, then,' I said. 'The house is mine, and if you deny my right to inspect it under all the circumstances, the Court of Chancery,' &c.; but I was as brief as pointed.

"'The question is,' said Thorsey, 'will you go?'

"'The answer is,' said I, with a sweet smile, 'not for four months and three weeks, some odd days and hours.'

"'Then I'll make you!' and Thorsey's little eyes gleamed like a rattlesnake's.

"'I would not seem,' said I, 'to put a limit on your resources. But if I go before the time fixed, you will certainly follow. Wouldn't it save trouble and law expenses if you cleared out now and left me alone?'

"There was five minutes' silence, whilst Betty clattered the dishes.

"'That's your last word?' said Thorsey.

"'Not at all. It's my first; and if you behave with decency, you shall not hear

another. I want to carry out my uncle's last wish as pleasantly as possible.'

"'No doubt!' sneered Mrs. Thorsey; 'and you'd like to marry our Mabel, wouldn't you?'

"'Yes, I should, if she would have me?'

"'Oh! Luckily our Mabel is not the only person concerned! We have a voice in that!'

"You may imagine the rush of ideas that passed through my mind at this unintended hint. I grasped the situation, and wanted to apologise; but Thorsey rolled to his feet, saying huskily:

"'It's no matter, Mr. Alcombe. We understand each other now. Come, Tib!' and they withdrew, leaving me and Betty.

"That handmaiden was visibly disconcerted. She upset things, and I had before remarked her admirable neatness in serving, spite of her flannel and her eternal mits. Upon the strength of this agitation I asked, 'What do you think Miss Mabel would say to this disagreeable scene if she heard of it, Betty?' but the old woman was more deaf than usual, and she made no answer. Then Mrs. Thorsey came bustling in and helped her to clear.

"My horses are kept at the village inn, you know, and it has occurred to me that Rickett is likely to hear gossip in the taproom not uninteresting in my present state of bewilderment. As we rode along this afternoon, I encouraged him to talk, but nothing came of it. One would hardly have believed that the landlord's factotum could be so little known, personally, to the villagers. Their notions of Thorsey and his wife seem to be very vague, but their opinions are not less emphatic for that. Rickett tells me that they think he has committed murder, and I rather suspect that they imagine my poor dear old uncle to have been implicated in the crime somehow! It is the simple rustic way of accounting for an influence and an intimacy which puzzle myself. As for Mabel, I gather that she is thought proud, and local criticism is not impressed with her beauty. 'A shapely young lady, they say, sir,' my groom reports, 'with a high temper, and very stand-off-ish.' This is just the opinion I should have expected, looking at her portrait. The good folks of Milo thought the same of their Venus, probably. Mabel was dismissed for parts unknown the day before my arrival. I asked about old Betty, hoping to hear that she had been the young lady's nurse, or something confidential of that kind. The villagers suppose so, but she did not reside at the Manor during Sir Hugh's lifetime.

"At supper to-night, Thorsey apologised in his bearish way: 'You can make allowance for a man's feelings under a disappointment,' he said. 'We meant nothing offensive to you, did we, Tib?' But Mrs. Thorsey couldn't bring herself to admit so much. She only muttered something about 'wish he'd go and have done with it, when a fool could see it's no use stopping!' I met them more than half-way, so the matter ended. What with one thing and another I feel remarkably sleepy. Good-night!"

"*Tuesday afternoon.*

"At last! Ever since the discovery of Mabel's photograph I have looked in the same place at every visit to the library, hoping for—I know not what! This morning, as usual, there was nothing, but when I came back from my ride I found this:—

"'If Mr. Alcombe is prolonging his stay under any sort of notion that something may occur beyond increasing discomfort and annoyance, and possibly worse, he is earnestly begged to dismiss all such illusions and to leave at once.'

"I don't stop to discuss this communication at the point to which things have arrived. My answer ran:—

"'Mr. Alcombe was induced to pay the visit by a dutiful wish to fulfil his uncle's last request. If Miss Mabel Thorsey herself declares that it is useless to persevere, he must submit; but no one else has the right or the power to dismiss him.'

"After depositing this in the same nook, I left the house, not returning until supper.

"My note was gone, but I found no reply. It may very well be that Mabel had no opportunity to write, or perhaps she could not pay a second visit to the library just then. But I recall Rickett's gossip about her pride, confirmed by every line in the face before me; and I suspect that she could not bring herself to address me under her own name. We shall see. Assuredly I will not go without her order, and then it shall not be a withdrawal from any hope or effort to win her."

"*Wednesday*, 10 A.M.

"No answer still. I am riding into Stainbridge, where I shall post this, and to give Mabel every chance, I shall stay out all day.

"Yours,
"HUGH ALCOMBE."

"*Wednesday evening.*

"The reply was here on my return: 'Miss Thorsey does not inquire of Mr. Alcombe's

sense of delicacy whether it is honourable to insist that she should make a formal request. But since Mr. Alcombe thinks proper to urge such a condition, Miss Thorsey does not hesitate to mention that it is from no regard for him one way or other she urges Mr. Alcombe to leave at once. That she does, pressingly, and if Mr. Alcombe will go to-night, Miss Thorsey will feel herself obliged.'

"Of course I comply, without more words, and I'm just off to the village to arrange with Rickett. Expect me some time to-morrow, and prepare to be bored. But, vanity apart, you will confess that my love story will bear some chatting remarks so far.

"8 *o'clock.*

"Excuse pencil. No train from this beyond Stainbridge, and Rickett points out that if I wait till to-morrow we can take the horses with us. So I shall venture to disoblige Mabel for a few hours and return to the Manor. It might be injudicious indeed to obey too promptly. She is not the sort of girl to be conciliated bv submission.

"H. A."

Telegram. "Thursday, 11.35 A. M.

"Thorsey, Alcombe Manor, to T. Cobbett, Temple, London.

"Mr. Alcombe has had an accident. We find your address in letters. Come at once, and inform his friends."

I did not lose a moment. On the way down, the following paragraph caught my eye in an evening paper: "The fine old manor house of Alcombe, now occupied by Mr. Thorsey, had a narrow escape last night. A fire broke out in the west wing about 1 A. M., but by great exertions of the villagers it was confined to that portion of the building. The library has suffered, but not severely, it is hoped. We regret to add that Mr. Hugh Alcombe, to whom the property belongs, and who was visiting at the Manor, sustained some injury, but details are not to hand."

I arrived in the afternoon, driving from Stainbridge. There were very few outward signs of mischief in the beautiful old house —broken windows, stains of smoke, and trampled flower-beds made the whole. Before I touched the bell, the door opened, and before I had said a word, Mr. Thorsey burst out—by Hugh's description I recognised the giant who barred my entrance: "There's nothing to see," he bellowed, "and we don't want any reporters, and that's enough, isn't it?"

"You misunderstand," I said; "I am a friend of Mr. Alcombe's."

"You're not wanted anyhow! Mr. Alcombe's all right, and the doctor's attending him."

I was just going to refer to the telegram, but in the odd state of things ruling at Alcombe, it seemed prudent to withhold the allusion. The man was actually elbowing me out when I said: "Let me inform you, Mr. Thorsey, that Hugh Alcombe has written to me every detail of his stay here, of your behaviour, and of very much that strikes me, a barrister in large criminal practice, as requiring explanation. If you refuse me admittance I shall drive to the nearest magistrate and tell him what I know."

Thorsey had been pale, but his face flushed, and his big frame thrilled with passion so menacing that I stepped back instinctively. At that moment a most respectable personage appeared behind him—the doctor, by no possibility of mistake; to whom I appealed.

"I am glad you have come, sir, as a friend of Mr. Alcombe. There is a certain risk in removing my patient, but I was about to suggest it to Mr. Thorsey, and you perhaps will support me."

"After my own experience I take the responsibility," I said. "If a cab is not suitable, these men hanging about could carry him."

Thorsey was bursting with rage, and I have no doubt he would have resisted the lot of us—successfully too—had not his wife come up. She dragged him aside, and expostulated, but it appeared to me that her influence was not that which some women have over giant husbands, the supremacy of intelligence; in this case the man seemed to listen as to a trusty confederate, whose remarks deserved attention.

The doctor led the way up stairs, and I found poor Hugh in a very small chamber which looked as though it had been furnished in haste. He lay senseless, swathed in bandages, with the singe and smoke unwashed.

"Mr. Thorsey and I carried him in here," said the doctor, "bed and all. His own room is burnt out. We must take him down stairs in the same manner."

"I consent. Where is Betty?"

"I have seen no one but the Thorsey couple."

I collected half-a-dozen stalwart fellows amongst the people loafing round; both

husband and wife busied themselves to assist. We raised Hugh upon his bedstead, which was fortunately narrow, and with infinite pains carried him down. Outside the house our task became easy, and we laid him safe in the tap-room of the village inn, cleared for his occupation. I gathered that both legs were broken, and internal injuries suspected.

"How could this possibly have happened?' I asked.

"Thorsey says that he fell down stairs," the doctor replied, significantly. "If the consequences prove serious, an inquiry shall be held; but I hope that your friend will be able to tell his own story presently."

It was at the greatest inconvenience I had run down, and to stay was impossible. From the daily bulletin sent me, I gathered that Hugh was mending slowly. On the next Saturday but one, as I was making ready to pay him a visit, a little girl brought a letter, unsigned, earnestly begging me to let the writer know how Hugh was progressing. It was a very sharp little girl, evidently well schooled for the matter in hand; I could make nothing of her: my reply was brief and formal.

This incident I kept from Hugh, of course. He could speak, but his ideas came slowly, without sequence, and the doctor cautioned me against any communication which might stimulate him. For the first week, until my reports became more confident, I received the mysterious inquiry every day by the hands of the little girl; then an address was given, and when I had conscientiously declared Hugh out of danger, the correspondence ceased.

It was a long while before he could give a circumstantial account of his mishap. Hugh was fast asleep when a violent blow upon the door aroused him—to find the chamber full of smoke. Dizzy and stifling he ran to the entrance, and whilst groping heard Thorsey's voice and another's—a girl's. "I tell you I was just going to call him," the former roared. "What are you doing here, eh?" There was a scream of pain, and at this instant Hugh ran out upon the landing. The smoke was less dense there, faintly illumined by candle-light. He caught a glimpse of the girl upon her knees, Thorsey standing over her; the giant turned with a savage cry, swept him off his feet, and threw or pushed him headlong down the staircase. I could not quite ascertain whether Hugh believed it to have been an accident or no. He seemed to be, not uncertain exactly, but undecided to pronounce.

It should have been mentioned that the Thorseys had vanished, leaving no trace, before Hugh was in condition to be questioned. The doctor wished me to take some steps, which he could not precisely formulate, to keep them under surveillance; but in the peculiar circumstances of the case, I did not find any practical means of doing so, and they had gone some days before their absence was discovered, leaving the manor empty. I made arrangements for protecting it, and waited Hugh's recovery. When he learned the disappearance of the Thorseys, his anger and agitation were extreme, as the people reported; but by the time I paid my next visit these feelings had quite calmed, and I thought to recognise a fixed scheme of action in his haste to get well. This impatience was vastly strengthened by the notes of inquiry sent to my chambers, which I showed them. Hugh identified Mabel's writing at a glance. But he made no confidence, and I knew him too well to ask.

At length my visits ceased, on the understanding that as soon as he could travel Hugh would come to me for a day or two on his way abroad. And presently he arrived, pale and feeble, but with a restless brilliancy in his eye which told me, through experience, that my comrade had pressing ideas in hand, and was burning to set them at work. "Have you a letter for me?" he asked without formalities.

I had none. "Well," said he, "the afternoon is still young. Now I will tell you what I have made up my mind to do. I am going to prosecute Thorsey for attempted murder."

"To threaten him, you mean, I suppose?"

"I mean what I say. Thorsey is guilty; and if there were not other considerations, I would devote my life to following him. I would not leave the brute, I swear it by my soul and honour, until I saw him sentenced."

I perceived that it was the insult of a blow which roused this passion of revenge. "But there is a strong consideration?" I asked.

"Yes. And therefore I forgive him if he will grant me the chance which he was paid to give, and which he consented to give by accepting my house for life!"

"The chance with his daughter?" Hugh nodded. "But how do you propose to find Thorsey?"

"I have written to the address in Mabel's notes. It is a small stationer's shop, and the people only know that a little girl used to call. She has been twice or thrice since the correspondence stopped. A week ago I

wrote to Thorsey there, under cover, telling him what I have told you, and declaring that I expected a definite reply this afternoon—here! The letter was called for yesterday. I wait the result."

"But, my dear fellow, you love Mabel, as I understand. Was there ever such wooing?—to threaten the father with a capital charge unless he gives you an opportunity to court his daughter?"

"I don't know that there ever was, but the other circumstances have been rarely paralleled, if it comes to that. And anyhow, I'll do it, as sure as we're all alive! Understand that I do not hold Mabel guiltless."

"Why, as I gather, she saved your life?"

"I was not referring to that incident, but to the chain of events that led up to it. I have never professed nor understood that form of chivalry which exacts that a man should put aside all his weapons of offence in attacking the woman he loves. I follow the older rule which declares that all is fair in love; and perhaps a rule older still would not shock me, if the conditions arise. Should I win Mabel—I know myself—I could be content to sit submissive at her feet as long as we both live, and rejoice to die with her. But nothing that a man could do in honour shall check me in the winning."

"I believe," said I, sarcastically, "that you have never seen the lady, nor spoken with her."

"Very true. And for the sake of argument I will admit it possible that better knowledge might change my feeling. In that case, Thorsey may go hang elsewhere. But as at present advised, I think it most emphatically worth my while to follow him, to set justice in motion against him, and if he remains obstinate to hang the criminal, by Heaven!"

"And you want to marry this man's daughter! How would it be possible after bringing such a charge?"

"It has not occurred to me to ask that; however, possible or no, I will assuredly do it, if things turn out as I hope. What is that?"

My clerk announced a young lady to see Mr. Alcombe. Hugh was deeply agitated, but he motioned me to sit still. She came into the room, closely veiled, a superb young figure.

"This is the friend to whom you telegraphed, Miss Thorsey," said Hugh. "He knows all that has passed. Pray sit down."

"Can it be true, sir," she burst out in a voice that harmonised with the music of her form, "that you intend to prosecute my father? I declare that he only meant to drive you from the house! The accident was unintentional."

"Mr. Thorsey will find every opportunity to explain his intentions. If you are acquainted with my letter, you know that I did not invite him to criminate himself."

I could not restrain my indignation. "This is brutal, Alcombe!" I exclaimed; but neither paid attention.

"My father has not seen your letter, sir," she continued. "He is beyond your reach!"

"The arm of justice is long and untiring, Miss Thorsey. But I propose a simple means of escape from the embarrassment. Does he accept that?"

"If he knew, he would dare you to do your worst!"

"I do not understand that you are authorised to speak for your father, Miss Thorsey; circumstances alter the point of view. Will you let him know the conditions?"

"Oh, sir, have mercy upon me! I do not know where he is! I left him that night,—I am wretched and forsaken—all alone, and life is so hard! Don't—don't break my heart quite with such cruelty!"

I saw by the leap of Hugh's colour, and the strain on his face as she sank upon her knees, that it was time to leave them, but the walls of my bedroom are only panels, and I could not but hear. Hugh had approached and was standing over her.

"I throw myself upon your mercy, Mabel!" he said, in tones thrilling with the constraint that honour and pity laid upon passion. "Whatever happens, whatever you resolve, I lay aside my charge against your father, and the condition I imposed. Console yourself, but let me entreat—not now—not now, but at a future time, when these things are forgotten! Let us resume the places which Sir Hugh meant us to take, consent to let me win your love if I can, without thought of the future or the past! If I fail, there is an end—an end to much more than my suit! Don't answer now, Mabel! I leave you alone."

Hugh came in to me and threw himself upon the bed, and lay there motionless. I went round to dismiss my clerk; five minutes afterwards the outer door closed, and I found the study empty. "Miss Thorsey is gone," I said to Hugh. "You had better see what she has left you."

"It isn't worth while," he answered,

without moving. "I shall go abroad to-morrow!"

"I assured myself that there was nothing, and then, "Hadn't you better wait a few days," I urged.

"To what purpose? A row is brewing at Alexandria. I shall go there and drive this possession out of me. If you have nothing better to do, come to the club presently and dine."

I promised hastily and he went out. Then I wrote to Miss Thorsey, and carried the letter myself. But no reply came that night, and Hugh started by the early mail. At the last moment I told him what I had done. "If it made any difference at all," said he, "one way or other, I should be sorry. Don't give yourself more useless trouble. Good-bye, old friend."

The row in Egypt grew and broke as all the world knows, and Hugh kept in the thick of it. I heard from him occasionally, but he never mentioned Mabel. Months passed and the interest of his romance died away among the excitements of a busy life.

One day a friend came to me at the club. "I want counsel's opinion in an informal way," said he. "Some time ago my wife engaged a lady-help, without such references as are usual. We have congratulated ourselves ever since, and I don't regret it now, not the least. But it seems that the young lady ran away from home; her father has discovered and claims her. My wife is ready to back the girl through thick and thin, and so am I, if the law doesn't actually forbid me. What do you say?"

"Why did she run away, and how old is she?"

"About twenty, I should think, and why she ran away appears to be a secret."

"Love, I suppose? Unless she can show a good reason for deserting her father, you cannot resist his claim."

"I am sorry for it. He can't break into my house? Then I will protect the girl as long as possible anyhow."

A month after this a lady was announced at my chambers; instantly I recognised a perfect figure once seen, and beheld a face that matched it. "I have no right to call upon you, sir," said Mabel, "but your name has been often mentioned lately, and I recollect how kind you were a long while ago. The lady with whom I found refuge after leaving Alcombe has been obliged"—she broke off with a cry as Thorsey entering seized her arm.

"We don't want to do anything disagreeable, sir," said he. "We've a comfortable home for a daughter we love beyond anything in the world, and who loved us till a young rake spoilt her. Say, Mabel, before this gentleman, was we ever otherwise than kind and good and loving to you? Didn't you promise a thousand times—ay, times countless, to stand by your father and your mother, who'd been cheated out of their rights? But this young fellow came, and the girl was never the same afterwards."

"I remember you now sir," interrupted his wife. "It was Mabel's conduct that drove my husband wild when you came to the Manor; since then, we've followed her up and down, wherever we could hear news."

"And now we've found her," cried Thorsey, stepping forward, "they must be big lawyers that keep her from us."

The situation was most embarrassing. It is very fine to talk of chivalry, or, for that matter, of police, when a gigantic ruffian is marching at you with his fists clenched, and no human aid at call more effective than a dyspeptic clerk. Mabel expected me to do something in the way of heroism apparently, for she had taken post behind my back, but ideas failed me at the moment. Words could not picture my relief when Hugh appeared in the doorway, very brown and lean, but amazingly cool. No one else saw him.

"Come, Mabel," said Thorsey; "come lovingly, for I'd be loth to take you by force."

She ran back with an inarticulate cry, and in turning saw Hugh—reached him in one bound, and clung to his arm, sobbing. For all the youth's command of face, astonishment was not less visible there than delight.

But he recovered himself in an instant, and then the supremacy of the man who knows exactly what he means, and, having secured it, fears no consequences, was strongly illustrated. Thorsey roared, but he paused.

"I don't doubt" said Hugh, "that you love my wife. Having known her better than any one, excepting me, and very much longer than I have had the luck to do, you must needs cherish her passionately. I sympathise with your bereavement, therefore, and I suppress, now, and for ever, any personal feelings I may have been led to entertain. You shall see my wife in the future, as often as I can make up my mind to admit outsiders. This is a promise, Mr. Thorsey, which does not cost me much. From the first I have been interested in you, outside of your accidental and unaccountable relationship towards my wife. We shall get along very well."

"We have had enough of this imper-

tinence!" cried Thorsey, advancing. "Get out of the way, or I'll smash you!"

"Not twice, I think! The chances are that you would not escape a second time. But I have so much confidence in your judgment that I do not intend to oppose you. My wife has no objection to go now. Have you darling? I shall go with you!"

"Make your choice, Mabel," cried Mrs. Thorsey. "Him or your parents!"

She threw herself into a chair, weeping convulsively; and the policeman I had sent for showed at the door. Nobody spoke for a time. "I think this is answer enough!" said Hugh softly. "Fate and woman's will have decided for me. Remember my promise, and summon me to fulfil it when and how you please."

They withdrew in threatening silence. We put Mabel into a cab presently, and I accompanied her back to the house of my friend Jervis.

There was a question I wished to ask of either lover. When I put it to Hugh, he replied, "No, I never saw Mabel in person till to-day. But my worthy old uncle declared she was as good as she was beautiful, and the photograph gave me an excellent notion how good that must be. You may think it an odd story, but my love for Mabel is quite regular and logical."

I could not bring myself to question the lady until we sat side by side at the wedding breakfast. "Oh!" she answered, laughing and blushing, "I had seen Hugh very often! Hasn't it occurred to you to wonder who old Betty was?"

The Thorseys have not yet reappeared.

FREDERICK BOYLE.

CHESHIRE PASTURES.
From a Drawing by ALFRED RIMMER.

CHEESE FARMING AT CHESTER.

It has been constantly said of late that the days of prosperity for the English farmer are over, and he must look to it, for evil is before him. Gloomy seers have even given us visions of great tracts of land going out of cultivation, and their tenantry finding a home in some far-off colony; some of them even would seem to believe that before the present century is over, many a stately mansion will be deserted, its owner will be almost anywhere, and the parks and pleasant waters will again be occupied by thistles and cormorants and bitterns. Nor indeed is there wanting some text for the forebodings, for we find that more than half the cheese in our markets comes from America; the choicest butter comes from Denmark; France and the Low Countries supply us largely with eggs and poultry; and this leaves quite out of the reckoning the beef and mutton we now receive from nearly all our colonies: so that the farmer says his occupation is nearly gone.

This is a state of things that should not be, and there is no doubt that where we see foreign produce we ought in most cases to see our own. Farming interests are passing through critical times, and many old, cherished practices must be abandoned.

But where the farmer sees cause for despondency he ought to see the promise of great hope, for it is certain that there is now a demand for his wares that has passed any dream of his fathers. Articles that once were considered luxuries, even in the present century, are now only regarded as necessaries, and the farmer has his markets increased ten-fold and twenty-fold.

Still, while all this flattering tale is told, there are the stern facts that foreigners are usurping the place our countrymen ought to occupy, and all of us must admit that this might be altered with advantage, and the way to alter it is clear. It is not by any laws to stop them from sending as much as they will, but by supplying the markets ourselves.

Let the farmers of England once realise the fact that they can make better cheese and butter, and rear finer cattle than any country under the sun, and that they can not only supply all England with these commodities but they can be very formidable rivals in foreign markets. Have not the Americans themselves paid prices for single English cows that would purchase a first-class farm, and build model farm-buildings! Let farmers only reflect upon the enormous wealth that lies at their doors, and wake up to modern systems, and not be above learning. The Americans, wise in their generation, have from time to time sent over agents to England to inquire into the best modes of procedure, and they have improved their dairies in accordance with any excellence they may have seen in the old country. But let farmers learn from them, and not stand still; and if they take to heart some of the lessons they may gather from the various agricultural reports made by men of high credit, they will see that their case is a hopeful one.

The Royal Agricultural Society give valuable prizes for the best-kept farms in different districts in England, and I will briefly quote the astonishing prosperity of one or two that have no exceptional advantages but merely succeed upon the same principles that enable one tradesman in a town to prosper beyond his fellows.

The Society's prize of 75*l.* was awarded in 1884 to Mr. Nunnerly, of Dearnford Hall, Whitchurch. This farm is pleasantly situated on the road between Whitchurch and Wem, and is convenient in its buildings and working plant. It occupies 127 acres of grass land, and sixty acres of arable, and the proprietor in 1879 expended the liberal sum of 300*l.* in bone dust, which would supply about half a ton per acre. The buildings at the same time were put into order and made thoroughly convenient. The principal production of the farm is cheese, and this is made with great skill and care. One noticeable fact is the liberal scale on which the cattle are fed when not out in the summer pastures, and the tenfold return they give for the outlay. In winter they are tied up in pairs in the stalls, and are fed with an abundant supply of barley-straw, cut turnips, and three pounds of linseed cake daily. The words of Mr. Carrington, of Croxden Abbey, may be quoted here—he is a gentleman of great skill in dairy matters, and he shows in the fewest words the advantage of liberal feeding. He says: "For a first-rate milking cow, two or three months after calving, twenty quarts of milk per day is a common produce, where good feeding is practised. This, at ninepence per imperial gallon, a price readily obtainable wholesale in the winter months at many dairy farms within reach of a railway station, amounts to three and ninepence per day, or twenty-six shillings per week. Yet how many dairy farmers grudge the outlay of three or four shillings per week in purchased cake or corn!" In Dearnford Hall Farm the cows that are in service for dairy purposes average in number about fifty, and an acre and a half are allowed to each; but on this pasturage four horses are turned out at night, and it also supplies the young calves. A plan of the buildings is given in the Agricultural Report, and it is very obvious that they will economise labour, and fewer hands will get through the work. A special description of sour cheese is made for the Manchester market; what is called acidity is gained by adding a little sour milk; a fuller description of this cheese will appear when the various kinds of Cheshire cheese are classified.

The process at Dearnford Hall is to remove about one-third of the cream from the previous night's milking, because if the whole were left the cheese would not be of such uniform quality, and would be much more difficult to manipulate, while the cream that is removed brings in a handsome item in butter. The accounts are kept with great care, and appended is the dairy account for 1883:—

	£	*s.*	*d.*
Cheese from 47 cows.........	766	2	0
Butter..........................	168	7	4
Whey valued at 50/- a cow	117	10	0
Calves sold....................	110	0	0
Calves reared, 15 calves at £2	30	0	0
	£1,191	19	4

These results seem so astonishing that Mr. Nunnerly, at the request of the judges, weighed the milk yielded on a given day—June 12, 1884—and the cheese produced on June 26, fourteen days after; this was tested and found to correspond most accurately with the returns rendered, and well indeed the judges may have said that such results were "almost unique in the history of cheese-makers." There is also an account kept for pigs on the same farm which are duly debited with the whey at 117*l.* 10*s.*, and the corn and meal consumed, and yet they show a profit of 60*l.* 8*s.* 6*d.* And all this says nothing of the arable land, upon which the results were very remarkable. Ten tons of potatoes are grown per acre, and as much as

forty-four bushels of wheat at sixty pounds per bushel on the same quantity of land. It will thus be seen that the gross product of this farm of 187 acres is considerably more than 2000*l.* per annum, indeed, it is estimated at 12*l.* to 13*l.* per acre.

I would almost hesitate to quote such figures if they rested only on my own estimate, but they are the careful calculations of the three gentlemen who are the judges of the Royal Agricultural Society of England, and their authority may be regarded as almost final, or at least as the most trustworthy that modern science has enabled us to procure. The judges say with great truth, "The noticeable point in Dearnford Hall Farm, and one which it is desirable should be fully recognised by dairy farmers, is the fact that Mr. Nunnerly makes a larger return by good dairy practice than would be possible by selling milk under the most favourable conditions." The land is not by any means rich, it is a light sandstone drift, and in places indeed it is rather poor, but the liberal treatment makes it what it is. And the trim hedges and the neatness that are apparent to any passer-by shows that it is kept by one "who by his plough would thrive."

It will naturally be asked what is the cost of all this, and the books are ready with an answer. The money paid for labour was 321*l.* 5*s.* 2*d.*, and the outlay for purchased cattle-food and manures was 650*l.*, and if the rental was 450*l.* a year there is a margin which even a prosperous tradesman might wish for.

The second prize of 50*l.* was granted to Mr. J. Batho, of Winston, near Ellesmere, who occupied a farm of 290 acres under Lord Brownlow. His chief business was the production of cheese for the Cheshire markets, and indeed it must have been almost difficult to decide between the two farms. The buildings are very well arranged, and there is what we hardly ever see in England, a wind-engine, 3-horse power, and as the buildings are open to every wind, it is found useful for grinding, chopping, and pulping. These engines are familiar to every traveller along the low countries of Holland. The dairy is provided with a warm chamber, in which cheeses are placed in cold weather for two or three days, when newly made, to assist the process of ripening.

The cheeses after being pressed are carefully bound with calico and tissue-paper on the top, and the cheese-room is warmed by pipes and hot air; a tank in this cheese-room which is filled with whey communicates by a pipe that is regulated by a tap with a vat in the piggeries. Pigs are a very important item in the economy of the farm during cheese-making, and no foreign competition has sensibly affected their value. There is one cow of six years which is chronicled by the judges as being something far beyond the common, she produced 11,000 lbs. of milk in 1883, which is equal to 1,100 galls., and the judges say "calculating that a gallon of milk will produce a pound of cheese, we have 9 cwt. 3 qrs. 8 lbs. of cheese, a most extraordinary production." In this farm, when the weather is very hot, the practice is to let the cows rest in the roomy houses and great Dutch open barns, and only let them out at sun-down. There would indeed seem to be some reason in this, for we always see on hot days that cattle are not feeding they are either standing in water, if there is a convenient brook or pond, or else they are under trees to escape the sun and flies. There is one interesting circumstance that Mr. Batho mentions, one gallon of milk will produce about a pound of cheese. This is indeed the general estimate, but in the autumn when grasses and leguminous plants are at their ripest, sixty gallons of milk will produce seventy-seven pounds of cheese.

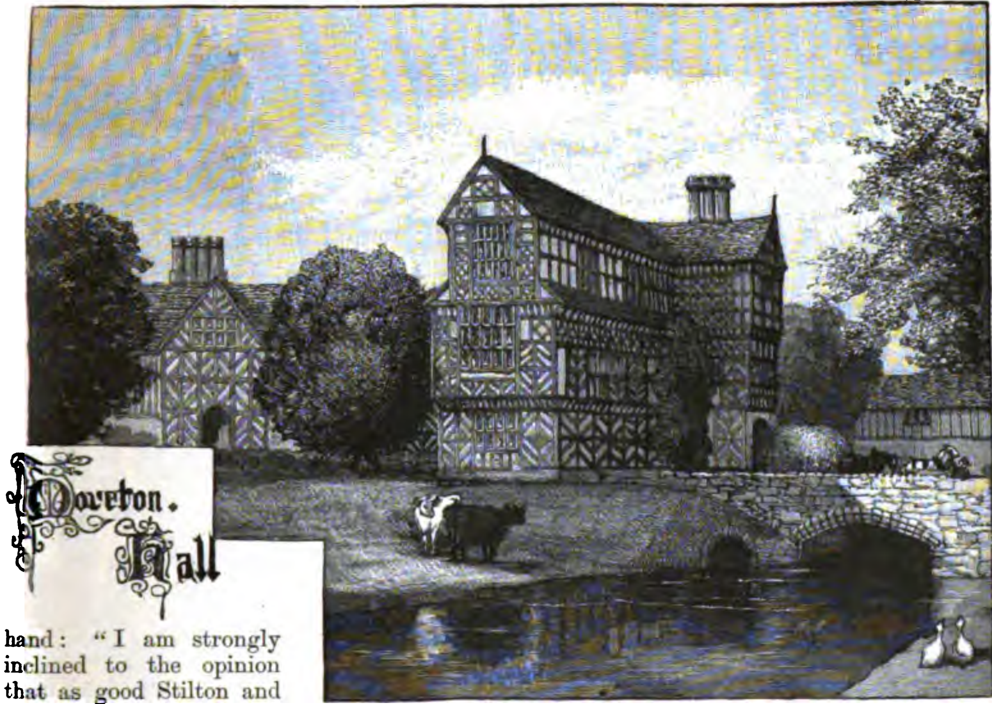
Neither of the farms spoken of produce what is called the best Cheshire dairy, but they make good medium quality. They are not exactly in Cheshire, but so near the arbitrary line that separates it from Shropshire, that they are quite within the range of the cheese district.

A Londoner will often be surprised if he traces the cheeses to their homes, to find what a number of halls there must be in Cheshire, but the reason is that at one time there were a great number of smaller landed proprietors, in fact wealthy yeomen as we should almost call them now, and their estates have become absorbed by the greater landowners. A black and white gable, or a tall stack of chimneys is often all that is left of the old hall, but sometimes more important buildings are converted into farmhouses, and fine old panelled rooms, banqueting halls, and even chapels, speak of the wealth and dignity of former owners.

Moreton Hall in the eastern part of Cheshire is a noble example of one of these. It is built round a quadrangle, and this quadrangle is quite as perfect as it was when Elizabeth sat upon the throne. There are great bow windows in it, and rich carvings, with many quaint legends, and as we enter into it over the bridge which spans the moat,

we find ourselves so completely transported into a relic of the past, that it is almost impossible to avoid a momentary exclamation of astonishment.

The cheese from Moreton Hall is prepared very much on the same principles as that at Dearnford, and is the white and slightly sour cheese for the Manchester market. But as they also make Cheddar for the same customers, I was curious to know how far this was possible. I wrote to the principal cheese factor in Cheshire, a gentleman who is regarded as the greatest authority in the county, and his answer has just come to

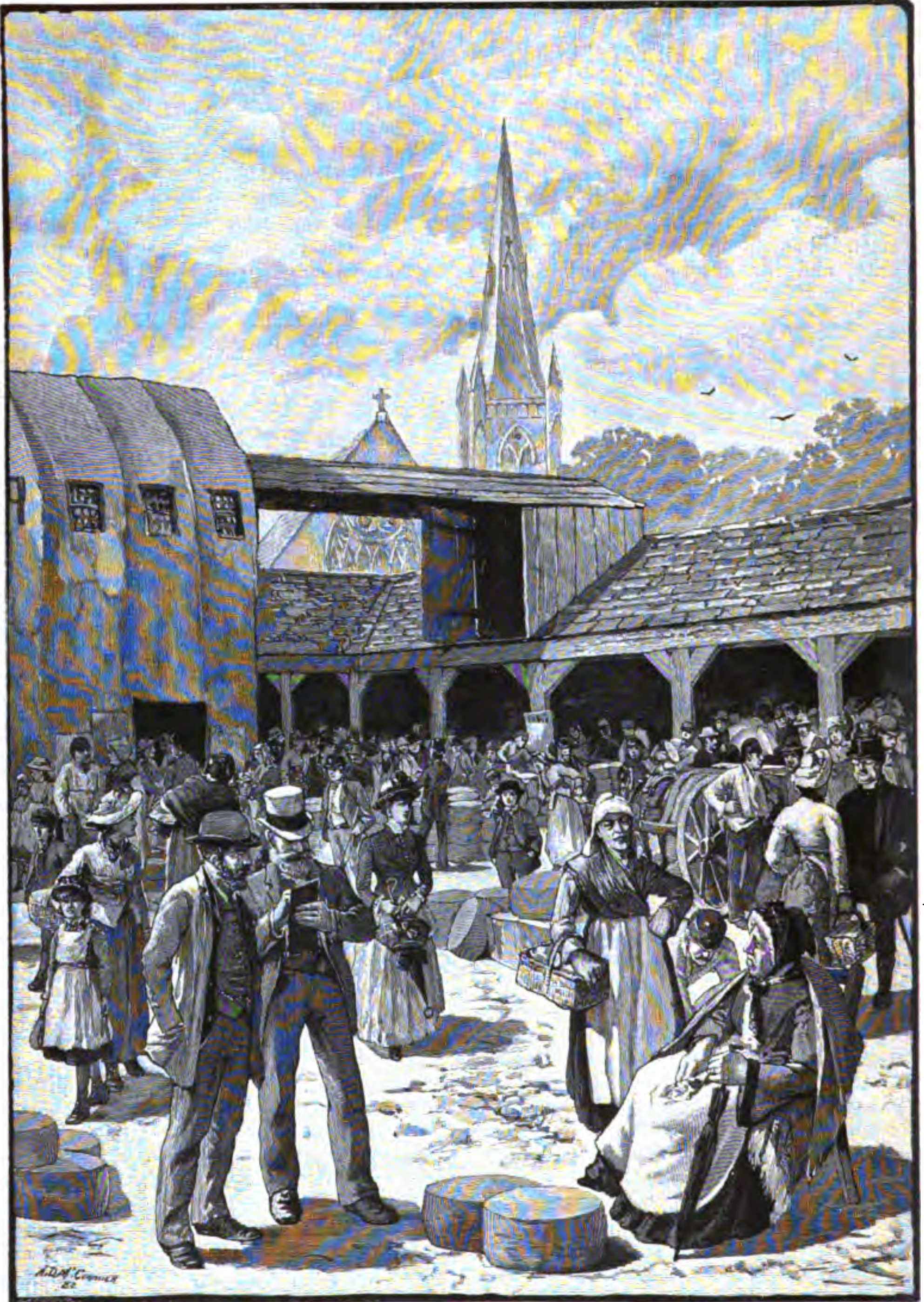

Moreton Hall

hand: "I am strongly inclined to the opinion that as good Stilton and Cheddar cheese could be made in Cheshire as elsewhere if it was a matter of study and the systems of the places precisely adopted. Still it is a question if these modes would pay better than the very best descriptions of Cheshire cheese." In the same journal there are many other reports of farms which are in wealth and prosperity, but they are, for the most part, farms for raising milk and fattening stock. One farm rented by Mr. Griffen from Lord Hatherton, Prestonvale near Penkridge, seems to have special merit, but it is more of an arable and pasture than a cheese farm. But labour is extremely well managed on this—for though there are 285 acres, they are worked by six men and three boys, with a little extra help at harvest—the total outlay in labour is only 23*s*. per acre.

The processes of cheese manufacture are few and simple, though there are many persons who would never excel in it. Of course much of what is written will appear too elementary to some readers, but there are doubtless others to whom even the rudiments of cheese-making are hardly known. Milk, in a general manner of speaking, may be said to consist of casein (or curds) and whey. Casein is the solid white part of milk, and though it contains other substances it is quite accurate enough to call these curds casein.

The whey is such active principle as is left of the milk, and is the sweet drink that most children remember affectionately through life, after they first taste it at a farmhouse. The great desideratum in the manufacture of cheese is to separate these two substances thoroughly, for if whey is left in the cheese it causes it to bulge out at the sides, and leaves a decomposed flavour which we may recognise in dairies of inferior value.

As soon as the evening's milking is completed and stored in a vat, it is cooled down as quickly as possible, and in some of the



THE CHEESE FAIR.
Engraved by O. LACOUR, *from a Drawing by* A. M'CORMICK.

more complete dairy farms there is a zinc cistern with a false bottom which is filled with cold water to reduce the temperature. In many farms about half the cream is taken away for churning, and the morning's milk is added directly after. The cold water is run off the false bottom of the vat, and hot water substituted until the temperature is raised to about 90°, and then rennet and anatto are added. Rennet, it may be said for those to whom the terms in cheese-making are strange, is the mild acid that separates the curds from the whey. Other acids would do the same, but this is incomparably the best.

Rennet is formed from the viscera of a calf, and at one time Cheshire farmers made it each day from the prepared skins, but now it may be purchased ready made in bottles, at the chemist's, and this is not inferior for all practical purposes to the rennet which farmers make, and it is more convenient.

After it has acted properly, the curds are formed in solid blocks, and the whey is run off. This is all done within an hour, and then the curds are carefully cut up to let the whey still further drain off. Here again delicacy is needed, so as not to let the rich part of the curds mix with the whey, and impoverish the cheese. Indeed if the whey is properly run off it *should* be as clear as Rhenish wine, and very like it in appearance, though this would involve a very high standard of excellence indeed in the skill of dairymaids.

The curds are now salted, and the cheese formed into its shape and pressed, and in seven days it is removed to the store-room. After being there for from seven weeks to three months, according to the quality, and more particularly according to the taste of the consumer, it is ready for market.

These of course are only short outlines of the methods used in making Cheshire cheese, and even they differ to some extent on different soils, and in different dairies.

The most scientific cheese-makers now object to the orthodox method of driving skewers into the newly-formed cheese to let out whey; not that the iron hurts it, but this form of tapping is apt to let out much more than they want, and robs the cheese of richness. The whey shows this by its thick whitey consistency, which contrasts with the clear liquid that first left the vat.

The finest cheese in Cheshire comes from the neighbourhood of Beeston Castle, and most of that which is made in this district is bought for the London market. It is supremely indifferent to foreign competition, and does not vary in value. This part of Cheshire is very beautiful, and if only it were out of England it would attract thousands of visitors to its health-giving valleys and hills.

Beeston Castle and hill singularly resemble a fortress on the Rhine, and have associations of greater interest to Englishmen, but if anything were wanted to complete the resemblance it is supplied by the neighbouring hill of Peckforton, which rises on the right hand of the picture, and is crowned by the princely residence of Peckforton Castle. They do not, as too often those of Rhineland did, "frown" on each other, for they have one owner who is deeply interested in all that concerns the welfare of his tenants. The castle was built by the Earl of Chester on his return from the Holy Land. At one time it belonged to the Black Prince. Richard II. garrisoned it, but fled before Henry IV., leaving his treasure, 100,000 marks there. Brave old Admiral Bunbury once lived here; his effigy in armour may be seen at Bunbury Church, one of the noble edifices of almost cathedral dimensions that are so often seen in this charming county. He was one of those who gallantly went out to meet the Spanish Armada, and he died in 1601 at the great age of 102. He was knighted for his services after the Spanish fleet was dispersed, so that he must have been in his eighty-ninth year at the battle.

Here the sweet meadow grasses grow, and the wild thyme and lotus and many kinds of clover flourish in a natural state, making the summer air fragrant with their pleasant scents.

To apply heavy liquid manures to such lands would be to spoil them, for rank grasses would soon flourish and elbow their more delicate neighbours out of the pastures. The milk which is obtained from the farms round Beeston Castle, Cholmondely and Malpas, is easily converted into fine cheese by simple care and almost elementary knowledge.

Mr. Aston, who is one of the great authorities on cheese-making, has given a few broad principles that should never be lost sight of, and Dr. Voelcker, F.R.S., the consulting chemist of the Royal Agricultural Society, has confirmed these quite independently.

There is one prevailing requirement among all cheese-makers, and without this all other excellences profit nothing: there should be absolute cleanliness in everything connected with a dairy, the milkmaids, the utensils, the cattle and their byres, and the store-

BEESTON CASTLE, THE CENTRE OF THE CHEESE DISTRICT.
From a Drawing by ALFRED RIMMER.

rooms. These latter are sometimes in unimproved farm-buildings, near piggeries, or other odorous matter, and new cheese or milk quickly acquires a foreign flavour. So delicate is it, that in a good dairy a number of cheeses had to be detached from the rest, and sold at a lower value, because they were manufactured at a time when a few doors had been freshly painted.

Cattle should be driven quietly to their byres and pastures, and have easy access to abundant supplies of good water.

The proper degree of temperature should be hit upon before the rennet is applied, but as this depends much upon the condition of the milk and the state of the atmosphere, experience must be the only guide.

In the item of quality there is not only a wide difference of opinion, but the general taste of the public has considerably altered.

Formerly, old and rather dry cheese was in the greatest demand, but now a newer and fresher kind of Cheshire is called for, and this to the advantage of the maker in every way.

Less salt is mixed with the curds, and the flavour of ripe cheese is gained by adding a little sour milk in the early stage of the manufacture.

We see in the market two kinds of cheese, yellow and white, and the difference is this: yellow cheese is slightly coloured with a South American herb called anatto. This anatto is a South American plant that yields a very strong reddish-yellow colour. It is used either in a pasty state or else in its more modern liquid form. The latter is much better, and safer to manipulate.

White cheese on the other hand has no colouring, and is made especially for the Manchester and other northern markets, where there was an idea that anatto affected the flavour, an idea, however, that does not rest on any solid foundation.

Cheshire cheese may be divided into three classes, each of which, however, has its own degree of excellence. There is, first of all, whole milk cheese, that is to say, cheese that has had no cream at all removed from it, and if this is well made on the best grass lands, it is almost as convertible into money at its full value as government stock. Then there is half-milk cheese, or cheese from which a considerable part of the cream has been removed, and finally there is skim-milk cheese from which all the cream has been taken away. The half-milk cheeses differ very greatly indeed, but the whole-milk, and the skim-milk are tolerably uniform in value. The latter is indeed uniformly of very inferior quality, but it is marrow and fatness itself if compared with a shipment of cheese which I see by this day's paper, left America, and the censor of the shipment is not an English factor, or any prejudiced party, but the editor of a most respectable paper, the *Chicago Tribune*—400 cases of cheese made from skim-milk, and that diluted, were shipped to England, January 15, 1885. The process employed was one that might really wake up our sleepy farmers, it was the "grand centrifugal," and it would claim to restore to skimmed milk all it ever lost, and enable the vendors to sell cheese at one cent

"OLD YACHT INN," CHESTER.
From a Drawing by ALFRED RIMMER.

per pound. The editor fairly enough says that he is in a puzzle which he should pity most, those who consumed the shipment, or those who had the conscience to call it cheese.

The Chester cheese market, which is figured here, is held in the "Linen Hall," as it is termed, and is now a monthly one. Formerly there were four markets in the year, and these were often cleared out by purchasers from Liverpool, Birmingham, and London, by 10 o'clock in the morning. The Yacht Inn which forms the subject of one of the illustrations, is opposite the cheese market, and on market days it is filled with farmers from Cheshire, Flint, and Denbighshire, upturned carts of many builds form a picturesque foreground, and the places they have come from which are lettered on the name-plates—Broxton, Beeston, Malpas, and many others—recall scenes of beauty and delight. The Linen Hall was built in the year 1778, on the site of one of the monasteries that were inclosed within the city walls, and formerly it was called the "Grey Friars' Croft." Grey Friars' Street is situated about a furlong away, and between the two were the monastic buildings and gardens. In this Linen Hall fairs were formerly held for the sale of Yorkshire cloth and tweeds, and moleskins. This was also the depot for Irish linen, for Chester was formerly the point of departure for Ireland, and we may see such signs as "The Dublin Packet" and others that are reminiscences of the old state of things, upon the older public-houses. The Yacht Inn is another relic, for yachts in former days differed much in use and appearance from those we know.

It is perfectly obvious from the accounts given of farms in this paper, that farming may be lucrative even yet, but as those who have prospered have often said to me, the tenants must march with the times. Of the tenure of land, and land laws, this is not the place to speak, excepting to say that these might be altered with advantage both to the owner and occupier, and there is no doubt that beneficial changes are not far distant.

As for being dependent upon foreign supplies for cheese and other farm produce, it is quite time we realised the fact that we might be great exporters. It is estimated that about 100,000 tons of cheese are made in England, and something more than this quantity is imported. Now at a very moderate estimate there are 4,000 square miles of land in England specially adapted for the manufacture of cheese, and that produce such well-known brands as Cheshire, Cheddar, Stilton, and Gloucester, and if these were worked up to their limit they would produce at a low estimate 360,000 tons, and that means a proportionate increase in bacon and beef![1] The Americans, as has been said have learned of us, and we may learn of them. The "grand centrifugal" process may indeed be beyond us, but the scrupulous cleanliness of their dairies, the saving of labour by ingenious appliances and the admirable system of their factories are well worth our study.

It is within the memory even of not old men that they excelled far in all that related to ships. Their captains were more scientific and their ships could show our own the way. But a yacht that crossed the ocean and beat anything we could produce was one cause amongst others that made shipbuilders and Board of Trade captains look to their ways. A total change has come over us since the days of American supremacy in shipping, and in friendly rivalry we have recovered our old position again. Indeed, as an American gentleman remarked to me, "If I want to cross the ocean, I must go in an English steamer." Let the English farmer enter into friendly rivalry—and there will never be any other—with the Americans; why, some of the best cheeses at the last

[1] This great yield of produce is, supposing that cows yield eighteen quarts of milk per day, but cattle in Cheshire have sometimes yielded as much as thirty and thirty-five. What then shall we say of the yield of a Dutch cow which gained the prize at Amsterdam in 1884. The Duke of Westminster, who does all in his power to advance the interests of agriculture in his county, has given us the following extraordinary narrative. In distributing the prizes at the Cheshire Dairy Show in October, 1884, he says:—"Lord Egerton of Tatton and my agent (Mr. Cecil Parker) went over to see the Agricultural Exhibition at Amsterdam in the summer. My nephew got a very bad cold, and had to come back, but he informed me of the appalling nature of the Dutch cows. You will agree with me in using that word 'appalling' when I was told that the prize cow on that occasion gives no less than seventy quarts of milk a day. I don't know what you Cheshire ladies may think of that, but it may raise the question whether we have got the right breed of cow at all. There was this cow producing seventy quarts a day. They told him it was a very common thing for a Dutch cow to produce thirty quarts a day. I think I may fairly use the word 'appalling' with respect to these very lacteal cows that we have been talking about. I believe Lord Egerton has been investing in these cattle, and I hope the Cheshire grass will agree with them, and that they will produce seventy quarts a day." This statement appeared so extraordinary that steps were taken to see if there might have been some error, or perhaps misprint, but there is neither, and it is permitted to be given on the high authority of the maker.

dairy show in Chester were bought by American visitors to send to New York, with I do not know what fiscal charges to face. Aim at any rate to supply Boston and New York, even if it ends in only having the monopoly of our own markets. We do indeed supply some foreign markets, for the best "Gorgonzola" cheese is made in Leicestershire; the only pity is that the same ingenuity is not expended over turning the same milk into Stilton; and let us remember that the old slovenly systems, even if they did succeed in producing good dairies occasionally, as doubtless they did, are no more fit to cope with modern requirements than old passenger packet-ships are to compete with screw-steamers.

In speaking of 4000 miles as the best of cheese-producing district of England we are only dealing with a fraction of its area. Yet the cheeses produced upon it would, at sixpence per pound, including the finest Stilton and Cheshire to help the average, be worth twenty millions sterling! And what about the cattle and the pigs, and poultry that also subsist on the same area.

Cheese from abroad is handicapped with packages, freight, brokerage, and insurance, and beyond this it loses by a long sea voyage as fruit does, although, perhaps, hardly to the same extent, still it is always best in the country whore it is made.

Can—it is sometimes asked—retired tradesmen who have a moderate competence, ever hope to farm with profit, as they used to do when wheat was eighty shillings per quarter and labourers were content with eight shillings a week, and in some future chapter an affirmative answer will be given. Of course they would have to learn; but technical knowledge is soon acquired if the taste is there, and certainly a tradesman would be apt to bring into the work many requisites a farmer too often lacks, such as accurate book-keeping, a knowledge of the value of economy, and business habits.

Perhaps there are few tradesmen who have not in their time hoped to "husband out life's taper" among meadows, and corn fields, and if they do not leave it too long they may spend years of prosperity and usefulness, and reverse the words of Polonius, "I'll be no more a service to the state," and say, "I'll *be* a service to the state, and keep a farm and carters."

ALFRED RIMMER.

LOVE AND FANTASY.

Beside a clear and laughing stream
Young Love sat pensively,
And long he gazed into the brook,
And many a sigh sighed he.

"Alone, alas! am I," sighed Love,
"And Love alone is dree;
Oh, who will hither come," cried Love,
"And keep me company?"

The zephyrs came with light caress,
Soft humming came the bee,
And sweet the birds above him sang,
"O, Love, we'll bide with thee."

And all the rustling grasses sighed,
Low murmured every tree,
The rippling waters tuneful asked,
"Are we not company?"

But Love, impatient, turned away;
"Ah, no! ah, no!" said he;
"Not such, not such, my heart doth crave
To keep it company.

"Yet know I not what it would have,
Ah, me! what can it be?
If only it would come," sighed Love,
And looked up wearily.

Just then a maid—ye gods, how fair!
What grace, what charm had she!—
Came slowly through the swaying trees;
Love straightway bent the knee.

As winsomely the maiden paused
Upon the daisied lea;
"Art come, fair maid," Love eager said,
"To keep me company?"

So soft her voice, Love quivered through
With new-born ecstasy;
"Yes, I am come," she gently said,
"And pledge my fealty."

Then Love he vowed—as young Love's wont—
With oaths and rhapsody;
But all the while the damsel's eyes
Did twinkle merrily.

"And, now, thy name, fair one?" saith Love.
"My name; ah, soon," quoth she,
"Its meaning thou wilt truly learn;
But I'm called '*Fantasy*.'"

"Which means delight and changeless joy!"
The youth cried rapturously.
She smiled upon the deep-moved boy;
"'Tis even so," quoth she.

Then knelt he by the winsome maid
Beneath a spreading tree;
Oh, ne'er before on summer air
Was heard such witchery

As tuned the lips of that bright pair,
Whose words melodiously
Were borne upon the murmuring breeze
Along the daisied lea.

"Oh ne'er before, dear maid!" cried Love,
"Such bliss was known to me
As now doth thrill my heart and brain;
This bliss, it comes from thee.

"Now, swear, my own, my best beloved,"
His voice shook tremously,
"That never thou wilt leave me, dear,
My hope, my Fantasy!"

To which the maid, but laughing low,
"Oh, that, most willingly;
For leal am I to Love and true,
'Tis *he* leaves Fantasy."

To which the youth, all pale with pain,
"Thou art unkind to me!
As soon this stream might leave its course,
As I should stray from thee."

* * * * *

Both maid and stream, one morn, were there,
But Love—ah, where was he?
And blithe the damsel laughed and said,
"Love ne'er keeps faith with me."

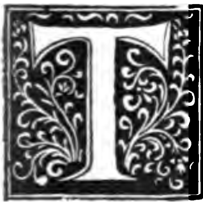
Then through the woodlands green she sang,
With arch and merry glee,
"When Love first meets you, maids, beware,
Lest it be Fantasy."

C. Milne.

AUNT RACHEL.

A RUSTIC SENTIMENTAL COMEDY.

CHAPTER IV.



HE rustic little church at Heydon Hay made a nucleus for the village, which, close at hand, clustered about it pretty thickly, but soon began to fray off into scattered edges, as if the force of attraction decreased with distance, after the established rule. Beside the churchyard, and separated from it by a high brick wall, was a garden, fronted by half a dozen slim and lofty poplars. Within the churchyard the wall was only on a level with the topmost tufts of grass, but on the garden side it stood six feet high, and was bulged out somewhat by the weight of earth which pressed against it. Facing the tall poplars was a house of two stories. It looked like a short row of houses, for it boasted three front doors. Over each of these was hung a little contrivance which resembled a section of that extinguisher apparatus which is still to be found suspended above the pulpit in some old-fashioned country churches. All the windows of the old house were of diamond panes, and those of the upper story projected from a roof of solid and venerable thatch. A pair of doves had their home in a wicker cage which hung from the wall, and their cooing was like the voice of the house, so peaceful, homely, and old-world was its aspect.

Despite the three front doors, the real entrance to the house was at the rear, to which access was had by a side gate. A path, moss-grown at the edges, led between shrubs and flowers to a small circle of brickwork, in the midst of which was a well with rope and windlass above it, and thence continued to the door, which led to an antique low-browed kitchen. A small dark passage led from the kitchen to a front room with a great fireplace, which rose so high that there was but just enough room between the mantel-board and the whitewashed ceiling for the squat brass candlesticks and the big foreign sea-shells which stood there for ornament.

The diamonded window admitted so little light that on entering here from the outer sunshine the visitor could only make out the details one by one. When his eyes became accustomed to the semi-darkness he was sure to notice a dozen or more green baize bags which hung upon the walls, each half defining, in the same vague way as all the others, the outline of the object it contained. Each green baize bag was closely tied at the neck, and suspended at an equal height with the rest upon a nail. There was something of a vault-like odour in the room, traceable probably to the two facts that the carpet was laid upon a brick floor, and that the chamber was rarely opened to the air.

Ezra Gold, seated upright in an oaken arm-chair with a hand lightly grasping the end of either arm, was at home in the close cool shadow of the place. The cloistered air, the quiet and the dim shade, seemed to suit him, and he to be in harmony with them. His eyes were open, and alighted now and again with an air of recognition on some familiar object, but otherwise he might have seemed asleep. On the central table was a great pile of music-books, old-fashioned alike in shape and binding. They exhaled a special cloistral odour of their own, as if they had been long imprisoned. Ezra's eye dwelt oftener on these musty old books than elsewhere.

He had sat still and silent for a long time when the bells of the church, with a startling nearness and distinctness, broke into a peal. He made a slight movement when the sound

first fell upon his ear, but went back to his quiet and his dreams again at once.

Ten minutes went by and the bells were still pealing, when he heard a sound which would have been inaudible in the midst of the metallic clamour to ears less accustomed than his own. He had lived there all his life, and scarcely noticed the noise which would almost have deafened a stranger. The sound he had heard was the clicking of the gate, and after a pause it was followed by the appearance of his nephew Reuben, who looked about him with a dazzled and uncertain gaze.

"Well, Reuben lad," said the old man; but his voice was lost for his nephew in the noise which shook the air. "Dost not see me?" he cried, speaking loudly this time.

"I'm fresh from the sunlight," Reuben shouted with unnecessary force. "You spoke before? I couldn't hear you for the bells."

The old man with a half-humorous gesture put his hands to his ears.

"No need to shout a man's head off," he answered. "Come outside."

Reuben understood the gesture, though he could not hear the words, and the two left the room together, and came out upon the back garden. The sound of the bells was still clear and loud, but by no means so overwhelming as it had been within doors.

"That's better," said Reuben. "They're making noise enough for young Sennacherib's wedding."

"Young Sennacherib?" asked his uncle. "Young Eld? Is young Eld to be married?"

"Didn't you know that? The procession is coming along the road this minute. Old Sennacherib disapproves of the match, and we've had a scene the like of which was never known in Heydon Hay before."

"Ay?" said Ezra, with grave interest, slowly, and with the look of a man long imprisoned, to whom outside things are strange, but interesting still. "As how?"

"Why thus," returned Reuben, with a laugh in his eyes. "Old Sennacherib comes to his gate and awaits the wedding party. Young Snac, with his bride upon his arm, waves a braggart handkerchief at the oldster, and out walks papa, plants himself straight in front of the company, and brings all to a halt. 'I should like to tell thee,' says the old fellow before them all, rolling that bull-dog head of his, 'as I've made my will an' cut thee off with a shillin'!'"

"Dear me!" said Ezra, seriously; "dear me! And what answer made young Snac to this?"

"Young Snac," said Reuben, "was equal to his day. 'All right,' says he, 'gi'e me the shillin' now, an' we'll drop in at the "Goat" and split a quart together.' 'All right,' says the old bull-dog; 'it's th' on'y chance I shall ever light upon of mekin' a profit out o' thee.' He lugs out a leather bag, finds a shilling, bites it to make sure of its value, hands it to the young bull-dog, and at the 'Goat' they actually pull up together, and young Snac spends the money then and there. 'Bring out six pints,' cries Snac the younger. 'Fo'penny ale's as much as a father can expect when his loving son is a-spendin' the whole of his inheritance upon him.' Everybody sipped, the bride included, and the two bull-dogs clinked their mugs together. I sipped myself, being invited as a bystander, and toasted father and son together."

"But, mind thee, lad," said Ezra, "it's scarcely to be touched upon as a laughing matter. Drollery of a sort theer is in it, to be sure; but what Sennacherib Eld says he sticks to. When he bites he holds. He was ever of that nature."

"I know," said Reuben; "but young Nip-and-Fasten has the breed of old Bite-and-Hold-Fast in him, and if the old man keeps his money the young one will manage to get along without it."

At this moment the bells ceased their clangour.

"They've gone into the church, Reuben," said the old man. "I'll do no less than wish 'em happiness, though there's fewer that finds it than seeks it by that gate."

"It's like other gates in that respect, I suppose," Reuben answered.

"Well, yes," returned the elder man, lingeringly. "But it's the gate that most of 'em fancy, and thereby it grows the saddest to look at, lad. Come indoors again. There'll be no more bells this yet-a-while."

Reuben followed him into the cloistral odours and shadows of the sitting-room. Ezra took his old seat and kept silence for the space of two or three minutes.

"You said you wanted to speak to me, uncle," said the younger man at length.

"Yes, yes," said Ezra, rising as if from a dream. "You're getting to have a very pretty hand on the fiddle, Reuben, and—well, it's a shame to bury anything that has a value. This"—he arose and laid a hand on the topmost book of the great pile of music—"this has never seen the light for a good five-and-twenty year. Theer's some of it forgot, notwithstanding that it's all main good music. But theer's no room i' the world for th' old-fangled an' the new-fangled. One nail drives

out another. But I've been thinking thee mightst find a thing or two herein as would prove of value, and it's yours if you see fit to take it away."

"Why, it's a library," said Reuben. "You are very good, uncle, but——"

"Tek it, lad, tek it, if you'd like it, and make no words. And if it shouldn't turn out to have been worth the carrying you can let th' old chap think it was—eh?"

"Worth the carrying?" said Reuben, with a half-embarrassed little laugh. "I'm pretty sure you had no rubbish on your shelves, uncle." He began to turn over the leaves of the topmost book. "'*Etudes*,'" he read, "'*pour deux violins*, par Joseph Manzini.' This looks good. Who was Joseph Manzini? I never heard of him."

"Manzini?" asked the old man with a curious eagerness—"Manzini." His voice changed altogether, and fell into a dreamy and retrospective tone. He laid a hand upon the open pages, and smoothed them with a touch which looked like a caress.

"Who was he?" asked Reuben. "Did you know him?"

"No, lad," returned the old man, coming out of his dream, and smiling as he spoke, "I never knew him. What should bring me to know a German musician as was great in his own day?"

"I thought you spoke as if you knew him," said Reuben.

"Hast a quick ear," replied Ezra, "and a searching fancy. No lad, no; I never knew him. But that was the last man I ever handled bow and fiddle for. I left that open"—he tapped the book with his fingers and then closed it as he spoke—"I left that open on my table when I was called away on business to London. I found it open when I came home again, and I closed it, for I never touched a bow again. I'd heard Paganini in the meantime. Me and 'Saiah Eld tried that through together, and since then I've never drawn a note out o' catgut."

"I could never altogether understand it, uncle," said Reuben. "What could the man's playing have been like?"

"What was it like?" returned the older man. "What is theer as it wa'n't like? I couldn't tell thee, lad—I couldn't tell thee. It was like a lost soul a-wailing i' the pit. It was like an angel a-singing afore the Lord. It was like that passage i' the Book o' Job, where 'tis said as 'twas the dead o' night when deep sleep falleth upon men, and a vision passed afore his face, and the hair of his flesh stood up. It was like the winter tempest i' the trees, and a little brook in summer weather. It was like as if theer was a livin' soul within the thing, and sometimes he'd trick it and soothe it, and it'd laugh and sing to do the heart good, an' another time he'd tear it by the roots till it shrilled to chill your blood."

"You heard him often?" asked Reuben.

"Never but once," said Ezra shaking his head with great decison. "Never but once. He wa'n't a man to hear too often. 'Twas a thing to know and to carry away. A glory to have looked at once, but not to live in the midst on. Too bright for common eyes, lad—too bright for common eyes."

"I've heard many speak of his playing," said Reuben. "But there are just as many opinions as there are people."

"There's no disputing in these matters," the older man answered. "I've heard him talked of as a Charley Tann, which I tek to be a kind of humbugging pretender, but 'twas plain to see for a man with a soul behind his wescut as the man was wore to a shadow with his feeling for his music. 'Twas partly the man's own sufferin' and triumphin' as had such a power over me. It is with music as th' other passions. Theer's love, for example. A lad picks out a wench, and spends his heart and natur' in her behalf as free as if there'd niver been a wench i' the world afore, and niver again would be. And after all a wench is a commonish sort of a object, and even the wench the lad's in love with is a commonish sort o' creature among wenches. But what's that to him, if her chances to be just the sort his soul and body cries after?"

"Ah!" said Reuben, "*if* his soul cries after her. But if he values goodness his soul will cry after it, and if he values beauty his soul will cry after that. I never heard Paganini, but he was a great player, or a real lover of music like you would never have found what he wanted in him."

"Yes, lad," his uncle answered, falling suddenly into his habitual manner, "the man was a player. Thee canst have the music any time thee likst to send for it."

Reuben knew the old man and his ways. The talkative fit was evidently over, and he might sit and talk, if he would, from then till evening, and get no more than a monosyllable here and there in return for his pains.

"It will take a hand-cart to carry the books," he said; "but I will take Manzini now if you will let me." The old man, contenting himself with a mere nod in answer, he took up the old-fashioned oblong folio, tucked it under his arm, and shook hands with the donor. "This is a princely gift,

uncle," he said, with the natural exaggeration of a grateful youngster. "I don't know how to say thank you for it."

Ezra smiled, but said nothing. Reuben, repeating his leave-taking, went away, and coming suddenly upon the bright sunlight and the renewed clangour of the bells was half stunned by the noise and dazzled by the glare. With all this clash and brilliance, as if they existed because of her and were a part of her presence, appeared Ruth Fuller in the act of passing Ezra's house. Ruth had brightness, but it was rather of the twilight sort than this; and the music which seemed fittest to salute her apparition might have been better supplied by these same bells at a distance of a mile or two. Reuben was perturbed, as any mere mortal might expect to be on encountering a goddess.

Let us see the goddess as well as may be.

She was country bred to begin with, and though to Heydon Hay her appearance smacked somewhat of the town, a dweller in towns would have called her rustic. She wore a straw hat which was in the fashion of the time, and to the eyes of the time looked charming, though twenty years later we call it ugly and speak no more than truth. Beneath this straw hat very beautiful and plenteous brown hair escaped in defiance of authority, and frolicked into curls and wavelets, disporting itself on a forehead of creamy tone and smoothness, and just touching the eyebrows, which were of a slightly darker brown, faintly arched on the lower outline and more prominently arched on the upper. Below the brows brown eyes, as honest as the day, and with a frank smile always ready to break through the dream which pretty often filled them. A short upper lip delicately curved and curiously mobile, a full lower lip, a chin expressive of great firmness, but softened by a dimpled hollow in the very middle of its roundness, a nose neither Grecian nor tilted, but betwixt the two, and delightful, and a complexion familiar with sun and air, wholesome, robust and fine. In stature she was no more than on a level with Reuben's chin, but Reuben was taller than common, standing six feet in his stockings. This fact of superior height was not in itself sufficient to account for the graceful inclination of the body which always characterised Reuben when he talked with Ruth. There was a tender and unconscious deference in this attitude which told more to the least observant observer than Reuben would willingly have had known.

Ezra Gold saw the chance encounter through the window and watched the pair as they shook hands. They walked away together, for they were bound in the same direction, and the old man rose from his seat and walked to the window to look after them.

"Well, well, lad," he said, speaking half aloud, after the fashion of men who spend much of their time alone, "theer's beauty and goodness theer, I fancy. Go thy ways, lad, and be happy."

They were out of sight already, and Ezra, with his hands folded behind him, paced twice or thrice along the room. Pausing before one of the green baize bags, he lifted it from its nail, and having untied the string that fastened it, he drew forth with great tenderness an unstrung violin, and carrying it to the light sat down and turned it over and over in his hands. Then he took the neck with his left hand, and placing the instrument upright upon his knee caressed it with his right.

"Poor lass," he said, "a' might think as thee was grieved to have had ne'er a soul to sing to all these years. I've a half mind to let thee have a song now, but I doubt thee couldst do naught but screech at me. I've forgotten how to ask a lady of thy make to sing. Shalt go to Reuben, lass; he'll mek thee find thy voice again. Rare and sweet it used to be—rare and sweet."

He fell into a fit of coughing which shook him from head to foot, but even in the midst of the paroxysm he made shift to lay down the violin with perfect tenderness. When the fit was over he lay back in his chair with his arms depending feebly at his sides, panting a little, but smiling like a man at peace.

CHAPTER V.

There had been a long spell of fair weather, and the Earl of Barfield had carried on his warfare against all and sundry who permitted the boughs of their garden trees to overhang the public highway, for a space of little less than a month. The campaign had been conducted with varying success, but the old nobleman counted as many victories as fights, and was disposed on the whole to be content with himself. He was an old and experienced warrior in this cause, and had learned to look with a philosophic eye upon reverses.

But on the day following that which saw the introduction of his lordship's parliamentary nominee to the quartette party, his

lordship encountered a check which called for all the resources of philosophy. He was routed by his own henchman, Joseph Beaker.

The defeat arrived in this wise. His lordship having carefully arranged his rounds so that Joseph should carry the ladder all the long distances, whilst he himself bore it all the short ones, had found himself so flurried by the defeat he had encountered at the hands of Miss Blythe, that he had permitted Joseph to take up the ladder and carry it away from where it had leaned against the apple-tree in the little old lady's garden. This unforeseen incident had utterly disarranged his plans, and since he had been inadvised enough to post his servitor in the particulars of the campaign, Joseph had been quick to discover his own advantage.

"We will go straight on to Willis's, Joseph," said his lordship, when they began their rounds that afternoon. The stroke was simple, but if it should only succeed was effective.

"We bain't agoin' to pass Widder Hotchkiss, be we, governor?" demanded Joseph, who saw through the device. His lordship decided not to hear the question, and walked on a little ahead, swinging the billhook and the saw.

Joseph Beaker revolved in his mind his own plan of action. In front of Widow Hotchkiss's cottage the trees were unusually luxuriant, and the bows hung unusually low. When they were reached Joseph contrived to entangle his ladder and to bring himself to a standstill, with every appearance of naturalness.

"My blessed," he mumbled, "this here's a disgrace to the parish, gaffer. Theer's nothin' in all Heydon Hay as can put a patch on it. Thee bissent agoin' past this, beest? Her's as small-sperited as a rabbit—the widder is."

"We'll take it another time, Joseph," said his lordship, striving to cover his confusion by taking a bigger pinch of snuff than common—"another time, Joseph, another time."

"Well," said Joseph, tossing his lopsided head, as if he had at last fathomed the folly and weakness of human nature, and resigned himself to his own mournful discoveries, "I should niver ha' thought it." He made a show of shouldering the ladder disgustedly, but dropped it again. "We fled afore a little un yesterday," he said. "I did look for a show o' courage here, governor." His lordship hesitated. "Why, look at it," pursued Joseph, waving a hand towards tho overhanging verdure; "it ud be a sinful crime to go by it."

"Put up the ladder, Joseph," replied his lordship in a voice of sudden resolve. The Hotchkiss case was a foregone victory for him, and his own desires chimed with Joseph's arguments, even whilst he felt himself outgeneralled.

The widow sweetened the business by a feeble protest, and the Earl of Barfield was lordly with her.

"Must come down, my good woman," said his lordship firmly, "must come down. Obstruct the highway. Disgrace to the parish."

"That's what I said," mumbled Joseph, as he steadied the ladder from below. The widow watched the process wistfully, and my lord chopped and sawed with unwonted gusto. Branch after branch fell into the lane, and the aged nobleman puffed and sweated with his grateful labour. He had not had such a joyful turn for many a day. The widow moaned like a winter wind in a keyhole, and when his lordship at last descended from his perch she was wiping her eyes with her apron.

"I knowin' full well what poor folks has got to put up with at the hands o' them as the Lord has set in authority," said the widow, "but it's cruel hard to have a body's bits o' trees chopped and lopped i' that way. When ourn was alive his lordship niver laid a hand upon 'em. Ourn 'ud niver ha' bent himself to put up wi' it, that he niver would, and Lord Barfield knows it, for though he was no better nor a market gardener, he was one o' them as knowed what was becomin' between man and man, be he niver so lowly, and his lordship the lord o' the manor for miles around."

"Tut, tut, my good woman," returned his lordship. "Pooh, pooh! Do for firewood. Nice and dry against the winter. Much better there than obstructing the highroad—much better. Joseph Beaker, take the ladder."

"My turn next time," replied Joseph. "Carried it here."

His lordship, a little abashed, feigned to consider and took snuff.

"Quite right, Joseph," he answered, "quite right. Quite fair to remind me. Perfectly fair." But he was a good deal blown and wearied with his exertions, and though anxious to escape the moanings of the widow, he had no taste for the exercise which awaited him. He braced himself for the task, however, and handing the tools to his henchman manfully shouldered the ladder and started away with it. The lane was circuitous, and when once he had rounded the first corner he paused and set

down his burden. "It's unusually warm to-day, Joseph," he said, mopping at his wrinkled forehead.

"Theer's a coolish breeze," replied Joseph, "and a plenty o' shadder."

"Do you know, Joseph," said the earl in a casual tone, "I think I shall have to get you to take this turn. I am a little tired."

"Carried it last turn," said Joseph, decidedly. "A bargain's a bargain."

"Certainly, certainly," returned his lordship, "a bargain *is* a bargain, Joseph." He sat down upon one of the lower rungs of the ladder and fanned himself with a pocket-handkerchief. "But you know, Joseph," he began again after a pause, "nobody pushes a bargain too hard. If you carry the ladder this time I will carry it next. Come now. What do you say to that?"

"It's a quarter of a mile from here to Willis's," said Joseph, "and it ain't five score yards from theer to the Tan Yard. Theer's some," he added with an almost philosophic air, "as knows when they are well off."

"I'll give you an extra penny," said his lordship, condescending to bargain.

"I'll do it for a extry sixpince," replied Joseph.

"I'll make it twopence," said his lordship,—"twopence and a screw of snuff."

"I'll do it for a extry sixpince," Joseph repeated doggedly.

Noblesse oblige. There was a point beyond which the Earl of Barfield could not haggle. He surrendered, but it galled him, and the agreeable sense of humour with which he commonly regarded Joseph Beaker failed him for the rest of that afternoon. It happened also that the people who remained to be encountered one and all opposed him, and with the exception of his triumph over the Widow Hotchkiss the day was a day of failure.

When, therefore, his lordship turned his steps homeward he was in a mood to be tart with anybody, and it befell that Ferdinand was the first person on whom he found an opportunity of venting his gathered sours. The young gentleman heaved in sight near the lodge gates, smoking a cigar and gazing about him with an air of lazy nonchalance which had very much the look of being practised in hours of private leisure. Behind him came the valet, bearing the big square colour-box, the camp stool, and the clumsy field easel.

"Daubing again, I presume?" said his lordship snappishly.

"Yes," said Ferdinand, holding his cigar at arm's length and flicking at the ash with his little finger, "daubing again."

His lordship felt the tone and gesture to be irritating and offensive.

"Joseph Beaker," he said, "take the ladder to the stables. I have done with you for to-day. Upon my word, Ferdinand," he continued, when Joseph had shambled through the gateway with the ladder, "I think you answer me with very little consideration for—In short, I think your manner a little wanting in—I don't care to be addressed in that way, Ferdinand."

"I am sorry, sir," said Ferdinand. "I did not mean to be disrespectful. You spoke of my daubing. I desired to admit the justice of the term. Nothing more, I assure you."

His lordship in his irritated mood felt the tone to be more irritating and offensive than before.

"I tell you candidly, Ferdinand, that I do not approve of the manner in which you spend your time here. If you imagine that you can walk over the course here without an effort you are very much mistaken. I take this idleness and indifference very ill, sir, very ill indeed, and if we are beaten I shall know on whom the blame will rest. The times are not what they were, Ferdinand; and constitutional principles are in danger."

"Really, sir," returned Ferdinand; "one can't be electioneering all the year round. There can't be a dissolution before the autumn. When the time comes I will work as hard as you can ask me to do."

"Pooh, pooh!" said his lordship irritably. "I don't ask you to spout politics. I ask you to show yourself to these people as a serious and thoughtful fellow, and not as a mere dauber of canvas and scraper of fiddles. You come here," he went on, irritated as much by his own speech as by the actual circumstances of the case, "as if you were courting a constituency of dilettanti, and expected to walk in by virtue of your little artistic graces. They don't want a man like that. They won't have a man like that. They're hard-headed fellows, let me tell you. These South Stafford fellows are the very deuce, let me tell you, for knowing all about Free Trade and the Cheap Loaf and the National Debt."

"Very well, sir," said Ferdinand, laughing, "I reform. Instead of carrying easel and *porte-couleur* Harvey shall go about with a copy of *The Wealth of Nations*, and when a voter passes I'll stop and consult the volume and make a note. But *l'homme serieux* is not the only man for election times. I'll wager all I am ever likely to

make out of politics that I have secured a vote this afternoon, though I have done nothing more than offer a farmer's wife a little artistic advice about the choice of a bonnet. I told her that yellow was fatal to that charming complexion, and advised blue. Old Holland is proud of his young wife, and I hooked him to a certainty."

"Holland!" cried his lordship more pettishly than ever. "Holland is Conservative to the backbone. We were always sure of Holland."

"Well, well," said Ferdinand in a voice of toleration, "we are at least as sure of him as ever."

The allowance in the young man's manner exasperated the old nobleman. But he liked his young friend in spite of his insolence and tranquil swagger, and he dreaded to say something which might be too strong for the occasion.

"We will talk this question over at another time," he said, controlling himself. "We will talk it over after dinner."

"I must go vote-catching after dinner," returned Ferdinand. "I promised to go and listen to the quartette party this evening."

"Very well," returned his lordship, with a sudden frostiness of manner. "I shall dine alone. Good evening."

He marched away, the senile nodding of his head accentuated into pettishness, and Ferdinand stood looking after him for a second or two with a smile, but presently thinking better of it, he hastened after the angry old man and overtook him.

"I am sorry, sir, if I disappoint you," he said. "I don't want to do that, and I won't do it if I can help it." The earl said nothing, but walked on with an injured air which was almost feminine. "Are you angry at my proposing to go to see old Fuller? I understood you to say yesterday that his vote was undecided, and that nothing was so likely to catch him as a little interest in his musical pursuits."

"I have no objections to offer to your proposal," replied his lordship frostily. "None whatever."

"I am glad to hear that, sir," said Ferdinand, with rather more dryness than was needed. His lordship walked on again, and the young man lingered behind.

The household ways at the Hall were simple, and the hours kept there were early. It was not yet seven o'clock when Ferdinand, having already eaten his lonely dinner, strolled down the drive, cigar in mouth, bound for old Fuller's garden. He thought less of electioneering and less of music than of the pretty girl he had discovered yesterday. She interested him a little, and piqued him a little. Without being altogether a puppy, he was well aware of his own advantages of person, and was accustomed to attribute to them a fair amount of his own social successes. He was heir to a baronetcy and to the estates that went with it. It was impossible in the course of nature that he should be long kept out of these desirable possessions, for the present baronet was his grandfather, and had long passed the ordinary limits of old age. The old man had outlived his own immediate natural heir, Ferdinand's father, and now, in spite of an extraordinary toughness of constitution, was showing signs of frailty which increased almost day by day. And apart from his own personal advantages, and the future baronetcy and the estates thereto appertaining, the young man felt that as the chosen candidate of the constitutional party for that division of the county at the approaching election, he was something of a figure in the place. It was rather abnormal that any pretty little half rustic girl should treat him with anything but reverence. If the girl had been shy and had blushed and trembled before him a little, he could have understood it. Had she been pert he could have understood it. Young women of the rustic order, if only they were a trifle good-looking, had an old-established licence to be pert to their male social superiors. But this young woman was not at all disposed to tremble before him, and was just as far removed from pertness as from humility.

As he strolled along he bethought him, vaguely enough—for he was not a young gentleman who was accustomed to put too much powder behind his purposes—that it would be rather an agreeable thing than otherwise to charm this young woman, if only just to show her that she could be charmed, and that he could be charming. He had been a little slighted, and it would be nice to be a little revenged. He was not a puppy, in spite of the fact that his head gave house-room to this kind of nonsense. The design is commoner amongst girls than boys, but there are plenty of young men who let their wits stray after this manner at times, and some of them live to laugh at themselves.

But whilst Ferdinand was thinking, an idea occurred to him which caused him to smile languidly. It would be amusing to awaken Barfield's wrath by starting a pronounced flirtation with this village beauty. It was scarcely consistent to have an inward understanding with himself, that if the flirtation

should take place it should be kept secret from his noble patron of all men in the world. It would certainly be great fun to take the little hussey from her pedestal. She was evidently disposed to think of herself a good deal more highly than she ought to think, and perhaps it might afford a useful lesson to her to be made a little more pliant, a little less self-opinionated, a little less disposed to snub young gentlemen of unimpeachable attractions. Thinking thus, Ferdinand made up quite a contented mind to be rustic beauty's schoolmaster.

The green door in the garden wall was still a little open when he reached it, but he could hear neither music nor voices.

The evening concert had not yet begun, and he was fain to stroll on a little further. This of itself was something of an offence to his majesty, though he hardly saw on whom to fix it. He did not know his way round to the front of the house, and did not care to present himself at the rear unless there were somebody there to receive him. He lit a new cigar to pass away the time, and re-enacted his first and only interview with the girl he had made up his mind to subjugate. In the course of this mental exercise he experienced anew the sense of slight he had felt at her hands, but in a more piercing manner. He had spoken to her, and she had waved her hand against him as if he had been a child to be silenced. He had spoken to her again, and she had not even responded. In point of fact she had ignored him. The more he looked at it the more remarkable this fact appeared, and the more uncomfortable and the more resolved he felt about it.

When his cigar was smoked half through he sighted the upright and stalwart figure of Reuben Gold, who was striding at a great pace towards him, swinging his violin case in one hand. Ferdinand paused to await him.

"Good evening, Mr. Gold," he said as Reuben drew near.

"Good evening," said Reuben, raising his eyes for a moment, and nodding with a preoccupied air. His rapid steps carried him past Ferdinand in an instant, and before the young gentleman could propose to join him he was so far in advance that it was necessary either to shout or run to bring him to a more moderate pace. Ferdinand raised his eyeglass, and surveyed the retreating figure with some indignation, and dropped it with a little click against one of his waistcoat buttons. Then he smiled somewhat wry-facedly.

"A cool set, upon my word," he murmured. "Boors, pure and simple."

He was half inclined to change his mind and stay away from the al fresco concert, but then the idea of the duty he owed himself in respect to that contumelious young beauty occurred to him, and he decided to go after all. He followed, therefore, in Reuben's hasty footsteps, but at a milder pace, and regaining the green door looked into the garden and saw the quartette party already assembled. Old Fuller, who was the first to perceive him, came forward with rough heartiness, and shook hands with a burly bow.

"Good evenin', Mr. de Blacquaire," said Fuller. "We're pleased to see you. If you'd care to tek a hand i'stead of settin' idle by to listen, we shall be glad to mek room. Eh, lads?"

"No, no, thank you, Mr. Fuller," said Ferdinand, "I would rather be a listener." Ruth was standing near the table, and he raised his cap to her. She answered his salute with a smile of welcome, and brought him a chair. "Good evening, Miss Fuller," he said, standing cap in hand before her. "What unusually beautiful weather we are having. Do you know, I am quite charmed with this old garden? There is something delightfully rustic and homely and old-fashioned about it."

"You are looking at the statues? she said with half a laugh. "They are an idea of father's. He wants to have them painted, but I always stand out against that—they look so much better as they are."

"Painted?" answered Ferdinand with a little grimace, and a little lifting of the hands and shrinking of the body as if the idea hurt him physically. "Oh, no. Pray don't have them painted."

"Well, well. Theer!" cried Fuller. "Here's another as is in favour o' grime an' slime! It's three to three now. Ruth and Reuben have allays been for leavin' 'em i' this way."

"Really, Mr. Fuller," said Ferdinand, "you must be persuaded to leave them as they are. As they are they are charming. It would be quite a crime to paint them. It would be horribly bad taste to paint them!"

After this partisan espousal of her cause, he was a little surprised to notice an indefinable but evident change in the rustic beauty's manner. Perhaps she disliked to hear a stranger accuse her father—however truly—of horribly bad taste, but this did not occur to Ferdinand, who had intended to show her that a gentleman was certain to sympathise with whatever trace of refinement he might discover in her.

"Would it?" said Fuller, simply. "Well, theer's three of a mind, and they'm likely enough to be right. Annyways theer's no danger of a brush coming anigh 'em while the young missis says 'No.' Her word's law i' this house, and has been ever sence her was no higher than the table."

"Wasn't that a ring at the front door?" asked Sennacherib, holding up his hand.

"Run and see, wench," said Fuller.

Ruth ran down the grass plot and into the house. She neither shuffled nor ambled, but skimmed over the smooth turf as if she moved by volition, and her feet had had nothing to do with the motion. She had scarce disappeared, when Isaiah, who faced the green door, sung out—

"Here's Ezra Gold, and bringin' a fiddle too. Good evenin', Mr. Gold. Beest gooin' to tek another turn at the music?"

"No," said Ezra advancing. "I expected to find Reuben here. I've got it on my mind as the poor old lady here"—he touched the green baize bag he carried beneath his arm—"is in a bit o' danger o' losing her voice through keeping silence all these length o' years, and I want him to see what sort of a tone her's got left in her."

Reuben rose from his seat with sparkling eyes and approached his uncle.

"Is that *the* old lady I've heard so much about?" he asked.

"Yes," replied Ezra, "it's the old lady herself. I don't know," he went on looking mildly about him, "as theer's another amateur player as I'd trust her to. Wait a bit, lad, while I show her into daylight."

Reuben stood with waiting hands while the old man unknotted the strings at the mouth of the green baize bag, and all eyes watched Ezra's lean fingers. At the instant when the knot was conquered and the mouth of the bag slid open, Ruth's clear voice was heard calling—

"Father, here's Aunt Rachel! Come this way, Aunt Rachel. We're going to have a little music."

CHAPTER VI.

Ezra Gold, seizing the violin gently by the neck, suffered the green baize bag to fall to the ground at his feet, and then tenderly raising the instrument in both hands looked up and dropped it to the ground. A little cry of dismay escaped from Reuben's lips, and he was on his knees in an instant.

"She's not hurt," he said, examining the violin with delicate care, "not hurt at all."

Then he looked up, and at the sight of his uncle's face rose swiftly to his feet. The old man's eyes were ghastly, and his cheeks, which had usually a hectic flush of colour too clear and bright for health, were of a leaden grey. Ezra's hand was on his heart.

"Not hurt?" he said in a strange voice. "Art sure she's not hurt, lad? That's fortunate."

The colour came back to his face as suddenly as it had disappeared.

"No," said Reuben, tapping the back of the fiddle lightly with his finger-tips and listening to the tone, though he kept his eyes fixed upon his uncle's. "She's as sound as a bell."

"That's well, lad, that's well," said Ezra in the same strange voice. The hands he reached out towards his nephew trembled, and Reuben handed back the precious instrument in some solicitude. It was natural that an old player should prize his favourite instrument, but surely, he thought, a little chance danger to it should scarcely shake a man in this way. Ezra's trembling hands began to tune the strings, and at the sound of Ruth's voice Reuben turned away. His uncle's agitation shocked him. He had known for years, as everybody had known, that Ezra had but a weakly constitution, but he had never seen so striking a sign of it before, and the old man's agitation awoke the young man's fears. There was a very close and tender affection between them.

"Reuben," Ruth was saying, "this is my Aunt Rachel. Aunt, this is Mr. Reuben Gold. I don't suppose you remember him."

"I do not remember Mr. Reuben Gold," said the little old lady, mincingly. "Is Mr. Gold a native of Heydon Hay? I do not think from Mr. Gold's appearance that he was born when I quitted the village. I think I recognise my old friends, the Elds," she went on with an air almost of patronage. "This will be Mr. Isaiah? Yes! I thought so. Mr. Isaiah was always mild in manner. And this will be Mr. Sennacherib? Yes! Mr. Sennacherib was unruly. I recognise them by their expressions."

"You remember me, Rachel?" said Mr. de Blacquaire, who had been watching the old lady since her arrival. She turned her head in a swift bird-like way and fixed her curiously youthful eyes upon him for an instant. The withered old face lit up with a smile which so transfigured it that for the moment it matched the youth of her eyes.

"Is it possible!" she cried. "Mr. For-

dinand! The dear, dear child!" She seized one of his hands and kissed it, but he drew it away, and putting an arm about her shoulders stooped to kiss her wrinkled cheek. "The grandson," she cried, turning on the others with an air of pride and tender triumph, "of my dear mistress, Lady de Blacquaire. I nursed Mr. Ferdinand in his infancy. I bore him to the font, and in my arms he received his baptismal appellation."

If she had laid claim to the loftiest of worldly distinctions she could scarcely have done it with a greater air of pride.

Ezra's tremulous fingers were still at work at the violin keys when Ruth addressed him.

"I dare say you knew my Aunt Rachel, Mr. Gold," she said. "Heydon Hay was such a little place five-and-twenty years ago that everybody must have known everybody."

"It was my privilege to know Miss Blythe when she lived here," said Ezra, looking up and speaking in a veiled murmur.

The little old lady started, turned pale, drew herself to her full height, and turned away. Sennacherib, who was watching the pair, drove out his clenched fist sideways with intent to nudge his brother Isaiah in the ribs to call his attention to this incident as a confirmation of the history he had told the night before. He miscalculated his distance, and landed on Isaiah's portly waistcoat with such force that the milder brother grunted aloud, and arising, demanded with indignation to know why he was thus assaulted. For a mere second Sennacherib was disconcerted, but recovering himself he drew Isaiah on one side and whispered in his ear—

"I on'y meant to gi'e thee a nudge, lad. Dost mind what I tode thee about 'em? Didst tek note how they met?"

"Thinkest thou'rt th' only man with a pair of eyes in his head?" demanded Isaiah, angrily, and aloud. Sennacherib by winks, and nods, and gestures, entreated him to silence, but for a minute or two Isaiah refused to be pacified, and sat rubbing at his waistcoat and darting looks of vengeance at his brother. "Punchin' a man at my time o' life i' that way," he mumbled wrathfully; "it's enough t' upset the systim for a month or more."

Nobody noticed the brethren, however, for the other members of the little party had each his or her preoccupations.

"Mr. Ferdinand," said Miss Blythe, turning suddenly upon the young gentleman, "I must seize this opportunity to ask what news there are of my dear mistress. I know that she is frail, and that correspondence would tax her energies too severely, but I make a point of writing to her once a week and presenting to her my respectful service."

She took his hand again as she addressed him, and Ferdinand noticed that it was icy cold. She was trembling all over and her eyes were troubled. He was just about to answer when a sharp twang caught his ear, and turning his head he saw Ezra in the act of handing the violin to Reuben.

"Have you got a fourth string, lad?" asked Ezra, speaking unevenly and with apparent effort; "this has gi'en way. I'm no hand at a fiddle nowadays," he added with a pitiable smile, "or else there's less virtue in catgut than there used to be."

"They make nothing as they used to do," said Reuben. He had drawn a flat tin box from his pocket and had selected a string from it, when Rachel drew Ferdinand on one side.

"Let me bring you a chair, Mr. Ferdinand," she said. "We will sit here and you must tell me of my dear mistress."

"Stay here," said Ferdinand, "I will bring you a chair." He was not sorry to be seen in this amiable light. It was agreeable to bend condescendingly to his grandmother's attached and faithful servitor, and to be observed. There was a genuine kindliness in him, too, towards the little withered old woman who had nursed him in his babyhood, and had taught him his first lessons. He brought the chairs and sat down with his old nurse at the edge of the grass plot at some little distance from the others.

"We will talk for a little time about my dear mistress," said Rachel, "and then I will ask you to take me away." She leaned forward in her chair looking up at her companion, and laying both hands upon his arm. "I cannot stay here," she went on in a whisper. "There are reasons. There is a person here I have not seen for more than a quarter of a century. You have observed that I am sometimes a little flighty." She withdrew one of her hands and tapped her forehead.

"My dear Rachel," said Ferdinand, in smiling protestation.

"Yes, yes," she insisted in a mincing whisper, as if she were laying claim to a distinctness. "A little flighty. You do no credit to your own penetration, dear Mr. Ferdinand, if you deny it. That person is the cause. I suffered a great wrong at that person's hands. Let us say no more. Tell me about my dear mistress."

The varnish of unconscious affectation was transparent enough for Ferdinand to see

through. The little old woman minced and bridled, and took quaintly sentimental airs, but she was moved a good deal, though in what way he could not guess. He sat and talked to her with a magnificent unbending, and she took his airs as no more than his right, and was well contented with them.

"And now, Reuben," cried Fuller, who like everybody else had noticed Miss Blythe's curious behaviour to Ezra and was disturbed by it. "And now Reuben, if thee hast got the old lady into fettle let's have a taste of her quality. It's maney an' maney a year now since I had a chance of listenin' to her. Let's have a solo, lad. Gi'e us summat old and flavoursome. Let's have 'The Last Rose o' Summer.'"

Reuben sat down, threw one leg over the other, and began to play. The evening was wonderfully still and quiet, but from far off, the mere ghost of a sound, came the voice of church bells. Their tone was so faint and far away that at the first stroke of the bow they seemed to die, and the lovely strain rose upon the air pure and unmingled with another sound. Rachel ceased her emphatic noddings and her mincing whisper, and sat with her hands folded in her lap to listen. Ezra, with his gaunt hands folded behind him, stood with his habitual stoop more marked than common, and stared at the grass at his feet. Ruth, from her old station by the apple-tree, looked from one to the other. She had heard Sennacherib's story from her father, and her heart was predisposed to read a romance here, little as either of the actors in that obscure drama of so many years ago looked like the figures of a romance now. They had been lovers before she was born, and had quarrelled somehow, and had each lived single. And now, when they had met after this great lapse of years, the grey old man trembled, and the wrinkled old woman turned her back upon him. The music was not without its share in the girl's emotion. And there was Reuben, with manly head and great shoulders, with strength and masculine grace in every line of him, to her fancy, drawing the loveliest music from the long-silent violin, and staring up at the evening sky as he played. Ah! if Reuben and she should quarrel and part!

But Reuben had never spoken a word, and the girl, catching herself at this romantic exercise, blushed for shame, and for one swift second hid her face in her hands. Then with a sudden pretence of perfect self-possession, such as only a woman could achieve on such short notice, she glanced with an admirably casual air about her to see that the gesture had not been observed. Nobody looked at her. Her father and the two brothers were watching Reuben, Ezra preserved his old attitude, Ferdinand was fiddling with his eyeglass, and moving his hand and one foot in time to the music, and Rachel's strangely youthful eyes were bright with tears. As the girl looked at her a shining drop brimmed over from each eye, and dropped upon the neat mantle of black silk she wore. The little old maid did not discover that she had been crying until Reuben's solo was over, and then she wiped her eyes composedly, and turned to renew her conversation with Ferdinand.

"Ah!" said Fuller, expelling a great sigh when Reuben laid down his bow upon the table, "theer's a tone! That's a noble instryment, Mr. Gold."

"She'll be the better for being played upon a little," said Ezra, mildly.

"Well, thee seest," said Isaiah with a look of contemplation, "her's been a leadin' what you might call a hideal sort o' life this five-and-twenty 'ear for a fiddle. Niver a chance of ketchin' cold or gettin' squawky. Allays wrapped up nice and warm and dry. Theer ain't, I dare venture to say it, a atom o' sap in the whole of her body. Her's as dry as——"

"As I be," interposed Sennacherib. "It 'ud be hard for annything to be dryer. Let's have a drop o' beer, Fuller, and then we'll get to work."

Ruth ran into the house laughing, and the four musicians gathered round the table. Ferdinand arose, strolled towards them, and took up a position behind Sennacherib's chair. Ezra made an uncertain movement or two, and, finally, with grave resolve, crossed the grass plot, and took the chair the young gentleman had vacated.

"I am informed, Miss Blythe," he said, with a slow, polite formality, "as you have come once more to reside among us." She inclined her head, but vouchsafed no other answer. The movement was prim to the verge of comedy, but it was plain that she meant to be chilly with him. He coughed behind his shaky white hand, and hesitated. "I do not know, Miss Blythe," he began again with new resolve, "in what manner I chanced to 'arn your grave displeasure. That is a thing I never knew." She turned upon him with a swift and vivid scorn. "A thing I never knew," he repeated. "If it is your desire to visit it upon me at this late hour, I have borne it for so many 'ears that I can bear it still. But I should like to ask, if I might be allowed to put the question, how it come to pass. I have allays felt as there was

a misunderstandin' i' the case. It is a wise bidding in Holy Writ as says, 'Let not the sun go down upon thy wrath.' And when the sun is the sun of life the thing is the more important."

"My good sir," said Rachel, rising from her seat, and asserting every inch of her small stature, "I desire to hold no communication with you now nor henceforth."

"That should be enough for a man, Miss Blythe," said Ezra mildly. "But why? if I may make so bold."

"I thought," said the little old lady, more starched and prim than ever, "I believed myself to have intimated that our conversation was at an end."

"You was not wont to be cruel nor unjust in your earlier days," Ezra answered. "But it shall be as you wish."

He left the seat, gave her a quaint old-fashioned bow, and returned to his former standing-place. Ruth was back again by this time, and Rachel crossed over to where she stood.

"Niece Ruth," she said, speaking after a fashion which was frequent with her, with an exaggerated motion of the lips, "I shall be obliged to you if you will accompany me to the house."

"Certainly, aunt," the girl answered, and placing an arm around her shoulders, walked away with her. "There is something the matter, dear. What is it?"

"There is nothing the matter," said the old lady, coldly.

"There is something serious the matter," said Ruth. They were in the house by this time, and sheltered from observation. "You are trembling, and your hands are cold. Let me get you a glass of wine."

Aunt Rachel stood erect before her, and answered with frozen rebuke—

"In my young days girls were not encouraged to contradict their seniors. I have said there is nothing the matter."

Ruth bent forward and took the two cold dry little hands in her own warm grasp, and looked into her aunt's eyes with tender solicitude. The hands were suddenly snatched away, and Aunt Rachel dropped into a seat, and without preface began to cry. Ruth knelt beside her, twining a firm arm and supple hand about her waist, and drawing down her head softly until its grey curls were pressed against her own ripe cheek. Not a word was spoken, and in five minutes the old maid's tears were over.

"Say nothing of this, my dear," she said as she kissed Ruth, and began to smooth her ruffled ribbons and curls. Her manner was less artificial than common, but the veneer of affectation was too firmly fixed to be peeled off at a moment's notice. "We are all foolish at times. You will find that out for yourself, child, as you grow older. I have been greatly disturbed, my dear, but I shall not again permit my equilibrium to be shaken by the same causes. Tell me child—is Mr. Ezra Gold often to be found here?"

"Not often," said Ruth. "He seems scarcely ever to move from home."

"I am glad to know it," said Aunt Rachel. "I cannot permit myself to move in the same society with Mr. Ezra Gold.'

"We all like him very much," Ruth answered tentatively

"Ah!" said Aunt Rachel pinching her lips and nodding. "You do not know him. *I* know him. A most despicable person. They will tell you that I am a little flighty."

"My dear aunt! What nonsense!"

"It is not nonsense, and you know it. I *am* a little flighty. At times. And I owe that to Mr. Ezra Gold. I owe a great deal to Mr. Ezra Gold, and that among it. Now, dear, not a word of this to anybody. Will you tell dear Mr. Ferdinand that I shall be honoured if he will grace my humble cottage with his presence? Thank you. Good night, child. And remember, not a word to anybody."

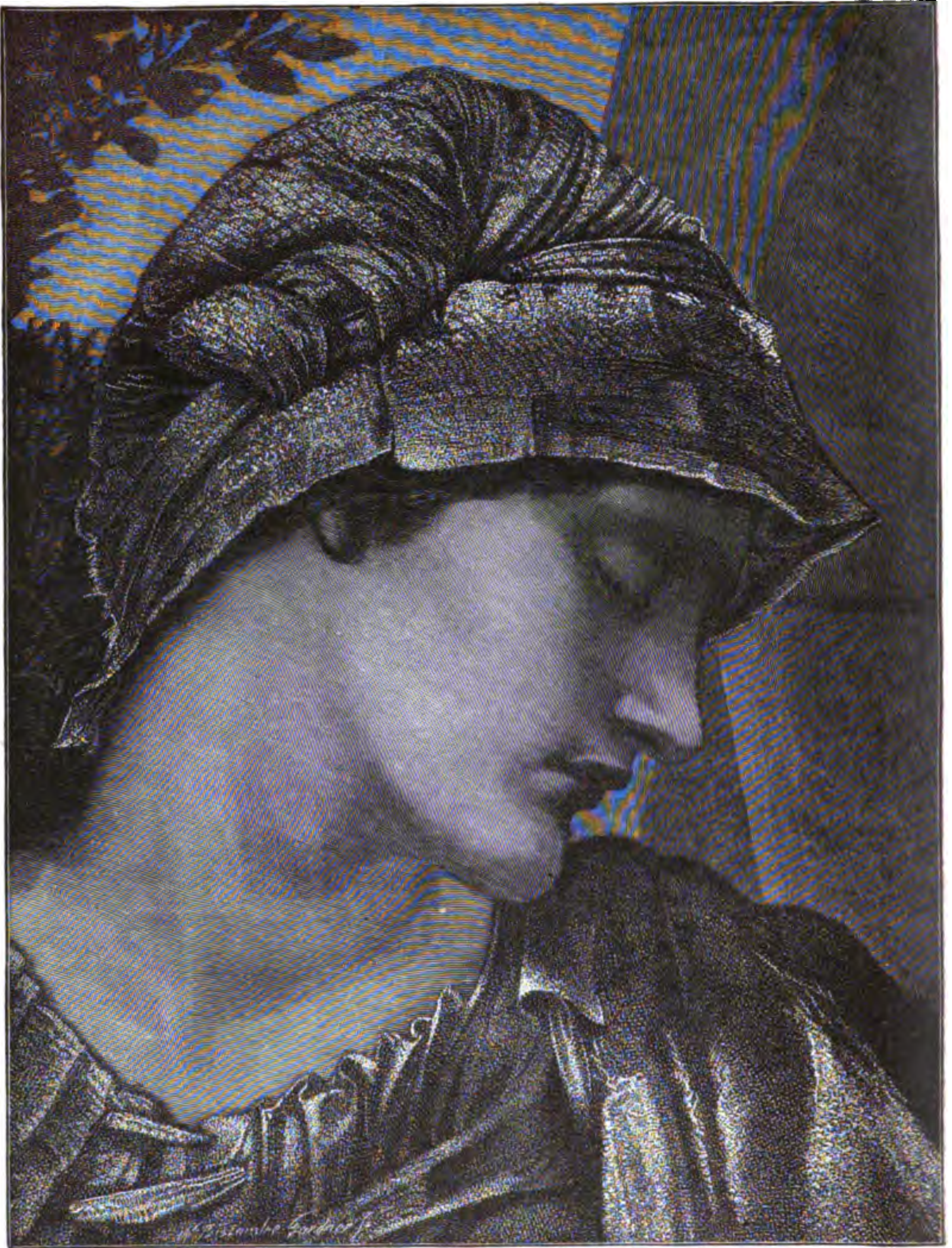
She dropped her veil and walked to the front door with her usual crisp and bird-like carriage. At the door she turned.

"Shun Mr. Ezra Gold, my dear. Shun all people who bear his name. I know them. I have cause to know them. They are cheats. Deceivers. Villains!"

She closed her lips tightly after this, and nodded many times. Then turning abruptly she hopped down the steps which led towards the garden gate, and disappeared. Ruth stood looking into the quiet street a moment, then closed the door and returned to the garden.

"Not all," she said to herself, as she paused in sight and hearing of the quartette party, who were by this time deep in an Andante of Haydn's—"not all."

(*To be continued.*)



HEAD OF THE FIGURE OF FORTUNE.

Engraved by W. BISCOMBE GARDNER, *from the Picture by* E. BURNE JONES.

The English Illustrated Magazine.

DECEMBER, 1885.

KISS AND BE FRIENDS: A WHITSUNTIDE WANDER.

PART I.—DUBLIN.

HITHER? That was the question. I meekly suggested "To Ireland."

Now, "she's Irish," has long been my family's tender excuse for certain failings of mine, which, let us hope, like some of my poor country's, "lean to virtue's side"; especially a foolish habit of liking to be happy rather than miserable; and of fraternising and sympathising with my fellow-creatures, believing them all friends till I find them out to be foes. Also—is this Irish too?—an irresistible impulse to say a good word for the losing side, which is sometimes listened to. So we decided to follow the Prince of Wales's example, and footsteps, to that forlorn and much abused land of Hibernia.

Our English friends regarded us with wondering pity. Whether they expected us to be blown up with dynamite, or shot at from behind a hedge, I cannot tell, but they warned us of a cyclone that was coming, whence other bad things for poor old Ireland do come—from America, and wished us safe back with impressive earnestness.

It did come, that cyclone. We heard it howling in the roofs of Chester Cathedral, we saw it shaking the apple-blossoms in the quaint old gardens by the walls, and bending the trees by the river-side; finally we had to take refuge from it in the sheltering "rows," but by the time the *Wild Irishman* had swept us through the pretty Welsh country to Holyhead, the sun shone so bright, and the steamer was so large and steady, that we felt it would be cowardly to linger. "Faint heart never won," or deserved to win, anything. We risked the voyage—and Ireland, and have never repented.

Had the Princess of Wales set her foot on Kingstown pier and driven through Dublin streets in such a downpour as we did, she might have doubted that extraordinary physiological fact, "Erin, the tear and the smile in thine eyes." For it was no accidental tear, but a veritable influenza. Yet not an hour afterwards, when the warm Irish welcome had quite neutralised the unkindness of the Irish skies, they too cleared, into the most lovely sunset, delicate aqua-marine, with a pale yellow glow, such as no artist could paint, and very few ever see, except in Ireland.

But the cyclone was not spent. We woke to the wettest of wet Sundays, which mattered little, as I had resolved to spend it in St. Patrick's Cathedral, of which, and the music, I had heard so much. Not untruly. Many years before, I had seen it in its melancholy neglected decay, before it was "rebuilt with porter bottles," as Irish wit chronicles its munificent restoration by one of the Guinness family. I half expected to find, as often happens, that restoration had been ruination, but not so. All was in excellent taste. And as to the music, even after having heard the finest cathedral services in England and France, and the various *funzioni* of two Easters at Rome, I found it beautiful. Beethoven's "Hallelujah," from the *Mount of Olives*, part of Spohr's *Last Judgment*, and Handel's "Lift up your heads, O ye gates," were done with rare perfection. Indeed, for refinement and even balance of voices, accuracy and purity of singing, any music lover would find the choir of St. Patrick's worth crossing the Channel to listen to, which is saying a good deal.

Also for the sermons. Irish preaching is popularly supposed to be "full of sound and fury, signifying nothing." But Dean Reichel has apparently added German depth and solidity to his native force. Brief, terse, vivid, a clear skeleton of thought, clothed with the bone and muscle of language—very muscular language too; no mincing of matters in the smallest degree—the sermons were a treat to listen to. Only, was it wise, was it necessary, in a semi-Catholic country, while explaining his own interpretation of the mysterious text, Christ's preaching "to the spirits in prison," that the Dean should abuse so vehemently the doctrine of purgatory, for which at least equal arguments may be found by its defenders? And in the afternoon discourse upon the text, "Remove from among you the accursed thing," which was listened to by an enormous dead-silent crowd, such as might have gathered under Luther or Savonarola, could not the passionate denunciations of sin have been followed by as passionate an entreaty to sinners? "Why will ye die, O House of Israel?" Can any human soul be driven out of hell with the lash of a cat o' nine tails? and was ever any doctrine enforced wholesomely by the blows of a sledge-hammer? Yet unquestionably it was a most powerful sermon, and when finally describing the state of a man, God-forsaken, in whom conscience itself is dead—which the Dean held to be the sin against the Holy Ghost—he lowered his voice and said, after a solemn pause, "For this there is no repentance, either in this world, or in the world to come," the hush of awed silence which came over the dense congregation was something never to be forgotten.

All the more, that they were, I grieve to say, by no means a well-behaved congregation. Before service, they chattered, stared about and smiled in a most objectionable way. Two ladies, especially, whose age should have taught them better—I hope they will read this paper and remember the indignant rebuke of another old lady, who hates the desecration, by chattering, of any house of music, doubly so when it is also the House of God.

Two more ladies evoked a little harmless moralising. One was a regular type of the "untidy Irishwoman," her handsome, ill-made seal-skin jacket hanging on her broad back like a sack; her bonnet, all flowers, feathers, and jet beads, stuck on the top of a mass of hair, soft, fine, with scarcely a grey thread in it, but looking as if it had not been combed for a week. Her clothes altogether seemed to have been "thrown on with a pitchfork"—and yet her large, fat, foolish face wore a look of contented enjoyment. Very different was the face beside her—clear-cut, worn, and rather sad, the silvery hair laid smoothly over the forehead. Her bonnet close and comfortable, and her mantle, of very common materials but well-fitting, neat, and whole, completed the picture of the "tidy Irishwoman"—some of the very tidiest women I have ever known have been Irishwomen! I speculated on these two, and thought what a curse one must be, and what a blessing the other, in some unknown home!

An Irish home! Novelists of a past generation—Miss Edgeworth, Lever, Lover—have painted it for English amusement, pity, or contempt. And more than one modern writer, notably the author of *Hogan, M.P.*, has done the same, using the wonderful power of Irish wit and Irish pathos to make error "funny," and evoke sympathy, not merely with sorrow but with sin. All may be true enough, the recklessness and the poverty, the outward gaudiness and inward squalor. But is Ireland the only country where exists that miserable habit of putting the best on the outside, and living for show, not reality? where everything is allowed, morally and physically, to go to rack and ruin for want of that "stitch in time" which "saves nine"—that systematic order, economy, punctuality which form the very key-stone of all home honour and home happiness?

I have seen in wealthy England and prudent Scotland homes which answered to this wretched picture, and in Ireland homes just the contrary. Not rich, it is true—nobody is rich in Ireland—but where a noble economy makes all needful comforts attainable, where to dress simply and travel second class is a thing neither to shrink from nor be ashamed of, while to spend time, thought, and all available money upon the poor and needy, is a self-sacrifice so natural that none regard it as such; where the heads of the household are its guides and helpers as well as its rulers, and the servants would almost die for "the family;" where Catholic and Protestant live together in harmony, the landlord going among his tenants, needing no protection from policeman or revolver, and the mistress taking her rounds of charity at any hour of the day or night as safe and as honoured as any Catholic nun. I am painting no ideal picture. Such homes exist, and while they do, there is hope for poor old Ireland.

But to our wanderings. They seemed coming to an ill end. Rain, rain, nothing

but rain. It swept alike down the wide handsome Dublin streets and the miserable Dublin slums, where the Prince and his son won everybody—as we heard on all sides—by the kindly word and smile which, to the warm Irish heart, is better than gold. One expedition we made—to Phœnix Park—perhaps the finest, as it is much the largest park of any European city, looked first at the Viceregal Lodge hidden in its trees, and then, within sight and hearing of it, at the tiny cross marked with pebbles in the roadway, which records one of the darkest tragedies of modern times—the murder of Cavendish and Burke.

Truly our English nobles must have something intrinsically noble about them to go about day by day face to face with possible death; for months the Lord-Lieutenant never stirred out without a military escort, each with a drawn sword in his hand and a revolver in his pocket. Why should Lord Spencer leave his safe, wealthy home and easy life, if not for the sake of duty, and a vague hope of benefiting Ireland? No one can look in the Viceroy's face, so full of care and yet full of kindness, without feeling that whatever the disloyal may say, it is the face of an honest, generous, and kindly man. His adversaries should at least give him the benefit of the doubt.

Despite of rain, hail, and bitter cold, more like January than the near-approaching June, we determined to pursue our wander. It is the heart, not the weather, which makes the holiday.

Ireland's picturesqueness lies in its coast-scenery. Its centre is mostly a dead level of bog or pasture-land. There are few or none of the smiling harvest fields which make England so pretty; the climate refuses to grow cereals, and, alas! the people have not the persistent industry required for cultivated farming. Neat hedgerows, well-kept woodlands, good roads, and, above all, the sweet contented-looking villages and hamlets that one sees continually in England, must not be looked for here. Yet it was a green and pleasant country that we swept through—no, crawled through—Irish railways always crawl—and, reaching our station at last, we mounted, defiant of old Time, the familiar outside car with its lively Irish pony. Excellent animal! that day he did forty miles in sixteen hours.

"IT WAS A GREEN AND PLEASANT COUNTRY."
From a Drawing by F. NOEL PATON.

Does any one know how delightful it is to drive across country in an outside car, with just enough necessity for holding on to keep your mind amused, and just enough jolting and shaking to give you "the least taste in life" of horse exercise? How pleasant to feel the wind in your face, and see the rain-clouds drifting behind you—to catch in passing the sights and scents of moorland gorse, of ditch-bank primroses, and hidden hyacinths, and the yellow gleam of whole acres of cowslips! I never saw so many cowslips or so large; a sign, alas! of poor land. When the soil improves the cowslips always disappear. And for birds—

there seemed a blackbird in every tall tree, and a dozen larks singing madly over every bit of common. But of human habitations there were very few. Now and then a group of little Kerry cows—mostly black—or a family of happy pigs, often black too, dotted the pastures, implying another family close by, who turned out to gaze at us from what might be either cabin or cow-shed, or both—half-clad boys or girls, one could hardly tell which, with wild shocks of hair and splendid Irish eyes, full of fun and intelligence. And sometimes we passed a woman with a shawl over her head, Irish fashion, carrying a huge bundle and perhaps a child as well, who first looked at us then looked away. Thin, poverty-pinched faces they often were, but neither coarse, sullen, nor degraded, nothing like the type of low Irish that one sees in towns. Much to be pitied truly, but certainly not to be despised. Some, perhaps, drop a curtsey to "the quality," but, generally, they just look at us with a dull curiosity, and pass on. Little enough have "the quality" done for them, poor souls!

For, every two or three miles we come upon handsome lodge-gates and lodges, marking the entrance to beautiful parks, and see gleaming through the trees, the "big house," deserted and going to ruin. Almost every landlord is an absentee.

"Sometimes," we are told, "they spend a few weeks here—we meet them at dinner-parties, but they always come protected, and very often it is only the ladies of the family who venture out at all. In the bad times, generally our carriage was the only one that was waiting without a policeman on it."

What a picture! Whose fault is it? That of the ignorant masses, or the educated aristocracy?—the "fathers and mothers" of the land, who might as well expect to bring up their children between the kiss and the blow, alternating with the indifference of total absence, as think to find Ireland a prosperous country when landowners thus forsake it.

I am no Home-ruler, no Parnellite. I loathe the agitators who, chiefly for their own ends, and for the love of excitement and notoriety, play upon the affectionate, impulsive Irish heart to its destruction. But I own, when I looked at these grand mansions, or pleasant country-houses, slowly dropping to decay, and thought of what such are in England—the centre of that educating intercourse and generous sympathy between rich and poor, which is an inestimable benefit to both—I felt that "the finest peasantry on earth," as I once heard their champion O'Connell call them, have a good deal to complain of.

Not all. Not in that oasis of the desert, that haven of peace where we took up our brief rest. But this trenches on the sanctity of private life, so I will pass it over.

Part II.—Killarney.

—But only the most persistently punctual of people could ever have got there! To start at 7.30 A.M. from a bright breakfast-table, drive ten Irish miles in pouring rain, and wait anxiously at a small comfortless station, where of course the train was late—and only by a frantic struggle did we catch the Killarney train at all—took more courage and strength than one could well spare. But it was done. And though we laughed at our own folly in calling this a "pleasure" excursion, and repeated inwardly the old Scotch song, "why left I my hame?"—why indeed! still there we were, and we must make the best of it.

We did and were rewarded. About Limerick Junction the clouds began to break, and by the time we had passed through the dull, dreary, level country which lies between it and Killarney, the skies had cleared, and burst into that passionate mingling of storm and sunshine which is the charm of a mountainous country, especially when that country is Ireland.

Tourist raptures are always objectionable, but when one has seen the Swiss, Italian, Scotch, and English lakes and still finds Killarney lovely—there must be something in it. "Lovely" is the right word—not grand, or startling, or gloomily sublime, but full of a lovable loveliness, that warms and soothes the spirit more than I can express. When, after a pleasant walk—through masses of yellow gorse—among orchises and primroses, and under avenues of stately trees, we sat down on the soft dry sand of the lake shore, and looked across at the Toomies and Purple Mountain—truly purple of the deepest hue of hills after rain—it seemed as if we had left the world behind us at an immeasurable distance, and that this was a place where all life's storms would cease.

"And our hearts, like thy waters, be mingled in
peace."

And yet it is only a day and a half, easy journeying, from London! Would that many a tired London-dweller, needing a brief repose,

and dreading the worry and discomfort of going abroad, would try it.

There are three excellent hotels at Killarney—The Lake, The Railway, and The Victoria, which latter we chose, as it was further out of the town. Nor did we ever regret our choice.

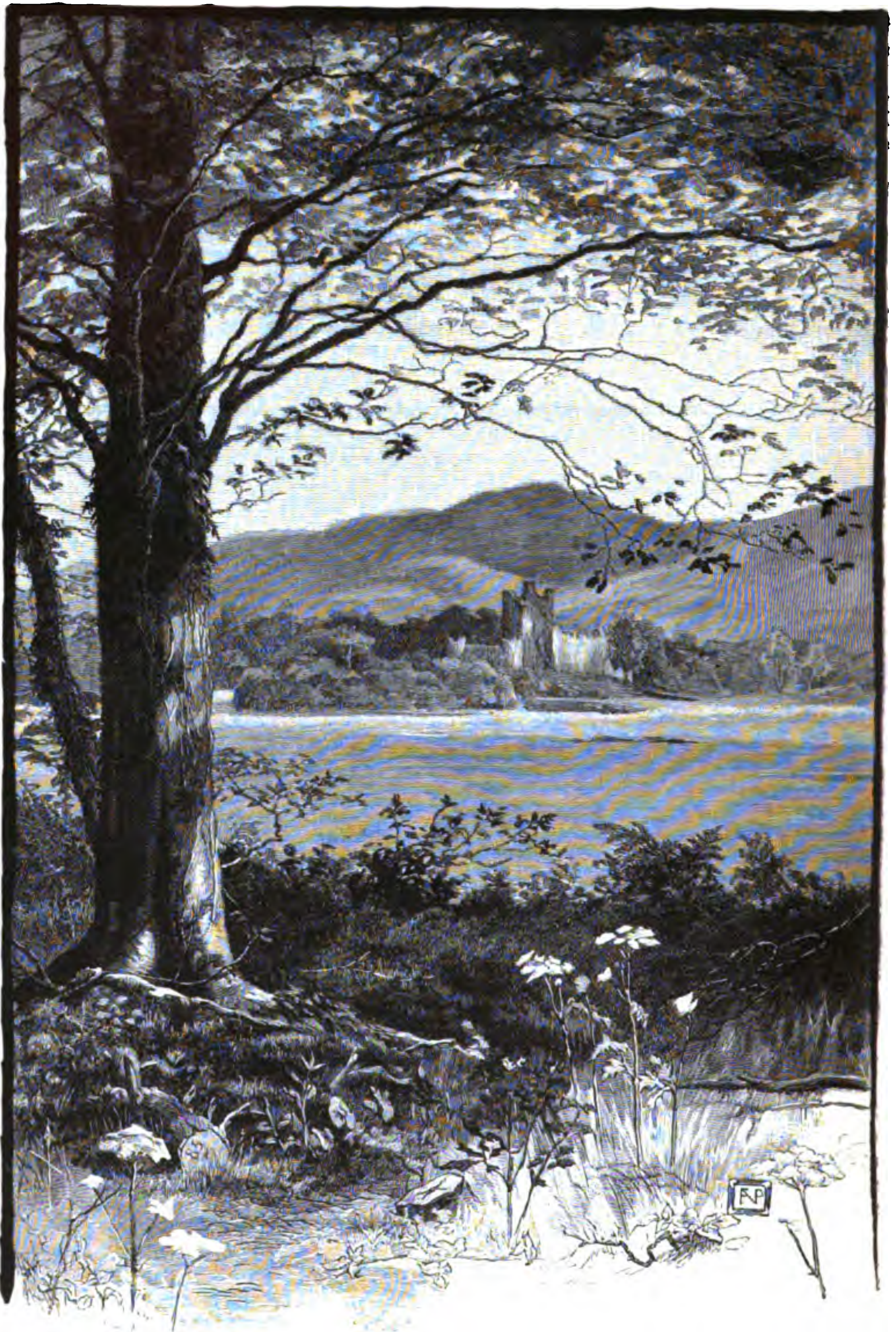
As this paper is meant to exemplify its title, and as nothing makes one love a country like knowing it, also because the simplest means of civilising a country is to plant on it, at intervals, comfortable hotels, like Lord George Hill's at Gweedore, and this one at Killarney—I do not hesitate to say a good word for the Victoria.

MUCROSS ABBEY.
From a Drawing by F. NOEL PATON.

It is built on Lord Kenmare's land, and its visitors have the privilege of going anywhere about the Kenmare grounds. Beautiful architecturally it is not. Outside it looks something like a barrack, but inside its arrangements are admirable. Most un-Irish, sarcastic Saxons would say, in its order, cleanliness, punctuality; but in the essentially Irish qualities of kindliness, politeness, and pleasantness, it may favourably compare with any hostelry we ever visited. It has, too, most of its resources within itself. The dear little Kerry cows feeding in the twilight fields implied milk, cream, and butter *ad libitum;* the hens clucking at early dawn, awoke a hope of new-laid eggs; and we watched our future dinner carried past the windows in the shape of an enormous newly-caught salmon. Unpoetical facts these, but they greatly add to the advantages of a holiday wander. "We shall be almost as comfortable as at home," said we. And we were.

We had only two days to "do" Killarney, so we set about it systematically. Day the first.—Torc Waterfall, Mucross Abbey and woods, the middle and lower lake with its islands. Day the second.—The Gap of Dunloe, the upper lake, the Long Range, and back to the lower lake, on whose shore was our hotel. This programme covered most of what we wished to see, and the intelligent landlord arranged it for us—as he will for any tourist—with cars, boats, boatmen, lunch, everything most easy and comparatively inexpensive, for there was no bargaining and no extortion.

A slight shower fell as we drove through Killarney town, with its shabby dreariness, and its groups of idle chatterers standing at street corners. Oh! if Irish men—and women—would only spend in working the time they waste in talking, what a different country theirs might be!



ROSS CASTLE.

Engraved by O. Lacour, *from a Drawing by* F. Noel Paton.

Torc Waterfall was—well! not grand but very pretty. And Mucross Abbey was like most old abbeys, except for a stately yew-tree in the cloisters, which with a peculiarity rare among yew-trees, had refused to shoot out a single branch till fairly above the walls, and then spread out into a splendid tree. An omen, may it be, of poor old Ireland, if ever she can attain God's free air and light, unencumbered by prejudice on one side and superstition on the other.

Hope seemed to dawn, as we noticed the exceeding neatness and aspect of cultivation in the Mucross property, and heard what good landlords the Herberts were, how "the masther" knew every tenant on his estate, and how his mother and sister used to visit all the sick and poor. And though he was then in America, Mr. Herbert never forgot anybody, and everybody looked for his coming back. If he had only been there when the Princess came, and could have shown her the old abbey, and got her to plant trees as the Queen did for his father, when she was little more than a girl—six flourishing young oaks, that promise to last a thousand years. The Princess planted nothing, but she seemed to admire the place extremely. "And she gave me a real gold sovereign, bless her purty face!" added the guide. Her giving it herself seemed to touch his old heart as much as the sovereign.

Everywhere we found that the sweet looks of the Princess, the kindly geniality of the Prince, had left a vivid impression; and while driving through Mucross Woods, and rowing to the Wine-cellars and the Colleen Bawn island, where, as London playgoers know, Danny Mann tried to drown Eily O'Connor, it was pleasant to think how our royalties must have enjoyed it all, and how it possibly taught them that the sad face of Ireland could be made to smile. And will—when land-owners learn to live, though never so simply and economically, upon their own land and among their own people, instead of leaving their tenantry to the mercy of any mischievous agitator, who tries to persuade them that all their misfortunes are wrongs, and that English misgovernment is at the bottom of it all. Possibly; yet neither a human being nor a country ever falls under the curse of misgovernment as long as it knows how to govern itself.

We found it the universal opinion that the best thing which could happen to Ireland would be a royal residence, such as was spoken of for Prince Albert Victor, and where, if he imitates his parents at Sandringham, his example would prevent more evil and do more good than any Crimes Act, for it would shame back the absentee landlords, cause them to spend in Ireland the money now wasted in London, Paris, and heaven knows where, so that in course of years—the evil of generations cannot be remedied in a day—the desert might rejoice and blossom as the rose.

Killarney does. Though decidedly "nature with her hair combed—" it is combed so skilfully as to be almost imperceptible. The magnolias, hydrangeas, and eucalyptus trees, and especially the great woods of self-sown arbutus, look as if they had sprung up of their own accord. We glided past them softly as upon a summer sea, till suddenly one of our boatmen threw a rug over us to keep out the spray, and then we were tossing like a cockle shell upon waves two or three feet high, which needed experienced oarsmen to face at all. It is often so. Sudden storms come down from the mountains, making navigation so risky that sailing-boats are never allowed on the lakes of Killarney; but the boatmen are equal to all other emergencies. They are a very fine race; our two, an old man and a young one, were as handsome as Venetian gondoliers, and as courteous. We did not wonder that the stroke-oar had been chosen to row the Princess's boat, and was among the fortunate number for whom the Prince had left twenty pounds.

Many a bit of pleasant and funny gossip did they indulge us with, as they pulled us into smooth water and landed us, nothing loth, on sweet Innisfallen, Moore's "fairy isle."

It is indeed a fairy isle. That May evening which might well have been preceded by the lovely May morning, when the O'Donoghue rides across the lake, with his ghostly train —shall we ever forget it! Beautiful Innisfallen! in its total solitude and silence, except for the sheep browsing on the green turf, and the thrushes singing in the great ash-trees, what a dream of delight it is! and always will be—like that "bower of roses by Bendemeer's stream"—we all have, or have had, some "calm Bendemeer," some paradise, realised or not, where the nightingales sing "all the day long," and will sing until the brief day of life is over and done.

Sweet Innisfallen! the old monks did well to set up their nest there. In the time when the Angelus was rung, and the mass was sung, in these now ruined walls, how civilising, if nothing more, must have been the influence of these men, who kept the flame of learning alight amidst pitchy darkness and did such exquisite work as the Book

THE GAP OF DUNLOE.
From a Drawing by F. NOEL PATON.

of Kells, which we saw in Trinity College, Dublin—strange remnant of so many nameless, long-forgotten lives, which yet must have been useful in their generation. As I took the bit of "real Irish shamrock" which our old boatman (who remembered Daniel O'Connell, and so did I), brought me as a votive offering from Innisfallen, how I wished that when orange despises green, and Catholic abhors Protestant, both parties would recall the fact that they spring from one common ancestor—the ancient Irish church, which built these and similar ruins, and for several hundred years was Ireland's only defence against total barbarism.

The Gap of Dunloe had yet to be done. It was, I own, rather heavy on our minds, nine miles on an outside car, five miles on the back of a pony, fourteen miles through the lakes in a boat. Had the weather been doubtful we might have ignominiously shirked it, but the May morning rose gloriously; we

could but wish ourselves well through the expedition, and start.

An intelligent American at the *table d'hôte*—many Americans take Killarney *en route* from Queenstown—warned us of the nuisance of beggars. And sure enough as soon as we reached Kate Kearney's cottage—that lovely young woman "who lived by the banks of Killarney" has much to answer for!—they bore down upon us in shoals, offering stockings, milk, "potheen," and then entreating shillings and sixpences with the most shameless persistency; for they were not ragged beggars, but very respectably clad—one woman had a gown on quite as good as my own. It was easy to believe the American's story, that yesterday, when he said he had not got a sixpence, they offered to change half-a-sovereign.

Determined to be rid of them, I tried first moral suasion, which signally failed, then a volley of rapid French, which so amazed them that they retired for the moment; then to a woman, who had run after the ponies for about half a mile, an indignant reproach: "I am Irish, and you make me ashamed of my country. What would my husband say to me if I went gadding about like this, instead of doing my work indoors? Go home, and do your work."

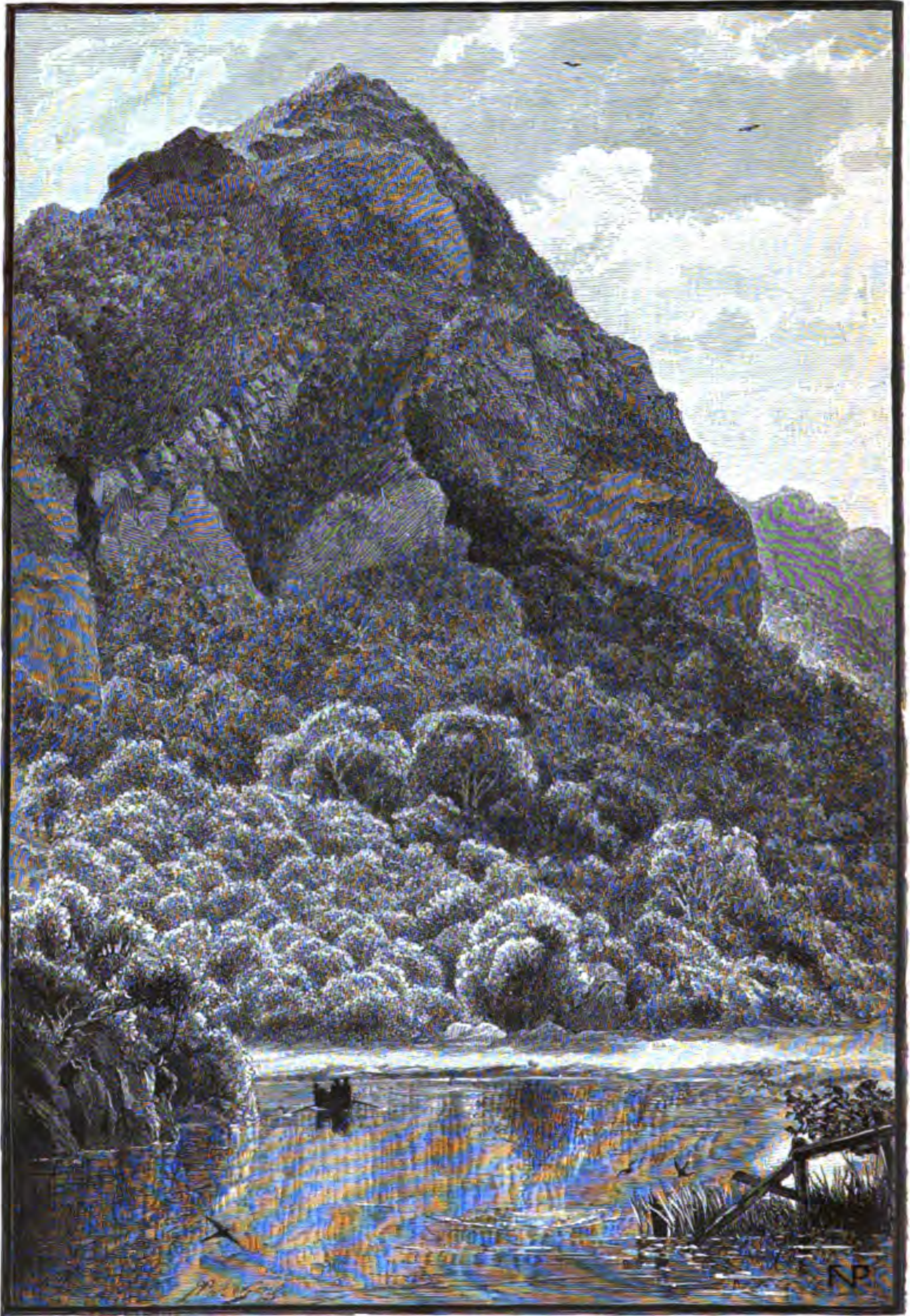
"Deed, ma'am, and maybe you're right," was the good-humoured answer, and whether from conviction, or because they saw no chance of getting out of me a single halfpenny, the beggars stopped. But as long as silly tourists amuse themselves with the weaknesses of the alas! only too lazy Celtic nature, so long will Irish beggars exist, to the disgrace of themselves and their patrons, who first encourage and then abuse them.

The Gap is fine, though not finer than many a Scottish glen; but the upper lake is picturesque, and the Long Range, a river five miles long, into which you pass by an all but invisible outlet, is very beautiful. It ends at the old Weir Bridge, in a rapid which is shot so skilfully that you never notice the danger till it is past; yet a few inches of swerving on either side and the boat would be dashed to pieces, and the strongest swimmers whirled hopelessly in the current, as has more than once happened. When the Prince was here, they told us, he was intreated to get out and walk past the rapids; it would indeed have been a woeful catastrophe for the future king of England to be drowned at Killarney.

He must have seen a good deal, and thought it over a good deal—our sensible, practical, kindly Prince of Wales, but I doubt if he ever saw a sight like that which met our eyes next morning when, after leaving the beautiful Lake of Killarney with a sore heart, and thinking how sad more hearts must be who have to leave "the sod" for ever, we found the station filled with a crowd of people, come to bid good-bye to some emigrants, bound to Queenstown by the same train.

Those departing were chiefly women, a dozen or so, probably sent for by their friends; the amount of money which reaches Ireland yearly, to bring out friends and kindred to America, is, we were told, enormous. They all seemed tolerably cheerful, and were extremely well-dressed—in fashionable jackets, hats, earrings, and above all, new kid gloves, with which they shook the bare rough hands of everybody they came near. But the friends had the ordinary dress of the south of Ireland peasant, with shawl or cloak drawn over their heads; many of the faces, men's as well as women's, were swollen with crying, and every few minutes some one or other fell on the necks of the emigrants, sobbing broken-heartedly. The Saxon nature never can understand the unrestrained emotion of the Irish, who weep, not silently, but out loud, like children. Hodge, now, would have said good-bye with a shake of the hand, or perhaps one shamefaced kiss, and so parted in the most commonplace way—for ever. But Paddy wails aloud, and never thinks of hiding his poor tear-sodden face. His quick sympathies extend far and wide; for miles, at every cottage whence the train was visible, stood groups waving some poor rag of a handkerchief. But the platform of Killarney Station was literally crammed.

What stories one might have imagined! There was one farmer-looking lad, who, hid in a corner with his lass, was beseeching her to be faithful; the tears ran down his cheeks in streams, but hers were quite dry, and she seemed much occupied with her brown velveteen "costume" dress, and her hat covered with spangles: I have my doubts as to that young woman's fidelity. There was only one family group—a woman, carrying a huge bundle on one arm, and a baby on the other, an elder boy staggering under a little sister, scarcely smaller than himself. The mother had a quiet, sad, determined face, and with her shawl over her head, might have sat for a *Mater Dolorosa*. Indeed the whole type of face among these poor people was very fine, indicating infinite possibilities for the race. Nor was there any squalid poverty, nor offensive dirt. The young men were stalwart, honest-looking



THE EAGLE'S NEST.
Engraved by R. PATERSON, *from a Drawing by* F. NOEL PATON.

fellows, and the girls had a decency and modesty of manner, which not all their exuberant grief could take away. Watching, them, I quite believed what I had lately been told by one who had had large experience among the Irish poor, that, as is proved by the registrar's records, the Irish girl's standard of moral purity is far higher than that of her Scottish or English sisters.

True, in Ireland there are no end of early imprudent marriages; boys and girls scarcely out of their teens hastening to flood the country with helpless little paupers; but they are virtuous and healthy paupers, far less harmful than those wretched abortions of vice and misery which we see, not only in our town streets, but in our agricultural districts. Might not these hapless "long" families who, though starving in miserable mud cabins, manage to lead pure lives, to keep the rash marriage tie unbroken, and bring up their girls and boys as honest as themselves, might they not be made into the strength and defence of the country, instead of being drained out of it, carrying its best blood to enrich another land?

In truth the saddest thing to see in Ireland is the enormous waste of valuable material, or else the misapplication of it to base uses. Many a worse man than that poor half-civilised savage, Myles Joyce of Maamtrassma, may live unhung; and perhaps more than one of those poor fellows for whom wives and mothers knelt praying outside Kilmainham Goal, while the black flag was floating inside it, might have been an honest, good fellow at heart, and died in his bed, a decent valuable citizen, if only he had not been exposed to those malific influences which are always at work in Ireland, and which to the impressionable Celtic nature are especially dangerous. Irishmen are, in their good points and their bad, exceedingly like children; and they need to be guided and governed like children; but it should be the loving control of a parent, not the despotic rule of a hard task-master, as has so often been the case. And, above all, they should be taught—woe betide all parents if they do not teach this to their children!—to control and govern themselves. May Ireland's king to be, who has lately seen with his own honest, parental eyes, of what it is capable, lay this maxim to heart.

I may be accused of painting *couleur de rose*, but I do so intentionally. There are enough writers ready to put into the picture the very blackest hues, or worse, those glaring eccentric colours that are at once so funny and so false. I know all Ireland's faults; the laugh which, God help the poor souls! is heard in the midst of misery, and gives the impression that this misery is unfelt; the reckless improvidence, the almost childish habit of lying, for it is often more like puerile imaginativeness than deliberate untruth; the vehement prejudices, the ridiculous pride, and love of outside show, which has ruined thousands of families. But I also know Ireland's virtues; its strong purity, its staunch fidelity, its quiet endurance of hard fortunes, its self-respect and self-denial. The possibilities of good in it are infinitely greater than its proclivities to what is bad.

If any happy future is to come, the reform ought to be social, not political, and to spring from the upper not the lower class. The Prince of Wales's visit has done more to turn the heart of Ireland towards England than all the legislation of the last twenty years. Why should not the heart of England turn towards Ireland? Why should not tourists go and investigate it, and by demand create supply, so as to bring English gold into its poverty-stricken districts? Nay, might not adventurous capitalists risk a little, both in coin and comfort, by buying land there and starting some useful industries? The great complaint of the people is that there is absolutely no work to do. They are obliged to leave their country, because if they stayed in it they would starve. Why not keep them—they are safer in Ireland than in America—by offering them the practical, sisterly help of wealthy, orderly, industrious England, if only it were given in a kindly way, with a cool head, warm heart, and wisely open hand?

In the hope of this, a day which we may never see, but perhaps our children may, I have written my paper, and called it "Kiss and be Friends." I end it with a word of advice, to Protestants and Catholics, Government Officials, and Home Rulers, Nationalists, Conservatives, Fenians, Parnellites, and the whole set of demagogues, small and great, who trade upon both the vices and the virtues of the Irish character—words written by their own Tommy Moore, who amidst all his foolishness, sometimes said a wise thing or two, and, Irish like, always said it in the most charming way:

"Erin, thy silent tear never shall cease,
Erin, thy languid smile ne'er shall increase,
Till like the rainbow's light,
Thy various tints unite,
And form in Heaven's sight
One arch of peace."

The Author of "JOHN HALIFAX, GENTLEMAN."

A Day with Sir Roger de Coverley.

A MAN'S first Care should be to avoid the Reproaches of his own Heart; his next, to escape the Censures of the World: If the last interferes with the former, it ought to be entirely neglected; but otherwise, there cannot be a greater Satisfaction to an honest Mind, than to see those Approbations which it gives it self seconded by the Applauses of the Publick: A Man is more sure of his Conduct, when the Verdict which he passes upon his own Behaviour is thus warranted and confirmed by the Opinion of all that know him.

My worthy Friend Sir Roger is one of those who is not only at Peace within himself, but beloved and esteemed by all about him. He receives a suitable Tribute for his universal Benevolence to Mankind, in the Returns of Affection and Good-

SIR ROGER TAKES US TO THE ASSIZES.
From a Drawing by Hugh Thomson.

will, which are paid him by every one that lives within his Neighbourhood. I lately met with two or three odd Instances of that general Respect which is shown to the good old Knight. He would needs carry *Will. Wimble* and myself with him to the County-Assizes: As we were upon the Road *Will. Wimble* joined a couple of plain Men who rid before us, and conversed with them for some Time; during which my Friend Sir ROGER acquainted me with their Characters.

THE TWO PLAIN MEN WHO RID BEFORE US.
From a Drawing by HUGH THOMSON.

The first of them, says he, that has a Spaniel by his Side, is a Yeoman of about an hundred Pounds a Year, an honest Man: He is just within the Game-Act, and qualified to kill an Hare or a Pheasant: He knocks down a Dinner with his Gun twice or thrice a Week; and by that means lives much cheaper than those who have not so good an Estate as himself. He would be a good Neighbour if he did not destroy so many Partridges: in short, he is a very sensible Man; shoots flying; and has been several times Foreman of the Petty-Jury.

AN HONEST YEOMAN.
From a Drawing by HUGH THOMSON.

The other that rides along with him is *Tom Touchy*, a Fellow famous for *taking the Law* of every Body. There is not one in the Town where he lives that he has not sued at a Quarter-Sessions. The Rogue had once the Impudence to go to Law with the *Widow*. His Head is full of Costs, Damages, and Ejectments: He plagued a couple of honest Gentlemen so long for a Trespass in breaking one of his Hedges, till he was forced to sell the Ground it enclosed to defray the Charges of the Prosecution: His Father left him fourscore Pounds a Year; but he has *cast* and been cast so often, that he is not now worth thirty. I

TOM TOUCHY.
From a Drawing by HUGH THOMSON.

WILL WIMBLE.
From a Drawing by HUGH THOMSON.

suppose he is going upon the old Business of the Willow-Tree.

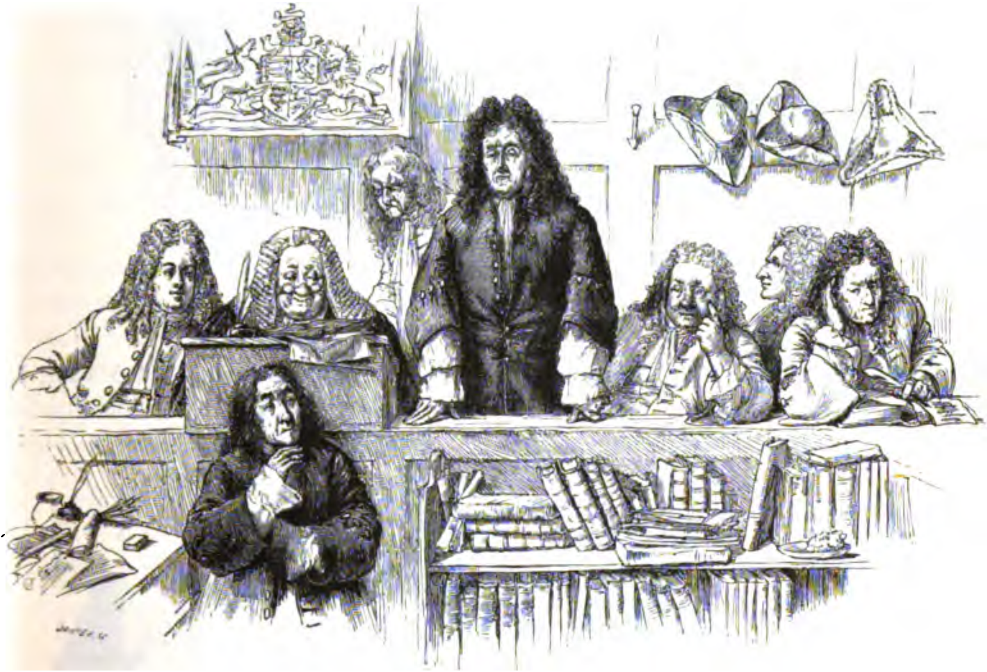
As Sir ROGER was giving me this Account of *Tom Touchy*, *Will. Wimble* and his two Companions stopped short till we came up to them. After having paid their Respects to Sir ROGER, *Will.* told him that Mr. *Touchy* and he must appeal to him upon a Dispute that arose between them. *Will.* it seems had been giving his Fellow-Traveller an Account of his Angling one Day in such a Hole; when *Tom Touchy*, instead of hearing out his Story, told him that Mr. such an One, if he pleased, might *take the Law of him* for fishing in that Part of the River. My Friend Sir ROGER heard them both, upon a round Trot; and after having paused some time, told them, with the Air of a Man who would not give his Judgment rashly, that *much might be said on both Sides.* They were neither of them dissatisfied with the Knight's Determination, because neither of them found himself in the Wrong by it: Upon which we made the best of our Way to the Assizes.

The Court was sat before Sir ROGER came;

THE WIDOW CONSULTS HER LAWYER ANENT TOM TOUCHY.
From a Drawing by HUGH THOMSON.

but notwithstanding all the Justices had taken their Places upon the Bench, they made room for the old Knight at the Head of them; who for his Reputation in the Country took occasion to whisper in the Judge's Ear, *That he was glad his Lordship had met with so much good Weather in his Circuit.* I was listening to the Proceeding of the Court with much Attention, and infinitely pleased with that great Appearance and Solemnity which so properly accompanies such a publick Administration of our Laws; when, after about an Hour's Sitting, I observed to my great Surprize, in the Midst of a Trial, that my Friend Sir ROGER was getting up to speak. I was in some Pain for him, till I found he had acquitted himself of two or three Sentences, with a Look of much Business and great Intrepidity.

Upon his first Rising the Court was hushed, and a general Whisper ran among the Country



A GENERAL WHISPER RAN THROUGH THE COUNTRY PEOPLE THAT SIR ROGER "WAS UP."
From a Drawing by HUGH THOMSON.

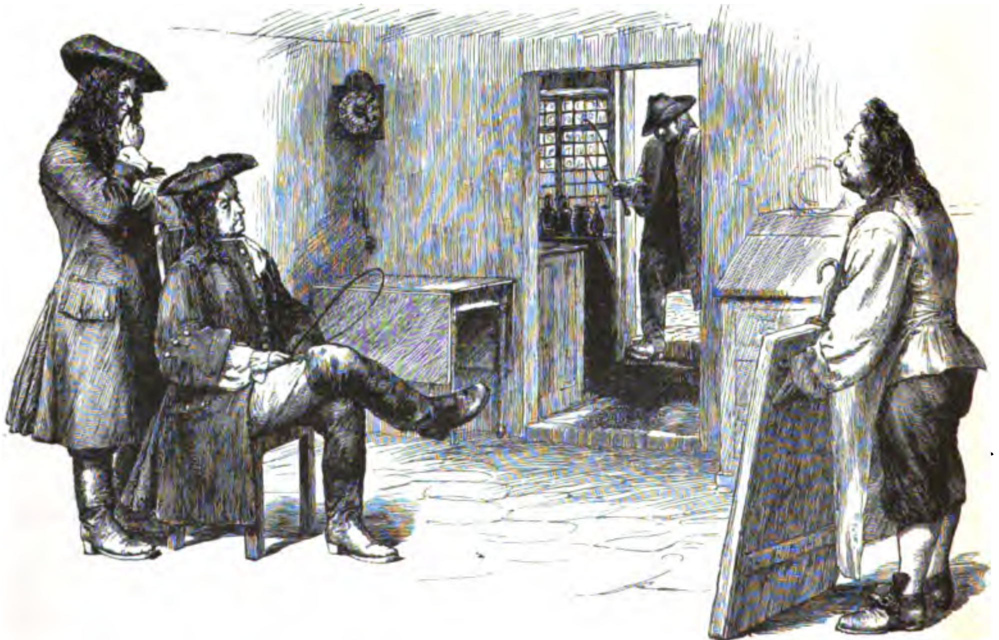
People that Sir ROGER *was up.* The Speech he made was so little to the Purpose, that I shall not trouble my Readers with an Account of it; and I believe was not so much designed by the Knight himself to inform the Court, as to give him a Figure in my Eye, and keep up his Credit in the Country.

I was highly delighted, when the Court rose, to see the Gentlemen of the Country gathering about my old Friend, and striving who should compliment him most; at the same time that the ordinary People gazed upon him at a distance, not a little admiring his Courage, that was not afraid to speak to the Judge.

In our Return home we met with a very odd Accident; which I cannot forbear relating, because it shews how desirous all who know Sir ROGER are of giving him Marks of their Esteem. When we were arrived upon the Verge of his Estate, we stopped at a little Inn to rest our selves and our Horses. The Man of the House had it seems been

"WE STOPPED AT A LITTLE INN TO REST OURSELVES AND OUR HORSES"
From a Drawing by HUGH THOMSON.

formerly a Servant in the Knight's Family; and to do Honour to his old Master, had some time since, unknown to Sir ROGER, put him up in a Sign-post before the Door; so that *the Knight's Head* had hung out upon the Road about a Week before he himself



INSPECTING "HIS HONOUR'S HEAD WITH THE ALTERATIONS HE HAD ORDERED TO BE MADE IN IT."
From a Drawing by HUGH THOMSON.

knew any thing of the Matter. As soon as Sir ROGER was acquainted with it, finding that his Servant's Indiscretion proceeded wholly from Affection and Good-will, he only told him that he had made him too high a Compliment; and when the Fellow seemed to think that could hardly be, added with a more decisive Look, That it was too great an Honour for any Man under a Duke; but told him at the same time, that it might be altered with a very few Touches, and that he himself would be at the Charge of it. Accordingly they got a Painter by the Knight's Directions to add a pair of Whiskers to the Face, and by a little Aggravation to the Features to change it into the *Saracen's Head.* I should not have known this Story had not the Inn-keeper, upon Sir ROGER's alighting, told him in my Hearing, That his Honour's Head was brought back last Night with the Alterations that he had ordered to be made in it. Upon this my Friend with his usual Chearfulness related the Particulars above-mentioned, and ordered the Head to be brought into the Room. I could not forbear discovering greater Expressions of Mirth than ordinary upon the Appearance of this monstrous Face, under which, notwithstanding it was made to frown and stare in a most extraordinary manner, I could still discover a distant Resemblance of my old Friend. Sir ROGER, upon seeing me laugh, desired me to tell him truly if I thought it possible for People to know him in that Disguise. I at first kept my usual Silence; but upon the Knight's conjuring me to tell him whether it was not still more like himself than a *Saracen,* I composed my Countenance in the best manner I could, and replied, *That much might be said on both Sides.*

These several Adventures, with the Knight's Behaviour in them, gave me as pleasant a Day as ever I met with in any of my Travels.

MUCH "MIGHT" BE SAID ON BOTH SIDES.
From a Drawing by HUGH THOMSON.

THE BODY-BIRDS OF COURT.

"EIGHTY-EIGHT when he died! That is a great age," I said.

"Yes, indeed. But he was a very clever man, was Robert Evans, Court, and brewed good beer," my companion answered. "His home-brewed was known, I am certain, for more than ten miles. You will have heard of his body-birds, sir?"

"His body-birds?" I exclaimed.

"Yes, to be sure. Robert Evans Court's body-birds!" And he looked at me, quick to suspect that his English was deficient. He had learned it in part from books; and hence the curious mixture I presently noted of Welsh idioms and formal English phrases. It was his light trap in which I was being helped on my journey, and his genial chat which was lightening that journey; which lay through a part of Carnarvonshire usually traversed only by wool-merchants and cattle-dealers—a country of upland farms swept by the sea-breezes, where English is not spoken even now by one person in a hundred, and even at inns and post-offices you get only "*Dim Sassenach*," for your answer. "Do you not say," he went on, "body-birds in English? Oh, but to be sure, it is in the Bible!" with a sudden recovery of his self-esteem.

"To be sure!" I replied hurriedly. "Of course it is! But as to Mr. Robert Evans, cannot you tell me the story?"

"I'll be bound there is no man in North or South Wales, or Carnarvonshire, that could tell it better, for Gwen Madoc, of whom you shall hear presently, was aunt to me. You see Robert Evans"—and my friend settled himself in his seat and prepared to go slowly up the long steep hill of Rhiw which rose before us—"Robert Evans lived in an old house called Court, near the sea, very windy and lonesome. He was a warm man. He had Court from his father, and he had mortgages, and as many as four lawsuits. But he was unlucky in his family. He had years back three sons who helped on the farm, or at times fished; for there is a cove at Court and good boats. Of these sons only one was married—to a Scotchwoman from Bristol, I have heard, who had had a husband before, a merchant captain; and she brought with her to Court a daughter, Peggy, ready-made as we say. Well, of those three fine men, there was not one left in a year. They were out fishing in a boat together, and Evan—that was the married one—was steering as they came into the cove on a spring tide running very high with a south wind. He steered a little to one side—not more than six inches, upon my honour—and pah! in an hour their bodies were thrown up on Robert Evans's land just bits of sea-weed. But that was not all. Evan's wife was on the beach at the time, so near she could have thrown a stone into the boat. They do say that before that she was pining away at Court—it was bleak, and lonesome, and cold, in the winters, and she had been used to live in the towns. But, however, she never held up her head after Evan was drowned. She took to her bed, and died in the short month. And then of all at Court there were left only Robert Evans and the child, Peggy."

"How old was she then?" I asked. He had paused, and was looking thoughtfully before, as striving, it would seem, to make the situation quite clear to himself.

"She was twelve, and the old man eighty and more. She was in no way related to him, you will remember, but he had her stop, and let her want for nothing that did not cost money. He was very careful of money, as was right. It was that made him the man he was. But there were some who would have given money to be rid of her. Year in and year out they never let the old man rest but that he should send her to service at least—though her father had been the captain of a big ship; and if Robert Evans had not

been a stiff man of his years, they would have had their will."

"But who——"

By a gesture he stopped the words on my lips as there rose mysteriously out of the silence about us a sound of wings, a chorus of shrill cries. A hundred white forms swept overhead, and fell a white cluster about something in a distant field. They were sea-gulls. "Just those same!" he said proudly, jerking his whip in their direction—"body-birds. When the news that Robert Evans's sons were drowned got about, there was a pretty uprising in Carnarvonshire. There seemed to be Evanses where there had never been Evanses before. As many as twenty walked in the funeral, and you may be sure that afterwards they did not leave the old man to himself. The Llewellyn Evanses were foremost. They had had a law-suit with Court, but made it up now. Besides there were Mr. and Mrs. Evan Bevan, and the three Evanses of Nant, and Owen Evans, and the Evanses of Sarn, and many more who were all forward to visit Court, and be friendly with old Gwen Madoc, Robert's housekeeper. I am told they could look black at one another, but in this they were all in one tale, that the foreign child should be sent away; and at times one and another would give her a rough word."

"She must have had a bad time," I observed.

"You may say that. But she stayed, and it was wonderful how strong and handsome she grew up, where her mother had just pined away. The sailors said it was her love of the sea; and I have heard that people who live inland about here come to think of nothing but the land—it is certain that they are good at a bargain—while the fishermen who live with a great space before them are finer men, I have heard, in their minds as well as their bodies; and Peggy *bach* grew up like them, free and open and upstanding, though she lived inland. When she was in trouble she would run down to the sea, where the salt spray washed away her tears and the wind blew her hair, that was of the colour of sea-weed, into a tangle. She was never so happy as when she was climbing the rocks among the sea-gulls, or else sitting with her books at the cove where the farm people would not go for fear of hearing the church bells that bring bad luck. Books? Oh, yes, indeed, next to the sea she was fond of books. There were many volumes, I have been told, that were her mother's; then Robert Evans, though he was a Wesleyan, went to church because there was no Wesleyan chapel, the Calvinistic Methodists being in strength about here; and the minister lent her many English books and befriended her. And I have heard that once when the Llewellyn Evanses had been about the girl he spoke to them so that they were afraid to drive down Rhiw hill that night, but led the horse; and I think it may be true, for they were Calvinists. Still, he was a good man, and I know that many Calvinists walked in his funeral."

"*Requiescat in pace*," said I.

"Eh! Well, I don't know how that may be," he replied, "but you must understand that all this time the Llewellyn Evanses, and the Evanses of Nant, and the others would be over at Court once or twice a week, so that all the neighbourhood called them Robert Evans's body-birds; and when they were there Peggy McNeill would be having an ill time, since even the old man would be hard to her; and more so as he grew older. But, however, there was a better time coming, or so it seemed at first, the beginning of which was through Peter Rees's lobster-pots. He was a great friend of hers. She would go out with him to take up his pots—oh, it might be two or three times a week. So it happened one day, when they had pushed off from the beach, and Peggy was steering, that old Rees stopped rowing on a sudden.

"'Why don't you go on, Peter?' said Peggy.

"'Bide a bit,' said old Rees.

"'What have you forgotten?' said she, looking about in the bottom of the boat. For she knew what he used very well.

"'Nought,' said he. But all the same he began to put the boat about in a stupid fashion, afraid of offending her, and yet loth to lose a shilling. And so when Peggy looked up what should she see but a gentleman—whom Rees had perceived, you will understand—stepping into the boat, and Peter Rees not daring to look her in the face because he knew well that she would never go out with strangers.

"Of course the young gentleman thought no harm, but said gaily, 'Thank you! I am just in time.' And what should he do, but go aft and sit down on the seat by her, and begin to talk to Rees about the weather and the pots. And presently he said to her, 'I suppose you are used to steering, my girl?'

"'Yes,' said Peggy, but very grave and quiet-like, so that if he had not determined that she was old Rees's daughter he would have taken notice of it. But she was wearing a short frock that she used for the fishing,

and was wet with getting into the boat moreover.

"'Will you please to hold my hat a minute,' he said, and with that he put it in her lap while he looked for a piece of string with which to fasten it to his button. Well, she said nothing, but her cheeks were scarlet, and by and by, when he had called her 'my girl' two or three times more—not roughly, but just off-hand, taking her for a fisher-girl—Peter Rees could stand it no longer, shilling or no shilling.

"'You mustn't speak that fashion to her, master,' he said gruffly.

"'What?' said the gentleman looking up. He was surprised, and no wonder, at the tone of the man.

"'You mustn't speak like that to Miss McNeill, Court,' repeated old Rees more roughly than before. 'You are to understand she is not a common girl, but like yourself.'

"The young gentleman turned and looked at her just once, short and sharp, and I am told that his face was as red as hers when their eyes met. 'I beg Miss McNeill's pardon—humbly,' he said, taking off his hat grandly, yet as if he meant it too; 'I was under a great misapprehension.'

"After that you may believe they did not enjoy the row much. There was scarcely a word said by any one until they came ashore again. The visitor, to the great joy of Peter, who was looking for a sixpence, gave him half-a-crown; and then walked away with the young lady, side by side with her, but very stiff and silent. However, just as they were parting, Peter could see that he said something, having his hat in his hand the while, and that Miss Peggy, after standing and listening, bowed as grand as might be. Upon which they separated for that time.

"But two things came of this; first, that every one began to call her Miss McNeill, Court, which was not at all to the pleasure of the Llewellyn Evanses. And then, that whenever the gentleman, who was a painter lodging at Mrs. Campbell's of the shop, would meet her, he would stop and say a few words, and more as the time went on. Presently there came some wet weather; and Mrs. Campbell borrowed for his use books from her, which had her name within; and later he sent for a box of books from London, and then the lending was on the other side. So it was not long before people began to see how things were, and to smile when the gentleman treated old Robert Evans at the Newydd Inn. The fishermen when he was out with them would tack so that he might see the smoke of Court over the cliffs; and there was no more Peggy *bach* to be met, either rowing with Peter Rees or running wild among the rocks, but a very sedate young lady who yet did not seem to be unhappy.

"The old man was ailing in his limbs at this time, but his mind was as clear as ever, and his grip of the land as tight. He could not bear, now that his sons were dead, that any one should come after him. I am thinking that he would be taking every one for a body-bird. Still the family were forward with presents and such like, and helped him perhaps about the farm; so that though there was talk in the village, no one could say what will he would make.

"However, one day towards winter Miss Peggy came in late from a walk, and found the old man very cross. 'Where have you been?' he cried angrily. Then without any warning, 'You have been courting,' he said, 'with that fine gentleman from the shop?'

"'Well,' my lady replied, putting a brave face upon it, as was her way, 'and what then, grandfather? I am not ashamed of it.'

"'You ought to be!' he cried, banging his stick upon the floor. 'Do you think that he will marry you?'

"'Yes I do,' she replied stoutly. 'He has told you so to-day, I know.'

"Robert Evans laughed, but his laugh was not a pleasant one. 'You are right,' he said. 'He has told me. He was very forward to tell me. He thought I was going to leave you my money. But I am not! Mind you that, my girl.'

"'Very well,' she answered, white and red by turns.

"'You will remember that you are no relation of mine!' he went on viciously, for he had grown very crabbed of late. 'And I am not going to leave you money. He is after my money. He is nothing but a fortune catcher!'

"'He is not!' she exclaimed, as hot as fire, and began to put on her hat again.

"'Very well! We shall see!' answered Robert Evans. 'Do you tell him what I say, and see if he will marry you. Go! Go now, girl, and you need not come back! You will get nothing by staying here!' he cried, for what with his jealousy and the mention of money, he was furious—'not a penny! You had better be off at once!'

"She did not answer for a minute or so, but she seemed to change her mind about going, for she laid down her hat, and went about the house-place getting tea ready—and no

doubt her fingers trembled a little—until the old man cried, 'Well, why don't you go? You will get nothing by staying.'

"'I shall stay to take care of you all the same,' she answered quietly. 'You need not leave me anything, and then—and then I shall know whether you are right.'

"'Do you mean it?' asked he sharply, after looking at her in silence for a moment.

"'Yes,' said she.

"'Then it's a bargain!' cried Robert Evans—'it's a bargain!' And he said not a word more about it, but took his tea from her and talked of the Llewellyn Evanses who had been to pay him a visit that day. It seemed, however, as if the matter had upset him, for he had to be helped to bed, and complained a good deal, neither of which things were usual with him.

"Well, it is not unlikely that the young lady promised herself to tell her lover all about it next day, and looked to hear many times over from his own lips that it was not her money he wanted. But this was not to be, for early the next morning Gwen Madoc was at her door.

"'You are to get up, miss,' she said. 'The master wants you to go to London by the first train.'

"'To London!' cried Peggy, very much astonished. 'Is he ill? Is anything the matter, Gwen?'

"'No,' answered the old woman very short. 'It is just that.'

"And when the girl, having dressed hastily, came down to Robert Evans's room, she found that this was pretty nearly all she was to learn. 'You will go to Mrs. Richard Evans, who lives at Islington,' he said, as if he had been thinking about it all night. 'She is my second cousin, and will find house-room for you, and make no charge. A telegram shall be sent to her this morning. To-morrow you will take this packet to the address upon it, and the next day a packet will be returned to you, which you will bring back to me. I am not well to-day, and I want to have the matter settled and off my mind, Peggy.'

"'But could not some one else go, if you are not well?' she objected, 'and I will stop and take care of you.'

"He grew very angry at that. 'Do as you are bidden, girl,' he said. 'I shall see the doctor to-day, and for the rest, Gwen can do for me. I am well enough. Do you look to the papers. Richard Evans owes me money, and will make no charge for your living.'

"So Miss Peggy had her breakfast, and in a wonderfully short time, as it seemed to her, was on the way to London, with plenty of leisure on her hands for thinking—very likely for doubting and fearing as well. She had not seen her sweetheart, that was one thing. She had been despatched in a hurry, that was another. And then, to be sure, the big town was strange to her.

"However, nothing happened there, I may tell you. But on the third morning she received a short note from Gwen Madoc, and suddenly rose from breakfast with Mrs. Richard, her face very white. There was news in the letter—news of which all the neighbourhood for miles round Court was by that time full. Robert Evans, if you will believe it, was dead. After ailing for a few hours he had died, with only Gwen Madoc to smoothe his pillow.

"It was late when she reached the nearest station to Court on her way back, and found a pony-trap waiting for her. She was stepping into it when Mr. Griffith Hughes, the lawyer, saw her, and came up to speak.

"'I am sorry to have bad news for you, Miss McNeill,' he said in a low voice, for he was a kind man, and what with the shock and the long journey she was looking very pale.

"'Oh, yes,' she answered, with a sort of weary surprise; 'I know it already. That is why I am come home—to Court, I mean.'

"He saw that she was thinking only of Robert Evans's death, which was not what was in his mind. 'It is about the will,' he said in a whisper, though he need not have been so careful, for every one in the neighbourhood had learned all about it from Gwen Madoc. 'It is a cruel will. I would not have made it for him, my dear. He has left Court to the Llewellyn Evanses, and the money between the Evanses of Nant and the Evan Bevans.'

"'It is quite right,' she answered, so calmly that he stared. 'My grandfather explained it to me. I fully understood that I was not to be in the will.'

"Mr. Hughes looked more and more puzzled. 'Oh, but,' he replied, 'it is not so bad as that. Your name is in the will. He has laid it upon those who get the land and money to provide for you—to settle a proper income upon you. And you may depend upon me for doing my best to have his wishes carried out, my dear.'

"The young lady turned very red, and raised her eyes sharply.

"'Who are to provide for me?' she asked.

"'The three families who divide the estate,' he said.

"'And are they obliged to do so?'

"'Well—no,' said he, unwillingly. 'I am not sure that they are exactly obliged. But no doubt——'

"'I doubt very much,' she answered, taking him up with a smile. And then she shook hands with him and drove away, leaving him wondering at her courage.

"Well, you may suppose it was a dreary house to which she came home. Mr. Griffith Hughes, who was executor, had been before the Llewellyn Evanses in taking possession, so that besides a lad or two in the kitchen there were only Gwen Madoc and the servant there, and they seemed to have very little to tell her about the death. When she had heard what they had to say, and they were all on their way to bed, 'Gwen,' she said softly, 'I think I should like to see him.'

"'So you shall, to-morrow, honey,' answered the old woman. 'But do you know, bach, that he has left you nothing?' and she held up her candle suddenly, so as to throw the light on the girl's tired face.

"'Oh!' she answered with a shudder, 'how can you talk about that now?' But presently she had another question ready. 'Have you seen Mr. Venmore since—since my grandfather's death, Gwen?' she asked timidly.

"'Yes, indeed, *bach*,' answered the housekeeper. 'I met him at the door of the shop this morning. I told him where you were, and that you would be back to-night. And about the will moreover.'

"The girl stopped at her own door and snuffed her candle. Gwen Madoc went slowly up the next flight, groaning over the steepness of the stairs. Then she turned to say good-night. The girl was at her side again, her eyes shining in the light of the two candles.

"'Oh, Gwen,' she whispered breathlessly, 'didn't he say anything?'

"'Not a word, *bach*,' answered the old woman, stroking her hair tenderly. 'He just went into the house in a hurry.'

"Miss Peggy went into her room much in the same way. No doubt she would be telling herself a great many times over before she slept that he would come and see her in the morning: and in the morning she would be saying, 'He will come in the afternoon;' and in the afternoon 'He will come in the evening.' But evening came, and darkness, and still he did not appear. Then she could endure it no longer. She let herself out of the front door, which there was no one now to use but herself, and with a shawl over her head ran all the way down to the shop. There was no light in his window up stairs: but at the back door stood Mrs. Campbell, looking after some one who had just left her.

"The girl came, strangely shrinking at the last moment, into the ring of light about the door. 'Why, Miss McNeill!' cried the other, starting visibly at sight of her. 'Is it you, honey? And are you alone?'

"'Yes; and I cannot stop. But oh, Mrs. Campbell, where is Mr. Venmore?'

"'I know no more than yourself, my dear,' said the good woman reluctantly. 'He went from here yesterday on a sudden—to take the train, I understood.'

"'Yesterday? When? At what time, please?' asked the young lady. There was a fear, which she had been putting from her all day. It was getting a footing now.

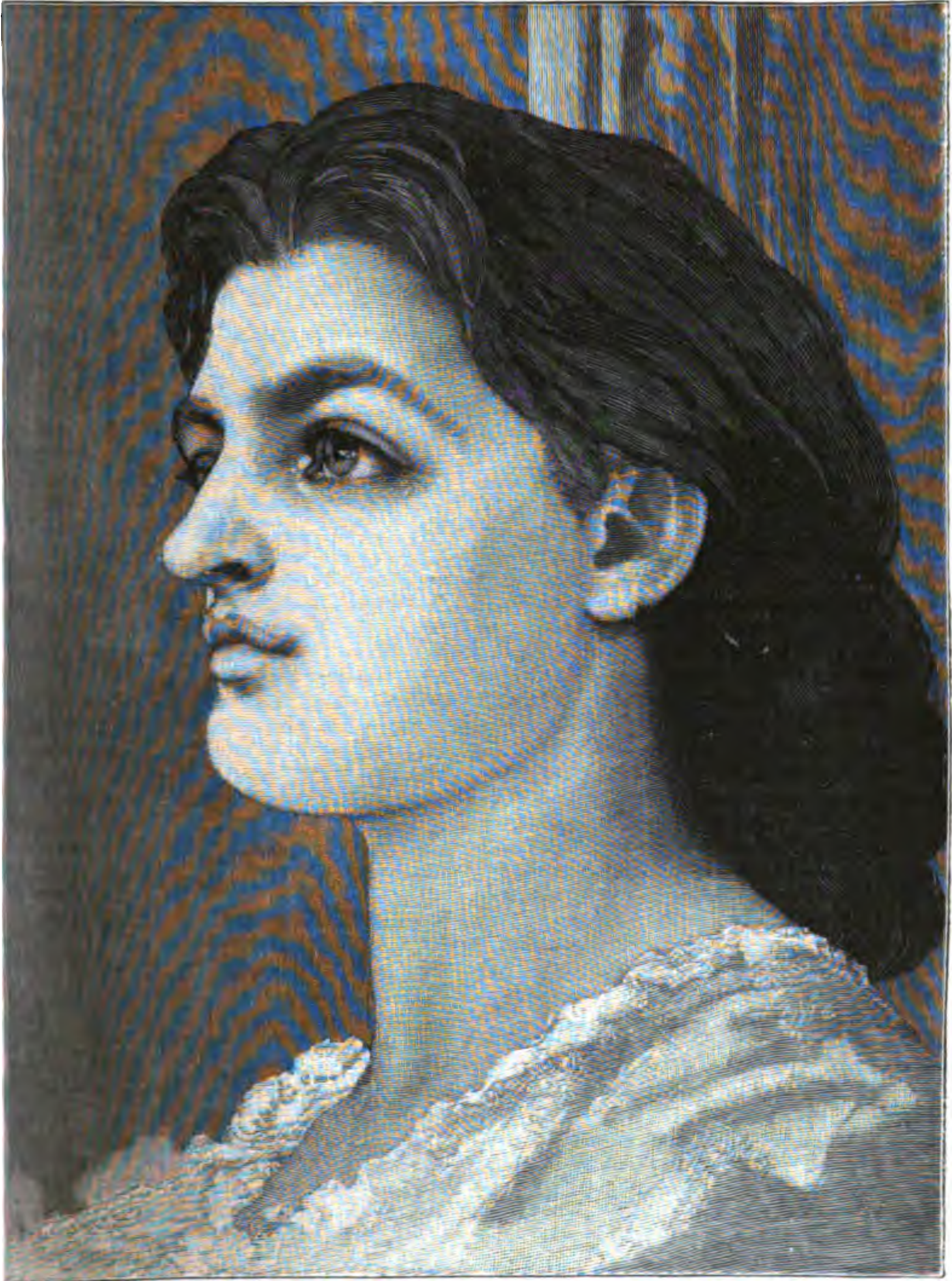
"'Well, it would be about midday. I know it was just after Gwen Madoc called in about the——'

"But the girl was gone. It was not to Mrs. Campbell she could make a moan. It was only the night-wind that caught the 'Oh cruel! cruel!' which broke from her as she went up the hill. Whether she slept that night at all I am not able to say. Only that when it was dawn she was out upon the cliffs, her face very white and sad-looking. The fishermen who were up early going out with the ebb saw her at times walking fast, and then again standing still and looking seaward. But I do not know what she was thinking, only I should fancy that the gulls had a different cry for her now, and it is certain that when she had returned and came down into the parlour at Court for the funeral, there were none of the Evanses could look her in the face with comfort.

"They were all there, of course. Mr. Llewellyn Evans—he was an elderly man, with a grey beard like a bird's nest, and very thick lips—was sitting with his wife on the horse-hair sofa. The Evanses of Nant, who were young men with lank faces and black hair combed upwards, were by the door. The Evan Bevans were at the table; and there were others, besides Mr. Griffith Hughes, who was undoing some papers when she entered.

"He rose and shook hands with her, marking pitifully the dark hollows under her eyes, and inwardly confirming his resolution to get her a substantial settlement. Then he hesitated, looking doubtfully at the others. 'We are going to read the will before the funeral instead of afterwards,' he said.

"'Oh!' she answered, taken aback—for in truth she had forgotten all about the will. 'I did not know. I will go, and come back later.'



STUDY OF A HEAD.

Engraved by W. Biscombe Gardner, *from a Picture by* Sir Frederick Leighton, P.R.A.

"'No, indeed!' cried Mrs. Llewellyn Evans, 'you had better stop and hear the will—though no relation, to be sure.'

"But at that moment Gwen Madoc came in, and peered round with a grim air of importance. 'Maybe some one,' she said in a low voice, 'would like to take a last look at the poor master?'

"But no one moved. They sighed and shook their heads at one another as if they would like to do so—but no one moved. They were anxious, you see, to hear the will. Only Peggy, who had turned to go out, said, 'Yes, Gwen, I should,' and slipped out with the old woman.

"'There is nothing to keep us now?' said Mr. Hughes briskly when the door was closed again. And every one nodding assent the lawyer went on to read the will, which was not a long one. It was received with a murmur of satisfaction, and much use of pocket-handkerchiefs.

"'Very fair,' said Mr. Llewellyn Evans. 'He was a clever man, our old friend.' All the legatees murmured after him 'Very fair!' and a word went round about the home-brewed, and Robert Evans's recipe for it. Then Llewellyn, who thought he ought to be taking the lead at Court now, said it was about time to be going to church.

"'There is one matter,' put in Mr. Griffith Hughes, 'which I think ought to be settled while we are all together. You see that there is a—what I may call a charge on the three main portions of the property in favour of Miss McNeill.'

"'Indeed, but what is that you are saying?' cried Llewellyn sharply. 'Do you mean that there is a rent charge?'

"'Not exactly a rent charge,' said the lawyer.

"'No!' cried Llewellyn with twinkle in his eyes. 'Nor any obligation in law, sir?'

"'Well, no,' assented Mr. Hughes grudgingly.

"'Then,' said Llewellyn Evans, getting up and putting his hands in his pockets, while he winked at the others, 'we will talk of that another time.'

"But Mr. Hughes said, 'No!' He was a kind man, and very anxious to do the best for the girl, but he somewhat lost his temper. 'No!' he said growing red. 'You will observe, if you please, Mr. Evans, that the testator says, "Forthwith—forthwith," so that, as sole executor, it is my duty to ask you to state your intentions now.'

"'Well, indeed, then,' said Llewellyn, changing his face to a kind of blank, 'I have no intentions. I think that the family has done more than enough for the girl already.'

"And he would say no otherwise. Nor was it to any purpose that the lawyer looked at Mrs. Llewellyn. She was examining the furniture, and feeling the stuffing of the sofa, and did not seem to hear. He could make nothing of the three Evanses, Nant. They all cried, 'Yes, indeed!' to what Llewellyn said. Only the Evan Bevans remained, and he turned to them in despair.

"'I am sure,' he said, addressing himself to them, 'that you will do something to carry out the testator's wishes? Your share under the will, Mr. Bevan, will amount to three hundred a year. This young lady has nothing—no relations, no home. May I take it that you will settle—say fifty pounds a year upon her? It need only be for her life.'

"'Mr. Bevan fidgeted under this appeal. His wife answered it. 'Certainly not, Mr. Hughes. If it were twenty pounds now, once for all, or even twenty-five—and Llewellyn and my nephews would say the same—I think we might manage that?'

'But Lewellyn shook his head obstinately. 'I have said I have no intentions, and I am a man of my word!' he answered. 'Let the girl go out to service. It is what we have always wanted her to do. Here are my nephews. They won't mind a young housekeeper.'

"Well, they all laughed at this except Mr. Hughes, who gathered up his papers looking very black, and not thinking of future clients. Llewellyn, however, did not care a bit for that, but walked to the bell, masterful-like, and rang it. 'Tell the undertaker,' he said to the servant, 'that we are ready.'

"It was as if the words had been a signal, for they were followed almost immediately by an outcry overhead and quick running upon the stairs. The legatees looked uncomfortably at the carpet; the lawyer was blacker than before. He said to himself, 'Now that poor child has fainted!' The confusion seemed to last some minutes. Then the door was opened, not by the undertaker, but by Gwen Madoc. The mourners rose with a sigh of relief; to their surprise she passed by even Llewellyn, and with a frightened face walked across to the lawyer. She whispered something in his ear.

"'What!' he cried starting back a pace from her, and speaking so that the wine-glasses on the table rattled again. 'Do you know what you are saying, woman?'

"'It is true,' she answered half-crying, 'and no fault indeed of mine neither.'

Gwen added more in quick, short sentences, which the family, strain their ears as they might, could not overhear.

"'I will come! I will come!' cried the lawyer. He waved his hand to them as a sign to make room for her to pass out. Then he turned to them, a queer look upon his face; it was not triumph altogether, for there was discomfiture and apprehension in it as well. 'You will believe me,' he said, 'that I am as much taken aback as yourselves—that till this moment I have been honestly as much in the dark as any one. It seems—so I am told—that our old friend is not dead.'

"'What!' cried Llewellyn in his turn. 'What do you mean?' and he raised his black-gloved hands as in refutation.

"'What I say,' replied Mr. Hughes patiently. 'I hear—wonderful as it sounds—that he is not dead. Something about a trance, I believe—a mistake happily discovered in time. I tell you all I know; and however it comes about, it is clear we ought to be glad that Mr. Robert Evans is spared to us.'

"With that he was glad to escape from the room. I am told that their faces were very strange to see. There was a long silence. Llewellyn was the first to speak. He swore a big oath and banged his great hand upon the table. 'I don't believe it!' he cried. 'I don't believe it! It is a trick!'

"But as he spoke the door opened behind him, and he and all turned to see what they had never thought to see, I am sure. They had come to walk in Robert Evans's funeral; and here was the gaunt stooping form of Robert Evans himself coming in, with an arm of Gwen Madoc on one side and of Miss Peggy on the other—Robert Evans beyond doubt alive. Behind him were the lawyer and Dr. Jones, a smile on their lips, and three or four women half-frightened, half-wondering.

"The old man was pale, and seemed to totter a little, but when the doctor would have placed a chair for him, he declined it, and stood gazing about him, wonderfully composed for a man just risen from his coffin. He had all his old grim aspect as he looked upon the family. Llewellyn's declaration was still in their ears. They could find not a word to say either of joy or grief.

"'Well, indeed,' said Robert with a dry chuckle, 'have none of you a word to throw at me? I am a ghost, I suppose? Ha!' he exclaimed, as his eye fell on the papers which Mr. Hughes had left upon the table, 'so! so! That is why you are not overjoyed at seeing me. You have been reading my will. Well, Llewellyn! Have not you a word to say to me now you know for what I had got you down?'

"At that Llewellyn found his tongue, and the others chimed in finely. Only there was something in the old man's manner that they did not like; and presently, when they had all told him how glad they were to see him again—just for all the world as if he had been ill for a few days—Robert Evans turned again to Llewellyn.

"'You had fixed what you would do for my girl here, I suppose?' he said, patting her shoulder gently, at which the family winced. 'It was a hundred a year you promised to settle, you know. You will have arranged all that.'

"Llewellyn looked stealthily at Mr. Hughes, who was standing at Robert's elbow, and muttered that they had not reached that stage.

"'What!' cried the old man sharply. 'How was that?'

"'I was intending,' Llewellyn began lamely, 'to settle——'

"'You were intending!' Robert Evans burst forth in a voice so changed that they all started back. 'You are a liar! You were intending to settle nothing! I know it well! I knew it long ago! Nothing, I say! As for you,' he went on, wheeling furiously round upon the Evanses of Nant, 'you knew my wishes. What were you going to do for her? What, I say? Speak, you hobbledehoys!'

"For they were backing from him in absolute fear of his passion, looking at one another or at the sullen face of Llewellyn Evans, or anywhere save at him. At length the eldest blurted out, 'Whatever Llewellyn meant to do, we were going to do, sir.'

"'You speak the truth there,' cried old Robert bitterly; 'for that was nothing, you know. Very well! I promise you that what Llewellyn gets of my property you shall get too—and it will be nothing! You, Bevan,' and he turned himself towards the Evan Bevans who were shaking in their shoes, 'I am told, did offer to do something for my girl.'

"'Yes, dear Robert,' cried Mrs. Bevan, radiant and eager, 'we did indeed.'

"'So I hear. Well, when I make my next will, I will take care to set you down for just so much as you proposed to give her! Peggy, *bach*,' he continued, turning from the chapfallen lady, and putting into the girl's hands the will which the lawyer had given him, 'tear up this rubbish! Tear it up! Now let us have something to eat in the other room. What, Llewellyn, no appetite?'

"But the family did not stay even to partake of the home-brewed. They were out of the house, I am told, before the coffin and the undertaker's men. There was big talking amongst them, as they went, of a conspiracy and a lunatic asylum. But though, to be sure, it was a wonderful recovery, and the doctor and Mr. Hughes as they drove away after dinner were very friendly together—which may have been only the home-brewed—at any rate the sole outcome of Llewellyn's talking and inquiries was that every one laughed very much, and Robert Evans's name for a clever man was known beyond Carnarvon.

"Of course it would be open house at Court that day, with plenty of eating and drinking and coming and going. But towards five o'clock the place grew quiet again. The visitors had gone home, and Gwen Madoc was up stairs. The old man was sleeping in his chair opposite the settle, and Miss Peggy was sitting on the window-seat watching him, her hands in her lap, her thoughts far away. Maybe she was trying to be really glad that the home, about which the cows lowed and the gulls screamed in the afternoon stillness and made it seem home each minute, was hers still; that she was not quite alone, nor friendless, nor poor. Maybe she was striving not to think of the thing which had been taken from her and could not be given back. Whatever her thoughts, she was aroused by some sound to find her eyes full of hot tears, through which she could dimly see that the old man was awake and looking at her with a strange expression which disappeared as she became aware of it.

"He began to speak. 'Providence has been very good to us, Peggy,' he said with grim meaning. 'It is well for you, my girl, that our eyes are open to see our kind friends as they are. There is one besides those who were here this morning that will wish he had not been so hasty.'

"She rose quickly and looked out of the window. 'Don't speak of him. Let us forget him,' she pleaded in a low tone.

"But Robert Evans seemed to take a delight in the—well, the goodness of Providence. 'If he had come to see you only once, when you were in trouble,' he went on, as if he were summing up the case in his own mind, and she were but a stick or a stone, 'we could have forgiven him, and I would have said you were right. Or even if he had written, eh?'

"'Oh, yes, yes!' sobbed the girl, her tears raining down her averted face. 'Don't torture me! You were right and I was wrong—all wrong!'

"'Well, yes, yes! Just so. But come here, my girl,' said the old man. 'Come!' he repeated, imperiously, as, surprised in the midst of her grief, she wavered and hesitated, 'sit here,' and he pointed to the settle opposite to him. 'Now suppose I were to tell you he had written, and that the letter had been—mislaid, shall we say? and come somehow to my hands? Now don't get excited, girl!'

"'Oh!' cried Peggy, her hands fallen, her lips parted, her eyes wide and frightened, her whole form rigid with questioning.

"'Just suppose that, my dear,' continued Robert, 'and that the letter were now before us—would you abide by its contents? Remember, he must have much to explain. Would you let me decide whether his explanation were satisfactory or not?'

"She was trembling with expectation, hope. But she tried to think of the matter calmly, to remember her lover's hurried flight, the lack of word or message for her, her own misery. She nodded silently, and held out her hand.

"He drew a letter from his pocket. 'You will let me see it?' he said suspiciously.

"'Oh, yes!' she cried, and fled with it to the window. He watched her while she tore it open and read first one page and then another—there were but two, it was very short—watched her while she thrust it from her and looked at it as a whole, then drew it to her and kissed it again and again.

"'Wait a bit! wait a bit!' cried he testily. 'Now let me see it.'

"She turned upon him almost fiercely, holding it away behind her, as if it were some living thing he might hurt. 'He thought he would meet me at the junction,' she stammered between laughing and crying. 'He was going to London to see his sister—that she might take me in. And he will be here to fetch me this evening. There! Take it!' and suddenly remembering herself she stretched out her hand and gave him the letter.

"'You promised to abide by my decision, you know,' said the old man gravely.

"'I will not!' she cried impetuously. 'Never!'

"'You promised,' he said.

"'I don't care! I don't care!' she replied, clasping her hands nervously. 'No one shall come between us.'

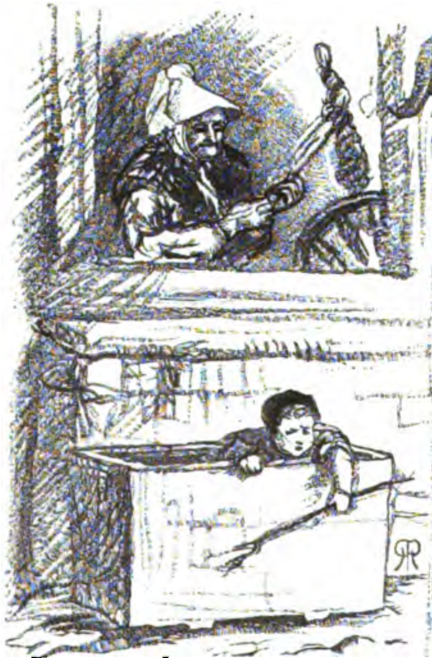
"'Very well,' said Robert Evans, 'then I need not decide. But you had better tell Owen to take the trap to the station to meet your man.'"

STANLEY J. WEYMAN.

LES BONNES SŒURS.
From a Drawing by H. R. ROBERTSON.

THROUGH THE CÔTES DU NORD.

PART I.



AS in my previous experiences, both at home and abroad, I had invariably found my best subjects in those districts that were described in guide books as "flat and uninteresting," I decided to explore the little-visited part of the north of Brittany. I even confess to some antipathy to those spots to which so many of my professional brethren rush in crowds, and rather sympathise with the artist who suggested that his tomb should bear the distinctive epitaph, "Here lies a painter who never was at Bettws-y-cwd." During my visit to the Côtes du Nord I was repeatedly informed by the *commis-voyageurs* and others that I was off the track, and that if I had gone to the western district—to Quimper and Pontaven—I should have been able to sit down to dinner every day with thirty other artists. But I resolutely withstood even this extraordinary attraction, and preferred to follow out the route that I had planned by aid of the map before leaving England. Arriving at St. Malo, my idea was to penetrate to the heart of the district as far as Callac and Carhaix, and then to turn northwards to the sea-coast, the extreme point of the projected journey being Roscoff. The same district, with occasional excursions and deviations, was again visited on a second tour, in order to carry out pictures of the subjects sketched on the former occasion.

Those people who have not visited St. Malo might naturally suppose that the constant

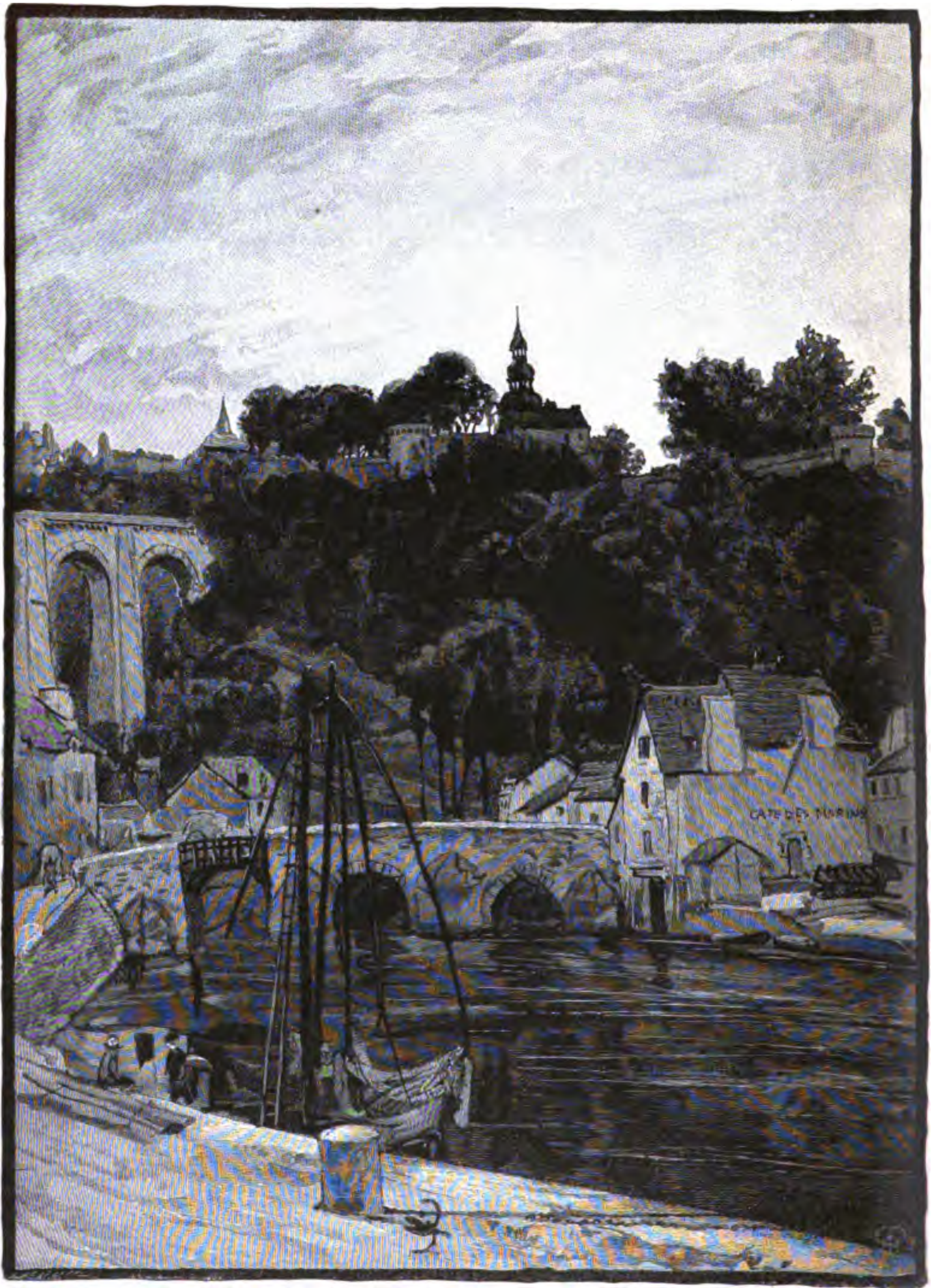
servic of steamers from Southampton would have to some extent influenced the style of the place, but happily such is not the case, and St. Malo remains in every way most characteristically foreign. The fortified walls which surround the town in true mediæval fashion give it an aspect of strangeness before we enter St. Malo, and a first glance at its streets reveals a variety of white caps worn by the women, imparting a sense of picturesqueness which remains with us during all our tour in Brittany.

The rocky coast of this part abounds in romantic-looking islands, of which the chief are the Grand-Bey, la Conchée, and Cezembre. The first-named is accessible from the mainland at low water, a short stone causeway spanning the only place in which the tide remains for any length of time. This island is interesting as having been chosen by Chateaubriand for his place of burial, and close by his tomb are some ruined walls, which may have been those of some old abbey or castle. One evening while I was on the beach, and had just commenced a sketch of the old town walls, my attention was diverted from my work by seeing some thirty or more of the Sisters of Charity—the *bonnes sœurs* as the people always call them—returning from their walk to the Grand-Bey. The long line of figures winding across the sand, with their dark dresses and butterfly coiffures, pleased me so much that I threw aside the sketch I had just begun, and proceeded without delay to portray the scene which forms one of our illustrations. I felt that I might not have the chance of seeing the sisters again under the same circumstances, while, as Robinson said when on the Rhine, "castles can wait." It is stated that some religious community formerly inhabited the island, and the fashion still exists among the Malouins of walking there on Easter Sunday, their promenade being no doubt the traditional survival of an ancient pilgrimage to a Pardon held there on that day.

Chateaubriand shares the honours of the town with its naval hero, Duguay Trouin, whose statue adorns the principal square; on the pedestal is an inscription to the effect that "he chased the English on all the seas." At the entrance to the house in which Chateaubriand was born (now the Hotel de France) are smaller statues of Duguay Trouin and Jean Bart. The latter was perhaps the most distinguished sailor that the French ever had, and though probably his name is no more familiar to most Englishmen than that of Duguay Trouin, yet it is true that he frequently beat us, and took many of our ships as prizes. On one occasion he and his ship were taken and were being towed to an English port, but tradition says that he found the whereabouts of the powder magazine, and approaching it with a lighted match threatened to blow up the vessel unless both ships were given up to his men; and so he returned from captivity much like Hans Breitmann "wherefer he'd peen he left noding behind."

St. Malo used to be called the "City of Corsairs," and though privateering is no longer possible, the natives of this part of the coast retain much of the venturesome spirit of old, and are as bold fishermen and sailors as are to be met with anywhere. I was present at the nautical *fêtes* held at Dinard, and was surprised at the very great number of small sailing vessels that took part in the regatta, and at the host of competitors in the swimming races. They had one variety of sport that was particularly interesting as a spectacle, called the *joûtes* (Angl. "jousts"). This species of water tournament was arranged in the following manner:—To the sterns of two ordinary-sized rowing boats were attached platforms of about a yard square, and raised by wooden supports to about eight feet from the surface of the water. On each of these platforms stood a man in bathing costume, and armed with a long tilting lance padded at the point. The charge was made by the boats rowing fast to meet, or rather to pass each other, so that at the moment of passing a combatant could, by a well-aimed thrust, push his adversary over backwards into the sea; the supports slanted backwards at such an angle as to prevent

THE MARQUIS DE CHAMBERY.
From a Drawing by H. R. ROBERTSON.

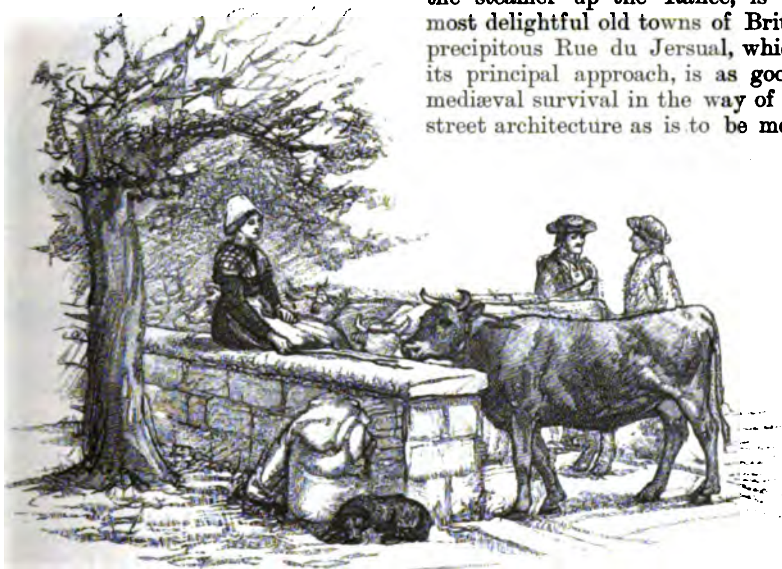


DINAN.

Engraved by O. LACOUR, *from a Drawing by* H. R. ROBERTSON.

any danger of a fall into the boat. Seen from the level of the water this fight up in the air was very dramatic, the attitudes of the combatants being picturesque in the extreme. I regret that the sketch I made on the spot was too slight to be of any use beyond being a memorandum of the subject, but hope to be able to devote more time to it another year.

The religious processions that take place on certain days in honour of the Virgin are not without an indication of the importance to the town of nautical matters, for a large model of a ship is then carried through the streets between two images of the Virgin, one gilt and the other silvered.



AT DINAN.
From a Drawing by H. R. Robertson.

On the beach at St. Malo I made the acquaintance of a gentleman of decayed fortunes who is certainly worth a passing notice. He is Edouard Choupard, Marquis de Chambery, now pursuing the humble calling of *guide-baigneur*—a sort of male bathing-woman. The estates that would have been his were taken from the family at the time of the Revolution, but papers are in his possession, the consul told me, which clearly prove his right to the title. He has, moreover, earned the respect of all by evincing the truest of nobility. In connection with the lifeboat service, and as a courageous swimmer, he has saved many lives, for which brave deeds he has been repeatedly decorated with medals; so I thought of Tennyson's words with regard to an ancient name, to "keep it noble, make it nobler," and saluted the poor *guide-baigneur* with all the respect due to a nobleman who is indeed what the word implies.

In walking along the Paramé road to St. Coulomb, one passes a quay always heaped up with great piles of deal planks from Norway, and the wholesome odour of the pine is most refreshing after the unimaginable smells of St. Malo. For a similar reason the farmsteads hereabouts are also pleasant to the wayfarer, as they abound in long sheds filled with the large pendent leaves of the tobacco-plant drying in the sun.

Dinan, which is best reached by taking the steamer up the Rance, is one of the most delightful old towns of Brittany. The precipitous Rue du Jersual, which was once its principal approach, is as good a bit of mediæval survival in the way of picturesque street architecture as is to be met with anywhere. It was there that I sketched our illustration of the small child placed in a box to keep it out of harm's way, and under the eye of the old crone spinning. By the way, I may mention that I have never observed any but very old women employed with the distaff or spinning-wheel, and I fear that in a few years the spinster proper will be as extinct as the dodo.

Dinan, like the other towns of Brittany, should, if possible, be seen on market day. Indeed it has occurred to me that it would be a very valuable addition to the regular guide-book information, if the practice obtained of always stating on what day of the week the markets were held. The vary-

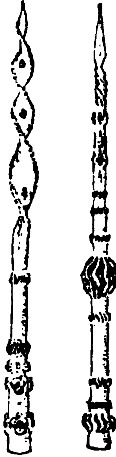
ing costumes of the neighbouring villages are all represented on these occasions, and the scene of animated bustle in what is perhaps an extremely dull town frequently makes all the difference to its general appearance. When tourists have been enthusiastic about the picturesqueness of particular towns I have often found, on inquiry, that they happened casually to have been there on market days.

The principal square in Dinan is the Place Duguesclin, the central part of which is the public promenade, planted with trees and surrounded by a low wall. To rings in this wall the cows for sale in the market are attached, while the farmers and their wives sit on the wall or stand about in lively conversation with the buyers. The little Brittany cows submit very quietly to the somewhat rough handling of the intending purchasers, who punch them about all over, and lastly take a firm grasp of the creatures' heads in order to examine their teeth, as is done to horses in England. I often watched the bargaining going on, but found it difficult to follow the proceedings, as the practice of violently shaking hands, which I innocently thought to be the conclusion, is only a trifling interlude, and is, I believe, a protest against the last extravagant proposal of the other party. I never saw any transfer of coin take place, but that, I learnt, was always an after business at the *auberge*, where the seller has to pay for the *consommations* —a practice which conduces to the besetting fault of these worthy people. An American author says of the Bretons, that "they are good people when they are not drunk, but they are usually drunk."

AT LAMBALLE.
From a Drawing by H. R. ROBERTSON.

The market is rarely confined to a single place in the town, all the open spaces and the larger streets being generally utilised, so that in a walk through the town one is always stumbling on some odd and unexpected merchandise exposed for sale out of doors. I remember seeing in an out-of-the-way corner in Dinan a piteous lot of small calves lying on the ground with their legs tied, and close by a barrow-load of second-hand clothes, which an old woman was spreading out upon the ground in as tempting an array as she could manage, while she sternly repelled certain long-legged swine who were curious as to her stock-in-trade. On the market day at Lamballe I sketched a characteristic group of earthenware vessels thus laid out for sale on the ground, while the seller came along comically loaded with two or three pots and pans in each hand and others tucked under her arms. The shapes of this common ware are almost always good and sometimes fine, and the colours are always agreeable. Since my return I met with the following remarks about the Breton pottery by Mr. Jephson, which interested me particularly when I found that it was at Lamballe that he also was so struck with the artistic character of the common ware:—"The pots and pans, of which there was a large display, struck me as being of very elegant shape, though of the coarsest materials. With all their wealth and appliances our potters are generally most unsuccessful in their search after the beautiful. In their anxiety to produce something new and elaborate, in order to justify placing a high price upon their articles, they have discarded the forms which the common sense and experience of ages had settled upon as the most beautiful and convenient; for in the useful arts the beautiful and the convenient always coincide. The consequence is, that, while the tables of our

millionaires are loaded with expensive monstrosities, the Breton peasant eats his soup and *galette* from a basin the form of which would have delighted Benvenuto Cellini." In a shop window at Lamballe I noticed the highly ornamental wax candles here figured.



WAX CANDLES.
From a Drawing by H. R. ROBERTSON.

In traversing the country districts of the Côtes du Nord one can seldom forget that one is among a cider-drinking people, the apple tree being met with so universally that one may please one's self whether one describes the orchards as having corn and other crops grown in them, or their cornfields as being planted with apple trees. Anyhow the effect is very beautiful when a rich crop of both is ready for the harvest. No doubt it is a method of cultivation well suited to the system of small holdings where the spade is a useful ally to the plough, for the apple-trees, often old and twisted in strange contortions, must interfere considerably with the making of a straight furrow.

Close to the ruins of the Chateau de la Garaye, at no great distance from Dinan, is an interesting old cider-mill, which looks coeval with the adjacent ruins. It consists of a huge circular trough cut in blocks of massive granite, into which the apples are thrown, and crushed by two heavy wheels of solid wood a foot across. The wheels are dragged along by horses, which walk round just outside the trough. I was told by the residents here that this primitive method of crushing the apples produced better cider than the improved machinery now generally in use, but do not know whether this is really the case, as there is so much traditional prejudice in favour of the old way of doing things. Right or wrong, I hope these people may long cherish their old beliefs, for here as elsewhere "the old order changeth" to the manifest disadvantage of all artistic requirements.

After Lamballe my next halting place was Guingamp, near which town, at the village of St. Croix, is the old chateau delineated on the opposite page. This ancient building is now a farmhouse, the ruins of the chapel adjoining being utilised as a barn and cow-house. The best aspect of this grand old chateau, that side with the little river flowing in front, has been altogether spoiled by a high railway embankment, which comes so close as to completely hide what must have been a charming view of the towers and spires of Guingamp.

I happened to be at Guingamp on the 1st of May—the *jour de Marie*—and in the evening was present at a most impressive service held in the church of Notre Dame de bon Secours—an edifice of cathedral-like proportions. The lighting of the building was of the scantiest character, consisting only of the candles on the altar and two or three little oil lamps attached to the columns; the effect thus produced was far more imposing than if there had been such a glare of light as is with us usually considered desirable. The service was held in the middle of the nave, in front of a large temporary altar draped with blue and white and profusely decked with flowers. The choir were grouped in front of the altar, while one of the officiating priests led off the music with a large trumpet. The place was crowded, the congregation consisting almost entirely of white-capped women and children. Perhaps the most beautiful part of the service was a simple hymn set to a grand air, which was sung in unison by the whole congregation.

In this church is a statue of the Virgin, which is one of those that have been honoured by the presentation of a gold crown from the Pope. This distinction is only accorded to those images which fulfil, in the words of the official announcement, the three conditions of "antiquity, miracles, and popularity." The first two reasons are well enough, but the third seems to me a little hard. I am inclined to regard this insisting on popularity as almost low on the part of his holiness, and if it were not to consider the matter too curiously, one might well imagine the indignant protest of a respectable old image, admittedly miraculous, against such a requirement, as being an extension of the franchise really indefensible. The rivalry that is thus instituted between the different images of the Virgin in the same church is perhaps the most curious phase of this competition. We often find in the same building statues of Notre Dame de bon Secours—Notre Dame de Pitié—Notre Dame de Déliverance, while near to each are suspended their votive tablets with the dates of the benefits accorded, these inscribed tablets no doubt affording a sort of gauge of their relative miraculous powers and consequent popularity.

In our route from Guingamp to Callac and Carhaix we leave the railway for the

diligence, a change of conveyance which is always accompanied by the satisfactory feeling that one will now see the people in their more unsophisticated aspect. The limited accommodation of these antiquated vehicles renders it advisable to bespeak one's place beforehand. Their usual build is something like an elongated hansom cab, with two inside seats for three passengers each (*very* thin ones), a wooden apron shutting down over the front row of seats, and having on the top of it room for the driver and two passengers. The horses are generally very frequently do we notice the characteristic crosses of granite reared by the wayside. These crosses vary much in size and shape: the one here sketched has apparently been broken, and by being consequently shortened has gained somewhat in grandeur of proportion. While in these out-of-the-way places it behoves the traveller to bear in mind that the time by the clock—*l'heure du pays*—is about half an hour behind that of Paris; in some places there is an extra hand to the church clock, so that both times are indicated. The first sight of a clock face of this

CHATEAU OF SAINTE CROIX, NEAR GUINGAMP.
From a Drawing by H. R. ROBERTSON.

wretched-looking specimens, but have considerably more go in them than their appearance would suggest; the harness is of the shabbiest, thin worn-out pieces of rope doing duty for reins, the whole turn out so patched and dilapidated that ramshackle is the only word to describe it.

The country through which the road passes gradually becomes wilder and more hilly—in fact we are now in the district of the Montagnes Noires, the projecting rocks at the summits of the hills being not unlike the Tors on Dartmoor. The more the road penetrates into the heart of the country the more description is apt to make one rub one's eyes.

Market day at Callac epitomises much that is curious and characteristic of the Côtes du Nord. First of all appeared the beggars—a crowd of hump-backs and cripples, who for the time swarmed in a town hitherto apparently free from these wretched objects. At an early hour the peasants began to flock in from far and near, the women frequently on horseback, and generally sitting astride on a sack which is their substitute for a saddle. It was a wet day (it generally is at Callac), and the women wore full black cloaks with large

WAYSIDE CROSS, NEAR GUINGAMP.
From a Drawing by H. R. ROBERTSON.

hoods, that gave them the appearance of venerable monks jogging solemnly along. On the rare occasions when I observed a woman sitting sideways she had a saddle with a single large stirrup made of wood, and suspended by cords for both her feet—an arrangement which looked like a child's swing on a small scale. The oxen are driven in pairs yoked together with a piece of wood behind the horns, or, if a beast is by itself, it has one leg tied to its horns. Perhaps the next arrival will be a little girl driving a couple of black sheep, also tied together by the neck with a cord which she holds in her hand as if she were driving a diminutive pair of horses. Then come along a farmer and his wife, almost beaten in their efforts to manage a refractory pig, the man dragging it by its tail and the woman by one of its ears. The squeaking of the pig is for the

moment drowned by a terrific drum, and one sees the town-crier, who has mounted on the top of a wall to announce some farm sale, or it may be some lost or strayed cattle. A pair of ballad singers are the next attraction, as the Bretons dearly love a song of any description. This pair, a man and woman, sang alternate verses, and as the subject seemed to amuse the audience immensely, I bought a copy of the ballad. It was in Breton, and consisted of a dialogue between a nobleman and a republican. I got mine host at the hotel to translate it for me, being anxious to know on which side the sympathies were supposed to be enlisted; but the arguments were so fairly balanced that it seemed to be calculated to attract the sou from the pocket of a politician whichever party he might favour. Though the sale of cattle is the primary object of this as of most other Breton markets, yet there is no lack of other merchandise of all sorts—provisions, drapery, sabots, &c. The peasants prefer to do what we should call their shopping at the open stalls of a market, where they can examine the goods and bargain more freely than they could under the seller's roof.

While at Callac I had the good fortune to hear of a Pardon within accessible distance, and one with a very distinctive peculiarity —a Pardon *des Cheveaux*! I could not get a very explicit account of what was to take place, but heard on all hands that there would be crowds of horses at the Pardon, so I determined to "assist" at the ceremony, whatever it might be. Properly speaking, the Pardon is that of St. Gildas, a bishop who is said to have emigrated from Great Britain in the sixth century. The chapel dedicated to him is near Carnouet, and lies back not very far from the high road between Callac and Carhaix.

On our way to the Pardon we noticed at all the by-roads groups of pilgrims, generally riding or driving the small white or grey cart-horse of the country; occasionally there would be two women astride on the same horse, which looked odd. To the saddle-bow there was to be usually seen dangling, head downwards, a fine barndoor fowl, the purpose of which we afterwards ascertained. My driver, though a Breton, was somewhat of a free-thinker, had been in the navy, and had seen the world, and so was quite above the superstitions of the district. He even derided with some playfulness those horses that we saw quietly at pasture in the fields, as being wanting in proper devotional ideas, and when the shower peculiar to the country happened to come down very heavily, to the discomfort of the pilgrims, he stigmatised it as "a tempest of the most anti-clerical." At the last turning of the road, as we approached our destination, stood a *tronc* for the saint, an alms-box stoutly clamped with iron. The chapel itself is picturesquely situated at the side of a beautifully wooded hill—the building being small, and chiefly noticeable on account of certain grotesque life-size nude figures, which do duty as gargoyles. Like many others of these smaller chapels, the only service that takes place in it is on the anniversary of the saint to whom it is dedicated; the fact being that these buildings are private property, and belonged in former times to the noble families of the locality. At the present day the owners are very often unable, through want of means, or it may be unwilling, to spend the money required to keep the edifice in proper repair, and there seem to be no public funds for the purpose. The extent to which this chapel of St. Gildas had been allowed to get out of repair was extraordinary, and I wondered how it could be tolerated by any officiating clergy. The holes in the roof had let in so much wet that the floor was all in puddles, and the walls were green with damp. The said floor was of mud, like the poorest cabins of the district, and very uneven. Here and there a bit of old stained glass remained in the windows, while indications of faded paintings might still be traced in places on the walls. It is curious amongst such an undoubtedly devout people that as much work as would keep the place decent is not done by the worshippers themselves.

The sacred spring, which attracts so many pilgrims to this Pardon, is situated in a corner of the churchyard. It is in the form of a shallow well, and has two troughs attached to it, both of which had been filled with water from the sacred source. The ecclesiastical element held aloof—the quasi-priestesses of the shrine being three old hags who might have served well for the witches in Macbeth. On the edge of the well they had ready several small basins and tumblers filled with the water, also some small phials. The tumblers were for any of the faithful to drink from, while the contents of the basins were emptied on the withers and croups of the horses. The water from the phials was poured into the ears of the horses, and this is considered the essential point, the tumblers and basins being often dispensed with. As many horses are sensitive to interference with their ears, there is occasionally some lively plunging about on the part of the

animals, and always a good deal of shaking of the head after the operation.

At one of the troughs a curious ceremony took place while we were looking on. An anxious mother had brought with her a little chemise belonging to her infant, who was dangerously ill. This was gravely laid on the water of one of the troughs by the old woman, who piously ejaculated in Breton, "May God bless your little one!" while the careworn parent watched with painful anxiety the gradual soaking and sinking of the little garment. The point of interest is this: if, after the immersion, the body of the garment should sink before the sleeves, the child will recover, but if the sleeves sink first, it will die. In the case we witnessed the attendant assured the mother that the augury was good, and that the child would undoubtedly recover, which we will hope it has done. However, the old hag told us confidentially that there was not much in it, for a case had just happened in which the sleeves had floated unmistakably, and yet when the hopeful father reached his home it was only to find his child already dead. A woman came and bathed her feet at the other trough; I don't know what may have been the matter with them, but they certainly looked the better for it. The reverence paid to so many so-called sacred wells in Brittany is said to be a relic of the old pagan worship of water; the modern Breton's regard for the element seems to be in a general way of so reverential a nature, that he employs it as little as possible for secular purposes. That there is a small fee for the saint in acknowledgment of the miraculous benefits, is a matter of course.

During the celebration of the mass, the chapel did not suffice to hold half the crowd who had assembled for the Pardon. The greater part of the congregation stood or knelt in a compact mass outside the building, at the west and south doors, which were, however, closed. I was not in the chapel at the time of the service, but could occasionally hear the sound of a drum, which seemed to be the only musical instrument on the occasion. I fancy it was chiefly used to inform the external part of the congregation as to the progress of the service, and it beat quite excitedly when it was all over. On entering the chapel, the reason of the pilgrims' occasionally bringing a chicken with them, became apparent. There was, near the north-west corner, a great hen-coop, for the benefit of the saint—rather like a clothes-press, pierced everywhere with holes and slits, and fitted with shelves, to each of which was fixed a sliding door. This cage, as the people called it, is capable of holding about a hundred fowls. When we inspected it there were only about twenty or thirty in it, but we were told that they would be brought at all hours during the day. While we were hearing about it, we saw one reverently presented by a long-haired old man, with hat and umbrella under his arm. The sacristan cut the string that had tied the creature's legs together, and with a grumbling and melancholy crow he was pushed into the cage. By the time of the afternoon service, or vespers, many of the birds seem to get reconciled to their strange quarters, and some of them are sure to crow lustily on hearing the priest begin to intone the service. That there is anything not quite seemly in the business does not seem to strike these primitive people, who allow their dogs to accompany them into the sacred building as a matter of course.

In a little transept or side chapel stood a gilded statue of the saint himself in the costume of a bishop: he seemed to be represented in a sort of pulpit, and a small model of a dog, about six inches high, stood on either side of him on the ledge of the pulpit. It was these little dogs (or other animals, one could not be quite sure what they were, as the artist had not been realistic) that received attention at the hands of the worshippers. They rubbed the palms and the backs of their hands against the sides and backs of the little animals, and retired apparently highly satisfied with the performance. I failed at the time to gather what special benefit was supposed to attach to the proceeding, but have heard since that it is believed to be a safeguard against rheumatism.

After vespers there is a sale by auction of the fowls in the cage. They are disposed of at once if a purchaser can be found for the whole lot, but failing that they are sold separately, so that it not unfrequently happens that the previous owner carries back his own bird, having left the price of it for the benefit of the church. From the sale one bird is always reserved—the strongest-looking specimen. One of the peasants is then told off at the statute price of ten sous to mount the church tower, and to throw the fowl into the air. In the churchyard and facing the tower, all the sturdiest of the male portion of the crowd are ranged in line ready to scramble for the poor fowl, only one representative of each family being permitted in the lists. The object is to catch the creature by the head, and these good

WELL AT CALLAC.

Engraved by O. LACOUR, *from a Drawing by* H. R. ROBERTSON.

people believe that the happy man who succeeds in doing this will have assuredly preserved the household to which he belongs from misfortune for the year.

The presentation of a cock at the Pardon of St. Gildas is supposed to be especially efficacious against whooping-cough, and one man told me, in a resigned sort of way, that his wife had insisted on his investing a matter of thirty sous in the purchase of one with that idea. The resemblance of the noise made by a child suffering from whooping-cough to the crowing of a cock was given as a reason for the proceeding, and is as sensible as many of the directions in old herbals where we find such assertions as that a leaf which resembles the shape of an adder's tongue is a specific against the bite of that reptile.

I have never met anywhere with a precise definition of what a "Pardon" is, though the scenes that occur on the occasion are tolerably familiar to all through the pictures of Jules Breton and other French painters. Guide-books occasionally mention the fact of the Pardon at a particular place as being one of unusual interest, but always take for granted that the reader is informed on the subject of Pardons in general. I take it to have been at first the simple *fête* day of the saint to whom a church was dedicated, his intercession being regarded as likely to be particularly effectual in obtaining pardon for the sins of those worshippers who honoured his special day. In certain places the idea of absolution is connected with the practice of remaining in prayer for some definite period of time, as for instance while a long taper is burning, which is laid all round the cornice of the chancel. At the village of St. Bulac, not far from Callac, there is a Pardon to which the pilgrims go barefoot, and as scantily clothed as decency will permit—the men in shirt and drawers, and the women in chemise and petticoat, all carrying candles in their right hands, and their sabots and headgear in their left. At eight o'clock they march in procession to the church with their candles lighted, which must make an impressive spectacle, many of the poor people having walked barefoot long distances from their homes. The Pardon usually winds up with dancing and drinking, and is sometimes followed up the next day by a fair with more merry-making.

PART II.

THERE is to be seen within four or five miles of Callac one of the menhirs so characteristic of Brittany. These rude obelisks or "long-stones," as their name literally means, are of prehistoric origin, and are supposed to be connected with the rites of some old "creed outworn," probably some sort of Phallic worship. A tradition in reference to these menhirs still survives, to the effect that a barren woman may be rendered fruitful by rubbing her bare bosom against the mystic stone, which she must visit at dead of night. Newly-married couples also make pilgrimages to the menhir with a similar object. The one near Callac is at Duault, in the middle of a wood, or plantation of young trees, which is much the same thing in France. It is quite an out-of-the-way spot, though on high ground, and the tourist will find it necessary to engage a guide to conduct him there. The height of this menhir is about twenty-two feet, and there are two smaller ones within a quarter of a mile. Near Dol there is one thirty feet high, but the largest still remaining *in situ* is at Plouarzel, near Brest, and is said to exceed forty-two feet in height. A yet grander specimen of this class, more than sixty feet in length, is at Lokmariaker, but it lies prostrate and broken. When Brittany became converted to Christianity, the attempt was made in many cases to overturn and destroy these relics of paganism, but it was found no easy matter, and the more simple device has frequently been adopted of making these huge blocks of stone serve as pedestals for crosses.

Carhaix was our next stopping place; it is very interesting from the architectural point of view, which can hardly be said of Callac. In this old-world town the inhabitants are perhaps more primitive in their style than at any other point of our tour. Many of the buildings are extremely curious, their fronts being protected with slates, which are

arranged so as to project over the windows in such a way as to make it difficult to say where the roof ends and the wall begins. The black undressed sheepskin jackets of the men are here the rule, while at most places in the Côtes du Nord they are rapidly becoming the exception. The name of the principal inn is "La Tour d'Auvergne," the house having been the birthplace of that hero who has been dubbed the first grenadier of France. His memory is kept green by the singular practice of retaining his name on the roll-call of his regiment, his place never having been filled up. When his name is called over duly with the others, it is the business of the soldier next in rotation to reply for the absentee, "Dead on the field of honour." His statue, by Marochetti, adorns his native town, and on the pedestal are bas-reliefs representing incidents in his life. I recollect particularly the one in which he is seen offering himself as a substitute for a conscript who could ill be spared from his home—it was after La Tour d'Auvergne had retired from the army, and the young man on whom the lot had fallen was the son of an old friend of his, and the sole support of his aged father.

Another fifteen miles by diligence takes us on to Le Huelgoet, which is in many respects the pleasantest place to stay at in the district. It has an hotel where the people have been taught something of English requirements. This is owing chiefly to the fact that it is capital head-quarters for those who are in search of sport, whether shooting or fishing. The trout streams in the neighbourhood are everywhere free to all, the only exception I heard of being the large lake close to the village which serves as the mill head. The trout run to a good size and are very abundant, from the obvious reason that they are little interfered with. In the spring half a dozen Englishmen will perhaps be the only anglers who will be fishing with anything like persistence, the native peasant occasionally indulging in the sport, but the French gentleman not at all. When passing through here in May I saw a fine fish, that the "patron" of the inn had taken, which must have weighed nearly four pounds. In the autumn there is partridge shooting to be obtained without much difficulty, and in the winter woodcock and snipe abound. The scenery is extremely varied; our two illustrations of the place which are so very dissimilar in character are not at any great distance from each other. There are many beautiful walks in the neighbourhood through shady woods or pretty country roads, with occasional bursts of distant view that could hardly be surpassed in their way. Living cannot be regarded as expensive, the very moderate *pension* of five francs a day at Le Huelgoet not being however singular, but the usual thing in these country inns, the prices in the towns being always somewhat higher.

The weird character of the granite rocks at Le Huelgoet is perhaps intensified by the fact that such huge boulders are rarely seen away from high mountains, and the Montagnes Noires, as the district is called, are, to use an American expression, "only a little rising ground." The height above the level of the sea may be considerable, but, as at Dartmoor, the aspect of the country does not itself express the fact. The piled-up rocks seen in our illustration, with the children dancing, look as if they were part of an old moraine, the river which still winds among these grand rocks having at this point found a bed for itself far below, where, though unseen, its sullen roar rises fitfully to the ear like the sound of a great waterfall in the far distance. Here and there among the rocks are holes through which the seething and boiling water may be dimly descried, and one wonders at the temerity with which parents allow their children to play by themselves close to such terrible danger. But to our remarks on the subject of this obvious risk the mothers only reply that the children never do fall down the holes, and the flat rock in our sketch is worn white with their dancing. At one place a descent to the river may be made by those who are sure-footed in slippery places, the cavern through which the stream here rushes being named "*La Ménage de la Vierge.*" The curious hollows worn in the stone by the water are variously called the steps, the cradle, the cauldron, &c., but have nothing distinctive about them, their resemblance to the objects named being of the slightest.

There are other places in the valley besides Le Huelgoet, where, in a similar manner, the river loses itself for considerable distances amongst gigantic granite rocks. In one spot it disappears in a frightful chasm called Le Gouffre. The appearance that the rocks here present is certainly that of having been violently hurled to their present positions by some tremendous convulsion, and while looking at them it is difficult to quite accept the modern geological views without some slight mental reservation—indeed one can hardly help thinking of the fabled Titans, so like the doings of some gigantic race are these wildly-confused heaps of enormous boulders. It is on record that once, at least,

the *gouffre* was the scene of a frightful accident. Some fifty years ago the owner of the neighbouring lead mines was showing this natural curiosity to a party of friends from Paris who were staying with him, when one unfortunate lady slipped and fell into the abyss, owing, it is said, to the slipperiness of some dry leaves on the brink of the chasm.

It is owing to the square cleavage of the granite formation that, in these districts, as elsewhere under the same circumstances, we meet with the so-called rocking-stones. Though often traditionally ascribed to the Druids, it is pretty evident that the balancing of these huge masses has been naturally brought about by the gradual wearing away of the parts of the rock exposed to the weather, and consequent reduction of the side on which the stone rests, till only a pivot is left. Besides the rocking-stones which are known as such, there are doubtless in reality very many more, but these being so situated as to be quite inaccessible, are never put to the test. The background to our sketch of the shrine at Ploumanach will illustrate what I mean, for most of the topmost rocks in the curiously piled-up heaps look as if they would rock could one only apply a lever.

The rocking-stone at Le Huelgoet may be visited by those travellers who do not intend making any stay, by leaving the diligence at the bridge and walking across the rocks to where the path rejoins the road. There are always young ragamuffins on the look-out to conduct the tourist for a few sous, and to exhibit their strength at the rocking-stone. Among the rocks I noticed one of those large ant-hills that are not uncommon in the Tyrol. This nest was built on sloping ground, partly against a large stone, and had some branches of the gorse growing through it near the top. It was composed of small

WHERE THE CHILDREN DANCE ON SUNDAYS AT LE HUELGOET.
From a Drawing by H. R. ROBERTSON.

HARVESTING BUCKWHEAT.
From a Drawing by H. R. ROBERTSON.

pieces of wood, bark, and any other dry vegetable matter that was available. In its greatest height it measured nearly three feet, and about half that where the ground was highest. The ants were a large black species with crimson thorax, and measured about a third of an inch. I noticed that any common ant which happened to meet one of these large black ones on the flat surface of the rock, retired precipitately, or was attacked and promptly killed.

The fact that the wolf has not altogether disappeared from the neighbourhood of Carhaix and Le Huelgoet seems consistent enough with the exceptionally weird character of the rocky gorges. When there I could not gather any very definite information about the wolves, except that the recent disappearance of several gentlemen's dogs was laid to their account. A book that I chanced to dip into when stopping at the "Tour d'Auvergne," called *Wild Sport in Brittany*, gave a very melodramatic description of a doctor's ride by night when chased by a troop of wolves which he managed to scare repeatedly by striking matches. The horse was the object of the wolves' attention on this occasion, and there seems to be no tradition of their attacking human beings. In Mr. Mountney Jephson's book (*A Walking Tour in Brittany*, published 1859) an account is given of a wolf hunt in the forest of Guimerck, which locality is also in the Montagnes Noires, but farther west than the places we are referring to. When seeking information from the inhabitants on the subject of the wolf I learned that the wild boar was similarly regarded as not altogether extinct, though rapidly becoming so.

At Le Huelgoet I sketched the group of peasants harvesting their buckwheat, and through the rest of my tour I noticed that a large proportion of the arable land everywhere was devoted to its culture. As it was a somewhat novel sight to me, I venture to think that some description of it may interest others. The buckwheat, *sarrasin* or *blé noir*, may perhaps be best described as a rather shabby-looking version of the meadow-sweet, and as unlike as possible to anything in the nature of our kinds of cereals, all of which are, I believe, cultivated varieties of the grass tribe. Its botanical name is *Polygonum fagopyrum*, and it is said to be a doubtful native of England. The stalk of the plant becomes of a fine red colour, inclining to crimson as the grain ripens, its clusters of small whitish flowers giving place to triangular seeds of a shiny black, in size about half as large as the grain of common wheat.

As the grain is in appearance unlike our common wheat, so is the bread that is made from it—the veritable bread of the Brittany peasant. To prepare it for the table a paste made of the flour is formed into circular cakes (called *galettes* or *crêpes*) about a foot across and as thin as a penny piece. These cakes are very slightly baked, so slightly indeed that the *galette* is quite soft and flexible, and in this state is frequently folded over twice in order that it may be carried in a small basket. Its texture is not unlike that of a crumpet, which, indeed, it more nearly resembles than anything else to which I can compare it. It is more palatable even in this flabby condition of "cold crumpet" than would be expected, but is really delicious when fried with butter and glazed with a beaten-up egg. I mention these particulars because at the hotels in Brittany these buckwheat cakes are considered quite unfit for the polite traveller, and unless he should go out of the beaten track and familiarise himself somewhat with the peasant life he may probably never so much as see one. Considering how often their ordinary bread is of poor quality and wretchedly sour, it is to be wished that the *galette* were sometimes regarded by the hotel-keepers as an available substitute. A kind of porridge made of buckwheat is regularly eaten by the peasants, who, however, occasionally vary the recipe by breaking up a *galette* into a bowl of milk.

Though the culture of the *sarrasin* forms such an important part of the rural industry, I do not find it even mentioned by the French journals in the agricultural returns of the year which they publish. I believe the reason is that this crop is cultivated almost entirely for home use, and that comparatively little is sold, the bulk of it being consumed by the household of the grower. It is a very nutritious article of food, and one cannot help wondering whether its cultivation might not be advantageously introduced into England. The only case that I have ever heard of here was a small patch grown for the sake of feeding pheasants. It would be interesting to know why a crop extensively grown on the other side of the channel should be so absolutely ignored on this.

Before leaving this interesting district it may be as well to call attention to its old name of Cornouaille, which is supposed by antiquaries to have given us the name of our county Cornwall. "This Cornouaille is equally celebrated with our own for wrestling matches, held annually, at which the true Cornish hug is said to be given; and for wreckers, whose infamous trade is promoted by the ever-raging sea and iron-bound coast. From other parts of Brittany, if we believe the native traditions, we derive our most popular romances, our nursery and fairy tales. Arthur here held his court with the Knights of the Round Table; and the cradle of Merlin was on the Ile de Sein, a low sand bank in that stormy sea, la Baie des Trépassés."

Another half day by diligence takes us to Morlaix, where we find ourselves again on the railway route. By the by I am sorry to say that the time is presumably not far distant when a new railway will connect Guingamp and Morlaix passing through the primitive district I have been telling about. The line to be taken is already marked out with particoloured poles, but I understand that it will not be immediately proceeded with, the

PEASANT WOMAN'S SILVER ORNAMENTS.
From a Drawing by H. R. ROBERTSON.

government having for the present rated the project as of third class importance, and not to be attended to till other more pressing claims are disposed of. The principal freight on this route would be cattle, and I fear that daily transports of beasts as required would soon supersede the weekly markets, which are so interesting to the artist and to the traveller generally. I would, however, advise those who may wish to see the Bretons in their old-world style not to delay longer than they can help, for such superstitious observances as the "Pardon des Chevaux," and much else of the same nature cannot be expected to long survive contact with steam power and the electric telegraph.

Morlaix is rich in old houses, and we had no sooner settled down at our hotel, than the waiter offered to pilot us to the two ancient staircases, whose carved work has made them

WOMAN OF ROSCOFF.
From a Drawing by H. R. ROBERTSON.

the recognised sights for the visitor. They are both interesting remains of sixteenth century work, and at one of the houses occasion is taken to display for sale old carved cabinets, sideboards, &c. There are other shops in the town where old fragments of carved work are utilised as panels in cabinet doors, &c., this Wardour-Street sort of work being carried through with much taste, and in perfect accordance with the old Breton style.

The town has two good hotels, and makes excellent headquarters while one is exploring places of interest in the neighbourhood. By taking the rail to Roscoff in the morning, and by breaking the return journey in the afternoon at St. Pol de Leon, these two places may both be seen in the day. In similar manner St. Thegonnec, Guimiliau, and Landivisiau may be seen hurriedly by those who wish to make the most of a short stay. When the time can be spared I would, however,

advise the tourist who wishes to see the country and the people properly, to walk occasionally some dozen miles or so instead of always taking train or diligence. The wayside crosses which are so commonly met with can then be examined at leisure, and the traveller is sure to see curious old farm buildings, and much else that will interest him. There are often two roads for the pedestrian to choose from—the old road which is generally very straight, going up hill and down dale regardless of what incline the land may take, and the new road which by going round the hills rather than over them, has rendered the way longer but more easy for the burdened horses. It is the old road that the tourist should everywhere take, though as the new one is always in the better state of repair, he will most likely be carefully told to be sure and follow that, and to avoid the old one. It was on the old roads that I lighted on two of the most picturesque subjects I have met with—pottery-making in a cottage, and sabot-making in a sort of mud hut with no window, but only a hole in the roof, which also served for chimney.

Morlaix has many old-fashioned and narrow little streets leading up to the hill above the town, and it was in one of them that I saw the small maiden that forms the subject of my sketch on the opposite page. She had fitted up a tiny altar on the steps of an uninhabited house, and had managed to get it to look wonderfully like the real thing, which, with its tawdry decorations, often enough suggests a very childish taste. Firstly she had laid down a white napkin or towel, and on it had placed a small plaster cast of the Virgin under a glass shade, a little cross of black wood, some vases of artificial flowers, and a pair of brass candlesticks. Instead of real candles in the candlesticks, which were doubtless quite beyond her means, the child had made believe very much, and had stuck in pieces of newspaper, which she had twisted up with a very plausible effect. Some green boughs at the back, and a cracked jug or two of real flowers of the commonest kinds, gave the requisite touch of nature to the *mise en scène*. The fact of my sketching her handiwork pleased the little girl immensely, and she particularly requested that I should insert in my drawing the sou which she had begged from me for "*la bonne Vièrge*," and which she had with due formality laid on the step in front of the little image. On my doing what she wanted she fairly danced with joy, and then ran off to fetch all her kindred to admire the masterpiece in which could be

AT MORLAIX.
From a Drawing by H. R. ROBERTSON.

POTTERY MAKING AT LANNION.

from a Drawing by H. R. ROBERTSON.

SHRINE AT PLOUMANACH.
Engraved by O. LACOUR, *from a Drawing by* H. R. ROBERTSON.

visibly distinguished the coin in question. Before I had finished my sketch, an old priest came by, who seemed highly to approve of the evidence of devotional spirit on the part of the little girl. She was not unknown to him, for he addressed her affectionately by name (it sounded like Soisette) and patted her on the head, to her manifest delight.

One of the most curious customs of the country is the exhumation of bodies that have been buried some time, and the preservation of the skulls, the rest of the bones being thrown into the ossuary or *reliquaire*. This bone-house was formerly to be met with in all Breton churchyards, usually surmounted by a Calvary, or sculptured representation of the Crucifixion, with many additional figures and subjects in bas-relief. Some of these Calvaries are very interesting and elaborate, but none are of a very high order of merit as works of art, the Breton ideal being a figure of curiously short proportions, with a very large head. At St. Thegonnec, near Morlaix, is one of the most celebrated, which is well worth a visit, the rude sculptures producing a very rich effect. There is moreover a group of life-size figures to be seen in the crypt of the adjacent mortuary chapel, which evinces great ability on the part of the sculptor. The subject is the Entombment, and it is treated with much pathos, some of the heads being really fine, and the whole impressive. This work is of comparatively recent times, the date affixed being 1702. I could not get much information from the natives as to the motive of the exhumations above referred to, but was told that it was probably to make room in the churchyards, which were everywhere overcrowded. This seems perhaps more likely than the view taken of the practice by Murray in his handbook. He says: "To allow the rude forefathers of the hamlet to repose quietly in the grave is opposed to the ideas of piety and affection in these rude people; after a certain number of years, the survivors are required to show their remembrance and respect for their parents and relations, by removing the skulls and bones from the coffin and placing them in the ossuary,—where the former are arranged on shelves, open to the view of all, each with the name or initials in black paint across the fleshless brow." Instead of this practice of painting the name across the forehead, the wealthier classes seem to have preferred the mode of preserving the skull in a box, with the name of the deceased painted outside, and the date of his death. The common addition to the inscription of the words "*Priez pour lui*" has suggested that the motive of the custom which seems so abhorent to our feelings, is "to attract the attention of friends and relatives, who may be induced by the sight to offer a prayer for the departed." These skull-boxes, to judge from the writings of previous travellers, must have been much more common twenty or thirty years ago than they are at present. Trollope speaks of their being frequently nailed against the walls of the churches and mortuary chapels, and they are thus figured in the background of an illustration in the first volume of his *Summer in Brittany*. The row of them which serves as a tail-piece to this article, was sketched in one of the churches at St. Pol de Leon, and was the only instance of them that I met with personally. They are perched upon the arches at the back of the choir-stalls, and can best be seen from the passage that goes round behind the chancel. In size and shape these skull-boxes are not unlike small dog-kennels. There is generally a heart-shaped hole in front, through which the ghastly object may be dimly descried; at the apex of the gable is a small cross, and near the heart-shaped aperture are painted ornamental forms, much resembling tadpoles; these I take to symbolise ascending flames, and they are intended no doubt to suggest the upward flight of the soul. A French resident told me that the exhumations were conducted with considerable formality, it being required that both the clergy and the police should be present officially, and take attestation of the proceedings, On the *jour des morts* the skull boxes were carried in solemn procession, and fixed on to the bracket or pillar destined for their accommodation.

From Morlaix I took rail to Lannion, which must not, however, be identified with "the Lannions," rugged islands described in the romance of *Gwen* as being off the west coast. For the sake of those of my readers who may not have met with this touching story, I would say that of all the books about Brittany which I have read, it seems to me to reflect the most faithfully the lights and shades of Breton character. It was when starting off to walk from Lannion to Perros-Guirec that just at the outskirts of the town I noticed some rude pottery unbaked and standing in the sun on the top of a wall adjoining a cottage. I made bold to enter the building, and found two women at work with the most primitive of potter's wheels that could be imagined. There was no treadle, nor indeed any band at all attached to the wheel which was simply turned round by hand, being in fact a revolving stand or table.

I have seen many representations of the potter's wheel, a device which is said to have been invented independently all over the world, but do not remember to have seen anything elsewhere quite so simple in construction as the one depicted in our illustration. On the required shape having been given to the clay it was first stood in the open air, and thence removed to shelves in the chimney to complete the drying process, and eventually fired in a kiln at the back of the cottage. This kiln or oven was the very oddest little specimen of the kind ever seen, consisting chiefly of broken potsherds plastered together with fresh clay, from which various weeds were boldly sprouting. The kiln was in such a tumbledown condition that it had to be propped up to leeward with a couple of great boughs, and looked so dangerous that I hardly liked standing by it. On my mildly suggesting the existence of danger it was not disputed, but I was consolingly assured that it was "not likely to fall to-day,"—they evidently would not answer for it to-morrow.

Along the coast westward from Perros-Guirec, about three miles, is the weird little village of Ploumanach. The immense masses of granite that lie scattered about in every direction, are frequently grotesque in form, suggesting squatting toads of gigantic proportion; indeed, the whole place impressed me as being about the most uncanny-looking spot I had ever set eyes on. The cottages of the inhabitants that are dotted about are so dwarfed by contrast with the monstrous rocks amongst which they are situated, as to look like the toy houses of children. The sole industry of the village is fishing, and the absence of anything like gardens to the dwellings gives the place a very poverty-stricken appearance. The neighbourhood, moreover, is haunted by a mad beggar-woman, whose wild gesticulations cannot fail to terrify, in spite of the assurance that the poor creature is really harmless. The only buildings visible at Ploumanach besides the poor cottages, are likewise of an extremely sombre character, such as the church of Notre Dame de la Clarté, the Calvary at Tregastel, and a convent away to the west. As a site for a convent, I can hardly fancy any spot more completely suggestive of seclusion from the world than this desolate piece of sea-coast, and the thought of a life to be spent here is enough to make the boldest shudder. Though the aspect of the place is so *triste*, and many of the cottages squalid even for Brittany, yet the inhabitants are by no means badly off, an able-bodied fisherman earning ten pounds a month, and frequently having a share in the profits of the seine-net fishing, which are often very considerable.

The Calvary at Tregastel presents an imposing appearance when viewed from the distance; it is of unusual size, and looks as if ornamented by sculptured figures of heroic proportions. By the expenditure of considerable time and trouble, I managed to visit it, but should not advise any one else to go out of his way to do so. On nearing it I found that the quasi-sculptured figures were only flying buttresses, the whole thing being provokingly new and commonplace. It is, however, I believe of substantial service to the mariners, as it furnishes the most conspicuous landmark for many miles.

The coast at Ploumanach is indented by several narrow bays, which the amphibious youngsters of the village utilise to sail their toy boats upon; this sailing of a fishing boat either in sport or earnest, seems to be their sole idea of work or play. In one of these small bays stands the shrine of St. Guirec, looking not altogether unlike a boat turned up on end; its architect, no doubt, was some old sailor who could not quite get away from the idea of boat building. It is supported by four Romanesque pillars, built on a rock with large boulders about it, which are submerged at high water. On these occasions the effect of its complete isolation is very striking, particularly if seen when a heavy sea is breaking over it. It reminded me of the somewhat similar kind of erection in the lagoons at Venice, and it struck me that the difference of the peoples was well typified by the contrast observable in their shrines—the southern one prettily constructed of wood, painted red and white, and decorated with paper flowers, while its northern counterpart was of granite, seaworn, solid and sombre.

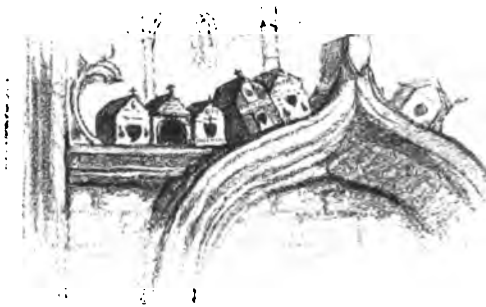
Just as I had sat down to my sketch the coastguardsman happened to come by, and he inquired of me politely what my nationality might be. On my telling him that I was English he said he guessed so as all the English would naturally wish to see a portrait of St. Guirec, he being a saint who had originally emigrated from England, the shrine having been erected on the spot where his feet first touched the Breton soil. I did not attempt to undeceive him as to the motive of my work by stating anything so wildly improbable as that there were Englishmen benighted enough never even to have heard the name of holy Guirec, the saint of all the calendar the most familiar to him.

The statue of the saint thus enshrined is carved in wood, and is between three and four feet in height. It represents him in the

costume of a bishop and wearing his mitre; his cope is blue and his under robe white. There is a peculiar virtue traditionally ascribed to this particular image which has made it renowned far and wide. It is currently believed by the peasantry that a young woman desirous of being married may secure the beneficent assistance of the saint by the act of sticking a pin into this wooden figure: some go as far as to say that she is sure to get a husband within the twelvemonth. Though of course each of the young ladies of the neighbourhood strenuously denies ever having performed this rite, yet the surface of the figure has everywhere as many small holes as a sieve. There are, however, very few pins to be seen sticking there, it being the custom of the small boys to appropriate them when the damsels have retired. I could not learn at all why St. Guirec was thus invoked nor what was the origin of the superstition. A similar practice is alluded to by Horace Walpole in his notes to the *Memoirs of Lord Chesterfield*, as having been in vogue at one time among our own people. It was the effigy of the much-married King Henry the Eighth in the Tower that was thus treated, and Archbishop Secker, on receiving a mock-modest letter on the subject from George Augustus Selwyn, "desired Lord Granby, Master of the Ordnance, to see the stone of offence taken away, which was done."

My seat when making my sketch was just under the shelter of some rocks that hid me from the path to the village. Two young women sauntered slowly up to the shrine, or the grotto as they call it; but one of them happening to catch sight of me they both precipitately retreated. I had to manœuvre by ostensibly retiring from the bay, and then it was only by returning as much as possible under cover of the rocks that I was enabled to see the rite actually performed.

Perros-Guirec was the last point of our tour, the return journey being made without any delay of importance. We have thus traversed the greater part of the Côtes du Nord, but have perforce left for the present many places of interest unvisited. Of the Bretons generally I would say, in conclusion, that I found them everywhere kindly and hospitable, and that they seem to regard an inhabitant of La Grande Bretagne as almost having the right to claim some distant kinship with them. The manners of the peasantry are exceptionally courteous—a point as to which an artist who travels has the right to an opinion, for his comfort while sketching depends considerably upon how he fares at the hands of the sons of the soil.



SKULL BOXES AT ST. POL DE LEON.
From a Drawing by H. R. ROBERTSON.

AUNT RACHEL.

A RUSTIC SENTIMENTAL COMEDY.

CHAPTER VII.

HEN Aunt Rachel had spent a fortnight or thereabouts in Heydon Hay, and had got her own small dwelling-place into precise order, she began to make a round of visits amongst the people she had known in her youth. She had met most of the survivors of that earlier day at the parish church on Sundays, and had had no occasion to find fault with the manner of her reception at their hands. If there was not precisely that warmth of greeting which she felt in her own heart, she found at least a kindly interest in her return and a friendly curiosity as to her past. To her, her return to her birthplace was naturally an event of absorbing interest. To the other inhabitants of the village it was no more than an episode, but nobody being distinctly cold or careless, Rachel was not allowed to see the difference between their standpoint and her own.

In her round of calls she left the house of Sennacherib Eld till last, though she and Mrs. Sennacherib had been schoolfellows and close friends. Perhaps she had not found Sennacherib's manner inviting, or perhaps the fact that Ezra Gold's house lay between her own and his had held her back a little. Everybody had supposed that she and Ezra Gold were going to be married six-and-twenty years ago, Rachel herself being amongst the believers, and having, it must be confessed, admirable ground for the belief. Nobody knew how the match had come to be broken off. It was so old-world a bit of history that even in Heydon Hay, where history dies hard, it had died and been buried long ago. Even Rachel's return could not resuscitate it for more than one or two. But the story that was dead for other people was still alive to her, and as fresh and young—now that it was back in its native air again—as if it had been an affair of yesterday. It was something of a task to her to pass the house in which the faithless lover lived. It would be the first achievement of that feat since Ezra had treated her so shamelessly, and it was almost as difficult after six-and-twenty years as it might have been after as many days.

She clenched her lips tightly as she came in sight of the tall poplars, which stood beyond the spire of the church, and rose to an equal height with it, and at the lychgate of the church she paused a little, feigning to take interest in one or two tombstones which recorded the death of people she had known. Her troubled eyes took no note of the inscriptions, but in a while she found resolution to go on again. With her little figure drawn uncompromisingly to its fullest height she rounded the corner of the churchyard, and saw the familiar walls. Ezra, contrary to his habit, was standing at the side door, and looking out upon the street. She was aware of his presence, but walked stiffly past, disregarding him, and he coughed behind his wasted hand. She thought the cough had a sound of embarrassed appeal or deprecation, as perhaps it had, but she refused to take notice of it, except by an added rigidity of demeanour.

Sennacherib's house stood back from the highway a hundred yards or so beyond Ezra's. It was fenced all round by an ill-trimmed hedge of hawthorn, and the only break in the hedge was made by the unpainted wooden gate which led by a brick-paved walk to the three brick steps before the door. The door stood open when Rachel reached it, and the knocker being set high up and out of reach, she tapped upon the woodwork with the

handle of her sunshade. This summons eliciting no response, she repeated it, but by and by the opening of a door within the house let out upon her the sound of Sennacherib's voice, hitherto audible only as an undefined and surly buzz.

"Who's master i' this house?" Sennacherib was asking. "Thee or me?"

"If brag and swagger could ha' made a man the master," said a feminine voice in tones of feeble resignation, "theer's no doubt it's you, Sennacherib."

"Brag and swagger?" said Sennacherib.

"Lord o' mercy!" replied the feminine voice, "what do you want to shout a body deaf for? Brag and swagger was what I said, Sennacherib. But if you think as a mother's heart is a-going to be overcome by that sort o' talk, and as I shall turn my back upon my very own born child, you've fell into the biggest error of your lifetime."

Rachel rapped again somewhat louder than before.

"Canst choose betwixt that young rip and me?" replied Sennacherib.

"That's right. Let the parish know your hardheartedness. Theer's sombody knockin' at the door. Go and tell 'em what you've made up your wicked mind to. Do!"

Sennacherib thrust his head into the hall and stared frowningly at the visitor through his spectacles.

"Good morning, sir," said Rachel with frigid politeness. "I called for the purpose of paying my respects to Mrs. Eld. If the moment is inauspicious I will call again."

At the sound of her voice Mrs. Sennacherib appeared, a large woman of matronly figure, but dejected aspect. She had been comely, but thirty years of protest and resignation had lifted the inner ends of her eyebrows and depressed the corners of her mouth, until, even in her most cheerful moments, she had a look of meek submission to unmeasured wrongs.

"Dear me," said Mrs. Sennacherib, sailing round her husband, and down the hall, "it's Miss Blythe! Come in, my dear, and tek off your cloak and bonnet. I'm glad to see you. I wondered if you was never comin' to see me. And how be you?" She bent over the little figure of her guest and buried it in an embrace like that of a feather bed. "It's beautiful weather for the time o' year," she continued, almost tearfully, "and I have been a-thinking of makin' a call upon you, but I'm short of breath, and Eld is such a creetur, he'd rather see a body stop in the house as if it was a prison, than harness the pony and drive me half a mile, to save his life."

"Short o' breath!" said Sennacherib. "Thee talkest like one as is short o' breath! Her talks enough," he added, addressing the visitor, "to break the wind of a Derby race-hoss."

"Ah," said his wife, shaking her head in a kind of doleful triumph, "Miss Blythe won't ha' been long i' the village afore her'll know what manner o' man you be, Sennacherib."

"I'll leave thee to tell her," said Sennacherib, with a grunt of scorn. "If I'd ha' been the manner o' man you'd ha' liked for a husband, I *should* ha' been despisable. My missis"—he addressed his wife's visitor again—"ought to ha' married a door mat, then her could ha' wiped her feet upon him whenivor the fancy took her."

With this he took his hat from a peg, stuck it at the back of his head, and marched out at the open front door.

"Ah, my dear," said Mrs. Sennacherib, "you did a wise thing when you made up your mind to be a single woman. The men's little more than a worrit—the best of 'em—and even the childern, as is counted upon for a blessin', brings trouble oftener nor j'y."

The visitor pinched her lips together and nodded, as if to say there was no disputing this glaring statement. The hostess, stooping over her, untied her bonnet-strings as if she had been a child, helped her to remove her mantle, and then ushered her into a sitting-room which looked upon a well-cultivated garden.

"I wouldn't say," pursued the hostess, "as I'd got a bad husband. Not for the world. But he's that hard and unbendin' both i' little things an' big uns. I've suffered under him now for thirty 'ear, but I niver counted as he'd put the lad to the door and forbid his mother to speak to him. Though as for that, my dear, he may forbid and go on forbiddin' as long as theer's a breath in his body, but a mother's heart is a mother's heart, my dear, though the whole world should stand up again her."

"Precisely," said Rachel.

"The lad's just as unbendin' as his father," pursued Mrs. Sennacherib, "though in a lighter-hearted sort of a way. He's as gay as the lark, our Snac is, even i' the face o' trouble, but there's no more hope o' movin' him than theer'd be o' liftin' the parish church and carryin' it to market. He's gone and married again his father's will, and now his father's gone an' made his last dyin' testyment an' cut him off wi' a shillin'. He'll get my money, as is tied on me hard an' fast, and that's my only comfort."

"They may be reconciled," said Rachel. "We must try to reconcile them."

"Reconcile Sennacherib Eld!" cried the wife dolefully. "Ah, my dear, you don't know the man. Why, who's that? There's somebody a-walkin' in as if the house belonged to 'em."

A young man in stand-up collars, and trousors supernaturally tight, appeared at the open door and nodded in a casual manner.

"Mornin', mother," said the young man, cheerfully. "Wheer's the governor?"

Mrs. Sennacherib screamed, and running at the new-comer began to embrace him and to kiss him and cry over him.

"Theer, theer!" he said, after kissing her off-hand. "Tek it easy."

"Oh, Snac!" cried his mother, "if father should come in! What should we do?"

"Do?" said the younger Sennacherib; "why, set me down afore the kitchen fire, an' mek me happetisin' afore he sets to work to eat me. How be you, mum?"

The younger Sennacherib's face was gay and impudent, with that peculiar mingling of gaiety and impudence which seems inseparable from freckles. His face was mottled with freckles, and the backs of his hands were of a dark yellowish brown with them.

"This is Miss Rachel Blythe," said his mother, "as was at school with me when I was a gell. This is my poor persecuted child, Miss Blythe."

"Me, mum!" said the persecuted child, standing with his feet wide apart, and bending first one knee and then the other, and then bending both together. "The governor's out, is he?"

"He's only just gone," returned his mother; "but, Snac, you'll only anger him comin' in i' this way. You'd better wait a bit and let things blow over."

"Well," said Snac, "I shouldn't ha' come for anythin' but business. But I've got a chance o' doin' a bit o' trade with him. He's had his mind set on Bunch's pony this two 'ear, an' Bunch an' him bein' at daggers drawn theer was niver a chance to buy it. But me an' him bein' split old Bunch sells me the pony, and I called thinkin' he might like to have it."

He laughed with great glee, and flicked one tightly-clad leg with the whip he carried.

"Wait a bit, Snac," his mother besought him. "Let it blow over a bit afore approachin' him."

"Wait for the Beacon Hill to blow over!" said Snac in answer. "I've no more expectations as the one 'll blow over than th' other. He'll do what he says he'll do. That's the pattern he's made in. I've got no more hopes of turnin' the governor than I should have if I was to go and tell a hox to be a donkey. It's again his natur' to change, and nothing short of a merracle 'll alter him. But as for livin' at enmity with him—— wheer's the use o' that? He's all the feyther's I've got, or am like to find at my time o' life, and I must just mek the best on him."

"A most commendable and Christian resolution," said Rachel, decisively.

"Very nice and kind of you to say so, mum," Snac answered, setting his hat a little more on one side, and bending both knees with a rakish swagger. "You can tell the governor as I called, mother. The pony's as genuine a bit of blood as is to be found in Heydon Hay. The p'ints of a hoss and a dog is a thing as every child thinks he knows about, but bless your heart, theer's nothing i' the world as is half so difficult t' understand, unless it is the ladies." There was such an air of compliment about the saving clause that Rachel involuntarily inclined her head to it. "You'll tell the governor as I was here, mother," Snac concluded, stooping down to kiss her.

"You mustn't ask me to do that, Snac," she answered. "I dar' not name your name."

"Rubbidge!" said Snac genially. "Does he bite?"

"It's for your sake, Snac," said his mother, "not for mine. But I dar' not do it."

"Well, well, mayhap I shall light upon him i' the village. If I shouldn't, I'll look in again. Good mornin', mother, and good-day to you, mum. I'm just goin' to drop in on Mr. Ezra Gold, seein' as I'm this way. I'm told he wants to part with that short-horn cow of hisn, and I'm allays game for a bit o' trade."

"Ah!" said Mrs. Sennacherib, shaking her doleful head. "He'll part with everythin' earthly, poor man, afore he's much older."

"Why," cried Snac, "what's the matter with the man?"

"The young 'uns see nothin', Miss Blythe," said Mrs. Sennacherib, shaking her head again, but this time with a sort of relish. "But old experienced folks can tell when any poor feller-creetur's time is drawing nigh. His father went just at his time o' life by the same road as he's a-takin'."

"Well, what road is he takin'?" her son demanded.

"Look at his poor hands," said Mrs. Sennacherib, with a pitying gusto. "As thin as eggshells, and with no more colour in 'em than there is in that chaney saucer. Hark to that dry cough as keeps on a hack-hack-hackin' at him."

"Pooh!" cried young Sennacherib. "He's been like that as long as I can remember him."

"Mark my words," his mother answered, with a stronger air of doleful relish than before, "he'll niver be like that much longer."

"Theer's them as looks at the dark side," returned Snac, "and them as looks at the bright. Niver say die till your time comes. I'll go and wake him up a bit, though he's no great hand at a bargain, and seems to find less contentment in gettin' on the blind side of a man than most on 'em. Good mornin', mother. Good mornin', mum."

Snac took his way with a flourish, and his mother looked after the tight-clad legs, the broad shoulders, the tall collars, and the rakish hat with mournful admiration.

"Do you think," asked the little old maid, coughing behind her hand, and looking out of window as she spoke, as if the theme had but little interest for her, "that Mr. Ezra Gold is really unwell?"

"Yes, my dear," said Mrs. Sennacherib; "he's got enough to last his time, unless it should please the Lord to send him a new and suddener affliction. I've seen a many go the same road. It's mostly the young as bears his particular kind of sufferin', but it's on his face in as plain readin' as the Family Bible. He's a lonish sort of a man, save for his nephew Reuben, but he'll ha' the parish for his mourners when his time does come. The gentlest, harmlessest creetur as ever was a neighbour, is Ezra Gold."

"Hem!" said Aunt Rachel. The monosyllable was at once curt and frozen. It implied as complete a denial as could have been expressed in a volume.

"Why, what have you got again him?" asked Mrs. Sennacherib.

"I?" said Rachel. "Against whom, my dear creature?"

Mrs. Sennacherib had spoken in the absolute certainty of impulse, and found herself a little confused.

"Mr. Gold," she answered somewhat feebly.

"What should I have against Mr. Gold?" asked the old maid, with a chill air of dignity and a pretence of surprise. She was not going to take everybody into her confidence.

"What to be sure?" said Mrs. Sennacherib, retiring from instinct. "In old days there used to be a sort of kindness between you. At least it was said so."

'It is a great pity that people cannot be taught to mind their own business," said Rachel.

"So it is, Miss Blythe—so it is," Mrs. Sennacherib assented hastily. "I hate them folks as has got nothing better to do than to talk about their neighbours. But as I was a-sayin' he's a-breakin' up fast, poor man, and that's a thing as is only too clear to a old experienced eye like mine. A beautiful sperrit the man's got, to be sure, but allays a mild and sorrowful look with him. When me and Sennacherib was first married he'd a habit of coming over here with 'Saiah Eld and Mr. Fuller for the music. It was pretty to hear 'em, for they'm all fine players, though mostly theer music was above my mark; but sometimes they'd get him to play somethin' by himself, and then 'twas sweet. But he give up playin' all of a sudden—I could niver mek out why or wheerfor, an' I suppose it's over five-an'-twenty 'ear since he touched the fiddle."

Now Mrs. Sennacherib, though not an untruthful woman as a general thing, had an idea as to the why and wherefore of Ezra Gold's withdrawal from the amateur ranks of Heydon Hay. She took most of her ideas from her husband, though she was not accustomed to think so, and it was he who had inoculated her with this one. She laid her small trap for her old friend and schoolfellow with an admirable monchalance and indifference of aspect, and looked at Rachel with an eye from which all appearance of speculation was carefully abstracted.

"He gave up playing?" Rachel asked, with a tone of surprise.

"Yes," said Mrs. Sennacherib, with a stolid-seeming nod. "He give it up, clean. Why, now I come to think on it, I don't believe he iver touched the music——" She paused in some confusion, and to cover this feigned to consider. "Let me see. He give up the music just about the time as you went away to Barfield."

The old maid's lips twitched, her cheeks went pale, and a look of absolute terror rose to her eyes.

"I was always under the impression that nothing could have induced him to give up his music. As I remember him he was peculiarly devoted to it."

MY SWEETHEART.

Engraved by R. Taylor, *from a Drawing by* G. L. Seymour

She did her best to speak indifferently, but her voice shook in spite of her.

"He give it up just about the time as you went away," repeated Mrs. Sennacherib. "I've heard our Sennacherib and his brother 'Saiah say over and over again as since that time he niver so much as opened a piece of music."

The little old maid arose with both hands on her heart, tight-clasped there. Her eyes were wild, and she panted as if for breath.

"Miss Blythe!" cried the other, alarmed by her aspect, "Rachel! What's the matter? Why, my dear, you're ill! A glass o' wine; me own mekin', my dear. Theer's no better elderberry i' the parish. Tek a drop, now do; it'll do you good, I'm sure."

"No, thank you," said Rachel, waving the proffered glass aside and sinking back into her chair. "It passes very soon. It is quite gone. I thank you. Pray take no notice of my ailments, Mrs. Eld. I am sorry to have discommoded you, even for a moment."

She was her prim and mincing self again, though there was still a tremor in her voice, and the exalted look in her young eyes was more marked than common. After a little time she recovered herself completely, and Mrs. Sennacherib entertained her for an hour with mournful histories of death and burial. The good woman had a rare nose for an invalid, and a passion for nursing. Such of her old schoolfellows as had died since Rachel's departure had mostly been nursed out of life under the care of Mrs. Sennacherib, and she was intimate with the symptoms of all of them, from the earliest to the latest. There was but little need for Rachel to talk at all when once her hostess had entered upon this absorbing topic, and when the old maid arose to go she had altogether recovered from the effect of whatever emotion had assailed her.

She walked homeward so prim, so old, so withered, that ninety-nine in a hundred would have laughed to know that she was living in the heart of a love story, and that story her own. But we rarely grow old enough to forget our own griefs, howsoever cold the frost of age may make us to the griefs of others.

CHAPTER VIII.

The young Sennacherib, swaggering gaily from his unnatural parent's door, was aware of something as nearly approaching a flutter as not often disturbed the picturesque dulness of the village main street. By some unusual chance there were half a dozen people in the road, and not only did these turn to stare at him, but at least half a dozen others peered at him from behind the curtains of cottage interiors, or boldly flattened their noses against the bulbous little panes of glass in the diamonded windows.

"Theer's a look of summat stirrin' i' the place, gaffer," said Snac to one ancient of the village.

"Why, yis, Mr. Eld, theer is that sort of a air about the pläas to-day," the old fellow answered with a fine unconsciousness. "But then theer mostly *is* a bit of a crowd round our town pump."

The crowd about the town pump consisted of one slatternly small girl and a puppy.

"Can't a chap call on his feyther 'ithout the midland counties turnin' out to look at him?" Snac asked smilingly.

"Yis," returned the ancient, who was conveniently deaf on a sudden. "Theer's been no such fine ripenin' weather for the wheat sence I wur a lad."

Snac gave the riding-whip he carried a burlesque threatening flourish, and the old boy grinned humorously.

"Sin Joseph Beaker this mornin', Mr. Eld?" he asked.

"No," said Snac. "What about him?"

"His lordship's gi'en him a set o' togs," said the old rustic, "an' he's drunker wi' the joy on 'em than iver I was with ode ale at harvest-time."

"Aha!" cried Snac scenting a jest. "Wheer is he?"

"Why, theer he is!" said the rustic, and turning, Snac beheld Joseph Beaker at that moment shambling round the corner of the graveyard wall, followed closely by the youth of the village. The Earl of Barfield had kept his promise, and had bestowed upon Joseph a laced waistcoat—a waistcoat which had not been worn since the first decade of the century, and was old-fashioned even then. It was of a fine crimson cloth, and had a tarnished line of lace about the edge and around the flaps of the pockets. Over this glorious garment Joseph wore a sky-blue swallow-tail coat of forgotten fashion, and below it a pair of knee-breeches which, being much too long for him, were adjusted midway about his shrunken calves. A pair of hob-nailed bluchers and a battered straw hat gave a somewhat feeble finish to these magnificences. As the poor Joseph aired the splendours of his attire there was a faint and far-away

imitation of the Earl of Barfield in his gait, and he paused at times after a fashion his lordship had, and perked his head from side to side as if in casual observation of the general well-being.

"Good morning, Lord Barfield," cried Snac as Joseph drew near. "It's a sight for sore eyes to see your lordship a-lookin' so young and lusty." Joseph beamed at this public crowning of his loftiest hopes, and would have gone by with a mere nod of lordly recognition, but the triumph was too much for him, and he laughed aloud for joy. "Well, bless my soul!" said Snac in feigned astonishment, "it's Mister Beaker! Send I may live if I didn't tek him for the Right Honourable th' Earl o' Barfield! Thee'st shake hands with an old friend, Mr. Beaker? That's right. Theer's nothin' I admire so much as to see a man as refuses to be carried away with pride." Joseph shook hands almost with enthusiasm.

"Theer's nothin' o' that sort about me, Mr. Eld," he replied.

"That I'm sure on," said Snac with conviction. "But how gay we be to-day, Mr. Beaker."

"It was my lord as gi'en me these," said Joseph retiring a pace or two to display his raiment, and gravely turning round in the presence of the little crowd that surrounded him so that each might see the fulness of its beauty.

At this moment Reuben Gold came swinging along the road with a green baize bag under his arm. He was on his way to his uncle's house, and unobserved of Snac, took a place on the causeway to see what might be the reason of this unusual gathering.

"Now," said Snac, "I never thought as Lord Barfield 'ud be so mean as to do things in that half-an'-half manner. I should ha' fancied as if Lord Barfield had took it into his head to set up an extra gentleman in livery he'd ha' done it thorough."

Joseph's countenance fell, and he surveyed his own arms and legs with an air of criticism. Then he took hold of the gold-laced flaps of the crimson waistcoat and laughed with a swift and intense approval.

"Ain't this been done thorough?" he demanded.

"As far as it goes, Joseph," replied the jocular Snac, "it's noble, to be sure." Joseph became critical again, but again at the sight of the gold-laced waistcoat his doubts vanished. "But surely, surely, Joseph, he should ha' gi'en you a pair o' them high collars as he wears, and a cravat, to go along with a get-out like that."

"He might ha' done that, to be sure," said Joseph tentatively.

"Might ha' done it!" cried Snac with a voice of honest scorn. "Ah! and would ha' done it if he'd been half a man, let alone a peer of the realm. For that's what he is, Joseph—a peer of the realm."

"So he is," said the poor Joseph, who was rapidly sliding into the trap which was set for him. "You would have expected a peer of the realm to do it thorough, wouldn't you?"

"Look here, Joseph," continued Snac, opening his trap wide, "you go and tell him. 'My lord,' says you—a-speakin' like a man, Joseph, and a-lookin' his lordship i' the face as a man in a suit of clothes like them has got a right to do—'my lord,' you says, 'you're as mean as you're high,' says you. 'What for?' says he. 'Why,' says you, 'for settin' a man out i' this half-an'-half mode for the folks to laugh at. Give me a collar and a cravat this minute,' you says, 'or else be ashamed o' thyself. Be ayther a man or a mouse.' That's the way to talk to 'em, Joseph."

"Think so?" asked Joseph, with an air half martial and half doubtful.

"To be sure!" cried Snac, and with one exception everybody in the little crowd echoed "To be sure!"

"I'll goo an' do it," said Joseph, thus fortified, "this instant minute."

"Wait a bit, Joseph," said Reuben Gold. "I'm going that way. We'll go a little of the road together."

"Now, Mr. Gold," cried Snac in a whisper, recognising Reuben's voice before he turned, "don't you go an' spoil sport."

"Snac, my lad," responded Reuben smiling, "it's poor sport."

"He'd goo an' tell him," said Snac with a delighted grin. "You can mek him say annythin'."

"That's why it's such poor sport," said Reuben. "It's too easy. It's sport to stand up for a bout with the sticks, when the other man's a bit better than you are; but it's no fun to beat a baby."

"I like it better," Snac replied with candour, "when th' odds is on t' other side. I like to be a bit better than t' other chap."

"You like to win? That's natural. But you like to deserve a bit of praise for winning. Eh?"

Reuben walked away with the rescued Joseph at his side. Joseph was as yet unconscious of his rescue, and was fully bent upon his message to the Earl.

"Theer's no denyin' that chap nothin'," said Snac, looking after Reuben's retiring figure. "He's got that form an' smilin' manner as'll tek no such thing as a no. An' lettin' that alone," he continued, again relapsing into candour, "he could punch my head if he wanted to, though I'm a match for ere another man i' the parish—and he'd do it too, at anny given minute, for all so mild as he is."

"He's the spit of what his uncle was," said the aged rustic. "When he was a lad he was the best cudgel player, the best man of his hands, and the prettiest man of his feet, from here to Castle Barfield."

"He's fell off of late 'ears, then," said Snac.

"Ah!" quavered the old fellow. "It's time as is too many for the best on us, Mr. Eld. Who'd think as I'd iver stood again all comers for miles an' miles around for the ten-score yards? I did though!"

"Didst?" cried Snac. "Then tek a shillin' and get a drop o' good stuff wi' it, an' warm up that old gizzard o' thine wi' thinkin' o' thy younger days."

And away he swaggered, carrying his shilling's worth with him in the commendations of the rustic circle. He was a young man who liked to be well thought of, and to that end did most of his benefactions in the open air.

In the meantime Reuben had disappeared with Joseph, and was already engaged in spoiling the village sport. Joseph was so resolved upon the collars and the cravat, and his imagination was so fired by the prospect of those splendid additions to his toilette, that Reuben was compelled to promise them from his own stores. Joseph became at once amenable to reason, and promised to overlook his lordship's meanness.

"Are you going to do anything for his lordship to-day, Joseph?" his protector asked him.

"No," said Joseph. "He's gi'en me a holiday. I tode him as t' warn't natural to think as a man 'ud want to go to work i' togs like thesen. The fust day's wear, and all!"

"Well, if you *should* care to earn a shilling——"

"I couldn't undertek a grimy job," said Joseph. "Not to-day. A message, now."

"A message? Could you take the message in a wheelbarrow, Joseph?"

"A barrer?" Joseph surveyed his arms and legs, and then took a grip of the laced waistcoat with both hands.

"A message in a wheelbarrow for a shilling, and a pair of collars and a black satin cravat to come home in, Joseph."

"Gaffer," said Joseph, "it's a bargain."

Reuben's message was Ezra Gold's musical library, and the volumes having been carefully built up in a roomy wheelbarrow, Joseph set out with them at a leisurely pace towards his patron's home. Reuben on first entering his uncle's house had laid the green baize bag upon the table. When the books were all arranged, and Joseph had started away with them, Reuben re-entered.

"I've brought the old lady back again, uncle," he said.

"You've eased her down I hope, lad," said the old man, untying the bag and drawing forth the violin. "That's right. As for bringing her back again, you remember what used to be the sayin' when you was a child, 'Give a thing and take a thing, that's the devil's plaything.' I meant thee to keep her, lad. It's a sin an' a shame as such a voice should be silent."

"Uncle," said Reuben, stammering somewhat, "I scarcely like to take her. It seems like—like trespassing on your goodness."

"I won't demean th' old lady," returned Ezra. "Her comes o' the right breed to have all the virtues of her kind. Her's a Stradivarius, Reuben, and my grandfather gi'en fifty guineas for her in the year seventeen hundred an' sixty-one. A king might mek a present of her to a king. And that's why in the natural selfishness of a man's heart I kep' her all these 'ears hangin' dumb and idle on the wall here. I take some shame to myself as I acted so, for you might ha' had her half a dozen years ago, and ha' done her no less than as much justice as I could iver ha' done her myself at the best days of my life. Her's yourn, my lad, and I only mek one bargain. If you should marry and have childern of your own, and one of 'em should be a player, he can have her, but if not, I ask you to will her to somebody as'll know her value, and handle her as her deserves."

Reuben was embarrassed by the gift.

"To tell the truth, uncle," he said, "I should take her the more readily if I'd coveted her less."

"Bring her out into the gardin, lad," returned his uncle. "Let's hear the 'Last Rose' again."

Reuben followed the old man's lead. His uncle's housekeeper carried chairs to the grass plot, and there the old man and the young one sat down together in the summer air, and Reuben, drawing a little pitch-pipe from his pocket, sounded its note, adjusted the violin,

and played. Ezra set his elbows upon his knees and his chin in his hands, and sat to listen.

"Lend her to me, lad," he said, when his nephew laid the instrument across his knees. "I don't know— I wonder—— Let's see if there's any of the old skill left." His face was grey and his hands shook as he held them out. "Theer's almost a fear upon me," he said as he took the fiddle and tucked it beneath his chin. "No, no, I dar' not. I doubt the poor thing 'ud shriek at me."

"Nonsense, uncle," answered Reuben, with a swift and subtle movement of the fingers of the left hand, such as only a violin-player could accomplish. "I doubt if there is such a thing as forgetting when once you have played. Try."

"No," said the old man, handing back the fiddle. "I dar' not. I haven't the courage for it. It's a poor folly, maybe, for a man o' my years to talk o' breakin' his heart over a toy like that, and yet, if the tone wasn't to come after all! That'd be a bitter pill, Reuben. No, no. It's a thousand to one the power's left me, but theer's just a chance it hasn't. I feel it theer." The gaunt left-hand fingers made just such a strenuous swift and subtle motion, as Reuben's had made a minute earlier. "And yet it mightn't be." Reuben reached out the violin towards him, but he recoiled from it and arose. "No, no. I dar'n't fail," he said with a grey smile. "I dar'n't risk it. Take her away, lad. No, lend her here. A man as hasn't pluck enow in his inwards for a thing o' that kind—— Lend her here!"

He seized the instrument, tucked it once more beneath his chin, and with closed eyes laid the bow upon the strings. His left foot, stretched firmly out in advance of the right, beat noiselessly upon the turf as if it marked the movement of a prelude inaudible except to him. Then the bow gripped the strings, and sounded one soft long-drawn melancholy note. A little movement of the brows, a scarcely discernible nod of the head marked his approval of the tone, and after marking anew the cadence of that airy prelude he began to play. For a minute or more his resolve and excitement carried him along, but suddenly a note sounded false, and he stopped.

"Ah-h-h!" he cried, shaking his head as if to banish the sound from his ears, "take her, Reuben, take her. Give her a sweet note or two to take the taste o' that out of her mouth. Poor thing! Strike up, lad—anything. Strike up!"

Reuben dashed into "The Wind that shakes the Barley!" and Ezra, with his gaunt hands folded behind him, walked twice or thrice the length of the grass plot.

"Theer's no fool like an old fool," he said, when he paused at his nephew's side. "Theer's nothing as is longed for like that as can niver be got at. Good-day, lad. Tek her away and niver let anybody maul her i' that fashion again, poor thing. I'll rest a while. Good-day, Reuben."

Reuben thus dismissed shook hands and went his way, bearing his uncle's gift with him. His way took him to Fuller's house, and, finding Ruth alone there, he displayed his treasure, and spent an hour in talk. If he had said then and there what he wanted to say the historic muse must needs have rested with him. But since, in spite of the promptings of his own desire, the favourableness of the time, and the delightful confusions of silence which overcame both Ruth and himself in the course of his visit, he said no more than any enthusiast in music might have said to any pretty girl who was disposed to listen to him, the historic muse is free to follow Joseph Beaker, with whom she has present business.

In the ordinary course of things Joseph would have taken the shortest cut to his patron's house, but to-day neither the weight of the barrow-load, which was considerable, nor Joseph's objection to labour, which was strongly-rooted, could prevent him from taking the lengthier route, which lay along the village main street, and therefore took him where he had most chance of being observed. He made but slow progress, being constantly stopped by his admirers, and making a practice of sitting down outside any house the doors of which happened to be closed, and there waiting to be observed. Despite the lingering character of his journey he had already passed the last house but one—Miss Blythe's cottage—and was forecasting in the dim twilight of his mind the impression he would make upon its inmate, when the little old maid herself went by without a glance.

"Arternoon, mum," said Joseph, setting down the wheelbarrow, and spitting upon his hands to show how little he was conscious of the glory of his own appearance.

"Good afternoon," said the old maid. "Ah! Joseph Beaker?" To Joseph's great disappointment she took no notice of his attire, but her eye happening to alight upon the books she approached and turned one of them over. Poor Joseph was not accustomed to read the signs of emotion, or he might have noticed that the hand that turned the leaves

trembled curiously. "What are these?" she asked. "Where are you taking them?"

"These be Mr. Ezra Gold's music books," he answered. "He's gi'en 'em to his nevew, and I'm a-wheelin' of 'em home for him. Look here. See what his lordship's gi'en to me."

But Miss Blythe was busily taking book after book, and was turning over the leaves as if she sought for something. Her hands were trembling more and more, and even Joseph thought it odd that so precise and neat a personage should have let her parasol tumble and lie unregarded in the dust.

"Wheel them to my house, Joseph Beaker," she said at last with a covert eagerness. "I want to look at them. I should like to look at them."

"My orders was to wheel 'em straight home," returned Joseph. "I worn't told to let nobody handle 'em, but it stands to rayson as they hadn't ought to be handled."

"Wheel them to my door," said the little old maid, stooping for her fallen sunshade. "I will give you sixpence."

"That's another matter," said Joseph sagely. "If a lady wants to look at 'em theer can't be nothin' again that, I *should* think."

The barrow was wheeled to Miss Blythe's door, and Miss Blythe in the open air, without waiting to remove bonnet, gloves, or mantle, began to turn over the leaves of the books, taking one systematically after the other, and racing through them as if her life depended on the task. Rapidly as she went to work at this singular task it occupied an hour, and when it was all over the prim starched old lady actually sat down upon her own doorstep with lax hands, and crushed her best new bonnet against the doorpost in a very abandonment of lassitude and fatigue.

"Done?" said Joseph, who had been sitting on the handle of the wheelbarrow, occasionally nodding and dozing in the pleasant sunlight. Miss Blythe arose languidly and gave him the promised sixpence. "You'm a wonner to read, you be, mum," he said, as he pocketed the coin. "I niver seed none on 'em goo at sich a pace as that. Sometimes my lord'll look at one side of a noospaper for a hour together. I've sin him do it."

Receiving no reply he spat upon his hands again, and started on the final course of his journey. Rachel closed the gate behind him, and walked automatically into her own sitting-room.

"There is no fool like an old fool," she said mournfully. Then with sudden fire—"I have known the man to be a villain these six-and-twenty years. Why should I doubt it now?"

And then, her starched dignity and her anger alike deserting her, she fell into a chair and cried, so long and so heartily, that at last, worn out with her grief, she fell asleep.

(*To be Continued.*)

THE ROYAL COMMISSIONERS—HOUSE OF LORDS.
From a Drawing by HARRY FURNISS.

THE HOUSE OF LORDS.

THE BLACK ROD.
From a Drawing by HARRY FURNISS.

THE House of Lords differs from the House of Commons in many respects beyond that of the hereditary principle. The two chambers are in their physical aspects wholly dissimilar. In the House of Commons no effort has been made to achieve grandeur or even dignity of appearance. It is literally a workshop, and is rigorously plain and businesslike in all its arrangements. I have heard from many people who visit the House of Commons for the first time an expression of surprise at the smallness of the chamber. The assembly fills so large a place in the mind of the world that, unconsciously, strangers imagine a magnificent hall of broad and lofty proportions. The House of Lords will more nearly gratify expectation of this character. It is a handsome, roomy chamber, dowered with the soft rich light that strays through stained glass windows. In the Commons every inch of space on the floor of the House is impressed into the service of members. Under the gallery by the door there is a row of benches which will accommodate a score or so of strangers. Otherwise no stranger may appear on the floor of the House whilst it is in session. In the Lords, at either end, there are comparatively roomy spaces for strangers. Ladies are admitted to little pens near the bar, and members of the Commons are at liberty to enter at will and take up standing room in this part of the House.

At the other end, where the throne stands, there is space reserved for Privy Councillors and the eldest sons of peers. Mr. Gladstone, on the rare occasions of his visits to the House of Lords, does not stand within the rails, his favourite position being at the corner of the bench where the bishops sit. It was here, leaning upon the edge of the bench, he heard Lord Salisbury's speech which settled the fate of the Franchise Bill in the autumn session of 1884. On great occasions Sir William Harcourt, Sir Michael Beach, Sir Richard Cross, and other Privy Councillors congregate behind the rail which guards the throne. I never saw Mr. Chamberlain availing himself of the privilege of listening

A SKETCH IN THE LOBBY.
From a Drawing by HARRY FURNISS.

to a debate in the Lords. He probably thinks his time might be more usefully employed. I remember one night last session seeing a very small schoolboy, presumably the eldest son of a peer, standing by the rails side by side with Sir William Harcourt, both intently listening to a debate, a concatenation of circumstances that somehow recalled Landseer's picture of *Dignity and Impudence*.

Whilst the chamber of the House of Lords is more imposing to look at it is not nearly so easy to speak in as its more modest neighbour. The House of Commons was not always endowed with the acoustical properties which now make it one of the best chambers for debating purposes the world possesses. When the Commons first met in their new home it was found almost impossible for a man to make himself heard. All kinds of devices were tried, and finally the expedient of the glass roof was hit upon. It is among the things not generally known that the glass ceiling of the House of Commons hides a noble roof upon which skilled carvers bestowed infinite care. The Commons had to consider whether they would retain the fair proportions of their chamber or sacrifice them to utility. They chose the latter course, and so the beautiful roof is hidden away. Possibly a similar sacrifice of ornamentation might bring about equally desirable results in the House of Lords. But the Lords stick to their architectural endowments and let their speeches take their chance.

The number of peers who are successful in making themselves heard might be counted on the fingers of both hands. By a happy good fortune these are the very men whom the public desire to hear. Whilst the vast majority of the peers are practically inaudible in the press gallery, I cannot call to mind any individual case in which the public interest materially suffers owing to the faulty acoustics of the chamber. Lord Granville and Lord Derby, it is true, can be followed throughout a speech only by painfully concentrated attention. Lord Granville has a slight lisp which detracts from the clearness of his enunciation, and Lord Derby is a little thick in utterance.

Aware of their defect, these two noble lords make a point of turning towards the press gallery maintaining their voice at a high pitch. But Lord Beaconsfield made himself as well heard in the House of Lords as Mr. Disraeli was wont to do in the House of Commons. The same statement holds good with respect to Lord Iddesleigh. He has not a particularly sonorous voice nor does he uplift it far above conversation pitch. Yet, apparently without effort, he, the first time he spoke in the Lords, overcame the difficulty which has proved insurmountable to many of his peers. Lord Salisbury's voice fills the chamber and echoes through the passages. Lord Cranbrook is distinctly heard. So is Lord Rosebery, and, so alas! is the Earl of Wemyss. These exceptions seem to show that perhaps after all the difficulty of which so much is heard is due rather to individual failing than to structural defects in the chamber.

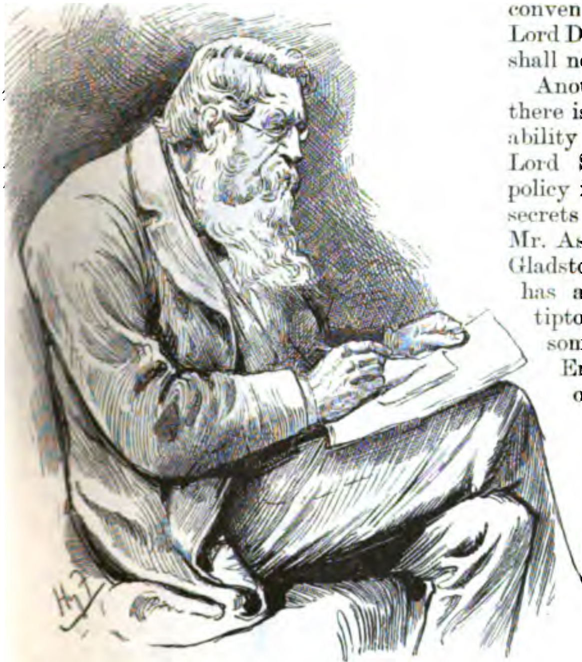
THE OPPOSITION BENCH.
From a Drawing by HARRY FURNISS.

The House of Lords commences public business at a quarter past four, an innovation of recent date. A few years ago public business was approached an hour later, and the change was made at the instance of the younger section of peers who complained that they were practically shut out from debate. They hoped that by meeting an hour earlier they would get some chance of speaking. The result has not justified their ardent expectation. Matters are now very much as they were heretofore, except that the House on the average adjourns earlier. The first principle of debate in the House of Lords is that, except under direst pressure, discussion shall be concluded in time to dress for eight o'clock dinner.

There is no such thing in the Lords as debate in the sense that it exists in the House of Commons. There are some half dozen members whose opinion is looked for, and this given there remains only to vote. The peers have no constituents and are freed from the necessity of periodically putting themselves *en evidence*. It follows that as a rule debate in the House of Lords on a big subject frequently reaches a higher level than a debate in the House of Commons. In the latter case controversy is so woefully diluted with wordiness. Men who have something to say which the House would willingly hear are so handicapped by a rush of fussy and fluent mediocrity, that the vast tract of debate, regarded as a whole, reaches a painfully low level. In the Lords only the big men speak, and when they have said their

say all is over. Thus it comes to pass that dinner at eight o'clock may be looked forward to with certainty. When Lord Salisbury, Lord Granville, and perhaps a couple of peers not sitting on the front benches have spoken, members just leave the House, and if any outsider wants to make a speech he finds himself without an audience, and so desists.

Lord Denman is the only peer who systematically endeavours to struggle against this unwritten law. He is a harmless, elderly gentleman, something of the Mr. Dick type, who regards his parliamentary duties as a serious portion of his life. One of his peculiarities is to turn up in unexpected parts of the House and commence a statement which has neither beginning nor middle, and of which the end is long deferred. He affects the Liberal side, sometimes presenting himself from a back bench in the rear of the bishops, sometimes speaking from below the gangway, and not infrequently appearing at the table in the immediate neighbourhood of Lord Granville. This is a delicate attention probably due to the circumstance that more than once Lord Granville in blandest manner has intimated his regret that he has not been able to follow the remarks of the noble lord. So Lord Denman draws as near as possible in order that he may be heard.



THE EARL OF IDDESLEIGH.
From a Drawing by HARRY FURNISS.

For this there is a precedent in the other House created by Mr. Biggar. During his memorable four hours' speech in the session of 1875, Mr. Biggar's voice, at the end of three hours, began to fail. He was speaking from his usual place below the gangway, and his remarks were quite inaudible at the chair, a circumstance to which the Speaker called his attention.

"Very well, Mr. Speaker," said Mr. Biggar, "I will come across."

So gathering up his blue-books, his notes, his glass of water, and his spectacles, he crossed the gangway and planted himself in convenient contiguity to the Speaker. Thus Lord Denman takes pains that Lord Granville shall not lose the benefit of his remarks.

Another peer between whom and the House there is difference of opinion as to the desirability or necessity of his being heard is Lord Stratheden and Campbell. Foreign policy is his *forte*, and he is as deep in the secrets of scheming continental potentates as Mr. Ashmead Bartlett used to be when Mr. Gladstone was in office. Lord Stratheden has a curious way of walking about on tiptoe as if he shrank from interrupting some colloquy between the Three Emperors. He nearly always throughout the session has a notice on the paper calling attention to some portentous movement in foreign affairs. But when the appointed day comes he generally postpones the motion, which, remaining upon the paper, serves to keep Prince Bismarck, the Czar, or the French Government in a state of unremitting anxiety. In the Commons Lord Stratheden and Campbell and Lord Denman would be howled down if they attempted to interpose in public business; in the Lords they are treated with a grave courtesy delightful to witness. They are peers whose patent of nobility is indisputable, and to suppose that a hereditary legislator could be slightly cracked would strike a blow at the very foundations of the House.

Undoubtedly the foremost man in the House of Lords is the Marquis of Salisbury. A debater of great power, an orator of singular felicity, he has in unbounded meaure that strong individuality which fascinates an assembly or a nation. He is always personally interesting, in the sense that Lord Beaconsfield was, and that Lord Randolph Churchill is, a peculiar quality lacking alike in Mr. Gladstone

and Earl Granville. When either of these statesmen rise, people know, within certain bounds, pretty much what they will say or do. When Lord Salisbury presents himself at the table of the House of Lords there is nothing certain about him except that he will say something in a very striking manner. He scorns oratorical graces, and rarely makes long speeches. Having something to say he says it in the fewest possible words, and resumes his seat with alacrity. When addressing the House he has a way of lounging over the table and chatting in a conversational tone, as if deprecating the idea that he was making a speech. Life is too short for indulgence in set orations, and if we have anything to say let us say it in the fewest words and get to action. Lord Salisbury does not make use of copious notes even when delivering his most important speeches. But the barbed phrases that drop carelessly from his lips are evidently well studied and laboriously prepared.

In Lord Granville the Marquis often finds a foeman worthy of his steel. Lord Granville's manner is the direct opposite to that of his political adversary. Lord Salisbury is scornfully overbearing, sometimes truculent. in his manner. Lord Granville is polite, deprecating, almost apologetic. Yet he sometimes with smiling face and softly inflected voice manages to say some things which for bitterness cannot be excelled by the Marquis of Salisbury. There are possibly to-day

THE MARQUIS OF SALISBURY.
From a Drawing by HARRY FURNISS.

few intellectual treats of a higher character than to be present at a controversy in the House of Lords between the two leaders.

Close behind the bench on which Earl Granville sits, in company with Lord Northbrook, Lord Kimberly, Lord Derby, and other of his colleagues, is a notable figure with white hair, bushy white eyebrows, and pinky face. This is Lord Sherbrooke, better known as Mr. Robert Lowe. Lord Sherbrooke is a pretty close attendant upon the sittings of the House of Lords, but he never speaks. He seems to have accepted his promotion as a death warrant of his political position, and is content to vote whilst others debate. It was curious in bygone times to see Lord Beaconsfield intently watching his old foeman and possibly anticipating amid new circumstances a renewal of old conflict. But Lord Sherbrooke never opened his mouth. This vow of silence was doubtless imposed by physical inability. Mr. Lowe in all his speeches in the House of Commons was accustomed to fortify himself with numerous notes. These he could doubtless prepare for the House of Lords with as much effect as he was wont to do in the House of Commons; but the difficulty of deciphering them after they are written out grows upon him.

It is more than six years since Lord Sherbrooke made the painful discovery that his career as a parliamentary orator was drawing to a close. Early in the session of 1879, being then in the House of Commons, he rose to take part in a debate on a vote of censure on the Government, moved by Sir Charles Dilke. A great deal was looked for from this interposition, and Mr. Lowe had evidently made a special effort to meet general anticipation. He got along successfully for a quarter of an hour. Then arose the necessity for citing extracts from blue-books in support of his argument. Taking up his notes he began to search for a particular memorandum, but could not find it. He floundered on for a while, and abruptly resumed his seat. That was his last speech in the House of Commons, and he has not attempted to fight against fortune in the House of Lords.

Oddly enough many of Mr. Lowe's contemporaries in the House of Commons have accepted their translation to the House of Lords as a condemnation to habitual silence. There is Lord Aberdare, who, as Mr. Bruce, sometime Home Secretary, was well known in the House of Commons and a regular participator in debate. He has not been wholly silent in the Lords; but is so rarely heard that his name is forgotten by the public. Lord Emly, late Mr. Monsell, Postmaster-General in Mr. Gladstone's former administration, is equally dumb. Nor does Lord Cardwell speak now that the attack upon the short service system has lapsed. Lord Carlingford, the Mr. Chichester Fortescue of earlier times, is more successful in keeping a front place. But Lord Alington, who, as Mr. Gerard Sturt, once electrified the House of Commons and delighted the

EARL GRANVILLE.
From a Drawing by HARRY FURNISS.

Prince of Wales, who happened to be in the gallery, by a disquisition on horse-flesh, rests on his laurels. Nor does Lord Lamington (Mr. Baillie Cochrane) ever confide to the House of Lords those deep thoughts on foreign affairs with which, in days not long gone by, the House of Commons was made periodically familiar. Lord Wolverton, who as whip in the Parliament of 1868 was not accustomed to make long speeches, has naturally subsided

into the grave silence most popular in the House of Lords. So has Mr. Cowper Temple, now Lord Mount Temple, who grows more than ever like the ghost of Lord Palmerston. Even Lord Coleridge only rarely favours the House of Lords with one of those elaborate and bloodless orations, dropped in silver-toned notes that may sometimes affect the mind but never touch the heart.

But if these once familiar denizens of the House of Commons modestly shrink from lengthening debate in the House of Lords there are at least two recruits from the other House who have diligently and not unsuccessfully endeavoured to make up the average of speech-making. These are the Earl of Wemyss, long known in the Commons as Lord Elcho, and Lord Brabourne who has accomplished a rare feat in political history. Most frequently, as in the cases cited above, a man who has made a name for himself in the Commons is content to sink into obscurity in the House of Lords. But Lord Brabourne has achieved a wider notoriety than Mr. Knatchbull-Hugessen enjoyed. There were circumstances attendant upon his introduction to the House of Lords that might have been expected powerfully to co-operate with ordinary influences in inducing a retiring attitude. But from the first Lord Brabourne took the House of Lords by the button-hole and insisted that the time had already come "when it *should* hear him." He took up a position on the cross benches, which has many advantages. It brings a man in personal contiguity with princes of the royal blood. A noble lord sitting on the cross benches may touch the hem of the garment of the Prince of Wales, or sit within reach of hand of the Duke of Cambridge. Beyond this there is a peculiarity about the cross benches that would not seem to recommend it to a modest and blushing young peer. It is the most prominent position in the House, set in the middle of the floor and dominating either side. Lord Brabourne, however, temporarily setting aside his natural modesty made a dash at one of these favoured seats on the night he entered the House, and thence, with amazing frequency, he rises to address an audience whose personal hostility is barely disguised under an attitude of frigid politeness.

LORD SHERBROOKE.
From a Drawing by HARRY FURNISS.

Up to within the last three months of the session the familiar figure of Lord Brabourne, with white hat adorned with a black band—curiously reminiscent of Ally Sloper—was to be found on the cross benches. But about a fortnight before Lord Salisbury came into office he with singular prescience discovered that the Conservative camp was the only place in which he could possess his soul in patience, and thither he went, the black-banded white hat now gleaming in the ranks of the Conservative host.

Lord Wemyss still remains on the cross benches, and is not likely from any such impulses of a sensitive conscience as have moved Lord Brabourne to vacate a place so admirably suited for haranguing the House. The House of Lords regards the Earl of Wemyss in a manner very different from that with which it looks upon the politician who, boxing the political compass, has literally sat in every part of the House. The peers think Lord Wemyss is perhaps a little verbose; but at least he is an honest man, of single mind, who follows his lights and endeavours to instruct his fellow men. Old members of the House of Commons looking down from the gallery upon the Earl of Wemyss, as with

forefinger outstretched, body bent forward with persuasive gesture, and countenance lit up with thorough self-enjoyment, listen for a while with pleased contentment. It is like a man who has crossed the Channel, and in snug fire-lighted room at the hotel hears the wind blow and the sea roar. He has had his bad time. But it is past and will come no more. For more than forty years they had Lord Elcho in the House of Commons, and have, perforce, listened to these long-winded orations, with reiteration pointed by the remorseless forefinger, and on the face of the orator this provoking look of almost ecstatic enjoyment of his speech. Let the Lords have a little of it now.

To do them justice they have had a good deal of it, and have borne it with the patience and courage worthy of the old renown of the English baron. On the very eve of the dissolution, Lord Wemyss, *à propos des bottes,* placed on the order book of the House a resolution raising the whole question of Liberal and Conservative policy and administration at home and abroad. This was a comprehensive heading that would permit of divergations into all the political questions of to-day, to-morrow, and yesterday. Ireland, Egypt, India, South Africa, the Afghan Question, the Budget, Parliamentary Reform, and Bi-metallism might all be touched upon under the wide field of this resolution. Lord Wemyss made the most of it, and for something little short of two mortal hours he reasoned with the yawning peerage.

LORD WEMYSS.
From a Drawing by HARRY FURNISS.

Looking round the House of Lords and thinking with respect of the hereditary principle, one is struck by the fact that our old nobility do not contribute anything beyond an infinitesimal proportion of the strength and dignity of the Legislature. When we mention Lord Salisbury, Lord Derby, the Duke of Argyll, the Duke of Richmond, Lord Rosebery, and Lord Carnarvon, the list of foremost debaters whose peerage dates beyond the present generation is completed. Of these Lord Granville can scarcely be reckoned among the old nobility, since his patent of peerage does not date beyond 1833, whilst the Herberts, whose representation I have included in diligent effort to swell the list, were raised to the peerage only in 1793. Here, out of the long roll of the English peerage, are six men who by their personal talents have lifted themselves into a prominent place in English

political life. The bright particular stars of debate in the House of Lords have, with few exceptions, been drawn from the common people, and have in recent days been known as Lord Cairns, Lord Selborne, Lord Coleridge, Lord Cockburn, and the like.

Lord Shaftesbury holds a unique position in the House. Throughout the civilised world

THE LATE EARL OF SHAFTESBURY.
From a Drawing by HARRY FURNISS.

his name is a household word. His life is recognised as the epitome of practical loving-kindness. When, years ago, he sat in the Commons as Lord Ashley, he was wont to take a moderate share of the duties of debate. But he has never taken an active part in the business of the House of Lords, and has now dropped out of it entirely, except when his sympathies are aroused by approach to the subjects to which he has devoted a long and honourable life. When he rises he is listened to from both sides with unfeigned respect and personal esteem.[1]

Lord Lytton has not achieved that position which possibly his talents, certainly his expectation, led him to look for. He is not a habitual participator in debate. When he returned from India he delivered a long and elaborate defence of his policy as Viceroy which had been bitterly and persistently attacked. There is a literary flavour about his carefully prepared orations, which, though excellent in quality, does not recommend itself to an audience. The House of Lords shares the instincts of common humanity at least to this extent, that it would rather hear in debate the halting sentences of a man struggling to express thoughts which the course of debate has fired, than to have recited to it an essay calmly written in the seclusion of the library. Lord Lytton's speeches are really *Quarterly Review* articles, and after the recitation has gone forward a little while members begin to yawn, or openly go to sleep, or furtively leave the House.

Lord Dunraven is one of those men of whom his friends are accustomed to say that he might be anything he pleased. Unfortunately Lord Dunraven pleases to be nothing particular. He is a man of conspicuous ability and wide knowledge, both of men and affairs. He is a ready and effective speaker, his pointed speech being frequently irradiated by flashes of quiet humour. He is, more than anything I know in flesh and blood, akin to some of Ouida's wonderful heroes —whether Russian princes or English peers—born to a high position, endowed with something like genius, able to do anything and ending by doing nothing. One night Lord Dunraven will appear in the House of Lords and deliver an incisive, eloquent, even statesmanlike speech on some question of high policy; on the next morning he sets off for some remote country, the more inaccessible in approach and the more uncomfortable as a residence the more attractive. Lord Dunraven is still young, and may yet seriously settle down to politics. If he should so decide he will make for himself a high position in the House of Lords, and that is surely worth a man's ambition.

Lord Redesdale has been Chairman of Committees and Deputy Speaker of the House of Lords for thirty-four years. A short time ago it was reported that with the present

[1] Since this was in type Lord Shaftesbury's useful life has been brought to an honoured close.

Parliament he would retire from his position, a report which he curtly contradicted. There are few figures more familiar in and about the House of Lords than the stout one dressed in squarely-cut black clothes, trousers just reaching to the ankle, displaying a glimpse of white stocking over the broad-soled shoe. Lord Redesdale, by virtue of his office, always wears a white necktie, and his general appearance gives some credit (perhaps gave birth) to the story that a young peer recently come into his inheritance strolling into the lobby of the House, handed his coat and stick to the Chairman of Committees under the impression that he was one of the attendants. There is, perhaps, some doubt as to the noble lord's efficiency as chairman, but none of the peremptoriness of his manner in carrying out his duties. Lord Redesdale's way of putting the question is highly characteristic. Supposing he is dealing with a measure promoted by the Conservative Government, this is how he deals with it:—

"Clause Five. Question is that clause five be added to the bill? Those-that-are-of-that-opinion-say-Content-the-contrary-not-content-the-Contents-have-it. Clauses Six, Seven, and Eight. Question is that these clauses be here added? Those-who-are," &c.

No one but a very hardened peer dare interpose, and it is only exceedingly ready ones who could find an opportunity. Lord Redesdale's little ways greatly amused Lord Beaconsfield, who made him an earl. The late Premier was not in the House long enough to try a fall with the irrascible and autocratic chairman, and indeed it is only the Marquis of Salisbury and Earl Granville who ever venture to do so. There is an instance of parliamentary debate which illustrates the graciousness of Lord Redesdale's manner and the ready, genial humour of Lord Granville. Thirty years ago, on the 15th May, 1855, during a debate on the war with Russia several ladies had obtained seats on the back benches of the House itself, an unusual position, though always secured to them on the occasions of the opening or the prorogation of Parliament. Lord Redesdale drew attention to this, complaining of its effect upon the appearance of the House.

"It makes the place look more like a casino than anything else," he growled. "I hope the irregularity will not be repeated, for I know at least one peer who would have spoken but for his unwillingness to address an audience of this kind."

"I accept as fully satisfactory," said Earl Granville, "my noble friend's explanation of the reason why some of the speeches delivered on the other side have, in the opinion of the supporters of ministers, been less effective than usual." The House laughed, and the ladies tittered; but Lord Redesdale never *could* see anything in Earl Granville's polished little darts.

In no respect is the physical and material difference between the House of Lords and the House of Commons more strongly marked than in respect of the lobbies. The lobby of the House of Commons is one of its most important and indispensable appanages.

LORD LYTTON.
From a Drawing by HARRY FURNISS.

Recent regulations have robbed it of some of its bustling appearance. But the fact remains that there are many nights in the session when more real business is transacted in the lobby of the House of Commons than under the eye of the Speaker. The lobby of the Lords is much smaller than that across the way, and is glorified by a brass gate that is worth a journey to see. The principal members of the Commons stroll out into their lobby to talk with each other or with friends from the outer world. The Lords

never gossip, and save when they come streaming forth after a big division the lobby has a deserted, almost ghostly look, intensified by the upright rails and hooks placed for hats and coats. All the pegs are labelled, and the highly-favoured stranger strolling in here will look with awe upon a big, rather broad brimmed hat on a peg labelled "Marquis of Salisbury"; on a walking-stick which is all

THE EARL OF DUNRAVEN.
From a Drawing by HARRY FURNISS.

that represents the grace and courtliness of Earl Granville; on the mysterious cloak attached to the name "Lord Stratheden and Campbell," and seeming to wrap within its dark folds the secret history of European statecraft; or a time-worn inverness over which the name of Lord Sherbrooke blinks.

Twice a year at least this lobby resounds to the tread of an impatient crowd pressing forward to get a good seat or standing place in the House of Lords. These are the Commons going to attend the ceremony of the opening of Parliament, or its prorogation. First comes the Sergeant-at-arms with mace on his shoulder. Behind, the Speaker in wig and gown, his train borne up by a gentleman of dignified appearance. Close in the rear is the chaplain, then a minister or two, and finally her Majesty's faithful Commons laughing and talking and stamping and crushing as if they were in quite a common place.

On the rare occasions, in recent days exclusively coincidental with Lord Beaconsfield's reign, when the Queen opens Parliament in person, the scene in the Lords is worthy of the dignity of the historical chamber. Peers who are never seen in the place come then to render homage to the Sovereign; ambassadors, glittering with orders, crowd their appointed place; noble ladies, gleaming with jewels, fill one side of the House and throng the galleries. All the royal princes and princesses accompany the Queen, and though little is done and less said the spectacle is worth preserving. But when it comes to the *simulacre*, the opening of Parliament by Royal Commission, the grand pageant is replaced by a pitiable mockery. The ceremony is in these days without practical value, and everything is done to make it as ludicrous as it is useless. Of the ceremonies of opening Parliament by Royal Commission or proroguing it, the latter is naturally the more melancholy spectacle. At the opening of a session there is some slight flush of interest and excitement; men are fresh back to town and are greedy for any little excitement, whether political or social. There is, moreover, the Queen's Speech which broadly indicates ministerial intention during the coming session.

But in the ceremony of prorogation, whilst it is almost identical with that of the opening of Parliament, everything combines to bring its mournful ludicrousness into fuller light. Every one is tired to death of politics, and of his fellow men. All that can be done in a session is accomplished, curiosity is sated, and energy sapped. Yet here, on the bench before the woolsack, sit the five cloaked figures with three-cornered hats completing their disguise. The cloaks are red, slashed with dirty ermine that suggest a second-hand source of temporary borrowing. A few ladies in morning dress sit on the otherwise deserted benches. Two or three peers of junior official position make a House. At the bar stands the Speaker, with the Sergeant-at-Arms and mace on one side and the chaplain on the other. Behind straggle a few *blasé* com-

moners. An air of deep depression dwells over the place, and is not lifted by the mummery that follows.

When the Speaker and the Commons have assembled in obedience to the summons of Black Rod, the two wigged and gowned clerks, who have sat at the end of the table, rise and stand apart, the one on the right hand of the table, the other on the left. He on the right produces a prodigious parchment from which he reads out the Commission of "our trusty and well beloved cousins," the mysterious figures on the bench before the woolsack. As he names each a hand steals forth from under the cloak, solemnly goes up to the peaked hat, uplifts it, replaces it, and withdraws beneath the cloak. The clerk reads on till he comes to another name, whereat he makes low obeisance in the direction of the woolsack. Another figure moves; another hand creeps upward; another cocked hat is uplifted; and another figure resumes its immobility. Thus the whole five Commissioners are in succession named with low bowing from the clerk and deliberate recognition of identity on their part.

This takes up a deal of time that might well be spared at the end of a busy session. But it is nothing to what follows. There is a more or less mighty pile of Bills which, having passed both Houses of Parliament, now await the royal assent. The clerk on the right hand side of the table taking up these bills one by one, first bows low to the cloaked figures, ducking as if a sustaining bolt had been suddenly withdrawn from the region of the small of his back. He reads out the title of the Bill, whereupon commences the task of the clerk on the left. If it be a money Bill this functionary, first bowing low

LORD ROSEBERY.
From a Drawing by HARRY FURNISS.

to the Commissioners, turns his head slightly to the left, and over his shoulder literally chucks at the Speaker and the assembled Commons the phrase, "*La reyne remercie ses bons sujets, accepte leur bénévolence, et ainsi le veult.*" If it be an ordinary measure, he says with the same deprecating gesture towards the Commons, "*La reyne le veult.*" Whether there are ten or two hundred bills exactly the same process must be gone through. First, the clerk on the right-hand side bows to the Commissioners; secondly, he recites the name of the Bill; thirdly, he bows again; fourthly, the clerk on the left-hand side bows to the Commissioners; fifthly, with scornful gesture of disregard, he throws over his shoulder to the awed Commons the assurance of the royal assent; sixthly, he heaves a little sigh of sympathy with the Commissioners for being troubled by this necessity of meeting common people; seventhly, he bows again, and his colleague takes up the next Bill and the whole process is gone over again, the phrase, "*La reyne le veult,*" rising and falling over the deserted House like the cry of the curlew on a distant desolate rock.

This burlesque of pagentry is more than ludicrous; it makes considerable demand on the public time. Not only at the beginning and end of the session is the mummery of the Royal Commission practised, but at frequently recurrent intervals during the busiest time of the session Black Rod appears at the door of the House of Commons and summons busy men to leave their affairs and go over to the Lords to play this melancholy little game. If the fiction of the royal assent is to be maintained it is surely worth the assistance of the royal presence. Failing that, it might be dispensed with with distinct advantage to public business and the dignity of Parliament.

TWO LORD CHANCELLORS—LORD CHANCELLOR OF ENGLAND AND LORD CHANCELLOR OF IRELAND.
From a Drawing by HARRY FURNISS.

There is, as it happens just now, one bit of human interest in this discordant mummery. The little elderly gentleman who stands on the left of the table and chants his mournful refrain, "*La reyne le veult,*" bears the name of Disraeli. He was brother to the great statesman who but lately filled the premier place in the House of Lords, and is an interesting personal link with a memory that will never die as long as English history lives.

HENRY W. LUCY.

DR. BARRÈRE.

CHAPTER I.

DR. BARRÈRE was a young man who was beginning to make his way. In the medical profession, as in most others, this is not a very easy thing to do, and no doubt he had made some mistakes. He had given offence in his first practice to the principal person in the little town where he had set up his surgery by explaining that certain symptoms which his patient believed to mean heart disease were due solely to indigestion; and he still more deeply offended that gentleman's wife by telling her that her children were overfed. These are follies which a more experienced medical man would never commit; but this one was young and fresh from those studies in which, more than in any other profession, things have to be called by their right names. In his next attempt he had nearly got into more serious trouble still, by his devotion to an interesting and difficult case, in which, unfortunately, the patient was a woman. From this he came out clear, with no stain on his character, as magistrates say. But for a doctor, as often for a woman, it is enough that evil has been said. The slander, though without proof, has more or less a sting, and is recollected when all the circumstances—the disproval, the clearing-up, even the facts of the case have been forgotten. He was, therefore, not without experience when he came to settle in the great town of Poolborough, which might be supposed large enough and busy enough to take no note of those village lies and tempests in a teapot. And this proved to be the case. He was young, he was clever, he was *au courant* of all the medical discoveries, knew everything that had been discovered by other men, and was not without little discoveries and inventions of his own. He was still young, a few years over thirty, at the age which combines the advantages of youth and of maturity, strong in mind and in body, loving work, and fearing nothing. If his previous encounters with the foolish side of humanity had diminished in some degree his faith in it, and opened his eyes to the risks which those who think no evil are apt to run in their first conflict with the stupidities and base ideas of men, he had yet not suffered enough to make him bitter, or more than wary in his dealings with the narrow and uncomprehending. He no longer felt sure of being understood, or that a true estimate of his intentions and motives was certain; but he did not go to the opposite extreme as some do, and take it for granted that his patients and their surroundings were incapable of doing him justice. He was sobered, but not embittered. He was wise enough neither to show too much interest, nor to betray too great an indifference. He listened seriously to the tale of symptoms which were nothing to anybody but their narrator, and he restrained his excitement when a matter of real importance, something delicate and critical, came under his view. Thus it was proved that he had learned his lesson. But he did not despise his fellow creatures in general, or think all alike guilty of affectation and self-regard, which showed that he had not learned that lesson with extravagance. He was kind, but not too kind. He was clever, but not so clever as to get the alarming character of an experimentalist—in short, he was in every way doing well and promising well. When the untoward accident occurred which cut short his career in Poolborough he was universally well thought of and looked upon as a rising man.

It may be well before going further to indicate certain particulars in his antecedents which throw light upon Dr. Barrère's

character and idiosyncracies. He was of French origin, as may be perceived by his name. The name was not so distinctly French as held by his father and grandfather, who ignored the nationality, and wrote it phonetically Barraire. In their days, perhaps, a French origin was not an advantage. But in the days when Arnold Barrère was at college this prejudice had disappeared, and he was himself delighted to resort to the old orthography, and liked his friends to remember the accent which it pleased him to employ. Perhaps the keen logical tendency of his mind and disposition to carry everything out to its legitimate conclusion with a severity which the English love of compromise and accident prevents, were more important signs of his origin than even the accent over the e. Dr. Barrère for his part did not like to elude the right and logical ending either of an accent or a disease. It annoyed him even that his patient should recover in an irregular way. He liked the symptoms to follow each other in proper sequence; and the end which was foreseen and evident was that which he preferred to have occur, even when the avoidance of it, and deliverance of the sufferer were due to his own powers. Like his nation, or rather like the nation of his forefathers, he was disposed to carry out everything to its logical end. His outward man, like his mind, bore evidence of his parentage. He was about the middle height, of a light and spare figure, with a thickly-growing but short and carefully cropped black beard, his complexion rather dark but very clear, his voice somewhat high-pitched for an Englishman, with an animated manner, and a certain sympathetic action of head and hand when he talked, scarcely enough to be called gesticulation, yet more than usually accompanies English speech. He seemed, in short, to have missed the influence of the two generations of English mothers and manners which might have been supposed to subdue all peculiarities of race, and to have stepped back to the immediate succession of that Arnold Barrère who was the first to bring the name to this island. These individual features gave a certain piquancy, many people thought, to the really quite English breeding of the doctor, who had never so much as crossed the Channel, and knew little more French than was consistent with a just placing of the accents, especially upon the letter e.

It would be unnecessary to enter into full detail of how he formed acquaintance with the Surtees, and came to the degree of intimacy which soon developed into other thoughts. It is a proper thing enough in a story, though not very true to real life, to describe a young doctor as falling in love, by a sick bed, with the angel-daughter who is the best nurse and ministrant that a sick parent can have. Members of the medical profession are not more prone than other men to mingle their affections with the requirements of their profession, and probably a devoted nurse is no more the ideal of a young doctor than a good model is that of a painter. As a matter of fact, however, it was while attending Mrs. Surtees through a not very dangerous or interesting illness that Dr. Barrère made the acquaintance of Agnes. He might just as well have met her in the society which he frequented sparingly, for there was no particular difference in her sphere and his: but there were reasons why Miss Surtees went little out, less than most young women of her age. Her family was one of those which had ranked amongst the best in Poolborough in the time of their wealth, and no one could say still that their place was not with "the best people" of the town. But with a mercantile community more than any other (though also more or less in every other) wealth is necessary for the retaining of that position. Women who go afoot cannot keep up with those who have carriages and horses at their command, neither can a girl in whose house no dances, no dinners, no entertainments, are ever given, associate long on easy terms with those who are in the full tide of everything, going everywhere, and exchanging hospitalities after the lavish fashion of wealthy commercial society. And this was not the only reason that kept Agnes Surtees out of the world. There was one more urgent which was told, and one which no one named but every one understood. The first was the delicate health of her mother. Dr. Barrère was aware that there was not very much in this. He knew that had she been able to drive about as did the ladies who were so sorry for her, and clothe herself in furs and velvet, and take change of air whenever she felt disposed, there would have been little the matter with Mrs. Surtees. But he was too sensible to breathe a word on this subject. He held his tongue at first from discretion, and afterwards because he had found out for himself why it was that Mrs. Surtees' delicate health was kept before the public of Poolborough. It took him some time to make this discovery; but partly from hints of others, and partly from his own perceptions, he found it out at last.

It was that these two ladies were involved

in the life of a third member of their household—a son and brother whom the "best people" in Poolborough had ceased to invite, and whose name when it was mentioned was accompanied with shakings of the head and looks of disapproval. Dr. Barrère did not even see Jim Surtees until he had been acquainted with his mother and sister for nearly a year—not that he was absent, but only that his haunts and associates were not theirs. He was a young man who had never done well. He had been far more highly educated than was usual with the young men of Poolborough; instead of being sent into the counting-house in his youth he had been sent to Cambridge, which was all his father's pride and folly, the critics said, exempting Mrs. Surtees from blame in a manner most unusual. It was supposed that she had disapproved. She had come of a Poolborough family, in business from father to son, and knew what was necessary; but Surtees was from the country, from a poor race of county people, and was disposed to think business beneath him, or at least to consider it as a mere stepping-stone to wealth. When he died so much less well off than was expected, leaving his family but poorly provided for, then was the moment when Jim Surtees might have proved what was in him, and stepped into the breach, replaced his mother and sister in their position, and restored the credit of his father's name. In that case all the old friends would have rallied round him; they would have backed him up with their credit, and given him every advantage. At such moments and in such emergencies mercantile men are at their best. No one would have refused the young man a helping hand—they would have hoisted him upon their shoulders into his father's place; they would have helped him largely, generously, manfully. Alas! Jim Surtees did then and there show what was in him. He had neither energy nor spirit nor ambition, nor any care for his father's name or his mother's comfort. He said at once that he knew nothing about business. What could he do? it was entirely out of his way. He scarcely knew what it was his father dealt in. Cotton? Yes—but what did he know about cotton, or bookkeeping, or anything? The young man was interviewed by all who knew him; he was sent for by the greatest merchants in Poolborough. What he ought to do was set before him by everybody who had any right to speak, and by a great many who had none. But nothing moved him. He knew nothing about business—he would do nothing in it. Why should he try what he could not do? And with these replies he baffled all the anxious counsellors who were so eager to convince him to the contrary. Then there were situations suggested, even provided, for him; but these were all subject to the same objections. Finally it came about that Jim Surtees did nothing. He had not been long enough at Cambridge to take his degree. He was modest about his own capacities even when pupils were suggested to him. He did not know enough to teach, he declared, till his modesty drove the anxious advisers distracted. What was to be done? Jim Surtees eluded every expedient to make him do anything. At last he dropped altogether, and the best people in Poolborough were conscious of his existence no more.

These were the circumstances of the Surtees family when Dr. Barrère made their acquaintance. He thought for some time that the two ladies lived alone, and that their withdrawal from society was somewhat absurd, based as it was on that delusion about Mrs. Surtees' health; but a little further information made him change his mind. He changed his mind about several things, modifying his first impressions as time went on. He had thought the mother one of those imaginary invalids who enjoy that gentle level of ill-health which does not involve much suffering, and which furnishes a pretty and interesting *rôle* for many unoccupied women; and he had thought her daughter an angelic creature, whose faith in her mother's *migraines* was such that she cheerfully and sweetly gave up the pleasures of her youth in order to minister to them. But as Dr. Barrère changed from a doctor into a friend; as he began to ask admittance at times when he was not called for, and when, last seal of a growing intimacy, he began to venture to knock at the door in the evening after dinner—a privilege which he pleaded for as belonging to the habits of his French ancestry (of which he knew so little)—his eyes were speedily opened to many things which a morning visitor would never have divined. The first time he did so, he perceived to his astonishment Agnes on the landing, half concealed by the turn of the staircase, eagerly looking down to see who it was; and her mother, though so little able to move about, was at the door of the little drawing-room, looking flushed and wretched, far more ill than when he had been called in to prescribe for her. For whom was it that they were looking? It could not be for himself, whom nobody had expected, whom they received with a tremulous kindness, half relieved, half reluctant. After a few such visits he began to see

that the minds of these poor ladies were divided between pleasure in his society and fear to have him there. If he stayed a little longer than usual he saw that they became anxious, the mother breathless, with a desire to have him go away: and that even Agnes would accompany him down stairs with an eager alacrity as if she could not be comfortable till she had seen him out of the house. And yet they were always kind, liked him to come, looked for him, even would say a word which showed that they had noted his absence if for a week or so he did not appear: although while he was there they were ever watchful, starting at every sound, hurrying him away if he stayed beyond his time. The sight of a tall figure lurching along the street, of some one fumbling with a latch-key, of which he was sometimes conscious as he went away, was scarcely necessary at last to make him aware what it was that occasioned this anxiety. Mrs. Surtees saw love dawning in the doctor's eyes. She would not shut out from her patient girl the chances of a happier lot: but what if the doctor should meet Jim! see him coming home sodden and stupid, or noisy and gay. As Dr. Barrère became intimate they had spoken to him of Jim. He was studying hard, he was writing, he was always busy, he was not fond of society. There were so many reasons why he should never appear. And by and by the doctor, with a great ache of pity, had learned all these excuses by heart, and penetrated their secret, and misconstrued their actions and habits no more.

Finally the doctor made the acquaintance of Jim, and to his great surprise not only liked him, but understood why the mother and sister were not always miserable, how life varied with them from day to day, and how even Mrs. Surtees was often cheerful, though never unwatchful, never at ease. Dr. Barrère thought with justice that nothing could be more miserable, more inexcusable, than the life the young man was leading. In theory fate should have put into every honest hand a whip to scourge such a good-for-nothing. And sometimes the doctor felt a righteous wrath, a desire to scourge till the blood came: but it was not so much out of moral indignation as out of an exasperated liking, an intolerable pity. What might happen in the house in those awful moments when all was silent, and everybody at rest save the mother and sister watching for Jim's return at night, neither the doctor nor any one knew. But at other moments Dr. Barrère found it impossible to resist, any more than the women did, the charm of a nature which had not lost its distinction even in the haunts where he had lost everything else. He even tried to attract and draw to himself the prodigal, entertaining visions on the subject and fancying how, if there were a man closely connected with the family, himself to wit, Arnold Barrère, and not merely women who wept and reproached and condoned and wept again, but never made a determined stand, nor struck a decisive blow, there might still be hope for Jim. It could not be said that this told as a motive in the fervour with which he offered himself to Agnes Surtees. The doctor was in love warmly and honestly, and as he made his declaration thought, as a lover ought, of nothing but Agnes. Yet when she hesitated and faltered, and after a moment broke the long silence and spoke to him openly of her brother, there was the warmth of a personal desire in the eagerness with which he met her confessions half way. "Jim is no drawback," he said eagerly—"to me none. I can help you with Jim. If you will have me there shall be no question of depriving him of any love or care. He shall have me in addition to help him to better things." "Oh," Agnes had cried, giving him both her hands in the fervour of love and trust, "God bless you, Arnold, for speaking of better things for Jim." And it was on this holy ground that their contract was made. Henceforward there were no concealments from him.

Dr. Barrère was not a man to let the grass grow under his feet. There was no reason why his marriage should be delayed. He wanted to have his wife—a possession almost indispensable, he assured Mrs. Surtees, with a smile, to a medical man; and the mother, anxious to see one child's fate assured, and still more anxious, catching with feverish hope at the help so hopefully offered for the other, had no inclination to put obstacles in the way. The marriage day was settled, and all the preparations thereto begun, when the sudden horror which still envelopes the name of Surtees in Poolborough arose in a moment, and the following incidents occurred to Dr. Barrère.

CHAPTER II.

He was going to visit a patient in a suburb one dark October night. But it could scarcely be called dark. There was a pallid moon somewhere among the clouds whitening the

heavy mist that lay over the half-built environs of the town—dismal blank spaces—fields which were no longer fields, streets which were not yet streets. The atmosphere was charged with vapour, which in its turn was made into a dim, confusing whiteness by the hidden moon. Everybody knows how dismal are these outskirts of a great city. A house built here and there stood out with a sinister solidity against the blank around. New roads and streets laid out with indications of pavement, cut across the ravaged fields. Here there was a mass of bricks, and there a pool of water. A piece of ragged hedgerow, a remnant of its earlier state, still bordered the highway here and there; a forlorn tree shedding its leaves at every breath of air stood at the corner where two ways met. Dr. Barrère was no ways timid, but he felt a chill of isolation and something like danger as he pushed his way towards one of the furthest points of the uncompleted road, where one house stood shivering in the vague damp and whiteness. He had to cross the other branching road, at the corner of which stood the shivering poplar, which shed its leaves as if with a perpetual shrinking of fear. There he was vaguely aware of something standing in the shade of the ragged hedgerow—a figure which moved as he passed, and seemed to make a step forward as if awaiting some one. To say that it was a figure he saw would be too distinct—he saw a movement, a something more solid than the mist, which detached itself as if with a suggestion of watchfulness, and immediately subsided again back into the shadows. Dr. Barrère, though he was not timid, felt the thrill as of a possible danger, the suggestion having something in it more moving than a distincter peril. But if there was a man lurking there waiting for some passer-by, it was not at least for him, and he walked quickly on, and presently in the interest of his patient, and in the many thoughts that hurry through every active brain, forgot the curious hint of mystery and danger which had for a moment excited his imagination.

When he approached the spot again on his return, even the suggestion had died out of his mind. His eyesight and all his faculties were keen, as befits his profession, and he saw, without being aware that he was seeing, everything that came within his range of vision. Accordingly he perceived without paying any attention, the vague figure of a man crossing the opening of the road where the poplar marked the corner, coming towards him. He saw the solid speck in the white mist approaching—then in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, this vague silhouette in the night became a sudden swift scene of pantomimic tragedy, all done and over in a moment. A sudden movement took place in the scene; another something, almost less than a shadow, suddenly came into it from behind the poplar. No, these words are too strong. What came into the night was the sound of a crashing blow and a fall, and another figure, in a different position, standing over something prostrate, raining down, as in a fit of frantic passion, blow on blow. Passion, murder, horror, came in a second into the still confusion of the misty air. Then, swift as the sudden commotion, came a pause—a wild cry of consternation, as if for the first time the actor in this terrible momentary tragedy had become aware what he was doing. The spectator's senses were so absorbed in the suddenness of the catastrophe that there was time enough for the whole drama to enact itself before he found voice. He had broken mechanically into a run, and thought that he called out. But it was not (it seemed to him in the hurried progression of ideas) his cry or the sound of his approach, but a sudden horror which had seized the man (was he a murderer?), who had in a moment come to himself. When the doctor at full speed, and calling out mechanically, automatically for Help! help! reached the spot where the prostrate figure was lying, the other had taken flight down the cross road and was already invisible in the distance. The doctor's first care was for the victim. He was not an avenger of blood, but a healer of men.

Presently there appeared around him two or three startled people—one from the nearest house carrying a small lamp, which made the strangest, weird appearance in the misty night; a passer-by on his way home; a vagrant from the deserted fields. They helped the doctor to turn over the murdered man, who was still living, but no more, and who, it was evident to Dr. Barrère's experienced eyes, was on the point of death and beyond all human help. The lamp had been placed on the ground close by, and sent up an odour of paraffin along with the yellow rays that proceeded from its globe of light, and the figures kneeling and bending over the inanimate thing in the midst looked more like a group of murderers than people bringing help and succour. Some time had elapsed before the means of transporting him even to the nearest house had been procured, and by that time there was no longer any question of what could be done on his behalf, and all that was possible was to carry away the

body. Dr. Barrère walked beside the melancholy convoy to the nearest police station, where he made his deposition: and then he went home in all the tremor of excitement and mental commotion. He had fortunately no visits to pay that evening of any importance; but he was too much stirred and troubled to remain quietly at home, and after a while hurried out to Agnes, his natural confidant, to tell her all about the shock he had received. It struck him with surprise to see, when he entered the little drawing-room, that Jim was with his mother and sister. It was a thing that had very seldom happened before. He sat apart from them at the writing-table, where he was writing, or making believe to write, letters. The sight of him struck Dr. Barrère with a certain surprise, but he could not have told why. There was no reason why he should not be found in his mother's drawing-room. It was true that he was rarely to be seen there, but yet sometimes he would make his appearance. This evening he had dressed for dinner, which was still more unusual: perhaps he was going out to some late evening party; perhaps some one had been expected to dinner. These thoughts flew vaguely through Dr. Barrère's mind, he could not have told why. There was no particular reason why he should thus desire to penetrate the motives of Jim Surtees' behaviour, or to explain to himself why the young man was there. The speculation passed through his head without thought, if such an expression may be used, without any volition of his, as half our thoughts do, like the chance flight of birds or butterflies across the air. They did not detain him a moment as he came forward with his greetings, and met the pleased surprise of the reception which the ladies gave him. "I thought it was too late to look for you," his Agnes said, with a brightening of all the soft lines of her face, as if the sun had risen upon a landscape. And then, as it was cold, a chair was drawn for him near the fire. "You have been kept late on your round to-night," said Mrs. Surtees. "Have you any very anxious case?"

"It is no case that has kept me," said the doctor. "I have had a dreadful encounter in the road. You know that district up beyond St. George's-in-the-Fields—those half-built, desolate villas and cottages. The roads are as lonely as if they were in the middle of a wood. A new quarter by night is as bad as a bare moor."

Agnes stood listening with her hand on the back of his chair, but still a smile upon her face—the smile of pleasure at his coming. Mrs. Surtees had let her knitting fall upon her lap, and was looking at him, listening with pleased interest. They had not perceived the agitation which, indeed, until he began to speak, he had managed to suppress. "And what happened?" Mrs. Surtees said.

"I have been," he answered, his voice breaking in spite of himself, "the witness of a murder."

"Good heavens!" The ladies were too much startled to put another question except with their eager eyes. They drew closer to him; the hand of Agnes glided to his shoulder from the back of his chair. What she thought first was that his emotion did honour to him.

Then he described to them briefly what he had seen—the lurking figure in the shadow which had alarmed himself as he passed first, but which he soon perceived had no hostile intentions towards him; the appearance of the man approaching from the opposite direction as he returned; the sudden assault; the rapid, breathless, horrible suddenness of the tragedy. The ladies hung upon his lips, making exclamations of horror. It was not till afterwards that Dr. Barrère became aware that the young man at the table behind made no sign, said not a word. He had told everything, and answered half a dozen hurried, faltering questions before Jim made any remark. Then he suddenly stirred behind backs (the group at the fireside having forgotten his presence) and asked "What are you talking about? What's happened?" in a deep half-growling voice, as of a man disturbed in his occupation by some fuss of which he did not grasp the meaning.

"Oh," said Mrs. Surtees wiping her moist eyes, "did you not hear, Jim? The doctor has seen a murder committed. God preserve us! I feel as if I had seen it myself. A dreadful thing like that coming so near us! It is as if we were mixed up in it," she said.

"A murder? Are you sure it was a murder? It might be nothing more than a quarrel—how could you tell in the dark?" said Jim, always in the same gruff, almost indignant voice.

"If you had seen it as I did you would have been in no doubt," said Dr. Barrère, turning half round, and catching a side view of the tall figure slouching with hands in his pockets, his face clouded with a scowl of displeasure, his shoulders up to his ears. This silhouette against the light gave him a thrill, he scarcely knew why. He paused a moment, and then added, "After all you may be right; it was murder to all intents and purposes—but whether it was intended to be so there may be a doubt."

"You are always so ready to come to tragical conclusions," said Jim in easier tones. "I dare say it will turn out to have been a quarrel, and no more."

"A quarrel in which one is killed is apt to look like murder."

These words gave them all a shivering sensation. Even Jim's shoulders went up to his ears as if he shared the involuntary shudder—and Mrs. Surtees said again, drying her eyes, "It is as if we were mixed up in it. Poor man, poor man, cut off in a moment, without a thought!"

"It appears he is a well known and very bad character," said Dr. Barrère. "I feel almost more sorry for the poor wretch that did it. The cry he gave when he saw what he had done still rings in my ears."

"Then you think he did not mean it, Arnold?"

"God knows! You would have said he meant everything that passion and rage could mean to see the blows; but that cry——"

"He repented, perhaps—when it was too late."

"It was horror—it was consternation. It was the cry of a man who suddenly saw what he had done."

There was a pause of sympathetic horror and pity. Then Jim Surtees went back to the writing-table, and Dr. Barrère continued his conversation with the ladies, which, however they tried to break into other and happier subjects, returned again and again to the terrible scene from which he had just come. They spoke in low tones together over the fire—the doctor recounting over and over again the feelings with which he had contemplated the extraordinary, sudden tragedy, the rapidity with which all its incidents followed each other, leaving him scarcely time to cry out before all was over. He was naturally full of it, and could speak of nothing else, and his betrothed and her mother, always sympathetic, threw themselves entirely into the excitement which still possessed him. It was late when he rose to go away, soothed and calmed, and with a sense of having at last exhausted the incident. It startled him as he turned round, after taking leave of Mrs. Surtees, to see that Jim was still there. And the aspect of the young man was sufficiently remarkable. The candles on the writing-table behind which he sat had burnt low. They had escaped from the little red shades which had been placed over them, and were flaring low, like a level sun in the evening, upon the figure behind, which, with his head bowed in his hands and shoulders up to his ears, seemed unconscious of all that was passing. Jim neither saw nor heard the doctor move. He was absorbed in some all-important matter of his own.

Next day Dr. Barrère was still deeply occupied by the scene he had seen. He was summoned for the coroner's inquest, and he was, as was natural, questioned by everybody he met upon a subject which was in all men's mouths. It was equally natural that he should return next evening to bring the account of all the encounters he had gone through and all that was news on the subject to Agnes and her mother. Once more he noted with surprise that Jim was in the drawing-room. Was he turning over a new leaf? Had he seen the folly of his ways at last?

They were sitting as before over the fire, Dr. Barrère telling his story, the ladies listening with absorbed attention. The interest of this terrible tragedy which had taken place almost within their ken, which they were seeing though his eyes, was absorbing to them. They wanted to know everything, the most minute details, what questions had been asked him, and what he had replied. Jim was still behind backs at the writing-table with the two candles in their red shades, which did not betray his face, but threw a strange light upon his hands and the occupation in which he seemed to be absorbed. He was playing an old-fashioned game with small coloured glass balls on a round board, called solitaire in the days when it was in fashion. The little tinkle of the balls as he placed them in the necessary order came in during the pauses in the talk like a faint accompaniment. But no one looked at him: they were too much absorbed in Dr. Barrère's report.

"And are you the only witness, Arnold?" Agnes asked.

"The only one who saw the deed done," he said. "It is very rarely that there is even one witness to the actual fact of a murder. But there is other evidence than mine; the man is supposed to have been seen by various people, and there is a dumb witness of the first importance, the stick which he must have thrown away, or which dropped from his hand in the horror, as I shall always believe, of his discovery of what he had done."

At this point there was a ring as of the glass balls all tinkling together on the board. The doctor turned round, slightly startled in the high tension of his nerves, and saw that Jim had upset his plaything, and that the balls were rolling about the table. But this was far from being an unusual accident in the game, and neither Mrs. Surtees nor

Agnes took any notice, their nerves were not strained as Dr. Barrère's had been. The mother spoke low with a natural thrill of horror and pity. "And is it known," she said, "is it known to whom the stick belongs?"

Before Dr. Barrère could reply there came a knock to the door—a knock not at the door of the room in which they sat, but below at the street door, a thing unusual indeed at that hour, but not so startling in general as to excite or alarm them. But perhaps all their nerves were affected more or less. It was very sudden and sharp, and came into the calm domestic atmosphere with a scarcely comprehensible shock. They all turned round, and Jim, the doctor saw, had suddenly risen up, and stood with his face turned towards the door. The summons rang through the silence with an effect altogether out of keeping with its simplicity.

"Who can that be so late," said Mrs. Surtees. "Jim, will you go and see?"

"It must be some one for me," the doctor said.

"Poor Arnold! I hope it is some one near," said Agnes faltering—for neither of them believed what they said. It was something terrible, something novel, some startling new event whatever it was. Jim, instead of doing as his mother wished, sat down again behind the writing-table, within the shelter of the red shades on the candles, and they all waited, scarcely venturing to draw breath. Presently the neat parlour-maid, pale too, and with a visible tremor, opened the door. She said, with a troubled look at her mistress, that, Please there was some one down stairs who wanted to speak to Mr. Jim. Mrs. Surtees was the last to be moved by the general agitation. She said "For Mr. Jim? But let him come up, Ellen. Jim, you had better ask your friend to come up stairs."

Once more there was a terrible, incomprehensible pause. Jim, who had fallen rather than re-seated himself on the sofa which stood behind the writing-table, said not a word; his face was not visible behind the shaded lights. Mrs. Surtees threw a glance round her—a troubled appeal for she knew not what enlightenment. Then she said breathlessly, "What has happened? What is the matter? Who is it? Ellen, you will show the gentleman up stairs."

Heavens! how they stood listening, panic-stricken, not knowing what they were afraid of, nor what there was to fear. Mrs. Surtees still kept her seat tremulously, and Jim, lost in the corner of the sofa, suddenly extinguished the candles—an act which they all seemed to approve and understand without knowing why. And then there came a heavy foot ascending the stairs. Mrs. Surtees did not know the man who came in—a tall soldierly man with a clear and healthful countenance. It even gave her a momentary sensation of comfort to see that Jim's "friend" was no blear-eyed young rake, but a person so respectable. She rose to meet him with her old-fashioned courtesy. "Though I have not the pleasure of knowing you," she said with a smile, which was tremulous by reason of that causeless agitation, "my son's friends are always welcome." Oh heaven above! her son's friend! Dr. Barrère was the only one among them who knew the man. The sight of him cleared the whole matter in a moment, and shed a horrible light over everything to the doctor's eyes. He made a sudden sign to the new-comer, imploring silence.

"I know this gentleman, too, Mrs. Surtees," he said, "he is one of my—friends, also. Would it be taking a great liberty if I were to ask you to leave us for a few minutes the use of this room? Agnes, it is a great intrusion—but—for God's sake take her away!" he said in his betrothed's ear.

Mrs. Surtees looked at him with some surprise and an air of gentle dignity not entirely without offence. "My dear," she said to Agnes, "Dr. Barrère would not ask such a thing without good reason for it, so let us go." She was not a woman who had been accustomed to take the lead even in her own family, and she was glad, glad beyond description, to believe that the business, whatever it was, was Dr. Barrère's business, and not—anything else. She accepted it with a trembling sense of relief, yet a feeling that the doctor was perhaps taking a little too much upon him, turning her out of her own room.

The two men stood looking at each other as the ladies went away, with Jim still huddled in the corner of the sofa, in the shade, making no sign. Dr. Barrère saw, however, that the stranger, with a glance round of keen much-practised eyes, had at once seen him, and placed himself between Jim and the door. When the ladies had disappeared the doctor spoke quickly. "Well," he said, "what is it, Morton? Some new information?"

"Something I regret as much as any one can, Dr. Barrère. I have to ask Mr. Surtees to come with me. There need be no exposure for the moment: but I must take him without delay."

"Take him!" The doctor made a lost

effort to appear not to perceive. He said, "Have you too seen something, then? Have you further evidence to give, Jim?"

There was no reply. Neither did the superintendent say a word. They stood all three silent. Jim had risen up; his limbs seemed unable to support him. He stood leaning on the table, looking out blankly over the two extinguished candles and their red shades. The officer went up and laid his hand lightly upon the young man's shoulder. "Come," he said, "you know what I'm here for: and I am sorry, very sorry for you, Mr. Jim: but no doubt you'll be able to make it all clear."

"Barrère," said Jim, struggling against the dryness in his throat, "you can prove that I've not been out of the house—that I was at home all last night. I couldn't—I couldn't, you know, be in two places at one time—could I, Barrère?"

"Mr. Jim, you must remember that whatever you say now will tell against you at the trial. I take you to witness, doctor, that I haven't even told him what it was for."

Jim ground out an oath from between his clenched teeth. "Do I need to ask?" he said. "Doesn't everybody know I hated him—and good reason too—hated him and threatened him—but, God help me, not to kill him!" cried the young man with a voice of despair.

CHAPTER III.

Dr. Barrère was left to break the news to the mother and daughter. He never knew how he accomplished this dreadful office. They came back when they heard the door shut, evidently not expecting to find him, believing that he had withdrawn with his "friend"—and the anxious, searching eyes with which his Agnes looked round the room, the mingled terror and pleasure of her look on discovering him, never faded from his mind. Mrs. Surtees was more disappointed than pleased. She said, with an evident sudden awakening of anxiety, "Where is Jim?" And then he had to tell them. How did he find words to do it? But the wonderful thing, the dreadful thing, was that after the shock of the first intimation there seemed little surprise in the looks of these poor ladies. The mother sank down in her chair and hid her face in her hands, and Agnes stood behind her mother, throwing her arms round her, pressing that bowed head against her breast. They did not cry out indignantly that it was not—could not be true. They were silent, like those upon whom something long looked for had come at last. The doctor left them after a while with a chill in his very soul. He could say nothing; he could not attempt to console them in the awful silence which seemed to have fallen upon them. Agnes tried to smile as he went away—tried with her trembling lips to say something. But she could not conceal from him that she wished him to go, that he could give no comfort, that the best thing he could do for them in their misery was to leave them alone. He went home very miserable in that consciousness of being put aside, and allowed no share in the anguish of the woman whom he loved. It was intolerable to him; it was unjust. He said to himself as he walked along that the tacit abandonment of Jim, the absence of all protest on their part that his guilt was impossible—a protest which surely a mother and sister in any circumstances ought to have made—was hard, was unjust. If all the world condemned him, yet they should not have condemned him. He took Jim's part hotly, feeling that he was a fellow sufferer. Even were he dissipated and reckless, poor fellow, there was a long, long way between that and murder. Murder! There was nothing in Jim which could make it possible that he could have to do with a murder. If he was hasty in temper, poor fellow, his nature was sweet, notwithstanding all his errors. Even he, Arnold Barrère, a man contemptuous of the manner of folly which had ruined Jim, a man with whom wrath and revenge might have awakened more sympathy—even he had come to have a tenderness for the erring young man. And to think that Jim could have lain in wait for any one, could have taken a man at a disadvantage, was, he declared to himself with indignation, impossible. It was impossible! though the two women who were nearest to him—his mother and his sister—did not say so, did not stand up in vindication of the unhappy youth.

When he had exhausted this natural indignation Dr. Barrère began to contemplate the situation more calmly, and to arrange its incidents in his mind. The horror of the thought that he was himself the chief witness affected him little at first, for it was to the fact only that he could speak, and the culprit, so far as he was concerned, was without identity, a shadow in the night, and no more. But a chill came over that flush of indignant partisanship with which he had made a mental stand for Jim when the other circumstances flashed upon him.

He remembered his own surprise to find Jim in the drawing-room when he arrived at Mrs. Surtees' house; to see his dress so unusual, though scarcely more unusual than the fact of his being there. He remembered how the young man held aloof, how the candles had flared upon him neglected. The little scene came before Dr. Barrère like a picture—the candle shades standing up in a ludicrous neglect, the light flaring under them upon Jim's face. And then again, to-night: the senseless game with which he seemed to amuse himself; the tremble of his hands over the plaything; his absence of interest in the matter which was so exciting to the others. Why was Jim there at all? Why did he ask no question? Why keep behind unexcited, unsurprised, while the doctor told his story? And then the reason thrust itself upon him in Jim's own words—"I couldn't be in two places at once, could I? You can prove that I was here last night." Good God, what did it mean? Jim—Jim!—and his mother and sister, who had sunk into despair without a word, who had never said as women ought, "We know him better; it is not true—it is not true."

Dr. Barrère went home more wretched than words can say. Hard and terrible is an unjust accusation; but oh, how easy, how sweet, how possible, is even the shame which is undeserved! A century of that is as nothing in comparison with a day or hour of that which is merited—of the horror which is true. He tried to hope still that it was not true; but he felt coming over him like a pall, the terror which he could now perceive had quenched the very hearts in the bosoms of the two women who were Jim's natural defenders. They had not been able to say a word—and neither could he. Dr. Barrère stood still in the middle of the dark street with the damp wind blowing in his face as all this came before him. A solitary passer-by looked round surprised, and looked again, thinking the man was mad. He saw in a moment as by a revelation, all that was before them—and himself. The horrible notoriety, the disgrace, the endless stigma. It would crush *them* and tear their lives asunder; but for him also, would not that be ruin too?

CHAPTER IV.

THE trial took place after a considerable interval, for the assizes were just over when the man was killed. In that dreadful time of suspense and misery proof after proof accumulated slowly with a gradual drawing together as of the very web of fate. The stick which was found by the body of the murdered man was Jim's stick, with his initials upon it, in a silver band—alas, his mother's gift. He was proved to have had a desperate quarrel with the man, who was one of those who had corrupted and misled him. Then the *alibi* which had seemed at first so strong disappeared into worse than nothing when examined: for Jim had been seen on his flight home; he had been seen to enter furtively and noiselessly into his mother's house, though the servants were ready to swear that he had not gone out that night; and all the precautions he had taken, instead of bringing him safety, only made his position worse, being shown to be precautions consciously taken against a danger foreseen. All these things grew into certainty before the trial; so that it was all a foregone conclusion in the minds of the townspeople, some of whom yielded to the conviction with heartfelt pity, and some with an eager improving of the situation, pointing out to what horrible conclusions vice was sure to come.

Meanwhile this strange and horrible event, which had held the town for more than nine days in wonder and perturbation, and which had given a moral to many a tale, and point to many a sermon, held one little circle of unhappy creatures as in a ring of iron—unable to get away from it, unable to forget it, their hearts, their hopes, their life itself, marked for ever with its trace of blood. The two ladies had roused themselves from their first stupor into a half fictitious adoption of their natural *rôle* as defenders of Jim. God knows through how many shocks and horrors of discovery Jim had led them, making something new, something worse, always the thing to be expected, before they had come to that pitch that their hearts had no power to make any protest at all. But when the morning rose upon their troubled souls they began to say to each other that it could not be true. It could not be true! Jim had now and then an *accès* of sudden rage, but he was the kind of man of whom it is said that he would not hurt a fly. How could it be possible that he would do a murder? It was not possible; any other kind of evil thing—but not that, oh, not that! They said this to each other when they rose up from the uneasy bed in which mother and daughter had lain down together, not able to separate from each other—though those rules of use and wont which are so strong on women made them lie down as if to sleep, where no sleep was. But when the light came—that awful

light which brings back common life to us on the morning after a great calamity—they looked into each other's pale faces, and with one voice said "Oh no, no, it cannot be!" "Mother," cried Agnes, "he would not hurt a fly. Oh, how kind he was when I was ill, when you had your accident—do you remember?" Who does not know what these words are—Do you remember? All that he was who is dead; all that he might have been who is lost; all the hopes, the happy prospects, the cheerful days before trouble came. No words more poignant can be said. They did not need to ask each other what they remembered—that was enough. They clasped each other and kissed with trembling lips, and then Agnes rose, bidding her mother rest, and went to fetch her the woman's cordial, the cup of tea—which is so often all one poor female creature can offer to another by way of help.

No, no, he could not have done it! They took a little comfort for the moment. And another strange comfort they took in a thing which was one of the most damning pieces of evidence against Jim: which was that he had quarrelled violently with the murdered man and denounced him, and declared hatred and everlasting enmity against him. The story of the quarrel as it was told to them brought tears, which were almost tears of joy, to Mrs. Surtees' eyes. The man who had been killed was one of those adventurers who haunt the outskirts of society wherever there are victims to be found. He had preyed upon the lives and souls of young men in Poolborough since the days when Jim Surtees was an innocent and credulous boy. It was not this man's fault that Jim had gone astray, for Jim, alas, was all ready for his fall, and eager after everything that was forbidden; but in the fits of remorse and misery which sometimes came upon him it was perhaps no wonder if he laid it at Langton's door; and that the mother should have held Langton responsible, who could wonder? The facts of the quarrel were as so many nails in Jim's coffin: but God help the poor woman, they gave consolation to his mother's heart. They meant repentance, she thought, they meant generosity and a pathetic indignation, and more, they meant succour; for the quarrel had arisen over an unfortunate youth whom the blackleg was throwing his toils around as he had thrown them around Jim, and whom Mrs. Surtees believed Jim had saved by exposing the villain. The story was told reluctantly, delicately, to the poor ladies, as almost sealing Jim's fate: and to the consternation of the narrator, who was struck dumb, and could only stare at them in a kind of stupor of astonishment, they looked at each other and broke forth into cries at first inarticulate which were almost cries of joy. "You do not see the bearing of it, I fear," said the solicitor who had the management of the case, as soon as out of his astonishment he had recovered his voice. "Oh sir," cried Mrs. Surtees, "what I see is this, that my boy has saved another poor woman's son, God bless him! and that will not be forgotten, that will not be forgotten!" This gentleman withdrew in a state of speechless consternation. "No, it will not be forgotten," he said to Dr. Barrère. "I think the poor lady has gone out of her senses, and little wonder. It is a piece of evidence which we can never get over." Dr. Barrère shook his head, not understanding the women much better than the lawyer did. This gave them consolation, and yet it was the seal of Jim's fate.

Dr. Barrère himself in the long period of waiting was a most unhappy man. He stood by the Surtees nobly, everybody said. No son could have been more attentive than he was to the poor mother who was entirely broken by this blow, and had suddenly become an old woman. And he never wavered in his faith and loyalty to Agnes, who but for that noble fidelity would, everybody said, have been the most of all to be pitied. For Agnes was young, and had all her life before her, with the stain of this crime upon her name; and if her lover had not stood by her what would have become of her? The people who had been doubtful of Dr. Barrère, as half a Frenchman, as too great a theorist, as a man who had not been quite successful in his outset, began now to look upon him with increased respect, and his firmness, his high honour, his disinterestedness were commented upon on all sides. But in his heart the doctor was far from happy. His life, too, seemed in question as well as Jim's. If the worst came to the worst, he asked himself, would society, however sympathetic for the moment, receive the family of a man who had been hanged—horrible words!—without prejudice? Would there not be a stigma upon the name of Surtees, and even upon the name of him who had given his own as a shield to the family of the murderer? He did his duty—no man more truly. He loved his Agnes with all the warmth of an honest heart, taking his share of all her trouble, supporting her through everything, making himself for her sake the brother of a criminal, and one of the objects of popular curiosity and pity. All this he did from day to day, and went on

doing it: but still there were struggles and dreadful misgivings in Dr. Barrère's heart. He was a proud man, and except for what he made by his profession a poor one. If that failed him he had nothing else to fall back upon, and he already knew the misery of unsuccess. He knew what it was to see his practice wasting away, to see his former patients pass by shamefacedly, conscious of having transferred their ailments and themselves to other hands, to be put aside for no expressed reason out of the tide of life. At Poolborough he had begun to forget the experiences of his beginning, and to feel that at last he had got hold of the thread which would lead him if not to fortune, at least to comfort and the certainties of an established course of living. Would this last, he asked himself? would it make no difference to him if he identified himself with ruin—ruin so hideous and complete? The question was a terrible one, and brought the sweat to his brow when in chance moments, between his visits and his cases, between the occupations and thoughts which absorbed him, now and then, suddenly, in spite of all the pains he took, it would start up and look him in the face. "He had a brother who was hanged," that was what people would say; they would not even after a little lapse of time pause to recollect that it was his wife's brother. The brand would go with them wherever he went. "You remember the great murder case in Poolborough? Well, these were the people, and the brother was hanged." These words seemed to detach themselves and float in the air. He said them to himself sometimes, or rather they were said in his ear, without anything else to connect them. The phrase seemed already a common phrase which any one might use—"The brother was hanged." And then cold drops of moisture would come out upon his forehead. And all the possibilities of life, the success which is dear to a man, the advancement of which he knew himself capable—was it all to go? Was he to be driven back once more to that everlasting re-commencement which makes the heart of a man sick?

These thoughts accompanied Dr. Barrère as he went and came, a son, and more than a son, to Mrs. Surtees, and to Agnes the most faithful, the most sympathetic of lovers. At such a moment, and in face of the awful catastrophe which had come upon them, any talk of marriage would have been out of place. He had, indeed, suggested it at first in mingled alarm and desperation, and true desire to do his best, in the first impulse of overwhelming sympathy, and at the same time in the first glimpse of all that might follow, and sickening horror of self-distrust lest his resolution might give way. He would have fled from himself, from all risks of this nature into the safety of a bond which he could not break. But Agnes had silently negatived the proposal with a shake of her head and a smile of pathetic tenderness. She, too, had thoughts of the future, of which she breathed no word to any one, not even to her mother. All that was in his mind as subject of alarm and misgiving was reflected, with that double clearness and vivification which is given to everything reflected in the clear flowing of a river, in the mind of Agnes. She saw all with the distinctness of one to whom the sacrifice of herself was nothing when compared with the welfare of those she loved. He was afraid lest these alarms might bring him into temptation, and the temptation be above his strength; and his soul was disturbed and made miserable. But to Agnes the matter took another aspect. All that he foresaw she foresaw, but the thought brought neither disturbance nor fear. It brought the exaltation of a great purpose—the solemn joy of approaching martyrdom. Arnold should never suffer for her. It was she who would have the better part and suffer for him.

The dreadful fact that it was Dr. Barrère only who had witnessed the murder, and that he would have to speak and prove what he had seen, became more and more apparent to them all as the time drew on. His description of the blows that had been rained down wildly on the victim, and of the lurking figure in the shadow whom he had noted, as he passed the first time, took away all hope that it might be supposed the act of a momentary madness without premeditation. The doctor had told his story with all the precision that was natural to him before he knew who it was that would be convicted by it; and now it was no longer possible for him, even had his conscience permitted it, to soften the details which he had at first given so clearly, or to throw any mist upon his clear narrative. He had to repeat it all, knowing the fatal effect it must have, standing up with Jim's pale face before him, with a knowledge that somewhere in a dim corner Agnes sat with bowed head listening—to what she already knew so well. The doctor's countenance was as pale as Jim's. His mouth grew dry as he bore his testimony; but not all the terrible consequences could make him alter a word. He could scarcely refrain a groan, a sob, when he had done; and this involuntary evidence of what it cost him to

THE CONFESSION OF LOVE.

Engraved by E. Wascott, *from the Picture by* F. A. Delobbe.

tell the truth increased the effect in the highest degree, as the evidence of an unwilling witness always does. There was but one point in which he could help the prisoner; and fortunately that too had been a special point in his previous evidence: but it was not until Dr. Barrère got into the hands of Jim's advocate that this was brought out. "I see," the counsel said, "that in your previous examination you speak of a cry uttered by the assailant after the blows which you have described. You describe it as a cry of horror. In what sense do you mean this to be understood?"

"I mean," said Dr. Barrère very pointedly and clearly—and if there had been any divided attention in the crowded court where so many people had come to hear the fate of one whom they had known from his childhood, every mind was roused now, and every eye intent upon the speaker—"I mean——" He paused to give fuller force to what he said.

"I mean that the man who struck those blows for the first time realised what he was doing. The cry was one of consternation and dismay. It was the cry of a man horrified to see what he had done."

"The cry was so remarkable that it made a great impression on your mind?"

"A very great impression. I do not think I have ever heard an utterance which affected me so much."

"You were hurrying forward at the time to interpose in the scuffle? Did you distinguish any words? Did you recognise the voice?"

"It would give an erroneous impression to say that I meant to interpose in the scuffle. There was no scuffle. The man fell at once. He never had a chance of defending himself. I did not recognise the voice, nor can I say that any words were used. It was nothing but a cry."

"The cry, however, was of such a nature as to induce you to change your mind in respect to what had occurred?"

"I had no time to form any theory. The impression it produced on my mind was that an assault was intended, but not murder: and that all at once it had become apparent to the unfortunate——" Here the doctor paused, and there was a deep sobbing breath of intense attention drawn by the crowd. He stopped for a minute, and then resumed, "It had become apparent to the—assailant that he had—gone too far; that the consequences were more terrible than he had intended. He threw down what he had in his hand, and fled in horror."

"You were convinced, then, that there was no murderous intention in the act of the unfortunate—as you have well said—assailant?"

"That was my conviction," said Dr. Barrère.

The effect made upon the assembly was great. And though it was no doubt diminished more or less by the cross-examination of the counsel for the prosecution, who protested vehemently against the epithet of unfortunate applied to the man who had attacked in the dark another man who was proceeding quietly about his own business, who had lain in wait for him and assaulted him murderously with every evidence of premeditation, it still remained the strongest point in the defence. "You say that you had no time to form any theory?" said the prosecutor; "yet you have told us that you rushed forward calling out murder. Was this before or after you heard the cry, so full of meaning which you have described?"

"It was probably almost at the same moment," said Dr. Barrère.

"Yet, even in the act of crying out murder, you were capable of noticing all the complicated sentiments which you now tell us were in the assailant's cry!"

"In great excitement one takes no note of the passage of time—a minute contains as much as an hour."

"And you expect us to believe that in that minute, and without the help of words, you were enlightened as to the meaning of the act by a mere inarticulate cry?"

"I tell you the impression produced on my mind, as I told it at the coroner's inquest," said Dr. Barrère, steadily; "as I have told it to my friends from the first."

"Yet this did not prevent you from shouting murder?"

"No; it did not prevent me from calling for help in the usual way."

This was all that could be made of the doctor. It remained the strongest point in poor Jim's favour, who was, as everybody saw to be inevitable, condemned; yet recommended to mercy because of what Dr. Barrère had said. Otherwise there were many features in the case that roused the popular pity. The bad character of the man who had been killed, the evil influence he was known to have exercised, the injury he had done to Jim himself and to so many others, and the very cause of the quarrel in which Jim had threatened and announced his intention of punishing him—all these things, had Jim been tried in France, would have produced a verdict modified by extenuating circumstances. In England it did not touch the

decision, but it produced that vague recommendation to mercy with which pity satisfies itself when it can do no more.

Dr. Barrère took the unfortunate mother and sister home. Mrs. Surtees, broken as she was, could not be absent from the court when her son's fate was to be determined. She was as one stricken dumb as they took her back. Now and then she would put her trembling hands to her eyes as if expecting tears which did not come. Her very heart and soul were crushed by the awful doom which had been spoken. And the others did not even dare to exchange a look. The horror which enveloped them was too terrible for speech. It was only after an interval had passed, and life, indomitable life which always rises again whatever may be the anguish that subdues it for a moment, had returned in pain and fear to its struggle with the intolerable, that words and the power of communication returned. Then Dr. Barrère told the broken-hearted women that both he himself and others in the town who knew Jim, with all the influence that could be brought to bear, would work for a revision of the sentence. It was upon his own evidence that the hopes, which those who were not so deeply, tremendously interested, but who regarded the case with an impartial eye, began to entertain, were founded. "I hope that the Home Secretary may send for me," he said; "they think he will. God grant it!" He too had worked himself into a kind of hope.

"Oh," cried Agnes, melting for the first time into tears at the touch of a possible deliverance, "if we could go, as they used to do, to the Queen, his mother and his sister, on our knees!"

Mrs. Surtees sat and listened to them with her immovable face of misery. "Don't speak to me of hope, for I cannot bear it," she said. "Oh, don't speak of hope; there is none—none! Nothing but death and shame."

"Yes, mother;" said Dr. Barrère, and he added under his breath, "whatever happens—whatever happens—there shall be no death of shame."

CHAPTER V.

The recommendation to mercy was very strong; almost all the principal people in the town interested themselves, and the judge himself had been persuaded to add a potent word; but as he did so he shook his head, and told the petitioners that their arguments were all sentimental. "What does your lordship say then to the doctor's testimony?" was asked him, upon which he shook his head more and more. "The doctor's testimony, above all," he said. "Mind you, I think that probably the doctor was right, but it is not a solid argument, it is all sentiment; and that is what the Home Office makes no account of." This was very discouraging. But still there was a certain enthusiasm in the town in Jim's favour, as well as a natural horror that one who really belonged (if he had kept his position) to the best class, should come to such an end; and the chief people who got up this recommendation to mercy were warm supporters of the Government. That, too, they felt convinced, must tell for something. And there reigned in Poolborough a certain hope, which Dr. Barrère sometimes shared.

Sometimes; for on many occasions he took the darker view—the view so universal and generally received, that the more important it is for you that a certain thing should come to pass, the more you desire it, the less likely it is to happen. And then he would ask himself was it so important that it should come to pass? At the best it was still true that Jim had killed this man. If he were not hanged for it he would be imprisoned for life: and whether it is worse to have a relative who has been hanged for a crime or one who is lingering out a long term of imprisonment for it, it is hard to tell. There did not seem much to choose between them. Perhaps even the hanging would be forgotten soonest—and it would be less of a burden. For to think of a brother in prison, who might emerge years hence with a ticket-of-leave, a disgraced and degraded man, was something terrible. Perhaps on the whole it would be best that he should die. And then Dr. Barrère shuddered. Die! Ah! if that might be, quietly, without demonstration. But as it was—— And then he would begin again, against his will, that painful circle of thought—"the brother was hanged." That was what people would say. After the horror of it had died out fantastic patients would cry, "The brother of a man who was hanged! Oh, no! don't let us call in such a person." The ladies would say this: they would shudder yet perhaps even laugh, for the pity would be forgotten, even the horror would be forgotten, and there would remain only this suggestion of discomfort—just enough to make the women feel that they would not like to have him, the brother of a man who was hanged, for

their doctor. Dr. Barrère tried all he could to escape from this circle of fatal thought: but however hard he worked, and however much he occupied himself, he could not do so always. And the thought went near sometimes to make him mad.

He had, however, much to occupy him, to keep thought away. He was the only element of comfort in the life of the two miserable women who lived under the shadow of death, their minds entirely absorbed in the approaching catastrophe, living through it a hundred times in anticipation, in despair which was made more ghastly and sickening by a flicker of terrible hope. Mrs. Surtees said that she had no hope; she would not allow the possibility to be named: but secretly dwelt upon it with an intensity of suspense which was more unendurable than any calamity. And when Agnes and her lover were alone this was the subject that occupied them to the exclusion of all others. Their own hopes and prospects were all blotted out as if they had never been. He brought her reports of what was said, and what was thought on the subject among the people who had influence, those who were straining every nerve to obtain a reprieve: and she hung upon his words breathless with an all-absorbing interest. He never got beyond the awful shadow, or could forget it, and went about all day with that cloud hanging over him, and frightened his patients with his stern and serious looks. "Dr. Barrère is not an encouraging doctor," they began to say, "he makes you think you are going to die;" for the sick people could not divest themselves of the idea that it was their complaints that were foremost in the doctor's mind and produced that severity in his looks.

But all this was light and easy to the last of the many occupations which filled Dr. Barrère's time and thoughts, and that was Jim—Jim alone in his prison, he who never had been alone, who had been surrounded all day long with his companions—the companions who had led him astray. No, they had not led him astray. Langton, who was dead, whom he had killed, had not led him astray, though he now thought so, or said so, bemoaning himself. Such a thing would be too heavy a burden for any human spirit. A man cannot ruin any more than he can save his brother. His own inclinations, his own will, his love for the forbidden, his idle wishes and follies—these were what had led him astray. And now he was left alone to think of all that, with the shadow before him of a hideous death at a fixed moment—a moment drawing nearer and nearer, which he could no more escape than he could forget it. Jim had many good qualities amid his evil ones. He was not a bad man; his sins were rather those of a foolish, self-indulgent boy. His character was that of a boy. A certain innocency, if that word may be used, lay under the surface of his vices, and long confinement away from all temptation had wrought a change in him like that that came over the leper in the Scriptures, whose flesh came again as the flesh of a little child. This was what happened to Jim, both bodily and mentally. He languished in health from his confinement, but yet his eyes regained the clearness of his youth, and his mind, all its ingenuousness, its power of affection. Lying under sentence of death he became once more the lovable human creature, the winning and attractive youth he had been in the days before trouble came. All clouds save the one cloud rolled off his soul. In all likelihood he himself forgot the course of degradation through which he had gone; everything was obliterated to him by the impossibility of sinning more—everything except the one thing which no self-delusion could obliterate, the unchangeable doom to which he was approaching day by day. Jim had none of the tremors of a murderer. He concealed nothing; he admitted freely that the verdict was just, that it was he who had lurked in the dark and awaited the villain—but only he had never meant more than to punish him. "It is all quite true what the doctor says. I knocked him down. I meant to beat him within an inch of his life. God knows if he deserved it at my hands, or any honest man's hands. And then it came over me in a moment that he never moved, that he never made a struggle. It was not because there were people coming up that I ran away. It was horror, as the doctor says. Nothing can ever happen to me again so dreadful as that," said Jim, putting up his handkerchief to wipe his damp forehead. And yet he could tell even that story with tolerable calm. He was not conscious of guilt; he had meant to do what he felt quite justifiable—rather laudable than otherwise—to thrash a rascal "within an inch of his life." He had expected the man to defend himself; he had been full of what he felt to be righteous rage, and he did not feel himself guilty now. He was haunted by no ghost; he had ceased even to shudder at the recollection of the horrible moment in which he became aware that instead of chastising he had killed.

But when his momentary occupation

with other thoughts died away and the recollection of what lay before him came back, the condition of poor Jim was a dreadful one. To die—for that!—to die on Thursday, the 3rd of September, at a horrible moment fixed and unchangeable. To feel the days running past remorselessly, swift without an event to break their monotonous flying pace—those days which were so endlessly long from dawn to twilight, which seemed as if they would never be done, which had so little night, yet which flew noiselessly, silently, bringing him ever nearer and nearer to the end. Poor Jim broke down entirely under the pressure of this intolerable certainty. Had it been done at once, the moment the sentence had been pronounced; but to sit and wait for it, look for it, anticipate it, know that every hour was bringing it nearer, that through the dark and through the day, and through all the endless circles of thoughts that surrounded and surrounded it, it was coming, always coming, not to be escaped! Jim's nerves broke down under this intolerable thing that had to be borne. He kept command of himself when he saw his mother and sister, but with Dr. Barrère he let himself go. It was a relief to him for the wretched moment. Save for the moment, nothing, alas, could be a relief—for whether he contrived to smile and subdue himself, or whether he dashed himself against the wall of impossibility that shut him in, whether he raved in anguish or madness, or slept, or tried to put a brave face upon it, it was coming all the time.

"It is sitting and waiting that is the horrible thing," he said; "to think there is nothing you can do. That's true, you know, doctor, in *Don Juan*, about the people that plunged into the sea to get drowned a little sooner and be done with it—in the shipwreck, you know. It's waiting and seeing it coming that is horrible. It is just thirteen days to-day. Death isn't what I mind; it's waiting for it. Will it be—will it be very—horrible, do you think—at the moment—when it comes?"

"No," said Dr. Barrère, "if it comes to that, not horrible at all—a moment, no more."

"A moment—but you can't tell till you try what may be in a moment. I don't mind, doctor; something sharp and soon would be a sort of relief. It is the sitting and waiting, counting the days, seeing it coming—always coming. Nobody has a right to torture a fellow like that—let them take him and hang him as the lynchers do, straight off." Then Jim was seized with a slight convulsive shudder. "And then the afterwards, doctor? for all your science you can't tell anything about that. Perhaps you don't believe in it at all. I do."

Dr. Barrère made no reply. He was not quite clear about what he believed; and he had nothing to say on such a subject to this young man standing upon the verge, with all the uncertainties and possibilities of life still so warm in him, and yet so near the one unalterable certainty. After a minute Jim resumed.

"I do," he said firmly. "I've never been what you call a sceptic. I don't believe men are: they only pretend, or perhaps think so, till it comes upon them. I wonder what they'll say to a poor fellow *up there*, doctor? I've always been told they understand up there—there can't be injustice done like here. And I've always been a true believer. I've never been led away—like that."

"It isn't a subject on which I can talk," said the doctor unsteadily; "your mother and Agnes, they know. But, Jim, for the love of God don't talk to them as you are doing now. Put on a good face for their sakes."

"Poor mother!" said Jim. He turned all at once almost to crying—softened entirely out of his wild talk. "What has she done to have a thing like this happen to her? She is a real good woman—and to have a son hanged, good Lord!" Again he shivered convulsively. "She won't live long, that's one thing; and perhaps it'll be explained to her satisfaction up there. But that's what I call unjust, Barrère, to torture a poor soul like that, that has never done anything but good all her life. You'll take care of Agnes. But mother will not live long, poor dear. Poor dear!" he repeated with a tremulous smile. "I suppose she had a happy life till I grew up—till I— I wonder what I could be born for, a fellow like me, to be hanged!" he cried with a sudden, sharp anguish in which there was the laughter of misery and the groan of despair.

Dr. Barrère left the prison with his heart bleeding; but he did not abandon Jim. On the contrary, there was a terrible attraction which drew him to the presence of the unfortunate young man. The doctor of Poolborough Jail, though not so high in the profession as himself, was one of Dr. Barrère's acquaintances, and to him he went when he left the condemned cell. The doctor told his professional brother that Surtees was in a very bad state of health. "His nerves have broken down entirely. His heart—haven't you remarked?—his heart is in such a state that he might go at any moment."

"Dear me," said the other, "he has never complained that I know of. And a very good thing too, Barrère; you don't mean to say that you would regret it if anything did happen, before——"

"No," said the doctor, "but the poor fellow may suffer. I wonder if you'd let me have the charge of him, Maxwell? I know you're a busy man. And it would please his mother to think that I was looking after him. What do you say?"

The one medical man looked at the other. Dr. Barrère was pale, but he did not shrink from the look turned upon him. "I'll tell you what I'll do, Barrère," said the prison doctor at last. "I am getting all wrong for want of a little rest. Feel my hand—my nerves are as much shaken as Surtees'. If you'll take the whole for a fortnight, so that I may take my holiday—"

Dr. Barrère thought for a moment. "A fortnight? That will be till after— I don't know how I am to do it with my practice: but I will do it, for the sake of—your health, Maxwell: for I see you are in a bad way."

"Hurrah!" said the other, "a breath of air will set me all right, and I shall be for ever obliged to you, Barrère." Then he stopped for a moment and looked keenly in his face. "You're a better man than I am, and know more: but for God's sake, Barrère, no tricks—no tricks. You know what I mean," he said.

"No, I don't know what you mean. I know you want a holiday, and I want to take care of a case in which I am interested. It suits us both. Let me have all the details you can," said Dr. Barrère.

CHAPTER VI.

The day had come, and almost the hour. The weary time had stolen, endless, yet flying on noiseless wings; an eternity of featureless lingering hours, yet speeding, speeding towards that one fixed end. And there was no reprieve. The important people of Poolborough had retired sullenly from their endeavours. To support a Government faithfully and yet not to have one poor favour granted—their recommendation to mercy turned back upon themselves: they were indignant, and in that grievance they forgot the original cause of it. Still there were one or two still toiling on. But the morning of the fatal day had dawned and nothing had come.

To tell how Mrs. Surtees and Agnes had lived through these days is beyond our power. They did not live; they dragged through a feverish dream from one time of seeing him to another, unconscious what passed in the meantime, except when some messenger would come to their door, and a wild blaze and frenzy of hope would light up in their miserable hearts: for it always seemed to them that it must be the reprieve which was coming, though each said to herself that it would not, could not, come. And when they saw Jim, that one actual recurring point in their lives was perhaps more miserable than the intervals. For to see him, and to know that the hour was coming ever nearer and nearer when he must die; to sit with him, never free from inspection, never out of hearing of some compulsory spectator; to see the tension of his nerves, the strain of intolerable expectation in him—was almost more than flesh and blood could bear. They had privileges which were not allowed in ordinary cases—for were not they still ranked among the best people of Poolborough, though beaten down by horrible calamity? What could they say to him? Not even the religious exhortations, the prayers which came from other lips less trembling. They were dumb. "Dear Jim," and "God bless you," was all they could say. Their misery was too great, there was no utterance in it; a word would have overthrown the enforced and awful calm. And neither could he speak. When he had said "Mother" and kissed her, and smiled, that was all. Then they sat silent holding each other's hands.

Through all this Dr. Barrère was the only human supporter of the miserable family. He had promised to stand by Jim to the end, not to leave him till life had left him—till all was over. And now the supreme moment had nearly come. The doctor was as pale, almost paler than he who was about to die. There was an air about him of sternness, almost of desperation: yet to Jim he was tender as his mother. He had warned the authorities what he feared, that agitation and excitement might even yet rob the law of its victim. He had been allowed to be with the condemned man from earliest dawn of the fatal morning in consequence of the warning he had given, but it appeared to the attendants that Jim himself bore a less alarming air than the doctor, whose colourless face and haggard eyes looked as if he had not slept for a week. Jim, poor Jim, had summoned all his courage for this supreme moment. There was a sweetness in his look that added to its

youthfulness. He looked like a boy: his long imprisonment and the enforced self-denial there was in it, had chased from his face all stains of evil. He was pale and worn with his confinement and with the interval of awful waiting, but his eyes were clear as a child's—pathetic, tender, with a wistful smile in them, as though the arrival of the fatal hour had brought relief. The old clergyman who had baptised him had come, too, to stand by him to the last, and he could scarcely speak for tears. But Jim was calm, and smiled; if any bit of blue sky was in that cell of the condemned, with all its grim and melancholy memories, it was in Jim's face.

The doctor moved about him not able to keep still, with that look of desperation, listening for every sound. But all was still except the broken voice of the old clergyman, who had knelt down and was praying. One of the attendants too had gone down on his knees. The other stood watching, yet distracted by a pity which even his hardened faculties could not resist. Jim sat with his hands clasped, his eyes for a moment closed, the smile still quivering about his mouth. In this stillness of intense feeling all observation save that of the ever-watchful doctor was momentarily subdued. Suddenly Jim's head seemed to droop forward on his breast; the doctor came in front of him with one swift step, and through the sound of the praying called imperatively, sharply, for wine, wine! The warder who was standing rushed to fill it out, while Dr. Barrère bent over the fainting youth. It all passed in a moment, before the half-said sentence of the prayer was completed. The clergyman's voice wavered, stopped—and then resumed again, finishing the phrase, notwithstanding the stir and hurried movement, the momentary breathless scuffle, which a sudden attack of illness, a fit or faint, always occasions. Then a sharp sound broke the stillness—the crash of the wine glass which the doctor let fall from his hand after forcing the contents, as it seemed, down the patient's throat. The old clergyman on his knees still, paused and opening his eyes gazed at the strange scene, not awakening to the seriousness of it, or perceiving any new element introduced into the solemnity of the situation for some minutes, yet gazing with tragic eyes, since nothing in the first place could well be more tragic. The little stir, the scuffle of the moving feet, the two men in motion about the still figure in the chair, lasted for a little longer; then the warder uttered a stifled cry. The clergyman on his knees, his heart still in his prayer for the dying, felt it half profane to break off into words to men in the midst of those he was addressing to God—but forced by this strange break cried "What is it?—what has happened?" in spite of himself.

There was no immediate answer. The doctor gave some brief quick directions, and with the help of the warder lifted the helpless figure, all fallen upon itself like a ruined house, with difficulty to the bed. The limp long helpless limbs, the entire immobility and deadness of the form struck with a strange chill to the heart of the man who had been interceding, wrapt in another atmosphere than that of earth. The clergyman got up from his knees, coming back with a keen and awful sense of his humanity. "Has he—fainted?" he asked with a gasp.

Once more a dead pause, a stillness in which the four men heard their hearts beating; then the doctor said, with a strange brevity and solemnity, "Better than that—he is dead."

Dead! They gathered round and gazed in a consternation beyond words. The young face, scarcely paler than it had been a moment since, the eyes half shut, the lips fallen apart with that awful opening which is made by the exit of the last breath, lay back upon the wretched pillow in all that abstraction and incalculable distance which comes with the first touch of death. No one could look at that, and be in any doubt. The warders stood by dazed with horror and dismay, as if they had let their prisoner escape. Was it their fault? Would they be blamed for it? They had seen men go to the scaffold before with little feeling, but they had never seen one die of the horror of it, as Jim had died.

While they were thus standing a sound of measured steps was heard without. The door was opened with that harsh turning of the key which in other circumstances would have sounded like the trumpet of doom, but which now woke no tremor, scarcely any concern. It was the sheriff and his grim procession coming for the prisoner. They streamed in and gathered astonished about the bed. Dr. Barrère turned from where he stood at the head, with a face which was like ashes—pallid, stern, the nostrils dilating, the throat held high. He made a solemn gesture with his hand towards the bed. "You come too late," he said.

The men had come in almost silently, in the excitement of the moment swelling the sombre circle to a little crowd. They thronged upon each other and looked at him, lying there on the miserable prison bed, in the

light of the horrible grated windows, all awe-stricken in a kind of grey consternation not knowing how to believe it; for it was a thing unparalleled that one who was condemned should thus give his executioner the slip. The whisper of the sheriff's low voice inquiring into the catastrophe broke the impression a little. "How did it happen—how was it? Dead! But it seems impossible. Are you sure, doctor, it is not a faint?"

The doctor waved his hand almost scornfully towards the still and rigid form. "I foresaw it always; it is—as I thought it would be," he said.

"His poor mother!" said the clergyman with a sort of habitual conventional lamentation, as if it could matter to that poor mother! Dr. Barrère turned upon him quickly. "Go to them—tell them—it will save them something," he said with sudden eagerness. "You can do no more here."

"It seems impossible," the sheriff repeated, turning again to the bed. "Is there a glass to be had?—anything—hold it to his lips! Do something, doctor. Have you tried all means? are you sure?" He had no doubt; but astonishment, and the novelty of the situation, suggested questions which really required no answer. He touched the dead hand and shuddered. "It is extraordinary, most extraordinary," he said.

"I warned you of the possibility from the beginning," said Dr. Barrère; "his heart was very weak. It is astonishing rather that he bore the strain so long." Then he added with that stern look, "It is better that it should be so."

The words were scarcely out of his lips when a sudden commotion was heard as of some one hurrying along the stony passages, a sound of voices and hasty steps. The door which, in view of the fatal ceremonial about to take place, had been left open, was pushed quickly, loudly to the wall, and an important personage, the Mayor of Poolborough, flushed and full of excitement, hurried in. "Thank God," he cried, wiping his forehead, "thank God it's come in time! I knew they could not refuse us. Here is the reprieve come at last."

A cry, a murmur rose into the air from all the watchers. Who could help it? The reprieve—at such a moment! This solemn mockery was more than human nerves could bear. The warder who had been poor Jim's chief guardian broke forth into a sudden loud outburst, like a child's, of crying. The sheriff could not speak. He pointed silently to the bed.

But of all the bystanders none was moved like Dr. Barrère. He fell backward as if he had received a blow, and gazed at the mayor speechless, his under lip dropping, his face livid, heavy drops coming out upon his brow. It was not till he was appealed to in the sudden explanations that followed that the doctor came to himself. When he was addressed he seemed to wake as from a dream, and answered with difficulty; his lips parched, his throat dry, making convulsive efforts to moisten his tongue, and enunciate the necessary words. "Heart disease—feared all the time—" he said, as if he had partly lost that faculty of speech. The mayor looked sharply at him, as if suspecting something. What was it? intoxication? So early, and at such a time? But Dr. Barrère seemed to have lost all interest in what was proceeding. He cared nothing for their looks. He cared for nothing in the world. "I'm of no further use here," he said huskily, and went towards the door as if he were blind, pushing against one and another. When he had reached the door, however, he turned back. "The poor fellow," he said, "the poor—victim was to be given to his family after—. It was a favour granted them. The removal was to be seen to—to-night; there is no reason for departing from that arrangement, I suppose?"

The officials looked at each other, not knowing what to say, feeling that in the unexpected catastrophe there was something which demanded a change, yet unable on the spur of the moment to think what it was. Then the mayor replied faltering, "I suppose so. It need not make any change, do you think? The poor family—have enough to bear without vexing them with alterations. Since there can be—no doubt—" He paused and looked, and shuddered. No doubt, oh no doubt! The execution would have been conducted with far less sensation. It was strange that such a shivering of horror should overwhelm them to see him lying so still upon that bed.

"Now I must go—to my rounds," the doctor said. He went out, buttoning up his coat to his throat, as if he were shivering too, though it was a genial September morning, soft and warm. He went out from the dark prison walls into the sunshine like a man dazed, passing the horrible preparations on his way, the coffin! from which he shrank as if it had been a monster. Dr. Barrère's countenance was like that of a dead man. He walked straight before him as if he were going somewhere; but he went upon no rounds; his patients waited for him vainly. He walked and walked till fatigue of the

body produced a general stupor, aiding and completing the strange collapse of the mind, and then mechanically, but not till it was evening, he went home. His housekeeper, full of anxious questions, was silenced by the look of his face, and had his dinner placed hastily and silently upon the table, thinking the agitation of the day had been too much for him. Dr. Barrère neither ate nor drank, but he fell into a heavy and troubled sleep at the table, where he had seated himself mechanically. It was late when he woke, and dark, and for a moment there was a pause of bewilderment and confusion in his mind. Then he rose, went to his desk and took some money out of it, and his cheque-book. He took up an overcoat as he went through the hall. He did not so much as hear the servant's timid question as to when he should return. When he should return!

After the body of poor Jim had been brought back to his mother's house and all was silent there, in that profound hush after an expected calamity which is almost a relief, Agnes, not able to rest, wondering in her misery why all that day her lover had not come near them, had not sent any communication, but for the first time had abandoned them in their sorrow, stood for a moment by the window in the hall to look if, by any possibility, he might still be coming. He might have been detained by some pressing call. He had neglected everything for Jim; he might now be compelled to make up for it—who could tell? Some reason there must be for his desertion. As she went to the window, which was on a level with the street, it gave her a shock beyond expression to see a pallid face close to it looking in—a miserable face, haggard, with eyes that were bloodshot and red, while everything else was the colour of clay—the colour of death. It was with difficulty she restrained a scream. She opened the window softly and said, "Arnold! you have come at last!" The figure outside shrank and withdrew, then said, "Do not touch me—don't look at me. I did it: to save him the shame——"

"Arnold, come in, for God's sake! don't speak so—Arnold——"

"Never, never more! I thought the reprieve would not come. I did it. Oh, never, never more!"

"Arnold!" she cried, stretching out her hands. But he was gone. Opening the door as quickly as her trembling would let her, the poor girl looked out into the dark street, into the night: but there was no one there.

Was it a dream, a vision, an illusion of exhausted nature, unable to discern reality from imagination? No one ever knew: but from that night Dr. Barrère was never seen more in Poolborough, nor did any of those who had known him hear of him again. He disappeared as if he had never been. And if that was the terrible explanation of it, or if the sudden shock had maddened him, or if it was really he that Agnes saw, no one can tell. But it was the last that was ever heard or seen of Dr. Barrère.

M. OLIPHANT.

DIRK WILLEMZOON.

["A poor Anabaptist, guilty of no crime but his fellowship with a persecuted sect, had been condemned to death. He made his escape, closely pursued by an officer of justice, across a frozen lake. It was late in the winter, and the ice had become unsound. It trembled and cracked beneath his footsteps, but he reached the shore in safety. The officer was not so fortunate. The ice gave way beneath him, and he sank into the lake, uttering a cry for succour. There was none to hear him except the fugitive whom he had been hunting.

"Dirk Willemzoon, for so was the Anabaptist called, instinctively obeying the dictates of a generous nature, returned, crossed the quaking and dangerous ice, at the peril of his life, extended his hand to his enemy, and saved him from certain death. Unfortunately for human nature, it cannot be added that the generosity of the action was met by a corresponding heroism. The officer was desirous, it is true, of avoiding the responsibility of sacrificing the preserver of his life, but the burgomaster of Aspern sternly reminded him to remember his oath. He accordingly arrested the fugitive, who on the 16th of May following, was burned to death under the most lingering tortures."—From Motley's *Dutch Republic.*]

DIRK WILLEMZOON sits in his lonely cell;
It needs no prophet's voice to tell
The doom that awaits him to-morrow.
The pain of a slow and anguished death
Wrought by the fire's fiercest breath
Will end his life of sorrow.

The snow-clad ground 'neath the cloudy skies
In long flat stretches before him lies,
By frozen seas all broken.
He gazes around o'er the wintry plain,
Homeward he gazes in vain—in vain
For a welcome rescue's token.

"I have loved them truly and long and well,
Yet I would not care in peace to dwell
Though a lie my life might shelter!
I do not believe that God's dear grace
Waits on man's will or touch, one ace,
Whether Bishop, Priest, or Elder.

"And yet it is hard, most hard, to die,
E'en though my thinking should be awry
Nor squares with the Pope's conclusions.
Hard to leave home and love so dear!
Oh! when will God's own true light and fear
Put an end to our mad confusions!

"But I cannot alter the set of my mind
Or at man's command make my conscience blind,
For the sake of life easier, better;
For I hold that eternal God is king
Whose truth is a sacred inviolate thing,
And God is no man's debtor."

But what is this? Has Dirk Willemzoon slept?
Or is his guard more slackly kept?
For the door is closed no longer!
Some angel hand from beyond the stars
Has opened wide those mighty bars
To show the high God is stronger.

"Now God be thanked," quoth Willemzoon,
"For this sweet liberty,
Who sent His angel to loose the chains
And set His servant free!
Now God be thanked, for well I know
What joy will be this day
In my home-nest, so full of tears
Since I was led away!

"Now God be thanked for this free air,
And the power to breathe and move.
Oh, never before in the fairest light
Seemed earth so full of love!
The snow lies thick 'neath the heavy clouds
And the gloom of a wintry sky,
Yet never before 'neath the brightest sun
Felt I my God so nigh.

"The chill keen winds from the wide ice-fields
Blow fiercely in my face,
But they cannot chill the warmth within
That is born of God's free grace.
Though everywhere the winter rules
And frozen seas groan and start,
No gloom can cloud and no frost can chill
The summer within my heart."

A moment's pause, and a quick glance round,
And before a heart could beat,
The deep blue ice was musical
With the sound of Willemzoon's feet.
"Now hie thee fast, Dirk Willemzoon!
Race quick o'er the frozen flood!
For in anger sore from the prison door
Comes the messenger of blood!

"Now haste! O haste! tread deft and firm
For the sake of home and wife,
Plant nimble feet on the bending ice
For liberty and life!"
With lips set fast and kindling eye,
He flees, and a moment more
He has reached firm ground and has left behind
The treacherous ice-made floor!

With gathered force and a freer tread,
He follows the well-known track,
Home and life are the goal before,
And death in looking back.
He climbs the bank; but hark! that sound
That booms from the icy plain!
That ominous crack! that piercing cry!
Instinct with fear and pain!

Look back, Dirk Willemzoon, now look back
To the frozen flood, and see
How Heaven and earth have leagued their might
To fight for thy liberty.
The enemy hath fallen!
Heaven's hand hath struck him down,
The ice has split, in the midst of it
See how thy foe doth drown.

"God be praised," quoth Dirk—"for as we have heard
In the glorious days of old,
His vengeance hath fallen like lightning
As prophet and seer foretold.
And He who brought forth His chosen,
And set his people free,
And cast all Pharaoh's lordly host
Like lead in the mighty sea,
Hath borne His servant across the flood
In safety like a sheep,
And hath overwhelmed his enemy
Once more in the giant deep.
Once more the world shall know God hears
The lowly one's complaints,
Once more the blood of their cruel foes
Shall wash the feet of His saints."

"Once more! once more!"—But a silence falls
On Dirk's loud exultant strain,
And a gentle cloud o'erspreads his face
With a shade of pity and pain.
He looks on his panting, drowning foe,
Ice-bound unto bitter death,
Looks from the way of freedom won,
To Alva's minion beneath!

And surging within his bosom
A rush of new thoughts arose,
As he thinks of One Who when dying
Prayed for His cruel foes.
Would He Who for our safety
Once laid His dear life down,
Stand idle in savage triumph
And let a foeman drown?

The blood-stained hand of the Shepherd
Who sought the wandering sheep,
Would surely reach forth to rescue
The dying from out the deep.
He thought of a loving hand stretched out
In Gethsemane to heal,
In the crown of thorns, in the bitter cross,
Dirk felt a mute appeal.
And He who rebuked His servants
Who longed for avenging fire,
Hath taught Dirk Willemzoon to see
That love's revenge is higher.

A moment more, and the savage flush
Of his hasty joy is gone.
The wish for life—the longing for home
Have passed, and the struggle is done:
And Dirk Willemzoon turns, and steps again
To the icy seaway back,
And treads once more with careful feet
The doubly perilous track.

He reached out his arms o'er the fatal gulf,
With labouring movement slow;
He hung o'er the crumbling chasm,
And drew forth his drowning foe!
The ice beneath them swayed and groaned,
It starred to left and right,
But it bore its burden bravely,
Helping Dirk's noble fight.

Now God be thanked, for the land is reached;
"Now Dirk get you gone, be free,
For to take you back to a flaming death
Is too gruesome work for me!
Nay, stay not now," quoth the sergeant,
"You are safer far away,
And God give you more than I can,
For the deed you have done this day."

Dirk turned to fly—but who is this,
Dark-browed and fierce and stern,
Whose cruel eyes in their sockets deep,
Like hell's own lanterns burn?

He speaks, and the warder trembles,
  Dirk's chance of flight is gone,
For the Mayor of Aspern is mighty,
  And his heart is a heart of stone!
"Beware to fight 'gainst the iron wall
  That girdles round you both.
Ho! back to prison, in Alva's name,
  And warder, remember your oath."

Alas for the cruel ways of men
  When bigotry plays its part,
Dirk's noble deed doth vainly plead,
  Where dogmas hath chilled the heart.
And lo! ere many days have passed,
  Or spring hath cleared the sky,
The noble soul under love's control,
  Dirk, is led forth to die!

They brought him out to the market-place,
  They bound him to the stake,
The faggots lay thick about his feet
  Who risked life for a foeman's sake.
They kindled the sluggish flame below,
  Till it rose with red tongue and spire,
And the furnace glowed fierce round Willemzoon,
  Who glorified God in the fire.

The cruel heat, and its scorching touch
  Wrought its agony of pain,
And the swift blood boiled and bubbled
  With anguish in every vein.
Till they burst their delicate barriers,
  And hissed in the raging flame,
And the angel of death through that fiery breath
  To the help of Willemzoon came.

But firm to the last Dirk Willemzoon stood,
  A bruised and a bleeding sight;
And he would not change that fiery shroud
  For a monarch's crown and might.
He had risked his life for another's good,
  He had followed his Lord's behest,
And he who doeth his Master's will
  With his Master's love is blest.

In that last hour Dirk Willemzoon's face
  Like an angel's is calm, serene;
And his eye is bright as the eye of one
  Who visions of God hath seen.
And I wot that he who lives his life
  By that same holy law,
Will see the same celestial sight
  Which Willemzoon then saw.

W. B. RIPON.

CAPTAIN LACKLAND.

THREE gentlemen were sitting together in a room in London one afternoon in the early summer of the year 1744. The eldest of these was Lord Lackland, a nobleman now somewhat advanced in life, whose character his worst enemy could hardly hope to blacken, and whose manners the polite could but aspire to equal. Near him sat his son, Captain Eustace Lackland, who had recently, at the conclusion of the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, returned to England, and who was at this time nearly twenty-six years old, as happy-tempered, improvident and agreeable a young gentleman as any in his majesty's service. Their companion was Sir John Goldwin, a busy person, often described, both inaccurately and inadequately, as "a worthy merchant."

"Our affairs, Eustace," Lord Lackland was saying, "are, in short, in the most hopeless posture of embarrassment, and I look to you to retrieve the fortunes of the family."

"I can assure you, sir," answered Eustace, "of my entire willingness to oblige you. May I ask whether you have any scheme to recommend for the purpose?"

"You must marry," said Lord Lackland.

The young gentleman, carelessly shifting his position so as to bring a second shoe buckle under observation, replied: "'Tis not so long, sir, since I had a mind to the step and you forbade it."

"Pshaw! folly!" cried his lordship (though indeed these were not the strongest interjections that he employed), "why do you speak of that boyish madness? You ought to thank me for having saved you from it; as I warrant your cousin Rosa does by this time. You must marry a woman who will enable you to make some figure in the world. You have a fine person, a captain's title, and some reputation as a soldier, your name is as old as any in England."

Here the young gentleman appeared to murmur, that like some other ancient things it had become no little tarnished; but Lord Lackland was discreetly deaf.

"The world must be changed indeed if these things cannot purchase a wealthy wife. And, let me tell you, 'tis vain to look to me for the payment of your debts."

"Indeed, sir," returned Eustace with some simplicity, "I have no such expectation. As for marriage, though I have of late entertained no design of it, nor can think the state conducive in general to happiness, yet (the lady not objectable, and an addition of fortune attending) I have no unconquerable aversions to it."

Lord Lackland smiled. "Sir John," said he, "has been opening to me a proposal."

Here Sir John, a gentleman at all times impatient of silence, took up the word. "The lady, Captain Lackland, is Miss Dorothy Marlowe. She is of most honourable family, not yet turned of twenty, and has always lived with her aunt in a retired part of Devonshire. She is, I am informed, very handsome, and perfectly well bred and polite."

Eustace heard this account with great attention and little belief. The lady, he said to himself, was no doubt an awkward rustic whom her friends were desirous of establishing in life. For was it credible to any reflecting mind that the guardians of a young creature of wealth and family, perfectly well bred and handsome, would offer her in marriage to a penniless and indebted young gentleman of no shining reputation?

"Is it to her aunt," he inquired, "that I owe this favouring proposal?"

Sir John laughed aloud, and Lord Lackland did not repress a smile.

"You are in error, my good Captain Lackland," said Sir John, "the aunt knows nothing of this. She is at present in London, whither she has come partly to consult a physician, her health being but crazy, and partly to take advice with me as to the disposing of her fortune, and the making of her will. She designs to leave everything to Miss Dorothy, who is also—mark me—a considerable heiress in her own right, though she has been kept in ignorance of the circumstance."

"Pray proceed," said Eustace gravely, and Sir John proceeded.

"Miss Marlowe had in her youth great expectations, and was promised in marriage to a gentleman of the neighbourhood, who, her expectations being disappointed, very abruptly and unhandsomely quitted her. Some years after, the unlooked for death of a relative made her mistress of a considerable fortune. Alarmed by her own experiences, she fears above all things that her niece may be sought in marriage with a view solely to her wealth. But in love, as in war, 'tis a maxim that artifice is ever allowable. The young lady is in Devonshire under the care of the vicar of the parish, whose daughter is I believe her bosom friend. 'Tis your part to go thither, to win the affections of the young lady, and the confidence of her guardians, and so to prosecute the affair that you may make her your wife before the aunt is able to interpose."

Eustace appeared to reflect. In all this he could find no explanation of Sir John's eagerness.

"May I ask, Sir John," said he, "what profit you propose to yourself in this affair? Since, if it be not such as I may hear, I must conclude 'tis to be at my expense and decline accordingly."

"You are more free, Captain Lackland, than courteous," Sir John returned, reddening. But, meeting the young gentleman's steady gaze, he judged it prudent to be frank, and explained that he had an opportunity of purchasing at a low figure the claims of several of Captain Lackland's creditors.

"Ay," said Eustace, carelessly, "I should suppose they are not a very marketable ware. But how, Sir John, if I should take no liking to the young lady? You will scarce, I believe, dispose of my debts at a profit."

"There may be less difficulty, sir," rejoined Sir John with some asperity, "in disposing of the person of the debtor."

His warmth convinced Eustace that his interests were involved. He asked the name of Miss Dorothy Marlowe's residence, and was told that the village was called Rosedale, and the vicar, Dr. Barnard.

"She is, I believe," said Sir John, "a good girl, accomplished, docile, and might make any man happy."

A picture rose up before the young man's imagination, of the simple country girl, not yet turned of twenty, growing up like a rose in a parsonage garden. He kept silence for a minute or so; then looking up, and becoming aware of his father's eyes upon him, shrugged his shoulders and said indifferently that he was ready to go into Devonshire if they wished, to find the lady agreeable if he could, and if so to do his endeavour to be pleasing to her in turn. And with this, after inquiring whether they had any further commands for him, he took his leave.

Captain Lackland went down into Devonshire in a temper as careless and cheerful as usual. The weather was agreeable, the adventure promised to be entertaining, and the part he was to play looked less black from his own point of view than when it was but a project of Sir John's. For he was, notwithstanding his carelessness, beginning to grow weary of his idle and indebted course of life, and found it easy to imagine himself entering upon new and better ways. And as for Miss Dorothy Marlowe, it is perhaps hardly strange that he could think it no irreparable injury to her to be made his wife, since he was sure he should never behave otherwise than kindly to any woman whom he could like well enough to marry.

II.

On the lawn, as we should say—they called it the bowling green—of Rosedale parsonage, several young people were at play. Their game was a sort of blind man's buff in which all the players who were not blindfolded joined hands in a ring, the blindfolded forming its centre. The endeavours of each to elude the pursuer without breaking the circle caused a lively fluctuation. The game was at its briskest when a well-dressed young gentleman approached through the wicket gate that divided the garden from the churchyard, and finding himself unobserved stood looking on at the group of players as they advanced and retreated with swift motions and sudden laughter. His attention was at once attracted by a young lady whose airs of

languor distinguished her at least as much as her really remarkable good looks. There was something too in her dress, a little more studied than that of her companions. Eustace watched her, and wondered whether this was Miss Dorothy Marlowe. From her his eye wandered to the three or four young men who were of the party, and he caught himself regarding them with some jealous displeasure. He could not deny to himself that two of them at least were neither awkward nor rustic. It appeared unpleasantly probable that he might be forestalled. As these thoughts were passing through his mind he perceived that he was observed. The circle was broken, and a young lady, who looked graver and older than most, came towards him. Eustace, on his side, was advancing bareheaded to meet her, when to his unbounded amazement he felt himself encircled by a pair of arms. Starting, he turned, and found that the young lady who was blindfolded, being, of course, unable to see that a stranger had approached, had taken him prisoner. She held him firmly with one hand while the other was employed in exploring his height and testing the texture of his coat.

"William," said she, in a clear and decided voice, and let him go.

Some of her fellow players, recovering the power of speech, cried out in dismay, "No, no; oh, Dorothy!"

At the name "Dorothy" Eustace instantly looked back. She, finding herself mistaken, in the same moment laid hands on him again. Again a resolute grasp detained his arm, and a gentle and inquiring little hand travelled up to gain a complete assurance of his stature.

"Then 'tis you, Dr. Marsh, but truly, sir, since you are fairly caught, you must abide your fortune."

"Indeed, madam, I ask no better," said Eustace.

His voice, the confused exclamations of her comrades, the touch of the sword hilt, upon which her hand chanced to fall, combined to proclaim to her her error.

"Who—who, then?" she cried.

She snatched off the bandage, and displayed to Eustace's curiosity, an alarmed countenance in which a pair of brown, clear, and dark eyes formed so remarkable a feature that the beholder was apt to lose sight of everything else. Eustace knew of nothing but her eyes and her expression. He did not remember to consider whether she was beautiful; he only received the impression of a genuine and beautiful nature.

"Oh, sir!" she stammered, "indeed I ask your pardon."

And as she spoke she blushed violently.

Eustace replied, he hardly knew in what words, that it was rather he who had need of pardon; and went on to say—a little insincerely, "I was seeking the good vicar, your worthy father."

For it had come into his mind that there might be two Dorothies among this company, and that possibly this was not Miss Marlowe after all. His doubt, however, was not at this time satisfied, for the eldest Miss Barnard, who had before begun to address him, now offered to conduct him to her father, and he was obliged to follow towards the house. But fortune, favouring his adventure, brought the doctor at this moment into sight. He advanced placidly, and with a benignant smile, and invited Eustace to return with him to his study. The latter, however, protested that his business was by no means private, that he would detain the doctor but a few minutes, and would not trouble him to go back to the house. The doctor bowed, and Eustace began to say that he designed to stay in Rosedale, and desired to lodge with some decent family, no matter how humble, rather than at an inn. He observed while he spoke, that several of the party were beginning to take leave. Four young ladies remained, of whom Dorothy was one, the languid beauty another, and she who had led him to her father a third. The fourth was a clear-eyed sensible-looking girl, whom he had heard addressed by the name of Charlotte. At her side lingered the young man called William, for whom Dorothy had at first mistaken him.

The doctor asked counsel of his eldest daughter, Miss Priscilla, who recommended the parish clerk, and Eustace, judging that this functionary would probably live near at hand, was eager in accepting the proposal. She offered to send for the clerk at once, and went indoors for that purpose, while Eustace, at the doctor's invitation, sat down with him under the arbour, and began to tell him his name and something of his circumstances. Dr. Barnard on hearing that his guest was Captain Lackland, made one or two complimentary speeches about what he chose to call his distinguished bravery. Eustace all this time was seeking for some way of satisfying himself that Dorothy was indeed Miss Marlowe. He therefore boldly congratulated the vicar upon the beauty and charms of the four young ladies, his daughters.

"Three of them only are mine," replied

THE WIFE OF PYGMALION.

Engraved by O. LACOUR, *from the Picture by* G. F. WATTS, R.A.

the doctor, "Priscilla, to whom you have already spoken, Lucinda and Charlotte."

But Charlotte had disappeared with William, and only Lucinda and Dorothy remained. Lucinda was the beauty; she dropped a very elegant curtsey at this introduction, and bestowed upon Captain Lackland a dazzling smile.

"This," proceeded the doctor, taking Dorothy's hand, "is Miss Dorothy Marlowe, the niece of my very esteemed good friend and neighbour, Miss Marlowe, and the bosom friend of my daughter Charlotte."

Eustace had bowed to each of the ladies, but his second bow was the more profound. "Miss Charlotte," said he, "is happy in her friend."

"We are all of us happy in her," said the doctor, and led her to the seat beside him.

"And she much more in all of you," returned Dorothy, blushing a little. And she demanded of him, with what countenance he would dare to preach his sermon against self-esteem if he practised a flattery so open.

"Is self-esteem, Miss Marlowe," asked Eustace, "so wonted a theme of the doctor's?"

"Nay," she answered, "'tis but one with which he is always threatening us."

"These disrespectful girls," cried Dr. Barnard, shaking his head, "I protest this fourth daughter of mine teaches all the rest to mock their indulgent parent."

"And I protest, father," said Miss Lucinda, "that for this disrespectful fourth daughter there is more indulgence reserved than for all the other three."

"Do you confess, Miss Marlowe?" asked Eustace, "or may a stranger be your advocate?"

"Yes, yes," cried Lucinda, "let us hear what Captain Lackland can find to say for you."

Eustace, not being forbidden, began his speech thus: "For those whom we honour only, and do not love, we have a language of respect and deference. For such as we love, yet cannot honour—which, alas! must in this world sometimes happen—we have a language of tenderness. But where we both love and honour, and where nearness of relation permits, we have a language of playfulness. That tone of amiable mockery which a brother may employ towards a favourite sister, a daughter towards an indulgent father, a husband towards a beloved wife, is the tongue of an inner sanctuary where no stranger may enter. To you, ladies, who have stood all your lives within the sanctuary of a father's love, this atmosphere is familiar. But to Miss Dorothy Marlowe, who is, if I mistake not, fatherless, it has all the charm of a late acquired possession. You know not, in your happily circumstanced life, how the lonely and excluded longs for such a language to be addressed to him. But I, to whom none speaks with the language of assured love and long confidence, I, who am in truth more orphaned than herself, I know it, and feel all the filial sweetness of Miss Dorothy's amiable raillery."

"Indeed, Captain Lackland," cried Lucinda, "you are a dangerous advocate. If you can plead thus for another, you would, I fear, be irresistible in pleading for yourself."

Eustace bowed, but his eyes were upon Dorothy, who sat looking down.

"Miss Marlowe," he said, "looks grave. I fear I have presumed in aspiring to utter her feelings."

"No, Captain Lackland," answered Dorothy, and her eyes, too, answered with a gaze of admirable sweetness and sincerity. "You have interpreted them to myself. I thank you for the truth."

"And is it also so true, sir," Miss Lucinda archly inquired, "that you are quite so solitary as you would have us think?"

"It is true, Miss Lucinda, that no heart would next week be greatly the heavier if I should die to-night."

"Alas! 'Tis a melancholy saying," said Lucinda.

"But one," said her father, cheerfully, "which we may trust that time will remedy. I will venture, my young friend, to prophesy that before ten years have passed away, you too will have formed those ties which make a man's death grievous to many."

"Heaven grant it!" said Eustace, piously.

And after a moment's pause he began to express his thanks for this kind interest in a stranger.

"Oh, sir," cried Lucinda, "when you have been a little longer in Rosedale you will learn that a stranger is the most agreeable object that can meet our eyes."

"If that be so, madam, I must fear to become your neighbour, lest I lose my only title to your esteem."

"Oh, sir!" said Miss Lucinda, bridling and smiling, "*you* need be under no such apprehensions."

These speeches of Lucinda's showed, as Eustace would have been ready to acknowledge, a polite and obliging disposition; she was moreover undeniably handsome; yet he

was aware that if hers had been the name "Dorothy," he would have returned without delay to London, declaring that Miss Marlowe was in truth a very fine young lady, but that she was no wife for him.

A neat maid-servant came out with a message from Miss Priscilla that the clerk was waiting. Eustace went in and had soon struck a bargain. He was now about to depart, but the vicar, sharing perhaps Lucinda's view of the worth of a stranger in Rosedale, invited him to remain and drink tea. Eustace joyfully accepted. Every minute which he passed in Miss Marlowe's company confirmed his first impression. She spoke little, nor were her smiles so frequent as Miss Lucinda's. But her voice was clear and sweet, and her words had a charming candour and simplicity. The young man called William was of the party. His attention, however, was solely absorbed by Charlotte, to whom, as it presently appeared, he was shortly to be married.

Eustace took leave with many thanks, and went away in a kind of rapture. But just after quitting the parsonage gate, he was met by a young man on horseback, who, seeing whence he came, bestowed upon him a stare so haughty and so suspicious that Eustace could scarce forbear, as he himself would have said, to take notice of it. Looking back he saw the rider stoop to lift with his whip the latch of the gate, whereat he in his turn was filled with doubts and suspicions. He tried to comfort himself by reflecting that Miss Lucinda's beauty was remarkable, and that the care with which she was dressed might well betoken some expectation of a visitor. This reflection, however, consoled him but poorly; for, notwithstanding the example of William, he found it difficult to believe that any sane man could seriously consider any other woman while Dorothy was by.

Dorothy, for her part, contributed very little to the discussion of Captain Lackland's words, manners and appearance, which arose on his departure; and later in the evening Lucinda took occasion to rally her upon her reticence. The two girls had strolled out into the garden, and had come to the lawn by the arbour. They stood still for a minute, and Dorothy's face was pensive.

"Ay, indeed!" said Lucinda, shaking her head, and gently pressing her companion's arm; and she gave a little exaggerated sigh. Dorothy turned upon her a grave gaze that would have been reproving, but that she would not consent to understand any meaning worthy of reproof. "'Tis not often, truly, that one shuts one's eyes and makes so fine a capture."

Dorothy at once made a motion to continue their walk. Her colour deepened a little.

"Can you suppose," she asked, with some dignity, "that the recollection is agreeable to me?"

Lucinda made no verbal reply; but she smiled, and presently said again: "But in good earnest, Dorothy, is not Captain Lackland an elegant young gentleman?"

"Yes," said Dorothy, looking up at the tree tops.

"What can have brought him hither? Can he—? Is it possible—? They say that there is mostly a lady for the end of a fine gentleman's journeys."

"Fie, Lucinda!" said Dorothy.

"Nay, wherefore? Who knows? He may, by chance—at some time—have seen ——Priscilla."

"For shame, Lucinda!" cried Dorothy; but she could not quite repress a smile, which her comrade was quick to note.

"Aha! you laugh—and now you blush. Dorothy, shall I tell you a saying I read the other day in a book? 'Twas thus, or something like it: '*Of every man and woman over the age of twenty-five, 'tis safer to tell ourselves that the drama of their lives was doubtless played out before we came to take a part in it.*'"

"Nay," began Dorothy, quickly, "did not Captain Lackland himself—?" But there she stopped short and diverted the channel of her speech. "But why would you put this saying upon me? Monitress, instruct thyself. 'Tis you, not I, who are so full of Captain Lackland's praises."

"I would fain suit my talk to my company," said Lucinda, again shaking her head.

Dorothy, at that, gave a little indignant exclamation, and walked resolutely away towards the others.

III.

It might perhaps be thought that Captain Lackland transgressed the bounds of etiquette a little, in making his second visit to the parsonage on the very next day; but this was a point on which he, as a Londoner, must be admittedly a better judge than any dweller in Rosedale, and the family received him with welcome. Mr. Roger Broadwood

indeed, who had met him yesterday at the gate, was by no means pleased to find him there, and showed his displeasure in a demeanour so sullen, that Eustace plainly foresaw there would be a necessity to teach manners to this country man. But the offences of Mr. Broadwood did not linger long in his memory. He was happy with a happiness for which it would have been impossible, in words, to assign a ground. He would have blushed to acknowledge thus early, even to himself, a belief that Dorothy loved him; but those fainter indications, which no words are fine enough to render, and which make about us the atmosphere of anticipatory joy or apprehensive sorrow, made about him an atmosphere of incomparable sweetness, in which he drew his breath with a kind of rapture, not knowing or questioning wherefore.

Mr. Roger Broadwood being called from home next day, any possibility of a quarrel between him and Eustace was for the time averted, and Eustace's visits to the parsonage continued undisturbed. The days glided easily by, he had now been in Rosedale a fortnight, he had spent some part of every day in Dorothy's presence, and his love and esteem for her grew at each meeting. The simple family life of the parsonage, the serene sincerity of Dorothy, were things new to him, and, to do him justice, they were things of which he was quick to feel the worth and beauty. To these kindly and inexperienced people, he on his part appeared no less deserving than themselves, and infinitely more attractive. His nature had the gift of companionableness; he had a ready ear for every fellow creature's story, and an inborn disposition to take things and men kindly. He was, in short, a scape-grace whom it was difficult not to love, and there is no reason to doubt that in such degrees and forms as might be becoming, he was beloved in Doctor Barnard's household.

Things were in this happy condition when Dorothy was one morning called suddenly into the garden by Lucinda. Looking over the hedge she saw, in the road, a lady wearing an elaborate riding dress and walking slowly. Her countenance was handsome, though to the judgment of Rosedale, rather too highly painted, and she had exceedingly fine eyes. These she turned upon the two girls, and maintained a composed stare for perhaps a minute. Then, with a face quite unmoved, she turned her eyes away and walked on.

Lucinda was affronted by this behaviour. "With what insolent curiosity," said she, "this fine madam regards us! Does she think, forsooth, that we are of a different nature because we wear chintz gowns and no paint on our faces?"

"She is very handsome," said Dorothy, and she felt herself vaguely alarmed. It was not, surely, jealousy that troubled her, but indeed our troubles of mind are perhaps not often so definite that we can class them under any of the duly assigned titles. No, Dorothy was not jealous; but there passed across her heart a little pang. Was not this lady one of his own kind, to whom he would feel himself more akin than to people so countrified and of so little knowledge.

Eustace, meanwhile, was sauntering in the churchyard. The path from the parsonage to the village it may be remembered came this way. By and by, coming to an old tree, upon whose bark many an initial and numeral, and a clumsy heart or two had been scored, he pulled out his knife and began to add another item to the reckoning.

While thus engaged, he heard the gate swing, and turning, more abashed than if he had been detected in a crime, he saw the lady who had been observed by Lucinda and Dorothy. He came forward, holding his knife behind him, and endeavouring to assume an easy air.

"Cousin!" said he, "why, cousin!" And then recovering a little fluency: "In the name of all that's wonderful, what do you here?"

"And in the name of all that's ten times wonderful," she answered, "what do you? Sure, Eustace, the question might come as well from me."

"Ay, indeed, as well or as ill; 'tis but foolish work to converse like the church catechism in question and answer."

She looked at him with large eyes and returned: "You were not always so apt, Eustace, at your church catechism," a retort which confused him afresh.

"I fear," she continued, "you have a mind to turn hermit and avoid the world. But 'tis in vain; the world will come from as far as the next county to look at you—as I have done."

"Yes, it is as you say, there is no avoiding the world."

"Good Lord, Eustace, what a sigh! You are as moody as a fine lady who has lost her lover or her lap-dog. Indeed you have a lover-like turn yourself. And, yes—surely—"

She lifted his reluctant hand, looked at the open knife, and then, with laughter in her eyes, surveyed the new-cut letter upon the tree.

"Whose name, Eustace," she demanded, "begins with D?"

Eustace knew not which way to look. He could not meet her eye. At last, calling up what effrontery remained from a very ample natural stock, "The name, madam," he answered, "of Despair."

She can scarcely have credited this tragic declaration, but for a moment she looked grave, and unclasping his fingers from the knife, retained it in her own hand. She seated herself on the wooden bench that ran round the tree.

"And now, once more," said she, "what freak can have brought the brilliant Captain Lackland to moralise, like a sexton, in a graveyard? This will be a good tale for some of your friends in London."

"Ah, London," cried Eustace. "You have come from London? But why do I ask? The modish cut of that amazon was no country milliner's device."

"No, faith," she replied looking down at it with some complacency, "for it was my own. Now will my mantua-maker cut fifty more after the same model, and not one wearer of the fifty but will look awkwardly."

"'Tis your privilege to shine, like a will-o'-the-wisp, where those who follow must be lost:

"For Rosa's magic might not copied be,
Within that circle none durst walk but she."

"Ah, Eustace," said she, "how often before has that couplet done service with another name than Rosa's. But keep your compliments for those who love them better. The language of gallantry is not the language of the heart."

To this, as he could not contradict it, the young gentleman ventured no reply.

"There was a time, Eustace," proceeded his cousin, "when you thought me worthy of your sincerer utterances."

"There was a time, Rosa, when we learned nursery songs together, and dreamed of spending our lives as man and wife in an arbour at the end of my father's garden. What then? The world changes, and the little Rosa is a fine lady, and the little Eustace a captain in his majesty's dragoons, owing more money than a score of such as he could pay in a score of lifetimes."

"Do you wish," she asked, eagerly, "to see it paid?"

He answered, truly, that there were few matters which gave him less concern.

"Can you not divine," said she, "what ·purpose brought me hither?"

To this Eustace, feeling an uncomfortable conviction that any purpose of hers within his range of conjecture would be a purpose very out of time to his wishes, replied evasively, and in as sprightly a manner as he could, by asking whether he was a wizard, to presume to fathom the motives of a lady of fashion.

But she, still looking out before her with a face of unusual seriousness, said: "You trifle with me. I thought you loved me once."

"Rosa, Rosa," said Eustace, moving uneasily, "why will you stir the ashes of a burnt-out fire?"

"Burnt out!" she cried, turning suddenly upon him, and with as sudden a change of tone. "No, not burnt out. Look—look here."

She drew out and hastily unfolded before him a letter. "Look at your own words. '*Whatever bar a hard fate puts between us, I am yours unalterably and for ever.*' And will you tell me that the fire is burnt out?"

He looked down with a strange wonder and sadness at the letter. The days in which he could have written it seemed distant as the memories of infancy. And so, he thought, we vow "unalterably and for ever," and so we look at the record. It was with a gentle tone that he answered, even though the words had bitterness in them:

"The heart of the boy who wrote thus, belonged indeed to the girl Rosa: but you and I—you, Lady Silverlock, and I, a weary man of the world—what have we to do with the loves of those Arcadian children? You were wise, and wisdom has divided us."

"But wisdom need do so no more. Will you force me to speak more plainly? I am no penniless girl, now."

Eustace was quite pale, and the hand that played with his sword hilt trembled. "Rosa," said he, "let us be friends."

"Friends!" she cried, "will you never forgive me for having denied you once? But 'tis ever thus with you men. A scratch to your vanity will outweigh the deepest wound in a woman's heart, and rankle, unforgiven, for a score of years. For years you have avoided me."

"'Tis true," returned Eustace, warming a little in his turn. "For years I did avoid you. I did as I would have had any other man do who loved you; I left you to be happy, if you could, in the way that you had chosen."

"Ah, yes, 'tis easy to be prudent when the heart is not engaged."

Eustace lifted his eyes, and forbore the retort which was so ready to his tongue. A

moment or two went by before she spoke again.

"Your father would not part us now. And if he would, am I not rich enough?"

"Rosa," said Eustace, "hear me, and, woman though you are, be generous enough to forgive a man for telling you the truth."

"Speak," said she; and he spoke, with a tone of conviction, that warmed into fervour, thus:—

"There comes a time in a man's life when the paint rubs off from the intrigues of this bustling world, and he begins to sicken of the whirligig, life, and of himself. Then, conscious of his own weakness, he longs for better things. Heaven is too far off, and the angels have deserted us, but there are yet pure and simple women. And such a woman, Rosa, must be my wife. You and I, who always have been half brother and sister, are too much alike. We should but pull each other down. The same life has tinged us both. The wife I seek must be no woman of the world, learned at cards, accomplished in a minuet, but an open-hearted girl whose song came to her from the birds, and her complexion from the hand of nature—"

He had forgotten himself and his hearer, and it was with the utmost surprise that he heard his cousin's angry interruption.

"A country girl, doubtless—and born at Rosedale, in Devonshire—and her name begins with a D."

Eustace could but look at her, amazed at the violence of her tone and the fierceness of her eyes. But she was now too angry to be quelled as before by a look.

"Oh, fie!" she exclaimed. "Now is all out! The picture was too glowing for a fancy portrait. This then was the secret of your moralising turn! And will you write to *her* that 'whatever bar a hard fate puts between you, your heart is hers unalterably and for ever'? Will you have the letter, sir, for a copy? I protest 'tis of no use to me."

"And this," thought Eustace, "might have been my wife."

"But who, prithee, is the fair one? One of the vicar's red-cheeked flock, I must presume. 'Tis perhaps that fine languishing thing, whom I saw but now in the parsonage garden, who smiles so widely to show that her teeth are white." Suddenly her whole voice and manner changed from the ironical to the menacing. "Your father," she cried, "shall hear of this."

"As your ladyship pleases. The news will not, I think, greatly discompose him."

"Ha—what? Your father knows it? Then the girl is wealthy. I'll unmask you, Eustace. Oh, artful! to profess, even to me, who should know better, a disinterested love. But Dr. Barnard shall know that for all your ancient name you are but a penniless adventurer."

"Dr. Barnard, madam, knows it as well as you."

"Still, I have your letters. *She* shall see them."

"And do you think that a six years old letter will avail against a lover of to-day?"

She was silent; and Eustace began to regret his open dealing, and to consider what was now best to do. He had no faith in the reality of any serious love on his cousin's part for himself; on the other hand, he fully credited her with the same affection of habit, of whose influence with himself he was very conscious. And since the paths of complete veracity had proved so dangerous, he returned within the borders of double dealing.

"Rosa," said he, "if I have mortified you, I ask your pardon. Forgive and believe that it was not my design."

She made no answer.

"Must we be enemies because my fate compels me to marry a wealthier woman? Believe me, it must be so."

"It was not necessity that spoke in your discourse."

"Is not every man willing to put the best face upon his deed? Perhaps, too, a little natural petulance— Forget the moment's outburst, and remember only that for the sake of his name, for the sake of his estate, your cousin must marry something larger than even Lady Silverlock's jointure."

"Is this earnest?" asked she.

"The most solemn earnest, urged upon me not three weeks since by Sir John Goldwin and my father."

"'Twas money drew you to this paragon? On your honour?"

"On my honour," answered Eustace, colouring, however, a little, and with grace enough in him to be ashamed of the subterfuge, "'twas money drew me to her."

She looked at him; he was unable even to guess how far she believed him. After a moment she said that if this were so she would stand his friend, and asked him to bring her acquainted with the vicar and his family. "Your suit," said she, "may prosper none the worse for bringing on the scene a wealthy lady relative."

Eustace hesitated. The proposition was by no means to his taste, but he could see no way of refusal. And before he had yet found an answer, that circumstance intervened, in hope of which he had originally

placed himself here. Dorothy and Lucinda came through the churchyard gate and along the path on their way to the village. No choice was now left him; he fancied too, that the young ladies looked somewhat strangely upon him at finding him engaged thus in converse with an unknown fine lady. He hastened therefore to effect the introduction.

"Miss Lucinda, Miss Marlowe, may I make you acquainted with my cousin, Lady Silverlock?"

The ladies curtsied. Rosa showed a smile as brilliant as Lucinda's own. Dorothy looked a little serious.

"I was just promising to do myself the honour of visiting you," said Rosa, "when my good fortune brought you this way."

"Oh, madam," said Lucinda, "'tis for us to wait upon your ladyship."

"I wondered but half an hour since what loadstone held my truant cousin in Rosedale. But now I seek no farther; this peaceful seeming village is the abode, I find, of Syrens."

"Oh, madam!" said Lucinda again.

"And he, I dare swear, is no Ulysses to stop his ears with wool—eh, Eustace?"

"Oh, madam," cried the delighted Lucinda, "you are too condescending."

Both young ladies noted the Christian name of Captain Lackland, and Lucinda failed not to point out, by and by, how elegant a name it was.

Lady Silverlock received Lucinda's speech with a smile; but her eyes were upon Dorothy.

"You are silent, Miss Marlowe," said she, "you view with displeasure this intrusion of a town-bred stranger into your rustic Eden."

"Indeed," answered Dorothy, "your ladyship mistakes. If I am silent 'tis that I would not presume to press myself upon you."

"Proud, as I live! But you must make an exception in your pride for me. The friends of my cousin Eustace (and Miss Marlowe, I hope, is one of them) must be mine."

"Alas! madam, what can you find worth having in the friendship of an ignorant country girl?"

"Leave me, my pretty one to judge of that. If you will promise to endure the fine lady, I will make shift to be content with the country maiden. For 'tis in friendship as in love that engagement stands the firmest wherein each party is rather sensible of opposing merits in the other, than desirous to display their own. I protest my cousin has made me curious to know you. But, faith, 'tis not as Miss Marlowe that I would know you."

"How then, madam?" asked Dorothy with a look of surprised, yet steady reproof, and with a face that refused the acknowledgment of a blush.

"Nay, is there no other name dearer than that? You look at me as if I meant mischievously. Forgive me, sweet one, and give me your Christian name—your church catechism name, as a pledge of reconcilement."

"'Tis Dorothy, madam."

"Dorothy! Ay! I have news to tell you of your name. Does not Dorothy begin with a D?"

"Cousin! Nay, I beg," cried Eustace.

But the protest came too late. Rosa had already pointed out the new-cut D above the seat. Dorothy saw. Her face took again the vivid blush that had clothed it at their first meeting, and she looked suddenly at Eustace. Their eyes, though but for a moment, answered each other, and Rosa's presence, her friendship or her enmity, sank into nothing.

IV.

On Sunday morning, some two days after Lady Silverlock's arrival, Eustace was again standing in the churchyard. The bells were ringing for morning service and the tall figure of the doctor had already crossed by the path to the vestry door. His family would not now be long in following, and Eustace would have the opportunity of wishing them a good morning and attending them on their entrance. As he stood awaiting this happy moment he became aware that another person was loitering with the like intent, and, his own face darkening, he met the half-forgotten scowl of Mr. Roger Broadwood. Like a true son of Lord Lackland, he bestowed upon his adversary an extremely polite bow, to which the other returned a churlish and reluctant acknowledgment. A minute or so later the little procession emerged from the garden; Lucinda, Priscilla, and Dorothy came together: Charlotte and William followed, a step or two behind. Instantly Roger on the one side and Eustace on the other had pulled off his hat and stood bowing. Fortune was good to Eustace; Dorothy was on his side and her first greeting was for him. He took his place beside her, and retained it even while she spoke to Mr. Broadwood. Her words

were friendly and neighbourly, she smiled on him too, but Eustace believed himself aware of a difference.

A seat in church immediately adjoining the family pew of the vicar had been assigned to Captain Lackland. From this position he could remark that Mr. Broadwood never moved his eyes from that pew, and he was able to assure himself with reasonable certainty that neither Priscilla nor Lucinda was the object of this fixed gaze. He himself was careful to abstain from observation so ostentatious, yet he could at the end of the service have recounted more accurately every rise and fall of Dorothy's eyelashes than the words of the doctor's sermon. But the absorption of all his thoughts in one subject gave him an air of attention that pleased the doctor very much. Lady Silverlock had come in a little late and distracted the thoughts of the congregation (unused to such spectacles) by the agitation of a vast fan, upon the centre of which shepherds and shepherdesses were sporting.

The quarter of an hour after Sunday morning service was sacred, grace of weather permitting, to social intercourse. The vicar and his daughters were surrounded by neighbours; the churchyard was full of the murmurs of much talking. To-day was an occasion of unwonted eventfulness, for Mr. Broadwood had come home, clad in a suit of half-mourning and enriched by the legacy of a distant cousin; and a lady of quality, the relative, it was reported, of the admired Captain Lackland, had arrived in the village. Every woman of any standing in Rosedale was ambitious of presentation to her ladyship, and was burning for a near opportunity of inspecting her "Brussels head." But this quarter of an hour could not be prolonged, for everybody's Sunday dinner was waiting, and horses, new harnessed or new saddled, were growing impatient.

Eustace was informed that a messenger had left a packet of letters for him, and excusing himself, reluctantly, from accepting the doctor's invitation to dinner, he hastened home. Lady Silverlock, however, returned with the vicar's family and behaved to them in the most engaging, and almost affectionate manner. Breaking open his letters, Eustace found them to be from his father and Sir John Goldwin.

These gentlemen urged him to demand Dorothy's hand at once, since the absence of her aunt was not likely to last much longer. "All letters to Miss Marlowe," wrote Sir John, "are delivered to my keeping Dr. Barnard will, of course, bid you address yourself to her, and you must appear to do so. The letter you must place under cover to me, and I will return an answer in Miss Marlowe's name (pretexting a sprained wrist as excuse for a strange hand) in which your suit will be granted and Miss Dorothy bidden to set out immediately for London in the charge of Lady Silverlock. You will, of course, attend these ladies. I will take care that on arriving you shall find Miss Marlowe called to a sick friend at a distance, but having left behind directions for an immediate solemnisation. The ceremony once past Miss Marlowe's resentment will not be long in abating. She is, I find, resolved to bestow her niece upon a country bumpkin, one Broadfield or Broadhead; and even he is not to presume to address the young lady until her return. Such tyranny deserves to be outwitted, and it will be a good work to preserve Miss Dorothy from her rustic suitor."

How, you will ask, did Captain Lackland receive this letter. Alas! he smiled as he read it, and resolved to lose no time in carrying out its instructions. He scarcely slept that night, and the next morning, at an hour when Lady Silverlock had not yet begun her uprising, he was at the parsonage door and had asked for Dr. Barnard.

Dr. Barnard was in his study. Eustace's heart beat so fast that he could scarce hear the doctor's words of welcome or see to advance across the room. He made his demand very becomingly, but his voice shook a little, and his face was pale. Dr. Barnard's countenance was grave but kindly. The answer, he said, must rest with Miss Marlowe, who was now in London, but had left directions that letters for her might be addressed to the care of Sir John Goldwin. Eustace said that he was known to that gentleman, and the doctor replied that the circumstance was auspicious. Then, after musing for a moment or so, he asked: "Have you any conjecture as to Dorothy's own feelings in this affair?"

"I—I do not know," replied Eustace.

At this, a smile flitted across the doctor's face. "It were well," said he, "that we should forward your application to Miss Marlowe immediately, since it is not in my power to give a reply."

"But your approbation, Dr. Barnard—may I not hope for your approbation?"

"You have it, Captain Lackland," he answered, extending his hand and looking with a cordial smile into the young man's disturbed face. For Eustace found himself by no means so easy and fluent as his wont;

and the doctor's friendliness was beginning to awake in him a sense of shame.

"I will myself," said the doctor, "write to Miss Marlowe in your favour. Here are pens and ink. Your impatience will no doubt ill bear delay."

He pushed his "standish" towards Eustace, and selecting a pen began to mend it. Eustace, on his part, sat with his pen in his hand looking to the ground, and feeling himself very despicable. Then he felt the doctor's eye upon him, and bending down set place and date at the top of his page, and began to write his mock letter to Miss Marlowe. He had never dreamed that his deception would be so bitter to him when he came to carry it out. Dr. Barnard had finished writing and looked across at him. The pain and shame by which he was beset must have been legible in his face. His agitation seemed to move the doctor's pity, for rising he came to him and laid a hand kindly on his shoulder. Eustace looked up, and letting his pen drop, hid his face upon his hands and broke into tears.

Dr. Barnard had begun to say: "Nay, nay, my dear young friend, this emotion is excessive," when there was a knock at the study door.

The doctor exclaimed "pshaw!" in an impatient tone, and went to the door. It was a farmer of the neighbourhood, come to take advice upon his letter from his landlord. Dr. Barnard led him to another room, and Eustace was left alone.

A sound from the garden roused his attention. Looking out he saw Dorothy walking slowly in the shadow of the trees. Her face, he thought, showed some slight change, some doubtful dawning of expectation not yet fixed into hope or fear. A town child in a country garden has such a look. Eustace felt the blood spring to his cheek, and was frightened at the momentary penitence that had made him ready to risk his hopes of winning her. And after all, how trivial a deceit it was! Did he not love her for herself? Would he not rejoice to take her without a penny? And did he not know that her aunt would refuse her to him for the sake of Roger Broadwood? No, no, there was no safe retreating into the paths of honesty. He must go on and make Dorothy his wife. He finished his letter, sealed it with the doctor's wax and the doctor's seal, and wrote a few lines to Sir John.

Then at his earnest request he was allowed to see Dorothy, who said, looking down, that would be obedient to her aunt.

"That is a good girl," said the doctor. "And now bid Captain Lackland farewell until we hear from your aunt; for I am about to beg that he will leave Rosedale for a few days. He will, I do not doubt, see the propriety of this course."

Eustace did not say that he saw the propriety, but he sighed deeply, and said that he would obey.

There went by some anxious and very long days, in which he lingered in neighbouring villages. At last the time came in which an answer might return from London. He came back to Rosedale, and next day received the expected package from Sir John. It was all as Sir John had promised. Here was the letter professedly dictated by Miss Marlowe, in which she accepted him as a husband for her niece. Here were short missives from his father and Sir John, promising that Miss Marlowe should be safely away by the time he came to London. He hurried to the parsonage. There, too, letters had been received. Dorothy was in joyful agitation over her aunt's commands that she should come to London. Lady Silverlock was delighted to undertake the charge of her. Dr. Barnard and his daughters were, as Lucinda said, all in a flutter. Speech with Dorothy alone was impossible, but he got a few murmured words that were enough. All that followed was a strange dream, of long roads, and the swaying motion of a carriage, and noisy crowded inns, and Dorothy's face, and Rosa's voice. Still in a dream they came to London; Sir John's house stood in a wondrous paradise; the tale that Sir John told to account for Miss Marlowe's absence seemed as true as all the rest.

And so late in a June afternoon there was a wedding in Sir John's drawing-room, and Sir John gave the bride to her husband, and Lady Silverlock stood on her other side and took the first kiss from Dorothy Lackland.

V.

It was the third day from the wedding of Dorothy and Eustace. Lord Lackland coming to pay a visit to his daughter-in-law, was shown into a "morning parlour," and requested to wait a few minutes. The few minutes had not yet become many when the door opened and Lady Silverlock entered.

"What, you, Rosa? Is Dorothy not yet visible? She has been quick to assume the manners of a fine lady."

"Nay, uncle, 'tis the mantua-maker detains her. She is trying a ball dress—for the first time in her life."

"Do not, I beg, disturb her occupation. I will wait upon Lady Millefoil at her *levée*, and return. But first let me express to you, Rosa, the infinite obligations of your family to you in this affair. She is still, I presume, quite ignorant of the trick played upon her?"

"Quite. Sir John, I believe, has acquainted her with the circumstance of her wealth, and they purpose to-morrow, or possibly to-night, to break to her the deception practised upon her aunt.

"It was an excellent device of Sir John and excellently carried out. But the finest sport is to remark how our bridegroom has almost grown to believe himself in love with his heiress. You would swear they were nymph and swain out of a poetry book. I protest the boy absolutely walks about smiling with inner satisfaction as if he had just won the great prize in the lottery."

He shrugged his shoulders, and with a graceful bow departed.

Lady Silverlock, being left alone, permitted her smile to fall away and stood in the middle of the room meditating. Her face grew grave and hard. She murmured rather bitterly "The great prize in the lottery!" Her smile came back at that, but it was neither a merry nor a pleasant smile, and her teeth were clenched together behind it.

Dorothy came in, looking fresh and bright, and wearing that same little chintz gown which she had worn on the day when she had captured Eustace in the parsonage garden.

Lady Silverlock received her gaily. "What, Dorothy, already? How suits the dress?"

"The dress, Rosa, is entirely charming. I own that I felt a little child's delight in my fineries. I long to show myself in it to my husband."

"'My husband!' How she says it! Is there not therein also something of the child's delight in a new toy?"

Dorothy drew a long breath, and passed her two hands over her eyes. "Oh, Rosa," said she, softly, "I never knew till now how full of joy the world might be. I used to reckon myself happy in Rosedale, but that was to this as sleep to waking."

"Is the prospect of a title indeed so alluring?"

"Hush, you worldly-minded Rosa. There is but one title for which I care—that of my Eustace's chosen wife."

"Yes," said Rosa, smiling, "his chosen. But who shall say what guides the choice of a man?"

"'Tis love, and when we say that we confess that we know not what it is."

"Love, my dear, is hardly so powerful, out of the romances."

"What do you mean, Rosa? I am sure love can scarce be more powerful than that which rules *here*, and he—ah, I believe he loves me better yet."

"Still the Arcadian shepherdess, Dorothy? But tell me what did you think of Lord Lackland?"

"He was all politeness and condescension. Yet—but tell me first: do *you* love your uncle very much?"

"My uncle is the cause that I am Lady Silverlock instead of being the wife of the man I loved. Need you ask further?"

"What, you, too, Rosa? He would have done so to Eustace, but Eustace was resolute. He told us in Devonshire. And I know too well whence proceeds his kindness to me. Sir John came to me yesterday evening and told me—what, think you? That I am heiress to I know not how much lands and money, but my aunt—my dear, wise aunt—has kept it a secret lest I should become a prey to fortune-hunters. That I might be an heiress! 'Tis like a fairy tale And he had informed Lord Lackland who, *therefore*, was overjoyed that Eustace had married me."

"And yet, though you know this, you can talk still as if he had wooed you but for your bright eyes."

"I do not understand."

"Oh, innocent child that you are! 'Tis provoking to see such blindness in one of one's own sex. Could he, if he would, have married you penniless?"

"He loves me, Rosa, he loves me. 'Tis in vain to tell me of aught else."

"Now, of all the follies that make this world intolerable is there any to compare with that of a lover who makes an angel from the commonest clay of man or woman? I tell you, Dorothy Lackland, if you persevere in thinking your fine captain husband a hero of romance you will but heap up a store of sorrow for yourself. Is it reasonable to think your man will differ from the thousands round him? I have known Eustace from the cradle, and I tell you constancy to one woman is not in him. You must not look for the impossible. He will, I dare say, be, notwithstanding, a complaisant husband."

"Complaisant!" cried Dorothy.

"Ay, my dear," returned Lady Silverlock, "and more than that no woman ought to cry out for."

"You know him not, Rosa, you know him not. You have *beheld* him, it may be, from his cradle, but you have never *seen* him yet."

"And have you, Dorothy, seen him? I would make experience easy for you, if you would let me. Have you seen the father and yet believe in the son? Can you not read the future in the past? The father married a rich alderman's daughter, spent her fortune, flouted her family, and broke her heart. The son has married you. But she, indeed, was a fool who could never learn to accept her husband for what he was. I tell you, child, life, and in especial married life, is but a compromise, where the woman must give up much, and take what she can in return. And how if we shut our eyes to the failings of our opposite shall we hope for a good bargain?"

"A bargain! But how simple I am! You are playing with me. I know you would not have me believe you."

"Indeed, Dorothy, I am in earnest. Nor are you so dull but that, having once heard me, your eyes will be opened in spite of yourself, and you will understand that your husband is but as other husbands, who love their wives' wealth better than their wives, and their own wills better than both."

Dorothy rose with some dignity.

"Enough, Lady Silverlock," said she, "I have been patient thus long, but I will bear no more. Were you ten times his kinswoman, I will not hear my husband slandered. You throw about false suspicions as the children in Rosedale throw burrs."

"'False suspicions' say you? Would you have me prove them true?"

"You cannot."

"This grows earnest indeed. For my own honour it becomes me now to speak. Will you condescend, my pretty blusterer, to look on this? But I forget—*you*, possibly, know not your husband's hand."

"I know it, I know it," answered Dorothy, stretching out her hand for the letter. And she read those same words which Rosa had shown to Eustace in the churchyard: 'Whatever bars a hard fate may put between us my heart is yours, unalterably and for ever.'

"Oh, 'tis false!" she cried. "It must be false."

"Yet you turn pale. Your heart confesses."

"Oh, Eustace!" murmured Dorothy. And then, recovering herself, she demanded: "But why, why, if this were so, did you suffer him to marry me? 'Tis impossible."

"Your fortune was needed for the payment of his debts."

There was a brief pause.

"Take your letter, Lady Silverlock," said Dorothy, "and my farewell. For henceforth you can be no friend for me. Between you and me there can be nothing in common. I will therefore free you from my presence and withdraw."

"Stay, madam," returned the other, reddening. "I will not drive you from your own apartment, nor force my company where I am told so plainly that 'tis unwelcome. The usages of the polite were not, I find, the usages of Rosedale. Make my excuses, I beg of you, to my cousin Eustace. I have the honour, Mrs. Lackland, to wish you a very good morning."

She swept a curtsey of most imposing character, to which Dorothy replied by a grave inclination of the head.

Dorothy, being left alone, gave way but for a few minutes to her first feeling of mere anger against Lady Silverlock. Her thoughts came back to their natural centre. "A bar!" Was she a bar between Eustace and his wishes? No, no, she had not looked closely enough into the letter. There must have been some explanation, if she had but sought a little deeper. It was impossible; it was even laughable. At that came the reaction of doubt. For yet—yet—it was his handwriting. Was she, indeed, an obstacle in his path—a bar? The sincerity of her own nature protested. She could not conceive that a man loving one woman, should bring himself to marry another. And in a moment the remembrance of her own marriage promise rushed over her. Was she tempted already to doubt her husband? "Oh, no," she murmured to herself, and smiled again. The dim instinct of recognition by which the truthful feel the truth or falsehood of their neighbours, told her that it was Eustace who was true to her and Rosa who was false, and with this recognition came the conviction that he, whom she felt true, must be nearer to herself than he could be to her who was false. Her heart had never fully trusted Rosa—she knew that now. She had crushed down her mistrust but it had never been driven out, and now it had come forward and claimed its natural place. No, it was not in the power of such as Lady Silverlock to shake her faith in Eustace. She shook her head, smiling softly.

She remembered that she had called these false suspicions, burrs, and resolved to brush them from her—belief, remembrance, all. But she felt that something of her lightheartedness went with them. She could never be quite as young and joyous again. Deceit had come face to face with her, and the world in which she had met deceit was a graver world henceforth.

Eustace had gone out with Sir John (they were staying in Sir John's house still) to make some formal proof of the marriage and set forth the claims of wife and husband to have Dorothy's fortune made over to them. They now returned and found Dorothy sitting by herself in the morning parlour.

"Why, Dorothy," said Eustace, "I thought Rosa had been with you."

She looked up at him quickly. He could not tell what her look meant.

"She has gone," she answered. "She bade me make her excuses to you."

"'Twas unkind of her," said he, "to leave you alone."

"My own thoughts, Eustace," said Dorothy, "are better company to me than your cousin."

"How?" said Eustace, suddenly breathless and full of vague apprehensions.

But Sir John, with a self-satisfied smile, interposed:

"Pardon me, Captain Lackland, if I presume to understand your lady's mind better than you do, but it seems to me that she pays a compliment to him of whom her thoughts are full."

Eustace's gratified smile at this interpretation sent a throb of additional reassurance to Dorothy's heart. She had, we know, assured herself already that all was well between Eustace and herself. Yet now when he was actually beside her, and her heart should, it would have seemed, have been completely at peace, it was filled with aching tumult.

She put up her hand half timidly to his arm as he stood beside her.

"Would it indeed grieve you very much if I had quarrelled with your cousin?"

"She is my nearest kinswoman," he answered, with a little caressing touch upon the appealing hand. "She might do my wife some mischief with my friends. But sure, my love, 'tis not your earnest?"

"She said things," Dorothy answered, looking down, "that your wife might not endure to hear."

"Confusion! What? What has she said?" cried Eustace. The light touch upon her fingers became an alarmed grasp, she felt his hand grow hot and his arm tremble. His emotion, she could not tell why, eased her and made her happier.

"Nothing," she answered, "that I will suffer myself to remember. You must not put me to the pain of repetition. She wounded me. I will not suffer it to rankle. Dear Eustace, can you not trust your wife to believe in you?"

At his name she looked up, and still keeping her eyes on him, rose and stood opposite to him. His face was troubled, but she knew quite clearly that it was not his love for her which was the doubtful thing.

"You are too good for me, Dorothy," he murmured. "I am but a poor rascal for a woman to trust in. And yet trust me, dear, all the same. The future shall be better than the past."

"I have no claim," she answered softly, "on your past. But you love me now?"

"From the deepest foundation," he answered, "of my soul."

"I am satisfied," said she. "I am always satisfied when I hear your voice. But we are forgetful of Sir John." And turning to him, who was walking to and fro at the other end of the room, singing an air and admiring his shoe buckles, "Is it not strange, dear sir," said she, "that we have yet no message from my aunt?"

"We shall hear, I doubt not, to-morrow," he replied.

Eustace, on his other side, plucked him by the sleeve. "To-morrow? Nay, tell her to-day," he whispered. "She has heard something already."

Sir John slightly shook his head, and put him aside. "Lord Lackland, madam," said he, "will be here, presently, to pay his compliments to his new daughter. He has never, I believe, had so exalted an opinion of his son as since he has seen how lovely a bride has bestowed her hand on him."

Dorothy's smile had a touch of sarcasm in it.

"It is not surprising," said Eustace, presently, "that you should raise my value with others. You have raised it with myself."

She drew herself up and put on a little air of severity. "Go, Captain Lackland," said she, "I will not be flattered. 'Tis scarce three days, sir, since you vowed to honour me, and sure I am that we honour not those whom we flatter."

She turned from them and went to a harpsichord that stood in the room. Turn-

ing the music she touched a note or two till presently she struck an air.

Sir John meanwhile was expressing to Eustace, almost with tears in his eyes, his admiration of her goodness and beauty.

"She is indeed," said he, "a sweet creature, and if you deserve the name of man you will be a good husband to her."

"I will, Sir John, trust me; I will," said Eustace.

Sir John pressed his hand and told him he believed him.

Alas for the value of good resolutions! It must have been at about the same minute that Lady Silverlock from her sedan chair caught sight of a familiar figure striding along the street. She waved her hand from the window and cried aloud, "Dr. Barnard! Dr. Barnard!"

The good doctor—for he it certainly was—stopped and turned, and then approached rapidly.

"Lady Silverlock!" cried he. His face darkened, and he asked hoarsely, "What have you done with Dorothy?"

"She is at Sir John Goldwin's. Oh, Dr. Barnard, do not look at me like that. Indeed I meant no harm; I believed that Miss Marlowe was here. I have only just learnt the truth, and I was on my way now to acquaint my lawyer and put her at once into safe hands. It is that vile Sir John. My cousin was in his power; he owed him hundreds of pounds, and Dorothy's fortune was to pay them. Oh, how glad am I to see you—a woman is so helpless! You are going now to Sir John's? I will return. They would be capable, I believe, of shutting you out. You will follow my chair, will you not?"

He nodded silently, overwhelmed by the confirmation of his fears, and they turned back towards the house in which Dorothy, Eustace, and Sir John were passing their time so unsuspiciously.

Dorothy had now fixed on a melody which she seemed to play with some significance. Eustace recognised it, and, going to her, asked with some surprise if this were among her songs.

"It has run in my head," she answered, "this half hour. Do *you* know it?" She turned a mischievous look upon him.

"I have heard it," he answered, "many a time. I cannot sing it you, but would you have me repeat its declaration?"

She nodded very slightly. "Indeed, I believe it might be salutary."

"Hear me, then, but do not, I beseech you, think me a Captain Macheath." And standing before her, half in earnest, half in jest, he repeated the verses of the song, which was that from the *Beggar's Opera*:—

"'Cease your funning,
Force nor cunning
Never shall my heart trepan.
All the sallies
Are but malice
To seduce (your) constant man.
'Tis most certain
By their flirting
Women oft have envy shown,
Pleased to ruin
Other's wooing,
Never happy in their own.'"

Sir John applauded loudly. Dorothy looked up into her husband's face and said, very seriously, "Amen!"

"Amen, indeed, with all my heart," answered he.

The words had scarcely left his lips when a servant came in.

"Sir," said he to his master, "Lady Silverlock and Dr. Barnard——" "Are below," he would doubtless have added, but Sir John interrupted him.

"Perdition!" cried he. "Fool! dolt! Did I not tell you to deny me?"

"Yes, sir, but my lady said——"

"No matter; the gentleman cannot be admitted."

But Dorothy had heard and risen.

"Dr. Barnard," said she. "Is it Dr. Barnard?"

"Yes, madam," said the man.

"Nay, pardon me, Sir John; I must see Dr. Barnard. Who knows. Perhaps my aunt is ill."

"They are come up, sir," said the servant, all abashed.

There was indeed a rustle and a sound of steps at the door.

"They are here," said Dorothy, and went forward, breathless, exclaiming, "Oh, my dear Dr. Barnard, how rejoiced I am to see you——"

She stopped short, seeing his muddy and disordered dress, his uncurled wig, and countenance full of alarm and agitation.

"Eustace put up his hand to his eyes and uttered a low groan of remorse and misery.

"Dorothy," cried Dr. Barnard, "are you married?"

"Yes, three days ago," she repeated in amazement.

"Heaven forgive me!" cried he. "Oh, my child, my poor, poor child, I should have been more careful. And they would have denied you to me, would have thrust me out, but that

Lady Silverlock saw me and brought me in. Oh, my Dorothy, we have been deceived—grossly, wilfully deceived. Your aunt never consented to your marriage—your aunt never sent for you. The letter was all a forgery—she was on her way home all the time."

"How? Who, then——?" said Dorothy, and turned her eyes to Eustace. Her voice died on her lips at the sight of his face, and she caught Dr. Barnard's hand.

"But he?" she murmured, "he?"

"He is but an abject fortune-hunter, a debtor, an adventurer——"

Sir John Goldwin here interrupted.

"Sir, sir, your sacred office gives you many privileges, but beware lest you exceed them. Captain Lackland is a gentleman of known repute——"

"Ay, indeed, sir," returned the doctor, sternly. "So I find since I have come to London;" and turning from him to Rosa: "Oh, madam, madam, why had not you the womanliness to save this innocent child?"

"Dr. Barnard," cried Sir John, "will you not hear reason? The deceit, such as it is, is mine. 'Twas I induced Captain Lackland to go to Devonshire; I described to him the lady; I sent the letters in Miss Marlowe's name; but I dispute entirely that the young lady has been wronged. Her aunt has an unreasoning dread of false lovers; she knows nothing of the world; she would not hear of Captain Lackland; she would not consider her niece's inclination; she would have forced her to marry a man with whom she could never have been happy. The marriage has been of my contriving; I glory in it, and I protest I think the lady owes me thanks. But if, indeed, there is aught of blame in the matter, 'tis to me that it belongs, and not to her husband. He, I dare say, made no pretence to you of wealth——"

"He never told me, sir," interrupted the doctor, "that he owed hundreds of pounds to you."

"To me?" murmured Sir John, confused.

"Ay, to you, false guardian that you are—you, the one man to whom Miss Marlowe trusted the knowledge of her niece's wealth."

"Oh, Sir John," cried Dorothy, "Sir John, surely this is not true. Tell me, tell me——"

She looked from one to the other, but no one seemed likely to answer her.

"It is true," said Eustace.

A voice said with quiet emphasis, "Fool!" and Lady Silverlock, who alone had attention to spare, observed that Lord Lackland had come in.

To Dorothy, Eustace's confession, following upon Rosa's words of an hour earlier, was the confession of much more besides. Everything seemed at an end for her. The whole world crumbled about her.

"True!" she cried, and the cry went home to Eustace's conscience like an arrow. "You knew it when you came? You came for that?"

She turned from one to another, seeking some shelter of belief. From Eustace she looked to Sir John and half uttered his name, but answered herself with "Oh, but you, too," and turning back to Eustace, "and *you*—oh, and Rosa, you—the letter, too—I understand! Oh misery, misery!"

By "the letter" she meant of course Eustace's letter to Rosa, the one unpardonable and incurable wound, but Eustace, and all of them, except Rosa, supposed that she spoke of the false letter from her aunt, in which Eustace had had in fact no hand, though, having profited by it, he could not excuse himself.

Dr. Barnard endeavoured to soothe her, calling her his daughter, and bidding her be brave.

"Dorothy," pleaded Eustace, "my wife—hear me but one word—"

Their words did not seem to reach her. Wringing her hands, she cried out:

"Tricked! tricked! and made a dupe of! Won by a few false words! Robbed of all that makes life good! Take me away, Dr. Barnard. Hide me where no one knows."

He put his arms round her and she hid her face, weeping.

"You shall come back, my dear," said Dr. Barnard, "to your own home, where every one loves and honours you."

Lord Lackland interposed. "By your leave, Dr. Barnard, the lady is my son's wife, and her home is with him."

"No, no," cried Dorothy, "not that—not now. Rather let me die."

She turned round with a face of terror, clinging to Dr. Barnard's arm.

Eustace, when he saw her shrink back thus, could as soon have struck her as have urged any right to hold her. He saw in her feeling an impassable gulf opened between them, and knew that she was lost to him.

"Father," said he, "this is my affair. Let no other intermeddle. You need not fear, Dorothy, I make no claim upon you, I have lost the right. I acknowledge all that you accuse me of."

The words fell chill upon her ears. She remembered that he had called her a bar

between him and Rosa, and believed that he was not sorry to let her go. The despairing acknowledgment seemed to Dr. Barnard almost more shameless than a denial.

"And you could come, sir," said he, "like a wolf into the fold to make ravage of this innocent lamb, to steal into an honest man's household, and plunder a defenceless girl, without mercy and without remorse."

"No, not without remorse." Eustace hardly knew whether he spoke the words or whether it was only within his heart that they were uttered so loudly.

"Had you no thought of her aunt—of that worthy and honourable lady, coming home to find her hearth desolate and her child stolen from her?"

"My aunt!" cried Dorothy. "Oh, Dr. Barnard, what said my aunt?"

"Nay, my dear, her heart is well-nigh broken. She lies at home, ill."

"Let us go to her," said Dorothy eagerly; but she stopped herself. "There is something else. I know not what I would say."

The look of search and doubt upon her face alarmed Dr. Barnard.

"There is nothing else, my dear. Come. Remember we are going to your aunt."

He tried to draw her towards the door. It was more than Eustace could bear. Springing forward he called her by her name. He held out his hands to her and would have flung himself at her feet. The world seemed to turn round. He scarcely knew what he did.

"Stop! Don't come near me!" she cried.

He shrank back and paused, not daring to look up and meet in her eyes the horror and aversion of her voice.

Almost instantly she spoke again. Her tone was perfectly calm and steady, and her face was like it.

"You have wronged me more, I think, than any woman was ever wronged before. I make no reproaches to you, but grant me this, the one last request I shall ever make of you—not to come near me, not to see my face ever again. You have the money that you sought me for—let me go."

She moved slowly towards the door. Eustace's eyes, his very life it seemed to him, followed her. Yet he knew beyond all hope, that nothing he could say or do would reach her. His one thought was to hold her to the last moment in his sight.

She was gone, and his senses seemed to forsake him. He sank back into a chair. It was that from which she had risen at the harpsichord. He dropped his face upon his arms, his arms across the keys that she had touched. He loathed and abhorred himself; his soul cried out within him for some way of reparation, but there was none. He had bound her, but he could not set her free. Oh, if she had but been penniless!

"Sir John," said Lord Lackland, "one word. The money remains his?"

"Oh, yes, my lord. I was careful for my own sake to see the articles drawn."

"For my part," said Lord Lackland, "I think the boy is well rid of his clog. And the aunt has more than enough for both. What should a couple of women do with so much wealth?"

With this reflection, he offered Sir John his snuff-box and withdrew.

Sir John could not be quite so philosophical. He shook his head and wished that he had never meddled in the affair. He sighed and wondered why these young people could not be reasonable and take things in a lower key. Then he murmured in his cravat a curse which could not be said aloud, because it was meant for Lady Silverlock, to whom he attributed the whole disturbance, and who was still in the room.

He went to Eustace and laid his hand upon his shoulder.

"Captain Lackland," said he.

But Captain Lackland, springing up in a fury, was so uncivil as to call him "Satan," and to declare in unmeasured terms that his temptations were to blame for all this.

"Oh, your servant, Captain Lackland! As you please! 'Tis not every young man thinks a rich wife's fortune so ill a gift."

And he flung out of the room, greatly affronted.

Eustace stood in the middle of the room, looking like a person started up from a dream. A new thought had possession of him. He remembered that if he were dead Dorothy would be free. He suffered the door to close upon Sir John. He had forgotten Rosa and he did not look round. She, standing in a corner, held her breath and trembled. He stood still for a moment, hearing Sir John's steps depart, then with a cry of "Dorothy!" snatched at his sword.

There was another cry, a wild rush, a hand upon his arm, and another on his sword hilt.

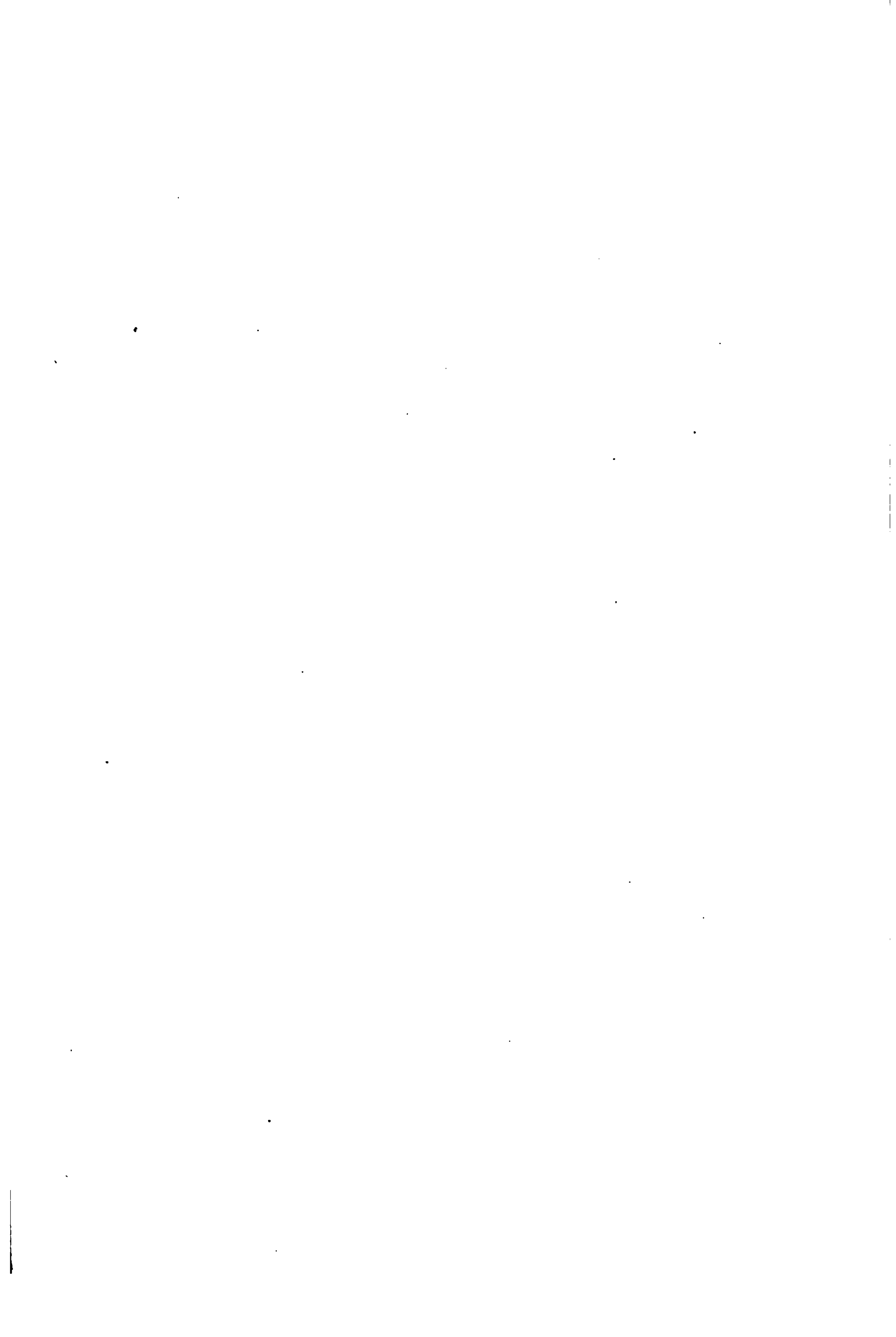
"Cousin!" cried Rosa.

"Give me my sword," cried Eustace, and pushing her roughly from him, wrestled himself free.

"Eustace! Eustace!" she cried, flinging herself before him and winding her arms

A SCENE IN HELGOLAND.

Engraved by O. LACOUR, *from a Drawing by* HAMILTON MACALLUM.



about him. "For her sake, Eustace, think of the pain to her—the scandal."

Maddened as he was, that argument reached him. He dropped his sword into its sheath, and for a moment reflected. Then, "There's war again," he murmured.

His face cleared a little. "Yes, you are right. There are better ways than that."

He freed himself from her grasp, raised her, and turned away.

She burst into questions, expostulations, and reproaches.

He replied with a voice and smile that seemed to be not his own but his father's: "You have taught me, Lady Silverlock, that an unloving wife may be made a cheerful widow. I hope to improve the example. You can tell my father, if he asks for me, that I go to offer my sword as a volunteer in his majesty's service."

She was impressed—as she had always been impressed by his father—and made no effort to stop him. He went, and she was left alone, to recognise that she had not divided her cousin one whit more irretrievably from Dorothy than from herself.

VIII.

Of the dangers of the campaign which followed it is not necessary to speak in detail. Sickness and the chances of war devastated the English ranks, but Eustace was always among those who escaped. The desperation which drove him into the most dangerous situations, won for him the renown of reckless intrepidity. In truth his only moments of forgetfulness were those spent in the hurry and tumult of battle. Then, only, did his life seem to have some flavour in it and the joy of action returned to him.

He left England in June, and after having endured, without ill effect, the hardships and privations of the winter, he fell a victim to a kind of low fever that was very prevalent in the camp. This, he thought, would put an end to him, for he was resolved not to recover. But he had not reckoned for the contradictions that might work in his own soul. No sooner did his fever begin to be alarming than his whole course of thought centred itself round the burning desire of seeing Dorothy again. And as it is said that the longings of a mother will keep alive her dying child, so, Eustace verily believed, did the eagerness of his desire keep alight the well-nigh extinguished spark of his life. He battled through his sickness, and began to make progress towards his usual health. But the wish born of his fever grew beyond it and gathered strength. He began to think that he *could* not die until he had seen Dorothy. At Fontenoy a ball struck his horse beneath him. As he fell he thought "now is all over!" With the thought Dorothy's face sprang up before him. He wrenched himself free from his entanglement, struggling as eagerly for life as a few minutes before he had courted death.

This event gave him food for reflection. He reminded himself that nearly a year had gone by, that he was still alive, and beginning, in spite of his resolve, to cherish a desire which could only be satisfied by retaining his hold on life. But this desire became more and more irresistible. It grew to be like the influence of a spell. At last, in obedience to an overmastering hunger, he gave up his command, and yielded to the force that drew him home. He landed at Harwich and made his way at once to Rosedale. He closed his last day's journey at the next preceding stage, where he slept, and in the morning walked to the village. It was nearly noon when he reached Dorothy's dwelling, and the day was the anniversary of their marriage. He had no thought—or at least he believed that he had none—of any possible reconciliation. The thing in his heart was to see her, and hear her speak, and go away and kill himself. The weight of existence, in spite of those frantic struggles to preserve it, had become intolerable. The daily reflection that his life was a continuing bondage for Dorothy was a torture. That self-destruction might be a sin involving future punishments he was ready enough to suppose, but since the punishment would fall upon him, he was willing and indeed eager to encounter it by way of atonement to Dorothy.

The fields all smelt of hay, and he saw no one in the houses; everybody had gone to work while the fine weather lasted. The door of Miss Marlowe's cottage stood half open. He slipped in, his heart beating. Before him was the door of the room into which he had once come with Dorothy and Charlotte. It was unlatched. He listened; all was still. He ventured into the room and found it empty. The long window stood wide. There was an open work-basket in a corner. A book lay on the table with a ribbon in it to mark the place.

He stood gazing at everything, feeling on everything the breath of her presence.

"Dorothy?" cried a voice from without. "Dorothy?"

It was Charlotte's voice. Eustace was instantly recalled to himself. He must not —he could not—be detected thus by Charlotte. He looked round for a way of retreat, and observing that there were long curtains pushed back from the window, hastily concealed himself between the wall and their heavy folds.

Charlotte came in.

"Dorothy!" she repeated. "Dorothy! Are you here?"

From the garden came a voice that thrilled Eustace's every nerve.

"Charlotte, is that you? I will come in, my dear."

He heard her step upon the path, then the rustle of her dress in the window as she passed in, hardly a foot from him, yet he could neither see her, nor touch her.

"I have been clipping my roses," said she. "See, let me give you some." And Eustace perceived a scent of roses that came creeping amid the folds of the curtain. "How is your husband, and his good mother? Is she better?"

"Her cough is much abated, I am thankful to say," answered Charlotte. "And you, my Dorothy?"

"I am well, Charlotte. But why, my dear, do you question it? Have you ever known me to be otherwise?"

There was a graver tone in her voice—a tone that sounded saddened and restrained. Eustace moved almost beyond self-control, pressed his arms and face against the wall, and wished that he were indeed lying under the new-turned sods at Fontenoy.

Charlotte, he fancied, took her hand.

"You are brave, Dorothy, I know, but your cheek confesses to a change, and your steps are slower than they were."

"We grow older, Charlotte. You and I will be old women shortly."

"Will we, Dorothy? Not I, thank you, at two and twenty. You must have a care how you speak thus before Lucinda. She would be mortally affronted."

She laughed a little, to draw a laugh from Dorothy, but Eustace heard none. Perhaps she smiled, but if so the smile can hardly have been very joyous or Charlotte would not have replied to it as she did.

"Why do you not own to your Charlotte?" said she, "that you are unhappy? Your heart would be the easier for it, and mine aches to see you silent."

"I would not have it do so," Dorothy answered. "Believe me, mine aches not —much."

"The last word," said Charlotte, "holds all. I would not torment you, only—to-day —I cannot help thinking——"

"Hush, Charlotte," said Dorothy, swiftly. "Pardon me, dear, but I cannot endure a reference to that day."

For a moment neither of them spoke.

"You have put on your wedding ring again," said Charlotte.

Eustace's heart leapt up within him.

"Of what avail was it to put it by?" said Dorothy. "The fetter is there still."

"Dorothy," began her friend once more, "I have news for you."

"What news?" she asked. Her voice was steady, but it seemed to Eustace to be full of terror.

"Nay, my dear, you tremble. Only this, some of the troops are returning to England, and Captain Lackland with them. He has won great honour by his bravery."

"Was he wounded?" asked Dorothy.

"No, I think not. 'Tis said he will be much advanced."

"I am glad to hear of his prosperity," said Dorothy.

"And now," pursued Charlotte, "silence me if you will. I know I have no right to ask—how, Dorothy, if he should come to you?"

Eustace listened, trembling, for her reply. Yet he felt with shame that he should not be here. He quieted his conscience with the excuse that by to-morrow all memories would be over for him, and that it would not matter whether he had heard or not heard anything.

Dorothy's answer was not what he had looked for.

"Had you any cause," said she, somewhat sternly, "to put the question? You have seen him, Charlotte."

"No," said Charlotte, "I have not seen him; I know nothing of him."

"He will not come," said Dorothy. "And if he should it could avail nothing. But why, my dear, would you look into the dark corners of my heart? When does Lucinda return from Bath?"

Charlotte replied, with extracts from Lucinda's letters, dealing chiefly with fashions of dresses and mantles. Dorothy answered gaily enough but stopped suddenly: "Listen! There is a step in the garden."

"'Tis, no doubt, my father," said Charlotte; and in the next moment Eustace heard Dorothy addressing Dr. Barnard by name. She reproached him playfully for not having been to see her for nearly a week, and he answered in the same tone, that the loss was on his side.

"And you, Dorothy, will you not come

over this afternoon to the vicarage and give Prissy and me your company? We are becoming quite grave and gloomy old people now that Charlotte has deserted us, and Lucinda has gone gadding with her cousins."

She thanked him, but would not come to-day—to-morrow, if he would.

The doctor then drew her a little aside, and so brought her unawares close to Eustace: "My love," said he, "has Charlotte told you any news of Captain Lackland?"

"Yes, sir."

"And now, Dorothy, this is your wedding-day. I would not extenuate the faults of which he was guilty towards you, but he is your husband still, he has distinguished himself greatly by his bravery abroad. Would it not be well, if it were possible, for you to be together?"

"Do not ask me, Dr. Barnard. It is impossible."

"You are implacable, Dorothy."

"Nay, I hope not. I wish him well; I shall always rejoice to hear of his successes, but I will never with my good will see his face again. I have heard that a released galley slave can never bear the face of his bench comrade. 'Tis not the man he loathes so deeply, but the chain. And I cannot—oh, I cannot. You did not know all."

"It must be as you choose, Dorothy. My conscience bid me say so much."

"I know. Indeed I am not ungrateful for all your goodness. To-day you must forgive me if I am grave and sad. To-morrow I will come to the vicarage, if you will permit me, and bring my harpsichord music, and you must get your violin, and we will give Prissy a concert."

"You are a good girl, Dorothy, to be so mindful of the old man's pleasures," he answered; and the tone suddenly recalled to Eustace all that past, which was really but a year old, though it seemed to have its place in another life.

Dr. Barnard and Charlotte took leave. Dorothy accompanied them to the garden gate, and Eustace came out into the room. She had laid down her hat and her basket of roses. Her glove was beside them, warm from her hand. Eustace took it up. "Could it hurt her," he asked himself, "that it should lie with him in his grave?" Then, recollecting that she would be alarmed if she should return and find him here, he stepped out into the garden and lurked behind the bushes till he had seen her re-enter at the window.

He, too, advanced and softly followed her in.

She had seated herself. Her back was towards him. He saw that her dress was black. Her attitude was dejected. After a moment she sighed deeply and rose, like a person resolved to put away thought.

"Dorothy," said Eustace.

She started towards him, her hands clasping each other, and his name upon her lips. Her face was thinner, older, yet it appeased his dream all the more fully; it was this that he had desired, though he had never seen it.

She drew quickly back. "Why do you seek me?" she asked. "Was it not the one condition——?"

"I know it. 'Tis not to force myself upon you that I come, but to speak to you once more—to make your freedom sure for ever. I know that my very sight is abhorrent to you, but bear with me this once. I will be brief. I had thought before this to be lying on a German battlefield."

She turned away, and he could not restrain the outcry of his pain.

"Oh, misery! that we should meet thus!"

"Why did you come?" said she, her face still averted; "you knew it must be so."

"Yes, I knew that," he answered. "I know all that lies between us—know it with more bitter shame and regret than even you. I do not come now to offer excuse nor proffer hollow plans for bridging over a gulf that never can be bridged. I know—oh, I know—that my own baseness has put me apart from you for ever. Never again, while I live, can I hope for the touch of your hand in mine or the frank meeting of your eyes full of faith in me and of hope. I have wronged you (I know it now, though I did not feel it as I did it) in almost every point that a man can wrong a woman. I deceived you, I blighted your first love, I left you bound, in name at least, to a most unworthy husband. I know it all now, and the knowledge is punishment enough, for I loved you—through all, in spite of all, I loved you, and nothing I can do can take away the past. I may die of grief, but I cannot give you back the peace and the happy faith that I have ruined, or wipe out of your life the agony of finding yourself my wife——"

"Let the past be," said Dorothy, "you have done for me what you could."

"No, there is more yet. You are bound to me still by a name."

"No matter, let it be," she said, quickly.

"I come to offer you your freedom, to tell you that the marriage—which was no marriage for you since you meant to take an honest man—shall be dissolved."

"Dissolved! cried Dorothy. Her calm

voice changed to a note of sudden feeling, a light sprang to her eyes, and a slow glow spread over her cheeks. To Eustace the change spoke of joy in the prospect of emancipation. He could hardly master himself to reply.

"Yes," said he, "you shall be free in the sight of Heaven and of men—free to make a happier marriage, to forget me . . . . . Oh, Heaven! from to-day you shall never see my face again."

"Do you mean this?" asked Dorothy.

"You may well distrust me. I am in earnest this time."

"Separated!" she repeated. "Set free!"

"As free as before my shadow darkened your path."

She stood looking before her, and her face betrayed perplexity.

"But you said once," said she, "that only death could part us now."

"Ah, yes, poor fool!—in hope! How blind hope is! Are we not parted already by more than death? If we might but have died together then!"

"What!" said she, "have you thought that, too?"

No reproach could have pierced him like the confession in those words.

"You shall need to look forward again to death," said he; "I will go now and return no more. Yet—I am going away from you now for ever. You loved me once. Let me take with me your forgiveness to comfort me when—when I come to die. Will you, Dorothy? 'Tis much, I know, to ask, but for the sake of those first days when you loved me—your forgiveness and one kiss. I am your husband still."

For now that his wish of seeing her had been granted a second rose in its place, as is the way with human wishes.

"Oh! I forgive you," said Dorothy; "I forgave you long ago."

"And the other, Dorothy? We are parting—the last time."

"Stay," said she, "tell me first——" Then, suddenly turning from him, "but oh, how can you come to me thus to torture me? I knew, I knew how it would be. Could you not have written? Could you not have spared me this?"

"What?" said Eustace, completely at a loss. This unlooked-for change in the midst of her gentler mood amazed and bewildered him.

"Was it not enough?" cried she. "Oh, Heaven! was it not enough to know that we were divided without your coming here to speak smooth words to me again and wake up all that past? I was at peace—why could you not let me be?"

"I did not mean to trouble you, Dorothy," said Eustace, humbly. "I did not understand——"

"No, no, how should you understand. There lies the pain—the intolerable sting. To have given all, all! And that *you*, you upon whom I hung all my hopes, should be able to come to me with graceful speeches and proffered hopes for the future. Am I blind, do you suppose? What have I to gain by any further separation? Marriage, forsooth! But you men think marriage, to a woman, what a doll is to a child—enough to still all tears. There is no further marriage in this world for me—my story has been told. But you—you have returned with new honours, and your cousin loves you. I can understand that—that it may be hard for you to be bound to a wife."

"For me! Nay, Dorothy, you must not so misunderstand me——"

"Spare me the protestations. You forget that I have seen your letter to Lady Silverlock. Go—oh, go! Do what you will, but —but for the sake of Heaven, spare me the sight of your face—the sound of your voice."

"'Your letter to Lady Silverlock?'" What was this? He raised his head, ready with an eager denial. But before she paused another thought had come. Why clear himself of this one thing more? Would it not make the future easier for her to think him as black as possible, since his suit was already beyond whitening? And so he let it pass, though it stabbed him to think that she could have believed it. It did not dawn upon him, humiliated as he was in his own eyes, that all the rest was nothing to her, and this wrong the one thing unpardonable.

"I go," he answered; "I cannot wonder that you should despise me. If you knew all—but 'tis no matter now—'tis just that you should blame me."

"I have not blamed you," she replied. "The time for that is past; there is no blindness left. 'Tis natural that you should wish to be free from me, but you need not have come to tell me so."

"To tell you *so*—nay——"

"Enough," interrupted she. "The past is past indeed. There is no link between us to justify reproach or explanation. Farewell, I wish you happy."

"Oh, in all my sins," cried he; "have I deserved this?"

"Why do you linger?" she asked. "Are there formalities needed? Dr. Barnard will

perform them for me. Go, break asunder the vow you made to me, and live, free from me, the life you would have chosen. Nothing shall hinder on my side."

Eustace could bear no more.

"'Live free from you!'" he exclaimed, passionately. "'Be happy!' Nay, you *must* hear me. By all that was ever sacred to any better man, I came here with no thought but for your sake. For me there is no woman in the world but you, no love worth dreaming of but yours; no hope, no happiness, no comfort but in atoning, so far as my poor life may, for the wrong I did you. Nay, I wish, for your sake, I might have died before I saw you. And you talk to me of a future! There is no such thing for me as a life apart from you. You must believe that, Dorothy. Tell me that you believe it."

She stood silent, staring before her.

"What! not a word? Dorothy!" And as still no answer came he murmured, "Farewell!" and turned reluctantly from her.

"Stay!" said she, and put out her hand. "Eustace, what did you mean when you said that I should be set free? Look at me."

She caught his hand and compelled his eyes to answer hers.

"Merciful heavens! Was it your death that should have freed me? Blind that I was! How could I dream that a marriage could be dissolved? Eustace, would you have thrown away your life?"

"I should not have told it you," he answered. "I know I should not have told it you."

"For me!" she cried. "To set me free! Oh, Heaven be thanked."

There were tears of gladness in her eyes.

"And now, indeed," said Eustace, "you thank me with a smile instead of words."

It was very terrible to him to behold the sudden radiance in her face.

"Better so," he murmured, and turned away.

"Better!" cried she. "Oh, dull and blind, can you not understand? Eustace, Eustace, can you not understand that I love you?"

"You love me?" echoed Eustace, too full of wonder to receive the whole meaning of the words that he repeated.

She put her arms about him and drew down his face to meet the kiss for which he had intreated. They stood holding each other close in the silence of the sunny room, and the scent of the roses surrounded them.

"And it is our wedding-day," said Dorothy, presently, looking up to see whether he, too, remembered.

"Indeed, I think it is," he answered, softly.

CLEMENTINA BLACK.

FROM DAWN TO DAWN.

Jesu Maria! Keep, oh keep
The fisher toiling on the deep!
Jesu Maria! Thus at dawn
Rings out the fishers' orison.
Slow kindles all the sleeping sea
With crimson fire and flash of gold,
Baring his ancient majesty
From mists dissolving fold on fold;
Slow lights the East: the ripples curl
In foam-white circles up the bay,
Save where the craggy ramparts whirl
The snowy spume in flakes of spray.
Night dies away, and once again
The day of toil returns to men.
The village wakes from quiet dreams,
And brown boats move, and canvas gleams;
And oars beat time, while with the dawn
Rings out the fishers' orison:—
Jesu Maria! Keep, oh keep
The fisher toiling on the deep!

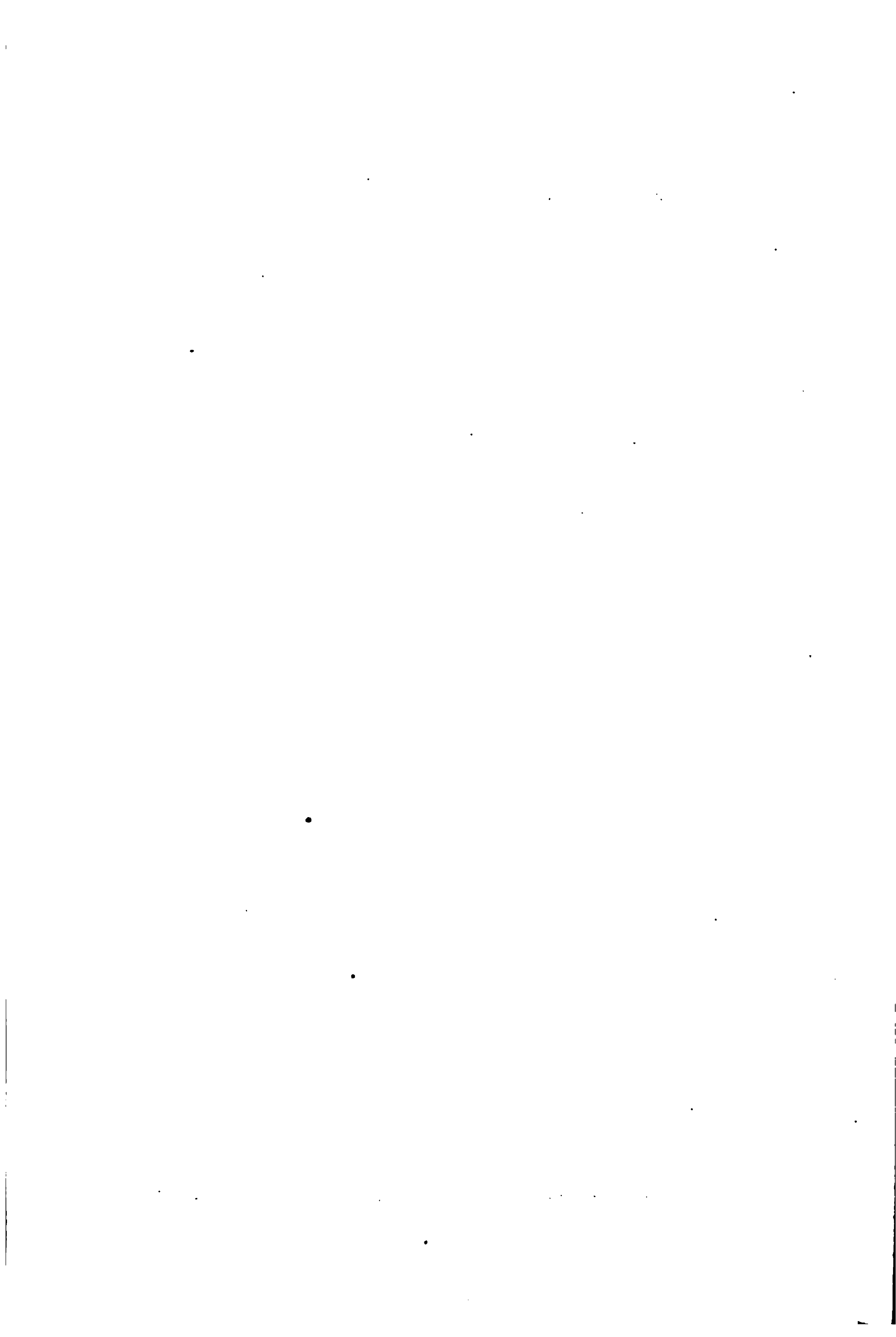
Jesu Maria! Thus the hymn
Is fainter as the light grows dim,
And from the clouds night flutters down
Soft-winged, and moves with drowsy feet
To cover up the little town,
And hush to rest the long white street.
Through thickening dusk the pharos beams
Its kindly hope of safe return,
And from the cottage window gleams
The lamp which love has set to burn.
Oh rest! Oh peace ineffable!
Oh soft-winged night! thy holy spell
So soothes the murmur of the street
The heart can hear its own deep beat;
And, faintly, through the darkening air,
Floats up the women's chaunted prayer,—
Jesu Maria! Keep, oh keep
The fisher toiling on the deep!

Jesu Maria! Oh the wail
From lips of women worn and pale,
When through the terror of the night
They hear the tortured wave recoil,
The tempest-paean, and the fight
Of angry waves in loud turmoil.
When by the smouldering fire they sit
In shivering fear, or rise to trim
The little lamp, and tend to it.
When the thin flame grows weak and dim;
Or peering through the open door
Down all the darkness of the shore,
They listen to the struggling breath
Of winds across that sea of death;
Who heeds, Oh, pitying Heaven, who hears
The prayer half hushed by bitter tears?—
Jesu Maria! Keep, oh keep
The fisher on the dreadful deep!

Jesu Maria! Dawn once more
Awakes along the ravaged shore.
The storm is dead; but still the deep
Remembers all the conflict passed;
And dark the cruel breakers sweep
With matted sea-wrack shoreward cast.
The surges hurry from afar
To lay upon the narrow sand,
The shattered mast, the broken spar,
An oar,—a twisted rudder-band.
But where are they who sailed away
With sunrise from the quiet bay;
Who launched the brown-winged boat, and went
At dawn, in rugged toil content?
Where is the bright returning sail?
What is the prayer the women wail?—
Jesu Maria! Keep, oh keep
Their souls, who died upon the deep!

Jesu Maria! Not in vain
To Thee ascends that cry of pain.
We cannot see; our hearts are blind,
And life is full of bitterness;
For through our tears we cannot find
Thy pitying hand in our distress.
But still we know Thy love abides:
Behind the sorrow and the loss,
The same divine compassion hides
That nailed Thee, bleeding, to the Cross.
Though shadowed from our earthly eyes
The fulness of Thy mercy lies,
We doubt not, but look up in faith
That sweetens life, that conquers death;
Faith that the parted yet may meet
In heaven,—together,—at Thy feet!—
Jesu Maria! Thou *wilt* keep
Their souls that died upon the deep.

George L. Moore.



SIR HENRY THOMPSON.

Engraved by O. LACOUR, *from the Portrait by* SIR JOHN EVERETT MILLAIS, BART., R.A.

The English Illustrated Magazine.

JANUARY, 1886.

THE POETRY DID IT:

AN EVENT IN THE LIFE OF MAJOR EVERGREEN

RELATED BY WILKIE COLLINS.

I.

AN employment which he enjoyed represented the bright side, and an enemy whom he abhorred personified the dark side, of Major Evergreen's life. He had plenty of money, excellent health, and a hare-brained little niece who might have caused some anxiety to other men in his position. The major's constitutional tranquillity accepted responsibilities of all sorts with a good-humoured indifference which set them at defiance. If Miss Mabel had eloped with the footman, he would have said: "Well, I hope they may be happy." If she had come down one morning to breakfast, and had announced that she felt a vocation to be a nun, he would have answered: "You know best, my dear; I only beg you won't trouble me to find the convent."

Persons who wished to see Major Evergreen in earnest—terribly in earnest—had only to look at him when he had pen, ink, and paper before him, and was writing poetry.

This was the employment that he enjoyed; this was the occupation of every day in his life. He must have written hundreds of thousands of lines, without a single thought in them which was not unconsciously borrowed from somebody else. Every form that poetry can take was equally easy and delightful to him. Blank verse and rhyming verse: epic poems and sonnets; tragedies, satires, epigrams; passionate poetry in the manner of Byron; narrative poetry in the manner of Scott; philosophical poetry in the manner of Wordsworth; poetry of the modern type which gets into the pulpit, and reminds us of our moral duties—this wonderful man was equal to every imaginable effort in verse; and, more deplorable still, being rich, he published his works. They appeared in volumes (first edition,) and disappeared as waste paper—and appeared again (second edition), and disappeared as before. The printing was perfection; the paper was expressly manufactured to make it worthy of the printing; and the happy major, closing his eyes on facts, firmly believed in his own popularity.

One day, towards the end of summer, the poet had laid down his pen, and was considering whether he should write a few hundred lines more, when his niece looked over his shoulder, and asked if she might speak to him.

Miss Mabel was little and dark, and slim and active; her brightly restless eyes were never in repose, except when she was asleep; her voice was cheerful, her manner was brisk, and her figure was plump. She was further entitled to claim general admiration by a system of dress which was the perfection of elegance, and by possessing a fortune of eighty thousand pounds. And last, not least on the list of her virtues, she read Major Evergreen's poetry.

"Well, Mabel, what is it?"

"It's about my marriage, uncle."

"Marry anybody you like, my dear."

"Even your ugly old publisher?"

"Yes, if you prefer him."

"Or anybody else!"

"Certainly, if you like him better."

"The fact is, uncle, you don't care what becomes of me."

"I am of your way of thinking, my dear."

"What do you mean?"

"Do *you* care what becomes of you?"

"Of course I do!"

"Then I care too."

There was an interval of silence. Mabel was considering what she should say next. She decided on speaking plainly, come what might of it.

"This is serious," she resumed.

The major was glad to hear it.

"I'm only afraid of one thing—I'm afraid I shall offend you."

The major declared that it was impossible to offend him.

"Remember what you have said, uncle! I have just had an offer of marriage."

"From my ugly publisher?"

"No; from Sir John Bosworth."

Major Evergreen—usually the laziest of men—jumped out of his chair, and walked up and down the room, transformed from a pleasant uncle who wrote poetry to a disagreeable old bachelor who was angry with his niece.

And for what reason? For this excellent reason: she had mentioned the name of the enemy whom he abhorred.

Sir John Bosworth was a gentleman who indulged in the hazardous speculations of modern life. He owned racehorses, and he built theatres; he was also proprietor of a weekly journal. In that newspaper had appeared the only review of Major Evergreen's poems which had ever noticed them at any length. Of the tone adopted by the critic, it is merely necessary to say that it hurried away the easy-tempered major to his lawyer's office, to bring an action for libel against Sir John Bosworth. The wise lawyer pronounced the article to be simply inhuman, but not libellous. Sir John (already under the influence of Mabel) expressed his regret in the handsomest manner; and declared that the article had been published by his editor without his knowledge. Major Evergreen submitted to circumstances—recovered his customary good spirits—and went on writing poetry more industriously than ever. But what author has succeeded in forgetting an inhuman review? To mention the name of the proprietor of the paper was to wound the poet in his tenderest place. When Sir John Bosworth paid visits to the charming niece, the unforgiving uncle was never in his way. Major Evergreen was "engaged in his study."

"I couldn't help mentioning the name, uncle," Mabel pleaded. "I was obliged to tell you who it was that had asked me to marry him."

The major received this apology with a word of serious advice. "You might have spared me the name, my dear—you might have said, That Man. I should have known whom you meant."

Mabel accepted the suggestion. "I wished to tell you that I didn't engage to marry That Man," she proceeded; "I only said I wanted time to consider. I don't think I like him. I rather believe I want to get away from him, before he calls again."

The major returned quietly to his chair.

"Very right indeed," he said—and looked at his pen and ink. He was longing to get rid of his niece and go back to his poetry.

"This is about the time of year," Mabel persisted, "when we go to the country."

The major was quite willing. "Just as you please; they're ready for us at Stillbrook."

"Stillbrook won't do, uncle. If we go to your country house That Man will follow us. Suppose we take refuge at Oakapple Hall?"

"With all my heart."

"Then I may write to Mrs. Corydon?"

"Certainly."

Mabel went away to write a letter; and Mabel's uncle remained, to write poetry.

II.

A widow of mild and retiring character, married late in life; and possessed of one son who exactly resembled her in disposition: there is the briefly sufficient description of Mrs. Corydon.

Arriving at Oakapple Hall, Major Evergreen and his niece encountered a surprise held in reserve for them by their amiable hostess. They were received at the house-door by Mrs. Corydon's son. On the last two occasions when they had enjoyed the widow's hospitality, Mr. Cyril Corydon had been absent, pursuing his studies at Oxford. Mabel had not seen him since he had left school.

Cyril had greatly improved in the interval. Still modest and a little reserved, he was no longer awkward; he kept his hands out of his pockets, and his nails exhibited no

black rims; his fair complexion was without pimples; his vacant smile of former days had meaning in it now; and, to complete the transformation, Mabel saw a slim young man who fed delicately, in place of a devouring fat boy who approached his dinner as a pig approaches a trough. She also noticed his pretty little flaxen moustache, and a shy tenderness in the expression of his gentle blue eyes. Upon the whole, he reminded her of a description of a Troubadour, in one of her uncle's poems.

Oakapple Hall, in one respect, resembled the famous abbey described by Rabelais—the inhabitants did as they pleased. When luncheon was over Major Evergreen retired to his room and his pen and ink. Mrs. Corydon resumed work on an immense embroidered counterpane, which had already occupied her patient fingers for the greater part of her life. The two young people took a walk in the park: Cyril offered his arm, and Mabel started the conversation.

"Have you really left Oxford for good?" she began. "And are you sorry for it?"

"I was sorry for it, until to-day."

Cyril laid a strong emphasis on the last three words, and ventured on a look which sent his artful compliment straight to its right address. Mabel acknowledged the look by an innocent little question: "Do you think I am improved, since you saw me last?"

Cyril burst into an exclamation. Expressed in letters, it was only, "Oh!" The manner and the tone made it eloquent, and ought to be described. But description requires appropriate words. Where, in this case, are the words? Mabel's innocence, requiring no description, pursued its artless way: "Mr. Corydon, you mustn't flatter me." Mr. Corydon immediately proceeded to flatter her.

"Don't call me 'Mr.'! You used to call me 'Cyril,' in the days when I was insensible to that honour and happiness. My one ambition is to hear you call me 'Cyril' now."

"You were a boy then, Mr. Corydon: you are a young man now. I am afraid it wouldn't be quite right."

Cyril hit on a poetical allusion which might have fallen from the lips of the major himself. "Juliet didn't hesitate," he remarked, "to call Romeo by his Christian name."

This—for a shy man—was, as Mabel thought, getting on at rather too rapid a rate. She turned the talk back into the prosaic channels of modern life. "I thought your mother and you were serious people," she said. "Have you really been to the play?"

"Only to Shakespeare," Cyril reminded her. "I was taken to the theatre, in the last vacation, by a man of high position, and large experience, whom I am proud to call my friend. His younger brother read with me under the same tutor—and I first came to know him in that way."

"Who is this remarkable gentleman?"

"Sir John Bosworth."

Mabel stood stock-still, and looked at the unsuspecting heir of Oakapple Hall. That good fellow was honestly pleased. "Sir John's fame has reached you," he said. "And perhaps you may have met him in society?"

Mabel acknowledged that she had met him, and said no more. Cyril sang his praises.

"What a man! He builds places of public amusement, he wins money on racecourses, he sits on the throne of the Press and dictates the policy of Europe—and, only think, he is My Friend!"

But Mabel's thoughts were otherwise employed.

A young person, hitherto free from any weak leanings towards superstition, she now dimly perceived the hand of Fate, mysteriously pointing to Sir John, at the very time when she had determined to dismiss him from her mind and from her list of visitors. What would be the next event? Would he discover Oakapple Hall? Preceded by his celebrity, would he obtain an introduction to Mrs. Corydon, and renew his offer of marriage? With the ready inconsistency of her sex and age, Mabel began to feel a certain reluctant interest in Sir John. He assumed romantic proportions in his absence. She had left him a shadowy figure disappearing, as it were, in the background. And here he was in the front of the picture again; presenting himself through the innocent medium of this nice boy—so proud of him, so grateful to him! Her curiosity was excited by the very man whom she had despised not three days since. She encouraged poor Cecil to talk of Sir John. One of Eve's daughters—there is nothing else to be said for her: one of Eve's daughters.

The course of their walk had brought them back, by this time, to the house. Cyril suddenly made an apology.

"Excuse me for one moment; I have something to show you." He ran into the house, and ran out again with the local newspaper in his hand.

"Nothing that I can say of our gifted friend will be as interesting to you as this,"

he announced, and pointed to the column of the newspaper filled by the London correspondent with news from the fashionable world. There was Sir John again! "A brilliant circle had assembled" at the country seat of a great nobleman, situated within an hour's drive of Oakapple Hall—and in two days more Sir John Bosworth was expected as a welcome addition to the number of his lordship's guests.

Mabel made the first excuse that occurred to her, and escaped from Cyril to the solitude of her own room. It was high time to consider what she had better do next.

III.

Decision of character is, generally speaking, a plant of slow growth in the human constitution. When the age is seventeen, the sex female, and the question: What am I to do next?—perplexing circumstances wait for an answer, and seldom get it. Mabel could not venture to consult her uncle—and if Mrs. Corydon had an amiable weakness, it took the form of habitual reliance on other people's advice. In this emergency, Mabel's temper escaped from control; and Cyril's position in the estimation of his charming friend receded, without any reason for that deplorable event which it was possible to discover. Ignorant of the ways of women—in love, with the ready inflammability of a young man who has led an innocent life—Cyril was foolish enough to ask if he had offended Mabel. He made the mistake with the utmost humility of manner and language—and was received with a toss of the head, and a reply which expressed surprise that a member of an English University should prove to be an ill-bred man.

Three days passed. Sir John Bosworth (if the newspaper could be trusted) was already established as a guest at the country seat of his noble friend. In sheer despair of recovering the ground that he had lost by any effort of his own, Cyril decided on asking the advice of the one competent and trustworthy person within his reach.

Sir John was in the house; Sir John hurried into the room in which Cyril was waiting for him, and shook hands with a cordial squeeze. This inestimable friend of Cyril's was a tall finely-made man, rather dark than light in complexion, and a little bald; otherwise remarkable for bushy eyebrows, a strong Roman nose, and magnificent whiskers; eyes bright and striking in themselves, but a little shifty in expression at times: in one word, a most agreeable person—with a false nature, concealed from the mass of mankind under a surface of easy humour and hearty good spirits.

"My dear boy, how glad I am to see you! You are one of *us*, of course? and you have come to luncheon? No? You are not invited by my lord? Come along and see him. Between ourselves, he's a bit of a bore—and a bright young fellow like you will be a perfect godsend to the rest of us. You won't? Now I look at you again, I see signs of something wrong. Am I rushing at rash conclusions if I suspect that my young friend is in a scrape? No explanations! At your age there is only one scrape—a woman."

"The loveliest girl in the world, Sir John. I am in sore need of your advice. Can we speak here without interruption?"

"Of course we can!"

He rang the bell as he replied, and gave his orders to the servant as coolly as if he had been in his own house. He was obsequiously obeyed. The servant knew him to be the proprietor of a newspaper; and, like his betters (including some of the highest personages in the land) the footman was afraid of the Press.

Sir John administered his first dose of advice. "Sit down, my good fellow—take a cigar—and out with it!"

Cyril told his melancholy story. "She treats me cruelly," he said, by way of conclusion. "And I assure you, on my word of honour, I haven't deserved it."

Sir John administered the second dose. "Exactly my case," he remarked coolly. "I am devoted to the loveliest girl in the world, and she treats me cruelly. Would you believe it?—she has left London to avoid me, and I don't know where to find her. Do as I do: take it easy."

"I'm too fond of her, Sir John, to take it easy."

"Oh, if you come to that, *I'm* broken-hearted. At the same time, I don't disguise from myself that we are both rowing in the same boat. You're the favourite plaything of one coquette; and I'm the favourite plaything of another. There it is in a nutshell."

This off-hand way of speaking of the beloved object shocked Cyril. "You may be right about your lady," he answered. "Excuse me for saying that you are wrong about mine."

Sir John laughed. "I was as innocent once as you are," he said. "Let's get at the facts first. Mine is quite a young one. Is yours quite a young one too?"

"In the first lovely bloom of youth!"

"You curious boy! Your imagination is misleading you—and you don't know it. All girls are alike."

Cyril indignantly struck his fist on the table. "There isn't another girl in the world like my Mabel!"

Sir John suddenly became serious.

"Mabel?" he repeated. "There's something in that name which sounds familiar to me. Not the niece of Major Evergreen, surely?"

"Yes!" cried simple Cyril, "the same. How stupid of me not to have thought of it before! She has met you in society; and she is naturally interested in a celebrated man like yourself. *You* would have some influence over her. Oh, Sir John, if you would only see Mabel, and say a word to her in my interests, how truly obligod to you I should be!"

The impenetrable face of the man of the world expressed nothing but perfect readiness to make himself useful. Far more experienced eyes than Cyril's would have discovered nothing in Sir John Bosworth's manner even remotely suggesting that the two lovers had been, all this time, talking of the same lady.

"With pleasure!" cried Sir John. "But where shall we find her?"

Cyril seized his hand. "You good friend!" he exclaimed, with tears in his eyes. "She's staying with my mother at our house—only a short ride from this place. When will you let me introduce you to my mother?"

"Whenever you like."

"At once?"

And that excellent man smiled, and cheerfully echoed the words: "At once!"

IV.

The two gentlemen discovered Miss Mabel walking up and down the garden terrace in front of Oakapple Hall, reading a book. Good girl! It was a volume of her uncle's poetry.

"I felt sure you would be glad to meet Sir John Bosworth again," Cyril began. His manner was a great deal too humble. Before he could get any farther, Sir John spoke for himself.

"The happiness is all mine," he said in his easy way. "If I happen, however, to be intruding, pray don't scruple to say so."

Mabel raised her eyes from her book. She had only to look at Cyril, and to see what had happened. Angry, perplexed, flattered, amused—in this conflict of small emotions she was completely at a loss how to assert herself to the best advantage; and she took refuge in a cold composure which, for the time being at least, committed her to nothing. "I was certainly engaged in reading," she replied—and put a mark in her book with a sigh of resignation.

Impenetrable Sir John received the blow without flinching. "You led me to hope for the honour of being introduced to Mrs. Corydon," he said to Cyril. "Shall we find her at home?"

He took Cyril's arm and led him to the house. "That's the way to manage her," he whispered. "I'll bet you five to one she's vexed at our leaving her—and ten to one that she receives us more civilly when she sees us again. Don't look back! You're a a lost man if she discovers that you're thinking of her. Which is the way to the drawing-room?"

Sir John Bosworth effected the conquest of Mrs. Corydon at the first interview. She treated him as she was accustomed to treat her best friends. In other words, she offered to show him over the house. Oakapple Hall was a place of great age and celebrity. In the upper regions two Kings of England had slept, and the ground floor still showed traces of the passage of Oliver Cromwell and his men. Sir John made his excuses for that day. Having heard that Mabel's uncle was in the house, he was courteously unwilling to disturb the major in the agonies of poetical composition. When he had taken his leave he whispered to Cyril, on his way to the house door: "I'll lay you another wager, if you like—we shall see Miss Mabel still on the terrace." And they did see her.

She was seated, with her closed book on her lap, deep in thought.

Hesitating between her two lovers, she had decided at first in favour of Cyril: he had youth on his side, he was handsome, he was modest and amiable. If he had happened to appear on the terrace, at that moment, he would have been the man preferred. But he was indoors, in attendance on his friend; and he left Mabel time to remember that there was a weak side to his character. In Cyril's place would Sir John have consulted another man, and have brought him to visit her, without once suspecting that he might be a rival in disguise? Mabel was already leaning to the side of Sir John, when she heard footsteps on the walk—and, looking up, saw the man himself approaching her, alone.

In the present state of her inclinations, she was disposed, as an accomplished flirt, to begin by trifling with him. He saw her intention in the bright malice of her eyes, and put an obstacle in her way. Taking the book off her lap, he assumed to be interested in her reading.

"Tired of poetry, Miss Mabel?"

"Never tired of it, Sir John."

"You read a great deal of poetry."

"I believe I have read all the English poets."

"Including the major. Do you find him equal to the others?"

"My uncle reminds me of the others—always pleasantly."

Sir John opened the book, at that part of it in which a mark had been left, and read the title of the poem: *The Rival Minstrels: a Contest in Verse.*

"Is it very interesting?" he asked.

His tone irritated Mabel. "It is perfectly charming," she answered—"and reminds me of Walter Scott. Two minstrels are in love with the same fair lady; she challenges them to an exhibition of their art; they are each to address her in verse; and she offers her hand to the poet whose lines she most admires. Ah, what a position women occupied in those days!"

"You would like to have been that fair lady, I suppose?"

"I should indeed! Especially," she added with a saucy smile, "if you were a minstrel."

"I never wrote anything in my life—except letters. A proprietor of a newspaper, Miss Mabel, leaves prose and verse to his editor and his contributors. Are you looking for anything?"

"I am looking for Mr. Corydon. Where is he?" Mabel asked, with an appearance of the deepest interest.

Sir John determined to stop the coming flirtation in another way.

"Staying in the house," he answered gravely, "by my advice."

"And why does he want your advice?"

"Because he is under my protection. I feel the truest regard for him, and the sincerest sympathy with him in his present trying situation."

Sir John knew his young lady well. His object was to puzzle her by presenting himself in an angry and jealous character entirely new to her experience—to keep her flighty mind by this means employed in trying to understand him, when he was obliged to leave her—to return the next day, and, by means of humble excuses and ardent entreaties for a reconciliation, to place poor Cyril's mild and modest fidelity in a light of comparison which it would be little likely to endure.

Thus far he had succeeded. Mabel listened, and looked at him, and said, "I don't understand you."

"I will make myself understood," Sir John rejoined. "Have you forgotten the offer of marriage which I ventured to address to you in London? You didn't say No; you told me you wished for time to consider. I called again, to hear what your decision might be; and I found that you had not only gone away into the country, without a word of apology, but had left strict instructions that the place of your retreat was not to be mentioned to anybody. If this was not a deliberate insult, it was something extremely like it. When I told you just now that Mr. Corydon was under my protection, I meant that I would not allow that excellent young man to be treated as you have treated me."

Mabel's indignation was equal to the one possible reply to this.

"Make your mind easy," she said; "Mr. Corydon is in no danger of being treated as I have treated you."

"I sincerely hope for my young friend's sake," Sir John answered, "that you really mean what you say."

Mabel got more and more angry. "Mr. Corydon is charming!" she burst out. "Mr. Corydon is a young man whom I esteem and admire!"

"Allow me to thank you, Miss Mabel, for your candour. You relieve me from the anxiety that I have been feeling on my friend's account. If you will only say to him what you have just said to me I shall retire, happy in the conviction that my intercession in Mr. Corydon's favour has been crowned with success. Good morning."

V.

Left by herself, Mabel felt the composing influence of solitude. Little by little, her cheeks recovered their every-day delicacy of colour; her eyebrows took their proper places on her forehead; and her pulse returned to the customary moderation of its beat. She was able to listen to the gentle promptings of her own vanity; and, as a matter of course, she began to look at Sir John's insolence from a new point of view. He, the self-possessed man of the world, had completely forgotten himself, and there could

be but one reason for it. "Mad with jealousy," she concluded complacently. "How fond he must be of me!"

Who was this, approaching slowly from the house with steps that hesitated? This was the fatal young man who was under Sir John's protection, and who had repaid the obligation by rousing emotions of jealous rage in Sir John's breast. Mabel was not sure whether she despised him or pitied him. In this difficulty, she took a middle course, and only said, "What do you want?"

"May I not have the happiness of speaking to you?"

"It depends, Mr. Corydon, on what you have to say. I forbid you to speak of Sir John Bosworth; I won't hear you if you speak of yourself; and I shall retire to my room if you speak of me. Have you any harmless remarks to make? Suppose you try the weather?"

Humble Cyril looked up at the sky. "Beautiful weather," he said submissively.

"Or politics?" Miss Mabel continued.

"Conservative," Cyril answered, as if he were saying his catechism.

"Or literature?"

"I haven't got any."

"What do you mean by that?"

"I mean, I wish I was as well read as you are. Oh, Miss Mabel, don't be so hard on a poor fellow who loves you with all his heart. I didn't mean any harm when I asked Sir John——"

"Be quiet!"

"If there is any sort of atonement that I can make—if you could only tell me what a young lady wants—I mean, what she looks for in a young man——"

"She looks, Mr. Corydon, for what she doesn't find in you."

"May I ask what that is?"

"May I ask if you object to the form of vulgarity which is called—Slang?"

"I object to nothing from You. Pray tell me in what I am deficient."

"Pluck!"

She looked at him with a moment's saucy attention—bowed, and returned to the house. Even Cyril discovered that she was not positively angry this time.

VI.

Sir John Bosworth appeared again on the next day—with an excellent reason for returning so soon. He had not yet been shown over Oakapple Hall.

On this occasion, the servant conducted him to the music-room. Mabel was at the piano; and Cyril was turning the leaves of the music for her. Sir John had only to look at them, and to suspect that his modest young friend had been gaining ground in his absence. He approached the piano with his genial smile, and examined the music. "Maiden Musings" was the title; and, in one respect at least, the composer had deserved well of the public of the present day—he had given them plenty of notes for their money. "Go on, please," said the amiable visitor. Mabel went on. Notes that thundered, notes that shrieked, notes in cataracts of sound represented the maiden's musings. "What were those remarks," Sir John asked when it was over, "that Mozart made on the subject of melody? Cyril, my dear fellow, have you got Kelly's *Reminiscences* in the library? Kelly was Mozart's pupil. Do try to find the book."

Before he complied with this request, Cyril looked at Mabel, and received a look in return. Then, and only then, he left the room. Sir John saw that he had not a moment to lose. The door had barely closed on his young rival, before he possessed himself of Mabel's hand, and said, "Oh, forgive me!"

She released her hand, and assumed an icy composure. "I confess I am a little surprised to see you again," she remarked.

"You see a man crushed by sorrow and shame," Sir John proceeded. "Some devil must have possessed me when I spoke to you yesterday. I have not had one quiet moment since. You are literally the one hope of my life. Try, pray try to imagine what I felt, when I had every reason to fear that I had lost you—and to what a man!"

"A very agreeable man, Sir John."

"Torture me, if you like; I have deserved it. But don't tell me that you—with your bright intelligence, your tact and delicacy, your superiority to the little weaknesses and vanities of ordinary women—can feel a serious attachment to such a person as Cyril Corydon. No! Despise me as you may, Mabel; destroy all the hopes that I have centred in you; doom me to be a wretched man for the rest of my life—there is one thing you can *not* do: I defy you to lower yourself in my estimation. You have been the one woman in the world to me since I first saw you; and the one woman you will remain to the day of my death!"

He caught her by the hand again: it trembled in his hand; her ready tongue had literally nothing to say. The power of non-

sense, in every form which it can take, is one of the great moral forces to which humanity instinctively submits. When Cyril returned (without having discovered the book) Sir John's nonsense, admirably spoken, had answered Sir John's purpose. Placed between her two admirers, Mabel was not able to determine which she really preferred.

"There's no such book in the library," Cyril announced. "If he wanted to get rid of me, don't you think, Miss Mabel, he might have said so plainly?"

For the moment Sir John was thunderstruck. Was this the same confiding helpless young gentleman who had brought him to Oakapple Hall? He recovered himself directly.

"My dear boy, is there gout in your family?" he asked. "I am at a loss to understand this extraordinary outbreak of temper—unless there is a first fit coming on, at an unusually early age."

Cyril passed this question over without notice. His fair complexion reddened with anger. Never had love wrought such a transformation in a man since the time of Cymon.

"I saw you take Miss Mabel's hand just now, when I came in," he declared stoutly. "I consider that to be a liberty."

Sir John's satirical composure was not disturbed even by this. "May I inquire, merely as a matter of curiosity, whether you claim a right of property in this young lady's hand?"

"Yes, I do! I have reason to hope that this young lady will do me the honour of marrying me."

"So have I!"

"I have a prior claim on her, Sir John."

"Nothing of the sort. I asked Miss Mabel to marry me last week."

Cyril turned indignantly to Mabel. "Is that true?"

Sir John cautioned her. "You're not bound to answer," he said.

"She *is* bound!"

"No, Cyril—no."

"Do you hear him, Mabel?"

Sir John pointed to Cyril's flaming cheeks. "Do you see him, Mabel?"

She burst out laughing. This disconcerted both the men: there was an awful pause. "Must I decide between you," she asked, "without any time to think first?" Neither the one nor the other offered her time to think first. Mabel's eyes suddenly brightened: a new idea had occurred to her. She turned to Sir John.

"I see a way out of the difficulty," she said. "Do you remember my uncle's poem—the *Contest of the Minstrels?* Suppose you and Mr. Corydon each address me in a little poem of your own composing—and suppose I imitate the fair lady of the ballad, and choose the minstrel whose verses I like best?"

Cyril was reduced to silence. Even Sir John could only say: "You're joking."

She *was* joking. But the consternation visible in the faces of the two men roused the spirit of mischief in her. "I'm quite in earnest," she answered. "If you wish me to decide between you, you have heard the only terms on which I consent. The day is before you: do your best."

As she opened the door to leave them, Mrs. Corydon came in. The amiable old lady said she was at Sir John's service when he wished to see the house.

VII.

Major Evergreen proved to be useless, on this occasion, as a means for making an excuse; he had gone out for a walk. All the rooms at Oakapple Hall were open to Sir John. He heard how the two Kings had slept in the house, how Oliver Cromwell had battered the house, how one part of it was built in one century, and another part in another. He was not even spared the interesting spectacle of Major Evergreen's study. "So characteristic of a poet," Mrs. Corydon said; "look at the manuscripts all scattered about!" Sir John looked at the manuscripts. Mrs. Corydon left him, and led the way to the window. "And now look at the view!" Sir John looked at the view.

Released at last, he had leisure to consider whether he should humour Mabel's absurd caprice, or decline to make himself ridiculous, and leave her to recover her senses. He was a man greedy for money, as well as a man in love. Remembering that she had a handsome fortune, and that a rival younger than himself was also courting her, he made his way to the library.

At one of the writing-tables, Cyril was sitting forlorn, surrounded by morsels of torn paper. "What have you done?" the elder minstrel asked of the younger. The melancholy answer was, "Nothing!" Cyril's voice sounded as if he was a child again, and was ready to cry.

Sir John sat down at a second table, in a

distant part of the room, and began to write. The quiet in the library was only disturbed, now and then, by the heavy sighs of Cyril, and the sound of paper that was being torn up.

VIII.

There was a knock at the door. A fresh young voice asked gaily: "May I come in?"

"Don't let me disturb you," said Mabel. "The fair ladies of past times were remarkable for their patience—especially with minstrels. I can wait."

She looked at Cyril, who was seated nearest to her. Too cruelly mortified to speak, he took her hand, and put it on his hot forehead; he pointed to the mass of torn paper all round him. The tears rose in his eyes—he opened the door and went out.

Mabel's face lost its expression of malicious enjoyment. She looked ashamed of herself; and she said softly: "Poor fellow!"

Sir John crossed the room, with a smile of conscious superiority. He was not a man who did anything by halves. Having decided on humouring the young lady, he presented his poetic offering with chivalrous humility, dropping on one knee.

Mabel read his verses. They had one great merit—there were very few of them.

"They say she's dark; yes, like the night
  Whose beauty shines from starry skies:
Oh, my sweet saint, how darkly bright
  The mellow radiance of those eyes!
I love in you the tender light—
  The light that gaudy day denies."

"Very pretty," Mabel said—"and reminds me of Byron. Did you ever read his Hebrew Melodies?"

"Never!" Sir John declared fervently. "Allow me, my angel, to kiss your hand, and claim your promise."

At that critical moment, Major Evergreen returned from his walk, and entered the library in search of a book. He stood petrified at the sight of the enemy whom he abhorred. "That Man!" he cried—and ran out of the room with a furious look at his niece.

She ran out after him. Sir John followed on tiptoe, and listened at the half-opened door.

"There's more excuse for me, uncle, than you think," Mabel pleaded. "Sir John Bosworth has one merit which you really ought to allow. He is a poet like yourself—he has just written this."

She began to read the verses:

"'They say she's dark; yes, like the night
  Whose beauty shines from starry skies——'"

Her uncle snatched the paper out of her hand. "My Poetry!" he shouted.

Before his niece could stop him, he was back again in the library. "Thief!" he called out at the top of his voice.

Mabel made a vain attempt to quiet him. She had forgotten the inhuman review. Not so the major. Even at that trying moment he could have repeated the most atrocious insults inflicted on him in the newspaper without missing a word.

"The scoundrel has been among My Manuscripts!" cried the infuriated poet. "I've longed to murder him for the last six months. And now I'll do it!"

It was useless to search the room. Sir John Bosworth had made his escape.

At a later period, when Mabel was asked why she had married Cyril instead of Sir John, she used to answer—

"The Poetry did it."

THE END.

WARE—WITH THE BRIDGE OVER THE LEA.
From a Drawing by E. H. FITCHEW.

CHARLES LAMB IN HERTFORDSHIRE.

WHO that has once felt can ever lose the enchantment of the opening scene of Isaac Walton's *Angler*, which takes us at one bound out of the dusty streets and noisy crowd into the sweet, fresh Hertfordshire air?

"You are well overtaken, gentlemen; a good morning to you both. I have stretched my legs up Tottenham Hill to overtake you, hoping your business may occasion you towards Ware, whither I am going this fine, fresh May morning." So speaks Mr. Piscator, and Mr. Venator replies in fitting terms of courtesy, how happy he is to reciprocate his new companion's wishes, for that his purpose is to drink his morning's draught at the Thatched House in Hoddesden, and that to-morrow morning he is to meet "a pack of otter-dogs of noble Mr. Sadler's upon Amwell Hill."

One of the earliest books that Charles Lamb writes about with enthusiasm to his friend Coleridge, is Isaac Walton's. "Among all your quaint readings," he asks in a letter of 1796, "did you ever light upon Walton's *Complete Angler?* I asked you the question once before. It breathes the very spirit of innocence, purity, and simplicity of heart; there are many choice old verses interspersed in it; it would sweeten a man's temper at any time to read it; it would christianise every discordant angry passion; pray make yourself acquainted with it." It had been clearly one of the well-thumbed volumes of his father's own small collection in Crown Office Row, or else in the more copious library of Samuel Salt, where he and his sister were turned at an early age to browse at will "upon that fair and wholesome pasturage." And the circumstances of his own family had given a new and special interest to Walton's pictures of rural life. Ware and Amwell and the banks of the Lea are the scenes to which Walton has added an undying beauty, and it was in the same county and neighbourhood that Lamb's childish holidays, and many no less happy days in

later life were to be passed. There is no need to tell again at any length, how his grandmother, Mrs. Field, was for fifty years and more housekeeper at the old manor house of the Plumer's at Blakesware in Hertfordshire, only some four miles from Ware, and within a walk of all those fascinating scenes where Mr. Piscator and his scholar roamed by the Lea, or discoursed on fish and fishing, or listened to Kit Marlowe's old choice song from the milkmaids' lips. No wonder that in spite of all the attractions of London for the lonely man in after life, the double charm of his childish associations, and of Walton's loved pages, never ceased to move him. It is touching indeed to hear him, in those last days of confinement to the desk's dull drudgery in Leadenhall Street, yearning aloud for the fresh air and freedom of those early rambles: "I had thought in a green old age (O green thought!) to have retired to Ponder's End, emblematic name, how beautiful! in the Ware Road, there to have made up my accounts with heaven and the company; toddling about it, between it and Cheshunt, anon stretching on some fine Isaac Walton morning, to Hoddesden or Amwell, careless as a beggar; but walking, walking ever, till I fairly walked myself off my legs, dying walking! The hope is gone. I sit like Philomel all day (but not singing), with my heart against this thorn of a desk." When he wrote thus to Wordsworth, he had three years yet to wait for the looked-for liberty. It did not come till March, 1825, but in the meantime he could still refresh himself with recollections of his occasional holidays, as in that most charming of the essays, *Old China*, when he recalls to Bridget their "pleasant walks to Enfield and Potter's Bar, and Waltham," when they carried with them the little hand-basket, in which they had deposited their day's fare of savoury cold lamb and salad, "and how you would pry about at noontide for some decent house where we might go in and produce our store—only paying for the ale that you must call for—and speculate upon the looks of the landlady, and whether she was likely to allow us a table cloth, and wish for such another honest hostess as Isaac Walton has described many a one on the pleasant banks of Lea, when he went a fishing."

All through his life, Hertfordshire was seldom far from Charles Lamb's thoughts, and never from his heart. It was at Blakesware, and in Widford village close by, that his first impressions of genuine country were obtained. It was there that he made the acquaintance of Ann Simmons, the Anna of his earliest poems, the *Rosamond Gray* of his first attempt at fiction, the Alice W——n of his essays of Elia—the first and only deep attachment of his life. I have used the term "made the acquaintance," but it may be that he only continued and improved it there, and that the first introduction to his Anna took place elsewhere. In the sonnet, which he told Coleridge he had composed "during a walk down into Hertfordshire," early in 1795, he speaks of having passed on his road a humble spire,

> "That mindest me of many a pleasure gone,
> Of merriest days of Love and Islington,
> Kindling anew the flames of past desire."

It is true that a few days later, another sonnet tells of the "green winding walks and steady pathways sweet" of Blakesware, when his Anna was his companion. And it is quite possible and likely that her family had lived at an earlier date in Islington, and that the attraction of Mrs. Field, Lamb's grandmother, and the Norris family, old friends of the Simmons's, had brought them to settle afterwards in the village of Widford. However that may be, it was with Hertfordshire that this boyish love continued all his life to be associated, and all through his life he turned by an irresistible fascination to memories of its places and its people.

Lamb was only in his eighteenth year when his second home in Hertfordshire was broken up by death. In 1792, his grandmother, Mrs. Field, died at a good old age in the old family mansion which she had faithfully watched over for more than half a century. Her grave is to be seen in the quiet churchyard of Widford, with the name, Mary Field, and date of burial, August 5, 1792. It is just to the left of the little gate into the churchyard, and under the shade of one of those superb wych-elms that add so much to the beauty of this Hertfordshire country. Four years later, writing to Coleridge about some poems in manuscript that the two friends were thinking of publishing in a print volume, Lamb incloses the memorial verses on *The Grandam*, but does not say when they were written: "It may not be amiss to remark," he adds, "that my grandmother (on whom the verses were written) lived housekeeper in a family the fifty or sixty last years of her life—that she was a woman of exemplary piety and goodness—and for many years before her death was terribly afflicted with a cancer in her breast, which she bore with true Christian patience. You may think that I have not kept enough apart the ideas of her heavenly and her

earthly master, but recollect I have designedly given in to her own way of feeling—and if she had a failing, 'twas that she respected her master's family too much, not reverenced her Maker too little." The lines open with a description of the village church, standing on the brow of the green hill sloping down to the valley of the Ashe—a pretty stream whose murmurs are now broken at intervals by the rattle of the trains on the District line to Buntingford :—

"On the green hill-top,
Hard by the house of prayer, a modest roof
And not distinguished from its neighbour barn,
Save by a slender, tapering length of spire,
The grandame sleeps. A plain stone barely tells
The name and date to the chance passenger."

WIDFORD CHURCH.
From a Drawing by E. H. FITCHEW.

The "neighbour barn" is one of the outbuildings of the Bury Farm, once a monastic establishment, separated from the churchyard by an ancient wall, and having access to it through a picturesque old gateway. Not far from the grave of Mrs. Field will be found those of many old and dear friends of Lamb—notably of the Norris family; Mrs. Randal Norris, the wife of Randal Norris of the Temple, who had been "more than father and mother" to him, in the sad days following the death of his own mother. Randal Norris himself lies, as befitted long and faithful service, in the burial-ground of the Temple Church. Widford, as will be remembered, is the scene of *Rosamond Gray;* and thither young Allan Clare returns in after years to revisit the scene of the awful tragedy :—"A kind of dread had hitherto kept me back; but I was restless now, till I had accomplished my wish. I set out one morning to walk. I reached Widford about eleven in the forenoon, after a slight breakfast at my inn, where I was mortified to perceive the old landlord did not know me again (old Thomas Billet—he has often made angle-rods for me when a child), I rambled over all my accustomed haunts." Widford, like most rural villages within the same short distance of London, has doubtless changed in many outward features since Lamb knew it. But the old Inn, with its sign overhanging the road, in our illustration is likely enough to have been the one that impressed his childish fancy. It is taken from a portfolio of sketches in Hertfordshire, made about the year 1790, by Mr. Luppino, one of the scene-painters of Covent Garden Theatre, and now in the

possession of Mr. Nunn of Hertford, through whose kindness I am able to reproduce it here. In the same sketch-book is one of the old house at Blakesware, which has been engraved in Cussan's *History of Hertfordshire.*

Rosamond Gray appeared in 1798. A year later we find Lamb again visiting his old haunts, and dwelling on them in a letter to Southey. "I have but just got your letter, being returned from Herts, where I have passed a few red-letter days with much pleasure. I would describe the country to you, as you have done by Devonshire, but alas! I am a poor pen at that same. I could tell you of an old house with a tapestry bedroom, the *Judgment of Solomon* composing one panel, and *Actæon Spying Diana Naked,* the other. I could tell of an old marble-hall, with Hogarth's prints, and the Roman Cæsars in marble hung round. I could tell of a wilderness, and of a village church, and where the bones of my honoured grandam lie; but there are feelings which refuse to be translated, sulky aborigines, which will not be naturalised in another soil. Of this nature are old family faces and scenes of infancy."

The old house here referred to is of course Blakesware Hall, which though actually in the Parish of Ware, is so close to Widford, that for church-going and most other parochial uses it practically belongs to that village. Blakesware was the original seat of the Plumer family; but when the Plumers built for themselves a new mansion at Gilston, near Harlow, a few miles distant, the old Blakesware house continued to be used as a Dower-house, until after the death of William Plumer, the member for Higham Ferrars in 1822, when it was pulled to the ground. The old gardens, with the triple terraces, have also disappeared; and much has happened to confuse the landmarks by which the site was to be identified. The house stood on the old road between Ware and Widford, but the necessities of the railway that has been since made, have caused the road to be diverted at this point of its course, and to pass on the other side of the little river Ashe, which flows through the valley. A young plantation, in an inclosure of palings, marks the actual site of the old house. And as one stands on the spot, one can realise, in spite of the many changes due to time and the hand of man, how the child, Charles Lamb, rambled in the old-fashioned gardens, beyond whose limits he was not allowed to stray. With that loveliest of his essays, *Blakesmoor in H——shire,* in our hand, or in our heart, we can still see some of the sights, and dream the dreams that filled his young imagination. The lofty Justice Hall, the tapestried chambers, the great gates, are all departed, but there are still some features in the near landscape that live as he saw them. "The solitude of childhood," he writes, "is not so much the mother of thought as it is the feeder of love, of silence, and admiration. So strange a passion for the place possessed me in those years that though there lay—I shame to say how few roods distant from the mansion—half hid by trees, what I judged some romantic lake, such was the spell which bound me to the house, and such my carefulness not to pass its strict and proper precincts, that the idle waters lay unexplored for me; and not till late in life, curiosity prevailing over elder devotion, I found to my astonishment a pretty brawling brook had been the *lacus incognitus* of my infancy." As we stand on the spot where Blakesware stood, we see it all. The little stream, the Ashe, placid for the most part of its course, but "brawling" at this particular stage, for here it tumbles over one of the "wears" that gives its name to the place, flows along just below where the old house stood; but at this point the trees and shrubs effectually shroud it from view, save where the waters have made for themselves a little inlet, on which a stately swan was basking in the sun, when last I saw it—the "romantic lake" of the child Elia.

But as we turn our eyes to look for other things by which the old place might be identified, alas! almost all are gone. "Thy costly fruit-garden, with its sun-baked southern wall; the ampler pleasure-garden, rising backward from the house in triple terraces . . . the verdant quarters backwarder still; and stretching still beyond, in old formality, thy firry wilderness, the haunt of the squirrel and the day-long murmuring wood-pigeon, with that antique image in the centre, God or Goddess, I wist not; but child of Athens or old Rome paid never a sincerer worship to Pan or to Sylvanus in their native groves, than I to that fragmental mystery." There are still inhabitants of Widford and its neighbourhood who remember the meadow behind Blakesware as the "quarters," and the copse or wood beyond bears the name of the "wilderness" to this day. It has not remained wholly true to the name, for a space in the centre of its five or six acres has been cleared, and there has sprung up a new Blakesware House, worthy in picturesque architecture and fair proportions of its old namesake; but the squirrel and the wood-pigeon have not wholly vanished from their ancient haunts.

OLD BLAKESWARE HOUSE.
From an old Water-Colour Drawing.

Mary Lamb has also given us her recollections of Blakesware, though chiefly of its interior, in the story of "The young Mohammedan" in *Mrs. Leicester's School.* Under the name of little Margaret Green, she tells her schoolfellows of the old house in which she used to spend her holidays with her mother, who was companion to the old lady of the Hall. "As I was permitted to walk in the garden, or wander about the house whenever I pleased, I used to leave the parlour for hours together, and make out my own solitary amusement as well as I could. My first visit was always to a very large hall, which, from being paved with marble, was called the marble hall. In this hall, while Mrs. Beresford's husband was living, the tenants used to be feasted at Christmas.

"The heads of the twelve Cæsars were hung round the hall. Every day I mounted on the chairs to look at them, and to read the inscriptions underneath, till I became perfectly familiar with their names and features. . . . An old broken battledore and some shuttlecocks with most of the feathers missing were on a marble slab in one corner of the hall, which constantly reminded me that there had once been younger inhabitants here than the old lady and her grey-headed servants. In another corner stood a marble figure of a Satyr; every day I laid my hand on his shoulder to feel how cold he was."

All this has passed away, but the Hertfordshire landscape in its rare serenity of summer sunshine is still the same as when Charles and Mary, as little children, looked on it from the garden walks, and walked to and fro on Sundays to Widford Church. The "walks and windings of Blakesware" are still full of beauty. The cottage of Rosamond Gray has been rebuilt, but the group of which it formed one, is still to be seen, not half a mile from the old house. Lamb must have been a boy of only sixteen or seventeen when the attachment to his Anna became one that coloured all his future life and thoughts, and when he wandered with her in these

Green winding walks, and shady pathways sweet.

"The boy and girl, for they were no more at that age, grew fond of each other—more fond than either of them suspected." Thus Charles Lamb relates—with what tender and bitter recollections of the days that are no more—under the guise of Rosamond Gray and Allan Clare, the story of his own early love. And the story, as he tells it, recalls to him the incomparable lines of the Elizabethan Daniel, which ten years later he was to give in full as the choicest sample of that poet in his specimens of the English dramatists. It is, I think, his earliest quotation from the

vast storehouse of noble verse, which few but Lamb had then explored. It is from Daniel's Pastoral Drama of *Hymen's Triumph.* It was a bold experiment to introduce into a romance, deluged with eighteenth century sentiment, the verse of an Elizabethan. Yet Daniel, the "well-languaged," is at his best so modern that no incongruity is felt; and with many a reader the lines have doubtless passed as from one of Lamb's contemporaries:—

Ah, I remember well (and how can I
But ever more remember well?) when first
Our flame began, when scarce we knew what was
The flame we felt; when as we sat and sighed,
And looked upon each other, and conceived
Not what we ailed, yet something we did ail;
And yet were well, and yet we were not well,
And what was our disease we could not tell.
Then would we kiss, then sigh, then look. And thus
In that first garden of our simpleness
We spent our childhood. But when years began
To reap the fruit of knowledge; ah, how then
Would she with graver looks, with sweet stern brow,
Check my presumption and my forwardness;
Yet still would give me flowers, still would me shew
What she would have me, yet not have me know.

Lamb has told us of his re-visiting these scenes of his childhood in later life, when only the ruins of the old house remained. It was in the year 1822 that the demolition of Blakesware was actually completed. And it would be probably in that year that Lamb paid the visit recorded in the essay, *Blakesmoor in H—— shire.* "Journeying northward lately," he writes, "I could not resist going some few miles out of my road to look upon the remains of an old great house with which I had been impressed in this way in infancy. I was apprised that the owner of it had lately pulled it down; still I had a vague notion that it could not all have perished, that so much solidity with magnificence could not have been crushed all at once into the mere dust and rubbish which I found it. The work of ruin had proceeded with a swift hand indeed, and the demolition of a few weeks had reduced it to—an antiquity. I was astonished at the indistinction of everything. Where had stood the great gates? What bounded the courtyard? Whereabouts did the outhouses commence? A few bricks only lay as representatives of that which was so stately, so spacious. . . . Had I seen these brick and mortar knaves at this process of destruction, at the plucking of every panel I should have felt the varlets at

WIDFORD.
From an Old Sketch by LUPPINO.

my heart. I should have cried out to them to spare a plank at least out of the cheerful store-room, in whose hot window-seat I used to sit and read Cowley, with the grass plot before, and the hum and flappings of that one solitary wasp, that ever haunted it, about me—it is in mine ears now, as oft as summer returns—or a panel of the yellow room."

Until lately no adequate picture of the old house was known to be in existence—nothing in fact, I believe, except the rough sketch already referred to, made by Luppino the scene-painter, as a hint for his own purposes, to serve perhaps as a background for some drama of rural life at Covent Garden. But happily some more careful hand was to copy and preserve the features of the old place before it became the "mere dust and rubbish" which Lamb found it. It must have been indeed just before the final demolition described by Lamb, that an artist was employed to make a drawing of the house for a copy of Clutterbuck's *Hertfordshire*, which a wealthy collector and connoisseur was in the process of illustrating, and which by the addition of a vast number of such illustrations he enlarged from its original two volumes to a magnificent set of ten. This fine copy has lately come into the hands of Messrs. Robson and Kerslake, of Coventry Street, and by their courtesy I am able to give the view of Blakesware. The "work of ruin," it will be observed, had already begun, but not so far but that the position of the great gates, the courtyard, and the outhouses is still apparent. The trees of the "wilderness" are to be seen in the distance, and the pretty brawling brook flows, as when Lamb first discovered it, a few roods distant from the mansion.

A few more facts about the house as Lamb first knew it are to be found in the essay *Dream Children*. With that strange love of mystifying which never deserted him even when his emotions were most deeply stirred, Lamb here places the old mansion of his childhood in Norfolk—apparently because in that county occurred the incidents on which the legend of the Babes in the Wood was founded, and because by a mere coincidence that story contributed something to the decorations of Blakesware House. "Certain it is," he says, and here, it might seem, he meant to emphasise a fact, "that the whole story of the children and their cruel uncle was to be seen fairly carved out in wood upon the chimney-piece of the great hall, the whole story down to the robin redbreasts; till a foolish rich person pulled it down to set up a marble one of modern invention in its stead with no story upon it." A little later on, he tells how Blakesware had its haunted room, and that it was the room occupied by his old grandmother, and that the form the apparition took was one of two infants, "to be seen at midnight gliding up and down the great staircase near where she slept—but she said 'those innocents would do her no harm.'" Did Lamb invent the haunted staircase to fit the legend of the Babes in the Wood; or was there really a ghost story of Blakesware, taking some such shape as this, and did he create the old carved chimney-piece to match it? There *was* a haunted room at Blakesware. He speaks of it again in the *Blakesmoor* Essay, as that in which old Mrs. Battle died. And curiously enough there actually was a legend in the Plumer family of an ancestor who had two children, who mysteriously and suspiciously disappeared, and in default of whom the baronetcy, borne by one Walter Plumer at the close of the seventeenth century, was lost to the family. We can well imagine old Mrs. Field with her memory (as Lamb has testified) so full of "anecdote domestic" and family tradition, telling this story over and over again by the winter fire to her two grandchildren, at that age when such stories most fascinate and impress, and its lingering in Charles Lamb's mind with features just distinct enough to prompt this fantastic blending of the theme with that of the orphan children of the immortal ballad—the subject too of Morton's touching after-piece, in which Fanny Kelly played the elder child.

"She kept up the dignity of the great house in a sort while she lived," continues Elia in the same essay, "which afterwards came to decay, and was nearly pulled down, and all its old ornaments stripped and carried off to the owner's other house." This other house was at Gilston, in the same county, and thither the marbles and the tapestries of Blakesware were removed. Gilston itself was pulled down about the year 1850, and a second Gilston, like the second Blakesware, has sprung up a few yards from its predecessor. The marbles and tapestries were once more dispersed, and can no longer be traced. But a few of the less valuable ornaments of old Blakesware, when it was pulled down, became the spoil or the perquisites of the villagers. and I have seen in a Widford cottage a carved chimney-piece and some oak panelling that form the last relics of that "extinguished habitation."

Only a mile distant from Ware, and within easy reach of Blakesware House, is the pretty village of Amwell, on that London road by

AMWELL CHURCH.
From a Drawing by E. H. FITCHEW.

which Charles and Mary had so often travelled to and fro on their holiday visits. The young boy and his guardian sister could never have forgotten the singular picturesqueness of Amwell Church standing on its green height with Lea and New River gently flowing at its foot—now almost embowered in trees and shrubs, but a hundred years ago, as old pictures show us, standing out for all to see, "plain as way to parish church." Amwell had its own poet at that season, Scott, the Quaker,—"Scott of Amwell," as he was commonly called—who celebrated its beauties not without a genuine feeling of their attractions. But Scott had not the strength (or is it courage?) to resist the conventionalities and commonplaces of the eighteenth century fashion of approaching nature. He is forgotten, and not undeservedly. He could not have made Amwell famous, as Cowper made Olney, or John Dyer made Grongar Hill. It is Amwell, rather, that has embalmed the name of the gentle Quaker. Most persons, to whom it is anything more than the name of a place, know it through the opening pages of Isaac Walton. Few perhaps remember that Charles and Mary, when they began their task of writing for Godwin's Juvenile Library, laid the scene of *Mrs. Leicester's School* in this pleasant village. "To the Young Ladies of Amwell School," so the governess begins her dedicatory letter, wherein she describes how on the first evening of re-assembling after the holidays, she had persuaded her little friends, shy and home-sick and nervous, to tell each her little story in turn, to wile away the weary hour before bedtime, and had then committed them to paper for the amusement of coming generations. There is something wonderfully touching in Charles and Mary Lamb thus turning again and again for inspiration, may we not say, to these dear haunts of their childhood. If they had had no such memories to which to revert, how could they have fought against the depression and the temptations of those first days of struggle for existence in their London loneliness? It is Emerson, I think, who points out how the affections are the real quickener of the intellect; how we halt and hesitate over our essay and treatise, and then, sitting down to write to a friend, how thoughts come speeding in and clothe themselves at once in

easiest and fittest speech. So it was with the brother and sister. They headed their sheet of paper "Widford" or "Amwell," and tender memories and happy associations flocked round them, and at once gave invention and fancy their delightful liberty. "My father is the curate of a village church about five miles from Amwell," so little Elizabeth Villiers begins her short and simple annals, in the opening story of *Mrs. Leicester's School.* Who can doubt that the village church five miles away was Widford, where Mary Lamb had so often listened to good Mr. Hambly on the hot summer Sundays? There was something in a village church—and, alas! especially when it was empty!—that had a life-long charm for Charles Lamb. Something in the *Excursion*, when he first read it, touched this chord in him, and he writes to Wordsworth accordingly. "One feeling I was particularly struck with as what I recognised so very lately at Harrow Church on entering it after a hot, secular day's pleasure, the instantaneous cooling and calming, almost transforming properties of a country church just entered; a certain fragrance which it has, either from its holiness, or being kept shut all the week, or the air that is let in being pure country, exactly what you have reduced into words—but I am feeling that which I cannot express." The same thought he was to expand, after his common custom, later on in the opening of the *Blakesmoor Essay:*—"The same difference of feeling, I think, attends us between entering an empty and a crowded church. In the latter it is chance but some present human frailty—an act of inattention on the part of some of the auditory—or a trait of affectation, or worse, vain glory, on that of the preacher—puts us by our best thoughts, disharmonising the place and the occasion. But wouldst thou know the beauty of holiness? Go alone on some week-day, borrowing the keys of good Master Sexton, traverse the cool aisles of some country church, think of the piety that has kneeled there—the congregations old and young that have found consolation there—the meek pastor, the docile parishioner. With no disturbing emotions, no cross, conflicting comparisons, drink in the tranquillity of the place, till thou thyself become as fixed and motionless as the marble effigies that kneel and weep around thee."

MACKERY END.
From a Drawing by E. H. FITCHEW.

Lamb had relatives in other parts of the country. In a letter to Manning, in 1819, he asks, "How are my cousins, the Gladmans of Wheathampstead, and farmer Bruton? Mrs. Bruton is a glorious woman. 'Hail! Mackery End.' This is a fragment of a blank verse poem which I once meditated, but got no further.' Old Mrs. Field of Blakesware, had been a Bruton, and a native of the same part of Hertfordshire, the neighbourhood of Wheathampstead. A sister of hers had married a small farmer of the name

THE FARM HOUSE, MACKERY END.
From a Drawing by E. H. FITCHEW.

of Gladman, and she and her husband occupied the farmhouse of Mackery End at the time of Lamb's earliest recollections of the place. It is, as Lamb describes it, "delightfully situated within a gentle walk from Wheathampstead," in fact about a mile and a half from that town. Lamb mentions that in old maps of the country it was spelt—"perhaps more properly," he adds—*Mackarel* End; but this variation savours too strongly of such changes as from "Asparagus" to "Sparrow-Grass," to commend it to the rigid philologist. It is now, in any case, further reduced to "Mackrye" End, and is, it may be presumed, the name of one "end" of the Wheathampstead Parish, and is not to be associated with any one dwelling in it. The principal Mackrye End house is a handsome old Jacobean mansion, only a few yards distance from which stands the farmhouse celebrated in Elia's essay. The farmer's residence has been rebuilt since Lamb's day, and is a rather demonstratively modern dwelling of bright red brick, but the barns and other farm buildings in the rear, look as if they might be the identical ones which met his view, when, on that summer day of 1816, or thereabouts, after a thirty years absence, he and his sister paid their memorable visit. "By a somewhat circuitous route," he tells us, "taking the noble park at Luton in our way from St. Albans, we arrived at the spot of our anxious curiosity about noon." As yet the Great Northern Railway with its branch line from Hatfield to Wheathampstead was not; and the brother and sister with their companion Barron Field, travelled doubtless by a Bedford coach, taking the road through St. Albans and Harpenden to Luton. Harpenden is but two miles or so from the place of their destination, but on that delicious morning in the "heart of June," they preferred the longer drive on the coach-top, and the pleasant seven mile trip after they had left the coach at Luton, by the "noble park," then belonging to the Butes, and following the course of Walton's "loved Lea stream," till they once more turned north again, by Batford Mill, pausing perhaps, in their walk to wonder at some curious boulders of Hertfordshire "plum pudding stone"—up the hill, and through fields of waving green wheat, to the pleasant home of Farmer Bruton. "The sight of it," Charles Lamb has told us, "though every trace of it was effaced from my recollections, affected me with a pleasure which I had not experienced for many a year. For though I had forgotten it, we had never forgotten being there together, and we had been talking about Mackery End all our lives, till memory on my part became mocked with a phantom of itself, and I thought I

knew the aspect of a place which, when present, Oh! how unlike it was to *that* which I had conjured up so many times instead of it!

"Still the air breathed balmily about it, the season was in the 'heart of June,' and I could say with the poet,

"'But thou that didst appear so fair
To fond imagination.
Dost rival in the light of day
Her delicate creation!'

"Bridget's was more a waking bliss than mine, for she easily remembered her old acquaintance again—some altered features, of course a little grudged at. At first indeed she was ready to disbelieve for joy; but the scene soon re-confirmed itself in her affections, and she traversed every outpost of the old mansion, to the wood house, the orchard, the place where the pigeon house had stood (house and birds were alike flown), with a breathless impatience of recognition, which was more pardonable perhaps than decorous, at the age of fifty odd. But Bridget in some things is behind her years."

It is difficult to stop, when one has begun to transcribe from this perfect essay—in tenderness, playfulness, and the finest feeling for the harmonies of prose, unmatched even by Lamb himself. But his readers will recall how Elia, odd of manner and appearance, and over conscious of the fact, was too shy to enter and make the first introductions, and how "Love, stronger than scruple, winged my cousin in without me," and how she soon returned "with a creature that might have sat to a sculptor for the image of welcome." How this "youngest of the Gladman's," who had married a Bruton, "just recollected in early life to have had her cousin Bridget pointed out to her, climbing a stile," and how "the name of kindred, and of cousinship" prevailed,—"those slender ties, that prove slight as gossamer in the rending atmosphere of a metropolis, binding faster as we found it, in hearty, homely, loving Hertfordshire."

It might seem absurd, in the face of testimony such as this, to lay stress upon the petulant remark of Lamb, once forced from him in a moment of irritation, that he hated the country. "Thou wert, my friend, a scorner of the fields," wrote Wordsworth in the memorial verses on Lamb's death—though with a poet's insight he knew how to add, "though more in show than truth." "He was more House-Lamb than Grass-Lamb," said dear Thomas Hood; and of course such sayings had a justification in Lamb's habits, and in his way of speaking about himself. But though he was "a cockney of cockneys," it would be wholly unjust to attach him to what was once defined as the "cockney school." There is indeed such a thing, but Lamb was not of it. Such a school belongs to no one place, and may be found very remote from the metropolis. It is true he could not have borne to live in the country, for the reason that the country deprived him of things that had become to him second nature. He was endowed with a restless, if not a truant disposition, and fretted under all enforced confinement. He could have used all but the very words of Touchstone when asked how he liked his shepherd-life:—"In respect that it is in the fields, it pleaseth me well; but in respect that it is not in the Court, it is tedious." Yet even when he was "in the Court," or in other words enjoying the "sweet security of streets," or taking through Islington or Shacklewell his "calm suburban way," he hungered for the refreshment of the absolute country—the desert places, the "much grass" of his childhood's fields. He tells us in the *Superannuated Man* how, during the weary years when his longest annual holiday was one fortnight, he yearned for this period of renovation. "Besides Sundays I had a day at Easter, and a day at Christmas, with a full week in the summer to go and air myself in my native fields of Hertfordshire. This last was a great indulgence; and the prospect of its recurrence, I believe, alone kept me up through the year, and made my durance tolerable. But when the week came round, did the glittering phantom of the distance keep touch with me? Or rather, was it not a series of seven uneasy days, spent in restless pursuit of pleasure, and a wearisome anxiety to find out how to make the most of them? Where was the quiet, where the promised rest? Before I had a taste of it, it had vanished."

Every one who has known a like experience of holidays, few and short, will remember how these bitters mingled with the sweets Still, as the writer adds, the prospect of its coming throws something of an illumination upon the darker side of the captivity. And Charles Lamb "enriched" mind and heart and spirit in these rare moments when he touched once more his native earth. He never lost touch of nature. The air that breathes from his writings, even when he is in his lightest vein, is one that has passed over green meadows—like the wafts from real though distant hayfields, that surprise the traveller at times in some of London's most crowded and prosaic streets.

Alfred Ainger.

WITNESSED BY TWO.

"BUT to-morrow — to-morrow you will keep for me. I may expect you at the usual time?" said young Mrs. Medway to her old friend Major Graham, as she shook hands with him.

"To-morrow! Certainly. I *have* kept it for you, Anne. I always said I should," he answered. There was a slight touch of reproach in his tone.

She lifted her eyes for half a second to his face as if she would have said more. But after all it was only the words "Good-bye, then, till to-morrow," that were uttered, quietly and almost coldly, as Major Graham left the room.

"I can't quite make Anne out sometimes," he said to himself. "She is surely *very* cold. And yet I know she has real affection for me—*sisterly* affection, I suppose. Ah, well! so much the better. But still, just when a fellow's off for heaven knows how long and —and—altogether it does seem a little overstrained. She can't but know what might have come to pass had we not been separated for so long—or had I been richer, and I don't think she could have been exactly in love with Medway, though by all accounts he was a very decent fellow. She is so inconsistent too—she seemed really disappointed when I said I couldn't stay to-day. But I'm a fool to think so much about her. I am as poor as ever and she is rich. A fatal barrier! It's a good thing that she *is* cold, and that I have plenty of other matters to think about."

And thus congratulating himself he dismissed, or believed that he dismissed, for the time being all thought of Anne Medway from his mind. It was true that he had plenty of other things to occupy it with, for the day after to-morrow was to see his departure from England for an indefinite period.

Mrs. Medway meantime sat sadly and silently in the library where Major Graham had left her. Her sweet grey eyes were fixed on the fire burning brightly and cheerfully in the waning afternoon light—but she saw nothing about her. Her thoughts were busily travelling along a road which had grown very familiar to them of late—she was recalling all her past intercourse with Kenneth Graham since the time when, as boy and girl, they had scarcely remembered that they were not "real" brother and sister, all through the pleasant years of frequent meeting and unconstrained companionship to the melancholy day when Kenneth was ordered to India and they bade each other a long farewell. That was ten years ago now, and they had not met again till last spring when Major Graham returned to find his old playfellow a widow, young, rich, and lovely, but lonely in a sense—save that she had two children—for she was without near relations and was not the type of woman to make quick or numerous friendships.

The renewal of the old relations had been very pleasant—only too pleasant, Anne had of late begun to think. For the news of Kenneth's having decided to go abroad again had made her realise all he had become to her, and the discovery brought with it sharp misgiving and even humiliation.

"He does not care for me—not as I do for him," she was saying to herself as she sat by the fire. "There would have been no necessity for his leaving England again had he done so. It cannot be that I am rich and he poor, surely? He is not the sort of man to let such a mere accident as that stand in the way if he really cared for me. No, it is that he does not care for me except as a sort of sister. But still—he said he had kept his *last* evening for me—at least he cares for no one else *more*, and that is something. Who knows—perhaps to-morrow—when it comes to really saying good-bye——!" and a faint flush of renewed hope rose to her cheeks and a brighter gleam to her eyes.

The door opened, and a grey haired man-servant came in gently.

"I beg your pardon, ma'am," he said apologetically; "I was not sure if Major Graham had gone. Will he be here to dinner, if you please?"

"Not to-night, Ambrose. I shall be quite alone. But Major Graham will dine here to-morrow—he does not leave till Thursday morning."

"Very well, ma'am," said Ambrose, as he discreetly retired.

He had been many years in the Medway household. He had respected his late master, but for his young mistress he had actual affection, and being of a somewhat sentimental turn he had constructed for her benefit a very pretty little romance of which Major Graham was the hero. It had been a real blow to poor Ambrose to learn that the gentleman in question was on the eve of his departure without any sign of a satisfactory third volume, and he was rather surprised to see that Mrs. Medway seemed this evening in better spirits than for some time past.

"It's maybe understood between themselves," he reflected, as he made his way back to his own quarters. "I'm sure I hope so, for he's a real gentleman and she's as sweet a lady as ever stepped, which I should know if any one should—having seen her patience with poor master as was really called for through his long illness. She deserves a happy ending, and I'm sure I hope she may have it, poor lady."

"To-morrow at the usual time," meaning five o'clock or thereabouts, brought Kenneth for his last visit. Anne had been expecting him with an anxiety she was almost ashamed to own to herself, yet her manner was so calm and collected that no one could have guessed the tumult of hope and fear, of wild grief at his leaving, of intense longing for any word—were it but a word—to prove that all was not on *her* side only.

"I could bear his being away—for years even if he thought it must be—if I could but look forward—if I had the *right* to look forward to his return," she said to herself.

But the evening passed on tranquilly, and to all appearance pleasantly, without a word or look more than might have been between real brother and sister. Kenneth talked kindly—tenderly even—of the past; repeated more than once the pleasure it had been to him to find again his old friend so little changed, so completely his old friend still. The boys came in to say good-night, and "good-bye, alas! my lads," added their tall friend with a sigh. "Don't forget me quite, Hal and Charlie, and don't let your mother forget me either, eh?" To which the little fellows replied solemnly, though hardly understanding why he patted their curly heads with a lingering hand this evening, or why mamma looked grave at his words.

And Anne bore it all without flinching, and smiled and talked a little more than usual perhaps, though all the time her heart was bursting, and Kenneth wondered more than ever if, after all, she *had* "much heart or feeling to speak of."

"You will be bringing back a wife with you perhaps," she said once. "Shall you tell her about your sister Anne, Kenneth?"

Major Graham looked at her earnestly for half an instant before he replied, but Anne's eyes were not turned towards him and she did not see the look. And his words almost belied it.

"Certainly I shall tell her of you," he said, "that is to say if she ever comes to exist. At present few things are less probable. Still I am old enough now never to say, '*Fontaine, je ne boirai jamais de ton eau.*' But," he went on, "I may return to find *you* married again, Anne. You are still so young and you are rather lonely."

"No," said Anne with a sudden fierceness which he had never seen in her before, "I shall *never* marry again—*never*," and she looked him full in the face with a strange sparkle in her eyes which almost frightened him.

"I beg your pardon," he said meekly. And though the momentary excitement faded as quickly as it had come and Anne, murmuring some half intelligible excuse, was again her quiet self, this momentary glimpse of a fierier nature beneath gave him food for reflection.

"Can Medway have not been what he seemed on the surface after all?" he thought to himself. "What can make her so vindictive against matrimony?"

But it was growing late, and Kenneth had still some last preparations to make. He rose slowly and reluctantly from his chair.

"I must be going, I fear," he said.

Anne too had risen. They stood together on the hearthrug. A slight, very slight shiver passed through her. Kenneth perceived it.

"You have caught cold, I fear," he said kindly. For the room was warm and the fire was burning brightly.

"No, I don't think so," she said indifferently.

"You will write to me now and then?" he said next.

"Oh, certainly—not very often perhaps," she replied lightly, "but now and then. Stay," and she turned away towards her

writing table, "tell me exactly how to address you. Your name—is your surname enough?—there is no other Graham in your regiment?"

"No," he said absently, "I suppose not. Yes, just my name and the regiment and Allagherry, which will be our headquarters. You might, if you were *very* amiable—you might write to Galles—a letter overland would wait for me there," for it was the days of "long sea" for all troops to India.

Anne returned to her former position on the hearthrug—the moment at the table had restored her courage. "We shall see," she said, smiling again.

Then Kenneth said once more, "I *must* go;" but he lingered still a moment.

"You must have caught cold, Anne, or else you are very tired. You are so white," and from his height above her, though Anne herself was tall, he laid his hand on her shoulder gently and as a brother might have done, and looked down at her pale face half inquiringly. A flush of colour rose for an instant to her cheeks. The temptation was strong upon her to throw off that calmly caressing hand, but she resisted it, and looked up bravely with a light almost of defiance in her eyes.

"I am perfectly well, I assure you. But perhaps I am a little tired. I suppose it is getting late."

And Kenneth stifled a sigh of scarcely realised disappointment, and quickly drew back his hand.

"Yes, it is late. I am very thoughtless. Good-bye then, Anne. God bless you."

And before she had time to answer he was gone.

Ambrose met him in the hall, with well-meaning officiousness bringing forward his coat and hat. His presence helped to dissipate an impulse which seized Major Graham to rush up stairs again for one other word of farewell. Had he done so what would he have found? Anne sobbing—sobbing with the terrible intensity of a self-contained nature once the strain is withdrawn—sobbing in the bitterness of her grief and the cruelty of her mortification; with but one consolation.

"At least he does not despise me. I hid it well," she whispered to herself.

And Kenneth Graham, as he drove away in his cab, repeated to himself, "She is *so* cold, this evening particularly. And yet, can it be that it was to hide any other feeling? If I thought so—good God!" and he half started up as if to call to the driver, but sat down again. "No, no, I must not be a fool. I could not stand a repulse from *her*—I could never see her again. Better not risk it. And then I am so poor!"

And in the bustle and hurry of his departure he tried to forget the wild fancy which for a moment had disturbed him. He sailed the next day.

But the few weeks which followed passed heavily for Anne. It was a dead time of year—there was no special necessity for her exerting herself to throw off the overwhelming depression, and strong and brave as she was, she allowed herself, to some extent, to yield to it.

"If only he had not come back—if I had never seen him again!" she repeated to herself incessantly. "I had in a sense forgotten him—the thought of him never troubled me all the years of my marriage. I suppose I had never before understood how I *could* care. How I wish I had never learnt it! How I *wish* he had never come back!"

It was above all in the afternoons—the dull, early dark, autumn afternoons, which for some weeks had been enlivened by the expectation, sure two or three times a week to be fulfilled, of Major Graham's "dropping in"—that the aching pain, the weary longing grew so bad as to be well nigh intolerable.

"How shall I bear it?" said poor Anne to herself sometimes; "it is so wrong, so unwomanly! So selfish too when I think of my children. How much I have to be thankful for—why should I ruin my life by crying for the one thing that is not for me? It is worse, far worse than if he had died; had I known that he had loved me, I could have borne his death, it seems to me."

She was sitting alone one afternoon about five weeks after Kenneth had left, thinking sadly over and over the same thoughts, when a tap at the door made her look up.

"Come in," she said, though the tap hardly sounded like that of her maid, and no one else was likely to come to the door of her own room where she happened to be. "Come in," and somewhat to her surprise the door half opened and old Ambrose's voice replied—

"If you please, ma'am——" then stopped and hesitated.

"Come in," she repeated with a touch of impatience. "What is it, Ambrose? Where is Seton?"

"If you please, ma'am, I couldn't find her—that is to say," Ambrose went on nervously, "I didn't look for her. I thought, ma'am I would rather tell you myself. You mustn't be startled, ma'am," and Anne at this looking up at the old man saw that he was pale and startled-looking himself, "but it's—it's Major Graham."

"Major Graham?" repeated Anne, and to herself her voice sounded almost like a scream. "What about him? Have you heard anything?"

"It's *him*, ma'am—him himself!" said Ambrose. "He's in the library. I'm a little afraid, ma'am, there may be something wrong, he looked so strange and he did not answer when I spoke to him. But he's in the library, ma'am."

Anne did not wait to hear more. She rushed past Ambrose, across the landing, and down the two flights of steps which led to the library—a half-way-house room, between the ground floor and the drawing-room—almost before his voice had stopped. At the door she hesitated a moment, and in that moment all sorts of wild suppositions flashed across her brain. "What was it? What was she going to hear? Had Kenneth turned back half-way out to India for *her* sake? Had some trouble befallen him, in which he had come to seek her sympathy? What *could* it be?" and her heart beating so as almost to suffocate her, she opened the door.

Yes—there he stood—on the hearthrug as she had last seen him in that room. But he did not seem to hear her come in, for he made no movement towards her; he did not even turn his head in her direction.

More and more startled and perturbed, Anne hastily went up to him.

"Kenneth!" she cried, "what is it? What is the matter?"

She had held out her hand as she hurried towards him, but he did not seem to see it. He stood there still, without moving—his face slightly turned away, till she was close beside him.

"Kenneth," she repeated, this time with a thrill of something very like anguish in her tone, "what is the matter? Are you angry with me? *Kenneth*—speak."

Then at last he slowly turned his head and looked at her with a strange, half wistful anxiety in his eyes—he gazed at her as if his very soul were in that gaze, and lifting his right hand, gently laid it on her shoulder as he had done the evening he had bidden her farewell. She did not shrink from his touch, but, strange to say, she did not feel it, and some indefinable instinct made her turn her eyes away from his and glance at her shoulder. But, even as she did so she saw that his hand was no longer there, and with a thrill of fear she exclaimed again, "*Speak*, Kenneth, *speak* to me!"

The words fell on empty air. There was no Kenneth beside her. She was standing on the hearthrug alone.

Then, for the first time, there came over her that awful chill of terror so often described, yet so indescribable to all but the few who have felt it for themselves. With a terrible though half stifled cry Anne turned towards the door. It opened before she reached it, and she half fell into old Ambrose's arms. Fortunately for her—for her reason perhaps—his vague misgiving had made him follow her, though of what he was afraid he could scarcely have told.

"Oh, ma'am—oh, my poor lady!" he exclaimed, as he half led, half carried her back to her own room, "what is it? Has he gone? But how could he have gone? I was close by—I never saw him pass."

"He is not there—*he has not been there*," said poor Anne, trembling and clinging to her old servant. "Oh, Ambrose, what you and I have seen was no living Kenneth Graham—no living man at all. Ambrose—he came thus to say good-bye to me. He is dead," and the tears burst forth as she spoke and Anne sobbed convulsively.

Ambrose looked at her in distress and consternation past words. Then at last he found courage to speak.

"My poor lady," he repeated. "It must be so. I misdoubted me and I did not know why. He did not ring—but I was passing by the door and something, a sort of feeling that there was some one waiting outside, made me open it. To my astonishment it was he," and Ambrose himself could not repress a sort of tremor. "He did not speak, but seemed to pass me and be up the stairs and in the library in an instant. And then, not knowing what to do, I went to your room, ma'am. Forgive me if I did wrong."

"No, no," said Anne, "you could not have done otherwise. Ring the bell, Ambrose, tell Seton I have had bad news, and that you think it has upset me. But wait at the door till she comes. I—I am afraid to be left alone."

And Mrs. Medway looked so deadly pale and faint, that when Seton came hurrying in answer to the sharply rung bell, it needed no explanation for her to see that Mrs. Medway was really ill. Seton was a practical, matter-of-fact person, and the bustle of attending to her mistress, trying to make her warm again—for Anne was shivering with cold—and persuading her to take some restoratives, effectually drove any inquiry as to the cause of the sudden seizure out of the maid's head. And by the time Mrs. Medway was better Seton had invented a satisfactory explanation of it all for herself.

"You need a change, ma'am. It's too

dull for anybody staying in town at this season; and it's beginning to tell on your nerves, ma'am," was the maid's idea.

And some little time after the strange occurrence Mrs. Medway was persuaded to leave town for the country.

But not till she had seen in the newspapers the fatal paragraph she knew would sooner or later be there—the announcement of the death, on board her Majesty's troopship *Ariadne*, a few days before reaching the Cape, of "Major R. R. Graham," of the 113th regiment.

She "had known it," she said to herself, yet when she saw it there, staring her in the face, she realised that she had been living in a hope which she had not allowed to herself that the apparition might in the end prove capable of other explanation. She would gladly have taken refuge in the thought that it was a dream, an optical delusion fed of her fancy incessantly brooding on her friend and on his last visit—that her brain was in some way disarranged or disturbed—anything, anything would have been welcome to her. But against all such was opposed the fact that it was not herself alone who had seen Kenneth Graham that fatal afternoon.

And now, when the worst was certain, she recognised this still more clearly as the strongest testimony to the apparition not having been the product of her own imagination. And old Ambrose, her sole confidant, in his simple way agreed with her.

"If I had not seen him too, ma'am, or if I alone had seen him," he said, furtively wiping his eyes. "But the two of us. No, it could have but the one meaning," and he looked sadly at the open newspaper. "There's a slight discrimpancy, ma'am," he said as he pointed to the paragraph. "Our Major Graham's name was '*K.* R.' not '*R.* R.'"

"It is only a misprint. I noticed that," said Anne wearily. "No, Ambrose, there can be no mistake. But I do not want any one—not *any one*—ever to hear the story. You will promise me that, Ambrose?" and the old man repeated the promise he had already given.

There was another "discrimpancy," which had struck Anne more forcibly, but which she refrained from mentioning to Ambrose.

"It can mean nothing; it is no use putting it into his head," she said to herself. "Still, it is strange."

The facts were these. The newspaper gave the date of Major Graham's death as the 25th November—the afternoon on which he had appeared to Mrs. Medway and her servant was that of the 26th. This left no possibility of calculating that the vision had occurred at or even shortly after the moment of the death.

"It must be a mistake in the announcement," Anne decided. And then she gave herself up to the acceptance of the fact. Kenneth was dead. Life held no individual future for her any more, nothing to look forward to, no hopes, however tremblingly admitted, that "some day" he might return, and return to discover—to own, perhaps, to himself and to her that he did love her, and that only mistaken pride, or her own coldness, or one of the hundred "mistakes" or "perhapses" by which men, so much more than women, allow to drift away from them the happiness they might grasp, had misled and withheld him! No; all was over. Henceforth she must live in her children alone—in the interests of others she must find her happiness.

"And in one blessed thought," said the poor girl—for she was little more—even at the first to herself; "that after all he *did* love me, that I may, without shame, say so in my heart, for I was his last thought. It was—it must have been—to tell me so that he came that day. My Kenneth—yes, he was mine after all."

Some little time passed. In the quiet country place, whither, sorely against Seton's desires, Mrs. Medway had betaken herself for "change," she heard no mention of Major Graham's death. One or two friends casually alluded to it in their letters as "very sad," but that was all. And Anne was glad of it.

"I must brace myself to hear it spoken of and discussed by the friends who knew him well—who knew how well *I* knew him," she reflected. "But I am glad to escape it for a while."

It was February already—more than three months since Kenneth Graham had left England when one morning—among letters forwarded from her London address—came a thin foreign paper one, with the traces of travel upon it—of which the superscription made Anne start and then turn pale and cold.

"I did not think of this," she said to herself. "He must have left it to be forwarded to me. It is terrible—getting a letter after the hand that wrote it has been long dead and cold."

With trembling fingers she opened it.

"My dear—may I say my dearest?—Anne," were the first words that her eyes fell on. Her own filled with tears. Wiping them away before going on to read more, she caught sight of the date. "On board H.M.'s troopship, *Ariadne*, November 27th."

Anne started. Stranger and stranger. *Two* days later than the reported date of his death—and the writing so strong and clear. No sign of weakness or illness even! She read on with frantic eagerness—it was not a very long letter—but when Anne had read the two or three somewhat hurriedly written pages, her face had changed as if from care-worn pallid middle age back to fresh sunny youth. She fell on her knees in fervent unspoken thanksgiving. She kissed the letter—the dear, beautiful letter, as if it were a living thing!

"It is too much—too much," she said. "What have I done to deserve such blessedness?"

This was what the letter told. The officer whose death had been announced was not "our Major Graham," not Graham of the 113th at all, but an officer belonging to another regiment who had come on board at Madeira to return to India, believing his health to be quite restored. "The doctors had in some way mistaken his case," wrote Kenneth, "for he broke down again quite suddenly and died two days ago. He was a very good fellow and we have all been very cut up about it. He took a fancy to me, and I have been up some nights with him, and I am rather done up myself. I write this to post at the Cape, for a fear has struck me that—his initials being so like mine—some report may reach you that it is *I*, not he. Would you care very much, dear Anne? I dare to think you would—but I cannot in a letter tell you why. I must wait till I see you. I have had a somewhat strange experience, and it is possible, just possible, that I may be able to tell you all about it, *vivâ voce*, sooner than I had any idea of when I last saw you. In the meantime good-bye and God bless you, my dear child."

Then followed a postscript—of some days' later date, written in great perturbation of spirit at finding that the letter had, by mistake, not been posted at the Cape. "After all my anxiety that you should see it as soon as or before the newspapers, it is really too bad. I cannot understand how it happened. I suppose it was that I was so busy getting poor Graham's papers and things together to send on shore, that I overlooked it. It cannot now be posted till we get to Galles."

That was all. But was it not enough and more than enough? The next few weeks passed for Anne Medway like a happy dream. She was content now to wait—years even—she had recovered faith in herself, faith in the future.

The next Indian mail brought her no letter, somewhat to her surprise. She wondered what had made Kenneth allude to his perhaps seeing her again before long—she wondered almost more, what was the "strange experience" to which he referred. Could it have had any connection with her *most* strange experience that November afternoon? And thus "wondering" she was sitting alone—in her own house again by this time—one evening towards the end of April, when a ring at the bell, made her look up from the book she was reading, half dreamily asking herself what visitor could be coming so late. She heard steps and voices—a door shutting, then Ambrose opened that of the drawing-room where she was sitting and came up to her, his wrinkled old face all flushed and beaming.

"It was me that frightened you so that day, ma'am," he began. "It's right it should be me again. But it's himself—his very own self this time. You may believe me, indeed."

Anne started to her feet. She felt herself growing pale—she trembled so that she could scarcely stand.

"Where is he?" she said. "You have not put him into the library—anywhere but there?"

"He would have it so, ma'am, He said he would explain to you. Oh, go to him, ma'am—you'll see it'll be all right."

Anne made her way to the library. But at the door a strange tremor seized her. She could scarcely control herself to open it. Yes—there again on the hearthrug stood the tall figure she had so often pictured thus to herself. She trembled and all but fell, but his voice—his own hearty living voice—speaking to her in accents tenderer and deeper than ever heretofore—reassured her and dispersed at once the fear that had hovered about her.

"Anne, my dear Anne. It is I myself. Don't look so frightened," and in a moment he had led her forward, and stood with his hand on her shoulder, looking with his kind earnest eyes into hers.

"Yes," he said, dreamily, "it was just thus. Oh, how often I have thought of this moment! Anne, if I am mistaken forgive my presumption—but I can't think I am. Anne, my darling, you *do* love me?"

There was no need of words. Anne hid her face on his shoulder for one happy moment. Then amidst the tears that *would* come she told him all—all she had suffered and hoped and feared—her love and her agony of humiliation when she thought

it was not returned; her terrible grief when she thought him dead—and yet the consolation of believing herself to have been his last thought in life.

"So you shall be—my first and my last," he answered. "My Anne—my very own!"

And then she told him more of the strange story we know. He listened with intense eagerness but without testifying much surprise, far less incredulity.

"I anticipated something of the kind," he said, after a moment or two of silence. "It is very strange. Listen, Anne; at the time, the exact time so far as I can roughly calculate, at which you thought you saw me I was *dreaming* of you. It was between four and five o'clock in the afternoon was it not?"

Anne bowed her head in assent.

"That would have made it about six o'clock where we then were," he went on consideringly. "Yes; it was about seven when I awoke. I had lain down that afternoon with a frightful headache. Poor Graham had died shortly before midnight the night before, and I had not been able to sleep, though I was very tired. I dare say I was not altogether in what the doctors call a normal condition, from the physical fatigue and the effect generally of having watched him die. I was feeling less *earthly*, if you can understand, than one usually does. It is—to me at least—*impossible* to watch a death-bed without wondering about it all—about what comes after—intensely. And Graham was so good, so patient and resigned and trustful, though it was awfully hard for him to die. He had every reason to wish to live. Well, Anne, when I fell asleep that afternoon I at once began dreaming about you. I had been thinking about you a great deal, constantly almost, ever since we set sail. For, just before starting, I had got a hint that this appointment—I have not told you about it yet, but that will keep; I have accepted it as you see by my being here—I got a hint that it would probably be offered me, and that if I didn't mind paying my passage back almost as soon as I got out, I had better make up my mind to accept it. I felt that it hung upon *you*, and yet I did not see how to find out what you would say without—without risking what I *had*—your sisterly friendship. It came into my head just as I was falling asleep that I would write to you from the Cape, and tell you of Graham's death to avoid any mistaken report, and that I might in my letter somehow feel my way a little. This was all in my mind, and as I fell asleep it got confused so that I did not know afterwards clearly where to separate it from my dream."

"And what was the dream?" asked Anne breathlessly.

"*Almost precisely what you saw*," he replied. "I fancied myself here—rushing up stairs to the library in my haste to see you—to tell you I was not dead, and to ask you if you would have cared much had it been so. I saw all the scene—the hall, the staircase already lighted. This room—and you coming in at the door with a half frightened, half eager look in your face. Then it grew confused. I next remember standing here beside you on the hearthrug with my hand on your shoulder—*thus* Anne—and gazing into your eyes, and struggling, *struggling* to ask you what I wanted so terribly to know. But the words would not come, and the agony seemed to awake me. Yet with the awaking came the answer. *Something* had answered me; I said to myself, 'Yes, Anne does love me.'"

And Anne remembered the strange feeling of joy which had come to her even in the first bitterness of her grief. She turned to the hand that still lay on her shoulder and kissed it. "Oh, Kenneth," she said, "how thankful we should be! But how strange, to think that we owe all to a dream! *Was* it a dream, Kenneth?"

He shook his head. "You must ask that of wiser people than I," he said. "I suppose it was."

"But how could it have been a dream?" said Anne again. "You forget, Kenneth—Ambrose saw you too."

"Though I did not see him, nor even think of him. Yes, that makes it even more incomprehensible. It must have been the old fellow's devotion to you, Anne, that made him sympathise with you, somehow."

"I am glad he saw you," said Anne. "I should prefer to think it more than a dream. And there is always more evidence in favour of any story of the kind if it has been witnessed by two. But there is one other thing I want to ask you. It has struck me since that you answered me rather abstractedly that last evening when I spoke about your address, and asked if there was any other of the name in your regiment. Once or twice I have drawn a faint ray of hope from remembering your not very decided answer."

"Yes, it was stupid of me; I half remembered it afterwards. I should have explained it, but it scarcely seemed worth while. I did know another Major Graham might be joining us at Funchal, for that very day I had been intrusted with letters for him. But I *was* abstracted that evening, Anne. I was trying to persuade myself I didn't care for what I now know I care for more than for life itself—your love, Anne." L. MOLESWORTH.

GIRGENTI. TEMPLE OF JUNO AND LUCINO.
From a Drawing by A. M'CORMICK.

A MONTH IN SICILY.

I.

THERE is an ingenious school of psychologists who undertake to explain every mental phenomenon in terms either of the structural matter or the functional action of the brain. When, for instance, we say to ourselves—as some of us, much to our perplexity, are always doing—"This particular incident, totally new as I know it to be, has happened to me before;" or, "This hitherto unvisited spot is perfectly familiar to me from a former state of existence;" or, "I, who have not met you before have a distinct recollection of making this very remark to you, and of your returning precisely your present answer;"—in all these cases the school of psychologists aforesaid are ready with their explanation. It is all owing, it appears, to our having two cerebral hemispheres instead of being content with one. We insist upon "driving a pair," and if one of the two is a little slower than the other we must put up with the consequences. The incident, the place, the remark and the reply have, even as we imagine, been in very truth experienced, seen, interchanged, at least in our consciousness, not once but twice; but with this little difference, that the interval between the two experiences instead of being, as it seems to us, infinite, is in fact infinitesimal. The second is separated from the first not by the ages which might divide a later from an earlier state of existence, but only by that indivisible instant of time taken up by the cerebral hemisphere which has "hung fire" in catching up its comrade. Having thus elucidated this singular phenomenon to their own satisfaction—if to nobody else's—these triumphant psychologists ought to make nothing of explaining that correlative but less mysterious operation of the mind, by which present impressions of the senses instead of seeming to recall past ones consciously stereotype themselves, as it were, for a perpetual future. Instead of saying, "This particular sight or sound has been seen or heard by me before," one says, "This particular sight or sound, will, I am convinced as I see or hear it, abide in the memory of the ear and eye so long as they continue to exist." There may be nothing specially remarkable in the sight or sound which brings this conviction with it, or even if remarkable in itself, it may be far less so than many others which have visited us

without asserting any such claims to perpetual remembrance. The sensation is in fact a thoroughly capricious one, occurring very often when one has no particular reason to expect it, and as often not occurring when one has.

On several occasions in my lifetime have I had the good fortune—for, unlike its converse, I regard it as wholly pleasurable—to experience it, but never in such commanding and convincing force as when, at seven o'clock in the morning of 1st January, 1884, I stood on the deck of the *Moïse*, an excellent steamer of the *Compagnie Transatlantique*, and watched Messina gradually growing in distinctness, with the lessening distance and the broadening daylight of the New Year. The world was waking very placidly—as is the manner of the old—and the weather, full apparently of good resolutions for the coming twelvemonth, was demurely calm. We had left the Punta del Faro behind us and were fairly in the Straits. Scylla and Charybdis, distant several miles from each other, if modern identifications can be trusted, had been successfully "negotiated," and we were stealing at half-steam along the Sicilian coast towards the "City of the Sickle." Here and at this moment it was that my feat of prospective cerebration, if I may be allowed the term, was performed; and with no very remarkable warrant from the circumstances. The mountains to the right hand as one enters the Straits from the north are imposing enough, but can boast no exceptional grandeur; neither does the whistle of a Mediterranean steamer—I mean, of course, its tenor not its soprano whistle—put forth on ordinary occasions a solemn or awe-inspiring sound. Neither again is there any reason to suppose that the east Sicilian coast is a favourite haunt of Echo. Yet the stoker of the *Moïse* might almost have been Narcissus, for the exquisitely melodious sadness of her response. The mellow note of our steam-whistle—for the stoker can make it mellow when he pleases, and hence the moral indignation which embitters our physical torture at its usual utterances—stole from crag to crag along the coast and far and ever farther inland, growing stranger and sadder till it died away, almost as it seemed in the very heart of the sleeping land. Again and again did our grimy musician repeat it, and again and again did the rocks reply to him. It might have been that ancient wail over the dead Pan, re-echoed anew with an added pathos in this birthplace of gods. And the inspiring influences of the place and time, the sea and the mountains and the morning, the mystery of the echoing shore, and the *religio* of that fabled home of myth and epos and pastoral song which we were approaching, combined, as I have said, to convince me that the sights and sounds of that New Year's Daybreak will hold a place in my memory as long as memory remains.

Prose, however, perpetually dogs the heels of poetry, and if the Straits of Messina, entered under auspicious circumstances, and with a musical stoker, may stand for poetry, the City of Messina is assuredly the baldest prose. Cicero's malefactor, and not Shakespeare's heroine, should have furnished forth the visitor's conception of it if he would not be disappointed, for Messina will far more adequately realise the idea of the strong-box of Verres than of the home of Beatrice. It is truly a place of painful disillusionment for the lover of *Much Ado About Nothing*. You cannot conceive yourself meeting Benedick, or Claudio, or Don Pedro, or anybody indeed, except perhaps Dogberry, in its one long, narrow, severely mercantile street; a conjectural site for Leonato's garden is nowhere to be found; while the almost universal verdict which would be passed upon the interior of the cathedral is that the thing was much better done at the Lyceum. Even the most lenient of guide-book criticism admits that the high altar, though "richly decorated, is in bad taste," and that certainly cannot be justly said of any "set piece," in Mr. Irving's production of the play. In all seriousness there is very little worth seeing about the Cathedral of Messina with the exception of its façade, nor about Messina itself with the exception of its fine port and quays. A day's sojourn will content most visitors, and they will then hasten away, as a candid Messinian recommended us to do, to the next halting place of the tourist—distant but an hour and a half's sailing journey from the unattractive sea-port, but itself the show-place, so far as natural beauty is concerned, of the island, and indeed one of the most picturesque spots in the whole Italian kingdom. There are however, easier towns to get to than this rock-built Taormina, which stands perched so high above its little railway station of Giardini, and is approached by so long and circuitous an ascent of carriage road that most travellers who visit "the ancient Tauromenium" leave their heavy modern portmanteaus at the station. But the three miles climb on the rickety omnibus is well repaid by the two great attractions which the traveller has turned aside to visit.

THE THEATRE AT TAORMINA.
From a Drawing by A. M'CORMICK.

First, the ruins of the Greek theatre, more perfect as to the state of its stage than any other in Sicily, and, with one exception, in the world; and secondly, the unequalled view from the hill on which it stands, the chain of mountains skirting the hither side of the Strait, the blue Calabrian heights beyond it, and high above all, here for the first time fairly seen, the never-to-be-forgotten pyramid of Etna. That it is the best view of this magnificent mountain—as graceful in its mere lines, as it is impressive in the contrast between its lava-scarred body and its peak of snow—I do not say. The view from Catania is a little nearer, and that which you get across the bay, whose southward arm is formed by the jutting coast-line from Lentini to Augusta, yields at sunset mixed effects of sea and mountain colour, which may be matched perhaps in other spots of the world, if there be such, where a gigantic snow-capped mountain appears to rise straight out of a purple sea, but nowhere else. Still the sight of Etna from Taormina is the visitor's first sight of it, at least from any vantage-point, and he may very likely fail to feel, or decline to recognise, the superior strength of any subsequent impressions.

Having wondered at the ruins, and gazed our fill upon the noble land- and sea-scape stretched beneath us, we descend the hill to the town, and having, if we are of those who "do" places energetically, passed a night at the inn for the sake of seeing the next morning's sunrise from the theatre, we once more take to the railway and proceed on our journey to Catania. Will many tourists think it worth while, as we did, to stop at Aci Reale to pay their respects to Homer, or to Theocritus, or to Handel, or to Hygeia? For the poets, the musician, and the goddess have all of them their separate claims to remembrance in this favoured spot. Was it not the home of Acis, god of the river that rises on the slopes of Etna, and beloved of Galatea—herself in vain beloved of the lubber Polyphemus? Was it not also, at least in all human probability, Polyphemus's principal "sheep run"? And must

not the cave in which he imprisoned Odysseus and his companions lie somewhere near by? Fortunately we can say with as much confidence as the subject-matter admits of that it must be. Theocritus only tells us that the Cyclops sat "on the brink of the tall cliff," to sing his lament over the cruelty of the milk-white Galatea. This description taken alone would not, of course, enable us to fix the love-sick monster's haunt, but his difficulty with the much-enduring Odysseus has left physical traces behind it, to witness if Homer lies; and at the cost of a couple of lire laid out in an hour's drive from the Albergo dei Bagni, a sceptic may set his doubt to rest at once by inspecting the Scogli de Ciclopi rising out of the water just opposite the spot where the blinded giant flung his huge missiles at the fleeing wanderer. There is not the least difficulty in identifying them from a comparison of the passage in the Ninth Odyssey with the accompanying sketch. At the first taunt of Odysseus, Polyphemus "brake off the peak of a great hill and threw it at us," but having misjudged the "strength" it fell "in front of the dark-prowed ship and washed it back towards the shore." Upon this the much-enduring one shoved it off again, Homer tells us, with a long pole, and again resumed his satirical remarks upon the defeated Cyclops, who on the second occasion lifted a "stone far greater than the first, and with one swing hurled it, and he put forth a measureless strength, and cast it but a little space behind the dark ship, and all but struck the end of the rudder. And the sea heaved beneath the fall of the rock, but the wave bare on the ship and drave it to the further shore." No antiquary who has ever "read a paper" to an archæological society need have any hesitation in selecting his "peak of a great hill" and his "stone far greater than the first" from this picturesque group, and I have no doubt that he would be able to defend his conclusions in the regions of fable by arguments quite as respectable as are often made to do duty in the domain of fact.

ROCKS OF THE CYCLOPS. ACI REALE.
From a Drawing by A. M'CORMICK.

Homer and Handel having received honour

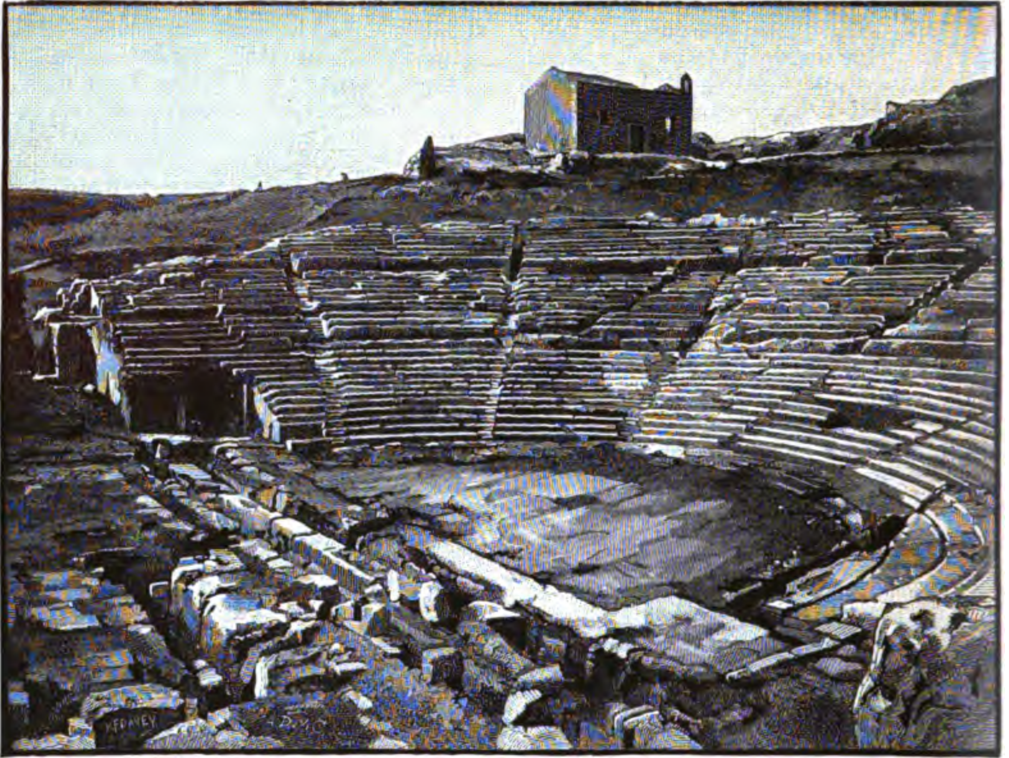
due, it is the turn of Hygeia—of the health-goddess whom classic myth, never elsewhere, to my knowledge, ironically represented as the offspring of Æsculapius. But to pay one's *devoirs* to this lady, it is necessary to go at the right time of the year, and that time is not January. For the season of the baths comes to an end in the autumn not to recommence again till the following spring, and in January the visitor finds naught but a huge barrack of a deserted hotel on one side of the road, and across it, in the pretty garden on the cliff, the Terme di San Venere, now silent and steamless—the healing fumes of sulphur and iodine no longer rising from their roof. The air, however, is none the worse for that, and the visitor may perhaps make it up to Hygeia by lounging away half a morning on the terrace of the baths, with the glorious blue floor of the Mediterranean at his feet, and himself rejoiced and refreshed by the mild winter sun and the soft winter breezes of the south.

From Aci Reale to Catania is a run of but twenty minutes, and at Catania, you find yourself, you are proudly informed, in the second city of Sicily. Except, however, that it is handsome, populous, well-found in hotels and shops, and a convenient starting-point for the exploration of Etna, you will not perhaps be more impressed by it than by any other Italian city of the second class on the mainland of the peninsula. If indeed the tourist like one of those Americans who "have become a name for always roaming with a hungry heart," has conceived the resolute idea of doing Syracuse in a day, then doubtless he will do well to prolong his stay at Catania, and taking his food with him, avoid the board and bed which will await him at a Syracuse *locanda*. For this is a separation *a mensâ et thoro*, which, though I believe myself to yield to no one in admiration and affection for Syracuse, I must admit to be desirable. Ardent antiquaries, however, and students fresh from Grote and Thucydides will most certainly disdain any such compromise with their duties. They will go to Syracuse prepared to scorn delights of eatable food and comfortable bed while living the laborious days of him who would study this memorable landmark of history and art in a serious spirit. He will prefer to "live near his work," to lodge in the town whose environs he is exploring; and probably after a two days-stare at Etna from Catania, a visit to the Benedictine monastery with the noble view of the great mountain from the gardens in its rear, and of course the subterranean remains of the Greco-Roman theatre, hard by the Corso Vittorio Emanuele, he will take his departure for Syracuse without longer delay. But let him, let everybody, make the journey, if only the weather be fine, by the afternoon and not by the morning train. For—as a friend of mine put it by way of humorous protest against the present not always well-informed enthusiasm for "pure Saxon" English—a "more magnificent succession of post-meridian, vespertine, and crepuscular views" is not to be found elsewhere in the island. From Catania to Lentini you have Etna, whenever visible, on your right; at Lentini the line of railway takes a sharp turn to the left and striking the coast at Agnoné, hugs it all along the northern shore of the promontory terminating with Cape Santa Croce, upon approaching which point it doubles back upon itself to follow the re-entering lines of the cape, and then once more turning to the left runs nearly due southward along the coast to Syracuse. Throughout the twenty miles or so, then, from Lentini to Augusta, beneath the tongue of Santa Croce, Etna lies on your left, with a broad blue bay, fringed for part of the way by a mile-wide margin of wet gleaming sand, between you and it. Etna, all its twenty miles from summit to sea coast abolished by distance, appears to be rising from the very sea, its cooled lava streams to be mingling with the very waters of the bay; and as the rays of the westering sun strike from across the island upon silver grey sand, and blue-purpling sea, and russet-iron mountain slopes and snow-capped peak, the spectator's first impulse is to declare that he has never seen anything finer in his life. But if he continues gazing after the sun has set, he will find that the sight can be beaten, and that the moment when the silver has gone out of the sand, and the purple of the sea has changed to grey, and the russet of Etna's lava slopes is deepening into black, is also the moment when the pink flush of the sunset catches its peak, and closes the colour symphony with a chord more exquisitely sweet than all.

Syracuse, declares Cicero, was the largest of Greek and the most beautiful of all cities; at least, he observes that that was its reputation, and affirms that the facts corresponded therewith. It is necessary, however, to receive his testimony on the point with some of the abatement necessary to be made from forensic descriptions of the grace and attractions of a female plaintiff. For the more important and more beautiful the city, the greater the villany of that defendant

whom she was charging with her betrayal and ruin. The fairer Syracuse, the viler Verres: and when we find the impassioned orator going on to describe the Fountain of Arethusa as of "incredible size," we are still more impressed with the necessity of taking Cicero's statement "under all reserve." But that Syracuse must at one time have been one of the largest Greek cities, the width of the area inclosed within its now ruined walls is sufficient to prove; and as to its beauty, he who looks down upon it on a bright day from the summit of the hill on which stands the Greek theatre, will not be disposed to quarrel with the praises of its advocate. But in the matchless wealth and interest of its antique remains it could well afford to dispense with beauty of situation. The Greek theatre alone is worth the journey to Sicily to see. Less picturesque in its surroundings than that of Taormina, and unadorned with the broken columns and crumbling outer wall that give such distinction to its rival ruin, it is of far more potent appeal to the antiquary as distinct from the artistic sense—far easier to rebuild and re-people in imagination. For though its stage is as imperfect as that of Taormina is perfect, its auditorium, in revenge—and that after all is the point at which the fancy most needs assistance—is still in a wonderfully well-preserved condition. More than forty tiers of seats shaped out of the natural limestone of the hillside can still be distinctly traced; and though their marble facings have, of course, disappeared ages ago, whole *cunei* of them are still as practically uninjured by time, as fit still for the use for which they were put, as when the Syracusans of the great age of Attic drama flocked hither to the tragedies of that poet whom they so deeply reverenced, that to be able to recite his verse gave freedom to the captive. A mile or so to the eastward lies the place of servitude to which were consigned those who either did not know their Euripides so well, or were not so fortunate in finding such ardent admirers of the poet among their gaolers. The Latomia dei Cappucini, one of the wildest and grandest of the now abandoned limestone quarries, with which the district abounds, is assigned as the probable prison of the ill-fated remnant of the Athenian army—the seven thousand who were sacrificed to the highly respectable incompetence of their general Nicias. "Here," says a historian, "inclosed by the precipitous rock which precluded all possibility of escape, they were exposed alternately to the direct or reflected beams of a scorching sun and to the chilly damps of the autumnal nights.

CATANIA FROM THE BREAKWATER.
From a Drawing by A. M'CORMICK.



THE THEATRE AT SYRACUSE.
From a Drawing by A. M'CORMICK.

The wants of nature were supplied by an allowance of bread and water so scanty as never to still the gnawings of hunger or the burning of thirst. No greater indulgence was shown to the wounded and the sick; and when death put an end to their sufferings, their unburied corpses still adding to the ever-growing noisomeness of the crowded dungeon constantly added to the torment of the survivors. At the end of seventy days their misery was somewhat alleviated by the diminution of their numbers. The greater part were then sold as slaves: only the Athenians and Siciliots were detained six months longer; and were then perhaps disposed of in the same manner." The cruel behaviour of the victorious Syracusans to these prisoners, whose lives they had sworn to spare, is closely anti-typical, as Mr. G. W. Cox has pointed out, of that of Suraj-ud-Doulah to his English captives two thousand years afterwards; but I suspect that the Black Hole at Calcutta, if it still exists, is not as picturesque as the Latomia dei Cappucini and even this is run close by the other deserted quarries in its neighbourhood. The Latomia del Paradiso, for instance, is in many ways extremely striking. At its entrance is the rock-hewn grotto identified by tradition with the Orecchio di Dionigi—the ear, or whispering chamber of Dionysius, in which, as the omniscient schoolboy knows, the tyrant of Syracuse was accustomed to confine his prisoners for the purpose of overhearing the confidences which they interchanged with each other. The assumption that this was the particular prison in which Dionysius played eavesdropper may, as our excellent guide-book assures us, be "arbitrary," but inasmuch as there seems to be no other whispering rock-chamber in the neighbourhood of Syracuse, it is scarcely so gratuitous as many such assumptions are. The Latomia Casale which lies between the Paradiso and the Cappucini is a less wild but a very beautiful spot. It has now become the private property of the Marchese Casale, by whom the levelled surface of its interior has been laid out as a flower-garden; but the visitor to Syracuse can easily obtain admission to it. It may be confidently recommended—and the antiquary, the student of art and history, nay,

even the poet himself, has been known not to disdain such information—as an excellent halting-place for lunch. There is shelter here from the sun and from prying eyes; there is that perfect stillness which seems always to brood more deeply over such deserted places as have once been haunts of busy life; there is the emotional charm of natural beauty and the sensuous luxury of sub-tropical culture—close at hand the green and gold of orange trees, in the middle distance the solemn plumes of the cypresses, and further still the dazzling white walls of the limestone which the blue sky bends down to meet.

The whole environment of Syracuse is indeed so rich in picturesque attraction alone that he who sets out to explore it in the morning meaning to return to the island-city betimes in the day will almost surely break his engagement to himself. If he is a specialist of any kind he will probably do so many days in succession. A youth with a headful of Thucydides and Grote could easily spend hour after hour on Epipolæ endeavouring to retrace for himself the incidents of that obstinate and changeful struggle whose mighty issues have made the spot for ever memorable in the history of the world. Not indeed that his success, even with the assistance of the most learned monographs, will be very conspicuous. After all his attempts to satisfy himself as to the probable position of the Syracusan προτείχισμα, or of the "stockade by the gate," he will but too probably have to content himself with that freedom of choice which the anecdotal showman was wont to bestow upon his juvenile patrons. But even though the visitor care for none of these things, or care for them only so moderately as to be unequal to laborious archæological research in connection with them, he will not find it easy to tear himself away from these beautiful heights till the inland shadows have begun to lengthen, and the evening mists to gather on the Ionian Sea. The environs of Syracuse are likely in fact to get themselves "done" and very thoroughly done, before the town is attacked at all. Besides the Greek theatre and the Roman amphitheatre in its vicinity, and the street of Tombs, and the ancient quarries, there are the extremely interesting Catacombs, and the by-no-means-to-be-missed crypt of St. Marcian (4th century) beneath the church of San Giovanni. Returning, too from these more distant excursions, one's steps are arrested by more or less notable ruins even up to the very isthmus of stonework and fortifications which divides the island of Ortygia from the ancient city. The simple broken column which marks the conjectural site of the Agora, can hardly, of course, detain one long, but the Bagno Bufardeci, the Roman palæstra in the neighbourhood of the railway station, is not to be quitted so soon.

And you might spend many days of delightful wandering among the dirty, tortuous, rough-paved, picturesque streets of the city itself. It is true that for temples, Syracuse, considering its former abundant wealth in this respect, is not now by any means so well off as Girgenti. The four cities of which Syracuse, according to Cicero, virtually consisted under the later Roman Republic, were full of architectural wonders. In the Achradina, he says, "there is a very large forum, most beautiful porticoes, a highly-decorated town-hall, a most spacious senate-house, and a superb temple of Jupiter Olympius." Another of the "cities" named Tyche, after the ancient temple of Fortune, standing in it, contained a "large gymnasium and many sacred buildings." In Neapolis, besides the "very large theatre," he makes mention of two temples of great beauty, one of Ceres, the other of Libera, and a "statue of Apollo, which is called Temenites, very beautiful and of colossal size; which if he [Verres] could have moved them, he would not have hesitated to carry off." It has, alas! been removed, it and the temples which stood near it, by a spoiler more edacious than Verres, impenetrable to indignant oratory and invulnerable by senatorial decree; and the gymnasium and the porticoes, the forum and the town-hall, and the superb "temple of Jupiter Olympius" have fallen victims to the same unsparing hand. There remains nothing traceable of the sacred edifices still standing in the Roman period, save the so-called temples of Diana and of Minerva, the former a striking ruin which starts up most unexpectedly before one, out, as it were, of the very slums of the city, and the latter converted into a Christian cathedral, its fluted Doric columns projecting under the desecration of whitewash from the plaster walls which now embed them. The faithful, but in this case, not oracular, Bädeker insists (reason not given) that the so-called temple of Diana is "more probably" a temple of Apollo; and (reason given and a bad one) that the so-called temple of Minerva is perhaps a temple of Diana. Judging, however, from its great size, it seems natural enough to identify it with "the sumptuous edifice containing the most costly treasures," re-

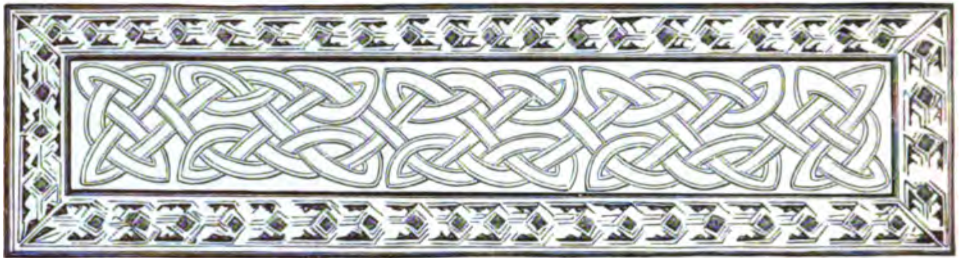
ferred to it in the Fifth Verrine Oration. For even the Syracuse of Cicero is not likely to have contained any temple more worthy, from its exterior importance, to be filled with the "treasures and ornaments" which caught the discriminating eye of Verres, than this building of one hundred and eighty feet in length and sixty in breadth. In spite, therefore, of the "several authorities" who would locate Minerva elsewhere, I shall cling to my belief that it was from here that this indefatigable collector of works of art "conveyed" those much admired pictures representing "the cavalry battle of Agathocles," and those folding doors "wrought beautifully in gold and ivory," with the description of which the Roman orator has made the mouths of all succeeding *virtuosi* to water. But the whole of these half-dozen chapters of the Fifth Verrine are exasperating to read; and the lover of Greek art may well find himself re-echoing each indignant question addressed by the accuser to the spoiler. "What has become of that Sappho which he took away from the town-hall? Where is the Pæan of which he robbed the temple of Æsculapius? and the statue of Aristæus which he carried off from the temple of Bacchus? and that most exquisite bust of Parian marble which we used to go and see in the temple of Libera?" Where, above all, is "that most holy statue of Jupiter Imperator, which the Greeks call Οὔριος, and which the reverence due to the shrine of Father Zeus had not protected from sacrilegious pillage?" There is no answer to these questions now. The little museum on the Piazza Minerva contains but a very few notable specimens of Greek sculpture, and only one of commanding merit. But by this, a lovely and excellently preserved statue of Venus, the Syracusans naturally set the greater store; and on its pedestal it bears the proud inscription, *Hoc Verris superstes, improbi latiocinii testimonium, &c.*, a legend which, to save it from the imputation of Hibernicism, we must needs suppose to mean that the statue testifies "in its *sole* survival," to the profligate plunderings of the governor.

EAR OF DIONYSIUS, SYRACUSE.
From a Drawing by A. M'CORMICK.

Decidedly, Syracuse is as much dedicate to Thucydides and Cicero as is Aci Reale to Homer and Theocritus; but while one lingers longer with the later writer at the latter spot, at the former the order will probably be reversed. There is plenty of dramatic interest in history of the Roman period, but what may be called the romance of history expires with the commencement of the decline of Athens. The Syracuse of the first century before Christ, the victim and prey of Verres, seems already, one feels, to have taken its place in the modern world: it is to the Syracuse of the fifth century, the battle-ground of Athens and Sparta that one must turn to breathe the full spirit of ancient life. And to get the fullest inspiration of it, the best of all spots, I think, is the harbour itself. The Earl of Iddesleigh, he has allowed us to suppose, prefers one of the heights to the rear of the town. Political friends and foes of the late estimable leader of the Opposition, or rather those of them who had never before considered any other than his political character, were filled with surprise, one remembers, by the genuine enthusiasm with which he described his sensations on first surveying the scene of that momentous struggle which virtually determined the issue of the Peloponnesian war and sealed the fate of Athens as a world-Power. The Earl of Iddesleigh, however, has always had a scholar's susceptibility to the associations of such a place as Syracuse, and a sense of the strange contrast between the great political struggles of the ancient, and many so-called great in the modern world —the former so small in their dimensions yet so vast in their issues; the latter so big and noisy in their day, yet often so unutterably trivial in their results—has probably tended to quicken the interest with which he looked down on that land-locked harbour in which the maritime supremacy, and with it the whole Panhellenic prestige of Athens, was dashed to pieces. Only I prefer for my own part to be nearer the water's edge, to stretch again the chain of Syracusan galleys from Plemmyrium to Ortygia, to crowd the Porto Grande once more with the vainly charging triremes of Athens, and to line the shores on either side with the fever-stricken troops of Nicias, and the fiercely exultant hosts of his enemies. What a tiny cockpit, after all, for a world-struggle to be fought out in—the smallest, says Thucydides, in which two such armaments ever met—and what a confused and bloody chance-medley the whole thing seems to have been! "It was seldom that two galleys found room and time for a regular conflict. The stroke aimed at one was frequently intercepted by another which was itself engaged in flight or pursuit. Attack and defence were completely directed by unforeseen objects; and friends and foes were entangled and confounded together in inextricable disorder. The din of so many shocks distracted the attention of the combatants and drowned the words of command, and the noise was increased by a dissonant clamour of exultation, entreaty, and remonstrance; on the side of the Athenians as they urged one another to force the outlet through which alone they could find a passage home, or not to fall back from the sea, which they had made their own by so many hard struggles, upon a hostile shore; on the side of the Syracusans as they animated each other to prevent the enemy's escape, or expostulated with those who fled before the Athenians whose only aim was flight. The tumult of sounds was heightened by the voices of the numberless spectators who lined the shore, all intent upon the combat, all deeply affected by its vicissitudes, but with different feelings and according to various views. As friend or foe appeared to be conquering in the quarter towards which their eyes were turned the air resounded with the cries of joy and grief, of exultation or terror, with prayers and shouts and lamentations, and, like men in a dream, they accompanied the motion of their distant friends with ineffectual gestures." But let us not pursue the distressing story, for it is a distressing one. It is in human nature to feel pity for the trapped. I believe that a generous householder would feel it even for a burglar whom he had locked into his pantry; and for the despairing Athenians cooped up in this narrow harbour with a hostile country behind them and that impenetrable line of galleys across the threshold of the friendly sea, it is impossible not to feel compassion, for all our recollection—or rather because we refuse to recollect—that they had simply been caught in the bigger burglary of conquest. And just so, too, I suppose that few of us had much heart to remember the cries of *à Berlin!* and the vapourings of boulevardier journalists as we watched the caged eagle in that bloody corner of the Meuse vainly beating with disabled wing and striking with broken beak and talons against his captor's triple bars of steel.

H. D. TRAILL.

(*To be Continued.*)



AUNT RACHEL.

A RUSTIC SENTIMENTAL COMEDY.

CHAPTER IX.

HE church bells made a pleasant music in Heydon Hay on Sunday mornings, and were naturally at their best upon a summer Sunday, when the sunshine had thrown itself broadly down to sleep about the tranquil fields. Heydon Hay was undisturbed by the presence of a single conventicle in opposition to the parish church, and the leisurely figures in the fields and lanes, and in the village street, were all bent one way. In fine weather the worshippers were for the most part a little in advance of time, and thereby found opportunity to gather in knots about the lych-gate, or between it and the porch, where they exchanged observations on secular affairs with a tone and manner dimly tempered by the presence of the church.

Half a dozen people in voluminous broadcloth were already gathered about the lych-gate when Fuller appeared, carrying his portly waistcoat with a waddle of good-humoured dignity, and mopping at his forehead. He was followed by a small boy, who with some difficulty carried the 'cello in a big green baize bag. One or two of the loungers at the gate carried smaller green bags, and whilst they and Fuller exchanged greetings, Sennacherib and Isaiah appeared in different directions, each with a baize-clothed fiddle tucked beneath his arm. The church of Heydon Hay boasted a string band of such excellence that on special occasions people flocked from all the surrounding parishes to listen to its performances. The members of the band and choir held themselves rather apart from other church-goers, like men who had special dignities and special interests. They had their fringe of lay admirers, who listened to their discussions on "that theer hef sharp," which ought to have sounded, or ought not to have sounded, in last Sunday's anthem.

Whether his lordship made a point of it or not, the Barfield carriage was always a little late, and Ferdinand certainly approved of the habit; but on this particular morning the young gentleman was earlier than common, and arrived on foot. The male villagers took off their hats as he walked leisurely along, the female villagers bobbed curtseys at him, and the children raced before him to do him a sort of processional reverence. This simple incense was pleasant enough, for he had spent most of his time in larger places than Heydon Hay, and had experienced but little of the sweets of the territorial sentiment. He walked along in high good-humour, and enjoyed his triumphal progress, though he made himself believe that it was only the quaint, rural, and old-world smack of it which pleased him.

Here and there he paused, and was affable with a county elector, but when he reached the lych-gate he was altogether friendly with Fuller and Sennacherib, and shook hands with Isaiah with actual warmth.

"Mr. Hales was dining at the Hall last night," he said. "He told us that some of the local people were in favour of an organ for the church, and had talked about getting up a subscription, but he wouldn't listen to the idea"

"Should think not," said Sennacherib. "Parson knows when he's well off."

"Indeed he does," returned Ferdinand; "he looks on the band as being quite a part of the church, and says that he would hardly know the place without it."

"A horgin!" grunted Sennacherib scornfully. "An' when they'd got it, theer's some on 'em as ud niver be content till they'd got a monkey in a scarlit coat to sit atop on it."

"I hardly think they want *that* kind of organ, Mr. Eld," said Ferdinand, smoothly.

"I do' know why they shouldn't," returned Sennacherib. "It's nothin' but their Christian humbleness as could mek 'em want it at all. The Lord's made 'em a bit better off than their neighbours, an' they feel it undeserved. It's castin' pearls afore swine to play for half on 'em about here."

Fuller, with both hands posed on the baize-clad head of the 'cello, which the small boy had surrendered to him some moments before, shook his fat ribs at this so heartily, that Sennacherib himself relaxed into a surly grin, and then Ferdinand felt himself at liberty to laugh also.

"You are rather severe upon your audience, Mr. Eld," he said.

"A tongue like a file, our Sennacherib's got," said the mild Isaiah. "Touches nothin' but what he rasps clean through it."

Ferdinand raised his hat at this moment, and made a forward step with his delicately-gloved right hand extended.

"Good morning, Miss Fuller."

Mr. de Blacquaire prided himself, and not without reason, on his own aplomb and self-possession, but he felt now a curious fluttering sensation to which he had hitherto been an entire stranger. Ruth accepted his proffered hand, and responded to his salute, and then shook hands with the two brethren. Ferdinand, with a jealousy at which he shortly found time to be surprised, noticed that her manner in shaking hands with these two stout and spectacled old vulgarians differed in no way from her manner in shaking hands with him. This in itself was a renewal of that calm, inexplicable disdain with which the girl had treated him from the first. If rustic beauty had been fluttered at his magnificent pressure, he could have gone his way and thought no more about it, but when rustic beauty was just as cool and unmoved by his appearance as if their social positions had been reversed, the thing became naturally moving, and had in it a lasting astonishment for leisure moments.

And there was no denying that the girl was surprisingly pretty. Prettier than ever this Sunday morning, in a remarkably neat dress of dove colour, a demurely coquettish hat, and a bit of cherry-coloured ribbon. Rustic beauty was not altogether disdainful of town-grown aids, it would seem, for Ferdinand's eye, trained to be critical in such matters, noted that the girl was finely gloved and booted. Her dress was like a part of her, but that, though the young gentleman could not be supposed to know it, was a charm she owed to her own good taste and her own supple fingers. The young gentleman might have been supposed to know perhaps that her greatest charm of all was her unconsciousness of charming, and it was certainly this which touched him more than anything else about her.

There was no outer sign of the young Ferdinand's inward disturbance.

"I am afraid," he said, resolute to draw her into talk with himself if he could, though it were only for a moment, "I am afraid that I have made Mr. Eld very angry."

Ruth's brown eyes took a half-smiling charge of Sennacherib's surly figure.

"Seems," said Sennacherib, "the young gentleman was a-dinin' last night along with the vicar, and it appears as some o' the fools he knows want to rob the parish church o' the band, an' build a horgin."

"The vicar won't listen to the idea," said Ferdinand. "There was only one opinion about it."

"It would be a great shame to break up the band," Ruth answered, speaking with vivacity, and addressing Ferdinand. "Everybody would miss it so. We would rather have the band than the finest organ in the world."

It happened, as such things will happen, for the disturbance of lovers, that just as Ruth turned to address Ferdinand, Reuben Gold marched under the lych-gate and caught sight of the group. The girl, her father, the two Elds, and the young gentleman were standing by this time opposite the church porch, but as far away from it as the width of the pathway would allow. Various knots of villagers, observing that his lordship's guest had stayed to talk, stood respectfully apart to look on, and, if it might be, to listen. Now Reuben, for reasons already hinted at, disliked Mr. de Blacquaire. He was not perhaps quite so conscious as Mr. de Blacquaire himself that all the advantage of the differences between them rested on the young gentleman's side. Reuben was not the sort of youngster who says to himself, "I am a handsome fellow," or "I am a clever fellow," or "I am a fellow of a good heart," but in face of Ferdinand's obvious admiration of Ruth and his evident desire to stand well in her graces he had sprung up at once to self-measurement, and had set himself shoulder to shoulder with the intruder for purposes of

comparison. With all the good the love for a good woman does us, with all the wheat and oil and wine it brings for the nourishment of the loftier half of us, it must needs bring a foolish bitter weed or two, which being eaten, disturb the stomach, and summon singular apparitions. And when Reuben saw the girl of his heart in vivacious public talk with a young man of another social sphere, he was quite naturally a great deal more perturbed than he need have been. The gentleman admired her, and it was not outside the nature of things that she might admire the gentleman. He came up, therefore, mighty serious, and shook hands with Fuller and the brethren, and then with Ruth, with an air of severity which was by no means usual with him. He carried his violin case tucked beneath his arm—a fact which of itself gave him an unworthy aspect in Ferdinand's eyes—and he had shaken hands with Ruth without raising his hat. A denizen of Heydon Hay who had taken off his hat in the open air to a woman would have been scoffed by his neighbours, and would probably have startled the woman herself as much as his own sense of propriety. But, all the same, Reuben's salute seemed mutilated and boorish to the man of more finished breeding, and helped to mark him as unworthy to be the suitor of so charming a creature as the rustic beauty.

"Mr. de Blacquaire's a-tellin' us, Reuben," said old Fuller, "as theer's been some talk o' breaking up the church band and starting a horgin i' the place on it."

"That will end in talk," said Reuben with a half-defiant, half-scrutinising look at Ferdinand, as if he charged him in his own mind with having suggested the barbarism.

"There is no danger that it will go further in the vicar's time," returned Ferdinand. "Besides, his lordship is as strongly opposed to the change as anybody."

"It's time we was movin' inside, lads," said Fuller, glancing up at the church clock. Ruth inclined her head to Ferdinand, gave a nod and a smile to Reuben (who nodded back rather gloomily), and passed like a sunbeam into the shadow of the porch. Fuller took up his 'cello in a big armful, and followed, with the brethren in his rear. Ferdinand, feeling Reuben's company to be distasteful, lingered in it with a perverse hope that the young man might address him, and Reuben stood rather sullenly by to mark his own sense of social contrast by allowing the gentleman to enter first.

Each being disappointed by the other's immobility and quiet, a gradual sense of awkwardness grew up between them, and this was becoming acute when Ezra appeared, and afforded a diversion. Under cover of his uncle's arrival Reuben escaped into the church.

In the course of centuries the churchyard had grown so high about the building that grass waved on a level with the sills of the lower windows, and the church was entered by a small flight of downward steps. The band and choir had a little bare back gallery to themselves, and approached it by a narrow spiral, stone staircase. There were no side galleries, and band and choir had therefore an uninterrupted survey of the building. Reuben valued his place because it gave him a constant sight of Ruth, and perhaps, though the fancy is certain of condemnation at the hands of some of the severer sort, the visible presence of the maiden for whose sake he hoped for all possible excellences in himself, was no bad aid to devotion. She sat in a broad band of tinted sunlight with her profile towards her lover, looking to his natural fancy as if she caused the sunlight, and were its heart and centre. Opposite to her, and with *his* profile towards the music gallery also, sat Ferdinand, and Reuben saw the young gentleman cast many glances across the church in Ruth's direction. This spectacle afforded no aid to devotion, and not even his music could draw the mind or eyes of the lover from Ferdinand, whom he began to regard as being an open rival.

There was enough in this reflection to spur the most laggard of admirers into definite action, and before the service was over Reuben had made up his mind. He would speak to Ruth after church, and at least decide his own chances. The vicar's sermon was brief, for the good man had no rival, and could afford to please himself, but its duration, short as it was, gave Reuben ample time to be rejected and accepted a score of times over, and to gild the future with the rosiest or cloud it with the most tempestuous of colours. The Earl of Barfield, according to his custom, had arrived late, and it comforted Reuben a little to think that in his presence, at all events, the young gentleman could make no progress with his love affairs. It comforted him further to see that Ruth took no notice of the glances of her admirer, and that she was to all appearance unconscious of them and of him.

But when once he had made up his mind to instant action, the vicar's brief discourse began to drag itself into supernatural length. Facing the preacher, and immediately beneath Reuben's feet, was a clock of old-fashioned

and clumsy structure, and the measured tick, tick, of its machinery communicated a faintly perceptible jar to a square foot or so of the gallery flooring. The mechanical rhythm got into Reuben's brain and nerves until every second seemed to hang fire for a phenomenal time, and the twenty minutes' discourse dragged into an age. Even when the vicar at last lifted his eyes from the neatly-ranged papers which lay on the pulpit cushion before him, laid down his glasses, and without pause or change of voice passed on to the benediction, and even when after the customary decent pause the outward movement of the congregation began, Reuben's impatience had still to be controlled, for it was the duty of the band to play a solemn selection from the works of some old master whilst the people filed away. Reuben led, and since the others must needs follow at the pace he set, the old master was led to a giddier step than he had ever danced to in a church before. Sennacherib was scandalised, and even the mild Fuller was conscious of an inward rebellion. The taste in Heydon Hay was rather in favour of drawl than chatter, and the old masters in their serious moods were accustomed to be taken with something more than leisure.

"Why Reuben, lad," began Sennacherib, "how didst come to let your hand run away with your elber i' that way?"

But Reuben, sticking his hat on anyhow, was gone before the old man had finished his question, thrusting his violin into its case as he made his way down the corkscrew stairs. A single glance assured him that Ruth was no longer in the churchyard. The Earl of Barfield's carriage blocked the way at the lych-gate, and the young fellow waited in high impatience until the obstacle should disappear. His lordship, in view of the approaching election, was much more amiable and talkative than common, and he and his protégé stood exchanging talk upon indifferent topics with a little crowd of church-goers, but in a while the earl climbed slowly into the carriage. Ferdinand skipped nimbly after him and the two were driven away. Reuben, with hasty nods and good mornings at one or two who would have detained him, strode into the highway just in time to see the dove-coloured dress turn at a distant corner. He hurried after it at his swiftest walk, and reaching the corner in the most evident violent hurry, narrowly escaped walking over the object of the chase, who had halted in talk with Aunt Rachel, at the place where their homeward ways divided.

He had expected to find her still far ahead, and this sudden encounter was amazingly disconcerting to him. To begin with, apart from his real purpose, he had no business whatsoever round that particular corner. Then to pause suddenly in the midst of so violent a hurry was in itself a plain proclamation of his intent, and his hot courage had so rapidly gone cold that the change of inward temperature carried a shock with it. Nevertheless he stopped and stammered a disjointed greeting to Rachel, who returned for sole answer an icy little nod, pinching her lips together somewhat superciliously as she gave it.

Ruth, who would have been burdened by a shyness equalling Reuben's own had he succeeded in catching her by herself, was bold enough in the presence of one of her own sex, and observed the situation with a delighted mischief. But this was changed, as swiftly as Reuben's emotions themselves, to a state of freezing discomfort when Aunt Rachel, bolt upright, and with a mincing precision in her speech, demanded to know if this young—ahem!—this person had any communication to make.

"My dear aunt," said the poor girl, blushing scarlet, and casting an appealing glance at Reuben.

"You appeared to be in a hurry, Mr. Gold," said the terrible old lady. "My niece and I will not detain you."

"Thank you," responded Reuben, shaken back into self-possession. "I am not in a hurry any longer."

Aunt Rachel turned right about face with an almost military precision, and passing her arm through Ruth's led the girl away, leaving Reuben shaken back into internal chaos. Ruth's blushing face and humid brown eyes were turned towards him in momentary but keen apology, and he was left standing alone on the cobbled pavement with a feeling of perfect wreck.

"Aunt Rachel!" said the girl, as she suffered herself thus ignominiously to be towed away. "How could you make me behave so rudely?"

"Have nothing to do with those people," replied Aunt Rachel frigidly. "They are bad. Root and branch. I know them, my dear. That young man has the audacity to admire you. You must not encourage him."

"I am sure," said Ruth guiltily, only half knowing what she said, "he has never spoken a word—"

"It is not necessary to wait for words," returned the old lady. "I can see quite clearly. I am experienced. I know the

Golds. I have been familiar with the method of their villainy for many years."

"How can you speak so?" the girl asked, recovering something of her native spirit. "I am sure that there is no better man in the world than Mr. Ezra Gold. Everybody speaks well of him."

"It is not quite accurate, my dear," said Aunt Rachel, "to say that everybody speaks well of him, when a person, even so inconsiderable as myself, is in the act of speaking ill of him." The quaint veneer of fashion with which for many years she had overlaid her speech and manner was more apparent in this address than common, but suddenly she broke through it and spoke with an approach to passion. "I know them; they are villains. Have nothing to do with any member of that family, my dear, as you value your happiness." She pinched her niece's arm tightly as she spoke, and for a little time they walked on in silence, Ruth not knowing what to say in answer to this outburst, but by no means convinced as yet of the villainy either of Ezra or of Reuben. "Now, my dear," Aunt Rachel began again, with a return to her customary mincing tones, "you are not far from your own residence. I observe," with a swift glance over her shoulder, "that the person still lingers at the corner. But if he should attempt to follow you may rely upon me to intercept him. My niece must act like my niece. You must show your detestation of his odious advances in a proper manner."

"But, Aunt Rachel!" protested Ruth, "he has never made any advances, and I—I haven't any detestation."

"All in good time, my dear," responded the old lady. "In the meantime, rely upon my protection." With this she stood up bird-like, and pecked affectionately at Ruth's rosy cheek. The girl was well-nigh crying, but restrained herself, and answered Rachel's "God bless you" with some self-possession.

"Good morning, dear aunt. But you are quite, oh, quite mistaken."

"Indeed, my dear," said Aunt Rachel, with a glitter in her youthful eyes, and a compression of her mobile lips, "I am nothing of the kind." Ruth's eyes sank, and she blushed before the old lady's keen and triumphant smile. She moved away downcast, whilst Aunt Rachel took the opposite direction. The old lady wore a determined air which changed to a sparkling triumph as she saw Reuben cross the road with an inelastic step, and continue his homeward way with a head bent either in thought or dejection.

CHAPTER X.

When Reuben found time to gather himself together and to face his own emotions he discovered himself to be more amazed than disconcerted. He cast about in his mind for an explanation of the old lady's displeasure and found none. Why should she desire to insult him? In what possible way could he have offended her? Even a lover (ingenious as lovers always are in the art of self-torment) could not persuade himself that Ruth was a willing party to her aunt's singular treatment of him. The apology in her glance had been unmistakable.

He was altogether at a loss to understand in what way he could have excited Miss Blythe's anger, but it was unpleasant to know that there was an enemy in the camp which he had always thought entirely friendly. With the exception of Ruth herself he had been sure of the approval of everybody concerned.

His performance at the homely one o'clock dinner spread at his mother's table was so poor as to be noticeable, and he had to endure and answer many tender but unnecessary inquiries as to the state of his health, and to pretend to listen whilst his mother related the melancholy history of a young man who fell into a decline and died through mere neglect of meal times. When this narrative was over and done with he escaped to his own room, carrying writing materials with him, and sat down to express on paper the hopes he had fully meant to express vocally an hour earlier. The golden rule for writing is to know precisely what you want to say, but though Reuben seemed to know, he found it hard to get it upon paper. Half a score of torn sheets went into the fire grate and were there carefully fired and reduced to ashes. It was only the discovery that he was reduced to his final sheet of paper which really screwed his courage to the sticking point. Being once there it held until the need for it was over, but when the letter was written it would have followed its forerunners if there had but been another sheet of paper in the house or the day had been anything but Sunday. As it was he let it stand perforce, enveloped and addressed it in a sort of desperation, and put it in his pocket, ready for personal delivery.

The quartette party always met on Sunday afternoons and played sacred music. Not so long ago they had been used to meet in church; but since the introduction of gas to the venerable building the afternoon service

had been abandoned, and an evening service instituted in its stead. The music parties were held at Fuller's in the summer time, and Reuben's chance of a declaration by letter looked simple and easy enough. It was but to slip the all-important note into Ruth's hand with a petition to her to read it, and the thing was done. He had time enough to do this over and over and over again in fancy as he walked down the sunlit street with his violin case tucked under his arm. He had time enough to be accepted and rejected just as often—to picture and enjoy the rapture of the one event and the misery and life-long loneliness entailed by the other. Every time his eager fancy slipped the note into Ruth's fingers his heart leaped, and his hands went hot and moist, but if ever the screw of courage gave a backward turn the thought of Ferdinand twisted it back to the sticking point again, and he was all resolve once more. The experience of ages has declared that there is no better spur for the halting paces of a laggard lover than that which is supplied by jealousy. The simplest coquette that ever tortured hearts in a hayfield is aware of the fact, and needs no appeal to the experience of ages to support her.

Reuben pushed the green gate aside, and entering upon the lawn found Fuller in the act of carrying the table to its customary place. He had been so free of the house, and had been for years so accustomed to enter it and leave it at his will, that there was nothing in the world but his own restraining sense of shyness to prevent him from walking past his host with the merest salutation, and fulfilling his own purpose then and there. But the trouble was that to his own disturbed feeling Fuller would unfallibly have guessed his purpose, and either of the other members of the quartette arriving, or any chance visitor strolling in, would have known in a moment that he could have no other reason for entering the house than to ask Ruth's hand in marriage. So he stood somewhat awkwardly by the table, whilst Fuller re-entered the house and after a little pause returned with a pile of music.

"This here's one of Ezra's books, I reckon," said the elder, singling one volume from the pile. "It's the one you browt here the day he gi'en you his libery."

"Ah!" said Reuben, "Manzini? That was the last music-book he opened for his own playing, so he told me." He fluttered the leaves, glancing towards the house meanwhile, but seeing nothing of his goddess. Fuller contented himself with a mere grunt in answer to Reuben's statement, and rolled off into the house once more, returning this time with his 'cello. He propped the instrument tenderly against the table, and seating himself near it, began to arrange the music. Reuben still stood awkwardly fingering the leaves of Manzini's duets, when Ruth appeared at the house door. He had made but a step towards her, and had not even made a step in his mind towards reading the half shy, half appealing aspect she wore, when the prim figure of Aunt Rachel appeared from behind her, and the old woman, with defiance expressed in every line and gesture, laid her mittened hand on the girl's arm and advanced by her side. Reuben stood arrested, and made a bow which he felt to be altogether awkward. Ruth's brown eyes drooped, and she blushed, but she found courage a second or two later for a glance of appeal which Reuben did not see. He offered chairs to the old woman and the young one as they came near him, but Rachel, with a stony little nod, walked by, taking her niece with her.

The young man took instant counsel with himself. He sat down near the table with Manzini's oblong folio in his lap, and turning the pages here and there, selected a moment when he was unobserved, and slipped his missive between the front board of the binding and the first blank leaf. It would be strange if he could not find time to whisper "Look in Manzini" before the day was over, and even if that course should fail he could at least forward his letter by the penny post, though that would imply a delay of twelve hours, and was hardly tolerable to think of. If he missed the opportunity for that hasty whisper he would carry Manzini away, and so re-secure possession of his letter.

Whilst he was planning thus, Rachel and her niece were walking up and down the grass-plot, and the old lady was talking away at a great rate, describing the glories of the house of Lady de Blacquaire, and affecting to be absorbed in her theme. She was not so much absorbed, however, that her manner did not clearly indicate her misliking sense of Reuben's nearness every time she passed him, though she did not so much as cast a glance in his direction. By and by the two Elds appeared, and the customary business of the afternoon began. Reuben had much ado to pin himself down to the music, but he succeeded fairly well, and gave nobody reason to suppose that his mind wandered far and often from his task. It was well for his repute for sanity, especially after the wild leadership at morning service, that he

was familiar with the theme. Even when his thoughts wandered furthest, he was mechanically accurate. All the time the book with the all-important missive in it lay on the table before him, and in his fancy disasters were constantly happening which revealed his secret. He repeated the terms of the note again and again, and added to it and altered it, and resolved to rewrite it, and again resolved to leave it as it was.

The afternoon party received an unusual addition in the persons of Mrs. Sennacherib and Mrs. Isaiah, who arrived when the performers were half way through their programme.

"I forgot to tell thee, Reuben, lad," said Fuller, "Ruth's got a bit of a tay-party this afternoon, and thee beest to stop with the rest on 'em."

"Thank you," said Reuben; "I shall stay with pleasure." He felt Rachel's disapproving glance upon him, and looking up met it for a moment, and returned it with a puzzled gravity. She was standing alone at a little distance from the table, and Ruth and the two new arrivals were in the act of entering the house. Reuben obeyed the impulse which moved him, and rising from his place crossed over to where the little old lady stood. "May I ask," he said, "how I came to fall under your displeasure, Miss Blythe?" He glanced over his shoulder to assure himself that nobody took especial note of him, and spoke in a low and guarded voice.

Miss Blythe made the most of her small figure, glanced with extreme deliberation from his eyes to his boots and back again, and, turning away, followed her niece and the two new arrivals, walking with an air of exaggerated dignity. Reuben, returning to his seat, had to make great play with his pocket-handkerchief to cover the signs of confusion which arose at this rebuff. Miss Blythe could scarcely have expressed a livelier contempt for him if he had been a convicted pickpocket.

His share of the music went so ill after this that he excited something like consternation in the minds of his friends.

"What's come to the lad, 'Saiah?" asked Sennacherib.

"Bist a bit out o' sorts, Reuben, bisent?" said Isaiah, mildly anxious.

"I can't play to-day," Reuben answered, almost fretfully. "Let us try again. No. There's nothing the matter. Nothing in the world. Let us try again."

They tried again, and by dint of great effort Reuben kept control over himself and escaped further disgrace, although at one time Ruth's sympathetic, shy look almost broke him down, and, at another, Rachel's stony gaze so filled him with wonderment and anger that he had much ado to save himself from falling.

Ruth retired to superintend the preparation of the tea-table within doors, and Rachel followed her. In their absence he got on better, but it was almost as great a relief as he had ever known to find that the concert at last was over, and that he could give unrestrained attention to the thoughts which pressed upon him.

"Tea is ready," said Ruth, standing in the doorway, and shading her eyes from the afternoon sunlight with one hand. Rachel surveyed the quartette party from the window, but Reuben could see that she was held in talk by Mrs. Sennacherib.

"This may be my only chance to-day," said the lover to himself, with one great heart-beat and a series of flutterings after it. He controlled himself as well as he might, and with a single glance towards Ruth stood a little behind the rest and feigned to arrange the music on the table.

Isaiah and Sennacherib went first, and Fuller waddled in their rear. Reuben, after as long a pause as he dared to make, followed them, and raising his eyes saw that Ruth stood just without the doorway making room for her guests to pass. Would she give him a chance for a word? The girl saw the unconscious pleading in his eyes, and blushing, looked on the ground. But she kept her place, and Reuben coming up to her just as Fuller's burly figure rolled out of sight through the door of the sitting-room, took both her hands in his, not knowing in his eagerness that he dared to advance so far, and murmured,

"Ruth. Look in the Manzini. The duets. The book my uncle gave me."

"Niece Ruth," said Rachel's voice from the sitting-room doorway. Reuben dropped the hands he held, becoming conscious in that action only of the fact that he had taken them, and stepped into the dusky passage, thankful for the gloom, for he felt that he was blushing like a boy. Ruth had made a guilty start forward into the garden, and did not pause until she had reached the table. "I beg your pardon, sir," said Rachel frostily, as she moved aside to make room for Reuben to pass her, but when she had once seen the young people wide apart she was satisfied, and forbore to call the girl again.

"Look in the Manzini," Reuben had said, and the girl, almost without knowing it, had paused with her hands resting on the glazed

brown millboard which bound it. He would think, if she opened the book at once, that she was curiously eager to obey him, and her heart told her pretty truly what she would find when she looked there. The fear almost made her turn away, but then, since she was there, if she did not care to look he would think her cruelly disdainful. Was anybody watching her? In every nerve she felt the eyes of all the party in the sitting-room as if they actually pierced and burned her. But standing with bent head, with an attitude of reverie which she felt to be unspeakably guilty, she raised the board with an air of chance, a semblance of no-interest touching her features—as though that could influence anybody, since her face was hidden—and saw a letter with her name upon it. To lay one hand upon this and to slip it into the pocket of her dress whilst actually turning with a look of nonchalance towards the sitting-room window, was felt by the criminal herself to be the most barefaced and wickedest of pretences. To make the tour of the garden afterwards with the letter in her pocket, and to gather flowers for a bouquet for the tea-table, whilst tea was actually ready and everybody was awaiting her, was at once a necessity, an hypocrisy, and a dreadful breach of good manners.

She took her place at the tea-table with perfect innocence and unconsciousness of aspect, but Reuben looked guilty enough for two, until the genuine gravity of the situation recalled him to himself, when he began to look as solemn as a graven image, and returned wry answers to the talk of those about him. There was no calling back his declaration now, and he felt it to be clumsy beyond expression, and inadequate alike to his sense of Ruth's perfections and his own poor deserts. No man can quite know, until he has tried it, how severe an ordeal it is to sit at table with the lady of his heart, whilst that lady has his declaration, as yet unread, in her pocket.

Ruth was so self-possessed and tranquil that it was evident to her lover's masculine understanding that she was ignorant of the nature of his missive and probably indifferent to it. Reuben's anxiety and preoccupation were in themselves a gladness to the girl, for they bore out the delightful prophecy of her own heart. She had always thought Reuben, even when she was a school-girl, the handsomest and manliest and cleverest of men. If it were unmaidenly to have thought so, and to allow her heart to be captured by a man who had never spoken a word of open love to her, she must be called unmaidenly. But there was never a purer heart in the world, and the sophistications of experience, vicarious or otherwise, had not touched her. It came natural to love Reuben, and perhaps the young man's eyes had made more of an excuse for her than would readily be fancied by those who have never experimented.

It may be, if the truth were known, that the maiden found the situation almost as trying as her lover, for there was a most tantalising element of uncertainty in it, and uncertainty is especially grievous to the feminine heart. But at last her duty as hostess no longer severely holding her, she left the room, ostensibly to assist in clearing away the tea-things, and was no sooner out of sight than she skimmed like a swallow to her own chamber and there read Reuben's letter. When she came back again Reuben knew that she had read it, and knew, too, that she had read it with favour and acceptance. There was a subtle, shy, inward happiness in Ruth's heart which diffused itself for her lover's delight as if it had been a perfume. Not another creature but himself and her knew of it, and yet to him it was real, and as evident as anything he saw or touched.

Once or twice she looked at him so sweetly, so shyly, so tenderly, and yet withal so frankly, that his heart ached with the desire he felt to rise and clasp her in his arms, and claim her for his own before them all. Aunt Rachel looked at him once or twice also, as if she stabbed him with an icicle, but he glanced back with a smile sunny enough to have thawed the weapon if only the bearer of it had been within measurable distance.

Rachel did not read her niece, for the simple reason that she was too resolved on reading what she supposed herself to have written to be able to trace the characters of mere nature. But she partly read the young man's triumph, and adjudged it as a piece of insolence, determining that he should be punished for it, richly, as he deserved. She had exposed the character of the Golds to her niece, and had told her that they were wicked, and bad, and shameless—male jilts, whose one delight it was to break feminine hearts. Ruth would certainly believe what she had been told on such unimpeachable authority, and would never dream of permitting herself to be duped by a man of whom she knew so much beforehand. Any airs of triumph the young man might display were therefore ridiculous and insolent, deserving both of chastisement and contempt.

Ruth's household occupations took her away a second time, and if she chose to fill a mere two or three minutes by writing a

note to a young man who sat within six yards of her, nobody suspected her of being so engaged. When she came back to her visitors, Reuben would fain have made opportunity to be near her, but Rachel was unwinking in her watchfulness, and he was compelled to surrender his design. The bells began to ring for evening church, and Ruth and the womenfolk went upstairs to make ready for out of doors. The quartette party sat downstairs with open windows, each of the three seniors pulling gravely at a long churchwarden, and the junior pretending to look at an old-fashioned book of beauty, in which a number of impossible ladies simpered on the observer from bowers of painted foliage.

Sitting near the window with his back to the garden, and deeply absorbed in his own fancies, he found himself on a sudden impelled to turn his head, not because of any sound that reached him, but because of some curious intuition of Ruth's neighbourhood to him. She was walking towards him at that moment, her footsteps falling soundlessly on the greensward, her face blushing, and her eyes downcast. As she passed him, and entered the house, she raised her eyes for a moment, and Reuben read in them a sweet, enigmatical intelligence, and a charmed shyness so delicious that he thrilled at it from head to feet.

He longed, as any lover may imagine of him, to exchange a word with her. He was certain, but he desired to be more than certain. To know was nothing—his heart demanded to hear the good news and to be surfeited with hearing. But the small dragon still guarded his Hesperides, and on the way to church he escorted Mrs. Isaiah, a matron gaunt and stern, whose cheerful doctrine it was that any spoken word not made actually necessary by the business of life was a sin. Mrs. Isaiah's grim reticence was less of a trouble to him than it would have been under ordinary circumstances, for he had his own thoughts to think, and did not care to be drawn away from them.

At the lych-gate Aunt Rachel paused to shake hands with everybody but Ruth and Reuben.

"You had better take Manzini home tonight, Reuben," said Ruth. She tried hard to make her voice commonplace, but to Reuben's ears there was a meaning in it, and his eyes answered to the meaning with such a flash of tenderness and assured joy that, in spite of all she could do, Ruth must needs lower her head and blush again.

Rachel's youthful eyes flashed from one to the other.

"I do not propose to attend the service this evening, niece Ruth," she said, a minute later, when Reuben and his *confrères* had entered on the cavernous darkness of the winding stairway. "I will call for you however," she added. "I shall be in the porch at the close of the service."

At the first clause of this speech Ruth rejoiced, but at the second her sense of relief was spoiled.

"Very well, dear," she answered. Aunt Rachel could not stand much longer between her and Reuben, and if a fight should have to be made it would be early enough to begin it when she had her father definitely on her side, as she would have to-morrow. So she went into church, and made strenuous efforts to attend to the service and the sermon, and failed dismally, and thought herself terribly profane.

Aunt Rachel, being left alone at the church porch, turned away and walked straight back to the house she had left. The green door in the high wall needed no more than a push to open it, and Rachel entered the garden, and walking straight to the table at which the quartette party had sat playing an hour or two earlier, laid hands upon Manzini's volume of duets for the violin. She took it by the back of the cover, and gave it a shake, and out from its pages fell a neatly-folded little note addressed in her niece's hand to Mr. Reuben Gold, and sealed in bronze wax with the impress of a rose. The little old lady pounced upon it, and held it at arm's length in both hands.

"Infatuated child!" she said, in her primmest and most fashionable accent. "My premonitions have not deceived me."

She placed the note in the bosom of her dress, set the book in its former position upon the table, and left the garden. Nobody looking at her could have supposed that she had been guilty of such an act, for, if ever conscious rectitude and high resolve for good shone in a human face, they lighted hers. Once she stopped short in the lonely lane, and stamped one small foot with lofty emphasis.

"The very method!" she said aloud in a voice of scorn. "For aught I know, the very book! You shall not suffer as I have suffered, my poor dear child. I thank Heaven that I am at hand to preserve you."

Thus animated by her own self-approval, Aunt Rachel, sometimes in [illegible] sometimes in tenderness, but oftener i[illegible]ed homeward, waited the d[illegible]me, and walked back to church again. She succeeded in getting Ruth away without a sight of Reuben.

but the young man passed them on their way with a step still quicker than he had used that morning. He threw a gay "Good-night, Ruth," over his shoulder as he walked, and Ruth felt the old lady's hand tighten on her arm, though she was far from guessing the nature of the emotion which moved her.

Once out of sight in the summer dusk, Reuben ran. He reached the green door, and with no surprise found it wide open. He approached the table, seized the old folio, and turning it back downwards so that nothing could fall from it, sped home, hugging it by the way. When he reached his own room he was breathless, but he struck a light, drew down the blinds, and turned over the leaves of the music-book one by one. In the centre of the book he paused, for there he seemed to find the object of his search. A note, bearing for sole superscription "Mr. Gold," was pinned to the edge of the page. But was that quaint, old-fashioned handwriting Ruth's? Why should she write to him on paper so old and yellow and faded? Why should the very pin that held it to the page be rusted as if it had been there for years.

The note was sealed with two wafers, and the paper cracked across as he opened it. It began "Dear Mr. Gold," and was signed "R." It ran thus—

"I have not ans^rd^ your est^md^ note until now, though in receipt of it since Thursday, for I dare not seem precipitate in such a matter. But I have consulted my own heart, and have laid it before the Throne, knowing no earthly adviser. Dear Mr. Gold, it shall be as you wish, and I trust God may help me to be a worthy helpmeet. So no more till I hear again from you."

It was impossible that this should be meant for him, or that Ruth should have written it, but though he searched the book from cover to cover there was no other missive to be found within it.

(*To be Continued.*)

IN THE MALL.
From a Drawing by Hugh Thomson.

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO.

I purpose in the present paper to gather up some of the notable doings and persons of the year 1785. Not to write the history of the country for that year, but to gossip in desultory fashion over journals and books and pictures which show what people were most interested in at that date.

George III. had been king for twenty-five years. He was now forty-seven years of age, and had thirteen children, of whom the youngest, the Princess Amelia, was two years old. The dreadful mental disorder which poisoned so much of his life had not as yet shown itself, but he had already had a great amount of trouble, personal and public. His eldest son, a young man of twenty-three, had been, like most preceding heirs-apparent, in opposition to his father's policy. By losses on the turf and at the gaming-table he was heavily in debt, was notoriously loose of life, and had broken both the Act of Settlement and the Royal Marriage Act by secretly marrying a Roman Catholic lady, very beautiful and of virtuous character. To add to this personal trouble the king was also grieved to the soul by the result of the long war, by which, in November, 1782, the fairest States in the American continent had been lost to the British crown. That war had added upwards of one hundred millions to the National Debt, and the country was altogether exhausted by the terrible struggle. Angry feelings had not died out, and it was not until June in this year, 1785, that George III. received Mr. Adams, the first minister from the United States. But he did so like a gentleman, with frankness and genuine kindness. Now, therefore, there was a respite for a while from foreign wars. Presently, on the breaking out of the French Revolution in 1789, the devils of blood and ruin were once more let loose, and all Europe was convulsed as with an earthquake. This defines for us, in some degree, the position of the year 1785. It stands in the lull between two fierce storms.

The prime minister as well as chancellor

of the Exchequer was William Pitt. He had become so in December, 1783, when he was but a few months over twenty-four years old. How he had achieved this dignity, or how it had been in part thrust upon him, it is no part of our present paper to tell. Lord Macaulay puts it all before us in his admirably clear and entrancing style. He took office, by the determined will of the king, in the face of a fierce majority of the House of Commons, with not a single supporter of eminence in that House, though he had a majority in the Lords. Opposite to him sat Fox, Burke, Sheridan, Erskine, Grey. Yet his spirit did not quail. He knew that public opinion outside was in his favour; and when the king was besought by the majority in the Commons to dismiss his minister he replied he would abdicate and go to Germany first. At length, in March, 1784, Pitt, having stubbornly held his ground until he saw that his time was come, dissolved Parliament and came back with such a majority as gave him unlimited power. More than one hundred and sixty members lost their seats, and were forthwith dubbed "Fox's Martyrs." King, Lords, and Commons were all on the minister's side. Among the new members returned to support him was William Wilberforce, a young man of his own age, who had been his travelling companion in the only continental tour he ever made, and who was hereafter to make for himself one of the noblest reputations among English worthies.

The records of Parliament for the year 1785 are curious and instructive. "The Westminster Scrutiny" will hardly convey any distinct idea now to most people, but it was an important matter in those days, not only because of the warmth of feeling which it kindled, but because it involved great constitutional issues. The Westminster election had begun on April 1, 1784, and continued until the 16th of May; the candidates were Lord Hood, Charles James Fox, and Sir Cecil Wray, the last being one of Pitt's supporters. The returns each day that the election dragged on are given in the *Annual Register;* one day (April 5) 3,042 persons polled, another (May 13) only 12. On the last day there were 39. But on the day of closing Sir Cecil Wray, who was 235 votes behind, demanded a scrutiny. Fox declared that the high-bailiff of Westminster had no option but to declare the numbers and so finish the election. But the high-bailiff, who was a Pittite, declared for the scrutiny, and a riot ensued which Fox himself was largely instrumental in quelling. When Parliament met angry debates ensued, the prime minister defending the high-bailiff, the Opposition angrily protesting. The scrutiny was affirmed by the prime minister's obedient majority. Pending the result Westminster of course remained disfranchised, Fox finding a seat elsewhere, but of course still maintaining his right to sit for Westminster. After eight months the high-bailiff announced that not quite two parishes out of the seven into which Westminster was divided, were finished, and one of these parishes was the smallest. Fox rose up and made a most touching appeal to the minister's magnanimity, the more so because it was so dignified and manly. (See *Annual Register*, 1784-5, pp. 177-9.) He was beaten, but the question was persistently brought forward, and public opinion was seen to be so fully on Fox's side that the ministry gave way after a struggle of ten months, and Hood and Fox were declared elected. Next year Fox brought an action against the high-bailiff for 100,000*l.* damages; the jury gave him 2,000*l.*

This year Pitt brought forward the question of Parliamentary Reform, a subject on which his father, Lord Chatham, had been keen. His proposal was to disfranchise thirty-six rotten boroughs, and give the seats to counties and great unrepresented towns, giving a money compensation to the owners and holders of disfranchised places. But his party did not support him, and the bill was thrown out by 248 to 174. He never attempted it again. When the French Revolution came, the subject seemed to be clean forgotten by the whole nation.

Ireland also was the scene of animated discussions. A large meeting of delegates, backed by the volunteers, held a meeting for the purpose of reforming the Irish Parliament, of procuring the admission of Roman Catholics to the elective franchise, and more freedom to Irish trade and manufactures. Much that was reasonable was urged, much that was unreasonable. The delegates somewhat ostentatiously modelled their proceedings on those of the first American seceders, and the English Government rejected all treating with them, though Pitt took the opportunity of declaring against the old jealousy and selfishness which England had displayed against her sister island. The rejection of the Irish demands led to much turbulence in Dublin and other great towns.

A yet more exciting subject in those days was found in the career of Warren Hastings in India. We can only summarise it by saying that he reformed and improved Indian administration, vastly increased our influence

there, and changed war into peace. But his proceedings were not always marked by scrupulous honour. On February 28th, 1785, Burke made one of his most magnificent speeches against him, and against the prime minister under whose sanction he was declared to have acted. He was as usual outvoted in the House, but he immediately published this speech, with a copious appendix of facts and parliamentary reports, and public opinion was electrified. Within a few days of its delivery, Hastings having tranquillised India set sail for England. The celebrated impeachment in Westminster Hall, a scene of thrilling interest in our annals, came next year, and is therefore out of our scope.

So, for the same reason, is Pitt's celebrated Sinking Fund, a scheme which he put forward for the extinguishing of the National Debt, and did it so attractively that "nearly every one," it was said, "jumped into the fairy car to be rolled away into financial elysium." He was much assisted in his plan by Dr. Price, a dissenting minister. It worked well for a while, but the tremendous war which followed the French Revolution made it act disastrously. We note in this year a proposal of the minister to raise 650,000*l*. by a lottery, and also to put a tax upon maid-servants. One of the newspapers gives a scheme by a Mr. Bickerstaffe to put a tax of a shilling a year on common watches and clocks, and two shillings on gold watches.

A few words on religion. The Established Church had become almost entirely Tory in its politics. The rank and file of the clergy had been so in the preceding reigns, but after the Revolution the bishops had for the most part been taken from the Whigs until George III.'s reign. Religious life had sunk low. Many of the bishops at this time were relations of men influential in the Government. Thus the Lord Chancellor Thurlow, had two brothers on the bench, at Lincoln and at Durham; Lord North's brother was at Winchester. The Archbishop of Canterbury was John Moore, who owed his elevation to a curious accident. He was the son of a butcher at Gloucester, and educated at the free school there. Displaying much talent he was sent by some friends to Oxford. He then became tutor to the Marquis of Blandford, son of the Duke of Marlborough; but the duchess, true to the traditions which Macaulay has described for us, would not suffer the young Levite to have a seat at her dinner-table. He had to go among the upper servants. But when her

A CONTESTED ELECTION.
From a Drawing by HUGH THOMSON.

husband died, the same haughty dame courted the handsome chaplain, and besought him to marry her, she having a very handsome income. The tempting offer was refused, and the young duke, her son, was so gratified by his tutor's self-denial that he settled £400 a year upon him and pressed him on the king for preferment. He was made Bishop of Bangor in 1775 and Archbishop of Canterbury eight years later, and a very respectable Primate he made. He enriched his family of course; they all did it in those days, no journals existing to denounce them. People still living tell how at a hotly disputed election fifty years ago it was announced on big placards that a certain meeting at Maidstone would be addressed by "the following learned and reverend divines: a Canon of Canterbury, the Rector of this, the Vicar of that," &c. &c., numbering some half a dozen. They were really all comprised in a son of Archbishop Moore who held many preferments, and some Whig opponent had thus satirised the fact, and done his best to raise prejudice against him. A similar joke was played by Sydney Smith on a rich Canon of Christchurch, Oxford, who being about to travel to Bath, asked Sydney in an evil hour to bespeak dinner for him at Hungerford. The jocose canon ordered dinner for the Canon of Christchurch, Rector of Staverton, &c., &c., about eight in all, which the victim found all ready on his arrival.

But this is not Archbishop Moore. He was personally a generous man, and his family made good use of the wealth which flowed towards them too freely. There is a portrait of Archbishop Moore in Lambeth Palace, full length but in profile. The late archbishop told me that, according to tradition he was so painted because a large wen had grown on the other side of his face. It may be so; but only yesterday I saw at Madame Tussaud's Hamilton's picture of the marriage of George IV. In that picture the Archbishop is actually in the same attitude as in the Lambeth picture, and I feel sure that the latter portrait is a replica of the other. The only other Prelate of note was Lowth, Bishop of London, a good Hebrew scholar. The great reviver of religious fervour, at a time when it seemed ready to die, was John Wesley. He was now 82 years old and still at work; he was to live six years longer. His brother Charles was five years younger; he died three years before him. Whitefield had died in 1770. Another person who had much influence in her time and established a religious body which continues until now, was Selina, Countess of Huntingdon, the founder of the "Lady Huntingdon Connexion." She was a Calvinistic Methodist. Her followers at present do not differ, I believe, from the Congregationalists. The influence of Wesley, not only upon his followers, but upon the religious life of England, has been very great. It showed itself in the rise of "Evangelicalism" in the Church of England, as represented by such men as John Newton and Romaine. The former was at this time rector of St. Mary Woolnoth, Lombard-street, the latter of St. Andrew-by-the-Wardrobe and St. Ann's Blackfriars. The mention of him reminds us that that poor fribble, Dr. Dodd, had once attached himself to Romaine, but had turned aside to the pleasures of the world. Before he was hanged for forgery in 1777, Romaine had visited him several times in Newgate. Once he was asked if he considered poor Dodd a sincere penitent. "I hope he may be," was the answer, "but there is a great difference between saying and feeling 'God be merciful to me a sinner.'" Another of the Evangelical clergy then living, though younger than the others we have mentioned, was Richard Cecil. He died in 1810. A musical composition of his is still sung in many churches, the simple anthem in F "I will arise." It has a curious history, which may well take by surprise those who object to the introduction of hymns in "unauthorised places" in public worship. Cecil used, like most other people, to *read* the Church Service, psalms, canticles, and all. But in order to enliven it, he wrote this anthem to be sung between the *Jubilate* and the Apostles' creed! Fancy somebody reviving that now!

In this year Paley published his *Moral Philosophy*, the most elaborate of his works. Readers will remember the apologue with beginning, about the pigeons. That opening destroyed his hopes of a mitre. When, afterwards, he published his *Horæ Paulinæ* and *Evidences of Christianity*, Pitt recommended him for a bishopric. "What, what, what?" said George III., "Pigeon Paley, Pigeon Paley? No, no, no!" Blair's *Lectures on Rhetoric* were published this year, and also some of his sermons. It is the fashion nowadays to run down Blair's sermons. But it has often been our fate to hear worse.

At the head of the Law as Lord Chief Justice of England stood William, Earl of Mansfield; he was now just eighty years old, and there was no diminution apparent in his mental powers. He resigned in 1788, but lived until 1793. A case which came on this year brought into prominence another lawyer

who was to win himself a great forensic name, Thomas Erskine. He was now thirty-five years old, and though he had been only seven years at the bar had a reputation second to none as an advocate. The case before us is that of the Dean of St. Asaph who had published a "Dialogue between a Gentleman and a Farmer," written by Sir Wm. Jones. The Government held it to be a seditious libel, and prosecuted the dean. Erskine was his advocate, and rested his defence upon two points: first, that the jury had the right of judging whether any tract were a libel or not; and secondly, that the publication was intended for the benefit of the country and therefore could not be a libel. Mr. Justice Buller summed up against him, but the jury brought in a verdict "Guilty of publishing only." The judge wished this to be a condemnation; Erskine contended that the verdict should be recorded verbatim, and a very angry discussion between them arose; but the judge [1] at length browbeat and manipulated the jury into giving a verdict against the defendant on the ground that the question whether any publication is a libel is a question of law, not of the opinion of a jury. If he *published* it, it was a libel according to the law. Erskine moved for a new trial in a speech which Fox declared was the finest he had ever heard, but Lord Mansfield decided that the verdict must stand. The consequence was Fox's Libel Bill in 1792, which affirms the right of the jury to find a general verdict.

English industry and manufacture may almost be said to have taken its origin at the beginning of the reign of George III. The mighty impetus given to it by the acquisition of Canada and the East Indies forms a wonderful, though almost silent chapter, in our annals. The chief corn-growing districts in those days were East Kent, especially the Isle of Thanet, Northumberland, Norfolk, and Suffolk. The extension of canal navigation dating from the reign of George II. is a sign of enkindled enterprise, and it is a remarkable fact that in fourteen years (1760-1774) no less than 452 Acts of Parliament were passed for the repair of highways. Much information concerning the previous state of the country is furnished by Arthur Young, who published Two *Tours through England*: one in the south, the other in the north. This is his account of an Essex road in 1768: "Of all the cursed roads that ever disgraced the kingdom in the very ages of barbarism, none ever equalled that from Billericay to the King's Head at Tilbury. It is for near twelve miles so narrow that a mouse cannot pass by any carriage. I saw a fellow creep under his waggon to assist me to lift, if possible, my chaise over a hedge. The ruts are of an incredible depth, and a pavement of diamonds might as well be sought for as a quarter. The trees everywhere overgrow the road, so that it is totally impervious to the sun, except at a few places. And, to add to all the infamous circumstances which concur to plague the traveller, I must not forget the eternally meeting with chalk-waggons; themselves frequently stuck fast, till a collection of them are in the same situation, and twenty or thirty horses may be tacked to each to draw them out one by one. After this description, will you—can you—believe me when I tell you that a turnpike was much solicited for by some gentlemen, to lead from Chelmsford to the ferry at Tilbury Fort, but opposed by the bruins of this country, whose horses were worried to death with bringing chalk through these vile roads? I do not imagine that the kingdom produces such an instance of detestable stupidity; and yet in this tract are found numbers of farmers who cultivate above 1,000*l*. a year."

It was no better apparently elsewhere. He tells travellers from Preston to Wigan to "avoid the turnpike as they would the devil, for a thousand to one they will break their necks." He measured ruts which were four feet deep, and passed three carts which had broken down. The turnpikes near Chepstow were "mere rocky lanes, full of hugeous stones as big as one's horse, and abominable holes."

Of all Inventions for the development of manufacturing enterprise we need not say that that of the steam-engine stands, beyond comparison, the highest. The history of this mighty factor in the history of the world's changes must form a paper by itself, we will therefore only say here that the first really efficient steam-engine was constructed about the year 1711, a rude and simple machine chiefly used for draining mines, and that little improvement was made upon it for sixty years; that James Watt, whose attention had been directed to the subject since 1759, steadily continued his schemes until, in 1782, he took out his patent for the double-acting engine, in which, for the first time, the piston was impelled both ways by the steam. This was really the turning-point in the history of the invention. The mining operations of Cornwall were immediately

[1] Let us put in a kind word about Justice Buller. Two years before he had given little Samuel Taylor Coleridge a presentation to Christ's Hospital.

increased sevenfold by the help thus afforded, and mines which would long before now have been abandoned are among the most productive. In like manner coal mines were also developed, so that whereas at the beginning of the century 290,000 chaldrons a year were sent to London; in the five years ending March 1785 there were 676,000 chaldrons annually. An act passed this year against the exportation of tools or engines used in the manufacture of iron and steel, shows to what importance these manufactures had risen. Another act of the same year is very noticeable. The American war had stopped the supply of vegetable tar, which had hitherto all come from that country. This set the proprietors of a lamp-black manufactory at Bristol making experiments with oil from pit coal in their works. The Earl of Dundonald took up the matter, and found that by various degrees of boiling, better tar than ever for bottoms of ships could be produced. And an act of 1785 gave him a patent for his invention for twenty years. The same year Josiah Wedgwood, who ever since 1763 had been producing his beautiful manufactures, gave evidence before a Committee of the House of Commons that he was directly employing 20,000 men in the manufacture, not reckoning those indirectly employed in digging coal, clays, and flints, and conveying the goods away. Once more we have to mention in connection with our manufactures, that in 1785 Richard Arkwright, the inventor or first user of the spinning machine, "the founder of the factory opulence and power of Great Britain," as Dr. Ure calls him, was defeated in endeavouring to stop other manufacturers, who, as he alleged, were infringing his patent.

READING "JOHN GILPIN."
From a Drawing by HUGH THOMSON.

We turn next to Literature—and first to Poetry. This year a shy recluse, who had been living for nineteen years in a little country town, and had not been as many miles away from it all that time, suddenly leapt from his obscurity into the position of the first poet of the age. This was William Cowper of Olney, who in July, 1785, published his *Task*. He had gone there in 1767 and taken up his residence in the market place of the little town, and had published a volume of poems previously, but they had not sold. The *Task* was first brought to notice by the fact that a poem in the same volume had made a prodigious sensation in London. *John Gilpin* had found its way into

the papers, had been publicly read by a clever elocutionist at Freemasons' Tavern, and had convulsed everybody who heard it with laughter. When it was announced that this poem was to be published along with some others everybody eagerly bought the volume, and though it was not, as expected, a volume of fun, but a serious and sustained production, it was found so beautiful that it won all hearts. And the writer all the while was suffering from acute religious melancholy. His chief relief was his garden, and there he used to sit in a summer-house which still remains, one of the most interesting of relics to all lovers of literary memories. On two poets then popular we need not enlarge. William Hayley would be forgotten now only that he was the unselfish and generous friend of Cowper. James Beattie, the author of *The Minstrel*, was pronounced by George III. the finest poet in the English language. We suspect that few of our readers have got through *The Minstrel*, or if they have done so, have been enthusiastic in their admiration. For writing his *Essay on Truth* Beattie was offered by Bishop Thomas of Winchester, a living of 500*l*. a year if he would take English Orders. But he declined on the ground that unbelievers might charge him with writing for the sake of preferment.

There was a young man, however, of twenty-six, who was preparing for himself the name of the greatest poetical genius of the century. In this year Robert Burns wrote *The Cotter's Saturday Night*, and next year published his first volume of *Poems*, previously (such was his intention) to flying from the country, where he was overwhelmed with difficulties and distress. "I weighed my productions as impartially as I could," he says, "I thought they had merit; and it was a delicious idea that I should be called a clever fellow, even though it should never reach my ears." How he was led to change his purpose is out of our focus.

The greatest literary man, the greatest Englishman of the century, was just gone. Need we name Samuel Johnson? He died December 18, 1784. Hannah More in a letter to her sister dated March, 1785, says that she has just met Mr. Boswell, who announced that he was compiling "*Anecdotes* of Johnson, not his *life*, but, as he has the vanity to call it, his *pyramid*." She goes on to say that she besought him to be tender to their reverend friend's memory, and especially to "mitigate some of his asperities," to which the reply was, "He would not cut off his claws, nor mole a tiger or cat to please anybody." Boswell's account of the *Tour to the Hebrides* was published this year, but the *Life of Johnson* not until 1790. Hannah More deserves mention even on her own account. At this time she was known to all the great writers and artists in London for her accomplishments, her wit, and her amiability. She had written her *Sacred Dramas*. Her nobler work and her labours to promote the welfare and happiness of mankind belong to a later date. The first time I ever heard Mr. Gladstone speak was at a meeting of the National Society in 1847, when he was expatiating on her delightful book *Cœlebs in Search of a Wife* as the noblest work on education which had yet appeared in our language. It was published in 1805.

Was there any man living greater and nobler than any of those we have mentioned? That is a question not for man, but for Omniscience to answer. But there was an Englishman living and working, of whom one of our historians has written that "perhaps no man has assuaged so much human misery." [1] There is an epitaph for a man! He of whom this has been said was no sovereign nor statesman, nor warrior, nor poet. He was a simple, not too well-educated country squire, and his name was John Howard. He spent his best years in making pilgrimages, not to holy shrines or beautiful scenes, but to loathsome, fever-stricken dens of unmitigated suffering, and by exposing to the shuddering sight of mankind, the possible barbarities enacted in the prisons of what called itself the civilised world. He led the way to destroying such hells. In the long self-denying labours which might be laid beside those of St. Paul himself, he at length caught fever, and died in the Crimea, Jan. 20, 1790. A monument was erected to him by public subscription; it is the first monument ever erected in St. Paul's Cathedral.

The picture of the period would hardly be complete without mention of the clever but scurrilous and somewhat unprincipled satirist who called himself "Peter Pindar," but whose name was Dr. John Walcot. He began as a medical man, but not finding his profession lucrative, took orders and failed also in this, utterly neglecting his duties. He then returned to physic and settled for a while at Truro. Everywhere he got himself into scrapes by his inveterate habit of satirising his neighbours. At Truro he detected the talents of the self-taught artist, Opie, and persuaded

[1] Dean Milman, "Annals of St. Paul's," p. 98.

him to accompany him to London, and to go shares with him in any profits they might make. This arrangement lasted for a year, and as Walcot's earnings apparently amounted to nothing, Opie started on his own account, and became a fashionable painter. Walcot betook himself to his pen for support, and published his *Lyric Odes to the Royal Academicians.* The first issue was in 1782, but he continued them each year till 1786. The reckless daring of his personalities, and also the keen sense of his remarks, for he was an excellent judge of art, caused his works to be eagerly run after. And thus he found that he might safely fly at higher game, and the king, the court, and the ministry, were assaulted and lampooned in the most savage manner. One piece of his which one constantly sees still in books of "Readings" is the story of "The Pilgrims and the Peas." Another is "The Apple Dumplings and the King." The drollest perhaps is the account of the Royal Visit to Whitbread's Brewery. The rollicking irregular verse was afterwards imitated and surpassed in variety by Barham in *The Ingoldsby Legends*, a work quite as coarse in spirit, though less illnatured. Walcot's want of principle is seen in his gross adulation of the Prince of Wales. He prophesies of him that he will be as great a benefactor to the country, and as generous, as his father is mean, and selfish, and unpatriotic. Walcot lived till 1819.

The Drama was very strong. The most brilliant play writer was Sheridan. He wrote *The Rivals* in 1775 when only twenty-five years old. All his plays had been written before our date, but he lived until 1816. Richard Cumberland was famous in his day, not only as dramatist, but as essayist, poet, novelist. He was honoured with a funeral in Westminster Abbey. I saw the side of his coffin exposed when the grave was opened for Dickens. Cumberland died in 1811. George Colman, Mrs. Cowley, the author of *The Belle's Stratagem,* and Macklin, the author of *The Man of the World*, all hold their ground on the modern stage. Macklin, who died in 1797, was aged 107. And not only dramatists but actors shine out brilliantly. Garrick and Foote were dead, the one six years before, the other eight. But John Philip Kemble, in his impersonation of lofty characters, has probably never been surpassed, while his sister, Sarah Siddons, has never been equalled as an actress. John Kemble made his first appearance in London in 1783, acting the part of Hamlet. He was then twenty-six years old (his brother Charles was only as yet eight). Mrs. Siddons had already won such a name that another first-class actor had prophesied she would ever remain unmatched. On the 2nd February, 1785, she first played at Drury Lane what proved her greatest character, that of Lady Macbeth. She was then thirty years of age. She died in 1831, her brother, John Philip, in 1823, Charles in 1854. Joseph Grimaldi, the very prince of clowns during his short day, was now only six years old, but had already made his appearance on the boards under his father's auspices; and, indeed, had made more than one sensation. Once his father, as clown, led him dressed as a monkey, and, while swinging him violently round, the chain broke, and the child was hurled into the pit and not hurt. Another time Lord Derby, who was always in the green-room courting Miss Farren, was thrown into convulsions by the boy's comical faces, and gave him half a crown at each visit. Fielding and Smollett were dead; but three lady novelists were flourishing, whose works are still read, and deserve to be read—Miss Burney, better known to us as Madame d'Arblay, the authoress of *Evelina*, Charlotte Smith, and Mrs. Inchbald. Mrs. Radcliffe was a little later; she was now just twenty-one years old. Her first novel was published the year that the Bastille was taken.

In History, Hume was dead; Robertson was living, but had done writing. But Gibbon, the greatest historian of all, the greatest even until this present, finished his famous work this year on the shores of the Lake of Lucerne.

In Art, the greatest name was Sir Joshua Reynolds. He was now sixty-two years old, had been elected unanimously first President of the Royal Academy on its foundation in 1769, when he was knighted, but only became "principal painter in ordinary to the king" on the death of Allan Ramsay in 1784. That he was in full vigour at this time is shown by the fact that he exhibited eighteen pictures at the Academy in 1788; his average during his life was eleven annually. The favourite painter of the king, however, was Benjamin West, and this was sufficient to expose that painter to the furious assaults of "Peter Pindar." West is probably best known to us by his picture of the *Death of General Wolfe*. In that picture he introduced an innovation which astounded all the artists and critics, and this against the advice of Sir Joshua himself. Hitherto it had been the universal practice of painters to dress all their figures, in historical pictures of any kind, in Greek or Roman costume. West painted his in the actual costume that his

characters wore. When the picture was finished Reynolds stood long in contemplation of it, and at length said, "West was right. He has treated the subject as it ought to be treated, and this picture will not only become one of the most popular, but will occasion a revolution in art." The engraving of this picture by Woollett is of such value that the present writer once saw an early impression sold at Christie and Manson's for 70*l.* Gainsborough had sent his last picture to the Academy in 1783. He died in 1788. George Romney was a fashionable portrait-painter, residing in Cavendish Square, while his wife caricatures of James Gillray, whose political satires range between 1782 and 1802. The ordinary dinner hour of the rich people was three, but the "extremely fashionable" dined at five. Coaches came for diners at seven. Then came the rout or opera, after this the evening parties, and supper followed at eleven. The House of Commons used to meet at 2 p.m. Gaming was carried on to a frightful extent. Gibbon says in one of his letters that Fox, previously to taking part in a debate on religion in the House of Commons, "prepared himself for that holy war by passing twenty-two hours

AN AUCTION ROOM.
From a Drawing by HUGH THOMSON.

and family were living in obscurity at Kendal. He only visited them twice during thirty-seven years, but at length gave up his profession and returned to them. He died at Kendal in 1802, aged sixty-eight. John Singleton Copley, like West, was born in America. They were almost exactly of an age. His most celebrated work, *The Death of Lord Chatham*, was painted five years before this.

The customs and manners of the times are depicted for us in the novels of the period, and in the letters of Horace Walpole, better still in the vigorous, but not always decorous

in the pious exercise of hazard, his devotion costing him only about 500*l.* per hour: in all 11,000*l.*" Croker mentions a case where 5,000*l.* was staked on a single card. Ladies of rank carried on these extravagant habits by keeping faro tables and cozening young men whom they decoyed to them. Three ladies in particular, Lady Buckinghamshire, Lady Archer, and Lady Mount Edgecumbe, were so notorious for this that they were commonly known as "Faro's daughters." Lord Kenyon, when denouncing gambling from the bench, not obscurely pointed at them and declared that if he could see any one of them

convicted, he would send her to the pillory. And Gillray published a caricature of two of these ladies in the pillory, unmistakable portraits. The threat is said to have been not without some good effect. In London the places of amusement were the Opera, the Theatres, Ranelagh, Vauxhall, and the Exhibition of the Academy. The fashionable watering-places were Bath and Tunbridge Wells, and with these Margate was beginning to be reckoned. Anstey's *New Bath Guide* was published this year, and the *New Margate Guide* within a year or two.

The picture of the time would not be fairly drawn without the mention, not only of the frequency of highway robberies, but of the number of persons who suffered death at the gallows. Thus in the Annual Register for this year (p. 193) we are told that twenty-four persons were sentenced to death at the Old Bailey on the 16th of June, and that day week fifteen of them were hanged together. Twelve of these were for burglary, two for a street robbery, and one for personating a sailor with intent to receive his wages. Immediately after this ghastly record we are told that Mary Cameron died, aged 139, and that she remembered the rejoicings at the restoration of Charles II.

We have one more record in the same volume. It will be remembered how last year the centenary of ballooning was observed in London and elsewhere. On June 5th, 1785, came the first catastrophe. There had been hydrogen balloons and fire balloons, called respectively in those days "*Montgolfières*" and "*Charlières*." The first man who had ever made an ascent, Pilâtre des Rosiers, made a compound machine combining the two, hydrogen above, fire beneath. With this he ascended at Boulogne, in company with a young man named Romain ; but after some minutes, having, as it afterwards appeared on examination of the wreck, endeavoured to open the gas balloon, he tore it, the gas was ignited by the fire and the ill-fated aëronauts were dashed to death. Visitors to Boulogne will remember the monument which still marks the spot.

W. Benham.

GRETNA GREEN REVISITED.

THE one bumpy street of Springfield, despite its sparse crop of grass, presents to this day a depressed appearance, a relic of the time when it doubled up under a weight of thundering chariots. At the well-remembered, notorious Queen's Head I stood in the gathering gloaming watching the road run yellow, until the last draggled hen had spluttered through the pools to roost, and the mean row of white-washed shrunken houses across the way had sunk into the sloppy ground, as they have been doing slowly for half a century, or were carried away in a rush of rain. Soaking weeds hung in lifeless bunches over the hedges of spears that line the roads from Gretna; on sodden Canobie Lea, where Lochinvar's steed would to-day have had to wade through yielding slush, dirty piles of congealed snow were still reluctant to be gone; and gnarled tree trunks, equally with palings that would have come out of the ground with a sloppy gluck, showed a dank and cheerless green. Yesterday the rooks dinned the air, and the parish of Gretna witnessed such a marrying and giving in marriage as might have flung it back fifty years. Elsewhere such a solemn cawing round the pulpit on the tree tops would denote a court of justice, but in the vicinity of Springfield, it may be presumed, the thoughts of the very rooks run on matrimony.

A little while ago Willum Lang, a postman's empty letter-bag on his back, and a glittering drop trembling from his nose, picked his way through the puddles, his lips pursed into a portentous frown, and his grey head bowed professionally in contemplation of a pair of knock-knee'd but serviceable shanks. A noteworthy man Willum, son of Simon, son of David, grandson by marriage of Joseph Paisley, all famous "blacksmiths" of Gretna Green. For nigh a century Springfield has marked time by the Langs, and still finds "In David Lang's days" as forcible as "when Plancus was consul." Willum's predecessors in office reserved themselves for carriage runaways, and would shake the lids from their coffins if they knew that Willum had to marry the once despised "pedestrians." "Even Elliot," David Lang would say, "could join couples who came on foot," and that, of course, was very hard on the poor pedestrian, for greater contempt no man ever had for rival than David for Elliot, unless, indeed, it was Elliot's for David. But those were the great clattering days, when there were four famous marrying shops: the two rival inns of Springfield, that washed their hands of each other across the street, Mr. Linton's aristocratic quarters at Gretna Hall, and the toll-bar on the right side of the Sark. A gentleman who had requisitioned the services of the toll-keeper many years ago recently made a journey across the border to shake his fist at the bar, and no one in Gretna Green can at all guess why. Far-seeing Murray, the sometime priest of Gretna Hall informed me, succeeded Beattie at the toll-house in 1843, and mighty convenient friends in need they both proved for the couples who dashed across the border with foaming fathers at their coaches' wheels. The stone bridge flashed fire to rushing hoofs, the exulting pursuers, knowing that a half-mile brae still barred the way to Springfield, saw themselves tearing romantic maidens from adventurers' arms, when Beattie's lamp gleamed in the night, the horses stopped as if an invisible sword had cleft them in twain, the maid was whisked like a bundle of stolen goods into the toll-bar, and her father flung himself in at the door in time to be introduced to his son-in-law. Oh, Beattie knew how to do his work expeditiously, and fat he waxed on the proceeds. In his later days marrying became the passion of his life, and he never saw a man and a maid together without creeping up behind them and beginning the marriage service. In Springfield

there still are men and women who have fled from him for their celibacy, marriage in Scotland being such an easy matter that you never know when they may not have you. In joining couples for the mere pleasure of the thing, Simon brought high fees into disrepute, and was no favourite with the rest of the priesthood. That half mile nearer the border, Jardine admits, gave the toll-bar a big advantage, but for runaways who could risk another ten minutes, Gretna Hall was the place to be married at.

Willum Lang's puckered face means business. He has been sent for by a millworker from Langholm, who, having an hour to spare, thinks he may as well drop in at the priest's and get spliced; or by an innocent visitor wandering through the village in search of the mythical smithy; or by a lawyer who shakes his finger threateningly at Willum (and might as well have stayed at home with his mother). From the most distant shores letters reach him regarding Gretna marriages, and if Willum dislikes monotony he must be getting rather sick of the stereotyped beginning "I think your charges very extortionate." The stereotyped ending "but the sum you asked for is inclosed," is another matter. It is generally about midnight that the rustics of the county rattle Willum's door off its snib and, bending over his bed, tell him to arise and marry them. His hand is crossed with silver coin, for gone are the bridegrooms whose gold dribbled in a glittering cascade from fat purses to a horny palm: and then, with a sleepy neighbour, a cold hearth, and a rattling cynic of a window for witnesses, he does the deed. Elsewhere I have used these words to describe the scene:—"The room in which the Gretna Green marriages have been celebrated for many years is a large rude kitchen, but dimly lighted by a small 'bole' window of lumpy glass that faces an ill-fitting back door. The draught generated between the two cuts the spot where the couples stand, and must prove a godsend to flushed and flurried bridegrooms. A bed—wooden and solid, ornamented with divers shaped and divers coloured clothes dependent from its woodwork like linen hung on a line to dry—fills a lordly space. The monster fireplace retreats bashfully before it into the opposite wall, and a grimy cracked ceiling looks on a bumpy stone floor, from which a cleanly man could eat his porridge. One shabby wall is happily hid by the drawers in which Lang keeps his books; and against the head of the bed an apoplectic Mrs. Langtry in a blue dress and yellow stockings, reminding the public that Simon Lang's teas are the best, shudders at her reflection in the looking-glass that dangles opposite her from a string." The signboard over a snuffy tavern that attempted to enter into rivalry with the Queen's Head depicts the priest on his knees going through the church marriage services, but the Langs have always kept their method of performing the ceremony a secret between themselves and the interested persons, and the artist in this case was doubtless drawing on his imagination. The picture is discredited by the scene of the wedding being made in a smithy, when it is notorious that the "blacksmith" has cut the tobacco plug, and caught fish in the Solway, and worked at the loom, the last, and the toll-bar, but never wielded Vulcan's hammer. The popular term is thus a mystery, though a witness once explained, in a trial, to Brougham, that Gretna marriages were a welding of heat. Now the welding of heat is part of a blacksmith's functions.

It is not for Willum Lang to censure the Langholm mill workers, without whose patronage he would be as a priest superannuated, but if they could be got to remember whom they are married to, it would greatly relieve his mind. When standing before him they are given to wabbling unsteadily on their feet, and to taking his inquiry whether the maiden on their right is goodly in their sight for an offer of another "mutchkin": and next morning they sometimes mistake somebody else's maiden for their own. When one of the youth of the neighbourhood takes to him a helpmate at Springfield his friend often wiles away the time by courting another, and when they return to Langholm things are sometimes a little mixed up. The priest, knowing what is expected of him, is generally able when appealed to, to "assign to each bridegroom his own"; but one shudders to think what complications may arise when Willum's eyes and memory go. These weddings are of course as legal as though Lang were Archbishop of Canterbury, but the clergymen shake their heads, and sometimes —as indeed was the case even in the great days—a second marriage by a minister is not thought amiss.

About the year 1826, the high road to Scotland ran away from Springfield. Weeds soon afterwards sprouted in the street, and though the place's reputation died hard, its back had been broken. Runaways skurried by oblivious of its existence, and at a convenient point on the new road shrewd John Linton dropped Gretna Hall. Springfield's convenient situation had been its sole recommendation, and when it lost that it was stranded. The first entry in the Langs'

books dates back to 1771, when Joseph Paisley represented the priesthood, but the impetus to Gretna marriages had been given by the passing of Lord Hardwicke's act, a score of years before. Legend speaks of a Solway fisherman who taught tobacconist Paisley the business. Prior to 1754, when the law put its foot down on all unions not celebrated by ministers of the Church of England, there had been no need to resort to Scotland, for the chaplains of the fleet were anticipating the priests of Gretna Green, and doing a roaring trade. Broadly speaking, it was as easy between the Reformation and 1745 to get married in the one country as in the other. The Marriage Act changed all that. It did a real injustice to non-members of the Established Church, and only cured the disease in one place to let it break out in another. Lord Hardwicke might have been a local member of Parliament, pushing a Bill through the House "for the promotion of Larceny and Rowdyism at Gretna Green." For the greater part of a century, there was a whirling of coaches and a clattering of horses across the border, after which came marriage in England before a registrar, and an amendment of the Scotch law that required residence north of the Sark, on the part of one of the parties, for twenty-one days before the ceremony took place. After that the romance of Gretna Green was as a tale that is told. The latter half of the last century, and the first twenty years of this, were thus the palmy days of Springfield, for after Gretna Hall hung out its signboard, the Langs were oftener seen at the "big house" than in the double-windowed parlour of the Queen's Head.

The present landlord of this hostelry, a lightsome host, troubled with corns, who passes much of his time with a knife in one hand and his big toe in the other, is nephew of that Beattie who saw his way to bed by the gleam of postboys' lamps, and spent his days unsnibbing the Queen's Head door to let runaways in, and barring it to keep their pursuers out. Much depends on habit, and Beattie slept most soundly to the drone of the priest in his parlour, and the rub-a-dub of baffled parents on his window-sills. His nephew, also a Beattie, brings his knife with him into the immortal room, where peers of the realm have mated with country wenches, and fine ladies have promised to obey their fathers' stable-boys, and two lord chancellors of England, with a hundred others have blossomed into husbands, and one wedding was celebrated of which neither Beattie nor the world takes any account. There are half a dozen tongues in the inn—itself a corpse now that wearily awaits interment—to show you where Lord Erskine gambolled in a tablecloth, while David Lang united him in the bonds of matrimony with his housekeeper, Sarah Buck. There is the table at which he composed some Latin doggerel in honour of the event, and the doubtful signature on a cracked pane of glass. A strange group they must have made—the gaping landlord at the door, Mrs. Buck, the superstitious, with all her children in her arms, David Lang rebuking the lord chancellor for posing in the lady's bonnet, Erskine in his table-cloth skipping round the low-roofed room in answer, and Christina Johnstone, the female witness, thinking sadly that his lordship might have known better. Here, too, Lord Eldon galloped one day with his "beloved Bessy"; and it is not uninteresting to note that though he came into the world eighteen months after Lord Erskine, he paid Gretna Green a business visit nearly fifty years before him. Lang's books are a veritable magic-lantern, and the Queen's Head the sheet on which he casts his figures. The slides change. Joseph Paisley sees his shrewd assistant, David Lang, marry his granddaughter, and dies characteristically across the way. David has his day, and Simon his son succeeds him; and in the meantime many a memorable figure glides shadow-like across the screen. The youth with his heart in his mouth is Lord George Lambton. It is an Earl of Westmoreland that plants his shoulders against the door, and tells the priest to hurry. The foot that drums on the floor is Lady Alicia Parsons's. A son of Lord Chief Justice Ellenborough makes way for his own son; a daughter follows in the very footsteps of her father, only a few hours between them. A daughter of Archdeacon Philpot arrives at four o'clock in the morning, and her companion forgets to grease the landlord's hand. The Hon. Charles Law just misses Lord Deerhurst. There are ghosts in cocked hats, and naval and military uniform, in muslin, broadcloth, tweed and velvet, gold lace and pigskin; swords flash, pistols smoke, steaming horses bear bleeding riders out of sight, and a thousand forms flit weird and shadowy through the stifling room.

The dinner of the only surviving priest of Gretna Hall frizzled under the deft knife of his spouse as he rubbed his hands recently over the reminiscences of his youth. Willum Lang never officiated at the Hall. Intelligent Jardine, full of years and honours, now enjoys his ease, not without a priestly

dignity, on a kitchen sofa, in his pocket edition of a home at Springfield, and it is perhaps out of respect to his visitor that he crowns his hoary head with a still whiter hat. His arms outstretched to the fire, he looks, by the flashes of light, in his ingle-nook a Shakesperian spirit crouching over an unholy pot, but his genial laugh betrays him, and his comely wife does not scruple to recall him to himself when he threatens to go off in an eternal chuckle. A stalwart border-woman she, in short petticoats and a delightful cap, such as in the killing times of the past bred the Johnny Armstrongs and the terrible moss-troopers of the Border. A storehouse of old ballads, and a Scotchwoman after Scott's own heart.

The day that Gretna Hall became an inn, its landlord felt himself called to the priesthood, and as long as he and his son remained above ground, marriage was the heaviest item in their bills. But when Gretna knew them no more, Jardine's chance had come. Even at Springfield the line has always been drawn at female priests, and from the "big house" used to come frequent messages to the shoemaker with its mistress's compliments and would he step up at once. The old gentleman is a bit of a dandy in his way, and it is pleasant to know that Nature herself gave him on those occasions a hint when it was time to dress. The rush for him down dark fields and across the Headless Cross was in a flurry of haste, but in the still night the rumble of a distant coach had been borne to him over the howes and meadows, and Jardine knew what that meant as well as the marriage service. Sometimes the coaches came round by Springfield, when the hall was full, and there was a tumbling out and in again by trembling runaways at the rival inns. Even the taverns have run couples, and up and down the sleety street horses pranced and panted in search of an idle priest. Jardine remembers one such nightmare time when the clatter of a pursuing vehicle came nearer and nearer, and a sweet young lady in the Queen's Head flung up her hands to heaven. Crash went her true lover's fist through a pane of glass to awaken the street (which always slept with one eye open) with the hoarse wail, "A hundred pounds to the man that marries me!" But big as was the bribe, the speed of the pursuers was greater, and the maiden's father looking in at the inn at an inconvenient moment called her away to fulfil another engagement. The Solway lies white from Gretna Hall like a sheet of mourning paper, between edges of black trees and hills. The famous long, low room still looks out on an ageing park, but they are only ghosts that join hands in it now, and it is a clinging to old days that makes the curious moon peep beneath the blind. The priest and the unbidden witness still are, but brides and bridegrooms come no more. To the days of his youth Jardine had to fling back his memory to recall the gravel springing from the wheels of Wakefield's flying chariot. The story is told in Hutchinson's *Chronicles of Gretna Green*, the first volume of which leads up to but does not broach the subject, and is common property at Springfield. The adventurer's dupe was an affectionate schoolgirl on whose feelings he worked by representing himself as the one friend who could save her father from ruin and disgrace. The supposed bankrupt was said to have taken flight to Scotland, and the girl of fifteen, jumping into Wakefield's coach at Liverpool, started with him in pursuit. A more graceless rascal never was, for at Carlisle the adventurer swore that he had talked with Miss Turner's father in an hotel where he was lying hidden from the sheriff's officers, and that the fugitive's wish was that she should, without delay, accept Mr. Wakefield's hand. The poor lassie, frantic with anxiety, was completely gulled, and on the 8th of March, 1826, Wakefield's coach drew up at Gretna Hall. Too late came the pursuit to stop the marriage, but the runaways were traced to France, and the law soon had the husband of a week by the heels. He had trusted, like all his brotherhood, to the lady's father making the best of it; and so perhaps he did; for the adventurer's address for the next three years was—Newgate, London.

Spiders of both sexes kept their nets at Gretna Green, but a tragedy was only enacted at the Hall between a score of comedies; and they were generally love-sick youths and maidens who interrupted the priest to ask if that was not the "so—sound of wh—wheels on the gravel walk?" A couple whom it would almost have been a satisfaction to marry without a fee (for the mere example of the thing) was that which raced from the south of England with the lady's father. When they reached the top of a hill his arms were gesticulating at the bottom, and they never turned one corner without seeing his steaming horse take another. Poor was the fond lover (dark his prospects at Gretna Green in consequence) but brave the maid, to whom her friends would insist on leaving money, which was the cause of the whole to-do. The father,

looking on the swain with suspicious eye, took to dreaming of postillions, high-roads, blacksmiths and Gretna Green. He would not suffer his daughter to move from his sight, and even to dances he escorted her in his private carriage, returning for her (for he was a busy man) at night. Quick of invention were the infuriated lovers. Threading the mazes of a dance, the girl was one evening snatched from her partner's arms by the announcement that her father's carriage barred the way below. A hurried explanation of why he had come so soon, a tripping down the stairs with trembling limbs into a close coach, a maiden in white in her lover's arms, and hey-ho for Gretna Green. Jardine is mellowed with a gentle cynicism, and sometimes he breaks off in his reminiscences to wonder what people want to be married for. The Springfield priest, he chuckles, is a blacksmith at whom love cannot afford to laugh. Ay, friend Jardine, but what about the blacksmith who laughs at love?

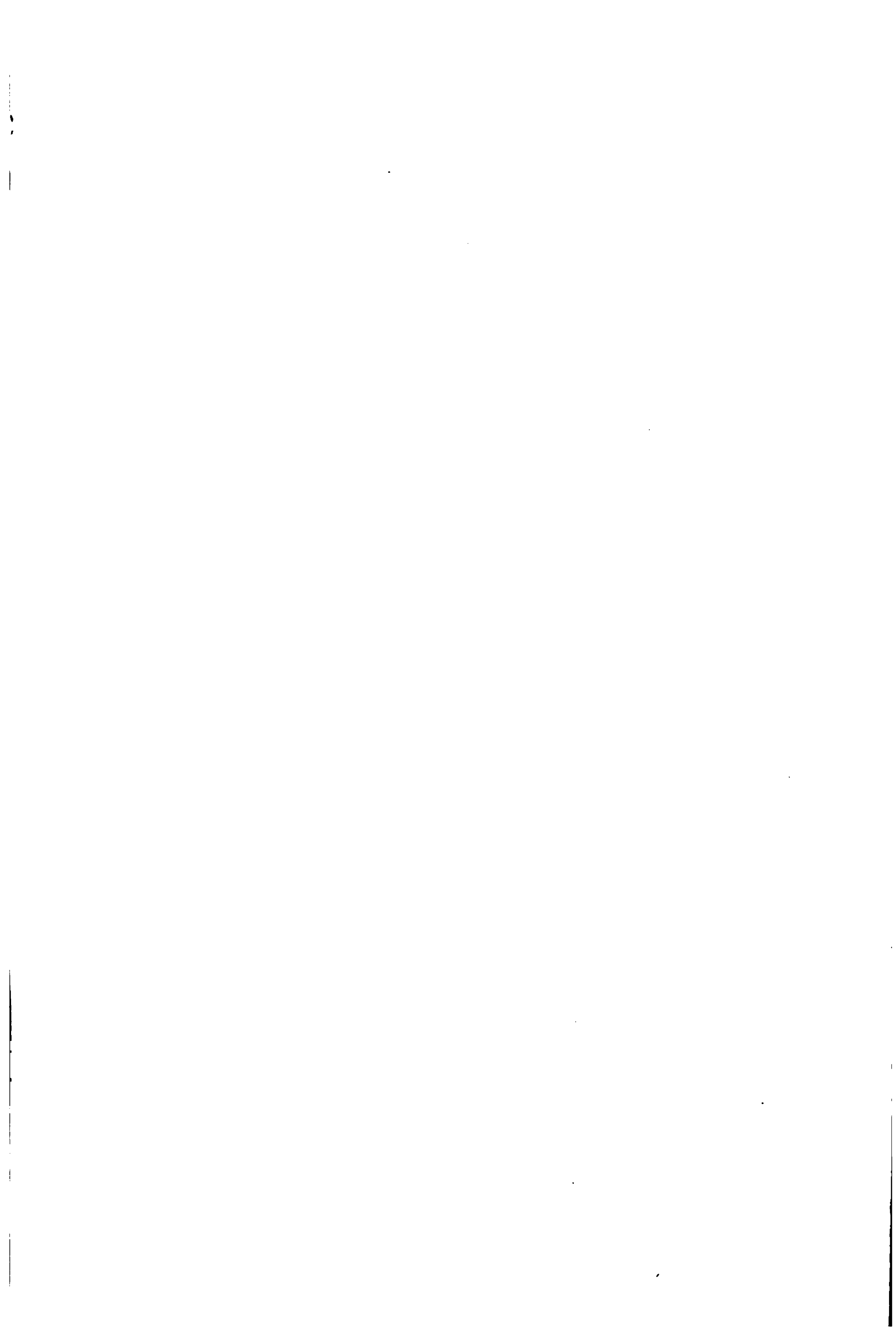
Half a century ago Mr. McDiarmid, a Scotch journalist of repute, loosened the tongue of a Springfield priest with a bowl of toddy. The result was as if the sluice had been lifted bodily from a dam, and stories (like the whisky) flowed like water. One over-curious *paterfamilias* there was who excused his visit to the village of weddings on the ground that he wished to introduce to the priest a daughter who might one day require his services "And sure enough," old Elliot, who entered into partnership with Simon Lang, crowed to his toddy-ladle, "I had her back with a younger man in the matter of three months!" There lives, too, in Springfield's memory the tale of the father who bolted with an elderly spinster, and returning to England passed his daughter and her lover on the way. Dark and wintry was the night, the two coaches rattled by, and next morning four persons who had gone wrong opened the eyes of astonishment.

When David Lang was asked during Wakefield's trial how much he had been paid for discharging the duties of priest, he replied pleasantly, "£20 or £30, or perhaps £40; I cannot say to a few pounds." This was pretty well, but there are authenticated cases in which £100 was paid. The priests had no fixed fee, and charged according to circumstances. If business was slack and the bridegroom not pressing, they lowered their charges, but where the bribed post-boys told them of high rank, hot pursuit, and heavy purses, they squeezed their dupes remorselessly. It is told of Joseph Paisley that when on his death-bed he heard the familiar rumble of coaches into the village, he shook death from him, ordered the runaways to approach his presence, married three couples from his bed, and gave up the ghost with three hundred pounds in his palsied hands. Beattie at the toll-bar, on the other hand, did not scorn silver fees, and as occasion warranted the priests have doubtless ranged in their charges from half-a-crown and a glass of whisky to a hundred pounds.

Though the toll-bar only at rare intervals got wealthy pairs into its clutches, Murray had not been long installed in office when pockets crammed with fees made him waddle as heavily as a duck. Fifty marriages a month was no uncommon occurrence at Gretna at that time, and it was then that the mansion was built which still stands about a hundred yards on the English side of the Sark. The toll-keeper, to whom it owes its existence, erected it for an hotel that would rival Gretna Hall, and prove irresistible to the couples who, on getting married on the Scotch side, would have to pass it on their return journey. But the alterations in the Marriage Laws marred the new hotel's chances, and Murray found that he had overreached himself. Perhaps one reason why he no longer prospered was because he pursued a niggardly policy with the postillions, ostlers, and other rapscallions who demanded a share of the booty. The Langs knew what they were about far too well to quarrel with the post-boys, and stories are still current in Springfield of these faithful youths tumbling their employers into the road rather than take them to a "blacksmith" with whom they did not deal.

There is no hope for Gretna. Springfield was and is the great glory of its inhabitants. Here ran the great wall of Adrian, the scene of many a tough fight in the days of stone weapons and skin-clad Picts. The Debatable Land, sung by Trouvere and Troubadour, is to-day but a sodden moss, in which no King Arthur strides fearfully away from the "grim lady" of the bogs; and moss-troopers, grim and gaunt and terrible, no longer whirl with lighted firebrands into England. With a thousand stars the placid moon lies long drawn out and drowned at the bottom of the Solway, without a love-sick maid to shed a tear; the chariots that once rattled and flashed along the now silent road, were turned into firewood decades ago, and the runaways, from a Prince of Capua to a beggar-maid, are rotten and forgotten.

J. M. Barrie.



SHOWING A FLARE.

Engraved by O. LACOUR, *from a Drawing by* C. J. STANILAND, R.I.

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HARRY'S INHERITANCE.

I.

OLONEL SIR THOMAS WOOLRYCH, K.C.B. (retired list), was a soldier of the old school, much attached to pipeclay and purchase, and with a low opinion of competitive examinations, the first six books of Euclid, the local military centres, the territorial titles of regiments, the latest regulation pattern in half-dress buttons, and most other confounded new-fangled radical fal-lal and trumpery in general. Sir Thomas believed as firmly in the wisdom of our ancestors as he distrusted the wisdom of our nearest descendants, now just attaining to years of maturity and indiscretion. Especially had he a marked dislike for this nasty modern shop-keeping habit of leaving all your loose money lying idly at your banker's, and paying everybody with a dirty little bit of crumpled paper, instead of pulling out a handful of gold, magnificently, from your trousers pocket, and flinging the sovereigns boldly down before you upon the counter like an officer and a gentleman. Why should you let one of these bloated, overfed, lazy banker fellows grow rich out of borrowing your money from you for nothing, without so much as a thank-you, and lending it out again to some other poor devil of a tradesman (probably in difficulties) at seven per cent. on short discount? No, no; that was not the way Sir Thomas Woolrych had been accustomed to live when he was an ensign (sub-lieutenant they positively call it nowadays) at Ahmednuggur in the North-West Provinces. In those days, my dear sir, a man drew his monthly screw by pay-warrant, took the rupees in solid cash, locked them up carefully in the desk in his bungalow, helped himself liberally to them while they lasted, and gave IOU's for any little trifle of cards or horses he might happen to have let himself in for meanwhile with his brother officers. IOU's are of course a gentlemanly and recognised form of monetary engagement, but for bankers' cheques Sir Thomas positively felt little less than contempt and loathing.

Nevertheless, in his comfortable villa in the park at Cheltenham (called Futteypoor Lodge, after that famous engagement during the Mutiny which gave the Colonel his regiment and his K.C.B.-ship) he stood one evening looking curiously at his big davenport, and muttered to himself with more than one most military oath, "Hanged if I don't think I shall positively be compelled to patronise these banker fellows after all. Somebody must have been helping himself again to some of my sovereigns."

Sir Thomas was not by nature a suspicious man—he was too frank and open-hearted himself to think ill easily of others—but he couldn't avoid feeling certain that somebody had been tampering unjustifiably with the contents of his davenport. He counted the rows of sovereigns over once more, very carefully; then he checked the number taken out by the entry in his pocket-book; and then he leaned back in his chair with a puzzled look, took a meditative puff or two at the stump of his cigar, and blew out the smoke in a long curl that left a sort of pout upon his heavily-moustached lip as soon as he had finished. Not a doubt in the world about it—somebody must have helped himself again to a dozen sovereigns.

It was a hateful thing to put a watch upon your servants and dependents, but Sir Thomas felt he must really do it. He

reckoned up the long rows a third time with military precision, entered the particulars once more most accurately in his pocket-book, sighed a deep sigh of regret at the distasteful occupation, and locked up the davenport once more with the air of a man who resigns himself unwillingly to a most unpleasant duty. Then he threw away the tag end of the smoked-out cigar, and went up slowly to dress for dinner.

Sir Thomas's household consisted entirely of himself and his nephew Harry, for he had never been married, and he regarded all womenkind alike from afar off with a quaint, respectful, old-world chivalry; but he made a point of dressing scrupulously every day for dinner, even when alone, as a decorous formality due to himself, his servants, society, the military profession, and the *convenances* in general. If he and his nephew dined together they dressed for one another; if they dined separately they dressed all the same, for the sake of the institution. When a man once consents to eat his evening meal in a blue tie and a morning cutaway, there is no drawing a line until you finally find him an advanced republican and an accomplice of those dreadful War Office people who are bent upon allowing the services to go to the devil. If Colonel Sir Thomas Woolrych, K.C.B., had for a single night been guilty of such abominable laxity, the whole fabric of society would have tottered to its base, and gods and footmen would have felt instinctively that it was all up with the British constitution.

"Harry," Sir Thomas said, as soon as they sat down to dinner together, "are you going out anywhere this evening, my boy?"

Harry looked up a little surlily, and answered after a moment's hesitation, "Why, yes, uncle, I thought—I thought of going round and having a game of billiards with Tom Whitmarsh."

Sir Thomas cleared his throat and hemmed dubiously. "In that case," he said at last, after a short pause, "I think I'll go down to the club myself and have a rubber. Wilkins, the carriage at half-past nine. I'm sorry, Harry, you're going out this evening."

"Why so, uncle? It's only just round to the Whitmarshs', you know."

Sir Thomas shut one eye and glanced with the other at the light through his glass of sherry, held up between finger and thumb critically and suspiciously. "A man may disapprove *in toto* of the present system of competitive examinations for the army," he said, slowly; "for my part, I certainly do, and I make no secret of it; admitting a lot of butchers and bakers and candlestick makers plump into the highest ranks of the service: no tone, no character, no position, no gentlemanly feeling; a great mistake—a great mistake; I told them so at the time. I said to them, 'Gentlemen, you are simply ruining the service.' But they took no notice of me; and what's the consequence? Competitive examination has been the ruin of the service, exactly as I told them. Began with that; then abolition of purchase; then local centres; then that abominable strap with the slip buckle—there, there, Harry, upon my soul, my boy, I can't bear to think of it. But a man may be opposed, as I said, to the whole present system of competitive examination, and yet, while that system still unfortunately continues to exist (that is to say, until a European war convinces all sensible people of the confounded folly of it), he may feel that his own young men, who are reading up for a direct commission, ought to be trying their hardest to get as much of this nonsensical humbug into their heads as possible during the time just before their own examinations. Now, Harry, I'm afraid you're not reading quite as hard as you ought to be doing. The crammer's all very well in his way, of course, but depend upon it, the crammer by himself won't get you through. What's needed is private study."

Harry turned his handsome dark eyes upon his uncle—a very dark, almost gipsy-looking face altogether, Harry's—and answered, deprecatingly, "Well, sir, and don't I go in for private study? Didn't I read up *Samson Agonistes* all by myself right through yesterday?"

"I don't know what Samson Something-or-other is," the old gentleman replied, testily. "What the dickens has Samson Something-or-other got to do with the preparation of a military man, I should like to know, sir?"

"It's the English Literature book for the exam., you know," Harry answered, with a quiet smile. "We've got to get it up, you see, with all the allusions and whatyoumaycallits, for direct commission. It's a sort of a play, I think I should call it, by John Milton."

"Oh, it's the English Literature, is it?" the old Colonel went on, somewhat mollified. "In my time, Harry, we weren't expected to know anything about English literature. The Articles of War, and the Officer's Companion, By Authority, that was the kind of literature we used to be examined in. But nowadays they expect a soldier to be read up in Samson Something-or-other, do they really? Well, well, let them have their fad,

let them have their fad, poor creatures. Still, Harry, I'm very much afraid you're wasting your time, and your money also. If I thought you only went to the Whitmarshs' to see Miss Milly, now, I shouldn't mind so much about it. Miss Milly is a very charming, sweet young creature, certainly — extremely pretty, too, extremely pretty—I don't deny it. You're young yet to go making yourself agreeable, my boy, to a pretty girl like that; you ought to wait for that sort of thing till you've got your majority, or at least, your company—a young man reading for direct commission has no business to go stuffing his head cram full with love and nonsense. No, no; he should leave it all free for fortification, and the general instructions, and Samson Something-or-other, if soldiers can't be made nowadays without English literature. But still, I don't so much object to that, I say—a sweet girl, certainly, Miss Milly—what I do object to is your knocking about so much at billiard-rooms, and so forth, with that young fellow Whitmarsh. Not a very nice young fellow, or a good companion for you either, Harry. I'm afraid, I'm afraid, my boy, he makes you spend a great deal too much money."

"I've never yet had to ask you to increase my allowance, sir," the young man answered haughtily, with a curious glance sideways at his uncle.

"Wilkins," Sir Thomas put in, with a nod to the butler, "go down and bring up a bottle of the old Madeira. Harry, my boy, don't let us discuss questions of this sort before the servants. My boy, I've never kept you short of money in any way, I hope; and if I ever do, I trust you'll tell me of it, tell me of it immediately."

Harry's dark cheeks burned bright for a moment, but he answered never a single word, and went on eating his dinner silently, with a very hang-dog look indeed upon his handsome features.

II.

At half-past nine Sir Thomas drove down to the club, and, when he reached the door, dismissed the coachman. "I shall walk back, Morton," he said. "I shan't want you again this evening. Don't let them sit up for me. I mayn't be home till two in the morning."

But as soon as the coachman had had full time to get back again in perfect safety, Sir Thomas walked straight down the club steps once more, and up the Promenade, and all the way to Futteypoor Lodge. When he got there, he opened the door silently with his latch-key, shut it again without the slightest noise, and walked on tip-toe into the library. It was an awkward sort of thing to do, certainly, but Sir Thomas was convinced in his own mind that he ought to do it. He wheeled an easy chair into the recess by the window, in front of which the curtains were drawn, arranged the folds so that he could see easily into the room by the slit between them, and sat down patiently to explore this mystery to the very bottom.

Sir Thomas was extremely loth in his own mind to suspect anybody; and yet it was quite clear that some one or other must have taken the missing sovereigns. Twice over money had been abstracted. It couldn't have been cook, of that he felt certain; nor Wilkins either. Very respectable woman, cook—very respectable butler, Wilkins. Not Morton; oh dear no, quite impossible, certainly not Morton. Not the housemaid, or the boy: obviously neither; well conducted young people, every one of them. But who the dickens could it be, then? for certainly somebody had taken the money. The good old colonel felt in his heart that for the sake of everybody's peace of mind it was his bounden duty to discover the real culprit before saying a single word to anybody about it.

There was something very ridiculous, of course, not to say undignified and absurd, in the idea of an elderly field officer, late in Her Majesty's service, sitting thus for hour after hour stealthily behind his own curtains, in the dark, as if he were a thief or a burglar, waiting to see whether anybody came to open his davenport. Sir Thomas grew decidedly wearied as he watched and waited, and but for his strong sense of the duty imposed upon him of tracking the guilty person, he would once or twice in the course of the evening have given up the quest from sheer disgust and annoyance at the absurdity of the position. But no; he must find out who had done it: so there he sat, as motionless as a cat watching a mouse-hole, with his eye turned always in the direction of the davenport, through the slight slit between the folded curtains.

Ten o'clock struck upon the alarum on the mantelpiece — half-past ten — eleven. Sir Thomas stretched his legs, yawned, and muttered audibly, "Confounded slow, really." Half-past eleven. Sir Thomas went over noiselessly to the side table, where the decanters were standing, and helped himself

to a brandy and seltzer, squeezing down the cork of the bottle carefully with his thumb, to prevent its popping, till all the gas had escaped piecemeal. Then he crept back, still noiselessly, feeling more like a convicted thief himself than a Knight Commander of the Most Honourable Order of the Bath, and wondering when the deuce this pilfering lock-breaker was going to begin his nightly depredations. Not till after Harry came back, most likely. The thief, whoever he or she was, would probably be afraid to venture into the library while there was still a chance of Harry returning unexpectedly and disturbing the whole procedure. But when once Harry had gone to bed, they would all have heard from Morton that Sir Thomas was going to be out late, and the thief would then doubtless seize so good an opportunity of helping himself unperceived to the counted sovereigns.

About half-past eleven there was a sound of steps upon the garden-walk, and Harry's voice could be heard audibly through the half-open window. The colonel caught the very words against his will. Harry was talking with Tom Whitmarsh, who had walked round to see him home; his voice was a little thick, as if with wine, and he seemed terribly excited (to judge by his accent) about something or other that had just happened.

"Good-night, Tom," the young man was saying, with an outward show of carelessness barely concealing a great deal of underlying irritation. "I'll pay you up what I lost to-morrow or the next day. You shall have your money, don't be afraid about it."

"Oh, it's all right," Tom Whitmarsh's voice answered in an offhand fashion. "Pay me whenever you like, you know, Woolrych. It doesn't matter to me when you pay me, this year or next year, so long as I get it sooner or later."

Sir Thomas listened with a sinking heart. "Play," he thought to himself. "Play, play, play, already! It was his father's curse, poor fellow, and I hope it won't be Harry's. It's some comfort to think, anyhow, that it's only billiards."

"Well, good-night, Tom," Harry went on, ringing the bell as he spoke.

"Good-night, Harry. I hope next time the cards won't go so persistently against you."

The cards! Phew! That was bad indeed. Sir Thomas started. He didn't object to a quiet after-dinner rubber on his own account, naturally: but this wasn't whist; oh, no; nothing of the sort. This was evidently serious playing. He drew a long breath, and felt he must talk very decidedly about the matter to Harry to-morrow morning.

"Is my uncle home yet, Wilkins?"

"No, sir; he said he wouldn't be back probably till two o'clock, and we wasn't to sit up for him."

"All right, then. Give me a light for a minute in the library. I'll take a seltzer before I go upstairs, just to steady me."

Sir Thomas almost laughed outright. This was really too ridiculous. Suppose after all the waiting Harry was to come over and discover him sitting there in the darkness by the window, what a pretty figure he would cut before him. And besides, the whole thing would have to come out then, and after all the thief would never be discovered and punished. The Colonel grew hot and red in the face, and began to wish to goodness he hadn't in the first place let himself in, in any way, for this ridiculous amateur detective business.

But Harry drank his seltzer standing by the side table, with no brandy, either; that was a good thing, no brandy. If he'd taken brandy too in his present excited condition, when he'd already certainly had quite as much as was at all good for him, Sir Thomas would have been justly and seriously angry. But after all, Harry was a good boy at bottom, and knew how to avoid such ugly habits. He took his seltzer and his bedroom candle. Wilkins turned out the light in the room, and Harry went up stairs by himself immediately.

Then Wilkins turned the key in the library door, and the old gentleman began to reflect that this was really a most uncomfortable position for him to be left in. Suppose they locked him in there till to-morrow morning! Ah! happy thought; if the worst came to the worst he could get out of the library window and let himself in at the front door by means of his latch-key.

The servants all filed up stairs, one by one. in an irregular procession; their feet died away gradually upon the upper landings, and a solemn silence came at last over the whole household. Sir Thomas's heart began to beat faster: the excitement of plot interest was growing stronger upon him. This was the time the thief would surely choose to open the davenport. He should know now within twenty minutes which it was of all his people, whom he trusted so implicitly, that was really robbing him.

And he had treated them all so kindly too. Ha, the rascal! he should catch it well, that he should, whoever he was, as soon as ever Sir Thomas discovered him.

Not if it were Wilkins, though; not if it were Wilkins. Sir Thomas hoped it wasn't really that excellent fellow Wilkins. A good old tried and trusty servant. If any unexpected financial difficulties——

Hush, hush. Quietly now. A step upon the landing.

Coming down noiselessly, noiselessly, noiselessly. Not Wilkins; not heavy enough for him, surely; no, no, a woman's step, so very light, so light and noiseless. Sir Thomas really hoped in his heart it wasn't that pretty delicate-looking girl, the new housemaid. If it was, by Jove, yes, he'd give her a good lecture then and there, that very minute, about it, offer to pay her passage quietly out to Canada, and—recommend her to get married decently, to some good young fellow, on the earliest possible opportunity.

The key turned once more in the lock, and then the door opened stealthily. Somebody glided like a ghost into the middle of the room. Sir Thomas, gazing intently through the slit in the curtains, murmured to himself that now at last he should fairly discover the confounded rascal.

Ha! How absurd! He could hardly help laughing once more at the ridiculous collapse to his high-wrought expectations. And yet he restrained himself. It was only Harry! Harry come down, candle in hand, no doubt to get another glass of seltzer. The Colonel hoped not with brandy. No; not with brandy. He put the glass up to his dry lips —Sir Thomas could see they were dry and feverish even from that distance; horrid thing, this gambling!—and he drained it off at a gulp, like a thirsty man who has tasted no liquor since early morning.

Then he took up his candle again, and turned—not to the door. Oh, no. The old gentleman watched him now with singular curiosity, for he was walking not to the door, but over in the direction of the suspected davenport. Sir Thomas could hardly even then guess at the truth. It wasn't, no it wasn't, it couldn't be Harry! not Harry that . . . that borrowed the money!

The young man took a piece of stout wire from his pocket with a terrible look of despair and agony. Sir Thomas's heart melted within him as he beheld it. He twisted the wire about in the lock with a dexterous pressure, and it opened easily. Sir Thomas looked on, and the tears rose into his eyes slowly by instinct; but he said never a word, and watched intently. Harry held the lid of the davenport open for a moment with one hand, and looked at the rows of counted gold within. The fingers of the other hand rose slowly and remorsefully up to the edge of the desk, and there hovered in an undecided fashion. Sir Thomas watched still, with his heart breaking. Then for a second Harry paused. He held back his hand and appeared to deliberate. Something within seemed to have affected him deeply. Sir Thomas, though a plain old soldier, could read his face well enough to know what it was; he was thinking of the kind words his uncle had said to him that very evening as they sat together down there at dinner.

For half a minute the suspense was terrible. Then, with a sudden impulse, Harry shut the lid of the davenport down hastily; flung the wire with a gesture of horror and remorse into the fireplace; took up his candle wildly in his hand; and rushed from the room and up the stairs, leaving the door open behind him.

Then Sir Thomas rose slowly from his seat in the window corner; lighted the gas in the centre burner; unlocked the davenport, with tears still trickling slowly down his face; counted all the money over carefully to make quite certain; found it absolutely untouched; and flung himself down upon his knees wildly, between shame, and fear, and relief, and misery. What he said or what he thought in that terrible moment of conflicting passions is best not here described or written; but when he rose again his eyes were glistening, more with forgiveness than with horror (anger there had never been); and being an old-fashioned old gentleman, he took down his big Bible from the shelf, just to reassure himself about a text which he thought he remembered somewhere in Luke: "Joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance." "Ah, yes," he said to himself; "he repented; he repented. He didn't take it. He felt he couldn't after what I said to him." And then, with the tears still rolling silently down his bronzed cheeks, he went up stairs to bed, but not to sleep; for he lay restless on his pillow all night through with that one terrible discovery weighing like lead upon his tender old bosom.

III.

Next morning, after breakfast, Sir Thomas said in a quiet tone of command to Harry, "My boy, I want to speak to you for a few minutes in the library."

Harry's cheek grew deadly pale and he caught his breath with difficulty, but he followed his uncle into the library without a word, and took his seat at the table opposite him.

"Harry," the old soldier began, as quietly as he was able, after an awkward pause; "I want to tell you a little—a little about your father and mother."

Harry's face suddenly changed from white to crimson, for he felt sure now that what Sir Thomas was going to talk about was not the loss of the money from the davenport a week earlier; and on the other hand, though he knew absolutely nothing about his own birth and parentage, he knew at least that there must have been some sort of mystery in the matter, or else his uncle would surely long since have spoken to him quite freely of his father and mother.

"My dear boy," the Colonel went on again, in a tremulous voice, "I think the time has now come when I ought to tell you that you and I are no relations by blood; you are—you are my nephew by adoption only."

Harry gave a sudden start of surprise, but said nothing.

"The way it all came about," Sir Thomas went on, playing nervously with his watch-chain, "was just this. I was in India during the Mutiny, as you know, and while I was stationed at Boolundshahr in the North-West Provinces, just before those confounded niggers—I mean to say, before the sepoys revolted, your father was adjutant of my regiment at the same station. He and your mother—well, Harry, your mother lived in a small bungalow near the cantonments, and there you were born; why, exactly eight months before the affair at Meerut, you know—the beginning of the Mutiny. Your father, I'm sorry to say, was a man very much given to high play—in short, if you'll excuse my putting it so, my boy, a regular gambler. He owed money to almost every man in the regiment, and amongst others, if I must tell you the whole truth, to me. In those days I sometimes played rather high myself, Harry; not as high as your poor father, my boy, for I was always prudent, but a great deal higher than a young man in a marching regiment has any right to do—a great deal higher. I left off playing immediately after what I'm just going to tell you; and from that day to this, Harry, I've never touched a card, except for whist or cribbage, and never will do, my boy, if I live to be as old as Methuselah."

The old man paused and wiped his brow for a second with his capacious handkerchief, while Harry's eyes, cast down upon the ground, began to fill rapidly with something or other that he couldn't for the life of him manage to keep out of them.

"On the night before the news from Meerut arrived," the old soldier went on once more, with his eye turned half away from the trembling lad, "we played together in the major's rooms, your father and I, with a few others; and before the end of the evening your father had lost a large sum to one of his brother officers. When we'd finished playing he came to me to my quarters, and he said, 'Woolrych, this is a bad job. I haven't got anything to pay McGregor with.'

"'All right, Walpole,' I answered him—your father's name was Captain Walpole, Harry—'I'll lend you whatever's necessary.'

"'No, no, my dear fellow,' he said, 'I won't borrow and only get myself into worse trouble. I'll take a shorter and easier way out of it all, you may depend upon it.'

"At the moment I hadn't the slightest idea what he meant, and so I said no more to him just then about it. But three minutes after he left my quarters I heard a loud cry, and saw your father in the moonlight out in the compound. He had a pistol in his hand. Next moment the report of a shot sounded loudly down below in the compound, and I rushed out at once to see what on earth could be the matter.

"Your father was lying in a pool of blood, just underneath a big mango tree beside the door, with his left jaw shattered to pieces, and his brain pierced through and through from one side to the other by a bullet from the pistol.

"He was dead—stone dead. There was no good doctoring him. We took him up and carried him into the surgeon's room, and none of us had the courage all that night to tell your mother.

"Next day news came of the rising at Meerut.

"That same night, while we were all keeping watch and mounting guard, expecting our men would follow the example of their companions at headquarters, there was a sudden din and tumult in the lines, about nine in the evening, when the word was given to turn in, and McGregor, coming past me, shouted at the top of his voice, 'It's all up, Woolrych. These black devils have broken loose at last, and they're going to fire the officers' quarters.'

"Well, Harry, my boy, I needn't tell you all about it at full length to-day; but in the end, as you know, we fought the men for

our own lives, and held our ground until the detachment came from Etawah to relieve us. However, before we could get to the Bibi's bungalow — the sepoys used to call your mother the Bibi, Harry—those black devils had broken in there, and when next morning early I burst into the ruined place, with three men of the 47th and a faithful native havildar, we found your poor mother —well, there, Harry, I can't bear to think of it, even now, my boy: but she was dead, too, quite dead, with a hundred sabre cuts all over her poor blood-stained, hacked-about body. And in the corner, under the cradle, the eight-month-old baby was lying and crying — crying bitterly; that was you, Harry."

The young man listened intently, with a face now once more ashy-white, but still he answered absolutely nothing.

"I took you in my arms, my boy," the old Colonel continued in a softer tone; "and as you were left all alone in the bungalow there, with no living soul to love or care for you, I carried you away in my arms myself, to my own quarters. All through the rest of that terrible campaign I kept you with me, and while I was fighting at Futteypoor, a native ayah was in charge of you for me. Your poor father had owed me a trifling debt, and I took you as payment in full, and have kept you with me as my nephew ever since. That is all your history, Harry."

The young man drew a deep breath, and looked across curiously to the bronzed face of the simple old officer. Then he asked, a little huskily, "And why didn't my father's or mother's relations reclaim me, sir? Do they know that I am still living?"

Sir Thomas coughed, and twirled his watch chain more nervously and uneasily than ever. "Well, you see, my boy," he answered at last, after a long pause, "your mother—I must tell you the whole truth now, Harry—your mother was a Eurasian, a half-caste lady—very light, almost white, but still a half-caste, you know, and—and—well, your father's family—didn't exactly acknowledge the relationship, Harry."

Harry's face burnt crimson once more, and the hot blood rushed madly to his cheeks, for he felt in a moment the full force of the meaning that the Colonel wrapped up so awkwardly in that one short embarrassed sentence.

There was another long pause, during which Harry kept his burning eyes fixed fast upon Sir Thomas, and Sir Thomas looked down uncomfortably at his boots and said nothing. Then the young man found voice again feebly to ask, almost in a whisper, one final question.

"Had you . . . had you any particular reason for telling me this story about my birth and my parents at this exact time . . . just now, uncle?"

"I had, Harry. I—I have rather suspected of late . . . that . . . that you are falling somehow into . . . into your poor father's unhappy vice of gambling. My boy, my boy, if you inherit his failings in that direction, I hope his end will be some warning to you to desist immediately."

"And had you . . . any reason to suspect me of . . . of any other fault . . . of . . . of any graver fault . . . . of anything really very serious, uncle?"

The Colonel held his head between his hands, and answered very slowly, as if the words were wrung from him by torture: "If you hadn't yourself asked me the question point blank, Harry, I would never have told you anything about it. Yes, my boy, my dear boy, my poor boy; I know it all . . . all . . . all . . . . absolutely."

Harry lifted up his voice in one loud cry and wail of horror, and darted out of the room without another syllable.

"I know that cry," the Colonel said in his own heart, trembling. "I have heard it before! It's the very cry poor Walpole gave that night at Boolundshahr, just before he went out and shot himself!"

IV.

Harry had rushed out into the garden; of that, Sir Thomas felt certain. He followed him hastily, and saw him by the seat under the lime trees in the far corner; he had something heavy in his right hand. Sir Thomas came closer and saw to his alarm and horror that it was indeed the small revolver from the old pistol stand on the wall of the vestibule.

Even as the poor old soldier gazed, half petrified, the lad pushed a cartridge home feverishly into one of the chambers, and raised the weapon, with a stern resolution, up to his temple. Sir Thomas recognised in that very moment of awe and terror that it was the exact attitude and action of Harry's dead father. The entire character and tragedy seemed to have handed itself down directly from father to son without a single change of detail or circumstance.

The old man darted forward hurriedly with

surprising haste, and caught Harry's hand just as the finger rested upon the trigger.

"My boy! my boy!" he cried, wrenching the revolver easily from his trembling grasp, and flinging it, with a great curve, to the other end of the garden. "Not that way! Not that way! I haven't reproached you with one word, Harry; but this is a bad return, indeed, for a life devoted to you. Oh, Harry! Harry! not by shuffling off your responsibilities and running away from them like a coward, not by that can you ever mend matters in the state you have got them into, but by living on, and fighting against your evil impulses and conquering them like a man—that's the way, the right way, to get the better of them. Promise me, Harry, promise me, my boy, that whatever comes you won't make away with yourself, as your father did; for my sake, live on and do better. I'm an old man, an old man, Harry, and I have but you in the world to care for or think about. Don't let me be shamed in my old age by seeing the boy I have brought up and loved as a son dying in disgrace, a poltroon and a coward. Stand by your guns, my boy; stand by your guns, and fight it out to the last minute."

Harry's arm fell powerless to his side, and he broke down utterly, in his shame and self-abasement flinging himself wildly upon the seat beneath the lime-trees and covering his face with his hands to hide the hot tears that were bursting forth in a feverish torrent.

"I will go," he said at last, in a choking voice. "I will go, uncle, and talk to Milly."

"Do," the Colonel said, soothing his arm tenderly. "Do, my boy. She's a good girl, and she'll advise you rightly. Go and speak to her; but before you go, promise me, promise me."

Harry rose, and tried to shake off Sir Thomas's heavy hand, laid with a fatherly pressure upon his struggling shoulder. But he couldn't; the old soldier was still too strong for him. "Promise me," he said once more caressingly, "promise me; promise me!"

Harry hesitated for a second in his troubled mind; then, with an effort, he answered slowly, "I promise, uncle."

Sir Thomas released him, and he rushed wildly away. "Remember," the Colonel cried aloud, as he went in at the open folding windows, "remember, Harry, you are on your honour. If you break parole I shall think very badly, very badly indeed, of you."

But as the old man turned back sadly into his lonely library, he thought to himself, "I wonder whether I oughtn't to have dealt more harshly with him! I wonder whether I was right in letting him off so easily for two such extremely—such extremely grave breaches of military discipline!"

V.

"Then you think, Milly, that's what I ought to do? You think I'd better go and never come back again till I feel quite sure of myself?"

"I think so, Harry, I think so . . . I think so. . . . And yet . . . it's very hard not to see you for so long, Harry."

"But I shall write to you every day, Milly, however long it may be; and if I conquer myself, why, then, Milly, I shall feel I can come back fit to marry you. I'm not fit now, and unless I feel that I've put myself straight with you and my uncle, I'll never come back again—never, never, never!"

Milly's lip trembled, but she only answered bravely, "That's well, Harry; for then you'll make all the more effort, and for my sake I'm sure you'll conquer. But, Harry, I wish before you go you'd tell me plainly what else it is that you've been doing besides playing and losing your uncle's money."

"Oh, Milly, Milly, I can't—I mustn't. If I were to tell you that you could never again respect me—you could never love me."

Milly was a wise girl, and pressed him no further. After all, there are some things it is better for none of us to know about one another, and this thing was just one of them.

So Harry Walpole went away from Cheltenham, nobody knew whither, except Milly; not daring to confide the secret of his whereabouts even to his uncle, nor seeing that sole friend once more before he went, but going away that very night, on his own resources, to seek his own fortune as best he might in the great world of London. "Tell my uncle why I have gone," he said to Milly; "that it is in order to conquer myself; and tell him that I'll write to you constantly, and that you will let him know from time to time whether I am well and making progress."

It was a hard time for poor old Sir Thomas, no doubt, those four years that Harry was away from him, he knew not where, and he was left alone by himself in his dreary home; but he felt it was best so; he knew Harry was trying to conquer him-

self. How Harry lived or what he was doing he never heard; but once or twice Milly hinted to him that Harry seemed sorely in want of money, and Sir Thomas gave her some to send him, and every time it was at once returned, with a very firm but gentle message from Harry to say that he was able, happily, to do without it, and would not further trouble his uncle. It was only from Milly that Sir Thomas could learn anything about his dear boy, and he saw her and asked her about him so often that he learned at last to love her like a daughter.

The four years rolled slowly away, and at the end of them Sir Thomas was one day sitting in his little library, somewhat disconsolate, and reflecting to himself that he ought to have somebody living with him at his time of life, when suddenly there came a ring and a knock that made him start with surprise and pleasure, for he recognised them at once as being Harry's. Next moment the servant brought him in a card, on which was engraved in small letters, "Dr. H. Walpole," and down in the left-hand corner, "Surrey Hospital."

Sir Thomas turned the card over and over with a momentary feeling of disappointment, for he had somehow fáncied to himself that Harry had gone off covering himself with glory among Zulus or Afghans, and he couldn't help feeling that beside that romantic dream of soldierly rehabilitation a plain doctor's life was absurdly prosaic. Next moment Harry himself was grasping his hand warmly, and prose and poetry were alike forgotten in that one vivid all-absorbing delight of his boy recovered.

As soon as the first flush of excitement was fairly over, and Harry had cried regretfully, "Why, uncle, how much older you're looking!" and Sir Thomas had exclaimed in his fatherly joy, "Why, Harry, my boy, what a fine fellow you've turned out, God bless me!" Harry took a little bank bag of sovereigns from his coat pocket and laid it down, very red, upon the corner of the table. "Those are yours, uncle," he said simply.

Sir Thomas's first impulse was to say, "No, no, my boy; keep them, keep them, and let us forget all about it," but he checked himself just in time, for he saw that the best and rightest thing all round was to take them quietly and trouble poor Harry no more with the recollection. "Thank you, my boy," the old soldier answered, taking them up and pocketing them as though it were merely the repayment of an ordinary debt. ("The school for the orphan children of officers in the army will be all the richer for it," he thought to himself.) "And now tell me, Harry, how have you been living, and what have you been doing ever since I last saw you?"

"Uncle," Harry cried—he hadn't unlearnt to think of him and call him by that fond old name, then—"uncle, I've been conquering myself. From the day I left you I've never touched a card once—not once, uncle."

"Except, I suppose, for a quiet rubber," the old Colonel put in, softly.

"Not even for a rubber, uncle," Harry answered, half smiling; "nor a cue nor a dice-box either, nor anything like them. I've determined to steer clear of all the dangers that surround me by inheritance, and I'm not going to begin again as long as I live, uncle."

"That's well, Harry, that's well. And you didn't go in for a direct commission, then? I was in hopes, my boy, that you would still, in spite of everything, go into the Queen's service."

Harry's face fell a little. "Uncle," he said, "I'm sorry to have disappointed you; sorry to have been compelled to run counter to any little ambitions you might have had for me in that respect; but I felt, after all you told me that day, that the army would be a very dangerous profession for me; and though I didn't want to be a coward and run away from danger, I didn't want to be foolhardy and needlessly expose myself to it. So I thought on the whole it would be wiser for me to give up the direct commission business altogether, and go in at once for being a doctor. It was safer, and therefore better in the end both for me and for you, uncle."

Sir Thomas took the young man's hand once more, and pressed it gently with a fatherly pressure. "My boy," he said, "you are right, quite right—a great deal more right, indeed, than I was. But how on earth have you found money to keep yourself alive and pay for your education all these years—tell me, Harry?"

Harry's face flushed up again, this time with honest pride, as he answered bravely, "I've earned enough by teaching and drawing to pay my way the whole time, till I got qualified. And I've been qualified now for nine months, and got a post as house-surgeon at our hospital; but I've waited to come and tell you till I'd saved up that money, you know, out of my salary, and now I'm coming back to settle down in practice here, uncle."

Sir Thomas said nothing, but he rose from his chair and took both Harry's hands in his with tears. For a few minutes he looked at him tenderly and admiringly, then he said

in his simple way, "God bless you! God bless you! I couldn't have done it myself, my boy. I couldn't have done it myself, Harry."

There was a minute's pause, and then Sir Thomas began again, "What a secretive little girl that dear little Miss Milly must be, never to have told me a word of all this, Harry. She kept as quiet about all details as if she was sworn to the utmost secrecy."

Harry rose and opened the library door. "Milly!" he called out, and a light little figure glided in from the drawing-room opposite.

"We expect to be married in three weeks, uncle—as soon as the banns can be published," Harry went on, presenting his future wife as it were to the Colonel. "Milly's money will just be enough for us to live upon until I can scrape together a practice, and she has confidence enough in me to believe that in the end I shall manage to get one."

Sir Thomas drew her down to his chair and kissed her forehead. "Milly," he said, softly, "you have chosen well. Harry, you have done wisely. I shall have two children now instead of one. If you are to live near me I shall be very happy. But, Harry, you have proved yourself well. Now you must let me buy you a practice."

GRANT ALLEN.

THE LIFEBOAT IN TOW.
From a Drawing by C. J. STANILAND, R.I.

LIFEBOATS AND LIFEBOAT-MEN.

I.

It is only fitting that Great Britain, with her large extent of coast-line and great mercantile navy, and with the sea-salt inborn in the veins of her sons, should have taken and kept the lead in the organisation of ways and means for the saving of life from shipwreck. Yet probably no one has less knowledge of the appearance and working of a lifeboat than the average dweller in our inland towns, who, magnificently though they may, and do, support our life-saving institutions, have yet no opportunity of acquiring any practical knowledge of lifeboats or their gallant crews,—with the exception of the few among the seaside tourists who, in their annual trip in search of ozone, may perchance have come across a peculiarly-shaped boat on the beach, painted red, white, and blue, and upon inquiry have been informed by some old salt that she was a lifeboat, or in the larger towns by the sea, where stands the often imposing-looking lifeboat-house of the Royal National Lifeboat Institution, may have spent an idle half-hour in inspecting the boat and hearing a yarn or two from the civil custodian. With the hope that this article, with the aid of the illustrations, may give a clearer idea of what a lifeboat is to those who have never or rarely seen one, and may awaken even a yet greater interest in a service so deservedly popular as the life-saving service of Great Britain, with its fleet of 287 lifeboats, and its army of brave and devoted men, whose efforts since their first organisation have resulted in the saving of 31,645 lives.

A short sketch of the history of lifeboats and their invention, showing what evolutions have resulted in the "survival of the fittest," may probably prove the readiest way of

showing the qualities necessary for a life-saving boat. The first lifeboat was built by Mr. Lionel Lukin, a coachbuilder in Long Acre, about 1784, which he called an "Unimmergible Boat."

Lukin was a native of Dunmow in Essex. George IV., then Prince of Wales, encouraged Lukin, and offered to pay the cost of all his experiments. Lukin purchased a Norway yawl, and to the outside of the upper frame of the yawl he added a projecting gunwale of cork and formed within the boat a hollow, water-tight inclosure. He then added a false iron keel and two water-tight inclosures, one at the bow and another at the stern.

The only boat ever fitted on Lukin's principle was a Bamborough coble, which was reported to have saved several lives. Lukin died at Hythe, in Kent, in 1834, and the following inscription was engraved on his tombstone and is still to be seen:

"This Lionel Lukin
was the first who built a lifeboat, and was the original Inventor of that principle of safety by which many lives and much property have been preserved from shipwreck, and he obtained for it the King's Patent in the year 1785."

Notwithstanding the earnestness of Lukin, hardly anything was done to aid the shipwrecked sailor until the year 1789, when the *Adventure*, of Newcastle, was wrecked at the mouth of the Tyne and her crew drowned in the sight of thousands of spectators. Excited by this disaster, the people of South Shields offered premiums for the best model of a lifeboat. Out of numerous designs two were selected, Mr. W. Wouldhave's and Mr. H. Greathead's; and the latter was employed to build a lifeboat on his plan, which was launched at South Shields in 1790. The committee would appear to have combined the two plans of Wouldhave and Greathead, and given it to the latter to build.

The idea of Wouldhave's form of boat was suggested to him, it was said, by the following circumstance: Having been asked to assist a woman to put a skeel of water on her head, Mr. Wouldhave noticed that she had a piece of a broken wooden dish lying in the water, which floated with the points upwards, and turning it over several times he found that it always righted itself. This observation suggested to him the construction of his model, but he does not seem to have done more than construct the boat, which was long known at Shields by the name of Wouldhave's cork boat. Greathead's boat differed from Lukin's in the shape of the keel and in the substitution of cork for the side air-chambers; but the special point in which Greathead's boat differed from both Lukin's and Wouldhave's consisted in making the keel curved instead of straight, and it is owing to this important improvement, which was undoubtedly Greathead's plan, that he has been popularly regarded as the inventor of the lifeboat, and entitled to a national reward.

Wouldhave died at South Shields in 1821. His tombstone in the church of S. Hilda bears the model of a lifeboat and the following quaint inscription:

Sacred to the Memory of
WILLIAM WOULDHAVE,
who died Sept. 28th, 1821,
Aged 70 years.
Clerk of this Church
and Inventor of that invaluable blessing
to mankind,
the Lifeboat.

" Heaven genius scientifick gave,
Surpassing vulgar boast; yet he from soil
So rich, no golden harvest reaped; no wreathe
Of laurel gleaned, nor but the sailor's heart,
Nor that ingrate, A palm unfading this
Till shipwrecks cease, or lifeboats cease to save."

For this and much of the historical and technical information contained in the article I am indebted to the exhaustive and able work of the late Mr. George Lewis, secretary to the Royal National Lifeboat Institution, entitled, *The Lifeboat and its Work*, and he in his turn was indebted to the Rev. George E. Sharland, of South Shields, for a copy of the above inscription. I am also indebted to the *Lifeboat Journal* of the Royal National Lifeboat Institution for reports of lifeboat services.

A model of Wouldhave's lifeboat is or was suspended to the chandelier in the church.

Greathead's lifeboat performed no important service until 1791, when it saved the crew of a brig at the entrance of the Tyne. Between then and 1797 it saved several other crews. Notwithstanding this, no other lifeboat was built until 1798, when the then Duke of Northumberland ordered one to be built at his own expense by Greathead, and also endowed it. In 1800 the Duke ordered one for Oporto, and Mr. C. Dempster in the same year one for Saint Andrews, where, on January 10th, 1803, it saved twelve men from the *Meanwell* of Scarborough. On account of the violence of the storm the

fishermen were afraid to venture in the boat until Mr. Dempster, Major Horsburgh, and Mr. D. Stewart volunteered. Owing to these proofs of their value Mr. Greathead had built thirty-one boats before the end of 1803.

In 1802, when 200 lives had been saved at the mouth of the Tyne alone, Greathead applied to Parliament for a reward, and £1,200 was voted to him. The Trinity House added £105, Lloyd's the same sum, the Society of Arts a gold medal and fifty guineas, and the Emperor of Russia a diamond ring.

In 1810 one of Greathead's lifeboats at Hartley, on the coast of Northumberland, rescued the crews of several cobles. On returning to the shore, however, the boat got too near the South Bush Rock, when a heavy sea broke on board and split her in halves, and all on board—thirty-four men—were drowned.

Greathead's original lifeboat was lost in 1821 upon the rocks at the mouth of the Tyne, but no lives were lost.

The next effort in the direction of the preservation of life from shipwreck was made by Sir William Hilary, Bart., who published a powerful appeal to the nation, asking "whether Englishmen would quietly look on and see hundreds of their fellow-creatures annually perish, when means of rescue, if supplied and properly used, were within reach?"

This appeal was warmly responded to, but little was done until 1823, when Sir William became acquainted with Mr. T. Wilson, one of the members for the city of London, who warmly took up the subject and caused a meeting to be held at the London Tavern with a view to the formation of a National Shipwreck Institution. The result of this meeting was that the Royal National Institution for the Preservation of Life from Shipwreck was founded. The receipts of the Institution during its first year were £9,826 6*s.* 6*d.*, and the Committee, in their first report, stated that they had caused twelve lifeboats to be built for different stations, besides which nine had been stationed round the coast by benevolent individuals and associations not connected with the Institution.

In 1826, the late S. Palmer, Esq., of Nasing Park, Essex, became connected with the Institution, and in 1828 his plan of fitting lifeboats was adopted by the Institution until 1852, when it was superseded by the self-righting principle. Palmer's boats rendered great service, some hundreds of lives having been saved by their instrumentality.

Between 1841 and 1850 no appeal was made to the public, and lifeboat work was in a very depressed state when a lamentable accident to the South Shields lifeboat, by which twenty men were drowned, had the effect of recalling public attention to the lifeboat question.

Out of evil came good, and a committee was formed to make renewed efforts.

The late Prince Consort became vice-patron of the Institution, in conjunction with the late King of the Belgians, her Majesty the Queen being patron, and in 1860 her Majesty granted a charter of incorporation.

In 1851 the late Duke of Northumberland offered a prize of 100 guineas for the best model of a lifeboat, and the like sum for defraying the cost of building a boat on the model chosen. In response 280 models and plans were sent in, and out of these Mr. James Beeching, of Great Yarmouth, was the successful candidate.

The first self-righting boat was constructed by Mr. James Beeching. It was thirty-six feet long and twelve-oared.

The Lifeboat Committee, not being altogether satisfied with Beeching's boat, had requested Mr. Peake, one of their number, to design a boat overcoming as far as possible the errors of Beeching's plan. Such a boat was designed and built at Woolwich Dockyard at the expense of the Government and under Mr. Peake's personal superintendence. This boat was a great success, and, although modified from time to time as the result of experiments, was completed and presented to his grace. The National Lifeboat Institution proceeded to build others on the same plan, and this same class of boats with certain important modifications and improvements it has continued to adopt up to the present time, so that the lifeboat of the Institution cannot be looked on as any one man's design or invention. The Institution's self-righting lifeboats have a water-tight deck at the loadwater line, and detached air-boxes along the sides from the thwarts to the deck. A great amount of extra buoyancy is also in these boats derived from large end air-cases built across their bow and stern, and occupying from 5 to 6½ feet in length from the stem and stern posts to gunwale height. These cases are chiefly intended to provide self-righting power in the event of the boat being stove in, and the place below the deck being filled with water they alone have sufficient buoyancy to float her.

The second peculiar characteristic of a lifeboat is the capability of self-discharging in a few seconds any water which may be shipped

by the breaking of a sea or by the boat being suddenly thrown on its beam-ends.

This self-discharging power is accomplished by means of the water-tight deck at the load line and a sufficient number of large open tubes having their upper orifices at the surface of the deck and their lower ones at the boat's floor, passing through the space between the deck and the floor but hermetically closed to it, thus providing an open communication between the interior of the boat and the sea, yet without suffering any leakage into the air-chambers under the deck. In the self-righting boats these tubes are fitted with self-acting valves which open downwards only, so that they will allow any water shipped to pass downwards, while none beyond a trifling leakage can pass upwards through them. These boats are first ballasted with a heavy iron keel, which acts as a most powerful leverage. These iron keels vary in weight from 3 to 21 cwt. Ballast formed of air-tight cases and of cork inclosed in water-tight cases is also used. Thus a ten-oared boat 33 feet long has an iron keel of 8 cwt., and nearly the same weight of air-cases and cases of cork stored beneath the deck.

Richardson's tubular lifeboat has a great amount of stability. It consists of two long tubes parallel to each other, a few feet apart having their ends turned upwards and downwards and terminating in points, with an open work or grating-deck with corresponding thwarts all supported above the tubes. It was designed and brought out by H. and H. T. Richardson, two Welsh gentlemen, father and son, who first used one on a lake in Wales. When the prize was offered by the Duke of Northumberland they sent a model to compete.

THE LAUNCH (WAITING FOR A CHANCE).
From a Drawing by C. J. STANILAND, R.I.

They built at Manchester a full-sized boat, forty feet long and rowing fourteen oars, and made a coasting voyage in it themselves from Liverpool to the Thames. This boat was afterwards sold to the Portuguese Government and stationed at Oporto.

A smaller tubular boat was built for the Institution and stationed at Rhyl, the boatmen at that place having applied for such a boat. She has saved several crews and has been highly reported on by those who work her. She has great stability and tows steadily.

Another such boat has been stationed by the Institution at New Brighton, and has done good service in saving life and property.

The only boats in the United Kingdom now ballasted with water are the Norfolk and Suffolk lifeboats. These boats deserve special notice and will be referred to in a separate division, as their build and entire system of launching and working, &c., is totally different from that of the self-righting boats.

It frequently happens that wrecks occur at a place several miles distant from the lifeboat station, yet close to the shore. In such cases it is quicker and safer to transport the lifeboat by land to the scene of the disaster than for her to be rowed or sailed broadside to the sea, through, perhaps, several miles of broken water. Again, at many places the shore runs out very flat, and should a wreck occur at low water, although abreast of the lifeboat station, she might have to be conveyed a quarter of a mile or more over the sands before she could be floated, which could then only be accomplished at the expense of much labour and loss of valuable time, unless she were placed on a wheeled carriage.

No pains or expense was spared by the Institution to make its lifeboat carriages as efficient as possible, not only for transport, but as a means of launching a lifeboat safely, quickly, and effectively. The subject was warmly taken up by the late Colonel J. Nisbett Colquhoun, R.A. He became chairman of the Institution's Carriage, House, and Rocket Sub-committee, and in 1852 he caused to be built in the Royal Arsenal, from his own designs, a carriage which was supplied to four stations and then abandoned by the Committee as a permanent pattern, on account of its costliness and weight. It however became the acknowledged pattern, of which all subsequent ones were, more or less, modifications. On the decease of Colonel Colquhoun his successor at the Royal Arsenal, Lieut.-Colonel A. T. Tulloh, R.A., also turned his attention to the subject, and with his assistance and that of Messrs. Ransome and Sons, of Ipswich, a carriage on a modified plan was produced. It was much cheaper and lighter, but after some extensive trials of four carriages of that class on the coast it was also found that it was not sufficiently simple in its arrangements for the crews of lifeboats to handle it satisfactorily. The Committee then requested their inspector of lifeboats to carry out a series of investigations, and draw up a report embodying the experiences of those who had been in the habit of using the various kinds of existing lifeboat transporting carriages, together with his own views as to the best way of meeting the necessities of the case.

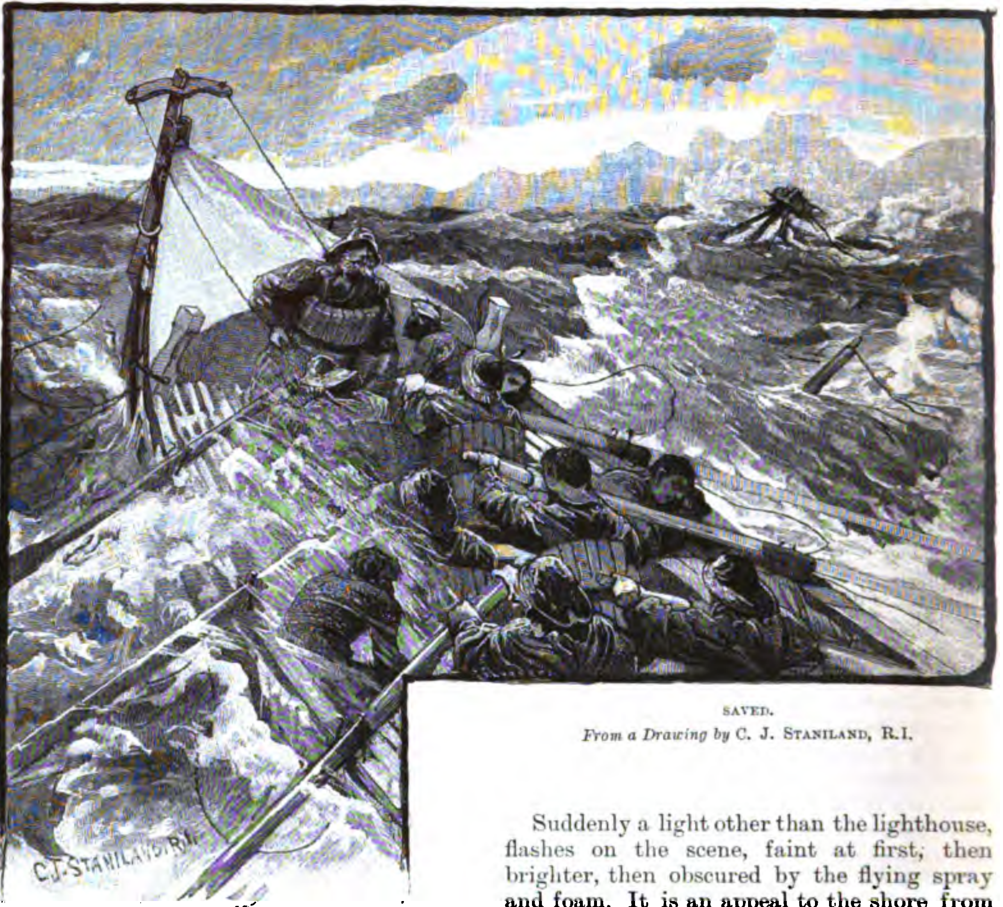
As the result of these investigations Captain Ward placed before the Committee designs for a carriage which he considered would meet the various conditions in a lifeboat carriage. His plan was approved, and the carriage then built became the model on which the Institution has continued to build to the present time.

In addition to transportation, a carriage is of immense service in launching a boat from a beach without her keel touching the ground; so much so, indeed, that one can be launched from a carriage through a high surf, when without one she could not be got off the beach.

In some cases where there is a harbour, as at Ramsgate, the boat is kept afloat, and when required is towed out by a steam tug to the scene of the wreck, or as near to it as possible (see illustration, p. 333). The tug then waits until the rescue is effected and picks up the boat again and tows her home.

To conduce to a thorough understanding of the whole method of launching the lifeboat from its carriage and the rescue of the shipwrecked crew, a general description of the work will be given, partly compiled from yarns by lifeboat men, partly from different accounts of services in the *Lifeboat*, the journal of the Royal National Lifeboat Institution, so as to give as clear an idea as possible to the non-nautical reader of the saving of life from shipwreck, combined with reports of actual rescues effected by the lifeboats of the Institution, selected with a view of showing special points, such as the transportation of boats, the determination of the crews, &c., &c.

Let the reader imagine him- or her-self a visitor at one of our seaside towns, not under the usual conditions of seaside visitation, bright sun, sparkling water, paddling and castle-building children, splashing bathers, bands of music, Ethiopian serenaders, and shrieking donkey-riders, but in mid-winter, when the surf is thundering on the beach, now deserted save by a few boatmen and fishermen gathered under the lee of an old boat or shed, sweeping the horizon with a



SAVED.
From a Drawing by C. J. STANILAND, R.I.

glass, and discussing the chances of the weather with many weatherwise looks at the sky.

Evening draws on, the sun has set in a lurid bank of clouds, throwing a momentary light as of fire over the town, intensifying the colour on the old red roofs until they glow as if lit with internal fires. But only momentarily—the flying scud comes driving up over the sunset, and everything settles down into cold, dreary grey, soon to vanish in the blackness of a moonless and starless night.

The boatmen go home; the town settles down into quiet and into sleep; the lights one by one are extinguished, until at last the revolving light at the lighthouse is the only break in the darkness, flashing out periodically and on its disappearance making the blackness blacker; and the only sound is the rush of the breakers up the steep beach, and their swish and rattle as they recoil dragging down the loose shingle in their clutches, only to return it in their next mad rush.

Suddenly a light other than the lighthouse, flashes on the scene, faint at first, then brighter, then obscured by the flying spray and foam. It is an appeal to the shore from the crew of some helpless craft which has struck on one of the outlying reefs, who have lighted a flare (see frontispiece), and, momentarily secure in the rigging, flash forth their message for help, until a wave higher than the rest extinguishes their torch but not their hopes, for they know that there is a lifeboat station on shore, and that that means rescue if rescue is within human power. Hardly is their flare quenched, when a report from the lightship on the other side of the headland and the flash and fire-stream of a rocket hissing up from behind the dark mass of cliff and making visible for the moment the cruel rocks and leaping surf round its base, tell them that their appeal has been heard; then another flash and report from the shore show that the coxswain of the lifeboat is on the alert, and is calling his crew together.

The crew gather, the boathouse is unlocked and the boat on its carriage run out, the horses are brought and harnessed, and, followed by scores of helpers and idlers who

have sprung up as if by magic, the boat is taken at full gallop along the quiet parade, now lit faintly by the grey light of morning, and down to the beach. The carriage is backed by the horses and willing strong arms through the shingle, so that the rear of the carriage from which the boat is launched shall face the sea; the crew clamber into the boat and take their places, each man with oar in hand and equipped with his cork life-belt; the coxswain takes his place at the stern and grips the tiller lines (see illustration, p. 336); some of the men with a look of grim determination on their faces, some slightly pale, others joking and chaffing each other. The wind seems armed with shafts of ice, the yeasty, porter-coloured foam lies in masses, rolling and tumbling up the shingle and flying far over the land to leeward. But calmly sit the lifeboat crew gripping their oars and waiting for a chance, and many thinking no doubt of those they have left at home. At last the chance comes, the coxswain gives the word, the idlers and boatmen who have manned the launching ropes run them up the beach and away goes the lifeboat on its noble errand, followed by the cheers and prayers of the shore crowd.

As the lifeboat meets the first shock of the breakers she seems for a moment to hang and hesitate, but the gallant fellows "put their backs in it" and as she gathers way and clears the worst of the broken water on the beach, she speeds on through masses of green water that tumble on board burying for the moment men and boat, but only for the moment; the lifeboat shakes herself free, discharges the water shipped, and again struggles forward to her goal. The light of dawn is yet faint, and the smother of driving spray and drift is so great that had not the coxswain taken the bearings of the wreck before the flare was quenched they might have searched for hours for the wreck. At last, amidst the hurly-burly, a faint shout is heard and answered, and amidst the ghastly ghostly white of the tumbling leaping foam on the reef is seen the black mass of the wreck. Her main topmast is gone, and groaning and creaking like a living thing in torture, the wind shrieking and howling through her remaining rigging, she grinds and thumps on the black jagged teeth of rock that are tearing her to pieces. The whole sea between the lifeboat and the wreck is a snarl of broken timber and ropes, the wreckage of the vessel. The lifeboat waits a chance, and then backs in; the grapple is thrown and holds; part of the crew in with their oars, the remainder, as the mad rush of waters swirling round the bow and stern of the wreck strive in their recoil to dash the boat against her, pull for their lives and keep her out. The shipwrecked crew make a rush for the boat as she hauls in. The foremast, sorely tried, goes by the board with a crash, and the flying, whirling ropes sweep overboard two of the crew and hurl them into the seething water. But the lifeboat-men are ready and prompt: by a sharp sheer they avoid, by an apparent miracle, the falling foremast and its gear, then dart on one man and drag him on board, and as the second, blindly struggling, goes down to his death, an iron grip seizes him by the hair and swings him back to safety. Then fending off the tangle of timber and hemp churning in this devil's caldron, they haul into the wreck once again and succeed in rescuing the remainder of the crew, and sheer off, as with crack and wrench the wreck lifts and then melts away as it were into a confusion of black ugly timbers, planking, knees, doors, and spars, in the white yeast and froth around them.

One of the men is nearly spent, and but for the rum, carried in the lifeboat for the purpose, the chances are that he would have been a dead man before the beach was reached. Then away they go, rescuers and rescued, for the shore, where they are eagerly waited for by a crowd, in which the anxious faces of the wives and daughters and sisters of the gallant crew are conspicuous, and the cheer which breaks forth and rings out again and again as the boat is sighted on its return, brings a light into the pale faces—pale indeed in the early dawn—that have waited patiently for the return in safety of their bread-winners. Alas, sometimes they wait in vain.

The boat is beached, willing hands helping; the rescued men are taken to the Sailors' Home, where every comfort awaits them. The carriage is brought down again, the fore carriage is disconnected and the end of the keelway rested on the ground, thus forming an inclined plane up which the boat is easily drawn. The forecarriage replaced, the horses are again harnessed and the boat drawn back to its shed followed by a cheering crowd.

The determination of the crews of the lifeboats, the number of attempts that they will make at a rescue, never losing pluck until all chance is gone, may perhaps be better realised by the perusal of some reports of lifeboat services taken from the *Lifeboat Journal*.

"Holyhead.—On the morning of the 30th March, 1883, it was reported that a barque

TESTING SELF-RIGHTING BOATS AT INSTITUTION'S YARD.
From a Drawing by C. J. STANILAND, R.I.

was ashore on Cymeran Beach with all hands in the fore rigging, the vessel having sunk and her mainmast having been carried away during a heavy S.S.W. gale. The Rhosneigir lifeboat went to her assistance but being disabled by the breaking of several rowing crutches, was compelled to return to the shore, one of the boat's crew being washed overboard by a heavy sea and rescued with some difficulty. The Holyhead lifeboat was then launched, and at about 11 o'clock was taken in tow by the ss. *George Elliott* to the N.W. of the South Stack. Here the lifeboat was cast off, and proceeded under canvas until about 12.30, when she fell in with the steam-tug *Challenger*, by which she was towed in the direction of the stranded vessel. Owing, however, to the heavy sea, the tug could not go within a mile of the wreck, and the lifeboat, being obliged to continue her course under oars, made three fruitless attempts to reach the wreck owing to the broken water and the heavy surf. As the wind was rising and there was no place to beach the boat she was obliged to return to Holyhead. Other unsuccessful attempts to reach the vessel were subsequently made by the Rhosneigir lifeboat, but they failed, and endeavours to rescue the crew by means of the rocket apparatus also failed.

"As the Rhosneigir men were reported to be exhausted by their exertions, it was suggested that the Holyhead crew should proceed to Rhosneigir and try to get to the vessel in that lifeboat. An application was accordingly made to the railway authorities for a special engine, which was at once granted, and the Holyhead crew were thus conveyed to the spot nearest to the wreck. It was now quite dark, and the men had scarcely any knowledge of the position of hidden rocks on that coast, but they nevertheless gallantly took out the boat and succeeded in reaching the wrecked vessel and in rescuing the twenty men who were on board."

To show the difficulties in connection with the transportation of lifeboats, the following report will be interesting:

"On Sunday, the 25th of November, intelligence was received at Eastbourne that a large foreign barque was riding at her anchors off Beachy Head lighthouse in a very dangerous position, with a signal of distress flying. With as little delay as possible the crew of the *William and Mary* lifeboat was mustered and the boat, mounted on its transporting carriage, started for Birling Gap, drawn by seven horses. The route taken was through Meads, where three additional horses were procured, and with this extra power she speedily mounted the hill, and crossed the downs to Birling Gap, a distance altogether of five miles. There the boat was obliged to be taken off her carriage, as the Gap had to be widened to admit even of the passage of the boat, and the incline was very sharp. The lower part of the Gap had been washed away by the sea, but this difficulty was overcome by using some long pieces of timber which were fortunately on the spot. Under the superintendence of the coxswain the boat was by great exertions got safely down to the beach, and was launched at 1.15. The wind was blowing a gale from the S.S.W. and a tremendous sea was rolling in. At about two o'clock, after a very hard struggle against the head sea, the midship oars being double banked, the vessel was reached; she was then opposite the Gap, about a mile from shore, labouring heavily in the seas with two anchors down, sails torn, and spars carried away.

"A storm of rain then came on, and the vessel and lifeboat were hidden from the view of the spectators who lined the cliffs. After a period of suspense the lifeboat was seen making for the shore, and in gallant style she took the beach almost close to the spot from whence she had started, and landed the rescued crew of eleven men. The lifeboat had anchored as close as possible to the vessel and the crew were then hauled into her.

TAKING CREW OFF JIB-BOOM.
From a Drawing by C. J. STANILAND, R.I.

"The poor fellows—who were in a very exhausted state, one of them having sustained

a fracture of the ribs—were taken to the coastguard station, where they received every attention from the chief officer and the coastguardsmen. The lifeboat was got up the Gap with considerable difficulty, and arrived back at her station about 7.30. The distressed vessel was the barque *New Brunswick* of Brevig, 480 tons, bound from Quebec to West Hartlepool with a cargo of deals. Subsequently, on the weather moderating, the ship and cargo were taken safely to Newhaven by the tug and lifeboat from there."

To show the way in which the lifeboatmen rescue a crew when the boat is unable, owing to heavy seas, to run alongside the wreck, the following report is quoted:

"Holy Island, Northumberland. — The ketch, *Mary Tweedlie*, of Berwick, was seen running before the wind under bare poles at 3 p.m. on the 6th March, 1883, during a fearful gale of wind from N. to N.E. and a very heavy sea, the whole bar and the sea as far as the eye could reach being one mass of broken water. The No. 1 lifeboat, *Grace Darling*, was launched and was more than three hours in reaching the vessel. The crew pulled bravely until almost exhausted, but every time they seemed to be near enough to throw a line on board a huge wave washed them about a hundred yards astern. This was repeated ten or twelve times before the lifeboat-men were able to get a rope fast to the vessel, after which they took two men into the boat by means of the life buoy in a very exhausted and benumbed condition; one of the crew had received a blow on the head from a falling spar at about twelve o'clock and had died soon afterwards."

The drawing, p. 341, represents the lifeboat, having got under the lee of a wreck, keeping out under her jib-boom, and the crew dropping one by one down a rope into the arms of the lifeboat-men.

The National Lifeboat Institution has up to date 267 of these self-righting boats distributed at their stations round the coast. The Institution has at Poplar, Limehouse, London, a store yard. It comprises sheds for stowage of lifeboats and their carriages, ample store-rooms, an office for the storekeeper in charge, and two cottages for the chief and senior assistant riggers. The yard opens on to the banks of the Limehouse Cut Canal, and on the bank is a large crane used to hoist boats in and out of the canal.

Every lifeboat before it leaves the yard is tested in the canal as to its stability, self-righting, and other qualities (see illustration p. 340); by means of a rope attached to the crane she is hauled over on her beam ends and upset, when she rights herself. She is also tested as to stability by means of a number of weights and men standing on her gunwale so as to bring her down to the water's edge.

C. J. STANILAND.

(*To be continued.*)

ULM.

WHEN the art-loving tourist desirous of transporting himself into the realm of feeling evoked by mediæval monuments visits Germany, he invariably sets forth for Nürnberg, oblivious or unconscious of the fact that there are yet other towns in the empire in which the craftsmanship of the middle ages can also be studied. Some of these can even boast that they surpass this wondrous Gothic city in a superior development of a special artistic branch. This is notably the case with Ulm, which, in respect of wood-carving, may claim to stand first in all Germany. Yet to how many persons who are well acquainted with Adam Krafft and Peter Vischer, are the names of the Syrlins, father and son, "familiar as household words"? The mention of Ulm is far more likely to recall the incident of General Mack's inglorious capitulation, an act of cowardice that has made the surrender of the city a by-word for mockery. Lying somewhat aside of the tourist beat, this ancient, now rather sleepy, Imperial town is rarely visited by the traveller. Once, however, it was of the greatest commercial importance, and the proverb went:—"*Ulmer Geld Regiert die Welt*" (Ulm's money rules the world).

Situated in a wide, fertile plain upon the Danube, like all places along that river it shows evidences of Roman civilisation. In chronicles of the ninth century it is mentioned as a *villa regia*, and the origin of its name is explained as V.L.M., *i.e. quintae legionis mensio.* Like all small mediæval republics, Ulm was pugnacious, and carried on feuds with its neighbours, whence the citizens learnt endurance and resistance, a circumstance which may account for the singularly virile expression stamped on the art productions of this period, rather in contrast with the soft sentimentalism that made the Swabian school of poetry some centuries later a butt for that mocking will-o'-the-wisp of genius, Heinrich Heine. At no time rigidly in the power of the clergy, Ulm was one of the first cities openly to join the reformed cause, and there exists in the British Museum a quaint document in which the decision of the corporation to join the new doctrine is made known to the citizens. This circumstance exerted immense importance in Ulm's artistic life, and in no town can be more graphically learnt what possibilities and probabilities of humanistic and artistic development lay in the higher Humanism which culled the choicest fruits from all modes of thought, and which, attaining its bloom in the Italian Renaissance, was also being striven after by the Gothic movement, and would, but for Luther, have achieved its aim.

The outer aspect of Ulm is not specially impressive. The streets are narrow and not always picturesque, the brick of which its ancient, tall, gabled houses are built is rather grey in tone, and gives the city a sombre look. Nor does it seem specially prosperous. The introduction of machinery has interfered with its ancient trade of spinning, and of all its former specialties it only retains that in carved wooden pipe-heads of the huge type familiar in representations of the typical German, and known as "Ulm-heads."

Built in a kind of oval, the cathedral, the pride and glory of the town, rears its head high up from its midst. This edifice takes rank among the six finest Gothic minsters of Germany, and is, after Cologne, the largest. Originally three- now five-aisled, it is built without transepts or side chapels, with that simplicity of design which has peculiarly favoured its conversion into a Protestant

place of worship. Begun in 1737, it was reared by the guild of Freemasons who here carried out to its fullest development their peculiar geometrical system, founding the entire edifice upon a fundamental number, which, in this case was 10 with a mystic combination of 3. Thus there are ten pointed arches in the nave, ten windows in the five-sided apse, the tower, if it had been finished, would have been five times as high as it was broad, and so forth. Arithmetical proportion pervades all the architectural details, while again and again recurs the monogram of the lodge, A. T., signifying *Tudela ædificata.* The building, originally, after the fashion of many Gothic churches, blocked up by small houses, has now been freed from these (with the one exception of the sacristan's dwelling, which clings like a swallow's nest to the side of the main porch), and can be seen in its entirety from the lime-planted square wherein it stands. Its exterior, from the fact that it was never finished, is not specially impressive, and excepting always the western *façade*, looks heavy; an appearance enhanced by the fact that the long plain walls of the building are of nude brick which has never yet received its destined coating of stone. All the more, therefore, does the colossal tower with its rich decorative work contrast with the main pile. The whole building is now undergoing careful restoration, and it is hoped, if funds are forthcoming, that it, too, like Cologne, will be completed under the ægis of the German Empire.

From its commencement it enjoyed the distinction, of which the Ulmers are justly proud, of being one of the few cathedrals erected at the expense of the citizens only, without aid from abroad, papal indulgences, or remission of taxes. That the tower remained incomplete was not so much from lack of funds, as that, in 1492, the two piers that supported it showed signs of giving way, so that it was not judged safe to rear it higher. The names of the master-masons, in accordance with the rules of the guild, are not always preserved. One, however, was certainly Ulrich von Ensingen, whose crest and bust are to be seen within the tower and who afterwards worked on Milan Cathedral. Five entrances give admission into the church. As usual the chief portal is the most beautiful. It is somewhat peculiar in treatment, being inclosed, as at Noyon, in a narthex, which is supported without by two tall elegant pillars that lead to the two main doors of the porch. These pillars are intended to symbolise the brazen pillars, Jachin and Boaz, placed by Solomon before his temple. One of them bears the figure of the naked Christ, showing to all who enter here the wounds He has endured for their sakes and salvation. There is a freedom of treatment in this statue, a search after dramatic effect, a correctness of body proportions, a fullness in the flesh handling, at that time too frequently a spare presentment of muscle, all pointing to an artist who must have seen Dürer's pictures, and have lived in an age when sculpture was liberating herself from architecture, and statues came to exist for their own sake. Unlike its neighbours it is hewn free in the stone, and was evidently modelled and blocked out elsewhere. Critics venture to think that we may here have another work from the hand of the younger Syrlin, but there is no positive evidence to be gained on the subject.

Flush with the main wall of the church uprises the tower, an elegant mass of late decorated Gothic, in which is carried out to greater completeness the idea developed by Master Erwin, at Strasbourg, of pilaster strips before the deeper lying windows, thus effectuating in the tower the idea started by the porch. In this tower, which is easily ascended and which commands an extensive view of the surrounding plains and the distant Swabian Alps, hang a large number of bells, all bearing names indicative of their purpose. Some have long been silent, among them one named the "Wine Bell" once rung nightly at ten o'clock for the purpose of fetching the male population home from the tavern. On the top is a quaint Latin inscription commemorating the foolhardiness of the Emperor Maximilian, a lover, it would seem, of foolhardy deeds—for Innsbruck has a cognate tale to tell—who, ascending this tower, in 1492, leaped upon the parapet, and balancing himself on one leg, swung round the other in mid-air; a truly royal form of recreation. In the tower, too, is kept a typical "Ulm-head," the largest tobacco-pipe probably ever made, excepting always Her Majesty's in St. Katherine's Docks. Tradition telleth that a student from Tübingen once smoked it empty after a steady pull of nine hours. Tradition telleth not how the student felt afterwards. On the roof of the nave sits the image of a huge sparrow, known as the "Ulmer-Spatz," a figure that has sat here from time immemorial as a memento to the Ulmers of the stupidity of their forbears, who needed a bird to show them that a beam carried crosswise could not enter into a narrow gate.

Of the doors that conduct into the church the richest in point of decoration are those in the chief portal, with their niches for

EXTERIOR OF CATHEDRAL, ULM.
From a Drawing by A. D. M'CORMICK.

statues, destroyed by the Protestant iconoclasts, their clustered pillars, their storied tympanums. But the quaintest and most fanciful is the south door, that is decorated with a most original device, namely a tree carved in stone with its branches bent and lopped to form the arch. But all the doors are equally rich in symbolic carving and of great interest in respect to the light they throw on the costume and armour of the period. Gothic grotesque together with deeper meaning is blended in that curious mode possible only to the Gothic mind. This is specially notable in the carving that represents the revolt of the angels, a fine dignified conception, in which is introduced the

involuntarily comic element, the Almighty sweeping away the rebellious angels with a schoolmaster's birch-rod. The birth of Christ is not represented as usual in a manger, but is a free and rather profane conception of a common burgher child-bed room. The artist here allowed himself much license. Thus the ox and the ass are introduced, but only to hold in their mouths the curtains of the bed, in which Mary lies comfortably ensconced, while Joseph is bearing across the chamber a basket of baby linen. Another door bears in its tympanum a representation of the Passion, yet another of the Last Judgment. Here Christ is depicted, drawn sword in hand, sitting upon the rainbow, a conception evidently borrowed from the defunct northern gods. As in all mediæval churches one door is decorated with the parable of the wise and foolish virgins. It was used for marriage parties, and was always known as the bride's door. A little street opposite the cathedral is still called Bride Lane. On all the doors, as everywhere inside and out of the cathedral, the use of plant ornamentation is predominant, and very elegantly and gracefully is it introduced.

The first aspect of the interior is impressive from its rhythmic dignity, and, notwithstanding its heavy style of building, it produces an effect of lightness and upstriving. Equally instantaneously, however, the eye is unfortunately impressed with the jejune and uglifying character German Protestantism always stamps upon its places of worship. Not only is its expression cold beyond words, but it seems so totally lacking in sense of harmony with the beauties that surround it, that the needful accessories of congregational worship are disposed in such a manner as positively to offend the eye, rudely breaking across symmetrical lines and disposed at luckless hap-hazard, with an indifference that savours of scornful disregard of beauty. The same unpleasant fact is observable at Nürnberg, and everywhere else in Germany, where Catholic buildings have been turned to Protestant use, so different from our English plan, where the newer worship has been grafted gently upon the older.

Entering by the main portal we come into a species of atrium, paved with red and white stones of Gothic design, while in the centre is a field representing the chief symbols of Gothic architecture, such as a tetragram, a pentagon, octagon, &c. Above this, in a gallery, stands the organ, an eyesore to the vision but a glory to the ear, being one among the many fine organs of the Continent. Three steps lead up to the nave, whose dignified simplicity is striking and impressive. It is formed by twelve clustered columns bearing lancet pier-arches. There is no triforium. Of the rich painted glass that once filled the windows only the apse retains its treasure, and hence a keener illumination penetrates into the building than was intended by its architects. Once, too, the interior was entirely painted in polychrome. Great attention should be given to the consoles of the main pillars of the nave, which are among the *chefs d'œuvre* of German stone carving, with their rich fantastic compositions, all different in design, now shields and crests, now real and imaginary animals, now flowers and fruit. On these, no doubt, before the image destruction of 1532, stood statues, and doubtless too they were surmounted by canopies, probably of equal beauty. Opposite the pulpit they form two shields, one bearing the crest of the town, the other the oft-repeated monogram A. T. In the sixth column on the right a carved stone commemorates the foundation of the cathedral. It is a high relief representing a knight and his lady, possibly the original founders, between whom kneels a mason bent under the weight of the building he carries on his shoulder. A quaint old German inscription is cut beneath. It is worthy of notice that in this model the church has three towers, the citizens having planned thus to erect the pile, in the hope of elevating their cathedral to episcopal rank. The pulpit is the chief ornament of the nave. It was carved by Engelberger of Augsburg and five apprentices, and is a mass of the most delicate flower ornamentation, some of which, unhappily, has been sawn off, an old woman in mistaken zeal having left by will a piece of cloth to drape the pulpit. The canopy of limewood is one of the masterpieces of Syrlin the younger, a work of rich interlaced decorative carving of the highest beauty, and of great originality of design and treatment. To the Syrlins, too, the font is often attributed, a noble stone structure resting upon four lions, and surrounded by the busts of the eight Old Testament prophets. There is, however, a want of free handling in the plastic treatment that belies the popular attribution. The aisles are in no respect remarkable, but there are many curious crests of old Ulm families attached to the pillars worthy of study by the lovers of heraldry.

It is in the choir, however, that the glories of the place are concentrated. Raised a step above the nave, there stands in its centre what was once the choir altar, with a carved

shrine, forming a portion of the choir stalls, on whose reverse side, *i.e.* the side turned towards the eastern apse, is the richly carved bishop's chair, of which I shall speak anon, and of which we reproduce an engraving. At the end of the choir stands the high altar, bearing a somewhat clumsy tryptich of woodwork, whose wings are formed by excellent paintings from the hand of Martin Schaffner. From the brush of this same master is a vigorous portrait of the Burgomaster, Eitel Besser, which decorates the Besser chapel, and is a picture worthy to take rank beside the famous portrait of Burgomaster Holzchuber of Nürnberg, by Albert Dürer. In the sacristy stands a now discarded altar, far finer than the above, with an angular but pathetic representation of the Crucifixion in the centre panel, and fine paintings of the Passion on the doors.

The choir, as I said before, still retains its ancient jewelled windows. Two are especially fine, those presented in their day by the Municipality, and by the Drapers' Guild, in the middle of the fifteenth century. The latter window has the favourite device of a genealogical tree of the seed of Jesse, and is signed by its artist, Hans Wild. It is supposed that this is the same man who designed the glorious windows of the Nürnberg Lorenz Kirche, and that he was a native of Ulm; for Ulm in former days was known for its good glass painting, special schools existing for the cultivation of that lost art. At San Pietro, in Bologna, are shown to this day windows that were made for this church in Ulm.

On the left-hand side of the choir stands the Sacrament-house, or ciborium, which it is peculiar to German churches—or sometimes to the cognate Belgian of the same date—to have separated from the high altar, traditionally the spot in which the consecrated wafer was reserved. On these Sacrament-houses much loving labour was always expended. Those of Nürnberg and Ulm are the most elaborate works of their kind in stone. In size and height the canopy at Ulm exceeds that of Adam Krafft's masterpiece; in beauty it runs it very close. It owes its erection to the piety of an ancient dame, who dying, left two hundred guilders with a certain linen-weaver, directing that with this sum a Sacrament-house should be built to her memory. Now the linen-weaver "bold" was a sharp old party. He had no intention of defrauding Holy Church, yet it seemed to him this was a wanton waste of money that could be turned to more profitable account. Hence he traded in linen with the money until he had so turned it over that, out of the interest of the capital, he was able to carry out the testator's wish. It is a favourite contention that our commercial morality is lower than that of our mediæval forbears. This story would point to another conclusion. But perchance this story is not true. Let us hope so. It occurred so long ago. Anyway, what does seem pretty certain is that, in 1469, the elder Syrlin was intrusted with the commission of erecting a ciborium, almost thirty years, therefore, before Krafft began to work at his *chef d'œuvre*.

The main idea of the composition of this Gothic pinnacle of filigree stone-work, is that of a winding staircase, ending at the height of ninety feet in a richly-decorated crocket. The whole treatment is so delicate that it seems difficult to grasp the fact that the material out of which this piece of lace-like fret-work is hewn is no other than common stone. If stone could be cast like bronze, we fancy it would look thus. Two flights of four steps conduct to the ciborium proper, which stands on a square gilt base, richly wrought and decorated. The supports of the stairs are formed by caryatides of the saints, St. Sebastian and St. Christopher carrying the infant Jesus on his shoulders. There are also eight excellently-preserved statues of Popes, Bishops and Abbots forming the banisters. On the side of the stair that comes nearest the sacred shrine, are carved an array of fantastic wild beasts, that seem set there to guard the holy treasure. Much weird humour and originality is displayed in the treatment of this farrago of dragons, lions, dogs, bears, angels and monks. The same mystical numerical arrangement that permeates the entire pile, finds expression in the Sacrament-house also. Thus, it begins with a square, changes into an octagon, resumes the square, and ends in a cross-shaped finial. Not far from this spot is the chapel of the Neidhert family, the sharp linen-weaver above referred to.

But it is time I spoke of the glory of Ulm, its cathedral stalls, which are disposed on each side of the choir, before it curves into an apse. They display a wealth of luxuriant figure, flower and geometrical decoration that makes them difficult to describe. While so rich, however, no sense of overlading is ever for one moment produced. Indeed, so well is the decoration proportioned to the main idea, that at a first hurried glance it almost seems that we have to do with pure simplicity here. Two rows of sculptured busts decorate the wall backs of the seats, while one row adorns the

FOUNTAIN FISHBOX.
From a Drawing by A. D. M'CORMICK.

doorways of the seats themselves—heads of saints, prophets, apostles, Biblical heroes, sages, holy widows, virgins and wives. The catholic breadth of spirit exercised in their selection, points to the true Humanism not only of the artist who designed, but of the Municipality and town that ordered this work to be done, of the priests that chanted the mass in this spot, and of the worshippers who came to look and pray. These choir stalls must have been a liberal education in themselves. The first row of heads, both the largest and most prominent, those in the doorways, are the images of enlightened heathens. Then follow the men who inspired the elder Scriptures, then those who bore testimony to the Christian faith. On the north side are the men, on the south the

women. The upper series commences at the choir steps with a signed and dated (1469) bust of the artist, the elder Syrlin. He is crowned with a laurel wreath, and regards with the happy pride of the true artist his finished labour. Next to him follow the seven great heathen sages, each with an appropriate motto culled from his works. This is their order, and both order and selection are noteworthy of the mediæval liberality of mind:—Secundus, Quintilian, Seneca, Ptolemy of Pelusium, Terence Publius, Cicero and Pythagoras, the latter wearing a curious hat of the style in fashion in the sculptor's day. Indeed, all are clad in the quaint local dress of the period, and are very likely portraits of worthy burghers. On the right side are the women, the place of honour again being given to the heathen. The first woman, however, who is opposite to the master sculptor is his wife. Above her head is a slab bearing a long Sibylline poem in debased Latin, placed in the mouth of the Sibylla Eritria. It is twenty-five lines long, and the first letter of each line forms these five words:—

"*Jesus Cristos Theu ijos soter.*"

The master's wife is followed by the Sibyls, Delphica, Libica, Tiburtina, Ellespontica, Cumana, Commeria and Frigia. Their mottoes are selected and adapted from that last Eclogue of Virgil's, that adumbration of Augustus, which the word-torturing grammarian schools of the early middle-ages had twisted into a prophecy of the coming of Christ. Among the holy men figure of course David, Solomon, Moses and Job; among the women, Miriam, Deborah and Hannah. Christian saints and martyrs fill the last row, bearing their appropriate emblems. The sculptures are all in the natural colours of the dark wood, though there are remains of blue and gold colour on the canopies, indicating that these were formerly painted. On the underneath side of the *miserere* seats, fantasy has, as usual, run riot. In the artistic treatment of those brackets much license was clearly always allowed. Those at Ulm are full of now sly, now broad hits at the clergy, at their corruption, their lethargy and indolence. Male and female figures are seen in lascivious attitudes, animals mock the ways of men. One of the best is a monk, who grasps and drains a bottle, which he clasps eagerly in both his hands. Fantastic heads and animals also form the arms that divide the sellettes one from the other. Throughout the whole work of art the treatment is masterly, unmannered, and free from the hardness of style, angularity, or attenuation of limb that was a feature of the sculpture of the time. They are both more graceful and freer than was common in contemporary painting. The busts grow easily from out the carved wall of decoration, and show now a characteristic seriousness, now a prophetic sternness, now a youthful loveliness and grace, evincing that their creator had command over expression and play of feature. The arabesques interspersed throughout the entire design are delicate and tasteful, rich but not overladen, and of an infinite variety of imagination, that never repeats itself in one single instance. Though much intertwined and interwoven, they induce no sense of painful elaboration of idea, of artificial creation; they are characterised by a spontaneity that makes them ever fresh and new, so that they leave the same impression on the mind that is produced by a fine piece of classic sculpture, an impression not always evoked by the more uneasy middle-age fantasy. There is a truth, life, beauty and harmony permeating these figures which surround the rather stern church with the everlasting cheerfulness of genius.

Where all is so excellent it is almost invidious to speak of what is best, but perhaps the most perfect of these seats is that known as the Bishop's Seat, behind the choir altar, and facing the strong painting of the Last Supper, by Schaffner. Here the arabesques are of rare beauty. The sculpture depicts Christ as the Judge bearing His sword, while below in the tympanum are the busts of six saints, and on the desk are carved the Sibyls Sarina and Eritria.

Little is known concerning the history of the great artists whose wood carvings are the gems of Ulm. The elder is entered in the town books as a carpenter. It is related that when he had ended these stalls he shook the dust of his native city from off his feet in discontent that the Municipality refused to pay him that which they had promised in return for his labour, and going to Vienna, died there in great misery. Of the younger it is told that after completing the glorious stalls that are to this day the pride of the ancient Cistercian monastery of the little village of Blaubeuren, the monks, his work ended, put out his eyes, in order that never again should he be able to make anything equal to them. This latter story let us hope is *ben trovato*. Neither are to the credit of our mediæval predecessors.

A most energetic and excellent society for

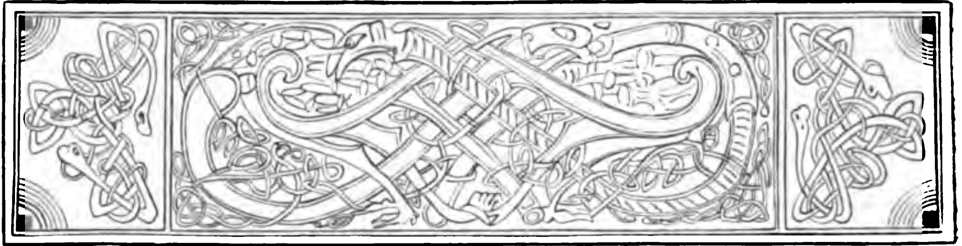
the study of the art and archæology of Ulm and Upper Swabia, that has its seat at Ulm, has preserved many memorials of the past from destruction and decay. To these belong the oldest piece of wood carving in the city, a life-sized Christ riding into Jerusalem on an ass, and bearing a palm branch in His hand. It was formerly used in the Palm Sunday procession, and is either the work of the elder Syrlin or proceeds from his school. Christ is a grave and dignified figure, very statuesque in pose and treatment. He holds His head well upright, His earnest oval-shaped face looks out straight before Him, His beard is full, His hair curly. The hands and naked feet are rather thin, but right in their proportions. The folds of His garment are treated in large full lines, and well arranged in mass, in contrast to the later and more angular style of dealing with drapery, as though made of crumpled paper. At the society's rooms also is preserved a large brass vessel known as Keppler's kettle. The astronomer it would seem lived for some long while at Ulm after the death of his first wife, and having a large family and small means, had to concern himself much about household affairs. There was some dispute in the Town Council regarding petty weights and measures, and Keppler was applied to to make a vessel that should measure them all. The kettle preserved is the visible result, but the actual result is yet wider. The attention he had to bestow upon little things with regard to it and his housekeeping, led to his arriving at a mathematical conclusion, which some time later assisted Leibnitz to the discovery of the differential calculus. A few pictures are also preserved by the society, but in pictures Ulm is not rich, though it produced Martin Schön, also called Schöngauer, Zeitblom and Schaffner.

The Guildhall of the town is an old pile that still retains its picturesque exterior though its interior has been much pulled about. It is of Gothic design, and bears the date 1370. Formerly its exterior was covered with frescoes of which traces still remain, showing the story of the Prodigal Son, for no quite obvious reason a favourite fresco for Guildhalls. Notable are the five fine Gothic windows that give upon the Council Chamber, the steep five storied gabled roof, and the graceful frieze that forms the string line of the first story. A curious old clock, with astronomical symbols still marks the time, which doubtless ambles gently at Ulm. The building stands at the corner of a street, and is so disposed that three of its sides are quite free. The main front gives upon the chief square of Ulm, where stands another of its glories, the fountain known by the citizens as the *Fischkasten* (Fish-box), why does not appear. Out of the centre of a wide simple basin rises a three-sided sandstone obelisk, bearing on each of its faces the statue of a knight. It was once gilt, but all trace of that has now vanished. Above the head of each knight is a canopy, after which the obelisk ends in a gently twisted crocket, decorated with flowers and leaves; a most original design. The water spouts forth from the mouth of three masks placed below the figures of the knights, who, it is supposed, represent one family, a father and two sons. The elder shows on his shield the Imperial Eagle, those of the younger are empty. The monument bears the inscription "J. Syrlin, 1482," thus putting its authorship beyond question. Less certain is the authorship of Ulm's second beautiful fountain, that salient feature of mediæval outdoor life and architecture, but connoisseurs believe that, because of its beauty, one of the Syrlins must also have made it. It stands in the square called Weinhof, and represents a colossal St. Christopher in sandstone. It is, however, supposed by those who should know, that this statue was not originally designed to stand in this spot, where certainly now it is not quite as well placed as it might be, being too high, and poised upon an unsuitable Renaissance pedestal. They think it must have been destined for the cathedral. Formerly statues of St. Christopher often stood in the porches of churches, indeed it was colloquially said that persons would only die on the day when they had not seen St. Christopher, *i.e.* had not gone to church, showing that people went to church more frequently in those days, when the church was club, council-chamber, and meeting house. The date of this statue must be somewhere about the end of the fifteenth century. It is very perfect in preservation though rather dirty. Its modelling is vigorous and full of truth. The tall, powerful giant is seen as he is stepping carefully through the water, feeling his ground with the tree trunk that serves him as a staff. His flowing hair mingles with his thick black beard, and leaves little to be seen of his face, yet enough to show that its expression is full of tender care, as he turns to look at the little child perched upon his shoulder, the child that from its size should be so light, and which nevertheless is so heavy, and grows heavier with every step he takes. His attitude and gaze give the idea that he is just saying to

it, "It seems as though I bore the world," and he regards with wonder the frail infant who clings to him with his left hand, and has his right raised in benediction. St. Christopher is clad in a large full cloak whose drapery is specially noteworthy. The folds are all indicated in the curious angular method, yet so true to nature that this artificiality in no wise offends the eye. There is a life-like naturalness about this statue hewn in the stubborn vehicle of common stone.

Like to all ancient cities Ulm offers many quaint peeps and effects to the visitor who wanders about its empty streets with an eye open to the picturesque. But these I cannot and need not indicate. Those who follow in my footsteps will find them for themselves. But this I do advise the traveller, whose road leads him by the ancient town, not to whirl past it in the train, but to descend and give it a visit of a few hours or, better, a few days. He will find himself amply rewarded, and if he goes away displeased, his eye having received no new and lovely impressions, his mind no new and suggestive thoughts, well—I am sorry for him, and that is all I can say.

HELEN ZIMMERN.



AUNT RACHEL.

A RUSTIC SENTIMENTAL COMEDY.

CHAPTER XI.

"THAT is a very insolent young man," said Aunt Rachel, as Reuben threw his hurried greeting over his shoulder in the dusk.

"Indeed, aunt," the girl answered, a little more boldly than she would have dared to speak had the light been clearer—"indeed, aunt, you are quite mistaken about him, and I don't understand why you should speak of Mr. Gold and his uncle as you do."

She cared less what Rachel thought or said of Reuben's uncle, though she had always had a friendly and admiring friendship for the old solitary, than she cared what was thought and said of Reuben. But it was easier to champion the two together than to defend her lover alone.

"You are a child," said Aunt Rachel, composedly. "What do you know of the opposite sex?"

The question was obviously outside the range of the discussion, but it silenced Ruth for the moment. The elder woman presumed upon her triumph, and continued—

"Confidence is natural to youth. That is an axiom I have frequently heard fall from the lips of my dear mistress. As you grow older you will grow less positive in your opinions, and will be careful to have a solid foundation for them. Now I know these people, and you do not."

"My dear aunt," said Ruth, in protest, "I have known Mr. Gold ever since I could walk."

"Of which Mr. Gold are we speaking?" demanded Rachel.

"It is true of both of them," Ruth answered. "Neither of them would harm a fly, or go a hairsbreadth from the truth for all the world. They are the best men I have ever known."

"Niece Ruth!" said Rachel, stopping short in her walk, and bringing Ruth to a halt also. "Upon the only occasion, since my return to Heydon Hay, on which I have found myself in the society of Mr. Ezra Gold, I took you into my confidence with respect to him. That is to say, I took you into my confidence as much as I have ever taken anybody. Mr. Ezra Gold is a mean and hypocritical person. Mr. Ezra Gold is a person who would not stop at any act of baseness or cruelty. Mr. Ezra Gold is a villain."

All this came from the old maid's lips with a chill and prim precision, which troubled her hearer more than any heat or violence could have done. But the old man's face and figure were before her with a wonderful vivid clearness. The stoop was that of fatigue, and yet it had a merciful mild courtesy in it too, and the grey face was eloquent of goodness.

"I can't believe it!" cried the girl, warmly. "Dear aunt, there must have been some terrible mistake. I am sure he is a good man. You have only to look at him to know that he is a good man."

"A whited sepulchre," said Aunt Rachel, walking on again. She had kept her mittened hand upon the girl's arm throughout the pause in their walk, and her very touch told her that Ruth was wounded and indignant. "What I say, I say of my own knowledge. He is a deliberate and cruel villain."

The girl contained herself and was silent. In a little while she began to think with an

almost tragic sense of pity of the withered and lonely old maid who walked beside her. She could pity thus profoundly because she could image herself in the like case, and though the figure she saw was far from being clear, her own terror of it and revolt from it told her how terrible it was. If she and Reuben should part as her aunt and Ezra had parted—if she should ever come to think of Reuben as Aunt Rachel thought of Ezra! The thought touched her with an arctic sense of cold and desolation. She drew away from it with an inward shudder, and in that instant of realisation she saw the little old maid's personality, really and truly standing in the middle of that bleak and frost-bound barrenness which she had dreamed as a possibility for herself. For the first time she saw and understood, and anger and bewilderment were alike swept away in the warm rush of sympathetic pity.

The road was lonely, and Ruth with both eyes brimming over placed her arm about her aunt's neck, and stooping, kissed her on the cheek. Two or three of the girl's tears fell warm on Rachel's face, and the old maid started away from her with a sudden anger, which was less unreasonable than it seemed. She had of late years had an inclination to linger in talk about the theme of woman's trust and man's perfidy. For Ruth and for Ruth only she had identified this theory of hers with a living man who was known to both, but she had never intended herself to be pitied. She had never asked for pity in insisting that a righteous judgment should be dealt out to Ezra Gold. She had cried in Ruth's presence after her meeting with Ezra, but she had persuaded herself that her tears resulted from nothing more than the shock she felt at meeting an old repulsion. And since she had got to believe this it followed as a thing of course that Ruth ought also to have believed it. The girl's pity wounded her and shamed her.

"Thank you," she said, in her chillest and primmest fashion, as she withdrew from Ruth's embrace. "I am not in want of pity." It was in her mind to tell Ruth to beware lest she herself should be in need of pity shortly, but she suppressed herself at considerable cost, and walked on stiffly and uncomfortably upright.

"I am very sorry, dear," said Ruth. "I did not mean to hurt you."

But Rachel was very indignant, and it was only as she remembered the purloined letter that she consented to be appeased. After all, she had taken the girl's welfare in hand, and had interested herself so kindly in her niece's behalf that she could not bear to be angry with her. So she permitted a truce to be called, and on Ruth's renewed apologies asked graciously that no more should be said about the matter. They parted at the green door of the garden, and Rachel, walking homeward, pondered on one important question. Ought she or ought she not to know the contents of the letter? Without knowing them how could she know exactly the length to which her niece and the intending worker of her ruin had already gone together? It was necessary to know that, and she slid her hand into the bosom of her dress, and held the letter there, half resolving to read it on her arrival at home. But although, as her theft of the letter itself would prove, her ideas of honour were quaint, they were strong. She had constituted herself Niece Ruth's guardian, and she meant to fulfil all her self-imposed duties to the letter, but there was one whose rights came before her own. The letter should be opened in the presence of Ruth's father, and the two authorities should consult together as to what might be done.

She cast about for a safe and unsuspicious resting-place for the letter, and at last decided upon the tea-caddy. She placed it there, locked it up, and by the aid of a chair and a table stowed it securely away in the topmost corner of a tall cupboard. Then having hidden the key in the parlour chimney she went to bed and to sleep, profoundly convinced that she had adopted the wisest of possible courses, and that Niece Ruth would be saved in the morning.

Meantime Aunt Rachel's antique griefs being out of sight for Ruth, were out of mind. She had her own affairs to think of, and found them at once pressing and delightful. By this time Reuben would have read her note, and would know all it had to tell him. When she thought how much it told him it seemed daring and strange, and almost terrible that she should have written it. For it admitted that his letter had made her very happy; she was not quite sure that she had not written "very, very happy," and wished it were to write again. But here in the solitude of her own chamber she could kiss Reuben's letter, and could rest it against her hot cheek in an ecstasy of fluttering congratulations. How he looked, how he walked, how he talked, how he smiled, how he played! How brave, how handsome, how altogether noble and good and gifted he was! There was nobody to compare with him in Heydon Hay, and the young men of Castle Barfield were contemptible by comparison

with him. A human sun before whose rays other young women's luminaries paled like rushlights! She seemed to have loved him always, and always to have been sure that he loved her, and yet it was wonderful to know it, and strange beyond strangeness to have told. She fancied him in the act of reading her letter, and she kissed his as she did so. Did he kiss hers? Was he as glad as she was? At these audacious fancies she hid herself and blushed.

Reuben all this while and until a much later hour was bewildering himself about the curious and old-fashioned missive he had discovered between the melodious pages of Manzini. Over and over again he searched through the volume, though he had already turned it leaf by leaf and knew that there was no chance of his having overlooked anything. Almost as often as he turned over the leaves of the music book he re-read the note he had taken from it. He questioned himself as to the possibility of his having allowed Ruth's note to fall, and mentally retraced his own fashion of taking up the book, and step by step the way in which he had carried it home. He was sure that nothing could have escaped from its pages since he had laid hands upon it, and was confronted with a double mystery. How had this time-stained epistle found its way into the pages, and how had the more modern missive he had fully expected to find there found its way out of it?

Suddenly an idea occurred to him which, though sufficiently far-fetched, seemed as if it might by chance explain the mystery. Long and long ago a son of the house of Gold had married a daughter of the house of Fuller. It was not outside the reasonable that Ruth should have had possession of this old document, in which a Ruth of that far-distant day had accepted a member of his own household. She might have chosen to answer him by this clear enigma, but a sense of solemnity in the phrasing of the letter made him hope his guess untrue. Desperate mysteries ask naturally for desperate guesses, and Reuben guessed right and left, but the mystery remained as desperate as ever. His thoughts so harried him that at last, though it was late for Heydon Hay, he determined to go at once to Fuller's house, and ask for Ruth.

He slipped quietly down stairs, and leaving the door ajar walked quickly along the darkened road, bearing poor Rachel's long-lost letter with him; but his journey, as he might have expected, ended in blank disappointment. Fuller's house was dark. He paced slowly home again, refastened the door, and went to bed, where he lay and tossed till broad dawn, and then reflecting that he would catch Ruth at her earliest household duties, fell asleep, and lay an hour or two beyond his usual time.

But if Reuben were laggard the innocent guardian dragon was early astir. Fuller, in his shirt-sleeves and a broad-brimmed straw hat, was pottering about his garden with a wheelbarrow and a pair of shears. He saw her at the open door of the garden, and sang out cheerily—

"Hello, Miss Blythe! Beest early afoot, this mornin'. I'm a lover o' the mornin' air myself. Theer's no time to my mind when the gardin stuff looks half as well. The smell o' them roses is real lovely."

He gave a loud-sounding and hearty sniff, and smacked his lips after it. Rachel seemed to linger a little at the door.

"Come in," said Fuller. "Come in. Theer's nobody here as bites. Beest come to see Ruth? I doubt if her's about as yet. We ode uns bin twice as early risin' as the young uns, nowadaysen. Wait a bit, and I'll gi'e her a bit of a chi-hike. Her'll be down in a minute."

"No," said Rachel, "don't call her. I do not wish to see her yet. It will be necessary to see her later on, but first of all I desire to speak to you alone." Fuller looked a little scared at this exordium, but Rachel did not notice him. He had never known her so precise and picked in air and speech as she seemed to be that morning, and through all this a furtive air of embarrassment peeped out plainly enough for even him to become aware of it. "May we sit down at this table?" she asked. "I presume the chairs are aired already by the warm atmosphere of the morning? There is no danger of rheumatism?"

"What's up?" inquired Fuller, sitting down at once, and setting his shirt-sleeved arms upon the table. "Theer's nothin' the matter, is theer?"

"You shall judge for yourself," replied Rachel. She drew a letter from her pocket, and covering it with her hand laid it on the table. A distinct odour of tea greeted Fuller's nostrils, and he noticed it even then. "I presume that you are not unacquainted with the character of the Messrs. Gold?"

"It ud be odd if I warn't acquynted with 'em," said Fuller. "I've lived i' the same parish with 'em all my days."

"That being so," said Rachel, "you will be able to appreciate my feelings when I tell you that almost upon my first arrival

here I discovered that the younger Gold was making advances to my Niece Ruth."

"Ah?" said Fuller interrogatively. "I don't count on bein' able to see no furder through a millstone than my neighbours, but I've been aweer o' that for a day or two."

"Ruth is motherless," pursued Rachel, a little too intent upon saying things in a predetermined way to take close note of Fuller. "A motherless girl in a situation of that kind is always in need of the guidance of an experienced hand."

"Yis, yis," assented Fuller heartily. "Many thanks to you, Miss Blythe, for it's kindly meant, I know."

"Last night," said Rachel, "I made a discovery." There was nothing in the world of which she was more certain than she was of Fuller's approving sanction. Only a few minutes before she had had her doubts about it, and they had made her nervous.

She was so very serious that Fuller began to look grave. But he was built of loyalty and unsuspicion, and though for a mere second a fear assailed him that the old lady was about to charge Reuben with playing his daughter false he scouted the fancy hotly. In the warmth thus gained he spoke more briskly than common.

"Drive along, ma'am. Come to the root o' the matter."

"This letter," said Rachel, taking Ruth's answer to Reuben in both hands, "was written last night. It is addressed in your daughter's handwriting to Mr. Reuben Gold."

"Yis, yis, yis," said Fuller impatiently, not knowing what to make of Rachel's funereal gravity.

"It appeared to me, after long consideration, that the best and wisest course I could adopt would be to bring it to you. I regard myself as being in a sense, and subject always to your authority, one of the child's natural guardians. If I did not view things in that light," the old lady explained, making elaborate motions with her lips for the distinct enunciation of every word, "I should consider that I was guilty of a sinful neglect of duty."

"Well," said Fuller, "as to sinful—but drive on, Miss Blythe."

"It appeared to me, then," continued Rachel, "that our plain duty would be to read this together, and to consult upon it."

"Wheer does the letter come from?" Fuller demanded, with a look of bewilderment.

"I discovered it in the——"

"What?" cried the old fellow, jumping from his chair and staring at her across the table with red face and wrathful eyes.

"I discovered it," replied Rachel, rising also and facing him with her head thrown back and her youthful eyes flashing; "I discovered it in the music book which was left last night upon this table. I saw it placed there clandestinely by my Niece Ruth."

"Be you mad, Miss Blythe?" asked Fuller, with a slow solemnity of inquiry which would have made the question richly mirthful to an auditor. "Do you mean to tell me as you gone about spyin' after wheer my little wench puts her letters to her sweetheart? Why, fie, fie, ma'am! That a child's trick, not a bit like a growed-up woman."

Fuller was astonished, but Rachel's amazement transcended his own.

"And you tell me, John Fuller, that you know the character of this man?"

"Know his character!" cried Fuller. "Who should know it better nor me? The lad's well-nigh lived i' my house ever sence he was no higher 'n my elber. Know his character? Ah! Should think I did an' all. The cliverest lad of his hands, and the best of his feet for twenty mile around—as full o' pluck as a tarrier, an' as kindly-hearted as a wench. Bar his Uncle Ezra, theer niver was a mon to match him in Heydon Hay i' my time. Know his character?" He was unused to speak with so much vigour, and he paused breathless and mopped his scarlet face with his shirt sleeve, staring across his arm at Rachel meanwhile, in mingled rage and wonder.

"His Uncle Ezra?" said Rachel, looking fixedly and scornfully back at him. "His Uncle Ezra is a villain!"

For a second or two he stared at her with a countenance of pure amazement, and then burst into a sudden gurgle of laughter. This so overmastered him that he had to cling to the table for support, and finally to resume his seat. His jolly face went crimson, and the tears chased each other down his fat cheeks. When he seemed to have had his laugh quite out, and sat gasping and mopping his eyes with his shirt sleeve, a chance look at Rachel re-inspired the passion of his mirth, and he laughed anew until he had to clip his wide ribs with his palms as if to hold himself together. A mere gleam of surprise crossed the scorn and anger of Rachel's face as she watched him, but it faded quickly, and when once it had passed her expression remained unchanged.

"Good morning, Aunt Rachel," cried Ruth's fresh voice. "You are early."

Rachel turned briskly round in time to see Ruth disappear from a white-curtained upper window. Fuller rose with a face of sudden sobriety, and began once more to mop his eyes. In a mere instant Ruth appeared at the door running towards the pair with a face all smiles. "Why, father," she cried, kissing the old man on the cheek, "what a laugh! You haven't laughed so for a year. What is the joke, Aunt Rachel?"

She saw at a glance that whatever the jest might be, Aunt Rachel was no sharer in it.

"I know of no joke, Niece Ruth," said the old lady with mincing iciness.

"Theer's summat serious at the bottom on it, but the joke's atop, plain for annybody to see," said Fuller. "But Miss Blythe's come here this mornin' of a funny sort of a arrant to my thinking, though her seems to fancy it's as solemn a business as a burying."

"What is the matter?" asked Ruth, looking from one to the other. Some movement of Rachel's eyes sent hers to the table, and she recognised her own letter in a flash. She moved instinctively and laid her hand upon it.

"That's it," said her father with a new gurgle. "'Twas your Aunt Rachel, my dear," he explained, "as see you put it somewheer last night, an' took care on it for you." Ruth turned upon the little old lady with a grand gesture, in which both hands were suddenly drawn down and backwards, until they were clenched together, crushing the letter between them behind her. "Her comes to me this morning," pursued Fuller, whilst the old woman and the young one looked at each other, "an' tells me plump an' plain as her wants t' open this letter and read it, along with me."

"Aunt Rachel!" said Ruth, with a sort of intense quiet, "how dare you?"

"I did nothing but my duty," said Rachel. "If I have exposed to you the character of these men in vain—"

"Exposed! Exposed!" cried Fuller. "What's this here maggot about exposing? Who talks about exposin' a lad like that? The best lad i' the country side without a 'ception!"

"You tell me then," said Rachel, turning upon him slowly, as if Ruth's eyes had an attraction for her, and she could scarcely leave them, "you tell me then that this Reuben Gold has your approval in making approaches to your daughter?"

"Approval!" shouted Fuller. "Yis. I've seen 'em gettin' fond on each other this five 'ear, and took a pleasure in it. What's agen the lad? Nothin' but the mumblin' of a bumble-bee as an old maid's got in her bonnet. A spite agen his uncle is a thing as *is* understandable."

"Indeed, sir," said Aunt Rachel, with frigid politeness. "Will you tell me why?"

"Well, no," said Fuller. "I'd rather I didn't. Look here. Let's have harmony. I'm no hand at quarrellin', even among the men, let alone among the petticuts. Let's have harmony. The wench has got her letter back, and theer's no harm done. And if theer is, ye'd better fight it out betwigst ye." With this he turned his back and waddled a pace or two. Then he turned a laughing face upon them, moving slowly on his axis. "Mek it up," he said. "Mek it up. Let's have no ill-blood i' the family. Nothin' like harmony."

Having thus delivered himself he rolled indoors, and there sat down to his morning pipe. But anger and laughter are alike provocative of thirst, and seeking a jug in the kitchen he took his way to the cellar, and there had a copious draught of small beer, after which he settled himself down in his armchair, prepared to make the best of anything which might befall him.

The quarrel from which he had withdrawn himself did not seem so easy to be made up as he had appeared to fancy. Ruth and Rachel stood face to face in silence. To the younger woman the offence which had been committed against her seemed intolerable, and it took this complexion less because of the nature of the act itself, than because of its consequences. It had mocked Reuben, and it had made her seem as if she were the mocker.

"You are angry, child?" said Rachel at length. "I was prepared for that. But I was not prepared for your father's acquiescence in the ruinous course upon which you have entered."

"Ruinous course?" said Ruth.

"I repeat," said the old lady, "the ruinous course upon which you have entered. These men are villains."

"Do they steal other people's letters?" asked Ruth.

"They are villains," repeated Aunt Rachel, ignoring this inquiry. "Villains. Cheats. Deceivers. You will rue this day in years to come." Then, with prodigious sudden stateliness, "I find my advice derided. My counsels are rebuffed. I wish you a good morning. I can entertain no further interest in your proceedings."

CHAPTER XII.

RACHEL marched from the garden and disappeared through the doorway without a backward glance. The girl, holding the crumpled letter in both hands behind her, beat her foot upon the greensward, and looked downward with flushed cheeks and glittering eyes. Her life had not hitherto been fruitful of strong emotions, and she had never felt so angry or aggrieved as she felt now.

"How did she dare? What can Reuben think of me?"

These were the only thoughts which found form in her mind, and each was poignant.

A knock sounded at the street door, and she moved mechanically to answer it, but catching sight of her father's figure in the hall she turned away, and seated herself at the musicians' table.

Fuller greeted Reuben — for the early visitor was no other than he—with a broad grin, and stuck a facetious forefinger in his ribs.

"Come in, lad, come in," he said chuckling, "I niver seed such a lark i' my born days as we've had here this mornin'."

"Indeed?" said Reuben. "Can I—" he began to blush and stammer a little. "Can I see Miss Ruth, Mr. Fuller?"

"All i' good time, lad," replied Fuller. "Come in. Sit thee down." Reuben complied, scarcely at his ease, and wondered what was coming. "Was you expectin' any sort of a letter last night, Reuben?" the old fellow asked him, with a fat enjoying chuckle.

"Yes, sir," said Reuben, blushing anew, but regarding his questioner frankly.

"Was that what you took away the book o' duets for, eh?"

"Yes, sir."

"Didst find the letter?" Fuller was determined to make the most of his history, after the manner of men who have stories ready made for them but rarely.

"I don't know," replied Reuben, to the old man's amazement. "Do you know what the letter was about, Mr. Fuller?"

"Don't know?" cried Fuller. "What beest hoverin' about? Knowst whether thee hadst a letter or not, dostn't?"

"I had a letter," said Reuben, "but I can't think it was meant for me. Perhaps I ought to have spoken first to you, sir, but I wrote to Miss Ruth yesterday—" There he paused, asking himself how to put this altogether sacred thing into words.

"Didst now?" asked Fuller, unctuously enjoying the young man's discomfort. "What might it ha' been about?"

"I wrote to ask her if she would marry me," said Reuben, with desperate simplicity.

"Ah?" said Fuller. "And what says her to that?"

"I can't believe that I have had her answer," returned Reuben, with much embarrassment. "I found a letter in the book, but I think—I am sure—it is not meant for me."

"You'll find Ruth i' the gardin," said Fuller, puzzled in his turn. "Her'll tell you, mayhap. But wait a bit. Her's rare an' wroth this mornin', and I ain't sure as it's safe to be anigh her. Miss Blythe's been here this mornin'—Aunt Rachel as the wench has allays called her, though her's no more than her mother's second cousin—and it seems as th' old creetur found out about Ruth's letter, and went and took it from wheer it was, and marched it off. Her was here this mornin' t' ask me to open it and read it along with her. Theer's no tekin' note of her, Reuben, poor old ooman. Her's got a hive in her head. 'Do you know this young man's character?' her says. 'Why, yis,' I says, 'It 'd be odd if I didn't,' I says. 'Well,' her says, 'he's a villin.' 'Rubbidge,' says I, 'theer's no moor esteemable feller i' the parish,' I says, 'onless it's his Uncle Ezra.' Then her fires up and her says: 'His Uncle Ezra is a villin.' Then I bust out a laughin' in her face. Her's flighty, you know, lad, her's uncommon flighty. Six-and-twenty year ago—it was afore thee couldst toddle—her left the parish because of Ezra."

"Because of my uncle?" There were so many things to be amazed at in this speech of Fuller's that the youngster hardly knew which to be surprised at most.

"Didst never hear o' that?" asked Fuller. "It's been the talk o' the parish ever sence her come back to live in it. Your uncle used to be a good deal at her mother's house from thirty to six-and-twenty 'ear ago, and used to tek his fiddle theer and gie 'em a taste o' music now and then. Her seems to ha' let it tek root in her poor head as he was squirin' her and mekin' up to her for marriage; but after four or five year her got tired and hopeless, I reckon, and went away. Then I expect her begun to brood a bit, after the mode of a woman as is lonely, and has got no such thing as a man around her, and that's how it is, lad."

"My uncle!" Reuben fell to pacing up and down the room, talking aloud, but as if he addressed himself rather than his sweetheart's father. "Manzini was the last man

whose works he played--the last man he ever handled bow and fiddle for. His own words. He left the book open when he went away, and closed it when he came back again." He drew the discoloured note from his pocket, and stared at it with a look of tragic certainty.

"Be we all mad together?" said Fuller. "What's the matter with the lad i' the name o' wonder?"

"I'll explain everything, sir," answered Reuben, like a man awakening from sleep. "And yet, I don't know that I can. I don't know that I have a right to explain. I could ask Ruth's advice. It's hard to know what to do in such a case."

"Theer's no such thing as a strait wescut i' the house, worse luck," said Fuller. "Theer *is* a clothes line, if that 'ud serve as well."

"May I see Miss Ruth, sir?" asked Reuben. "I'll tell you all about it if I can. But I think I have found out a very strange and mournful thing."

Fuller threw open the window and called "Ruth." She came in slowly, and started when she saw Reuben there, and both she and he stood for a moment in some confusion.

"Gi'e the wench a kiss, and ha' done with it," said Fuller. "Her's as ready as thee beest willin'."

Reuben acted on this sage counsel, and Ruth, though she blushed like a rose, made no protest.

"Theer," said papa, hugging his fat waistcoat, and rolling from the room. "Call me when I'm wanted."

He was not wanted for a long time, for the lovers had much to say to each other, as was only natural. First of all Ruth shyly gave Reuben the letter she had written the night before, and he read it, and then there were questions to be asked and answered on either side, as—Did she really love him? And why? And since when? And had she not always known that he loved her? All which the reader shall figure out of his or her own experience or fancy, for these things, though delightful in their own time and place, are not to be written of, having a smack of foolishness with much that is tender and charming.

Next—or rather, interlaced with this—came Ruth's version of Aunt Rachel's curious behaviour. And then said Reuben:

"I think I hold the key to that. But whether I do or not remains to be seen. I found this in Manzini. You see how old it looks. The very pin that held it to the paper was rusted half through. You see," turning it over, "it is addressed to Mr. Gold. I am afraid it was meant for my uncle, and that he never saw it. If it is a breach of faith to show it you I cannot help it. Read it, darling, and tell me what you think is best to be done."

Ruth read it, and looked up with a face pale with extreme compassion.

"Reuben," she said, "this is Aunt Rachel's handwriting. This is all her story." She began to cry, and Reuben comforted her. "What can we do?" she asked, gently evading him. "Oh, Reuben, how pitiful, how pitiful it is!"

"Should he have it after all these years?" asked Reuben. "What can it be but a regret to him?"

"Oh yes," she answered, with clasped hands, and new tears in her eyes, "he must have it. Think of his poor spirit knowing afterwards that we had kept it from him!"

"It will be a sore grief for him to see it. I fear so. A sore grief."

"Aunt Rachel will be less bitter when she knows. But, oh, Reuben, to be parted in that way for so long! Do you see it all? He wrote to her asking her to be his wife, and she wrote back, and he never had her answer, and waited for it. And she, waiting and waiting for him, and hearing nothing, thinking she had been tricked and mocked, poor thing, and growing prouder and bitterer until she went away. I never, never heard of anything so sad." She would have none of Reuben's consoling now, though the tears were streaming down her cheeks. "Go," she begged him, "go at once, and take it to him. Think if it were you and me!"

"It would never have happened to you and me, my darling," said Reuben. "I'd have had 'Yes' or 'No' for an answer. A man's offer of his heart is worth a 'No thank you,' though he made it to a queen."

"Go at once," she besought him. "I shall be unhappy till I know he knows!"

"Well, my dear," said Reuben, "if you say go, I go. But I'd as lief put my hand in a fire. The poor old man will have suffered nothing like this for many a day."

"Stop an' tek a bit o' breakfast, lad," cried Fuller as Reuben hurried by him, at the door which gave upon the garden. "It'll be ready i' five minutes."

"I have my orders, sir," said Reuben, with a pale smile. "I can't stop this morning, much as I should like to."

Like most healthy men of vivid fancy he was a rapid walker, and in a few minutes he was in sight of his uncle's house. His

heart failed him, and he stopped short irresolutely. Should he send the letter, explaining where he found it, and how? He could hardly bear to think of looking on the pain the old man might endure. And yet would it not be kinder to be with him? Might he not be in need of some one, and if he were, who was there but his nephew—the one man of his kindred left alive?

"I'll do it at once," said Reuben, and walking straight to the door he knocked. He would have given all he had to be away when this was done, but he had to stand his ground, and he waited a long time whilst a hand drew back the shrieking bolts and clattering chain within. Then the key turned in the lock. The door opened, and his uncle stood before him.

"Beest early this morning," he said, with a smile. "Theer's something special brings thee here so soon?"

"Yes," answered Reuben, clearing his throat, "something special."

"Come in, lad," said Ezra. "No trouble, I hope. Theer's a kind of a troubled look upon you. What is it?"

Reuben entered without an immediate answer, and Ezra closed the door behind him. The gloom and the almost vault-like odours of the chamber struck upon him with a cold sense of solitude and age. They answered to the thoughts that filled him—the thoughts of his uncle's lonely and sunless life.

"Trouble!" said the old man in an inward voice. "Theer's trouble everywheer! What is it, lad?"

"Sit down, uncle," began Reuben, after a pause in which Ezra peered at him anxiously. "I find I must tell you some business of my own to make myself quite clear. I wrote a note to Ruth last night, and I learned from her that she had put an answer between the leaves of Manzini. I took the book home, and found a note addressed to Mr. Gold. I opened it and it was signed with an 'R' and so I read it. But I can't help thinking it belongs to you. The paper's very yellow and old, and I think"—his voice grew treacherous, and he could scarcely command it—"I think it must have lain there unnoticed for some years."

He held it out rustling and shaking in his hand. Ezra, breathing hard and short, accepted it, and began to grope in his pockets for his spectacle case. After a while he found it, and tremblingly setting his glasses astride his nose began to unfold the paper, which crackled noisily in the dead silence. When he had unfolded it he glanced across at Reuben, and walked to the window.

"Theer's summat wrong," he said, when he had stood there for a minute or two, with the crisp thick old paper crackling in his hands. "Summat the matter wi' my eyes. Read it—out." His voice was ghastly strange.

Reuben approached him, and took the letter from his fingers. In this exchange their hands met, and Ezra's was like ice. He laid it on Reuben's shoulder, repeating, "Read it out."

"'Dear Mr. Gold,'" read Reuben, "'I have not answered your esteemed note until now, though in receipt of it since Thursday.'"

"Thursday?" said Ezra.

"Thursday," repeated Reuben. "'For I dare not seem precipitate in such a matter. But I have consulted my own heart, and have laid it before the Throne, knowing no earthly adviser.'"

There was such a tremor in the hand which held him that Reuben's voice failed for pure pity.

"Yes," said Ezra. "Go on."

"'Dear Mr. Gold,'" read Reuben, in a voice even less steady than before, "'it shall be as you wish.'" There he paused again, his voice betraying him.

"Go on," said Ezra.

"'It shall be as you wish, and I trust God may help me to be a worthy helpmeet. So no more till I hear again from you. R.'"

"That's all?" asked Ezra.

"That's all."

"Thank you, lad, thank you." He stooped as if in the act of sitting down, and Reuben, passing an arm about his waist, led him to an armchair. "Thank you, lad," he said again. An eight-day clock ticked in a neighbouring room. "That was how it came to pass," said the old man, in a voice so strangely commonplace that Reuben started at it. "Ah! That was how it came to pass." He was silent again for two or three minutes and the clock ticked on. "That was how it came to pass," he said again. With great deliberation he set his hands together, finger by finger, in the shape of a wedge, and then pushing them between his knees bent his head above them, and seemed to stare at the dim pattern of the carpet. He was silent for a long time now, and sat as still as if he were carved in stone. "Who's there?" he cried, suddenly looking up.

"I am here, uncle," Reuben answered.

"Yes, yes," said Ezra. "Reuben. Yes, of course. And that was how it came to pass."

Reuben, with a burning and choking sensation in his throat, stood in his place, not knowing what to say or do.

"Wheer is it?" asked Ezra, looking up again. Reuben handed him the note, and he sat with bent head above it for a long time. "Reuben, lad," he said then, "I'll wish thee a good mornin'. I'm like to be poor company, and to tell the truth, lad, I want to be by mysen for a while. I've been shook a bit, my lad, I've been shook a bit."

As he spoke thus he arose, and with his hands folded behind him walked to and fro. His face was greyer than common, and the bright colour which generally marked his cheeks was flown, but it was plain to see that he had recovered full possession of himself, though he was still much agitated. Reuben went away in silence, and Ezra continued to pace the room for an hour. His housekeeper appeared to tell him that breakfast was on the table, but though he answered in his customary manner he took no further notice. She came again to tell him with a voice of complaint that everything was cold and spoiled.

"Well, well, woman," said Ezra, "leave it theer."

He went on walking up and down, until, without any acceleration of his pace, he changed the direction of his walk, and passed out at the door, feeling in the darkened little passage for his hat.

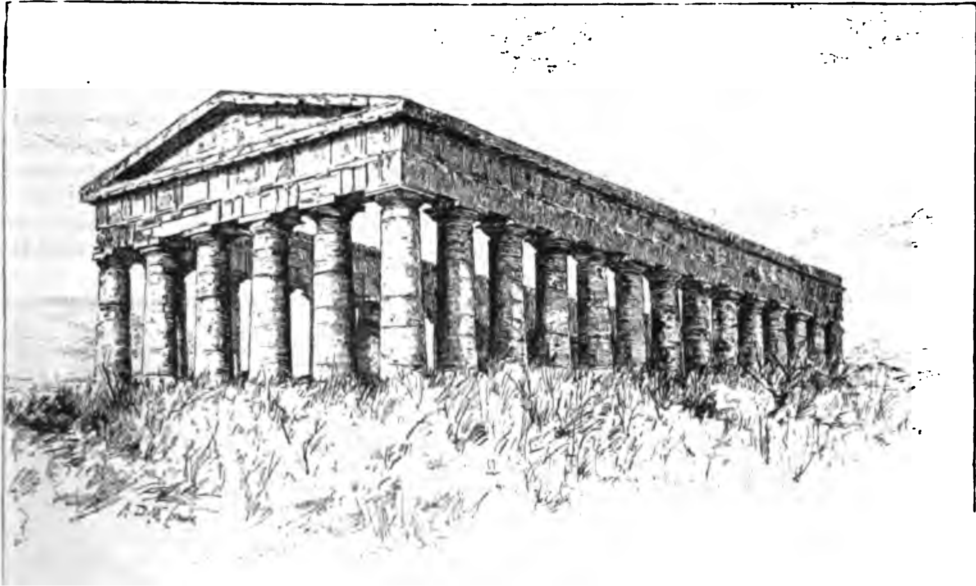
"You sha'n't goo out wi' nothing on your stomach," said the servant, who had been watching and waiting to see what he would do. Ezra, to satisfy her, poured out and drank a cup of coffee, and then walked out into the street, bending his steps in the direction of Rachel's cottage. Twice on the way he paused and half drew from his waistcoat pocket the yellow old note which had so long lingered on its way to him, but each time he returned it without looking at it, and walked on again.

He stood for a moment at the wicket gate, and then opening it passed through, suffering it to fall, with a clatter, behind him. His hand trembled strangely as he lifted it to the door, and he knocked with a tremulous loudness. When he had waited for a time he heard Rachel's footsteps tapping on the oil-cloth of the passage which divided her toy sitting-room from her bandbox of a parlour. His grey face went a shade greyer, and he cleared his throat nervously, with the tips of his thin fingers at his mouth. He heard the rattling of the door chain, but it seemed rather as if it were being put up than taken down, and this suspicion was confirmed when it was opened with a little jar and stopped short at the confines of the chain. Rachel's face looked round the edge of the door. He had time to speak but a single word—"Rachel!"

The door was vigorously slammed in his face, and he heard the emphatic tapping of footsteps as she retired. He stood for a minute irresolute, and then, quitting the porch, walked round the thread of gravelled footpath which led to the back of the cottage. He had but rounded the corner of the building when the back door closed with a clang, and he heard the bolts shot. Next, whilst he still stood irresolute, he saw Rachel approach a window and vigorously apply herself to the blind cord. In the mere instant which intervened between this and the descent of the blind, she looked at him with a profound and passionate scorn. The old man sighed, and nodding his head up and down retraced his steps, but lingering in the pathway in the little garden and surveying the house wistfully he was again aware of Rachel, who faced him once more with an unchanging countenance. This time she appeared at the parlour window, and a second time the blind came down between him and her gaze of uncompromising scorn.

"Eh, dear!" he said, tremblingly, as he turned away. "Her's got reason to think it, poor thing. It's hard to find out the ways o' Providence. If it warn't for good it couldn't ha' happened, but it's a heavy burden all the same."

(*To be continued.*)



TEMPLE OF SEGESTA.
From a Drawing by A. M'CORMICK.

A MONTH IN SICILY.

II.

IT is almost impossible for any visitor to Sicily who is unpractical enough to take an interest in ancient history to avoid irritating his friends or acquaintances, and probably, if he writes, his readers, by constant reference to the associations of the island with antiquity. And yet nothing can be more preposterous than this when we come to consider that island's size. Why, Ireland itself, no monster—I mean of magnitude—would make nearly three of it in superficial area. Let any one who is curious in the matter calculate how many Sicilies would equal one Australia, and I think the result of the admeasurement ought to make him pretty well ashamed of devoting any attention to so insignificant a spot. If it does not, I can say no more than that he deserves to have what Mr. Cobden called "all the works of Thucydides" delivered to him every morning in threepenny numbers instead of his *Times*, and that he does *not* deserve to be a fellow-countryman of Lord Sherbrooke. We want a few more such repentant scholars as his lordship to speak their minds about all this classical nonsense. Now, however, that he has ceased to encourage the timid engineer and rouse the members of the Iron and Steel Institute from that condition of excessive diffidence, which oppresses all scientific men in these days, the effect of his once annual speeches is beginning to fade from people's minds. They are now in danger of forgetting the great truth which Mr. Lowe used so eloquently to impress upon them—namely, that the historic importance of events depends entirely upon the dimensions of the stage on which, and the numbers of the actors by whom, the drama was performed—just as the intellectual stature of the individual is exactly measured by the number of feet which he stands in his stocking soles, while the precise greatness of his soul may be determined by a glance at the tape measure round his chest. People, I say, have almost or quite forgotten the insignificant size of

Hellas, the ridiculously small armies that fought together in the causes of States not so big as a good-sized English county, and in fact all the correctives of that absurd self-importance of the classic poets and historians which Mr. Lowe was wont to satirise with such felicitous humour. No doubt it will be all the better for me if they have: since the reader will thus be all the less conscious of the extreme unimportance of the things which interest me, and which I too coolly assume to be likely to interest him.

Speaking, however, for the moment as an entirely dutiful child of the nineteenth century, I cannot refrain from making an observation which may seem disparaging to one of the achievements upon which our mother especially prides herself. It is this: that if steam had been invented in the fifth century B.C., and if the present railway system of Sicily had existed in the time of the Peloponnesian war, and had been at the command of the Athenian invaders of the island, I have the gravest doubts whether the armies of Nicias and Demosthenes would have succeeded in making good their retreat from Syracuse. To be sure a captious critic might say that this is no reproach to the nineteenth century, or at least to the last quarter of it, but rather to the country whose railway arrangements are thirty years behind the age. But, be that as it may, I feel convinced that if the Athenian generals, instead of attempting to make their escape by way of the valley of the Cacyparis, had endeavoured to retire their troops by the Syracuse-Catania railway, they might have been easily cut off by an active troop of Spartan cavalry before they could have got further on their road than the Priolo station. Looking at the question, however, from the picturesque and antiquarian point of view, it would be most ungrateful to complain of the deliberate movements of the Sicilian trains. They afford you excellent opportunities of seeing the country *en route*, and nowhere better than on the line from Syracuse to Girgenti *viâ* Catania. The journey through the smiling Piano di Catania, the broad belt of corn land which skirts the railway for miles and enables one to understand whence the "island-granary of Europe" derived its name, past rock-perched Calta-

GIRGENTI.
From a Drawing by A. M'CORMICK.

scibetta and Castrogiovanni (whence on foot or mule-back to the scene of the oldest of recorded abductions, the plains of Enna,) is interesting all the way; and if the railway route is about twice as long by distance and three times as long by time, between Syracuse and Girgenti, as some children of the nineteenth century—especially her American children—are apt to think that it need be, one cannot deny on reaching one's destination that the afternoon has been pleasantly spent, and that there are less enjoyable things than crawling through Sicily at a snail's pace in one of the most expeditious of Sicilian trains.

"Girgenti," said a young Englishman, our travelling companion, to his newly-married bride, as we approached its station, "Girgenti is the ancient Agrigentum." "Yes, dear," replied the lady demurely, "but what is the ancient Agrigentum?" and the young man was speechless. Had Madame been a Girton graduate she might perhaps have been able to point out to him that he had been guilty of the logical error in definition technically known as *Obscurum per obscurius*; but I was not sorry that she was unable thus to reprove him, since he was quite sufficiently gravelled as it was. He was not long, however, in taking his revenge, for, unearthing a guide-book from his hand-bag and remarking with a malicious smile, "You expressed a desire, my love, to learn something about the ancient Agrigentum," he bestowed upon her a page and a half of such admirably condensed historical information that I feel sure it left her under the impression that "the name of Verres, that enlightened patron of learning, has been preserved for us in the immortal Odes of Phalaris, while that of Pindar lives to infamy as the cruel tyrant of Acragas who roasted to death the poet Cicero in a brazen bull." The only point, however, on which she made any remark was on the description of Girgenti as "the most beautiful city of mortals"—a description which, as she observed, made it very provoking to have to enter the town in the dark. And in truth the first impression produced by arriving at half-past six on a January evening, after a long railway journey, is that the roads and the hotel omnibus are quite unworthy of a city so enthusiastically commended by Pindar. The one seem to be all hills and the other all jolts. Now its horses are painfully labouring up a steep ascent, now plunging down as steep a declivity at a break-neck pace, while you peer through its steaming windows on what seems to be on both sides a plain as level and desolate as the sea. A quarter of an hour brings us to the town, and, having clattered and staggered through its uneven streets, another good quarter of an hour of open country intervenes before we reach the Hôtel des Temples—and supper. And so to bed in a storm of wind that in its violence leaves no doubt as to the exposed situation of a house of which it is too dark to see the bearings. The wind, which makes one's very bed shudder, is clearly blowing its hardest from the south-western sea.

The morning after our arrival, however, broke calm and fair, and then that same south-western exposure of which we had felt the discomforts throughout the night, began to reveal its advantages. From the bedroom windows on this side of the hotel one looks forth upon a strangely impressive view. The ground descends abruptly through an unkempt garden—if that, indeed, can be called a garden which is merely a rough inclosure of a piece of land allowed to beautify itself with its own wild flowers and other natural growths—to a broad and smiling champaign, level, or very gradually sloping, downwards (except where, now and again, the declivity is arrested by a gentle knoll), towards Porto Empedocle and the sea. Scattered here and there about this open plain, mostly upon the summits of the knolls aforesaid, lie the ruins of no fewer than seven temples, each plainly discernible in the clear—the too-clear—morning air: and not discernible only but plainly recognisable in each case by its structure and conformation for the shrine of the particular deity to whom it is dedicated. The faithful Bädeker tells them off for you as you sit at your bedroom window, full of thick-coming fancies, and waiting for that Sicilian coffee which will be thick when it does come. Ceres and Proserpine, Juno Lacinia, Concord, Hercules, Æsculapius, Olympian Jove, Castor and Pollux—there they are in their order from east to west. It is a land of ruins, and to all appearance of nothing else. One can just succeed, indeed, in tracing the coils of the railway as it winds like a black snake towards the port, but, save that, there are no other signs of life. One can descry no waggon upon the roads, no horse in the furrows, no labourer among the vines. Girgenti itself, with its hum and clatter, lies behind us; we can catch no glimpse of life or motion on the quays of the Porto Empedocle. All seems as desolate as those grey and mouldering fanes of the discrowned gods—a solitude which only changes in character without deepening in intensity, as the eye travels across the foam-fringed coast-line out on to the misty sea. No landscape

TEMPLE OF HERCULES AT SELINUNTO.
From a Drawing by A. M'CORMICK.

that I ever before looked upon is at once so touching and so stimulating; none so strangely divides one between the moral pleasure of viewing it in the poetry of distance and the intellectual curiosity which only a closer inspection can satisfy. The latter feeling of course must win at last. No man ever yet sat a whole morning at a hotel window merely content to look out upon a landscape which he had never seen before, and which is covered with "objects of interest" of a unique description. No one, at least, ever sat out a whole fine morning in this way: and the morning I am speaking of was a fine one—until you went out. It was just the day to entrap unwary visitors into an attempt to "do" the temples, or as many of them as might be, before lunch, and to send them home wet through before they had done more than pay their respects to Juno Lacinia (or is it Juno Lucina? Authorities differ, and one sees not well why in the dedication of a temple erected to the goddess at Acragas she should have been named after a temple dedicated to her elsewhere—to wit, at Crotona on the Lacinian promotory), and, perhaps, also, if they are fairly expeditious in their movements, to Concordia. Such, at any rate, was the way in which the day served us. We had just time to visit the two most perfect ruins of this god-haunted spot when the drizzle became downpour, and there was nothing for it but retreat. Even, I believe, to the most enthusiastic of antiquaries there comes a time when the persistent dripping of an umbrella-stream down the back of the neck begins to beget a gentle feeling of satiety with the work of exploration.

Girgenti, however, is a place at which you can afford—or ought to be able to afford—to lose an afternoon; for it is a place in which you might spend many interesting days, and from which you ought under no circumstances to hurry away. Whether you depend for your chief pleasure upon the eye or the mind—whether delight in beauty of architectural form or wonder at magnificence of structural scale be your predominant feeling, it will here find endless gratification. The noble *façade* of Concordia, and Juno's stately file of lateral columns make one sort of

appeal to the emotions; it is a wholly different one which comes from the vast prostrate pillars, the gigantic moss-grown plinths of the temple of Hercules. The colossal caryatid which has been pieced together from his *disjecta membra*, and now stares supine at the heavens from the grass-grown floor of the temple, is plainly visible from the hotel windows a thousand yards away. The habitation of Olympian Jove was over 120 yards in length, and more than sixty in breadth. They were at the height of their fame, these temples, down to as late a date as the eve of the Roman empire, and their contents did not, of course, escape the critical attention of the æsthetic Verres. "Did you not," exclaims Cicero indignantly, "take away a most beautiful statue of Apollo, on whose thigh there was the name of Mycon inscribed in minute letters of silver, out of that most holy temple of Æsculapius?" And what about "the brazen image of Hercules himself, than which," the orator adds with that curious mixture of affected humility and equally affected contempt which characterises all Cicero's references to Greek art in these speeches, "I cannot readily say where I have seen anything finer (being, however, not much of a judge of these matters though I have seen plenty of specimens): so greatly venerated among them, O judges, that his mouth and chin are a little worn away, because men, in addressing their prayers and congratulations to him, are accustomed not only to worship the statue but to kiss it." This was the statue which the energetic proconsul endeavoured to carry off by organising a night attack upon the temple—an attack repelled by the militant piety of the Agrigentines, who beat off the plunderers with stones and bludgeons, compelling them to retire in possession of only two other "very small statues, in order not to return to that robber of all holy things empty handed." This also was the occasion on which the Sicilians, "who are never in such straits as not to be able to say something facetious and neat," delivered themselves of the admirable though not, perhaps, entirely novel witticism, that "the enormous boar" had a right to take rank with the other boar of Erymanthus destroyed by Hercules.

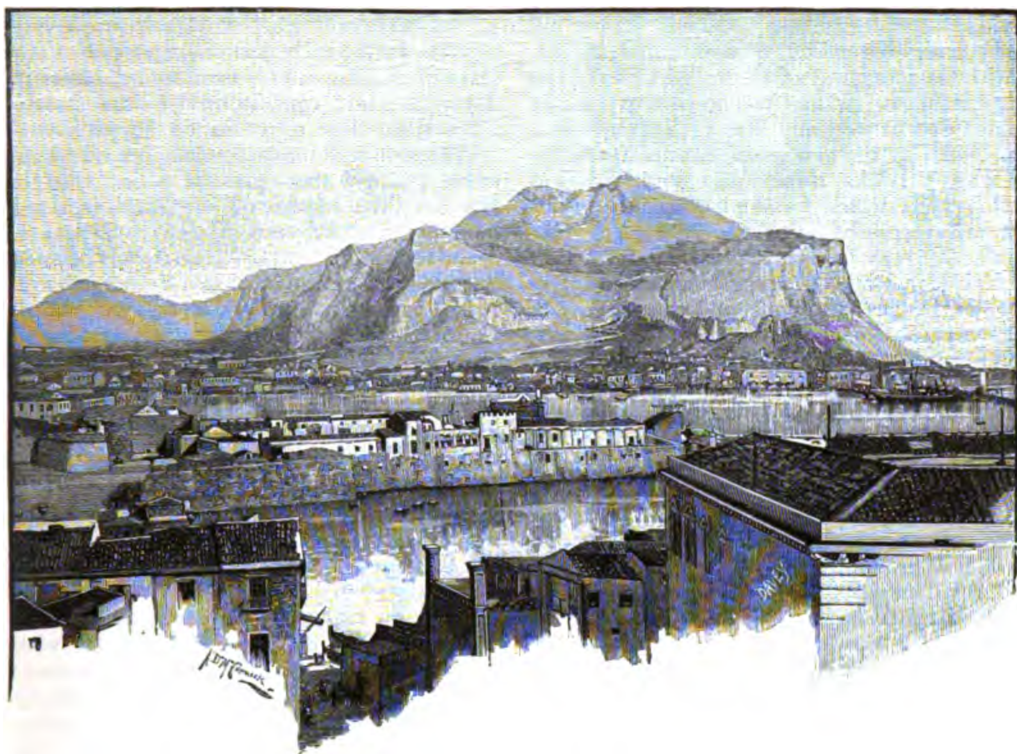
It may seem perhaps to smack somewhat of a paradox to say that people very often do not visit Girgenti until after they have passed several days there; but it is nevertheless the strict truth. The hotel, as has been remarked, lies a good distance on the sea-board side of the town, and the visitor is pretty sure to explore the ruins which lie between him and the sea before bending his steps towards the town. Nor will he need more than one journey thither when he does go; a single visit being sufficient to enable him to make the acquaintance of the cathedral, and to admire that marble sarcophagus, with its representation, in relief, of the myth of Hippolytus, which is its principal feature of attraction. He will soon quit the Christian for the pagan temples, and the streets of the town for the silent olive-clad hills upon which the famous ruins lie. More especially will he do so when he has overcome the natural diffidence inspired by the information in his Bradshaw, to the effect that "the island of Sicily is still infested with brigands, especially about Girgenti." Even if for no other reason than that which disinclined Paul Louis Courier to seek an interview with the Procureur-general, who was prosecuting him for a seditious libel, namely, that "he had no wish to make new acquaintances," the visitor to Girgenti is almost sure not to desire an introduction of this sort, and will be relieved by finding that it is not forced upon him. For the fact is, that both here and elsewhere in Sicily, alike on its four coasts and in the interior, at Syracuse, at Girgenti, at Segesta, in the environs of Palermo, once infamous as a haunt of brigandage, or even at Trapani itself, the scene of the kidnapping of the Duca di Calvino in the autumn of 1883, the foreign traveller may with perfect safety order his goings out and comings in, as though there were no such things as brigands in existence. He will meet with no robbers —at least outside his hotel bureau; and this precisely because the *latro* out of doors has too much fellow-feeling with the *perfidus caupo* within them to poach upon his preserves. Sicilian brigandage, in short, is a terror, not to the foreigner, but to the resident. An English, French, or German tourist is practically as safe against the artistically decorated firelock of the Sicilian brigand, as a Saxon bagman is against the rusty blunderbuss of the Irish tenant. He who has to fear a bullet from the one, or a shower of slugs from the other is in each case the unpopular landlord. And what completes the parallel between the two cases is, that by a considerable section of the outwardly law-abiding population of the island, the Sicilian brigand is regarded as a sincere if misguided patriot. This feeling came out amusingly in a talk which I had with a perfectly respectable hotel-keeper in one of the larger towns of Sicily, a man who, in England, would have been a member of the Licensed Victuallers'

Association, and given a steady Conservative vote at every election. My friend made light, as all brigand-breeding nations do, of the brigandage scandal in every form. It was a *niente*, a trifle, a way they had, a mere method of "guying" obnoxious citizens. Why should the signor trouble himself about it? You might have thought that it was nothing more formidable than a "hay-making" in the rooms of a too studious undergraduate, or the serenade of a tin kettle band under the windows of some eccentric in a country town. I asked him whether it was true that the Trapani band had carried the joke, and the Duke, so far as to confine him for several weeks in a cave on the mountains, many feet below the earth's surface, and to feed him on the bread of affliction, and the water of affliction, until their messenger returned again in peace, bearing sixty thousand francs of ransom with him. Yes, mine host admitted with a shrug that that was so. "The brigands," he said, "had put *il Duca* into a 'grotto' among the mountains," and he seemed to rely much upon the pastoral associations of the word as mitigating the severity of the aged nobleman's treatment. There was no denying, too, that he was boarded in the manner alleged; or that his hotel bill did "foot up" to £2,400. Bonifazio's mouth appeared to water at the thought of so profitable a *pension*. "But what would you have?" he proceeded with much animation. "The Duke, what is he? He is a man, very rich, very rich, and yet if he comes into this town, into that town, into whatever town, on business, he go not to the *albergo*, the best hotel of the place—never. He go to a little *trattoria* like as—well like as where I would not myself go, if I had two *lire* in my pocket. It is good that he not hoard his money for ever. The Trapani brigands they have made some of it to—how you call it?—circulate."

Thus this child of nature, unspoilt by the conventionalisms of a more advanced civilisation: and I could not help wondering what chance the Duke of Stingister, for instance, would have among ourselves if it were as easy a thing for a little band of patriot tradesmen to swoop down upon his Grace as his carriage draws up at the Stores, and to bear him away to Primrose Hill, there to be held in duress until his Duchess, stimulated thereto, perhaps, by the receipt of one of her husband's ears in a registered letter, should have forwarded them the ransom which they demanded. If this, I say, were as simple an operation to perform in London, as it was for the Sicilian brigands to carry off the unfortunate Sicilian nobleman while in the act of driving into the town of Trapani—how then? However I kept these reflections to myself, and admitted that highway robbery was a device, like another, for making money circulate. Bonifazio then went on to say that the Duca was not the only great proprietor who had given offence to his neighbours by his ill-judged parsimony: there were several others in the island as bad in this respect as he. "And would their money," I asked him, "be made to circulate in the same way?" a question to which he replied with a world of significance in his tone, "I should not wonder." From that he passed into anecdotes of the celebrated brigand Leone—the Claude Duval of Sicily—the gayest, gallantest, mildest mannered bandit that ever slit a nose, the chivalrous footpad who once courteously returned one of his victims a valuable gold watch on understanding that it had been a present from his wife, and who, after a life of brilliant predatory exploits, was at last treacherously surprised and shot by the Sicilian police. My companion made no disguise of his feeling that the circumstances under which the excellent Leone met his end (his assailants had fired upon him, so far as I could gather, without giving him time to fire upon them), reflected indelible disgrace upon the authorities, who still retained in their service the perpetrators of the cowardly crime. He spoke, in fact, of the shooting in quite the spirit in which the old Border balladist sings of the execution of Johnny Armstrong and his band:

> "John *murdered* was at Carlinrigg,
> And all his gallant companie;
> But Scotland's heart was ne'er sae wae,
> To see sae mony brave men die."

And after all, why not? So far as popular sentiment with regard to "out-door" robbery is concerned, the Sicilian of the nineteenth century is very little in advance of the Scottish Borderer of the sixteenth. Within doors it is different. Leone, and Leone's admirers, would, no doubt, scorn to pick your pocket in a church; but Kinmont Willie would have equally disdained the action. It is undoubtedly the open air which is felt to purify and dignify the act of theft. It is not the thing taken, as some apologists for our Border freebooters have pretended: it matters not whether that be coin or kine. *Pecus* is the etymological root, and was in old times the commonest representative of *pecunia*; but if Borderers lifted cattle in preference to other commodities, it was only because the cattle co-operated in the lifting.



PALERMO, WITH MONTE PELLEGRINO.
From a Drawing by A. M'CORMICK.

Did not old Wat of Harden, that ancestor of whom Sir Walter Scott was so amusingly proud, thus regretfully apostrophise a Cumbrian haystack?—"By my soul, had ye but four feet, ye should na stand lang there!" No; it matters not what you lifted in ancient Scotland or lift in modern Sicily; the one thing essential is that you should do your thieving in the open air.

This, however, is perhaps something of a digression. It is time to quit Girgenti for the next natural halting-place for the hurried visitor to Sicily—the capital itself. Palermo must be sought, too, even before the remainder of the island has been "done," for it is the base for expeditions to the two, perhaps, most interesting spots in Sicily, Segesta and Selinunto. The one is a two the other a three days' drive from Palermo: but both well repay the expenditure of time and money. The unfinished temple of Segesta, with its unfluted columns, is one of the best preserved Doric temples and by far the most impressive in its surroundings. We are in presence of the union of two desolations, in this mountain solitude and before this deserted shrine. No words can do justice to its lonely grandeur. Selinunto, though less imposing than Segesta in natural majesty of situation, contends successfully with Girgenti in its wealth of ruins. The remains of seven temples crown the two hills on which the ancient Selinus stood, and the reliefs removed from two of the largest of them have enriched the museum at Palermo with nearly the oldest specimen of Greek sculpture existing. It is best, I think, in all such cases that decorations of this kind, which have been removed, should be visited before going to look at the ruins themselves: as it is only by beginning the mentally reconstructive process at that end that one can ever employ it to much purpose. The metopes of Selinus at any rate will be far more interesting to him who has seen the ruined temples of Selinunto than to him who has not; and this is a consideration of the more importance, since, to tell the truth, the museum of Palermo contains few other objects of interest of any kind. But one does not come to this beautifully seated city for Greek antiquities; nor except, perhaps, for the treasures of mosaic within its walls, or within easy reach of it, would its mere artistic attractions justify a

visit. Architecturally speaking it has no particular distinction, being branded, indeed, with the monotony of all Italian cities of the second class. When you have traversed it from east to west and then again from south to north by the two great thoroughfares, the Corso Vittorio Emmanuele and the Via Macqueda, which form an offensively symmetrical cross, let fall, as it were, upon the city in such a way that their point of intersection coincides with its exact geometrical centre—when this has been done, and when also you have done the Molo and the Cala, and admired the imposing Porta Felice, and strolled through the gardens of La Flora, there is not much in the way of strictly urban attractions left to explore. Palermo is not a beauty of "shy surprises;" such architectural charms as she possesses she frankly displays at once. There are cities in which you may wander for days together and light continually upon the hidden picturesque lurking in the midst of squalor; but Palermo is not one of these. All that man has ever done for her external adornment she can show you in a few hours, but days and weeks could not more than suffice for the full appreciation of all she owes to nature.

Nevertheless, for so is travelling man compounded, the visitor will very likely leave the natural charms of the city untasted until he has quenched the thirst of his curiosity as to its adventitious treasures. He will straightway get him to the museum aforesaid, or to the Church of La Martorana, or sooner still, perhaps, to the Cappella Palatina, under the inspiration of those two asterisks which preface Mr. Bädeker's assurance that in this he will here find what is "accounted the most beautiful castle-chapel in the world." To the mosaics with which its interior is, even more richly than that of the Martorana, adorned, I must candidly admit my incompetence to do justice. The feeling aroused by all art of this kind in the mind of the inexpert observer may be most accurately defined, to judge at least from my own case, as that of a "pleasurable wonder," and to inquire too curiously as to the extent to which the mere astonishment at a curiosity is superadded to, or mistaken for, a delight in beauty would, I maintain, be the mere impertinence of self-analysis. I leave it to others to say whether mosaics in themselves are surprisingly beautiful, or only beautifully surprising, and will content myself with saying that nowhere except in Palermo, and at the cathedral at Monreale, five miles off, are there, it is said, any such mosaics to be found in the world. But one would certainly go to Monreale whether there were any mosaics in the cathedral there or not. The lover of nature—as he used to be called in days when men condescended to the Cosmos more than they affect to do at present—will enjoy a walk or drive along a road which at several points commands a fine view of the bay; the village of Monreale is itself curious; the interior of the cathedral is architecturally striking; and in the garden and cloisters of the monastery one may well muse a pleasant afternoon away. But in the return journey from Monreale—one would hardly take it on the way there—there is gratification for a very different and probably much more general taste. A love of the "gruesome" is implanted deeply in our nature, and the resolute sightseer, after having fully recognised and deplored the fact that he is yielding to a "morbid" propensity, will descend into the subterranean corridors of the Capuchin monastery and see what he will see. It is just possible, however, that if he is an expert in self-deception—an art which varies indefinitely in difficulty with variations of temperament—he may convince himself that he enters the crowded dormitory of everlasting sleepers in the purely philosophic spirit of a Hamlet. He will not, it is true, be allowed to handle the skulls in the physical sense of the term, but he may do so, of course, as a preacher handles a text, and he will thus obtain the unique satisfaction of gratifying a morbid propensity, and encouraging an elevated emotion not only at the same moment but by the same act.

Palermo has next to no antiquities. The silt of successive ages, and the detritus of a life which, from earliest history has been a busy one, have irrecoverably buried almost all vestiges of her classic past. Her true, her only, but her all-sufficient attraction is conveyed in her ancient name. She is indeed Panormus—it is as the "all-harbour" city, that she fills the eye and mind, and lingers in the memory, and lives anew in the imagination. It is possible to tire of the study of mosaics—for some of us it is possible to do so with perhaps excessive expedition—but I do not think that anybody who loves blue sky and blue water, and "tender curving lines of creamy spray," will find it possible to tire of Palermo. The bay which embraces her is beautiful at all times of the day, the lines of Monte Pellegrino have a noble boldness from whatever point you view them, but the place and time which the real lover of Palermo would be most likely to choose to gaze upon his mistress is from the end of the sea-drive opposite the gardens of La

Flora at about the hour of sunset. The clear Mediterranean air is then at its clearest, the fringing foam at its whitest, the golden background of the Conca d'Oro at its mellowest; while the bare volcanic-looking sides of Pellegrino seem fusing into ruddy molten metal beneath the slanting rays. Sunset after sunset you may feast your eyes upon this delicious land- and sea-scape with still unexhausted pleasure—that is if the weather favours you. But do not in January count too confidently upon that. It is a delusion born of our systematic depreciation of our own climate to believe that the southern air is always balmy, the southern heaven always blue. You may have vile weather at Palermo in winter, as you may almost anywhere in or around the basin of the Mediterranean at that season of the year—as you may at Cannes or Nice, at Algiers or Tunis, or even, I imagine, though my own brief experience therein runs altogether to the contrary, at soft and sleepy Malaga. At Palermo I have known what it is to cower for a whole day of downpour over a hotel fire, to hear a hurricane volleying against my bedroom window all a livelong night, and to have to scuttle indoors off a balcony to escape a shower of blinding sleet. But if you get weather to your liking Palermo can be delightful. The trip to the villa of La Favorita will make one day's excellent pleasuring outside the city, the ascent, if you are a climber, of Pellegrino, with its unequalled views of sea and island, is another. But when every attraction outside the confines of the city is exhausted, one may lounge away the hours well contented without stirring many yards from the hotel-door. There is excitement enough in the mere intoxication of air and sunlight, of rippling waves and shining shore—those stimulants of nature upon which no reaction waits, and which sharpen, instead of stupefying, the senses they delight. The pleasure that comes of them remains unabated to the end, and perhaps is never keener than when you stand at last upon the deck of the steamer which is to bear you homeward and wave your last farewell to the receding city, lying couched, the loveliest of Ocean's Nereids, in her shell of gold.

H. D. Traill.

SICILIAN PEASANTS.
From a Drawing by A. M'Cormick.

ON THE CULTIVATION OF TEA AND ON TEA-CUSTOMS IN JAPAN.

THE tea-plant, not being indigenous in Japan, was first introduced from China. From this country also the religion of Buddha, science and art, many a useful handicraft, the greater number of cultivated plants, with few exceptions, such as tobacco and potato, were brought into Dai Nihon, "the Realm of the Rising Sun."[1] Hence, likewise, the Japanese received their principal textile materials: hemp, cotton, and silk, their staple food, rice, and their indispensable beverage, tea.

Our word "Tea" is supposed to be of Chinese origin, being derived from the Amoy and Swatow reading "Tay" of the same character, which expresses both the ancient name of tea, "T'su," and the more modern one, "Ch'a."

The Japanese tea, "Chiya" (pronounce Châ) is the infusion of the dried leaves of two kinds of shrub, both belonging to the natural order of the Ternstroemiaceæ, viz., the *Thea chinensis*, var. L. "Châ," and the *Camellia Sasanqua*, L.; "Sazan-k'wa," lit. "Mountain tea flower."

Although known in Japan for more than a thousand years, tea has only gradually become the general national beverage, as late as the fourteenth century.

Historical writers disagree as to the exact date of its first introduction, but we are fairly correct in referring it to the first half of the eighth century, A.D., from the fact, that all record a religious festival in 729, at which the forty-fifth Mikado Shômmu Tennô[2] (724-748) entertained the Buddhist priests with tea, a hitherto unknown beverage from Corea, this country having been for many centuries the high road of Chinese culture to Japan.

[1] "Dai Nihon," or "Dai Nippon," is the official name of the East Asiatic Empire, known in Europe as "Japan." Its ancient Japanese name is "Ô Yamato." The word "Nippon" (spelt Nitsupon), or "Nihon," is of Chinese origin, meaning sun-rise, or "day-break" (of Nichi, sun or day, and Hon, origin, beginning). This name was first given by the Chinese and Coreans to the islands in the east, in the direction of the rising sun. We find this name already in Chinese works of the time of the T'ang (Tô) dynasty (618-905 A.D.). It was officially adopted, in addition to the ancient name Yamato, by order of the thirty-fifth Mikado Tenji Tennô (662-670), as we find recorded in the Nihon-gi, "History of Japan," written in 720. The prefix "Dai" or "Ô," "great," is likewise of very ancient date, in imitation of the name of China, which formerly was called "Dai Tô," "Great East," and now "Dai Chin," and not, as some erroneously believe, after the instance of "Great Britain." The name "Dai Nippon" is mentioned as an old-established title in an encyclopedical work published in 1712, in "San-sai-tsu-ye," "Picture of the San-sai, *i.e.*, the three powers that rule all things, viz., heaven, earth, and man," and in the official Dai-Nihon-shi, "History of Japan," published in 1715. The word "Japan" is an European corruption of the Chinese "Jih-pên-kwoh," the "Zipango" of Marco Polo. The name of the main island of the Japanese archipelago is not "Nippon," as erroneously stated in all older and in many modern geographical works and maps, but "Hon-dô," or "Hon-shiu" (Hon: "principal, real"; Dô or Shiu: "state, province").

[2] "Mikado," the title of the Emperors of Japan, means literally "Sublime Gate." Tennô, "King of Heaven," is the official title, and is adopted in diplomatic intercourse as equivalent to "Majesty." The defunct emperors appear in history only under their posthumous names, Kai-miyô, literally "Name of Correction."

We also find tea already mentioned in a poem by the fiftieth Mikado K'wammu Tennô (782-805), the founder of the capital Kiyôto (794). A very ancient work, however, the Riuju-koku-ji, "Genealogical history of the country," states that the Abbot Yei-shû of the temple and monastery Shû-fuku-ji or Bon-shaku-ji in the province Ômi, was the first who brought tea and the art of preparing it from China, whither he had gone in 770, in order to study the Buddhist tenets at their source, as the early Japanese bonzes were wont to do.[1] This chronicle relates that Yei shû offered tea, which he had himself prepared, to Saga Tennô, the fifty-second Mikado (810-823), when visiting his convent in April, 815. The emperor was so delighted with this fragrant beverage, that he issued, in June of the same year, an order to lay out tea plantations in the Go-kinai, "the five imperial provinces,"[2] and in the provinces of Ômi, Tamba, and Harima. Contemporary history also informs us that Saga Tennô had a private tea-garden eastwards of the imperial palace at Kiyôto.

These accounts render it at any rate sufficiently evident, that tea was known in Japan at very ancient times. It also appears very probable that the leaves were prepared after Chinese custom, by being first steamed, then dried and ground into a fine powder.

For the following four centuries tea fell again gradually into disuse and finally almost into oblivion. It had never yet become general, but had only been adopted as an exceptional luxury by the nobility and the Buddhist clergy.

It was only under the reign of the eighty-third Emperor, Tsuchi Mikado Tennô (1199-1210), that the cultivation of tea was permanently established in Japan. In 1200 the bonze Yei-sei (Gi-sei) brought tea-seeds from China, which he planted on the mountain Seburi in Chikuzen, the most northern province of the island Kiu-shiu, "Ninelands," so called after the number of its provinces. The climate and soil of this southern island are particularly favourable to the growth of the Tsubaki, the *Camellia Japonica*, which is allied to the tea-plant; it develops into a tree of 18-24 feet in height and 4 feet in circumference. Yei-sei is also reported to have first introduced the Chinese custom of the ceremonious tea-drinking, which, subsequently, as we shall learn anon, has become one of the most formal social institutions, known by the name of the Châ-no-yu (lit. "boiling tea-water").

Yei-sei presented tea-seeds to Mei-ki (Miyô-ye), the abbot of the monastery of Tô-gano near Kiyôto—to whom the use of tea had been recommended for its stimulant properties—and instructed him in the cultivation of the plant and the treatment and preparation of the leaves. Encouraged by the first trials near Tô-gano and Fukase in Yamashiro, Mei-ki laid out plantations near Uji in the same province, the success of which realised his most sanguine anticipations. The tea-growers of Uji still manifest their grateful remembrance of the Abbot Mei-ki as the greatest benefactor of their district, by annually offering at his shrine the first gathered tea-leaves.

The use of tea came now more and more into fashion among the aristocracy and the Buddhist clergy. Of the bonzes, the monks of the Zen-shû, "the Sect of Abstraction"—which ranks second in the number of its votaries—were particularly addicted to this beverage, having discovered its property of keeping them awake during the long vigils and nocturnal prayers.

This sect was founded in China by Dar'ma (Daruma), an immediate disciple of Buddha, and was introduced into Japan by the aforesaid Yei-sei, who first taught it in the Temple of Ken-nin-ji at Kiyôto, under the name of Butsu-shin-shû, "the true sect of Buddha," as representing the original teaching of Shâkyamuni Gautama (born in 624 B.C., the twenty-fifth Buddha). The principal doctrine of the Zen-shû is, that "perfect rest of mind and body are indispensable for the ultimate attainment of supreme bliss." Dar'ma spent many years in deep meditation, immovably kneeling, until his legs had wasted and become paralysed. His representation as a legless, paunchy body, may be seen—like the figure of the Highlander in England—before tobacconists' shops; perhaps in allusion to the soothing property of tobacco. In this shape he is built up as a snow-man in winter; and made of papier-maché, weighted with lead, so as to rise when

[1] Buddhism was introduced into Japan in the middle of the sixth century A.D., from Corea, where it had spread from China. Chinese Buddhism, which differs in several respects from the original Indian religion, has always been the source from which the Japanese Buddhism drew its tenets.

[2] The five provinces, Yamashiro, with the capital Kiyôto, Yamato, Setsu (Tsu), Kawachi, and Idzumi, have always been under direct imperial administration; hence they had been called from the most remote times: Go-kinai "The five imperial provinces." Within the last few years the name Kami-gata, "Government Districts," literally, "superior region," is commencing to supersede the ancient name Go-kinai. The above enumerated eight provinces constitute nearly the centre of the main island Hon-dô.

laid flat on his back, forms a favourite children's toy.

The favour which tea had found with the feudal nobility—the Samurai—had led, as an indirect cause, to the spoliation of many pagodas of the bronze-rings which surround their terminal spires.

Kono Moronawo, a general of the first Ashikaga Shôgun Taka Uchi[1] (1336–1358), who was excessively fond of tea, opining that water boiled in bronze kettles did not spoil the subtle aroma of the tea, had kettles made of such bronze rings. His example was followed by the Samurai, and soon there was no pagoda at Kiyôto and in its environs which had not been stripped in this manner.

The tea-plantations of Uji were considerably extended in 1400 by Ashikaga Yoshi Mitsu, the third Shôgun of the second Minamoto dynasty (1368–1398), who, two years after his abdication, ordered Uchi Yoshihiro, one of his noble vassals, to have all the available land converted for this purpose. Since then Uji has been the most celebrated tea-land in Japan, producing a leaf hitherto unsurpassed in quality and delicacy of flavour. Henceforth the cultivation of tea spread rapidly throughout the country, and tea commenced to become the general beverage of the people.

It is doubtful whether the tea used at that period was in powder or in leaf; but contemporary literary works and poetry alluding only to powdered tea, we may conclude that this tea resembled the powdered tea, which at present is known by the name of Usu-châ, "pounded tea" (from Usu: a wooden or stone mortar used for pounding rice). This much, however, is certain, that the tea used by Ashikaga Yoshi Mitsu was not made of tea in leaf. Under this Shôgun, also, the ceremony of Châ-no-yu was established.

Until about 1570, the tea-leaves were immediately after picking immersed for a moment into boiling water, and, after having been dried in the sun, converted into powder. Tea prepared in this manner was called Ude-châ, "boiled tea" (from Ude: to cook by boiling). In the beginning of that year, a tea-merchant at Uji, of the name of Kami-bayashi, invented an apparatus called Hôiro (from Hoji: to roast, parch; and Ro: a hearth or a fire-place in the floor), for drying the tea-leaves, which I shall fully describe when speaking of the present mode of preparing them. The Hôiro was, however, only 156 years after its invention, in 1716, universally adopted for "firing tea," which is the correct technical term used by the English and Americans in China and in Japan, and which exactly renders the Japanese expression, "Châ-wo-iri." Until the year 1700, tea-leaves were fired in a pan, which process was called Nabe-iri, "pot-roasting."

The same tea-merchant also first distinguished two sorts of tea, the Usu-châ, "light tea;" and the Koi-châ, "dark tea." The word "Usu" in this instance means "light, thin," and, although spelt in Japanese like "Usu: to pound," is written with a different Chinese character. He likewise was the first who introduced matting-covers raised on poles about eight feet high, in order to protect the plantation in winter against hoar-frost, and in summer against the sun. Such covers are still universally in use. When riding, in June, the time when the young leaves, which yield the first quality of green tea, are fully developed, the whole country about Uji is under matting, over which the head of the horse-man just rises, so that, with the exception of the distant hills and mountains, and the roofs of the homesteads, the landscape is hidden from his view.

Within the last century and a half two new sorts of tea acquired a great reputation. They are known by the names of "Yamamoto-châ" and "Giyôku-ro-châ." We learn, about the origin of the first sort, that a tea-grower of the name of Nagaya Soshichiro, who lived in the seventeenth century in Tsutsuki-gori, in Yamashiro, produced a new kind of tea of particularly fine colour, for which, however, he failed to find purchasers at Kiyôto and in its neighbourhood. He proceeded with it to Yedo (called since 1868 Tô-kiyô, "Eastern capital,") in order to sell it to a tea-merchant, who kept a well-known tea-store near the Nihon-bashi, "the bridge of the Rising Sun."[2] This merchant, whose

[1] Shiyau-gun (pronounce Shô-gun) is a word of Chinese origin, and is composed of Shô, "general," and Gun, "army" or "war." The full title is "Sei-i-tai-shô-gun," "Great General, Conqueror of Barbarians." The Shôgunate was established in 1192, and hereditary in the Minamoto family, of which three dynasties held this high office, viz., the first dynasty, or that of its founder Minamoto Yori Tomo (1192, until the assassination of the third, Shôgun Sane Tomo, the second son of Yori Tomo, in 1219); the second, or Ashikaga dynasty (1336-1573); and the third, or Tokugawa dynasty (1603. until the abolition of the Shôgunate in 1868). The generals holding this office between each of these dynasties are not enumerated in history as Shôguns, not having been of Minamoto blood. The Shôguns were erroneously believed to be the second or military emperors of Japan, whilst they were only commanders-in-chief.

[2] The bridge of the Rising Sun, or of Japan, Nihon-bashi, is situated in the centre of Tô-kiyô (Yedo). From this bridge, upon which the great roads of the empire abut, all the distances throughout the country are measured. It is the Charing Cross of

name was Yamamoto, was so much pleased with it, that he at once bespoke the whole of the next year's crop; and the new tea, which he called Ten-châ, "Paradise- or Heaven-tea," found great favour, and has since preserved its high reputation under the more popular name of "Yamamoto-châ."

In the beginning of this century Yamamoto Tokuwo, a descendant of the afore-named Yamamoto, came to Uji on a visit to the tea-planter Kinoshita. Shown by him through the establishment, he noticed how the green leaves commenced curling in the Hôiro. It struck him as a novelty, likely to be successful in the trade, and he ordered a large supply of tea in this half-finished state, which found an eager sale, and commands the market still at the present day, known by the name of Giyôku-ro-châ, "Dew-drop tea." After the opening of the treaty-port of Yokohama in 1857, when the export of tea, principally to America, commenced, the Chinese method of preparing black and green teas was adopted.

In Japan green tea in leaf is universally used. Powdered tea, which at present is a most expensive luxury, is reserved for rare ceremonious occasions. Tea is not prepared by making an infusion with boiling water, as is habitual with us, but the boiling water is first carefully cooled in another vessel to 176° F. The leaves are renewed for every infusion, the same never being used for inexhaustible replenishings of the tea-pot, as is our custom. Tea prepared in the Japanese manner is of the colour of pale Sherry or Sauterne, and constitutes a most refreshing, reviving beverage, especially when travelling or when fatigued by exertion. The Japanese, like the Chinese, drink tea without milk or sugar, which, they contend, spoil the delicate aroma; but they recommend the use of both with black and green teas of inferior quality, prepared after the Chinese method, in order to cover their roughness.

The preparation of good tea is considered by the Japanese almost an art. Persons particularly expert in this accomplishment are called "Châ-jin," lit.: "tea-man." This term, however, besides its laudatory meaning, conveys also a less flattering sense, that of an eccentric person.

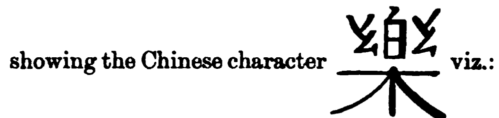
The Châ-jin prefer to every other kind of tea pots, those of a pottery known by the name of "Raku-yaki," not only for their elegance and beauty, but also for their property of preserving the heat of the tea longer

the new capital of Japan. Here stands the Kô-shaku, "public placard," a board erected under a shed on which are posted the imperial edicts.

than any other kind. Being very delicate, cups of this kind are alleged to produce a pleasant sensation when brought in contact with the lips.

The Raku-yaki—"Yaki" (meaning "to bake, to burn,") is the general term for any pottery baked in the furnace—is a kind of *faïence* made only at Kiyôto by one family, the descendants of a Corean of the name of Amaya, who immigrated and was naturalised in Japan in 1550, and who established himself as a potter in this city, which is celebrated for its various kinds of superior ceramics. He subsequently changed his name, as is frequently done, into that of Sasaki Sôkei. His son, Tanaka Chô-jiro, was the inheritor of his father's trade secret, and the original pottery made by these two, now very rare and of priceless value, is known as "Ima-raku Kiyô-yaki," "Henceforth delightful ware of Kiyôto."

Sasaki's grandson, Kichi Zayemon, received in 1580 from General Taiko Sama,[2] in reward for his famous ceramics, a brevet and seal, showing the Chinese character



viz.: "Raku," which means "happiness or enjoyment," with the permission to stamp all his ware with this mark. In consequence, all the Raku-yaki, which is still exclusively made by the descendants of Kichi Zayemon in the original manner, bears this Chinese sign. This ware is mostly hand-made, exceptionally moulded, but never turned on the wheel. It is glazed, and generally of black colour. The only other colours which sometimes form the ground, and are used for ornamentation, are white, red, yellow, and blue.

It is a general custom, the omission of which is considered an unpardonable breach of good manners, to offer tea to every visitor immediately after his arrival. Even in shops, the customer is served with tea before the goods are displayed to him, and this does not by any means impose upon him the obligation

[2] Toyotomi Hide Yoshi, popularly known by the name of Taiko Sama, "Lord Great Merit," the conqueror of Corea (1596); was in power during the interregnum between the second and third Minamoto dynasties (1573-1603), during which three of the most celebrated generals held the highest offices in the realm, but two of whom never became Shô-guns, not being of Minamoto blood. They were Ota Nobunaga, Taiko Sama, and Minamoto Tokuguwa Iye Yasu, who founded the third Minamoto dynasty in 1603. Taiko Sama, the son of a peasant, was born in 1536, and died in 1598, the highest in power, and one of the most popular heroes of Japan.

of making a purchase. This appears to have been a very ancient custom both in China and Japan, so ancient, that it was not omitted in receiving visitors from this world by the highest authorities in the Paradise and in the Hades, as we learn from the stories in the Liăo-Chai-Chih-Î (Strange Stories from my Small Library), a classical work written in 1679 by P'û Sung-Ling, which is one of the most popular books in China.[1] In the story entitled "Châng's Transformation," Châng, who is a Taoist,[2] possessed besides other marvellous gifts, the power of disembodying himself and of soaring "above the clouds to heaven." There an angel led him among beautiful halls and palaces into the presence of Buddha himself, who said to him, "My son, your virtue is a matter of great joy to me; unfortunately your term of life is short, and I have therefore made an appeal to God on your behalf." Châng prostrated himself and bowed the head to the ground, upon which he was commanded to rise and to be seated, and was served with tea as fragrant as Epidendrum.

In another story, "Metempsychosis," a certain Lin, who had taken his master's degree in 1621, and who could remember what had happened to him in a previous state of existence, tells the story of the migration of his soul. "I died at the age of sixty-two. On being conducted into the presence of the King of the Purgatory, he received me civilly, bade me to be seated, and offered me a cup of tea. I noticed, however, that the tea in his majesty's cup was clear and limpid, while that in my own was muddy like the lees of wine. It then flashed across me that this was the potion which was given to all disembodied spirits to render them oblivious of the past, and accordingly, when the king was looking the other way, I seized the opportunity of pouring it under the table, pretending afterwards that I had drunk it all up." This was the reason why, unlike other spirits who returned into this world, he had not lost the remembrance of his former state.

According to the general custom, the necessary tea-apparatus, Châ-dôgu, is constantly kept in readiness in the living-room of every house, viz. a brazier with live coals: Hibachi, a kettle to boil the water: Tetsubin, a tray: Bon, with a tea-pot: Do-bin or Chā-bin, cups: Châ-wan, and a tea-caddy: Châ-ire. Tea is the beverage and relish of every meal, even if it be nothing but boiled rice. Every artisan and labourer, going to work, carries with him a rice-box: Bentô, of lackered wood, a kettle, a tea-caddy, a teapot, and a cup, and his chop-sticks: Hashi. A few dry sticks boil the water, and the refreshing beverage is made. The rice is eaten either cold or mixed with hot tea.

A complete tea-apparatus belongs also to the fittings of the Ju-bako, "Picnic-box," with which every Japanese is provided when travelling, or making an excursion, or at picnic-parties. Of the latter, called Hanami, *i.e.*, "Looking at the flowers," the Japanese are exceedingly fond, the lovely landscapes with which their country abounds offering the most tempting inducement.

Tea-houses: Châ-ya, which take the place of our taverns and taps, are met with everywhere, on high roads and by-roads, in temple-groves, and resorts of pleasure.

Before describing the sociable and ceremonious tea-parties peculiar to the Japanese, I shall premise a short sketch on the cultivation and preparation of tea.

Tea is cultivated in Japan as far as to 40° N. The best tea-land, as I have already pointed out, is the district of Uji in the province of Yamashiro, after which the plantations of the other provinces rank in the following order: those of Ômi, Ise, Shimôsa, Echiu, Tôtômi, Kadzusa, Inaba, Suwô, Suruga, Nagato, and Musashi on the main island Hon-dô, and those of Hizen and Higo on the island of Kiu-shiu, "Nine lands." This is the most southern, and second in size, of the four large islands of the Archipelago, which consists besides of a great number of lesser islands. There are plantations also in other provinces, but I only mention those producing superior qualities of tea.

The tea-plant, like many other plants, cannot be transplanted or multiplied by

[1] This classical work, which is commonly known by its abbreviated title, Liao Chai, "Small Library," has been translated into English by Mr. Herbert A. Giles, and entitled, "Strange Stories from a Chinese Studio" (London: T. De la Rue, 1880).

[2] The Taoist system of metaphysics has been founded by Lao Tsze, "Old Child," so named because when born his head was white, and his countenance that of an old man. He lived about the close of the sixth century B.C., and was a contemporary to K'ung Kiu (Confucius). His biography is almost legendary, and his doctrines, Taô, "the way," and Teh, "moral excellence," as promulgated by his disciples, are mystic and abstruse.

The Three Systems of Doctrine (Religion) "San-Kiâo," as they are called, viz., the "System of the Literati" (of Confucius), that of Shê (Shâkyamuni, *i.e.*, Buddha), and that of Tao (Taoism), constitute the three recognised systems of religion, philosophy, and ethics of the Chinese.

slips or by grafting, but must be raised from seeds. It requires a temperate climate, too great heat or cold being injurious to it.

The plantation ought to be laid out near a water-course, and, if possible, in a sloping situation open to the air. The seeds are always sown in drills running north and south, in order that the plants may be freely exposed to the sun, else they would only partially develop. The tea-growers are very particular as to the time of collecting the seeds, and they prefer the autumn equinox to any other season. They only choose such seeds as are fully ripe, and have fallen to the ground after the spontaneous opening of the seed-vessels.

The best time for sowing is from December to the end of January. The seeds are placed in circles, slightly covered with earth, over which a layer of rice-husks is spread in order to protect them against the hoar-frost.

The first shoots appear in the following May or June, the roots developing in proportion to the plant. If the seeds are sown too late, the roots have not time to expand before the rising of the stem, which injures permanently the subsequent growth of the shrub. No manure is required during the first twelvemonth after the appearance of the plant. During the second year animal manure diluted in an equal quantity of water is applied. From the third year, the stem is surrounded three times yearly with pure animal manure or with oil-cake, *i.e.*, the residue of the oil-press. At the end of the third year the shrub is topped in order to increase the power of forming lateral buds.

The first leaves are gathered in the fourth year. The harvest commences in the beginning of the summer, when only the youngest leaves are picked. Thirty days after the first gathering, the second takes place. Some tea-growers have lately made a third picking, in consequence of the rise in the price of tea, but this proceeding ought to be energetically discountenanced, as it has proved most injurious to the plant.

I now propose to describe the mode of treatment of the tea-leaves, as it is practised at Uji, where, as we know, the best qualities of tea are produced. This being the standard method of preparing tea for use, it is followed with but very slight modifications by all the tea-growers in the country. We shall learn all the minor points, to which the Japanese, taught by a long and extensive experience, appear to pay great attention, some of which may seem to us but of slight importance or of none whatever. The great care with which the Japanese are wont to treat details may explain their success and excellence in many undertakings. It is the special bias of their mind, which I may, I believe, not incorrectly, designate as *mikro-megan*, "great in small things."

The leaves, immediately after having been gathered, are taken to the factory. The tea-plant abounds in stipules, and is thus unlike other plants of the order of the Ternstroemiaceæ, which are usually ex-stipulate. Here the stipules are separated by means of a bamboo sieve, and all impurities are removed. This done, the leaves are exposed to the action of steam, by placing them on a bamboo hurdle over water heated to 200° F. in a covered pan. Those intended for tea-in-leaf are steamed for fifteen seconds, those intended for powdered tea for half a minute. After this, they are uncovered, turned and aired by means of fans in the shape of the well-known palm-fans of the leaf of the *Corypha rotundifolia*, Lam. These fans, which serve for a great many purposes, are called Uchi-wa, and are made of a frame of split bamboo covered with paper.

Before the steam has ceased to escape, the leaves are placed in a basket, "the cooler," in which they are continually turned and fanned. The fanning must be particularly attended to, else the leaves would turn yellow and lose their fine aroma.

When perfectly cooled, the leaves are taken to the Hôiro, the apparatus for "firing the tea." The Hôiro proper is merely that portion which contains the fuel, but this term is generally extended to the whole apparatus, in which sense I likewise shall use it in this paper. It is a wooden frame measuring six feet by four, lined with a layer of cement, and covered with an iron grate, a short distance above which a copper-wire net is stretched. On this the dessicator holding the leaves is placed. This dessicator is a box of exactly the same dimensions as the Hôiro proper, formed of a wooden framework and paper.

The fuel, of which twenty-three pounds are used for every firing, consists of equal parts of charcoal of hard and of soft wood. When the fire is quite bright, a sufficient quantity of straw is burnt to obtain a layer of ashes in order to prevent the direct action of the radiating heat. During the process of firing, the leaves are continually rolled between the hands until they commence shrivelling and are nearly dry, when they are transferred to a second Hôiro for complete dessication. In preparing the sort of tea which is known by the name of Giyôku-ro-châ, lit.: "Dew-drop tea," the leaves are steamed

but for an instant, and whilst drying over a slow fire, each single leaf is most carefully rolled between the fingers.

The leaves when perfectly dry are removed from the second Hôiro, into sieves of copper-wire, in which the petioles, which may have remained attached, are separated by gentle rubbing between the palms of the hands.

After having been winnowed, the leaves are assorted into three qualities, and sifted through bamboo sieves, of which there are six different degrees of fineness. Common tea is sifted but once, the better qualities from six to seven times, and the powdered tea even as often as ten times, which expenditure in time and labour renders this kind of tea extremely dear.

The leaves for the powdered tea are likewise dessicated on the Hôiro, but in a somewhat different manner. The apparatus consists merely of the lower box for the fuel, with a grating of bamboo instead of the iron grate and the wire-net on the top. On this is placed a bamboo hurdle covered with a sheet of cardboard of the same size as the Hôiro proper, on which the leaves are spread. Instead of rolling the leaves between the fingers, they are alternately collected in the middle of the cardboard, and spread out again by means of tiny pincers, in order to secure the uniform drying of every single leaf.

The temperature of the room in which the Hôiro is placed, must be very high, and the doors and windows kept closed against the cooler outer air and draught. When the leaves are nearly dry, they are removed from the Hôiro and fanned, then all the faulty ones, and those which had turned yellow, are carefully picked out, and the remaining placed again on the Hôiro until perfectly dry, when they are spread on shelves near the fire and left for some time without being touched. Finally the leaves are sifted through a series of sieves from No. 4 to No. 10. The mode of the ultimate picking likewise differs from that employed with the tea-in-leaf. The leaves are placed in a square dish, spread by means of a feather, and the faulty ones removed with a pincer. For the first quality of powdered tea even more precautions are taken. The dish remains covered with a sheet of paper, and only those leaves are exposed which are taken up one by one with the pincer.

Tea being very difficult to keep in perfect condition, the Japanese dedicate the most scrupulous care to prevent its losing in flavour and colour. Pedantic as their many precautions may appear, it is not labour lost, as it secures them a most delicious aromatic beverage, quite different from that insipid infusion of broom-sticks, yclept "tea," with which, in our ignorance of "what tea really ought to be," we generally feel contented. In fact, tea in the West and tea in the far-off East are two quite different beverages.

But it is not to be wondered at, from the careless way tea is treated in Europe. I am not speaking of the tea merchant proper, but of the retailer and the ordinary housekeeper. Tea in retail shops is often kept in indifferently closing canisters, even in open boxes, exposed to the air and to contamination from extraneous odours of other merchandise, in the close vicinity of roast coffee or whatever objectionable compound is sold and bought under that name—of cheese, soap, candles, and a hundred other odoriferous articles. At home it is frequently kept in a paper bag stowed away into a cupboard with miscellaneous contents. People generally do not know, or forget, that the aroma of tea is volatile, that the leaf itself is hygroscopic, *i.e.*, very liable to get damp, and that it is equally subject to become impregnated by any kind of odour. Against all these injuries tea ought to be carefully guarded in order to preserve, at any rate, as much of its intrinsic qualities as are still left in it when reaching us.

We shall see, and may perhaps learn how the Japanese keep and protect their tea.

The tea-leaves after having been prepared for use in the manner above described, are in June again exposed to the action of a gentle fire for several hours; then spread out in a flat pan and stirred and fanned until they have cooled. Then they are put into glazed earthenware jars, which are methodically moved and shaken, until they settle firmly, fresh leaves being added by degrees, until the jars are quite full. These jars are closed by stoppers likewise of earthenware, which are wrapped in several layers of paper in order to make them air-tight. The jars are removed to the upper floor of the factory, and stored in a room which must be well aired, cool, and perfectly dry. In August the tea is again fired and treated in the same manner as in the preceding month, and this process is repeated in the following months of November, February, and March, the tea being fired altogether five times during the twelvemonth after the harvest. With such precautions tea will keep in perfect condition until the next season. The selection of tea jars is guided by experience. Some peculiar kinds of old earthenware, known by the names of Ko-bizen, Ko-tamba, and Ko-shigaraki, especially the latter for preserving

tea in larger quantities, are always preferred to modern jars. These jars are named after the place of their fabrication, the provinces Hizen and Tamba, and Shigaraki in the province of Ômi, all famous for their ceramics. The prefixed word "Ko" means "old, ancient." If new jars must be used, they are carefully examined for the quality of the material, the glazing and the baking.

Tea, for the inland transport, is packed in boxes made of the wood of the Kiri, the *Pawlownia imperialis*. For export air-tight tin boxes are used, which have a casing of the wood of Sugi, the *Cryptomeria japonica*. Smaller quantities are kept in well-stopped glass jars, made air-tight with pitch. Tea in such jars, kept under water in a well, will preserve its flavour unimpaired over the winter.

Powdered tea is extremely difficult to keep, and requires therefore additional precautions. It is kept in jars of turned pewter, closed air-tight with a double stopper. These are imbedded in common tea in a box of Kiri wood. The same mode of packing is also occasionally resorted to for the preservation of finer qualities of tea-in-leaf.

The subjoined table will show a Japanese analysis of the principal qualities of tea.

Name of Tea.		Tea-Kraft.	Tannin.	Theïne.	Ash.
Ori-mono-chá (Folded tea)	Of Uji.	29·77	14·20	2·93	5·67
Giyôku-ro-chá (Dew-drop tea)	Of Uji.	34·00	15·60	2·42	5·80
Usu-chá (Light tea) ...	Of Uji.	35·75	22·72	3·44	6·15
Koi-chá (Dark tea) ...	Of Uji.	35·65	25·20	4·21	6·05
Tô-bi-dashi-chá (Sifted tea)		12·12	14·20	4·15	4·97
Ban-chá (Common tea) ...		27·75	13·06	1·98	5·06
Yu-shiyutsu-chá (Export tea)		30·40	23·96	2·57	4·68
Neri-chá (Brick tea)	Prepared after the Chinese mode.	36·00	19·88	3·36	4·10
Koku-chá (Black tea)	Prepared after the Chinese mode.	30·85	14·06	4·67	5·60
Ko-chá (Tea dust) (broken leaves)	Prepared after the Chinese mode.	33·07	14·20	1·94	5·73
Riyoku-chá (Green tea)	Prepared after the Chinese mode.	37·35	15·95	2·83	5·78
Japanese Ko-chá (Tea dust)		36·25	15·75	2·96	5·28

"Tea Kraft," "strength of tea," is the generally adopted technical term, introduced by Dr. G. Martin, for the total amount of extractive matter, obtained by digesting the tea-leaves with a mixture of three parts of ether and one part of absolute alcohol. It comprises the volatile oils of chlorophyll, the resinous substances, the theïne, and other extractive matter.

A never absent constituent of all these different kinds of tea is a varying quantity of manganese, viz., 1·04 per cent. in the Ori-mono-châ, 21 per cent. in the Giyôku-ro-châ. The occurrence and proportion of manganese in each sort of tea is determined by incinerating the green leaves.

The Japanese green and black teas are without artificial colouring, technically called "facing." The former are made of the youngest, finest leaves of the first picking, which are only slightly fired. The black sorts are the leaves of the second gathering, which are more fired.

Imitations of the Riyoku-châ, "green tea," which surpasses every other sort in tea-kraft, made in China, are teas of inferior qualities, artificially coloured with indigo, sulphate of copper, or other green metallic dyes. They are prohibited in Japan by the law of the country as injurious to health.

Here I may insert a few words in explanation of the names and the origin of the several sorts of Chinese tea of commerce.

Tea was not known in China before the T'ang dynasty (618-906 A.D.), although an infusion of some kind of leaf was used as early as during the Chow dynasty (1122-255 B.C.), as we learn from the Urh Ya, a glossary of terms used in ancient history and poetry. This work is classified according to subjects and accompanied by explanatory notes, and has been assigned to the beginning of the Chow dynasty, but belongs more probably to the era of Confucius (K'ung Kui, 551-479 B.C.).

Formerly all the Chinese tea consumed in England was indiscriminately called "Bohea," for which we have the authority of Pope, Byron, and other great writers of the last and of the beginning of this century.

The "Bohea" proper, is called so after two ranges of hills in Fu-kien or Fo-kien, lit., "happy establishment," one of the eight provinces, with the capital Fu-chôu-fu on the river Min.

"Con-gou," lit.: "labour," is named so at Amoy from the labour in preparing it.

"Sou-chong," lit.: "small kind," as a Cantonese term for tea of many varieties.

"Hy-son," means "flourishing spring."

"Pe-koe" is the Cantonese pronunciation of the character for "white hair." This kind of tea is so called because for this sort only the youngest leaves are gathered, which have still the delicate down, the "white hair," on the surface. When older, all tea leaves are coriaceous.

"Pou-chong," "folded tea," is a kind of tea so called at Canton after the method of packing it.

The "brick tea," which has been much used for some years, is prepared in Central China from the commoner sorts of tea, by soaking the tea refuse, as broken leaves,

twigs, and dust, in boiling water and then pressing them into moulds. There are three qualities: large green, small green, and black tea. Brick tea is universally used in Siberia and in Mongolia, where it also serves as a medium of exchange. The Mongols place the bricks, when testing the quality, on the head, and try to pull downwards the edges with both hands. They reject the brick as worthless if it break or bend.

Notwithstanding the great production of tea in Japan, many cheap and harmless substitutes are used by the poorer classes, either mixed with genuine tea or pure. The taste and the absence of the peculiar aroma, however, render any fraudulent adulteration impossible.

The nearest allied to the genuine tea are the buds of the common Camellia of the country, Tsubaki, the *Camellia Japonica*, L., but the bitter taste of the infusion will betray its origin.

The young leaves of the pond lily, *Nuphar japonicum*, make an excellent aromatic tea of the same colour as that of the genuine tea. For this purpose the leaves are chopped and pressed in order to remove the juice, and then immediately infused with boiling water.

In the central provinces the leaves of a kind of liquorice, "Fuji-kanzô," *Desmodium Oldhami*, which is cultivated for home consumption, are largely used by the country folk instead of genuine tea, under the name of Kawara-châ, "brick tea," or "Hineri-châ," "rolled" or "kneaded tea."

Other much-used substitutes are, Kuko-châ, the leaves of Kuko, *Lycium barbarum*, L., Barbary box-thorn, or *Lycium chinense*, Chinese box-thorn, which is distinguished from the former by smaller leaves. Its infusion is of dark green colour and of insipid taste. Further Maira-châ, the leaves of Kara-kôgi, a kind of maple, and Mugi-châ, barley tea, which is made of the young shoots of barley or wheat, and is sometimes mixed with powdered tea in order to improve its colour. Its infusion, however, is rather tasteless. Also the young leaves of the Kawa-yanagi, "River willow," *Salix japonica*, and of the mulberry, "Kuwa," Morus alba, make fair substitutes.

Moreover, special mention must be made of the Ama-châ, "Sweet tea," which is obtained from the leaves of a plant of the family of the Cucurbitaceæ, the *Gymnostemma cissoides*, Benth., cultivated for this purpose at Uji and at Tawara, in the province Yamashiro, and also in the province of Tamba. This sweet tea is used as medicine, and mixed with a decoction of liquorice-root, Kanzô, *Glycyrrhiza glabra*, for the bath of Buddha at the festival of his Nativity, the "Bu-shô-ye," on the 8th day of the VIIIth moon.

On the morning of the festival the statue of Buddha, represented as an infant, and bedecked with azalea blossoms, is placed, under a canopy in the temple, in a tub half-filled with Ama-châ. The worshippers pour the tea with a ladle over the head of the figure, and carefully collect the fluid trickling down in phials, which they take home as a protection against sickness and as a remedy against all kinds of diseases and complaints.

Tea, besides being the never-failing beverage at every meal, the ever ready refreshment and the courteous offering to the visitor, unites the family and friends in a genial gathering of ladies and gentlemen, at home round the brazier and the lamp in winter evenings; at picnic parties in the shady glen in the afternoon during the fine season, thus forming the bond of many a social meeting.

Two kinds of tea-parties, exclusively of gentlemen, hold their rank among the most refined usages of polite society, and are so truly characteristic of Japanese custom, that their description will allow a glimpse below the surface of national life not generally possible to the foreign observer. These are the tea-parties of semi-literary or æsthetic character, and the ceremonious Châ-no-yu. In the former prevails the easy and unaffected tone of well-bred gentlemen; the other is conducted under the strictest rules of etiquette, which regulate every detail of behaviour and speech.

The innate taste and the love of fine scenery are manifest in the arrangements of the first kind of entertainment, to which recitals of romance and impromptu poetry add intellectual charm.

The host selects for this purpose a tea-house, Châ-ya, situated in well laid-out grounds, commanding a fine view. In this he secures the space of a certain number of mats, proportionate to the number of his guests, which, by a convenient distribution of the sliding partitions, and by the removal of the front wall,[1] is converted into a kind

[1] The floors of all the rooms are overlaid with mats, "Tatami," of rushes or straw, covered with a fine straw tissue. Each mat measures about two inches in thickness, one Ken, *i.e.*, six feet in length, and half a Ken, *i.e.*, three feet in width. The Ken and its subdivision, the Shaku and the Sun (ten Sun = one Shaku, six Shaku

of open hall, overlooking the landscape. From these mats, which form the sitting place, "Seki," this kind of tea-party derives its name, "Châ-seki." This room is decorated with choice flowers, and the art treasures of the host, which at other times are stored in the fire-proof Go-down,[1] belonging to his private residence. Folding-screens and hanging-pictures, "Kake-mono," painted by celebrated artists, costly lacker-ware, bronzes, china, and other heir-looms are tastefully displayed.

The Japanese, as a rule, select from their history and legendary lore, for subjects of their graphic art, scenes illustrating the glorious deeds of their national heroes, and the myths and fairy tales of by-gone times, and these suggest the stories, in the recital of which every one takes his turn. Not seldom the gaze is arrested by a mountain, a waterfall, or a shrine, of which tradition has preserved many a legend, always a welcome subject. This is especially the case in the environs of Kiyôto, the western capital,—from 794 to 1868 the imperial residence—celebrated for their unsurpassed beauty, and hallowed by having been the abode of the ancient Yamato gods,[2] and the scene of the prowess and the exploits of knights and squires, and of the miracles wrought by pious priests. Often the charm of the scenery inspires an extempore effusion in the metre of an Uta,[3] which the poet inscribes on the fans of his friends.[4]

Such stories told at tea-parties are called in Japanese literature by the Chinese term, "Châ-wa," or by the pure Japanese name, "Châ-banashi," both meaning tea-stories; or "Hito-kuchi-banashi," "One-mouth stories," *i.e.*, short stories told without interruption.

Sometimes professional story-tellers are hired. Of these there are two classes, the Hanashi-ka, "story-tellers," and the Tsuji-kô-shâku-shi, *i.e.*, "Cross-road tradition narrators," both of whom, since olden times, have been the faithful guardians of folk-lore. The Hanashi-ka are always members, "Deshi," *i.e.*, "disciples" of a more or less celebrated company, under a manager of recognised fame, who unites them into troupes of never less than five, and not more than seven in number. Such companies are often advertised many weeks before their arrival in a place, by hoisting flags or streamers, with the names of the performers, who alternate in their recitals. They appear either in hired rooms, or in proper booths, "Yose." Their programme embraces war stories, "Gun-dan," traditions, "Kô-shâku," tales of every-day events, "Hanashi," or recitals with musical accompaniment, "Gidaiyu," so called after the name of their inventor, Takemoto Gidaiyu in 1575. The performance commences, as a rule, with an inferior member, to whom succeed the better artists, and finally the stars. The intervals are generally filled up with feats of legerdemain, "Te-dzuma."

The Tsuji-kô-shâku-ji, on the contrary, does not belong to any company; he is free and independent, and recites in the open air. He selects, as his name indicates, a cross-road between lively thoroughfares, where, sitting on his mat, he commences his

= one Ken) form the unit, in terms of which all dimensions in buildings are expressed.

The Japanese rooms are divided by sliding partitions, "Fusuma," running in grooves, which can be shifted so as to enlarge or diminish the space. They serve at the same time instead of doors. The front wall of the house similarly consists of sliding and removable windows, "Shoji," of paper, or more recently also of glass.

[1] Almost every house has a detached fireproof storehouse, "Kura," in which all the valuables are protected from the too frequent danger of fire. I recollect an extensive conflagration in 1874, which laid in ashes over 2,000 houses in one of the most populous business parts of Kiyôto. All the Kura stood out uninjured from amongst the ruins. These store-houses are built on the system of our fireproof safes (which, however, were invented many hundred years later). They have double walls of fireproof clay, the intervening space being filled with ashes, which are bad conductors. The low and narrow door and the few small square windows are guarded by double-walled flanged iron shutters. Such store-houses are called by the Europeans in the East, in China and Japan, "Go-down," which term is derived from the Malay word "Go-dong," meaning a warehouse (and not, as many believe, from the English, "to go down").

[2] The Yamato gods are the ancient national deities of the indigenous religion of Japan, called the Shintô, "Path to the gods," or the Kami-creed, the words Shin and Kami meaning deity. Yamato was the first part of the island Hon-dô conquered, when Jimmu Tennô, the first Mikado, founded his new empire in 660 B.C. Yamato is also the name of a province, and has been extended to the whole realm. The term Yamato conveys at the same time the sense of the truly national without foreign admixture. Thus the pure classical Japanese language, without words derived from the Chinese, is likewise called the Yamato dialect.

[3] The Uta are short poems of thirty-one syllables, written either in five lines of five, seven, five, seven, seven syllables each, or in two lines, one of seventeen, the other of fourteen syllables. They are not rhymed, the Japanese, unlike the Chinese poetry, having no rhymes.

[4] Everybody in Japan carries a fan. Gentlemen use only white paper fans. Frequently their fans are inscribed either by the owner himself, or by a friend, with an Uta, or with a Buddhist bible-text, or with a quotation from Confucius in Chinese characters or in the Japanese Hira-kana, the cursive writing. It is considered an act of courtesy to inscribe a friend's fan with such occasional lines. Gentlemen, therefore, when visiting only have white blank fans. Coloured fans are used exclusively by ladies and children.

tales. He does not wait until an audience has collected, knowing that there are but few too busy and too hurried not to stop for a moment to listen to his story, and to place a small coin on the fan of his mate.[1] Soon the circle of listeners increases, and in the same ratio the narrator's eloquence and its meed. He is not, however, a common street ranter. His elocution is pure, his words are refined and select, his delivery and gestures dignified and measured, and adapted to the subject of his tale. He generally is a broken-down artist who had known better days. He likely once was an eminent and popular member of a theatrical company. A younger actor, perhaps his own pupil, has risen to be his rival, and deprived him of the fickle favour of the public; has taken up successfully his best parts, and finally reduced him from a star to a factotum. Too proud to accept this position, and hurt by this neglect —public ingratitude, as he chooses to call it—he had left the stage. Fortune had deserted him, want had obliged him to find a more appreciative audience in a public thoroughfare. After a while he became reconciled to his altered circumstances, and took a liking to his independence, leaving to-day's cares to the day, and the morrow to haphazard, in the happy thoughtlessness of his kind. Or he had gone down in the world through his own fault, through improvidence, or most likely through overfondness of rice-beer, "Sake." He had become a strolling vagabond, a "Mamezô."[2] Yet he has saved his art from the shipwreck of his life, and has guarded pure and undefiled his treasure, which, however deep he may have fallen himself, he would never degrade.

In his misery he has remained the inspired bard of the time-honoured traditions of his country, transmitting with eloquent tongue facts and fiction, reality veiled in the glamour of magic, and the supernatural concealed beneath the familiar garb of every-day life.

There are besides several other classes of public story-tellers, who, however, are not employed for the entertainment of the guests at tea-parties, with the rare exception of the Ko-wairo, lit. "the tone of the voice;" so called, because they recite scenes of popular dramas with the exact imitation of the voice and delivery of celebrated actors.

[1] Money is collected in public exhibitions on an open fan, instead of in a plate. The fan likewise serves for offering and receiving presents, handing letters, small objects, &c.

[2] The term "Mamezô" is an untranslatable slang-word, conveying the sense of a combination of a jack-pudding and an adventurer.

The Otoshi-banashi, lit. "to drop, to debase the story," have the trick of exciting the interest and feelings of the audience by their highly-wrought story, and of suddenly winding it up by an unexpected turn quite incongruous with its tenor, thus acting after the French adage, "*Du sublime au ridicule il n'y a qu'un pas.*" These stories offend the taste of the more refined class of people, but never fail to excite the guffaw of the crowd, whose enjoyment receives an additional zest when at the turning-point of the tale the disappointed part of the audience, which has been deluded by the high-flown oratory of the punster, disperses with undisguised signs of disapproval and disgust.

The Sai-mon, originally itinerant preachers, but now improvisators, invite the public by the noise of a wooden clapper, "Gara-gara," or "Gata-gata." These and the former count among the Yashi, "the mountebanks," which class embraces all kinds of street-tumblers, monkey-leaders, sellers of charms, dentists, conjurors, snake-charmers, and the like.

But enough of this digression.

The Châ-no-yu is devoid of those intellectual charms, which render the Châ-seki so attractive to men of culture. It is a most tedious ceremonial, the motives which first gave rise to it having long ceased to impart to it any vitality. Before another generation has passed away, it will probably have followed many other ancient customs and ceremonies to limbo.

As a curious institution however of the middle ages, it gives us an insight into the manners and feelings of centuries gone by, and incongruous as it seems at the present day, it may yet interest the philosophical observer.

It was first introduced, as already stated, from China by the bonze Yei-sei at the end of the eighth century, and after having long fallen into neglect and almost into oblivion, it was revived and developed into one of the most solemn social customs by Abbot Kiu-shin of the Shô-mei-Temple at Kiyôto under Yoshi Masa, the magnificent eighth Shô-gun of the Ashikaga, or second Minamoto dynasty (1443-1473). This great prelate entertained the Shô-gun according to the traditional rules of the Châ-no-yu in a tea-house which he had built for this purpose, The tea-room, "Châ-za-shiki,"[3] measured four mats and a half, *i.e.*, nine square feet—afterwards adopted as the standard dimensions.

[3] Za-shiki means a room or apartment. This term is derived from the word Zasu, "to sit in the manner of the Japanese," *i.e.*, to squat on the floor, supported by the heels; and Shiki, "to spread, to overlay," *e.g.*, with mats, as is the case in Japanese rooms.

Subsequently Kiu-shin was ordered by the Shô-gun to unite all the ancient rules of the Châ-no-yu, and to embody them into a code, which is known by the name of Dai-shi-Châ-no-yu, "The Great Master's tea-party." The minute etiquette of this code with but few later modifications is still carried out to the letter. The Shô-gun nominated him Sô-shô, *i.e.*, "Arbiter elegantiarium."[1] The duties of this still extant honorary office consist in maintaining the strict observation of the rules of the Châ-no-yu. Kiu-shin afterwards left holy orders, and under his lay-name Shikuwo, instructed many pupils in his ceremonial, which they handed down to posterity.

Shô-gun Yoshi Masa, after having abdicated in favour of his son Yoshi-Nawo in 1473, erected in 1479 at the foot of the Higashi-Yama, "Eastern Mountain," near Kiyôto, the celebrated summer-palace, known by the name of Gin-kaku-ji—"the Silver-House"—from its timber-work and roof being silvered, imitating his ancestor's Yoshi Mitsu (the third Ashikaga Shô-gun 1368-1398), famous Golden-House, the Kin-kaku-ji, north-west of Kiyôto. This stands in an extensive park, on the border of an artificial lake in which tiny islets represent the Japanese archipelago. Yoshi Masa built in the splendid park of the Silver-House, which is celebrated for its magnificent azaleas clipped into the most fantastic shapes, and likewise for its ponds of gold-fish, a tea-house after the fashion of that of Kiu-shin. Here he placed his valuable collection of old tea-sets, and also of pictures by great masters, and here he used to entertain his friends to Châ-no-yu parties. Both the Golden- and the Silver-House are still preserved, and the grounds are open to the public.

During my residence at Kiyôto, where the traditions of the refined customs of Old Japan —the Japan before '68 and its modern innovations—have been faithfully preserved, I several times was honoured with invitations to a Châ-no-yu, which after my first experience, I regret to say, I but reluctantly accepted, a refusal of which would have been an irreparable offence.

I shall now describe the ceremonial as it is still carried out, with but slight modifications, after Kiu-shin's original regulations, begging the forbearance of the reader for making him a fellow-martyr to the worst of social offences—insufferable boredom.

[1] Sô-shô means "teacher of elegant accomplishments," viz., music, singing, riding, fencing, the preparation of tea, and the arrangement of flowers, in which not only ladies, but also gentlemen, should be proficient.

It is the duty of the host to superintend personally all the arrangements of the tea-room, the preparation of the tea, and to attend on his guest, the presence of servants being strictly forbidden. He selects the flowers for the decoration of the room and of the vases, and the pictures on the walls which should be in harmony with the sentiments pervading the company, so as to arouse lofty ideas and noble feelings. Everything required for the entertainment, every article of furniture or ornament, the tea-apparatus, &c., has its special position and place, prescribed by the inexorable rules of the Châ-no-yu. The number of the tea-cups is always two less than that of the guests, thus there are five when seven, or three when five, guests are invited.

In most of the gentlemen's residences, built in the old style, there are special tea-houses in the garden, or at least in a wing of the house overlooking the latter. The grounds therefore likewise claim the special care of the host. All the faded blossoms and leaves must be removed from the shrubs and trees, which, like the flowers and the turf, must be watered. So also the rockeries, the gravel, and the stepping-stones, in order to produce a refreshing coolness.

From the verandah, which is raised about three feet above the ground and surrounds every house, unhewn boulders form steps into the garden, in which flat stones are laid out at convenient distances from each other, serving as foot-paths. This is a very old fashion, as proved by one of the ancient classical names of Japan, "Shiki-shima"—"The Scattered Islands"—which has been derived from the resemblance of the grouping of the islands of the archipelago, with the arrangement of the stepping stones in gardens.

The hour appointed for the reception of the guests is always noon-time, unlike that for other convivialities, which take place either in the afternoon if a Châ-seki or a picnic party, or late in the evening. The number of the invited guests never exceeds seven. They appear punctually and simultaneously at the appointed hour, having met previously in order to arrive together. This is also at variance with the general prevailing habit of unpunctuality, *la politesse des rois* having been unknown, at any rate until lately, in Japan, when the highest in rank always kept the company waiting.

The guests are received by the host at the door of the hall. They enter according to the order of their social rank, which is strictly observed at every stage of the entertainment.

A member of the aristocracy has the precedence; he is perhaps followed by the descendant of a Sô-shô, after whom ranks the proprietor of a celebrated old teapot or cup, and so on.

At the time when the Japanese feudal nobility, the Samurai, never appeared in public without swords, these were deposited before entering the tea-room on a sword-rack "Katana-kake," in the hall, in the order of the rank of the owner. The old custom of carrying of swords by the Samurai was enforced as a law by the celebrated code of the Hundred Laws of the year 1605, by Iye Yasu, the founder of the Tokugawa, or third and last Minamoto dynasty. This code is known by the name of "the Legacy of Gongen Sama." The latter is the abbreviation of the posthumous name of Iye Yasu, the whole name running thus: "Shô-ishi-î, Tô-shô, Dai Gongen," *i.e.*, "Prince of First Rank, Light of the East, Great Manifestation of Buddha." "Sama" is a respectful title appended to the names of persons of rank.

The 35th law says: "The sword is the soul of the Samurai. Whosoever loses his sword is dishonoured and shall be sentenced to the severest punishment." This law, however, was repealed by an imperial edict, dated March 28th, 1876, by the present—(the 121st)—Mikado, Mutsu Hito Tennô: "The Benign" ordaining: "From this date nobody is permitted to carry a sword except those in court dress, or members of the army and navy, and police officers on duty." No modern innovation caused so much ill-feeling against the Government, as the abolition of this ancient privilege of the Samurai.

The manner of carrying swords and of their disposition was ruled by the most stringent etiquette. Only the high aristocracy and the Samurai or Buke, *i.e.*, the military (feudal) gentry and government officials, had the right of two swords, called Dai-shô (lit. "large and small," from the Chinese Ta-siâo), *i.e.*, the right of carrying at the same time the straight, long, plain sword, the "Katana" with a small, dagger-like knife, the "Ko-dzuka," fitted into the scabbard, and a short, generally richly ornamented sword, the Waki-zashi, lit. "Side-stabber." Citizens, peasants and servants were permitted to carry a short, plain Waki-zashi, when travelling and on festival occasions, such as weddings and funerals. Monks, pedlars, beggars, and the Yeta, *i.e.*, the Parias (including the tanners, leather dressers, knackers, scavengers, gravediggers, and those employed in the cremation yards, who were considered unclean, "Fu-jô,"), were entirely deprived of the privilege of carrying arms, even when travelling.

The manner in which the swords were carried betrayed the social rank. Persons of high rank carried the long sword perpendicularly, with the hilt upwards. Commoners wore it horizontally in the belt, the Samurai carried it in a diagonal position.

Knocking with the scabbard against that of another gentleman was considered a great breach of good manners, and, when not immediately apologised for, as an intentional insult and challenge, equivalent to our "flinging down the gauntlet," for which the expression, "Saya-ateru," "touching the scabbard," was the technical term. The turning of the scabbard in the belt, as if intending to draw the sword, was likewise a sign of challenge.

Gentlemen, when calling at another's residence, left their sword in keeping of their attendant, or, when alone, on the floor in the hall. Politeness required that the host should order his own servant to bring it into the reception-room, and place it ceremoniously on the sword-rack. The servant, however, was not permitted to touch the sword with his bare hands, but had to wrap it in a silken cloth, before bringing it. At less ceremonious visits to more intimate acquaintances, the swords were taken into the room and laid on the floor at the right side of the owner, as a sign of friendly and trustful feeling, as at this side it could not conveniently be drawn. Under suspicious circumstances the arms were placed at the left side. In either case, however, the hilt ought to be directed towards the host; if the sword is placed with the point directed against him, it betrayed a hostile intention, and when in this position kicked with the foot against the host, it meant a deadly insult and a challenge. No sword was allowed to be removed from its scabbard without previously asking the permission of those present.

After this sketch of the etiquette in managing the sword, let us now return to our tea-party.

After all the guests are seated, strictly according to their rank, the host begs leave to retire, in order to give opportunity to his friends to admire and praise, as good breeding makes incumbent, the arrangements of the room, the furniture, and the tea-apparatus. The first guest commences the inspection and the eulogy, the others follow according to their rank, which order, as I already have stated, is observed throughout the meeting. I therefore shall not allude to it again, not to render an already tedious account more than unavoidably wearisome.

The host re-entering, thanks his guests

for having honoured him with their company, leaves again and returns immediately with two bronze or earthenware vessels, one containing charcoal, the other finely sifted white ashes. After having laid and lit the fire in the Kotatsu, *i.e.*, a square fireplace, sunk in the centre of the room, he burns incense and puts on the kettle. The first guest, apologising to his neighbours, begs leave to examine the censer, "Kô-ro," and its paten, which he afterwards hands round. The host again retires and returns to ask if he may now offer some refreshments. The principal guest replies in the name of the company, that they will comply with their host's arrangements. The latter, after precisely ten minutes, during which the guests smoke, returns with tea-trays, "Bon," or low stands (about one foot in height) of lackered wood, "Dai," which he places before each guest, and serves alternately soup and fish, each time cooked in a different manner. This is in accordance with the Japanese style of dinner, in which soup, fish, and sweet or savoury omelets, each time however differently prepared, alternate as often as the grandness of the occasion demands. Instead of bread, boiled rice, "Meshi," is served by a female attendant, who, kneeling before a lackered pail containing the rice, "Meshibitsu," fills the rice-bowls with a ladle, replenishing them from time to time as required. Weak tea, and at the end of the repast, warmed rice-beer, "Sake," are the beverage. The fare of the Châ-no-yu differs from that of other dinner-parties only in the omission of the omelets and the rice.

After the first half of the repast is over, the host asks permission to retire, and returning immediately, he places a flask of rice-beer and a drinking cup for each, before the principal guest, who, keeping his own, hands the others to his neighbour who passes them on until every one is provided. The first guest then drinks the health of the host, the others follow his lead. The collation over, the chopsticks, "Hashi," are wiped with a paper napkin, and confectionery, "Châno-ko," is handed round, of which every one partakes. After having admired again the wall-pictures, all retire for a short time into the garden, while the host changes the flowers and pictures, prepares the tea-service and dons the court dress, "Kami-shimo," for the subsequent ceremonious Châ-no-yu.

Responding to the call of the gong, the guests return in the same order and with the same formalities as on their first arrival, wash their hands, duly admire the new arrangements in general and every single object in particular, the first guest leading the remarks. The first tea now offered is called Koi-châ, "strong" or "dark tea," which the host prepares by pouring water, which has previously cooled in a second teapot to 200° F., over the leaves. This tea is served in a special old-fashioned cup of irregular shape, four inches in diameter, and of like depth, which is presented to the principal guest who passes it to the others. Each guest is provided with a fine white paper napkin, with which he holds the cup and wipes its rim before handing it to his neighbour, after having taken three or four sips, reminding one of the English loving-cup. Unrelenting etiquette requires, that the first guest after having partaken of the tea, should make a series of questions about the name and the quality of the tea, its source, &c., to which the host, who drinks last, replies with many apologies for the deficiency of the beverage, a formality which may never be omitted. The other guests this time do not follow the example of the first, but listen silently. Then the empty cup, the value of which is enhanced by its age and its history, passes round for general admiration and finally returns to the host, who now re-arranges the hearth and burns fresh incense.

Now pipes are lighted, small rice-cakes, "Kashi," and Usu-châ, "weak tea," which is prepared in the usual manner, offered, of which the guests partake according to their liking. The conversation becomes now more general and less formal.

After precisely half an hour, the principal guest gives the sign for rising, and the company take leave one after the other, with the most exaggerated expressions of thanks for the entertainment. The host likewise in no less high-flown words expresses his thanks for the great honour which they had conferred upon him, apologising repeatedly for all the innumerable defects and the meanness of the entertainment, and everybody retires after three mutual prostrations in the same order as they arrived, in their innermost heart, I should believe, very glad to have once again passed through the ordeal of a Châ-no-yu.

Several modifications of Kiu-shin's ceremonial had been attempted in the course of time, but none had even a temporary success, except those introduced by Sennô Rikiu and his disciples, which met with partial favour. Sennô, originally a merchant at the sea-port of Sakai, in the province of Idzumi, about nine miles south of Ôsaka, had been nominated Sô-shô for his intimate acquaintance with the ceremonial of the Châ-no-yu, by

General Ota Nobunaga, who was in power during the interregnum between the second and the third Minamoto dynasties (1573-1581). He was confirmed in this honorary function by the celebrated General Taiko Sama (1591-1599). Once ordered by the latter to prepare tea according to Kiu-shin's rules, he in many points deviated from these. When asked by Taiko Sama the reason for permitting himself such alterations, he stated that the prescribed ceremonial was too tedious and elaborate, and contradictory to his personal theory of the proprieties of a perfect Châ-no-yu, which demanded perfect freedom from every care and anxiety, peace of mind, purity of thought, and respectful reverence. These alterations found great favour with Taiko Sama, who complimented Sennô on his innovations, and bade him carry out and perfect his new style of the Châ-no-yu.

Sennô also substituted delicate rush mats and unhewn pillars with the bark left on, for the hitherto usual ceiling of wooden laths and pillars of planed wood of the tea-room, and he reduced its area to three-fourths of its former dimensions (about six square feet). I saw such a tea-house in the park of the aforementioned Kin-kaku-ji. It is on a hillock commanding an extensive view of the N.W. mountain range. It was erected, if my memory does not fail, by Taiko Sama.

He also first introduced the common larger tea-cup, which I mentioned in my description of the Châ-no-yu ceremonial. According to Kiu-shin's rules, the tea had been served in small cups for each guest separately, and the tea-service was arranged before Sennô's time on trays placed on the floor-mat instead of on a stand. The host being obliged, as we have seen, to prepare and fetch everything required and to attend personally on his guests, Sennô added for his convenience a small pantry to the tea-room. Until this time the guests took their swords into the room, which he objected to as being opposed to the peaceful and friendly character of the meeting. He therefore had hooks placed in the hall to suspend the arms before entering, for which afterwards sword-racks were substituted, which remained the custom until the abolition of the right of carrying swords in 1876. Many of these sword-racks may still be seen in gentlemen's houses.

His garden likewise became a model to others. It was laid out in such a manner that seen from the tea-room it represented a landscape in miniature. Cryptomerias and other kinds of pines were alternately planted with groups of bamboo and ornamental shrubs, and fish-ponds with clear water, tiny waterfalls, meandering rivers with rustic bridges, smooth stepping-stones, and quaintly shaped moss-clad rocks, were all so cunningly arranged as to deceive the eye and to produce the illusion of an extensive perspective, although occupying a small limited space. Gardens laid out in this fashion and tea-houses as introduced by Sennô may be frequently met with in the grounds of noblemen and wealthy citizens, especially at Kiyôto. Also the gardens of many public tea-houses are laid out in a similar manner. One of the most famous tea-houses of this kind is in the village of Yamashina, near Kiyôto, on the road to Ôtsu (now called Shiga), the optical illusion of which could not be surpassed. Thus the influence of Sennô's taste rules the art of gardening still in the present day.

Other innovations of the Châ-no-yu had only an ephemeral existence. Furuta Oribe-no Shô, a disciple of Sennô, reverted to the most ancient ceremonial. His rules, known by the name of the Oribe-riu, "Style of Oribe," were too minutely formal to meet with many supporters. He was in high favour with Hide Tada, the second Shô-gun of the third dynasty (1605-1622), who raised him to the rank of a Dai-miyô, *i.e.*, feudal prince.

Oribe-no Shô's principal disciple, Kobori Totomi-no Kami, "Kobori, Lord of Totomi," (which is a province on the sea-board of the Pacific), introduced a new ceremonial of æsthetic taste. He decorated the tea-room with most costly ornaments, and fitted it with all kinds of works of art. But he failed in finding many imitators. The wonted simplicity of arrangements, which in no way interfered with the essential repose of mind, prevailed over this novelty. After his death, his style fell into disuse and has, as I am told, only occasionally been resuscitated by stray æsthetes. He was a contemporary of the third Tokugawa Shô-gun Iye Mitsu (1623-1650), who, in order to test the loyalty of the Dai-mijô, issued command that the same reverence should be shown to the officers of his household when returning with tea from Uji on the Tô-kai-dô, "the eastern sea-road," *i.e.*, the great highway between Yedo (Tô-kiyô) and Kiyôto, as to his proper person when travelling. By this order the fame of the already celebrated tea of Uji spread over the whole country.

For the last two centuries and a half no more innovations have taken place in the ceremonial of the Châ-no-yu, which may probably soon be numbered with many other vanishing customs of old Japan.

F. A. JUNKER VON LANGEGG.

THE LAUNCH.

Engraved by O. LACOUR, *from a Drawing by* C. J. STANILAND, R.I.

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IN THE JOTUNHEIM.

"WHERE shall it be?" I asked my companion, after watching him a while poring over his Baedeker. We were sitting on the deck of the *Domino*, bound from Hull to Bergen, trying to expel the dismal impression of the North Sea, sullen-looking and threatening violence, by a vivid forecast of the pleasures of the coming tour in "old Norway." "I decide for the Jotunheim," answered my comrade, whose incognito we may conveniently preserve by the help of the mathematical symbol X. He was an experienced traveller in Norway, and I being wholly inexperienced, gladly gave over the arrangement of the tour into his hands.

"Where is the Jotunheim?" I asked.

"It is a small mountainous region lying to the east and a little to the north of that long fjord there," pointing to the Sognefjord on the map. He went on to enlarge on its attractions. "As its name, 'the home of the giants,' suggests, it is the Switzerland of Norway, with the enormous advantage over the original that it has been neglected by Englishmen. It has the merit of having been discovered by the Norwegians themselves, and of being still and almost exclusively their playground. There we shall be far away from the fjords, the Romsdal, and the other haunts of the English and American tourist." I had previously discovered that X. was just now touched by that mild form of misanthropy which is apt to follow an exhausting London season, and I was struck with the fact that even in his present mood his partiality for the Norwegians was such as to make him seemingly indifferent to the possibility of being jostled by a crowd of them in their favourite mountain resort. But not minding the contingency myself I at once acquiesced. So it was settled that we should do in Norway as the Norwegians, who seem to reverse the English practice, and make their summer flitting away from the coast.

At Bergen my imagination was greatly excited by watching X. make elaborate preparations for our excursion by purchases of tinned meats, &c. (Hermatisk), soap, and other ordinary concomitants of civilised life. We spent just three days in reaching the Jotunheim, taking train to Vossevangen, going thence by cariole to Gutvangen, on the Sognefjord, and then using the steamer to Aardal. There was much in the scenery of the valleys through which we passed under an almost cloudless sky to compensate us for the discomforts of the North Sea. The bright green slopes, where peasant households were busily stretching the fragrant grass on hurdles; the cool pine woods, where many a gleaming white stem lay ready to be launched into the turbulent stream below; the stream itself filling the vale with a lullaby hum, and made more lively here and there by a sprightly little saw-mill; the gaily-tinted toy-like wooden houses and churches; all guarded by bare mountain-tops, now rugged and black, and now smooth and of a silvery-grey: this seemed to invite to delay and repose. And then the trim and almost elegant Norwegian inn, with its white windows, its old-fashioned fruit garden, where an abundance of glowing red currants allured the eye, and a calm pellucid lake just below, rightly placed for the morning plunge —it seemed nothing less than a mad ingratitude to hurry past so seductive a spot. So

I felt, and I was weak enough to plead for a day's delay in order to stretch myself on the thyme-scented meadows and recover the normal consciousness of being always at the same level by feeling as much of *terra firma* as possible. But X. was not to be persuaded, and proved as rigorous a guide as the Palmer who successfully led Sir Guyon through so many perilous allurements. Steamers, he reminded me, are scarce in Norway, and it does not do to trifle with them; a day's loitering now might ruin our Jotunheim plan.

At Aardal walking began, two men being here engaged as guides and porters. Our path wound up about the side of a narrow gulley-like valley, into which leaps one of the finest waterfalls of Norway—the Vettisfos. At the mountain farm hard by, which gives the cataract its name, we finally parted with the luxuries of civilisation. After a night's rest under its hospitable roof we had a heavy day's walking to one of the nearer stations of the Jotunheim. Our route was plainly marked by a footpath up to a cluster of saeters or chalets, but after this was quite effaced in dreary stretches of bog and boulder. Here and there a general hint as to direction was supplied by a miniature cairn—one of the services rendered by the Tourist Club, which has of late been engaged in opening up the district to pedestrians. In the wild and gloomy defile of Smoget we found ourselves getting well among the mountain giants, though to-day they moodily hid their peaks in the mist, only looking out at us now and again with something of a savage frown, much as a sleepy lion in a menagerie might look out on a visitor who dared to approach his cage. From this point our road dipped, past dark tarn and darker precipice, varied by declivities of snow and ice, to a lake—Tyin by name, its waters showing to-day a dark blue under the sunless sky. This is one of the three lakes, Bygdin, Gjende, and Tyin, lying about as near one another as the English lakes, which give much of its beauty to the Jotunheim. They lie 3,000 feet or so above the sea level. This altitude in Norway means that they are above the reach of the pines and other trees except the dwarf-birch, and only a couple of thousand feet below the summer snow. Their pale bluish-milky tinge tells one at once that they are fed by glacier streams. Yet their surroundings are by no means bare and bleak. The less precipitate mountain slopes are clothed up to a good height with the bright greens of mountain grass, varied by the warmer tints of curious wild flower and berried shrub; while even steeper tracts strewn with rock *débris* are covered with a variety of fine lichens, of many shades of green, and ochre, and purplish grey, making a delicate embroidery of the broken and unpromising surface. All this fair colour is thrown into strong relief by the cold arctic scenery of glittering snow, and black bare crag above.

After skirting one side of Lake Tyin we presently reached the goal of our day's tramp—the tourist's hut at Eidsbugarden. This stands just above the shore of Lake Bygdin, which is longer and has more precipitate sides than Tyin. The hut we found to be a simple structure of pine-wood; namely, a long, one-storied cabin cut across into four small rooms, a bedroom, a living-room, a second bedroom, and a kitchen. It is roofed after the manner of Norwegian huts, with bark covered by a thick crust of turf, the long yellow grasses of which give a pretty decorative finish to the homely architecture. These Jotunheim huts owe their existence to the energy of the Tourist Club, about which a word or two may be said by way of a slight historical introduction to the district.

The Jotunheim region was discovered as far back as 1813 by an enterprising Norwegian mountaineer, yet it is still only in process of being opened up; for in Norway, be it remembered, all processes, even that of striking a light, are tardy. It is, indeed, only within the last fifteen years that any considerable number of travellers have penetrated the district. Up to that time there was only a miserable kennel-like hut of stones, into which the lonely traveller could creep in case of a storm. But during the later period the Tourist Club has provided some seven or eight wooden huts, either erecting them itself or encouraging others to erect them.

Besides providing bed and board for tourists, the Club has rendered them excellent service by throwing bridges across the streams, supplying the lakes with boats, as well as by erecting the rude landmarks already referred to; and of late it has gone so far as to arrange for a private transmission of letters during the ten weeks of the season.

Owing to these improvements, the solitudes of the Jotunheim—which but a few years ago were only broken now and again in the short summer by the cry of an itinerant herdsman tending his cattle on the marshy margin of a lake, or by the still rarer report of a sportsman's gun—are now enlivened every season by the merry talk and laughter

of small companies of Norwegian tourists. These are made up of university men and others from Christiania and Bergen, together with fair-haired Norwegian ladies, who take to the mountain tramp and knapsack hardly less naturally than their robuster brothers and husbands.

Since the accommodation is limited, every tourist has to regard himself as a bird of passage, who may spend a night or two at a hut, but must then give place to others. Let not, then, the disciple of Isaak Walton count on being able to take up his quarters near one of the well-stocked lakes for a week or so, for if he does he will very probably be told, in a polite enough way, no doubt, to "move on."

The Club, though throwing open its huts to the public, has reserved certain privileges for its own members; thus they are catered for at a somewhat lower tariff than outsiders. Still more important, when, as not infrequently happens, sleeping accommodation fails to meet the demand, a member of the Club can claim priority over an outsider in the matter of beds, even though the latter may have been in undisturbed possession for a night or more. These restrictions are, howhowever, no real hardship to anybody, since membership for one year is at once secured by the modest subscription of four kroner (about four shillings and sixpence). Thereupon the tourist is furnished with a porcelain button which fits into his button-hole, and bears on its face, on a parti-coloured ground, a gilt monogram formed by the letters T. N. The display of this badge at any one of the huts secures its possessor the best attention that can be given.

X. and I had enrolled ourselves as members at Bergen, and as on our arrival at Eidsbugarden the house was not full, we experienced the pleasantest kind of reception. After an excellent night's rest we did a little gentle climbing, in order to explore the Jotunheim scenery. The mountain form which prevails here is a striking contrast to the monotonous moor-like Fjelde which cover so much of Norway. The Jotunheim range is a cluster of peaks, many of which have a fine needle-like point. They mostly rise to 6,000 or 7,000 feet, and the two highest (which are also the loftiest mountains in Norway), namely, Glitretind and Galdhöpig, only reach the modest altitude of 8,500 feet. Hence one does not here experience what is, perhaps, the finest impression which Switzerland gives to the imagination, namely, the vision of a far-off snow-peak just distinguishable from the cloudy background, which at once proclaims its royal superiority by overtopping nearer and, in themselves, imposing-looking heights. The effect is rather that of the Snowdon district, where a number of adjacent summits seem to rise to the same level; and there is something in the crater-like form of some of the heights, as well as in the black tarns which lie in the hollows below, to strengthen the likeness. At the same time these Norwegian peaks give to the eye a much stronger impression of sublime altitude than might be conjectured from the figures. This is due partly, no doubt, to the depth of the snow-line, also in part to the abrupt spring of the mountain-side, and the sharp detachment of the summit, which gives to each peak a certain air of distinction.

Perhaps the most characteristic and impressive feature of the Jotunheim scenery is represented by a small neighbouring lake, which is as gloomy as Coruisk. It is walled in by bare, cruel-looking rocks, above which glitter ample snow fields. Between the pendent crags there descends, to the very level of the lake, a much wrenched and lacerated glacier, its snow-sprinkled surface soiled by dark lines of rock *débris*. As it reaches the water the loosened blocks float away over the black sullen-looking surface, transforming it into a miniature arctic sea.

The mists which we found about the mountains still clung to them, and at length turned into a decided and pertinacious mountain rain. In this way we were detained for several days at Eidsbugarden. The little hut filled to overflowing, but in consideration of the drenching rain nobody was sent away. And so it came to pass that we were thrown into unexpectedly close quarters with our Norwegian fellow-tourists. The little *salon* with no more luxurious furniture than a few backless benches, and decidedly over-crowded, was not a promising place for passing a day in, and I soon found that X.'s partiality for the Norwegians hardly sufficed for the severe test which was now applied to it. I am much afraid that we were both moody and unsociable, as only Britons, perhaps, are able to be. We made every excuse to get out, as for example, to collect drift wood for the "peison," or primitive hearth-stone.[1] X. threatened to

[1] This consists of a slab raised above the floor, placed in the corner of the room, but at a little distance from the walls. The back of the hearth is formed by two vertical slabs fitted at right angles to one another. Higher up this half inclosure is completed by a cement front, which makes a rude chimney. In the poorer farms the flue is wanting, and the smoke is free to make its exit by a hole in the apex of the roof by any course it prefers.

go and fish, but on my hinting that this would wear the appearance of a shabby desertion, he gave up the plan. In this condition of mental disaffection we found our Norwegian companions much more considerate and good-natured than we deserved. They had a way of taking kindly to rain and imprisonment which was altogether un-English; but they felt or affected to feel for our distress, and went to work to mitigate it.

The ladies of the party more particularly threw themselves into the beneficent task of charming away our melancholy, rallying us so skilfully with humorous banter, that against our wills we became infected with their gaiety, and purposely carried our *rôle* of ill-used Britons to a point of absurd exaggeration. The success of this experiment led our lady entertainers to propose a *time*, or lesson in Norse, a story-book belonging to an embryonic library in the hut serving as literature. This, too, soon became a merry pastime. English or German affinities in the words ever and again led us absurdly astray in our guesses, and our unlucky shots were greeted with explosions of laughter in which we ourselves, though only half conscious of the point, were compelled to join.

Confinement and loss of time were not, however, the only hardships of our situation. There was the larder growing rapidly exhausted under the unwonted demands. The supply of fresh meat was gone, and the net which ought to have furnished the table with large pink-fleshed trout, was broken and useless. X. and I were growing alarmed at the inroads made on our stock of tin-food. The wine and the Bavarian beer were at an end, and there only remained the "home brewed," a tart, depressing beverage, against which our Norwegian friends solemnly warned us. Even the heavy rye bread no longer appeared as a welcome change from the tough dry *fladbröd*, or oat-cake.

But presently this evil, too, was remedied. A plump Norwegian pony arrived one morning, bearing half a sheep and other good things from some neighbouring valley. The plucky little animal who has resolutely borne his load over some twenty miles or more of rough stony ground, is greeted by a chorus of plaudits from the guests. The good house-wife who manages the hut, well understanding the weaknesses of tourist nature, prepares a sumptuous repast for her guests. First comes the bouillon, then the boiled, and finally the roast, after which even a Viking might have felt that he had had mutton enough for one day. This bounteous supply of meat is supported by abundance of potatoes, after which come sweets in the shape of a meal pudding, and a dish of the excellent moltebaer, a mountain berry of a particularly rich honey-like flavour, and finally a diversity of cheeses, among which the piquant "misost" figures as the crowning delicacy. A bottle of hock is found to complete the festal character of the meal. Everybody is of course in the gayest spirits: conversation rushes and leaps rather than flows. A pleasant appearance of private hospitality is given to the repast by the nimble co-operation of the lady visitors, who, in default of a sufficient body of waiters, flit to and from the kitchen, and so help to keep the board supplied.

Our greatest affliction during this state of congestion of the Eidsbugarden hut, was the want of sufficient bed accommodation. The room at the end of the building given over to the men contained four bedsteads, one in each of its corners. They were substantial box-like frames, and were supplied with straw beds and pillows, and a pair of coarse blankets. They had the usual failing of Norwegian beds, of being too short for a good vigorous stretch. This fact has led some Englishmen to suppose that the average stature of Norwegians is less than their own. But a more plausible explanation is, that owing to the severity of his climate, the Norseman has acquired the habit of lying in as compact a manner as possible. While thus deficient in length, these beds had just width enough to justify an unscrupulous person in saying that they were big enough for two persons. And we found that every guest was expected to satisfy himself if need be with a moiety of one of the couches. To the unexacting Norwegian tourist this amount of dormitory accommodation is looked on as a thing to be grateful for, inasmuch as worse arrangements have often to be put up with. Thus he is even required to take to a hammock, slung up to the stout pine stem that runs from one end of the building to the other, at a level with the base of the roof. And when the hammocks are disposed of, a guest may have to content himself with a spare bolster and a rug placed on a bench or the floor of the *salon*.

We found that the allotment of the sleeping accommodation each night, which seemed to fall into the hands of the lady guests, was a matter of considerable difficulty, sometimes calling for as much discussion and contrivance as Yorick's celebrated compact with his fellow traveller. And sometimes all the scheming would be suddenly deranged by the late arrival of another party.

X. and I had taken care to impress on the minds of our Norwegian companions, the fact of our strong British repugnance to partnership in the matter of beds, and they had good-naturedly humoured us, I fear, at some inconvenience to themselves. Thus it happened that one night, when the hut was more than usually crowded, I still found myself in undivided possession of a bed, X. having consented to take to a hammock. I can recall the scene in all its details. It is about 11.45 P.M. Three out of the four boxes of our dormitory are filled by a brace of tourists. Snugly ensconcing myself in my couch, I proceed to watch, by the aid of the late northern twilight, eked out by a sickly spluttering candle, my less happy comrade sitting, jaded-looking and despondent, on the edge of my bed, while the landlord, Ole by name, a merry-eyed, freckled man, with a heavy shock of reddish hair, slings up a hammock to the pole above the foot of the bed. When this operation is complete, Ole discovers that there are no more blankets, and proposes to X., whose weary and flaccid appearance suggests that he would passively resign himself to any proposal, however preposterous, if only urged strongly enough, that he should use his own sheep-skin sack. X. consents, the sheepskin is brought, the body of my dispirited friend is with some difficulty inserted into its cosy depths, and, being now perfectly helpless, the woolly burden is lifted and deposited in the hammock by Ole's stalwart arms. He then retires beaming with satisfaction at his handiwork.

After snatching two hours' sleep I was roused by a sound, a faint dolorous articulation of my name. I at once responded in the same invalidish tone, and asked what was the matter. Thereupon the voice, which I now fully recognised as X.'s, proceeded with trembling accents, "I'm being roasted alive in this sack—would you mind giving me a corner of your bed?" Half asleep as I still was, I dimly felt the comicality of the situation, but checking the impulse to laugh, I at once acceded to my comrade's prayer. He was apportioned his corner, where I need not say, he lay for the rest of the night as motionless as a log.

There was no getting him back into the hammock, so that on the waking of the occupants of the other beds it was at once perceived that after all the Englishmen had brought themselves to accept the half-bed arrangement. So inglorious a retreat from a stoutly maintained position naturally exposed us to a good deal of good-natured chaffing, and the morning meal was made more than usually blithe by a detailed narrative of the night's adventure.

At length the mists cleared away and the sun revived the faded hues of lake and mountain. We were eager to be off, and at once set out for Gjendeboden, the station at the nearer extremity of Lake Gjende, hoping to find this less crowded. The walk was a short one, and we were able to enjoy at our leisure this first full revelation of the beauties of the Jotunheim. The peak summits had thrown aside their cloudy wrappings and were laving themselves in the cool blue expanse. The snow-clad declivities and the glaciers shone and glistened in the unaccustomed light. Down every seam in the mountain side there rushed a white torrent. The mosses and other mountain growths seemed to swell and grow into more wanton life, as if drunk with the abundant moisture. It was a fresh outburst of life in a region which at first sight seemed wholly devoid of life.

On arriving at Gjendeboden, charmingly placed at the foot of a sublime precipice, our hearts beat high at learning that here in place of dormitories there were single bedrooms. But our rising hopes were instantly dashed by the further information that the house was full, and all the trim snug-looking bedchambers occupied. The fortunate possessors were at the time away, climbing a neighbouring peak, and would not be back till supper-time. X., goaded by a preternatural craving for sleep, made further inquiries and discovered that one of the party was a German, and not a member of the Turistforening. Thereupon he pointed to his button, and claimed the right of turning out the unqualified "Tyske." There was no question as to his right to the room, but a nice point remained undecided. Was he entitled to retire, as he longed to do, before the return of the company, and in order to make sure of his possession, eject the German's impedimenta from the room? Unfortunately the only visitors in the house at the moment were ladies, and these, touched no doubt by X.'s haggard look and plaintive manner, gave it as their opinion that he might do so. So despatching an early supper he took to his chamber, put the German's belongings outside the door, and his own inside as a barricade. As for me, I awaited with sick heart the new experience of lying for a night on the floor of the *salon* with some six or seven other unfortunates.

Late in the evening the mountaineering party returned. The room became

crowded and noisy; supper was served, and the excursionists attacked it with admirable vigour. As I sat crouching over the peison in a corner of the room I heard now and again beneath the pleasant ripple of the Norse, the deeper and gruffer murmur of German. A Teuton was conversing with a Norwegian lawyer, who was on his honeymoon, and whose acquaintance we had made at Eidsbugarden. Among the expressions that reached my ears was the ominous one, "Unverschämter Englander!" After supper, which had been enlivened by wine, the German murmur grew into more of a distinct growl. Presently the advocate came up to me and apprised me in a stiff formal way, the effect of which was heightened by his necessarily slow utterance of an unfamiliar tongue, that my friend, though entitled to the bedroom had exceeded his rights in ejecting the German's impedimenta, including among other valuables a much prized herbarium. I did all I could in X.'s behoof to show the great practical difficulties of his situation, needing sleep, finding a room which was legitimately his, and so forth. But all the while I could not but feel a little vexed at my fate, bedless myself, and having to stand up for one comfortably sleeping the sleep of the just, ignorant of the storm which his precipitateness had raised. The lawyer rejoined his German client, and up to a late hour my ear caught snatches of their talk. One ran as follows:—

German. "Can he talk German?"

Norwegian. "Of course; he is a scholar (Gelehrter)."

German. "I won't spare him."

Norwegian (with a grim chuckle). "We shall enjoy the scene."

From this and other fragments I inferred that there was to be a grand squaring of moral accounts the next morning. As I sat by the peison with closed eyes, listening to the angry talk in an atmosphere charged with tobacco smoke, I imagined myself transported to one of those half-barbaric western settlements which Bret Harte has so vividly depicted. At length I saw the German take to one of the hammocks slung up in the room, and our improvised dormitory, its disorderly and comfortless aspect still faintly discernible in the late twilight, became as still as the heavy breathing of six male sleepers would allow.

The evening's excitement, aided by the foulness of the atmosphere and the hardness of my couch, forbade the hope of sleep. So as soon as the nocturnal twilight began to show signs of brightening into dawn I got up and went out, in order to taste the pure morning air, and refresh my eyes by a wash in some cool mountain stream. The delicious freshness of the early mountain breeze, the restful scenery of the lake, on the spongy margin of which a herd of dainty Norwegian kine was browsing, and more than all, perhaps the plash of the merry little beck trying to make up for the absence of the morning carol of our English birds, soon drove away all dismal recollections of that grimy and stuffy room. As I loitered by the brook, looking at the placid lake, I heard a footstep on the path below me, and glancing in that direction I saw to my great surprise, the figure of the aggrieved herbalist, duly equipped with knapsack and alpenstock, stepping nimbly in the direction of the next station. The effect which this unlooked for event produced on my mind was a mixed one. A first sense of relief at the disappearance of a nuisance alternated with a feeling of disappointment at being robbed of the last and most exciting passage of an interesting little drama, and finally both feelings gave place to a delightful sense of the comicality of this early and stealthy retreat of the blustering German hero. Our breakfast was made more than usually mirthful by my giving the unsuspecting X. a true and faithful account of the nocturnal tragi-comedy and the unexpected morning *dénoûment.*

We were a little surprised to hear the lawyer greet us with his friendly smile and "Good day!" just as though nothing had occurred. I could not help asking myself whether his eloquent advocacy had been wholly inspired by the bottles of wine in which he had shared, or whether his assumption of a friendly attitude towards us was due to professional pique at his client's having failed to maintain his suit, aided, perhaps, by the mediation of his wife, to whom we had done our best to make ourselves agreeable.

One night at this crowded hut was enough for us, and as there happened to be a disengaged boat which had been brought the previous day from Gjendesheim, another and larger station at the other end of the lake, we took possession of it and resolved to row to this point. As the morning was calm our work, in spite of certain obvious defects in our craft, was not exhausting, and left us mental energy enough thoroughly to enjoy the superb scenery of the lake, which may, perhaps, be called the Ulleswater or Lomond of the Jotunheim. Here the mountains are much more precipitate than at the other lake, and sometimes rise abruptly in black-stained

ramparts of rock a thousand feet high. These bold cliffs give way in places to declivities less steep, where drifts of rock *débris*, their dark grey tint varied by the warm yellows of the lichen, descend and make picturesque dark promontories on the bright surface of the lake; and these again yield in places to still gentler slopes, where the eye is regaled by an exuberance of bright-tinted mountain growth; and every now and again we can tell by a roar and a white gleam that a cataract is using some boulder-strewn and overgrown hollow for its eager descent to the lake.

The tourists' hut at Gjendesheim, charmingly situated above a broad swift river which here flows out of the lake, is the largest in the Jotunheim, having not only its separate bedrooms, but its two stories. Fortunately it was not full when we arrived, and within a day or two we were left the sole occupants. We had an *embarras des richesses* in bedrooms, and the good-wife, who had been in England and brought back amicable sentiments towards its people, began to spoil us by unexpected dishes and other luxuries. We felt we had earned our repose, and proceeded to enjoy the *solitude à deux*, the ample space and abundant cheer, with something of a righteous self-complacency. There being no new arrivals we were not required to move on, so we lingered for a week and more under the fairest of northern skies.

There was plenty to see. Gjendesheim is conveniently placed for reaching some of the best points of view in the Jotunheim. Of these the isolated mountain Besshö, and the adjacent Bessegg cliff are perhaps the finest. The latter is a narrow ledge of rock, 1,000 feet above the lake, and forming a dam to a second lake, long and narrow like Gjende, but of a much darker hue. A small amount of blasting would, it is said, suffice to make out of this curious natural phenomenon another splendid waterfall. Our chief attraction here was the river Sjoa, which runs out of Gjende and descends by a succession of foaming cascades and deep, caldron-like pools to a second lake, the serene meadow-girt Sjodalsvand. X. found the pools of the river well supplied with big, well-nourished trout, and occupied himself mainly in angling for these; and I discovered in the scenery of the river abundant material for sketches. The richness of the vegetation here surprised me. Copses of dwarf birch, varied with stretches of swampy ground, where the brilliant hues of moss and autumn-tinted shrub were a delight to the eye. It was in these boggy hollows that I saw the finest specimens of the moltebaer, the scarlet berry now turning to the rich orangey-yellow of perfect ripeness, set amid fine bronze-coloured foliage on tiny hillocks or mounds. Above these boggy places towered gigantic crags, quaint in shape and posture, in the hollows and interstices of which flourished strange mountain vegetation. One point on this wild picturesque stream particularly impressed me. After wearing itself out in violent leapings down its steep rugged channel, the river glides softly a while over a broad level course. Here its waters are dotted by clusters of rocky islands, some tiny enough, others of a respectable size and wooded with birch. One feels that by just changing the pale greenish blue of the water to a blackish-brown, and one or two other small alterations, the scene might be made a bit of Scotch moorland; but glancing higher one sees a cluster of snow-clad peaks, resplendent to-day under the full summer sunlight, and the momentary illusion is dispelled.

We were very loth to leave Gjendesheim, but we had still to reach the two princes among the giants. The wind blew persistently from the west, and made a return by the lake impracticable. So we made a detour and reached Röisheim, the nearest station to our goal by way of the Lom valley. This plan gave me a taste of the strange experience of moving on day after day through interminable pine forests, where, but for the rude road itself, everything seemed primeval and untouched by human hand. It afforded us, too, a view of one of the largest and richest valleys of the country, where the farmsteads reach a size and an elaborateness of wooden decoration that is peculiarly impressive after the rude simplicity of the Jotunheim.

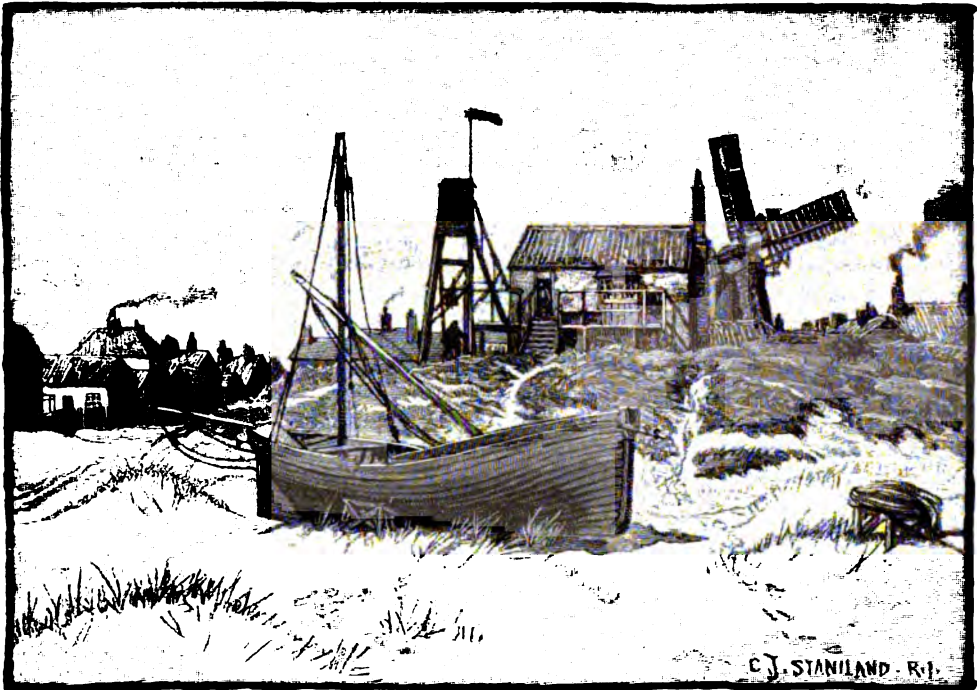
From the commodious and hospitable roof of Röisheim we set out one afternoon accompanied by another Englishman and a trusty guide for Spiterstul, whence we were to climb Glitretind, the highest mountain of Norway according to the latest measurements. Our path wound upwards along a steep declivity above a roaring torrent, and through clumps of pine, and meadow-like openings, where herds of parti-coloured cattle were browsing. Spiterstulen we found to be a pair of small huts placed close together above a glacier stream, opposite a bare steep mountain flecked with patches of snow. Happily for us there were no tourists before us, so all the accommodation the meagre little saeter could give was ours. The rude *ménage* was in the hands of a stalwart, sedate, and almost stern-looking girl, whose age we put

down at twenty-five, supported by a feeble-looking little lass of twelve or thereabouts. Fire was lit in the tiny *salon* of the visitor's saeter, and we were soon engaged in despatching a homely but savoury supper. Through the little window we could still see the black outlines of the huge mountain-pyramids, and now and again the head of some animal belonging to the saeter rubbing itself against the low window made a queer little silhouette in the foreground.

After supper our guide, Knut by name, a good-looking blonde of thirty years or so, was invited to smoke a pipe with us. Then somebody suggested a song, and Knut indulged us with the well-known patriotic song, "Ja, vi elsker dette Landet" (Yea, we love this land), and a number of other volkslieder. As he came to the end of his *répertoire*, he bethought him that Maria, the saeter-girl, had a *sangbog* (song-book), whereupon we asked him to bid her join us and give us the benefit of her voice. He stepped over into the other saeter, and for ten minutes there was no sign of a return. We guessed how it was, and having asked an unusual favour, followed it up by a further audacity. We knocked at the door of Maria's cabin, and by dint of personal intreaty wore down the bashful reluctance that our messenger had found so obstinate. The small child had to come, too, and she offered a form of resistance which had to be dealt with by something approaching physical compulsion. At length the party was complete. Maria sat by Knut on one side of the peison sharing the tattered song-book, while her timid *protégée* crouched behind her chair. Knut took up the office of *sangmester*, instructing Maria by occasional nudges as to the right way of proceeding. On receiving these corrections Maria's grave face relaxed to something like a faint smile, and we soon guessed the reason; for it turned out that Maria had not only the better voice of the two, but knew more about the mysteries of the singing art than her would-be teacher, though, woman-like, she submitted with good grace to the *rôle* of pupil. The sound of these rugged Norse melodies, with their wide compass and their suddenly-changing rhythm, sung by voices having more strength and agility than sweetness, seemed to ally itself at once to the wild chant of the glacier stream outside, and to become the voice of these wild snow-fretted, ice-riven, but ever-enduring Jotunheim mountains.

We had a glorious day for the Glitretind expedition, which, to one of us at least, untrained in mountaineering and knowing nothing before of ropings and perilous snow-cornices, was the great event of the tour. Knut was a delightful guide, and we reached the glittering white crest in the best of spirits. As we stood in the perfect mountain stillness and let our eyes wander over the Jotunheim world, with its finely-cut peaks all showing themselves boldly to-day, its smooth, dazzling snow-fields, its glacier appendages, and its shimmering lakes, a sudden vibration of sympathetic patriotism impelled us to take up last evening's strong and rousing melody, "Yea! we love this land." Knut was touched, and expressed his emotion by an action that was striking even in a Norwegian guide. His face beaming with delight, he came to each of us in turn, wrung our hand, and exclaimed with something of tremulousness in his voice "Min Ven!" (my friend!). Our tour in the Jotunheim could hardly have had a more agreeable or memorable ending.

James Sully.



BEACHMAN'S VILLAGE AND LIFEBOAT STATION.
From a Drawing by C. J. STANILAND, R.I.

LIFEBOATS AND LIFEBOAT-MEN.

II.

THE next class of lifeboats to be considered is that of the Norfolk and Suffolk lifeboats. These boats deserve especial notice. They are only seventeen in number, twelve of them being exclusively sailing boats varying from thirty-six to forty-six feet in length and from ten and a half to twelve feet in breadth. As those of the larger size are unmanageable in a heavy sea under oars, and as they have often to work to windward against the heaviest gales to the rescue of the crews of vessels wrecked on the numerous outlying banks which exist off that part of the coast, it is indispensable that they should be heavily ballasted and have considerable draught of water to give them good weatherly qualities. In order to make this requisite provision without involving too much weight for convenient launching they are provided with water-ballast in addition to having iron keels. This water is let in by the same apertures that serve for self-relief of water, the plugs which close them not being withdrawn until just before leaving the beach. The quantity of water thus let in is very great, being in the largest boat of this class not less than seven tons, which water is not retained in an inclosed tank, but left to fill every unoccupied space up to the level of the plane of flotation. This unoccupied space is chiefly confined to a narrow channel of about one-third of the boat's width. Cross air-cases at bow and stern, to the level of the thwarts, also confine it lengthwise. The average area of these channels is about twenty feet long by four feet wide, in which the water lies to an average depth of two and a half feet, in amount equal to about 200 cubic feet or five and three-quarter tons. A great quantity of water also settles between the timbers of these boats, beneath the side and end air cases, which cases are movable separate boxes, and which cannot be made to fit so closely as to fill up those spaces. These boats have also iron keels varying from twelve to seventeen hundredweight. At first sight it would

appear highly dangerous to have so large a quantity of water awash in a boat; the truth is, however, that the safety of the principle consists in the largeness of the quantity, taken together with the fact of its being cut off from access to the ends and sides of the boat. If these boats were less heavily ballasted they would be more corky, rising and falling with every heave of the sea, and the water within them would be constantly in motion towards the lowest level; but thus heavily weighted and propelled by powerful sails, they cut deeply through every sea instead of rising to it, and in nautical phraseology, they make much worse weather of it than a lighter and more lively boat would do. Heavy masses of "green sea" break over them so as sometimes altogether to submerge their crews, but their stability is so great that the boatmen have unbounded confidence in them, and are protected against being washed overboard by "ridge ropes" rove through iron stanchions round the boat, fixed in the gunwales.

The only two boats of this class which have ever upset were the Southwold boat in February, 1858, the then most recently constructed boat of the class, and the Kessingland lifeboat which was upset a few years ago. In the case of the Southwold boat she was taken out through rather a high surf for the quarterly exercise of her crew. On returning to shore, before entering the surf, the crew injudiciously inserted the plugs and pumped out about two-thirds of the water ballast. They then ran her under sail with too much way on into the surf, when a following sea, overtaking her, threw her stern up; the ton and a half of water still in her then rushed to the bow, which became completely submerged, and broaching-to across the surf she immediately upset, her masts broke off on coming in contact with the ground, and, not being a self-righting boat, she remained keel up. Her crew of fifteen men, all having on their life-belts in accordance with the rules of the Institution, were saved; but three gentlemen who had gone off as amateurs, and had refused to put on life-belts which had been offered to them, were drowned, though one at least of them was known to be a good swimmer. Had this boat had her full water ballast in her the sea would probably have broken over the stern instead of lifting it, and the accident would not have occurred.

In the case of the Kessingland boat the accident seems to have occurred also from injudicious management of the valves. Quoting from memory, the boat was being launched on service, when she was pushed off through a heavy surf without opening the valves. Consequently, having no water ballast in her, her bow was thrown up and the stern forced on to the sand, when she turned a complete somersault and lay keel uppermost on the beach, with, I think, three of the crew under her. A hole was immediately driven through her planking and two rescued alive, but the third man was killed by being crushed under the thwarts or gunwale. So that it really seems with these boats that if properly managed, they, though not self-righting, are non-capsizable, and this is what the east coast men (who swear by them) claim for them.

To rightly understand these boats they must be taken in conjunction with the men who man them, and the shore from which they are launched. Authorities seem to agree that at one time, in past ages, the waves of the German Ocean flowed over the low-lying marshes of the Norfolk coast, and swept far inland.

It is a coast flat, and to many people uninteresting—wide stretches of white sand, clean as sugar and very like it in colour, backed up by high sandhills protecting the low marsh lands from the sand-laden winds, and originally, no doubt, from the encroachments of the sea. The sand is piled up and held together by the long-reaching roots of the marram grass, which not only binds it together but lays the foundation of smaller hills which are gradually creeping down to the sea across the beach. The sea at Caister and thereabouts is now retiring. Then away from the beach, at varying distances, stretch the outlying sandbanks, the grave of many a brave man and gallant ship. A magnificent roadstead several miles in length stretches from Yarmouth to beyond Caister, formed by the Scroby Sands only some two miles distant, running parallel with the beach which it effectually protects and at the same time affords a splendid anchorage for weatherbound and distressed vessels.

A pleasant coast for a long stretch when the sun is shining dazzlingly on the white sand, and a nice little breeze ripples the waters of the North Sea and cools the air, and the cloud shadows fly over the flat sands and marshes—and a cool air is needed, for the sand in which you sink almost ankle deep is heavy walking, especially to a stranger. The natives can always pick out a foreigner a mile away by his walk. A native never lifts his feet, but drags them somewhat; a foreigner tries to walk as if in Regent Street

with a firm paving stone under his feet, and consequently slips back about six inches out of every foot. A nice coast for a walk on a summer's day, but in winter, with a fierce north-easter blowing, a grey, dreary, desolate coast, grey sky, grey sand, and grey water, but grand in its stretches of flat sand and low hill, and its slaty sky broken only by wicked-looking scud flying overhead from the sea—fitting-looking outriders to the coming storm laden with wreck and ruin to many a household; looking seaward, a grey sea gradually becoming whiter, and rows of sandbanks one outside the other, already leaping in hungry white spouts like sea snakes eager for prey, and soon to be one white mass of yeasty froth and foam. The marram grass around flutters and rasps its hard edges in the wind until a fiercer gust than usual seems almost to make it shriek; and as the wind freshens, the sand rises in veritable sand storms, dimming the distance that was dim before, and coming on your face like pins and needles, causing a hasty right-about-face to leeward and a search for a lee.

The hazardous nature of the coast, the amount of assistance required (especially in the old days before steam) by vessels in the roads and on the sands, and the hardy training gained in the deep-sea and herring fishing, nurtured a race of iron men—simple, kind, great-hearted giants, brave as lions, men who at any hour of the night are willing and eager to leave their warm beds and rush to face the icy wind and possible death to save life or property—the race of Norfolk and Suffolk beachmen.

They form themselves into companies, each member of a company buying a share in the company's yawls, punts, and gear, and taking his share of expenses of repair, and also helping to work the lifeboat. They are governed by a set of printed rules too long to quote here. No member of a company can share in the salvage gained by one of their boats unless he at least touches some part of the boat before she leaves the beach, and the writer has seen a man run into the sea above his knees to touch the extreme end of the yawl or lifeboat's jigger as she went off, and thus saved his share. The widow of one of the company is also allowed to put a man in to work her share for her. He is called a widow's man, and shares the money earned by the boats with the widow.

At Yarmouth there were formerly six companies, each one possessing a look-out, yawls, and other boats.

The competition at times between these companies was so great that enormous risks were incurred, and numerous accidents, involving loss of life, happened in the race to be first alongside the vessel in distress.

Fortunately for all but the beachmen, the substitution of steamers for sailing-vessels, and the greater supervision exercised by the Board of Trade over ships (thanks to Mr. Plimsoll), has no doubt checked the practice of some unscrupulous shipowners of sending rotten, unseaworthy ships to sea insured far over their value, and for the past five or six years it has been evident that the need for beachmen at Yarmouth has gone, and that the chance of earning a living in that way has been getting small by degrees and beautifully less, with the result that the six companies have dwindled down to three weak ones, containing at most in the aggregate twenty men, and their boats rapidly going to decay; but Caister, a village two miles to the north of Yarmouth, continues to maintain its company numbering forty men, and they contrive to follow their dangerous calling under moderately thriving circumstances. Almost as this paragraph was written comes the news that these gallant fellows—who have faced the heaviest gales on the east coast in their lifeboats, the *Birmingham*, *Covent Garden*, and *Godsend*, and saved some six or seven hundred lives (the highest record of any crew round the coast) and never lost a man—had gone out in their light yawl *Zephyr* to the relief of a schooner which had gone on the Barber Sand, and on a fine night in sight of shore (only about a mile) had lost eight men out of a crew of fifteen, leaving six widows and twenty-nine children. As the sketches illustrating this section of the paper were all taken at Caister and from Caister men and boats, and nothing could possibly show the coolness and presence of mind of Norfolk beachmen more than their conduct in this disaster, the history of it is given as narrated by the beachmen themselves who were the survivors, and with whom and the lost men the writer has been on terms of intimate friendship for eleven years. The schooner was observed by the watch, Philip George and James Haylett, jun., coming down outside the Barber Sand, wind S.S.E., and a fine moonlight night, rather hazy, when she was suddenly observed to swing round with her head to the north-east. Philip George at once concluded she had hung on the outer edge of the Barber, and after watching a few minutes, and seeing that she remained, J. Haylett rang the bell and called the crew together, and the night being so fine they launched the yawl and ran off. On the Barber is the mast of a vessel which sank

some eight years ago, and the crew of which these very Caister men had rescued. They knew it well, and the writer even knew it as well as his own front door, and had walked round it when the Barber was dry at low tide. Yet as James Haylett, the coxswain that night, said to the writer, in describing the affair, "I had just said, 'Now, dear boys, keep a look out for that old stump,' when, before the words were out, she caught on the stump and ripped along to amidships, and immediately began to fill." The crew began to throw out the bags of ballast, and Haylett and another out with their knives and cut away all the gear from the masts and threw them overboard. Two or three quietly sat on the gunwale and stripped to their shirt and drawers, when down went the yawl from under them. Haylett, the coxswain, as he came up, got hold of two oars and supported himself for a time, when, finding the oars wobbling about uncomfortably, he searched with one hand (when he had one free) in his pockets for a piece of string, but found none; on this he managed to untie a scarf from his neck, and with this lashed the two oars together. Soon after he found himself by the foremast, and he and his son Aaron, and Joseph Haylett and Knowles got hold of it, and getting some astride and others hanging on by their hands, kept themselves afloat for a time, but four times the mast rolled over and threw them off, and each time there was one less for the mast to support. Aaron got hold of the two oars that his father had lashed together, and on that saved himself. Joe Haylett and Knowles were drowned. John George steadied himself on the boat before she went down, and stripped, and then swam away, calling out "Fare ye well, boys, I am off to the shore." He came across Plummer, who had the foregrating, and George put a hand on it. Plummer sang out he should be drowned, as it would not bear two, and George swam away again for shore. After swimming some distance he came across a shrimper, *The Brothers*, of Yarmouth, and hailed them; they missed

THE LOOK-OUT.
From a Drawing by C. J. STANILAND, R.I.

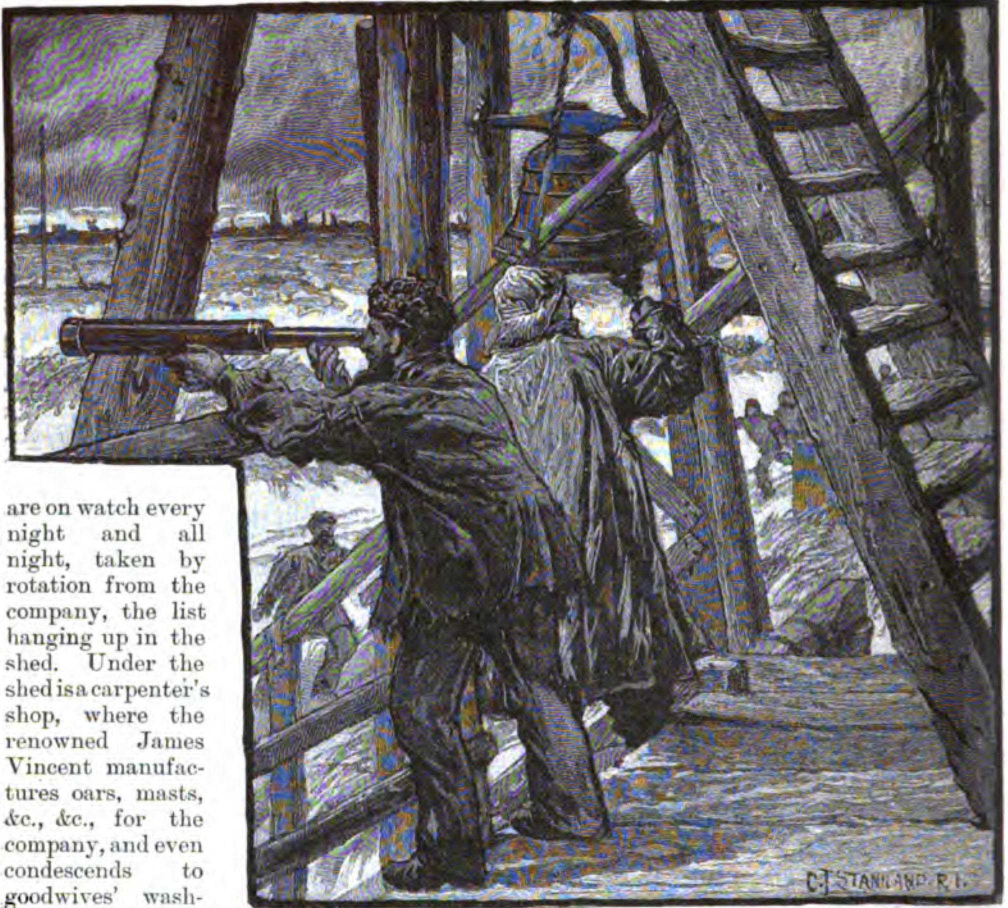
him at first, then came about and picked him up. He said, "There are fifteen of us in the water about here." They immediately bore away under George's directions, and first picked up Plummer on the grating quite insensible: then one after the other picked up Aaron Haylett on two oars, Isaiah Haylett two oars and some bottom boards out of boat, G. Haylett two oars, Russell on the mizen-mast, and last old James Haylett on the foremast astride, with an oar under one arm and a sett under the other. As they picked him up the light gig came off from Caister and took the rescued men ashore, and old Haylett (over sixty), after being two hours in the water, pulled an oar all the way ashore and then walked up home. Plummer told the writer that as the boat went down he caught hold of an oar, and found that some one had hold of the other end, and as he could swim and thought the unknown might not be able to, he let him have it, and just then the foregrating floated up edgeways; he caught it, and it no doubt saved his life. Jack Burton was a good swimmer, but an old man, and seems to have been one of the first to go down; yet, strange to say, his body was found floating off Yarmouth Monument in company with some of the floating wreckage, a distance of four miles away, some three or four hours afterwards—the only one found at the time, though three others were recovered some week or so after. The fatality is all the more extraordinary when it is known that, as usual, the watch up at the shed kept the glass on the yawl until he saw her lower her sail, when he turned to Philip George and said, "It is all right, Philip, she has got the job"—that is, to get the schooner off—it being an agreed signal with them to lower the sail. As a matter of fact, looking from the shed, the stump on the Barber on which the yawl was wrecked, the schooner on the sand, and the Cockle lightship were all in one line, so that when she reached the mast, only three hundred yards from the schooner, she appeared from the lookout to be alongside her, and the lowering of the sail was really the sinking of the yawl.

The men sat there in the shed for over an hour. When one came in and said he seemed to hear some shouting, they went outside on the staging, but in the meantime the moon had become overcast, and after some time they heard a shout, and the son of Isaiah Haylett, a little boy, said to Philip George, "Why, Philip, that is my father's voice," and George said, "Yes, my boy I do believe it is." They then saw the shrimper tacking about in a curious manner, and rushed down to the beach and launched the gig, and got to the shrimper in time to bring the rescued men ashore.

In justice to the lifeboat, which has behaved so well and saved so many lives, the writer would like to correct an error into which most of the press have fallen, in describing the disaster as the wreck of the Caister lifeboat and the yawl lifeboat. Had it been the lifeboat no lives would have been lost, as the bottom might have been ripped out of her, and as long as she hung together at all she would have floated herself and the men.

The writer has heard the Caister men relate with great gusto a yarn as to their going out to a ship on the North Cross Sand. When they got near the wreck a heavy sea caught the life-boat and swept her down, bow on, on to the wreck, knocking the stem clean out of her, and leaving a gaping rent with the water washing in and out; of course it made no difference to the boat's power of flotation, but the sailors on the wreck declined to leave even their perilous position for a boat with her bows stove in, and it was only after reiterated assurances from the beachmen that they consented to be rescued, and were soon landed safely on the beach.

The illustration (page 395) of beachmen's village is a drawing of Caister; on the right is the beachmen's shed with its look-out, and to the left the gap leading up to the village and high road to Yarmouth; the sandhills covered with marram grass in foreground, and one of the large yawls, the *Redjacket*, in the centre. The Dutch look of the whole coast is singular, the houses showing only their chimneys over the low hills, the windmills, and inland the marshes with sails apparently sailing over the land. The sandhills and the marram grass are the same, and any one who has never seen the Norfolk coast, but is familiar with the Dutch shore at Scheveningen can, by eliminating the Dutch boats and filling their place with Norfolk yawls, and substituting Norfolk beachmen for Scheveningen fishermen and women, bring the Norfolk coast before his eyes at once. The shed is in the upper story a watch-house and beachmen's parliament house, where the affairs of the nation (of Caister beachmen) are discussed, accounts settled, and business transacted; following up the parallel by even (like other legislators) taking long and comfortable snoozes on the benches which run round the building. One side contains a bay window, from which through sliding shutters a view can be obtained north, east or south, and where some beachman is always on watch. Two men



THE ALARM BELL.
From a Drawing by C. J. STANILAND, R.I.

are on watch every night and all night, taken by rotation from the company, the list hanging up in the shed. Under the shed is a carpenter's shop, where the renowned James Vincent manufactures oars, masts, &c., &c., for the company, and even condescends to goodwives' washing tubs and other domestic appliances. The Norfolk women or coast women at any rate look very picturesque in their handkerchiefs and shawls, which they wear over the head and fasten under the chin—a rare protection against a Norfolk wind, which has no mercy, and cuts like—but words fail to describe its keenness; let the reader go and experience it, and then he will understand.

We will imagine the watch set, and all the other good Caister folk in bed. The one man is lying down having a nap. The fire is burning brightly in the small iron stove, the lamp is alight, and by it the second man is alternately spelling out a few pages of some novel (for the beachmen have a respectable library of sea novels, *British Workmen*, *Lifeboat Journals*, and so forth, sent by kindly souls to relieve the tedium of their watches [1]) and having a look-out through the glass. The night wears away, the men change places, until as day begins to break, a longer look than ordinary is taken through the glass, the sleeper is roused, and a discussion of bearings, &c., ensues, with the result that a vessel is descried fast aground on the Cross Sand, with a heavy sea breaking over her.

Out dash the men on to the staging; one lays hold of the cord attached to the clapper of the bell (see page 400), and the other rushes at breakneck pace down the steps and up the gap, shouting and hammering at the doors as he goes, as if a certain old gentleman were at his heels. Then breaks out a Babel of sounds; men rush from every door and side road, some of them with their trousers on, pulling on their shirts as they run,

[1] Any books—illustrated ones are the best, as some of the beachmen cannot read—sent to the Company of Beachmen, Caister, Great Yarmouth, will be well bestowed, and thankfully received.

stumbling in the dark, through the heavy sand, but all making for one point, the shed.

There, hung up to rails at the roof are their oilies, sou'-westers, and boat-stockings; under the benches their big sea-boots, like great buckets, which look as if a beachman, giant as he is, might get into each boot.

In a twinkling the men have donned their seagear, and are making a bee line across the sands for the lifeboat. See below.

The surf is smashing on to the beach in tons, like a collection of Nasmyth steam-hammers, and the wind is howling across the beach and up the gap, bringing with it clouds of sand, until the air seems almost solid with it, and makes even the hardy beachman shield his face; for it fills eyes, nose, and mouth, and soon turns all the glass exposed to its power into ground glass.

THE RUSH FOR THE LIFEBOAT.
From a Drawing by C. J. STANILAND, R.I.

The red tanned lug-sails are carried down and placed in the boat ready for hoisting, and the skids laid down forward of the boat; the legs which keep the boat on an even keel are taken away and replaced by the broad backs of the sturdy beachmen, amid shouts of "hold her up;" the hauling off warp which is anchored out to seaward is taken in over the pulley in the bow, then with a "Yo, Ho, Ho, Ho, Hiiiii," the boat begins to move on her porpoise oiled skids. As she goes over and clears the one at her stern it is caught up by the side handles by two beachmen and taken to her bows, and placed in line ready to pick her up again as she comes steadily on down the sand.

Then the men tumble on board and haul at the warp; the remaining men keep her moving over her skids, until, with a run and a smash, for no other word will describe the sound, she dashes her bows into a mass of water just breaking, thundering on the beach, and shipping tons of it and giving her crew the first smother of many they will have before they return, she moves slowly on. Another breaker catches her ere she has fairly gathered way and she looks almost like coming back, but the beachmen on shore have

had the sett[1] ready; they ship it on the stern, and with a shout and a rally shove her off in gallant style into the smother. (Frontispiece.)

Up goes the foresail with a run, showing red against the grey; up goes the mizen, and heeling over to the wind the boat thrashes through the broken water; overboard goes the hauling-off warp and she is clear of the beach and fighting her way through the heavy seas to the wreck; sea after sea breaks over her, until (as the crew have often told the writer) they can see nothing of the boat, only feel it under their feet, hang like grim death to the ridge ropes, and take a breath when the sea gives them a chance. Over the Barber they thrash, then over the Scroby. They have to make a long leg to fetch the wreck, and as they rise on a wave they can sometimes make her out dimly, with seas spouting fountains over her. She is a small schooner, and her crew, two men and two wretched half-starved-looking boys and an equally wretched-looking mongrel cur, are huddled together in the weather shrouds of the foremast; the mizen mast has already gone over the side. The lifeboat fights her way to windward, then anchors, and lowering her lugs veers down to the wreck (see page 402), drops alongside and takes in the poor half-drowned wretches and their poor dog, hauls back to the anchor, then up sail and away to the beach, where the rest of the company is awaiting them. The boat is again hauled up on her skids, the men of the rescued crew marched up to the shed where the warmth and a drop of rum soon puts fresh life into the sailors, a messenger is sent into the village for a horse and cart, and their names, and the name, &c. of their vessel having been taken by the coast guard they are driven off to snug quarters in the sailor's home at Yarmouth.

VEERING DOWN TO WRECK.
From a Drawing by C. J. STANILAND, R.I.

The illustration, page 403, represents an incident which sometimes happens when the tide is low. In this case it was a smack on

[1] *Sett*, a long pole with an angle iron at the end which fixes on to the stern post of the yawl or lifeboat and so pushes her off.

ON THE SANDS.
From a Drawing by C. J. STANILAND, R.I.

the Barber Sand. She was discovered at daybreak with no signs of life unless a huddled-up dark spot at the foot of the mizen might be a human being still alive. The small life-boat, the *Godsend,* was launched and taken as near as was safe to the edge of the sand, now a shallow mass of seething foam. Over went two or three of the beachmen and fought their way through the surf to the wreck; they found the sole survivor lashed to the foot of the mizen and insensible. He was cut loose, and half carried, half dragged, back to the boat and to the shed, where a little rum, friction, and heat gradually restored him.

The writer hopes that from this article the reader may have gained a tolerably correct idea of the general build and appearance of the lifeboats of all three types, and perhaps a keener appreciation of the heroism of the lifeboat-men and the value of their service, and if, when sitting by a cosy fire enjoying your creature comforts, the sound of the howling wind outside should turn the reader's thoughts to the raging sea, and the scenes of peril and rescue that may at that moment be taking place round our coasts, may it also have the effect of turning a portion of the stream of his or her charity towards John Street, Adelphi, Strand, London, the offices of the Royal National Lifeboat Institution, where it will be thankfully received by the courteous secretary Mr. Charles Dibdin, whose very name seems to carry with it a smack of the sea and sea songs.

CHARLES J. STANILAND, R.I.

AUNT RACHEL.

A RUSTIC SENTIMENTAL COMEDY.

CHAPTER XIII.

EZRA walked home and sat there alone until evening. His housekeeper routed him from his armchair for dinner and tea, and at each meal he made a feeble pretence of eating and drinking, and having been scolded for his poor appetite, went back to his old place. He sat there till the room was dark, scarcely moving, but wearing no very noticeable sign of pain or trouble. The story was so old, and the misfortune it related was so long past mending! He had been grey himself these many years, and the things which surrounded him and touched him had long since shared all his own want of colour.

There was no relighting these old ashes.

And yet in defiance of that avowed impossibility they seemed now and again to glow. They warmed him and lighted him back to a perception of lost odour and dead colour. They stung him into some remembrance of the pain of years ago. And then again they were altogether cold and lifeless.

He said vaguely in a half-whisper that it was a pity; and the phrase rose to his lips a hundred times, oftener than not an utterance purely mechanical, and expressing neither regret for Rachel nor for himself, nor sorrow for their division. When he was not thinking of her or of himself, he murmured that this was how it had come to pass, and did not seem to care or feel at all.

When the gloom was deepening in Ezra's ill-lit chamber, though the light of the summer evening still lingered outside, the housekeeper came in and drew the blinds, and left behind her a single candle, which left the room as dusky as before. Shortly after this Reuben came in, and Ezra, nodding, signed him to a chair. The young man took a seat in silence.

"Well, lad," said his uncle, when to the young man the continued stillness had grown almost ponderous. The seconds had seemed to drop one by one upon him from the audible ticking of the old clock in the next room, each with an increasing weight of embarrassed sympathy.

"Well, uncle?" returned Reuben, trying to speak in his ordinary way, and only succeeding in sounding shamefully flippant and unsympathetic to his own ears.

"I've a mind to have a talk with you," said Ezra. "Is the door shut?"

Reuben rose to see, and murmuring that it was closed, resumed his seat. He waited a while in expectation that his uncle was about to confide in him.

"When beest going to make up your mind to pluck up a courage and speak to Ruth?" the old man asked.

"To Ruth, sir?" returned Reuben. The question staggered him a little.

"To Ruth," said Ezra.

"I have spoken," answered Reuben. "We are going to be married."

"That's well," the old man said, mildly. "But I looked to be told of any such thing happening. Thee and me, lad, are all as is left o' th' old stock i' this part o' the world."

"Don't think I should have kept you ignorant of it," said Reuben. "I only knew this morning. I have not seen you since till now."

"Well, lad, well," said Ezra, "I wish thee happy. But I'm sure you know that without need of any word o' mine. I asked because I meant to give out a bit of a warning agen the danger of delay. Theer's not alone the danger of it, but sometimes the cruelty of it. It's hard for a young woman as has been encouraged to set her heart upon a man to be kept waitin' on the young man's pleasure. You see, lad, they'm tongue-tied. Perhaps"—he offered this supposition with perfect gravity—"perhaps it's the having been tongue-tied afore marriage as makes

some on 'em so lively and onruled in speech when marriage has set 'em free."

There was a definite sense in Reuben's mind that the old man was not saying what he wished to say, and this sense was strengthened when Ezra, after moving once or twice in his seat, cleared his throat and began to walk up and down the room.

"Had you read that letter as you brought to me this morning, lad?" he asked, coughing behind his hand, and trying to speak as if the thing were a commonplace trifle.

"I read it, because I thought that it must be addressed to me," said Reuben. "I had written to Ruth, and she told me to look in Manzini for her answer. I found nothing but that letter in the book."

"Why how was that?" asked Ezra, without turning towards him.

"Her own note had been taken away before I got the book." Reuben felt himself on dangerous ground. It was unpleasant to have to talk of these things, and it looked impossible to reveal Rachel's eccentricity to Ezra, knowing what he knew.

"Ah!" said Ezra, absent-mindedly. "You read the letter then!" He went on pacing up and down. "You understood it?"

"I—seemed to understand it," said Reuben. Ezra came back to his chair and seated himself with a look of half resolve.

"Reuben," he began, in a voice pathetically ill-disguised, "it was something of a cruelty as that letter should ha' been found at all after such a lapse o' time. The rights of the case was these. As a younger man than now—I was six-an'-thirty at the time—I wrote to—I wrote an offer of myself in marriage to a person as was then resident i' this parish. The day but one after I wrote I had to go up to London to see to some affairs as was in the lawyer's hands, relating to thy grandfather's property. He'd been dead a year or more, and the thing was only just got straight. Whilst theer, I heard Paganini, and I've told you, more than once, I never cared to touch a bow theerafter. I found Manzini on the music stand and closed the pages. He was open theer as I had left him, for I was a bit particular about my things, and mother used to pretend as her durstn't lay a hand upon 'em. I waited and waited for th' answer. I met the person as I had wrote to once, and bowed to her. I've remembered often and often the start her gave, as if I'd done her some sort of insult. I could never understand how nor why. I did not know as I had gi'en her any right to treat me thus contemptuous. I thought her set a value upon herself beyond my deservin's, and I abode to bear it. In the course of a two-three weeks she left the parish, and I made up my mind as her'd left despising me. I won't pretend as I might not ha' found her letter if her had been less prideful and disdainous, for in the course of a little while I might ha' gone back to the music, if things had gone happier with me. But it would ha' been kinder not to know the truth at all than find it out so late."

He had spoken throughout in what was meant for his customary tone of dry gravity, but it failed him often, though for a word only. At such times he would pause and cough behind his wasted hand, and these frequent breaks in the narrative made its quiet tones more touching to the hearer than any declamation or any profession of profound regret, however eloquently expressed, could possibly have been.

"Have you explained to her, since you received the letter?" asked Reuben. "Don't you think, uncle, that she ought to know?"

Ezra looked at him in a faint surprise. He supposed he had guarded himself from any suspicion of betraying his old sweetheart's personality.

"Yes," he said, still bent upon this reservation. "It happens as the person I speak of came back to Heydon Hay some time ago, and was within the parish this very day. I went to make a call upon her, and to show how Providence had seen fit to deal with both of us, but her refused to exchange speech with me. You see, Reuben," he went on, coughing with a dry mildness of demeanour, "it's doubtless been upon her mind for a many years as I was making a sort of cruel and unmanly game of her. Seeing her that offstanding it seemed to me her valued me so lowly as to take my letter for a kind of offence. It seems now as it was me and not her as was too prideful."

They were both silent for a time, but Reuben was the first to speak again.

"She ought to know, uncle. She should be told. Perhaps Ruth could tell her."

"My lad, my lad!" said Ezra mournfully reproving him. "How could I tell another of a thing like this?"

"Well, sir," Reuben answered, "I know now how the idea came into her mind, though I was puzzled at first. But she is strongly opposed to my being engaged to Ruth, and came down to tell Mr. Fuller this morning that I was a villain. I am thinking of her own lonely life, and I am sure that if Ruth and I are married she will never speak again to the only relatives she has unless this is

explained. For her own sake, uncle, as well as yours, I think she ought to know the truth."

He was looking downwards as he spoke, and did not see the questioning air with which Ezra regarded him.

"You know who it was then as wrote this letter?"

"Yes," said Reuben, looking up at him. "Ruth knew the handwriting."

"Reuben!" cried the old man, sternly. He rose with more open signs of agitation than Reuben had yet seen in him, and walked hurriedly to and fro. "Reuben! Reuben!" he repeated, in a voice of keen reproach. "Ah! When was ever youth and folly separate! I never thought thee wast the lad to cry thine uncle's trouble i' the market-place!"

"No, uncle, no! Don't think that of me," cried his nephew. "I did not know what to do. I asked Ruth's advice. I could not be certain that the note was meant for you. And—guessing what I thought I guessed—I was afraid to bring it."

"Well, well! Well, well!" said Ezra. "It's been too sad an' mournful all along for me to go about to make a new quarrel on it. Let it pass. I make no doubt you acted for the best. Art too good a lad to tek pleasure in prying into the pain of an old man—as—loves thee. Leave it alone, lad. Let's think a while, and turn it over and see what may be done."

He went back to his armchair, and Reuben watched him in sympathetic silence.

"I know her to be bitter hard upon me in her thoughts," said Ezra, after a time. "The kind of scorn her bears for me is good for nobody, not even if it happens to be grounded i' the right. It might be a blow to her at first, but it ud be a blow as ud carry healing with it i' the long run. Let the wench tek the letter. It'll be easier for her to get it at a woman's hands."

He drew the cracked and faded letter from his waistcoat pocket, and held it out towards Reuben without looking at him.

"I think that will be the best and kindest course, sir," said Reuben, accepting the letter and placing it in his pocket-book. "It may not be easy for Ruth to speak to her just at first, for she is very angry with her for having engaged herself to me."

"I have heard word of her opposing it," answered Ezra. "Theer are them in Heydon Hay as elsewheer—folks, without being aythur coarse-hearted or hard-minded, as talk of their neighbours' affairs, and love to tell you whatever there is to be heard as is unpleasing. I have been told as her describes me as a villin, and speaks in the same terms of you, Reuben. And that's why I advised you to speak out, before there should be time to make mischief, if by any chance mischief might be made. And I've seen enough to know as theer's no staple so easy to mannyfacture as ill-will, even betwixt them as thinks well of each other. But, Reuben, even the best of women are talkers, and I look for it to be made a point on between Ruth and you, that no word of this is breathed except between your two selves."

"You may trust Ruth as much as you trust me, uncle," said Reuben.

"Like enough," answered Ezra. "And I've a warm liking for her. But there'll be no unkindness in naming my particular wish i' this affair."

"No, no," answered Reuben. "I will tell her what you say. You may trust us both."

"Let me know how things go," said the old man. "And good-night, Reuben."

A tender twilight still reigned outside, and Reuben, walking along the village street, could see the softened mass of roofs and chimneys and the dark green bulk of trees outlined clearly against the sky. The air was soft and still, and something in the quiet and the dimness of the hour seemed to bear a hint of memory or continuation of the scene which had just closed. He was going to see Ruth at once, and she was naturally in his mind, and presented herself as vividly there as if he had been in her presence. The old man's trouble was so much more real to a lover than it could have been to another man! If it were he and Ruth who were thus parted! There lay a whole heart-ache. He loved Ezra, and yet it did not seem possible to feel his grief half so well save by seeing it as his own. Such a lonely terror lay in the thought of parting from Ruth and living for ever without her, that it awoke in him an actual pang of pain for his uncle's trouble.

"But," said Reuben, as he strode along, "that is what was. He felt it, no doubt, and felt it for many a dreary month. But it's over now, for the most part. I could have cried for him this morning, and again to-night, but it was more pity for the past than for the present."

Ezra had been a sad man always, since Reuben could remember him, and yet not altogether an unhappy one. The sunshine of his life had seemed veiled, but not extinguished. And could love do so little at its most unfortunate and hapless ending? For some, maybe, but surely not for Reuben!

For him, if love should die, what could there be but clouds and darkness for ever and always? But the old take things tranquilly, and to the young it seems that they must always have been tranquil. Uncle Ezra a lover? A possible fancy. But Ezra loving as *he* loved? An impossible fancy. And even six-and-thirty looked old to Reuben's eyes, for he stood a whole decade under it.

"I will go at once," said Ruth, so soon as she knew what was required of her. "I'll just tell father, and then I'll put on my hat and be ready in a minute. Will you"—with an exquisite demureness and simplicity—"will you go with me, Reuben?"

"Goo and see Aunt Rachel?" cried old Fuller, when the girl had told him her intention. "Well, why not?" Ruth ran up stairs, and Fuller waddled into the room where Reuben waited. "Ruth talks about bringin' th' ode wench back to rayson," he said, with a fat chuckle, "but that's a road Miss Blythe 'll niver travel again, I reckon. Her said good-bye to rayson, and shook hands a many hears ago. It's a bit too late i' life to patch up the quarrel betwigst 'em now."

The old man's paces were so leisurely and heavy and Ruth's so quick and light that she was in the room before he had formulated this opinion, and stood at the looking-glass, regarding Reuben's reflection in its dimly illumined depths as she patted and smoothed the ribbons beneath her chin.

"Let us hope not, father," she said; and then turning upon Reuben, "I am ready."

He offered her his arm and she took it. It was the simple fashion of the time and place. No engaged lovers took an airing of a dozen yards without that outward sign of the tie between them. They walked along in the soft summer evening, pitying Ezra and Rachel in gentle whispers.

"I was thinking just now if you and I should part, dear—if their case were ours!"

"Oh, Reuben!"

And so the grief of the old was a part of the joy of the young, tender-hearted as they were. They played round the mournful old history.

"But you would speak, Reuben? You would never let me go without a word?"

"And if I didn't speak, dear? If something held me back from speaking?"

"But you wouldn't let it hold you back."

"Not now, darling. But I might have done yesterday. Before I knew."

Before he knew! He must have always known! But of that she would say nothing.

In front of the one village shop in which the pair of window candles still glimmered, they paused, whilst Reuben searched his pocket-book for the note, and then went on again, in perfumed darkness, until they reached the gate of Rachel's cottage.

"Be brave, darling," Reuben whispered here. "Don't let her repulse you easily."

Ruth entered at the gate, stole on tiptoe along the gravelled path, knocked and listened. The whole front of the little house was in darkness, but by and by even Reuben from his post behind the hedge heard the faint noise made by slippered feet in the oil-clothed hall.

"Who's there?" said a voice from within.

"Dear aunt," Ruth answered, "let me in. Do please let me in. I want to speak to you."

Reuben, listening, heard the sound of the jarring chain, and the door was opened. He peeped through the interstices of the hedge, and saw Miss Blythe smiling in the light of the candle she carried in her left hand.

"Dear niece," said Rachel, with an unusually fine and finicking accent. "Enter, you are welcome."

Ruth entered, the door was closed, and Reuben sat down on the bank outside to await his sweetheart's return.

"I understand," said Rachel. "You are welcome, my child. I detest rancour in families. I can forgive and forget." As she spoke thus she led the way into her small sitting-room. To Ruth the poor creature's unconsciousness seemed terrible. She laid her arms about Aunt Rachel's withered figure, and cried a little as she leaned upon her shoulder. "There, there," said Aunt Rachel, with a note of patronage in her voice, "compose yourself, dear child. Compose yourself. I am glad to see you. Take your own time, dear child, your own time."

At this Ruth cried afresh. It was evident that Aunt Rachel supposed her here to perform an office of penitence; and it was all so pitiful to the girl's heart, which, tender enough by nature, had been made softer and more tender still by her recent talk with Reuben in the lane.

"Don't talk so. Don't speak so," she said brokenly. "Dear aunt, read this, and then you will know why I am here."

"Ah!" sighed Aunt Rachel with a world of meaning. "What did I tell you, my dear?" She took the letter from her niece's hand, kissed the charming bearer of it casually, as if in certainty that she would soon be comforted, and began to search for her glasses.

Ruth, understanding the old lady's error, was moved still more by it, but emotion and tender interest were at war, and she sat in

a half-frightened silence, piteously wondering what would happen. Rachel had found her glasses, had set the letter upon the table before her, and now drawing the candle nearer, placed the spectacles deliberately astride upon her fine little nose, snuffed the candle, and took up the crackling old bit of paper with an air of triumph and hope fulfilled which cut Ruth to the heart.

The younger woman hid her face in her hands, and furtively watched the elder through her fingers.

Rachel read but a line, and then dropping the letter stared across the candle at Ruth, and passed a hand across her forehead, brushing her glasses away in the act. She groped for them, polished them with an automatic look, and began again. Ruth, too frightened even to sob, still looked at her, and save for the rustle of the withered paper in the withered fingers the silence was complete.

"What is this?" cried Aunt Rachel suddenly. "Why do you bring me this?" She was standing bolt upright, with both hands clasped downward on the letter.

"It was only found last night," said Ruth, rising and making a single step towards her. "From the hour you wrote it until then it was never seen. Reuben found it and brought it to me." The old maid's face went white, and but that the chair she had thrust away from her in rising rested against the mantelpiece she would have fallen. Ruth ran towards her and set a protecting arm about her waist. Her own tears were falling fast, and her voice was altogether broken. "It was in Manzini, the book you took Reuben's letter from. He found it there, and thought it came from me, until he saw that the paper was old, and that it did not quite answer his own letter. He took it to his uncle Ezra, and the poor old man's heart is broken. Oh, aunt, his heart is broken! He had never seen it. He had waited, waited—"

She could say no more, she was so agitated by her own words, and so stricken by the stony face before her.

Suddenly the old maid melted into tears. Reuben, sitting and waiting on the bank of the hedge without, had heard Ruth's broken voice, and now he could hear Rachel weeping. The night was without a sound, and he could hear nothing but the murmurs and sobbings from the little sitting-room. Rachel cried unrestrainedly and long, and Reuben waited with exemplary patience. At last Ruth came out and whispered to him,

"Tell father I am going to stay with Aunt Rachel to-night."

Reuben, naturally enough, would have kept her there and questioned her, but she ran back into the cottage before he could detain her, and after lingering a while bareheaded before the casket which held her, he took his way back to Fuller and gave him his daughter's message.

"Ah!" said Fuller. "At that rate it ud seem to be pretty well straightened out betwigst 'em. I'm glad to think it, for theer's nothin' like harmony among them as is tied together. But hows'ever her an' the wench may mek it up, Reuben, thee'lt be a villin till the end o' the chapter." The villainy attributed to Reuben and Ezra tickled the old man greatly, and his fat body was so agitated by his mirth that his legs became unequal to their burthen. He had to drop into his great cushioned armchair to have his laugh out. "That villainy o' thine 'll be the death o' me," he said, as he wiped his eyes.

Rachel and Ruth sat far into the night, and the old maid told over and over again the story of the courtship and the misunderstanding between herself and Ezra.

"Even when he was young," she told her listener often, "he was shy and proud. And he would think I had treated him as though he had been the dirt beneath my feet. I did. I did. He will never forgive me. Never, never."

She always cried afresh tempestuously at this, but when the first passion of her grief had worn itself out she came back to her story and lauded Ezra without stint. He was proud, oh yes, he was proud, but then it was not in a way to hurt anybody. He joined in the sports of the other young men when she was quite a girl, a mere chit of a thing, my dear, and he was the master of them all. Then Ruth chimed in. And so was Reuben now. Reuben was not like the rest of them. He was their master in everything, and everybody who was old enough to remember said that he was more like his uncle than like his father even. The duet of praise, accompanied by the old maid's tears, murmured along for an hour.

"You will meet him now?" Ruth suggested, rather timidly. "You will be friends again?"

"We could never bear to meet each other," cried Rachel. "How could I come before him?" Then, "I must go away."

"No, no," Ruth pleaded, "you must not go away. You must stay here. You must be friends again. What shall we tell him, dear? He has found the letter at last, and he sends to you. Can you let him think that you are still against him?"

"No," said Rachel, almost wildly. "You

will tell him I went away because I could not bear to see him. I ought to have known him too well to have thought so basely of him."

"It was his duty to speak to you. It was less your fault than his. It was nobody's fault. It was a disaster." Ruth thought poorly of Ezra's tactics as a lover, but she was not bent on expressing her own opinions. Reuben would never have acted in such a way. He would have known at least whether his letter had been received or no. Would any *man* take silent contempt as a final answer from the woman he loved? It was the man's real business to come conquering, whatever airs of gentleness he might wear. And animated by these reflections the girl became filled with impatience at the old maid's self-upbraidings. She was sorry, sorry with all her heart, for both, but if there were fault at all it lay on Ezra's side. "I shall see him in the morning," she said, finally, thinking of Reuben. "He will go to his uncle."

"Child," said Aunt Rachel, with the beginning of a return to her old manner, "do you think I can consent to have my affairs bandied from messenger to messenger in this way? I will write."

She said this boldly enough, but her heart shrank from it. Her mind went blank when she tried to figure what she should say. She could do nothing but prostrate herself anew before the re-established idol. She began to realise the fact that whatever disguise of hate and despite her love had taken she had done nothing but love him all along.

Ruth contented herself with the promise, but as it happened, Rachel never wrote or had need to write upon this question. For Reuben strolling early in the morning, and finding his feet wandering in the direction of Rachel's cottage, encountered his uncle, and their talk rendered the letter unnecessary. Ezra flushed and coughed behind his hand in more than a commonly deprecatory way when he sighted his nephew.

"Well, lad," he began.

"Ruth took the letter," answered Reuben. "I waited outside for her, and I know Miss Blythe was deeply affected by it because I heard her crying. Ruth stayed all night with her," he continued, "and I suppose"—with a flush and a little hesitation—"I suppose she's there now."

"That means as they two are reunited?" said Ezra, and without saying much more the old man took his nephew's arm and they strolled by the cottage together.

Its inmates were early astir despite the lateness of the hour at which they had retired, and hearing voices as they stood together in the bedroom renewing the moving duet of the evening, they peeped through the curtains, and saw uncle and nephew go by arm in arm. At this they flew together and embraced, and from that moment the duet became broken and confused. The little maid who assisted Rachel in her household affairs had not yet arrived, so the old lady herself lit the fire and made tea, whilst Ruth established herself in ambush in the parlour, and kept a watch upon the road. When Rachel came in to lay the snowy table-cloth, the china and the spoons made an unusual clatter in her trembling hands, and the two were in such a state of agitation that breakfast was a pure pretence. Whilst they were seated at table Reuben and Ezra again strolled by, and Ruth divined the fact that not only was Reuben waiting for her, which was to be expected, but Ezra was attending the moment when she should quit the house in order that he might make a call upon Aunt Rachel. So in such a state of tremulousness as she had never experienced before—even when she took Reuben's note from the pages of Manzini or hid her own there—she arose, and, protesting that her father would never breakfast in her absence, and that she should be roundly scolded for being so late, she put on her hat and gloves, kissed Aunt Rachel's cold cheek, and ran out into the lane with blushes so charming and becoming that she might have been taken for the very humanised spirit of the dawn, lingering an hour or two beyond her time to make acquaintance with daylight. If this simile should seem to border on the ridiculous, the responsibility of it may be safely thrown upon Reuben, who not merely met her with it in his mind, but conveyed it to her as they walked homeward together. Ezra was even more bashful than Ruth, though in him the sentiment wrought less attractive tokens of itself.

"I'll walk about a little while further," he said awkwardly, when he had bidden Ruth good morning, and without need to watch him they knew that he had walked no further than Rachel's cottage. The girl on leaving it had neglected to close the door, and the old maid had not dared to rise. He stood in the open doorway, and it gave him a mute invitation to enter, though he had not courage to accept it. He knocked faintly once or twice, and by and by was aware of a movement in the parlour. He turned towards the door and saw it open slowly, and Rachel looked out at him trembling from head to foot, with signs of tears in her face.

"Miss Blythe," he began, shakily, "I trust all ill-feelin' is at end between us. May an old friend exchange a word with you?"

"Pray come in," said Miss Blythe, in a frightened whisper; and he entered. "Will you take a seat?" she asked him.

"Rachel," he said, "I was to blame, but never as you thought. But I kept single for your sake, Rachel."

By what wonderful alchemy of nature the withered heart grew young again at that moment, Heaven knows, but it was out of a heart suddenly impassioned and warm with youth that she answered him,

"And I will keep single for yours."

CHAPTER XIV.

Ferdinand, in obedience to the call of the political situation, had absented himself from Heydon Hay for a week or two. The Liberals had put into the field a stronger man than he had expected to encounter, and there was a sudden awakening in the constitutional camp. He had to go the rounds and visit his bandsmen, and without being particularly alert himself to see that everybody else was on the *qui vive*. The constitutional candidate was perhaps as little interested in the coming strife as any man in the limits of the constituency, but he had allowed himself to be entered for the race, and was bound to a pretence of warmth even if he could not feel it. Ruth was not much in his mind whilst he was away, but when he came back again he found time once more hanging heavy on his hands, and being greeted by her when he went to listen to the quartette party precisely as he had been from the first, he determined, more than ever, to start a pronounced flirtation with the haughty little hussey and bring her to a proper sense of her position. So he went early to church afoot on Sunday morning, leaving his lordship to follow alone in his carriage, and he chatted affably with the members of the little crowd that lingered about the lych-gate and the porch, and there awaited Ruth's coming.

Fuller was rather impressed with the young man's civility as a general thing, being open to the territorial sentiment, and was proud to be singled out from the rest by the Earl of Barfield's visitor, and publicly talked to on terms of apparent equality. And Ruth, who accompanied her father, was on this particular morning not quite what she had been hitherto. When Ferdinand raised his hat and proffered her his hand, she blushed, and her eyes held a singular uncertainty he had never before remarked in them. He could even feel in the few brief seconds for which her hand lay in his own that it trembled slightly. Aha! She began to awake, then. The young Ferdinand plumed himself and spread himself for her vision. The old man, not unwilling that his neighbours should remark him in familiar intercourse with the great of the land, lingered at the porch, and for once Ruth did not desert his side and run into the church alone.

"Upon my word," said Ferdinand, "there is something in the air of Heydon Hay, Mr. Fuller, which would seem to be unusually favourable to the growth of feminine charms. May I congratulate Miss Ruth upon her aspect this morning?"

He meant the little thing no harm. He could compliment her in her father's presence as easily as out of it, and perhaps with a better conscience. Whensoever loosed from the string the arrow of compliment would find its mark. Besides, the very carelessness of his appreciation would help its force. He might be a little kinder and more confidential later on.

"Well, sir," said Fuller, with a chuckle, "her's bound to look her best just now."

"Father," said Ruth, with an amazingly sudden vivacity, "I want to speak to you. Excuse us, Mr. de Blacquaire."

Her face was of the colour of the rose from brow to chin, and her eyes were as shy as ever in spite of her vivacity. They met Ferdinand's smiling conquering glance for a moment and no more. He raised his hat and withdrew. He had shot his arrow and had hit the white. He could afford to retire contented for the moment, and he did so. But by and by that young Gold, who played first fiddle in the quartette, came up with his auburn mane, with his fiddle tucked under his arm, and stopped to talk with Ruth and Fuller. Ferdinand, exchanging a friendly word or two with a doubtful voter, watched with interest. She was blushing still, and still surveying the ground, and marking patterns on it with the toe of her pretty little boot—conscious of his glance, the puss, no doubt, and was posing a little for his admiration.

Ferdinand sat in the Barfield pew, and Ruth sat opposite. Why the philtre was working more and more! She was so conscious that she seemed scarcely able to raise her eyes, and when, as happened no less than three times, she met his glance, she looked down in the sweetest confusion. The victorious young gentleman was so absorbed in

his own reflections that he took but little note of the service, and suffered his attention to it to be for the most part mechanical. But on a sudden a certain quite indefinable sense of general interest touched him. Something was doing or was going to be done which was not altogether in the common.

"I publish banns of marriage," said Parson Hales, in those generous old port-wine tones of his, "between Reuben Gold, bachelor, and Ruth Fuller, spinster, both of this parish, and——"

Mr. Ferdinand de Blacquaire realised with a shocking suddenness and vividness that he was an ass and a puppy. He learned later on that he was not absolutely either, but he gets a twinge out of "I publish banns of marriage," even unto this day.

Sennacherib, who sat near Reuben in the music gallery, nudged him with his elbow.

"Knowest what's what," he whispered, to the younger man's prodigious scandal and discomfort. "Hast got the best wench i' the parish."

Reuben would willingly have chosen another time and place for the receipt of congratulations.

Both Rachel and Ezra were in church, and each looked seriously and sadly down, thinking of what might have been.

When service was over, the ringers met by previous arrangement, and startled Heydon Hay with a peal. Ezra was at Rachel's side when the flood of sound descended on them, and drowned his salutation. But they shook hands, and walked away side by side until they reached the front of Ezra's house, when Rachel turned to say good bye.

"I'll walk a little way if you'll permit it, Miss Blythe," said Ezra, and the old maid assenting, they walked on until the strenuous clang of the bells was softened into music. "They'll mek a handsome couple," said Ezra, breaking the silence.

"Upon acquaintance with the young man," said Rachel, "I discover many admirable qualities in him." The speech was prim still, and was likely to continue so, but it had lost something and had gained something. It would be hard to say what it had lost or gained, and yet the change was there, and Ezra marked it, and thought the voice tenderer and more womanly. Perhaps the flood-tide of youth which had swept over her heart at their reconciliation had not entirely ebbed away, and its inward music lent an echo to her speech. If it were there still it was that which lent some of its own liquid sweetness to her look. Not much perhaps, and yet a little, and discernible.

There were half a dozen homeward-going worshippers ahead of them, a hundred yards away, and a handful more a hundred yards behind, as Ezra's backened glance discerned. They were all moving in the same direction, and at pretty much the same pace. The air was very quiet, and the clear music of the bells made no hindrance to their talk.

"I'm thinkin', Miss Blythe," said Ezra, slowly, walking with his hands clasped behind him, and his downcast eyes just resting on her face and gliding away again, "I'm thinkin' as the spectacle of them two young lives being linked the one with the other gives a sort of a lonely seeming to the old age as you and me has got to look to."

"Perhaps so, Mr. Gold," said Rachel, stopping with dry brevity in her walk and holding out her hand. "I must hasten homewards. I wish you a good morning."

Ezra took her proffered hand in his, shook it gravely, and accepted his dismissal.

Not many newspapers came to Heydon Hay, and the few that found their way thither reached the regular subscribers a day or two after their news was stale to London readers. Ezra got his *Argus* regularly every Tuesday morning, and in fine weather would sit in the garden to read it. It happened that on the Tuesday after the first time of asking of the banns, he sat beneath a full-leaved distorted old cherry tree, gravely reading "Our Paris Correspondence," when his eye fell upon an item of news or fancy which startled him and then set him a thinking. All Paris, said our correspondent, was delightfully fluttered by the approaching marriage of the Marquis of B. and Madame de X. Madame de X. was a reigning beauty in the days of the Consul Plancus. It would be unfair to reveal her precise age even if one knew it. The Marquis of B. was turned seventy. The two had been lovers in their youth, and had been separated by a misunderstanding. The lady had married, but the gentleman for her sake had kept single. Monsieur X. had lived with his bride for but a year, and had then succumbed to an attack of phthisis. Now, after a separation of forty years, the two lovers had met again, the ancient misunderstanding had been romantically explained, and they had decided to spend the winter of their days together. Paris was charmed, Paris was touched by this picture of a lifelong devotion presented by the Marquis of B.

Ezra, rising from his seat, laid the paper upon it, and walked soberly about the garden. Then he took up the journal, surrounded the paragraph which related to the devotion of the Marquis of B. with heavy ink marks,

waited patiently until the lines dried, folded up the paper, put it in his pocket, and walked into the road. There he turned to the left, and went straight on to Miss Blythe's cottage. There in the garden was Miss Blythe herself, in a cottage bonnet and long gloves, busily hoeing with little pecks at a raised flower bed of the size of a tea-tray. She looked up when Ezra paused at the gate, nodded with brisk preciseness in answer to his salutation, and then went on industriously pecking at the flower bed.

"My weekly paper has just arrived, Miss Blythe," said Ezra. "It appears to contain an onusual amount of interestin' matter, and I thought I'd ask you in passing if you'd care to have a look at it."

"You are remarkably obliging, Mr. Gold," said Rachel. "I thank you extremely." She took the newspaper from his hand, and retired into the house with it. Ezra lingered, and she returned to resume her occupation.

"It is beautiful weather," said Ezra.

"It is beautiful weather indeed," said Rachel. Ezra lingered on, but rather hopelessly, for she would not so much as glance in his direction so far as he could see, but her features were entirely hidden by the cottage bonnet.

"I trust you will find a item or two as will be of interest," he said, after a lengthy pause. Rachel contented herself with an emphatic-seeming little nod at the flower bed. "Good day, Miss Blythe."

"Good day, Mr. Gold, and thank you very much for being so good as to think of me."

They did not encounter again until the following Sunday morning, when the banns between Ruth and Reuben were called a second time. The ringers were at work again when Ezra and Rachel met in the porch as the church-goers streamed slowly away, and the two shook hands mutely. They walked on side by side until Ezra's house was reached, and neither spoke until then. Pausing before the door, Miss Blythe put out her hand.

"If I might be allowed to go a little further, Miss Blythe," said Ezra, gently. Rachel withdrew her hand and said nothing. So once more they walked, apart from other home-going worshippers, down the lane that led to Rachel's cottage.

"Did you," began Ezra, pausing to cough behind his hand, "did you tek a look at the paper, Miss Blythe?" He received a nod for sole answer, unless the pinching of the lips and an unconsciously affected maiden drooping of the eyelids might be supposed to add to it. "Did you happen to read a particular item," said Ezra, pausing to cough behind his hand again—"a item in the letter from Paris?"

"Really, Mr. Gold," said Rachel, marching on with exceeding stateliness, and looking straight before her, "at our ages that piece of news would offer a very frivolous theme for conversation."

"Might we not talk of it without being frivolous, Miss Blythe?" asked Ezra.

"Decidedly not, in my opinion," Miss Blythe responded.

"To talk of love," pursued Ezra, glancing at her now and then, "in the sense young people use the word, between persons of the ages of that lady and gentleman, ud be frivolous indeed. But I persoom, Miss Blythe, they did not talk so."

"I should think not indeed," said Rachel, with decision. "I should hope not."

"But to talk of love as love is betwixt the elderly—to talk of companionship—to talk of shelterin' one another again the loneliness of late old age—to talk of each one tekin' up the little remnant of life as was left to 'em and putting it i' the other's hands for kindly keepin'! Should you think as that was ridiculous, Rachel?"

"I should think," said Rachel, "that old fools are the greatest fools of all." Ezra sighed. "I do not know," she said at this, "that the poor marquis is so much to blame, but the lady should have known better than listen to his folly."

"I had thought," said Ezra patiently, "you would ha' took a different view of it, Rachel." They went on to the gate without another word. "Good morning, Rachel," Ezra said there. "Don't be afraid of me. I will not come back again to this subject. I had hoped you would not ha' looked on it with such mislikin', but sence you do, I will say no more about it."

So they parted, and met again and were good friends, and not infrequent companions, and Ezra said no more.

The eve of Reuben's great day came round, and Reuben was dismissed from his sweetheart's presence to wander where he would, for Ruth and her assistants (amongst whom was none more important than Aunt Rachel) had a prodigious deal to do. The lovers were to leave directly after their marriage for no less a place than London, and there were dresses to be tried on and finished and packed, and altogether the time was trying. In his wanderings about the fields Reuben encountered the younger Sennacherib, whom he strove vainly to avoid, not because he disliked him, but because his own thoughts kept him in better company just then than

the younger Sennacherib was likely to provide in his own person. But Snac was not a man to be lightly shaken off, and Reuben bent himself to listen to him as best he might.

"So," said young Sennacherib, "thee beest goin' to enter into the bounds of 'oly mattery-mony?" Reuben laughed and nodded an affirmative. "Well, theest done a very pretty thing for me amongst you."

"For you?" said Reuben. "How?"

"Why this way," said Snac, bending his knees to make the tight embraces of his cords endurable. "Thee wast by when my feyther gi'en me the farewell shillin'. Very well. I'd got nothin' i' the world, and he knowed it. After a bit he begun to relent a bit, though nobody'd iver have expected sich a thing. But so it was. He took to sendin' me a sov a week, onbeknownst to anybody, and most of all to mother. Well, mother sends me a sov a week from the beginnin', onbeknownst to anybody, and most of all to him. Her'd ha' gone in fear of her life if her'd ha' guessed he knowed it. And now my income's cut down to half, and all because of this here weddin' o' thine."

"I don't see how," said Reuben.

"Why thus," said Snac with a somewhat rueful grin. "This here Rachel Blythe as has come back to the parish has come to a reconciling with your uncle, as was a bygone flame of hern; and her tells my mother as it's thee and thy bride as browt that to pass."

"True enough," Reuben allowed; "but still I don't see—"

"An' niver will see," said Snac, "till thee lettest me tell thee. Her comes to my feyther's house, this Miss Blythe, an' tells mother what a beautiful thing this reconcilin' is, and they fall to weepin' and cryin' to my feyther both together, an' all on a sudden, t' everybody's mightiest astonishing, what's he do but say, 'Theer, I forgi'en him. Hold your jaw, the pair on you!' Well now, see what a pitch I'm let to fall on. Feyther durn't tell mother for his life as he helped me; her durn't tell him as her helped me. So they mek up their minds to gi'e me a pound a week betwigst the two on 'em, and that's how it comes about with these here cussed reconcilings, as I'm done out o' fifty per cent. o' my income. Look here, Mr. Gold, don't you goo about reconcilin' no more o' my relations."

"Why, Snac," cried Reuben, "it's none of my doing."

"Well," Snac allowed, "it'd be hard upon a man to mek him answerable for all the doin's of his wife's mother's second cousin. But if it had been a man as had ha' done it, I'd ha' had a try to punch his head for him. I should ha' took a trial trip at you yourself, Mr. Gold, for all so big and all so handy as you be."

"Well, Snac," said Reuben, "it will be all the better for you in the end, and I hope it may mend sooner. But if the fact of my meaning to get married has done so much good as you say it has, I'm very glad to know it, and I'll take it as a happy sign."

It seemed an augury of happiness as he walked alone about the fields, and dwelt upon it. It seemed a fitting thing that love should spread peace abroad, and that peace should multiply itself.

On the morrow the ringers rang, and being inspired by plenitude of beer and rich gratuity, and hearty goodwill into the bargain, they rang till sundown. And when the wedding was over, and the bride and bridegroom had driven away with cheers and blessings in their train, the wedding guests sat in the garden with the sylvan statues standing solemnly about, and the bells making joyful music. Everybody was very sober and serious when the excitement of cheering away the wedded pair was over, and in a while the guests began to go. Ezra and Rachel lingered among the latest, and Rachel's going was the signal for Ezra to say his good-byes and follow. She made no objection to his society, and they walked on without speaking. The declining sun shone full in their faces, and cast their shadows far behind. Except for themselves the lane was lonely.

"Did you see in last week's copy of the *Argus*," said Rachel suddenly, and with great dryness, "that the Marquis of B. and the lady are united?"

"I noted it," said Ezra. "Do you think so badly of them as you did?"

Rachel said nothing.

"Do you think as badly of them as you did?" he asked again, and still Rachel said nothing. The lane was lonely. He laid a hand upon the shoulder nearest him, and asked the question for a third time. Still she said not a word, but bent her head, perhaps to avoid the level sunlight. "Shall we garner up the years that are left for us together, dear?"

She gave no answer still, but he seemed to understand. They walked on side by side towards the sunset, and the joy-bells, half sad with distance, sounded in their ears.

D. CHRISTIE MURRAY.

THE END.

THE MEET.
From a Drawing by RANDOLPH CALDECOTT.

FOX-HUNTING: BY A MAN IN A ROUND HAT.

WHAT can a round hat have to say about fox-hunting? asks the top-hat. Well, he has not much to say to you, Mr. Top-hat: you know all about it; but there are plenty of people in "wide-awakes"—I mean the sort of folk that wear, or would wear, soft felt wide-awakes when in the country—who don't know anything about it, and to these I address myself.

Now the sporting artists who draw for you in the illustrated papers are accustomed to represent for your benefit sportsmen only who are arrayed in tip-top hunting costume, and many of you must feel that a man in a round hat and butcher-boots is as out of place at a hunt as a man in a tweed suit at a ball. These sporting draughtsmen visit the fashionable hunting countries only, or stop at home and imagine the doings in such countries. It may be opposed to their experience; but, if you will believe me, I have seen a great man—the correspondent of an important "country gentleman's newspaper"—at a big advertised hunt attired in a round hat—and that a drab one—and a check jacket. This will strike many persons as something dreadful; but I am of opinion that it should be known, and that other secrets of the public hunting-field should be proclaimed to the ignorant and the deceived.

To begin with—keen and zealous sportsman though I am—I will admit that we must make the best of fox-hunting while we may, for there are very wise men who say that the sport is doomed. How long it will be before its knell is sounded—its "Who-whoop"—nobody can exactly tell: but if much is done in the way of small farms and peasant proprietorship the number of packs of hounds will lessen quicker than was thought probable but a year or two ago. Many signs of increasingly powerful hostility to the much-honoured sport have been forced upon our attention of late years. Riding over tender crops by ignorant or reckless people was always a grievance; but it is not now so patiently borne as was formerly the case: and lately farmers have been objecting to having their fences broken down by beasts that cannot be called hunters bestraddled by men lacking a courage which the farmers respect and wanting in the means necessary to keep up an establishment that "does good to the neighbourhood." Everybody will excuse a poor farmer for remonstrating—even if loudly—against the destruction of his crops; but his complaints about a few broken twigs do not seem to impress all of us as so reasonable. The potterers, the shufflers, and the gap-riders think him cross-grained and short of sympathy for manly sport. I fear, however, that they will have to give in to him, and either abandon the pursuit of the wily fox altogether or take to first class hunters and red coats (I am crediting all men already so furnished as not belonging to the potterers, the shufflers, and the gap-riders), for I believe the possessors of those articles will be favoured and allowed immunity for their more occasional offences longer than the wearers of butcher-boots and tweed-jackets. The round-hats may be called amateurs, for certainly they are so considered by the cold eye of the non-riding farmer and the wrink-

ling nose of the man with a stud of horses. Yet I am pretty sure that the heart of a true sportsman often beats beneath the felt tile of the youth of small means and above the single spur of the little butcher who turns out on the morrow of market-day, and most masters of foxhounds know this, and are polite and cheery to such followers. The hunting, however, is kept up by the "professional" sportsmen—they find most of the money, either, as in the case of the lordliest and the wealthiest, by keeping hounds themselves, or by subscribing largely as responsible members of a hunt. And of course the red-coats, the white leather breeches, the carnation tops of the boots, and the thorough-bred horses are the very brightness and life of the chase as a spectacle—although they do not form quite so harmonious and perfect a picture as the "many-coloured pack," which are enough in themselves to satisfy the painter's eye.

Truly it is a beautiful sight to see hounds bounding and jumping over a bit of wild land covered with brown heather and dead ferns. And this reminds me that it is better—as I have hinted—to make the best of it by revelling in the aspect and emotions of fox-hunting as it now affects us than to indulge in glooming forebodings of evil days or than to try to reconcile the social, political, and sporting sides of the question. Let us leave these things to be discussed in the *Field* and elsewhere, and let us contemplate a scene which appears on the following page, and is entitled "at the Covert side."

Two men, beautifully dressed in full and correct hunting costume, are lolling on horseback near a large covert after a check, and are chatting lazily about things in general, when sounds denoting a renewal of the chase come from the wood, and one of them exclaims in a tone of annoyance, "I do believe they've found that nasty beast again!" What is this man out for? you ask. Why do people go out hunting if not to see the hounds work and catch foxes? If the day be fine, the country pretty, the field (meaning the company) cheery, and one's horse pleasant to ride, these are reasons for turning out. But suppose the meet to be far away, the morning cold and foggy or rainy, and one's horse difficult in some of the many ways possible to the animal, then why does one go out? Because it is the only business of their lives in winter for many; because it is more like play than work to some; and, in the case of others, because a few hardships voluntarily borne are as nought compared with the exhilaration of spirits produced, the certainty of a good appetite for dinner, and the pleasing knowledge that the domestic atmosphere

SOME ROUND-HATS.
From a Drawing by RANDOLPH CALDECOTT.

AT THE COVERT SIDE.
From a Drawing by RANDOLPH CALDECOTT.

will be more buoyant than if they had stayed at home all day. Some turn out to sell their horses, and some to show their clothes; but nobody goes out because he believes his help is wanted in destroying a thieving little beast of unpleasant odour. Yet I have heard this put forward as an argument in favour of fox-hunting. The poet Somerville sings sweetly of the farmer and his wife rewarding the huntsmen with amber-coloured ale for slaying their mortal foe (I will refrain from ornamenting these notes with a quotation of the lines referred to, although it would give much elegance and an air of high style to the page). This is a poetical way of treating the subject. The jolly farmer still brings out his ale—I wish it were oftener the good home-brewed of yore—but it is for hospitality's sake. He knows that the whole business and promenade of fox-hunting are an artificial arrangement to suit the wealthy and the idle. He is able to kill the foxes himself if he feels really aggrieved. If he lets them live it is because he is "one of the right sort," or because he has very solemn reasons for believing it to be to his interest not to be branded as a vulpecide. But I am again wandering from my duty instead of attending to the show.

One of the prettiest and liveliest sights that can be seen out of doors in England in these degenerate days is a pack of hounds getting on to the line of their fox. How they enjoy the odour! The illustration which I call "*Gone Away!*" represents the hounds leaving a patch of gorse and hurrying forward on a breast-high scent—the huntsman with an eye on the hounds is putting his old horse at the bank, apparently, but only apparently—regardless of the safety of his pack. Part of the field come pushing along behind. Such a picture—but a better and a living one—may be seen thirty or forty miles

GONE AWAY!
From a Drawing by RANDOLPH CALDECOTT.

ON THE SURREY COMMONS.
From a Drawing by RANDOLPH CALDECOTT.

from London, in hunting countries despised by the gay and dashing gentlemen who attend the meets of the fashionable hunts.

To the scarce, but quite possibly entitled to respect, reader, who has never been on a horse when "Gone Away! Forrard! Forrard! Forrard Away!" and such like sounds rend the air, I may mention that the situation has a rare excitement. All is movement; and if the hounds have gone away at a rattling pace it is necessary for the sportsman to push along without any hesitation or he will find that in a minute he has not only lost the hounds but all the horsemen as well, except, as an Irishman might say, the two boys who have just dismounted to shove their donkey through a hedge. There are some people, however, as I have shown above, who turn up at the covert side, but who are not anxious for the fox to break covert. Besides stopping conversation it is the signal for preparing to ride, and everybody is not out to ride a run or take jumps. It may be that at such a moment a timid or prudent sportsman suddenly finds that the narrow lane which he has selected for himself is a channel down which pours the whole hunt, vociferating, "Get on, get on in front!" In this event he had better "get on in front," until the nature of the fences that bound the lane allows the more adventurous of the galloping crowd to pop into the fields alongside. When waiting out in the open field at the time of breaking covert, participation in the exciting rush may be avoided by suddenly dismounting and becoming busily engaged in tightening the girths of the saddle or in vain efforts to keep the horse still enough to allow that operation to be performed. This procedure is believed by some to impose upon the on-looking carriage folks by appearing to be a sufficient excuse for not dashing boldly at the stiffly-fenced country that stretches away so invitingly to the horizon.

PULLING DOWN A RAIL.
From a Drawing by RANDOLPH CALDECOTT.

The illustration called *On the Surrey Commons* exhibits a "whip" (properly called a whipper-in) and a few others getting over one of the usual low banks. They are often rotten and have ditches obscured by heather and ferns. Horses not used to these obstacles are liable to despise them and to fall over them. I have seen a horse carrying a lady send his knees well into a bank and alight on his back on the other side, and I have seen a

AT A GATE.
From a Drawing by RANDOLPH CALDECOTT.

whip get a severe fall at a bank scarcely higher than a dandelion. In rough countries a big first-class horse is not required, and is not so safe as a little clever one. And it is a great comfort as one grows in years and weight to be able to climb back easily to the saddle after dismounting to pull down a rail —like the gentleman in one of my illustrations—or to open an obstinate gate. A pony that can creep, and scramble, and push through thin places in growing hedges frequently shows much sport to his owner. He is not usually in the same field as the hounds when they are crossing an inclosed country; but in woods he is as well off as anybody, and on open commons and downs he always feels part of the hunt.

When the fox has gone away and the

AMONG THE TURNIPS.
From a Drawing by RANDOLPH CALDECOTT.

FOX-HUNTING.
From a Drawing by RANDOLPH CALDECOTT.

hounds have settled on to his line, then the riding begins. Straight away go some at the nearest fence, others make for the gate in the corner of the field; and here the sportsman must beware of kicking horses and of being jammed against the gate-post. I give a little sketch of a small crowd at a gate. If the gate will not stay open but insists on swinging back heavily I would advise only strong men with their horses well in hand to struggle for the pleasure of showing the customary politeness to ladies. Crowded gateways are dangerous and are to be avoided, and much valuable time may be lost at them. experiences but alighted right between the handles (or rather "stilts," is it not?) of a plough on one occasion, and on another jumped on to the back of the hunted fox and killed it—this last feat not being considered quite as meritorious as at first sight some might deem it to be. In addition to these already described delights there is the chance of dropping into a pond or a sand-hole, which sometimes happens to short-sighted men. But all casualties of this nature may be avoided if the sportsman will restrain himself from doing the admired thing, "taking his own line." By riding exactly behind some

"DON'T RIDE OVER THE SNOWDROPS."
From a Drawing by RANDOLPH CALDECOTT.

But sometimes the boundaries of a field are so formidable that it is very risky for even the best mounted riders to try to get out by any other way, and apparently easy fences are not always cleared without danger. I have known people land on a heap of turnips which have been shot down under the hedge on the far side, and find that they afford a very insecure footing to a horse (I give a sketch of a gentleman so engaged, but it is not drawn from nature), and there are many instances on record of men jumping into a pair of harrows and their horses having to be sawn out. I could tell you of a bold rider who in one season not only had these two

prudent heavy-weight, and being careful not to go at the fences until his hat and shoulders can be seen steadily careering across the next field there will be little risk of damage to either rider. To allow your horse to go at a fence when the last of the leader seen was a view of coat-flaps turning over his back above a broad flash of white leather is nothing less than an attempt at manslaughter. From such a thought I will gladly turn.

In some of the wilder parts of old England the fox-hunter is led into many pretty places that but for the chase he would know nothing of, and into which he would not be allowed to enter. At other times he would feel like

THROWN OUT.
From a Drawing by RANDOLPH CALDECOTT.

which the chase leads. These are surely the "brutal fox-hunters" of whom one reads, and they should be contrasted with that M.F.H. (by the way, he has since held the post of Master of the Horse,) who, when his hounds were passing through a beautiful park in early spring, held up his hand to the field and called out, "Gentlemen, pray don't ride over the snowdrops!" I give a drawing of the scene—it was in a park where those welcome little flowers grow in wild profusion under the naked beech trees.

a trespasser and might be treated as such. "Who would think of coming out here for a mere walk?" asks in a satisfied and gushing manner one of Leech's sportsmen as he splashes down a muddy farm lane. There may be dull, heavy fellows who are not affected by the charms of the scenery through

There are plenty of men who turn out with the hope of getting a fast gallop with plenty of jumping; but these are not fox-hunters proper, they are dashing horsemen, and a "drag" would do well enough for them. Others take a morning jog in order to see hounds work, which is not easy to

A SMALL FARMER.
From a Drawing by RANDOLPH CALDECOTT.

do in some countries, owing to the nature of the coverts, the marshalling of the Master, and the quickness and silence of the pack. Here I may remark that it is very seldom necessary for the sportsman to encourage the hounds by such cries as "Yoicks," "Loo in," &c. It is the business of the professional huntsman and his whippers-in to speak to the hounds, and the amateur may get himself into trouble, even if he should happen to possess a very melodious and tuneful voice well adapted to making the woods ring. There are times when a little cracking of the whip may be indulged in; but this should not be carried to excess, indeed it is better to keep it entirely for the late afternoons of blank days—a blank day being one on which no foxes are found. It is expected, however, that any sportsman, on foot or in the saddle, who shall be lucky enough to view the fox when the hounds are at fault or a great distance behind, will immediately sing out "Tally-ho!" with all his might. He may enunciate each syllable with great precision if he likes, and if he can do so without enfeebling the vibrations of the welkin. But a frantic yell of any kind generally appears to answer the purpose and to be preferred by most men. The warning cries of "War'-wheat" and "War'-hole" must be more distinctly uttered if they are to be of any use, and the riders for whose benefit they are given will do well carefully to regard them.

It is quite possible for experienced fox-hunters to lose the hounds during a run—to be "*thrown out*," as it is called, like our friend in the illustration—and to survey a vast tract of hill, dale, and wood without seeing a sign of the pack or the field. This is an evil or a gain according to the humour of the individual. He may have had enough of sport for the day, he may be far from home, and be yearning for a cigar. In such case there is great pleasure on a fine day in leaving off early and riding quietly and contemplatively homewards, an object of interest to the loafers round the doors of the village ale-houses, and of envy to the clerks in the shops and offices of the little towns he may pass through. On the way he may be called upon by some inquirer to say if he has killed the fox, or he may fall in with some dejected-looking "small farmer" like the one I have drawn standing in the lane and have some deliberate conversation on agricultural prospects or "hear tell" of that pack of fox-hounds in Yorkshire which report said was kept out of the poor-rates. This story of course he could not believe; but it might cause him not to forget to send his overdue cheque to the Hunt or the Poultry Fund.

R. CALDECOTT.

ON BEAUX.

(HISTORICALLY CONSIDERED.)

IN an age of memoirs of interesting people whom authors have met, the beaux have been hardly dealt with. They have indeed suffered their full at the hands of the gentlemen who have attempted their lives. They have many of them been studied to death. Their good things have been retailed as if repetition added a zest to a good thing's flavour; their characters have been drawn at all sorts of lengths; their wardrobes have been catalogued till we sicken of catalogues; and things have got to such a pitch, that the mere mention of D'Orsay causes a shudder, and Brummell who bored nobody in life, now that he is dead bores every one through his biographers.

The supposition is forced upon us that these evil effects are the results of mismanagement. The beau, perhaps, as a subject, has not been properly handled. A certain flippancy of sentiment, a certain lightness of style has possessed the writers who have taken the matter in hand. They seem not to have known that they were treading on delicate ground, and they have too often made a deep subject shallow by their treatment of it. Instead of rising to the height of their great argument, they have too often written of beaux as many profaners have discoursed on cooking—as if the art on which the destiny of nations has been shown to depend, was a mere affair of pots and pans, and adroit management of melted butter—they have, in a word, committed one of those immense blunders which are so easy of commission, and in their treatment of an imaginative subject have lost sight of the imaginative side of it.

The truth is that the beau who has suffered so from his biographers, awaits his evolutionist. He requires to be dealt with soberly, and in the reverent spirit of modern scientific research; he has yet to be taken into account in the great estimate of the forces of civilisation; he has yet to be traced from his first appearance in the social struggle to his final development in it, and his influence upon the other forces at work has to be gauged by comparison. The scientific historian will no doubt in time trace the unbroken line in long succession; he will show how, in the history of nations, beau has handed on the torch to beau; he will treat the threadbare subject of Brummell's necktie, for instance, no longer as a peg to hang a pleasantry upon, but as the final issue of a long series of anterior struggles; and will reveal by a new application of the origin of species, the chords of sympathetic life which connect Agag, who walked delicately, with Alvanley, who all the year round ate apricot tarts.

Deductions such as these are, however, beyond the limits of a magazine article. Such labours, moreover, are for the historian. In a superficial view of so vast a question I can but point out what seem to me the most prominent landmarks in the country to be traversed. I propose briefly then to trace the main line of the beaux from the time when they emerge from the twilight of fable to a period within the memory of men still living. It will be something if I can show a regular descent however painful. To trace the inferior lines, to show the influence of the race, as a whole, upon society, would

be to travel beyond my province and my space.

A beau, to begin with a definition properly understood, is, as I understand him, a man who has become the companion of princes and lawgivers, by the sole attraction of personal appearance and fascinating manners. But this must not be held to put kings themselves out of court. For many of the most celebrated beaux in history have been kings. Indeed when the beau first rises into consideration from the background of historic obscurity, some have held that he rises in the person of Tiglath-Pileser. This in special is the view of Winer (*Biblisches Real-Lexicon*, i. 25). At so uncertain a period, however, it is natural that opinions should waver; but if the evidence which points to the second known King of Assyria as having been a beau is deemed to rest on insufficient authority, the same objection cannot be urged against the claim of the latest of his successors. Whether limned by poets or historians, the figure of Sardanapalus stands before us through the mist of centuries as the royal beau personified. In his love of ease and horses, and fine clothes, and the ballet, in his abhorrence of routine and business and all grave pursuits whatsoever, he shines with a peculiar brilliance; and many imitators who have arisen in later ages compared with their almost pre-historic model glimmer indeed with but a reflected light.

The lapse of centuries now occurs without bringing to light any beau sufficiently conspicuous for mention, but Athenæus introduces us at about 600 B.C. into the society of one who with every qualification for the *rôle* seems unaccountably to have escaped the notice of historians. Smindyrides of Sybaris, prized, we are told, most highly those arts which contribute to the enjoyment of life, such as sleeping, eating, drinking, and dressing the hair. He was a man of no ambition, except with regard to the set of his clothes; he brought in an edict to prevent anybody keeping cocks, on the ground that they interfered with his slumbers; and when he went to Sicyon to sue for Cleisthenes' daughter, he was accompanied on his journey by a thousand cooks.

The memory of so bright an example as this, in some form or another was destined to endure; and if the name of Smindyrides sank into temporary oblivion after his decease, his example may at least be supposed to have fanned the rising ambition of a follower greater even than himself. About two hundred years after the death of the great Sybarite, the young Alcibiades became a known figure in the brilliant society of Athens. In him the beau reached a still further stage of development. Descended on both sides from the most illustrious families of his country, born to the inheritance of great wealth, endowed with extraordinary beauty of person, and passionately fond of show and splendour, his career was mapped out clearly before him, and he followed it with an assiduity that is well known. His brilliancy was indeed of so overpowering a kind that the many imitators who followed in his wake are completely swallowed up by its radiance, and hardly another name occurs prominently in the lapse of the four centuries which intervene between his death at Bithynia in 404 B.C. and the birth of Petronius Arbiter in the Rome of the Empire.

It would not perhaps be too high praise for Petronius to say that he was a Roman Alcibiades without a military genius. This defect perhaps but heightened the peculiar character of his excellence. His ambition was of another sort. Having given a lifetime to the study of luxurious ease, his taste and his ingenuity made him the oracle of Roman fashion. He taught the Emperor Nero how to dine. He superintended the building of the house of gold. His fertile fancy was, however, supplemented by a poignant wit, and a literary facility which proved his ruin. Not contented with supping with an emperor, he went so far as to sketch the emperor at supper. This daring cost him his life. He remained in character to the last. He set his house in order, gave instructions to reward some slaves and punish others, wrote out his will, and composed a stinging satire on the emperor's foul excesses, sealed it, and sent it to him, and then opened a vein in his arm.

History offers no richer example of the classical beau than this, though Antinous fulfilled the conditions of rising into the companionship of an emperor by the sole attraction of personal appearance, and Heliogabalus, though he was an emperor himself, preferred the better part and disported as a beau. The twentieth Emperor of Rome, indeed, as a beau, aimed high. A faithful picture placed by his immediate orders over the altar of Victory in the Senate House, conveyed to the Romans the just but unworthy resemblance of his person and manners. He was drawn, we are told, in his sacerdotal robes of silk and gold, after the loose flowing fashion of the Medes and Phœnicians, his head was covered with a lofty tiara, his numerous collars and bracelets were adorned with gems of inestimable value. His eye-

brows were tinged with black, and his cheeks painted with an artificial red and white.

In his *Confessions of an Opium-eater* De Quincey tells us of the strange effect produced on his over-stimulated imagination by the study of Livy. After rising from a reading of the "pictured page," the majesty of ancient Rome oppressed him almost physically, and he has brought a sense of it to his readers as no other historian has done. At the sound of the portentous words *Populus Romanus*, he tells us, Consular Rome herself became present to his imagination, he saw the dire array of the Lictors with their fasces, he heard the stern tramp of the legions, and the shouting of the great crowd that lined the Sacred Way. A feeling akin to this possesses us as we turn over the lives of the beaux of the Empire. When we read of Petronius's dinner parties, of Antinous's hair, and of the general conduct of Heliogabalus's *ménage*, we too, in a kindred measure, feel oppressed. We feel how greatly both the virtues and the vices of the old world surpass our meagre imaginations. We feel that we have touched the height of our argument—that beaux could go no further than they went under the Empire, and that from this point in their history a gradual declension must be inevitable.

History in this case supports our fears. In spite of brilliant exceptions we search the record in vain for the equals of the Cæsarean exquisites. In the dark ages which immediately succeeded the overthrow of the Roman Empire, the beau was obscured with other relics of civilisation in the general darkness and ignorance that prevailed. And when the deluge of barbarism had receded and left Italy once more free, happy, and prosperous, the worship of the arts which grew from that prosperity gave too earnest an impulse to life for the beau to properly take root and flourish. Lorenzo the Magnificent, it is true, possessed many characteristics of the kingly beau, obscured by a too ardent and sincere love for music, painting, and the collection of rare manuscripts; but while he, for want of a better instance, may be allowed to have carried on the connection of beaux in the direct Italian line, a more signal example of the Cult had already risen and flourished in England.

Piers Gaveston was indeed as fine an example of the mediæval beau as can be found. The son of a Gascon knight of some distinction who had honourably served Edward I., he was admitted, for his father's sake, into the establishment of the Prince of Wales. In this congenial soil the young Gascon took root; and when his master became king, he became favourite. His qualifications for this post are stated with the utmost precision by the chroniclers, and their accounts show Gaveston to have been as purely bred a beau as ever breathed. He indeed fulfilled all the requirements of the *rôle* in a remarkable degree. He was utterly without education; was endowed with the utmost elegance of shape and person, had all the genius of a modern stage-manager for getting up court masques; and rode excellently on horseback. It is not surprising after this, that he should have almost succeeded in embroiling England in a civil war, or that, failing to do this, his brilliant career should have been prematurely cut short by the violence of jealous faction. Piers Gaveston, after having been besieged in Scarborough Castle, and forced to surrender, was summarily executed at Warwick, on the 19th of June, 1312. His influence, however, survived the malice of his enemies, and through his bright example the main stock of the beaux took root in England, and bore fruit there for a long succession of years. Curiously enough, however, the sister-country was the nursery of his first successor. James Crichton was born in Scotland, in 1561; and at the age of fourteen took his degree of Master of Arts. The first swordsman, the first dancer, as well as the first scholar of his age, he also was the possessor of the most handsome face and of the most elegant figure. With these advantages the young Scot worked marvels. His love adventures have been chronicled by Ainsworth; his achievements as a scholar have been placed on a firm basis of historic truth by the industry and research of Mr. Patrick Fraser Tytler, and by the united industry of these two biographers we are enabled to admire and marvel at the various adventures of the most wonderful figure of his age. We see him now love-making in the king's palace; now challenging all scholars, philosophers, and divines to a disputation, to be carried on in any twelve specified languages, in any science, liberal art, discipline, or faculty, at the college of Navarre; and on the very next day appearing at a tilting match in the Louvre, and carrying off the ring from all his accomplished and experienced rivals. We follow him subsequently in his journey through Italy from Rome, where he repeated his literary challenge in the presence of pope and cardinals; to Venice, where he became dependent on the bounty of the celebrated Aldus Manutius, the printer, and thence to Padua, where he overthrew the heads of the learned University of that town, and having

outwitted them in Latin poetry, scholastic disputation, and an exposition of the errors of Aristotle and his commentators, playfully wound up the day's labour by a declamation on the bliss of ignorance. From Padua the Admirable Crichton made for Mantua, and in this city he resided, beloved of the ladies, and acting as tutor to the duke's son up to the time of his lamentable death. This took place under circumstances peculiarly tragic. Returning home one night from a visit to his mistress, and playing and singing as he was wont to do when he walked, Crichton was suddenly attacked by several armed men in masks. One of these, with characteristic facility, he disarmed and seized; the rest took to flight. On unmasking his captive, he naturally enough discovered the features of his patron. Crichton instantly dropped upon one knee, and presented his sword to his master, who, inflamed by rage, and it is supposed by jealousy, without more ado ran him through the body.

This was in 1583. Nine years later the heroic Crichton's worthy successor was born at Brookesley in Leicestershire, a seat which had been in the possession of his ancestors for nearly four centuries. When young George Villiers in the flush of his youthful beauty came upon the town, James I. had begun to weary of the personality of Robert Carr. The Earl of Somerset had promised well as a beau till he had fallen under the fascination of the beautiful Countess of Essex. After this period, however, he had aspired to the more significant *rôle* of poisoner, and the gloom of his new profession had shadowed his former brilliant life. He fell as rapidly in his patron's favour as George Villiers rose. The sudden rise indeed of the Leicestershire youth from nothing to the highest dignities is sensational even in a history of sensation, and stamps him beyond all question as a jewel of the first class. Directly the great patron of beaux saw him, he made him his cup-bearer and called him Steenie. Promotion followed this first outburst of royal favour with a rapidity quite royal. Dignities could not be heaped too thickly upon the man who had the finest hair, eyes, and figure in the kingdom, and whose education had been distinguished by a total lack of proficiency in literature. Villiers was made successively Knight and Gentleman of the Bedchamber with a pension of a thousand a year, Master of the Horse, Knight of the Order of the Garter, and in the next January was advanced to the Earldom of Buckingham. He was then made Lord High Admiral of England, Chief Justice in Eyre of all the Parks and Forests on south of Trent, Master of the King's Bench Office, High Steward of Westminster, and Constable of Windsor Castle.

It would be beside the mark to follow this ducal specimen of a beau through all the brilliant incidents of his picturesque life; to describe his secret visit to Spain with Prince Charles, afterwards Charles I.; his new method of negotiating a treaty with a country by making love to its queen; to catalogue the number of his conquests in love and his defeats in war, to count the number of pearls he carried on his doublet—for are not these things chronicled in the adventures of the *Three Musketeers?* Have they not been written by the great Dumas? It is sufficient to say that when the dagger of Fenton cut short the first Duke of Buckingham's dazzling career, that nobleman had reached the highest summit of ambition to which the beau, as beau, has attained in England, and had amassed the largest fortune from public sources accumulated under the Stuarts. The thirty thousand pounds of those days would be equal to £90,000 now, and George Villiers through his life, as became a beau, had been no saver.

For a long while the blank occasioned by his death was not filled up. The Commonwealth was soon afterwards in the ascendant; and under the Commonwealth there were no beaux—they were all in hiding. When the Restoration took place things gravitated suddenly to an opposite extreme. Everybody was a beau, or tried to be one. It is difficult with so many Richmonds in the field to select the lineal descendant of the great duke; to choose the beau from among so many most worthy to succeed to his sceptre. A nobility which comprised a second Buckingham, a Halifax, a Roscommon, a Rochester, and a Cavendish, showed that, in 1660, there was wit if there was not wisdom among our hereditary legislators. But a wit is one thing and a beau is another; and it is not among this list of brilliants, however sparkling, that we discover the real pearl. On the contrary, Sir Charles Sedley strikes us as the beau of this period. Singling him out from amongst a host of favourites, his gracious monarch described his qualifications for the *rôle* in set and royal terms. With a certain regal exaggeration (which may be pardoned a king in his description of a courtier who strangely enough never asked him for anything), he described his new *protégé* as a man furnished by nature for the conversation of princes, and adapted even from his

cradle to be great and admired. The *protégé* followed the king's prescription. He wrote songs, many of them charming, comedies, all of them bad; but above all he lived—and he lived the radiant centre of a life which was pre-eminently coloured and courtly.

His death took place at the age of ninety, and consequently not till he had carried his sovereignty of the beaux well into the reign of Queen Anne. From this point the history of his race has been treated by great and acknowledged authorities. The author of the *English Humorists* has shown how the great Congreve, with all the blushing honours of *The Way of the World* thick upon him, was glad to sink the fame of the dramatist to appear in the eyes of a distinguished foreigner simply as a fine gentleman. This striking instance of literary abnegation marks him as an aspirant for Sir Charles Sedley's empire, and indeed appoints him to his place; and from Congreve a host of names, known but not famous, carry on the unbroken succession, till the crown of the beaux was placed by universal consent on the pale brow of Brummell. Here we must pause, for we have entered the well-tilled garden of the memoir writers. We have, however, accomplished the purpose with which we set out. We have traced the main line of the beaux, from the dawn of their history to the period immediately preceding their eclipse. For the beaux are gone from us, as Thackeray has announced; gone—for want of the social conditions under which alone it was possible for them to thrive: the obsequiousness of parasites, the blind obedience of children, the humility of chaplains, the grovelling of tradesmen, hat in hand, as the gentleman passed, the abasement of authors waiting for hours in ante-rooms with fulsome dedications! Yes, the beaux are gone—though the last of them, like the last of the Mohicans, made a gallant stand, and lit up the last hours of their life with a pale glory which reflected, however faintly, some shadow of their former state. Many of these last representatives, who have escaped the fate of the Brummell and the D'Orsay—who have not been over-written — are worthy of a passing note. Amongst them Montrond, the author of *C'est possible, Monsieur, mais je n'aime pas qu'on me le dise* in answer to the charge *Vous trichez!* and of innumerable other mots which the sympathetic Talleyrand appropriated; the *preux chevalier*, too, of Byron's song

> "Whom France and Fortune chiefly deigned to waft here,
> Whose chiefly harmless talent was to amuse;
> But the clubs found it rather serious laughter
> Because, such was his magic power to please,
> The cards seemed charmed too by his repartees."

Then Colonel Kelly of the 1st Foot Guards, the Sovereign of Boots, who perished in a conflagration at the Custom House in an attempt to save his favourite pair, and the news of whose sad death was received by his sorrowing friends with concealed transports, and terrific endeavours to secure his phœnix of a valet; Alvanley, too, described by all who knew him as the best dressed and most humorous man in England, the hero of "Ice him, Gunter, ice him!" spoken to the confectioner crying out of the hotness of his horse, the hero too of the apricot tart, as eternal upon his sideboard the whole year through, as the sacred flame in Vesta's temple; finally Luttrell, the most brilliant man of his day, the author of the *Advice to Julia, and other Poems*, who was at the same time the last of the beaux, and the last of the conversationalists.

W. OUTRAM TRISTRAM.

SIR THOMAS MORE.

HE personal character of Sir Thomas More would have sufficed to make him one of the heroes of English history, even if he had possessed no other title to the reverence of posterity. It would be hard to name any Englishman of any age who was of a purer or nobler spirit. He lived at a time when public life in this country was extremely corrupt, yet he rose to the highest secular dignity in the State, under the sovereign, without having once stooped to an action which even his enemies could ascribe to an unworthy or doubtful motive. As Erasmus said: "No one ever tried harder to get admitted to court than More did to keep out of it;" and when at last honours were thrust upon him, he accepted them, not for his own sake or for the sake of his children, but because they seemed likely to provide him with an ample opportunity for the exercise of his powers for the common good. The time came when he had to choose whether he would suffer an ignominious death, or profess beliefs which were repugnant to his intellect and moral sense; and to More it appeared a simple duty to maintain his honour untarnished even at the cost of life itself.

In private life he was as great as in his public career; and as an intellectual leader, he ranked with the foremost European thinkers and writers of the early part of the sixteenth century. His friend, Dean Colet, the founder of St. Paul's School, used to speak of him as the only man of genius in Britain, and although this was a somewhat exaggerated estimate—for Colet himself had a touch of genius—it is true that More's was an intellect unmatched in his own time in England for strength, alertness, and subtlety. A true child of the age of the Renascence, he delighted in art and poetry. and was fascinated by the masterpieces of ancient literature. He was versed, too, in theology and in philosophy, and he probably knew all that was then known about the laws of the physical world. The problems of social and political science he studied closely and continuously, and his ideas on the subject were so deep and pregnant that we are only now beginning to understand their full significance. In all his really important works there is a tone of greatness, and he is essentially so modern in his methods that it is sometimes difficult to realise that he was born more than four centuries ago. And in his best years, whether he wrote in Latin or in English, his style was always that of an artist. Although he excelled only in prose, there can be little doubt that his mastery of the English language was one of the most potent of the influences which prepared the way for the achievements of Spenser, Marlowe, and Shakespeare.

More was born on the 7th of January, 1478, in Milk Street, Cheapside, London. The elder More was a prosperous barrister, and decided that his son should be trained for his own profession. Having been well grounded in Latin at St. Anthony's School, Threadneedle Street, More was admitted as a page into the house of Archbishop—afterwards Cardinal—Morton, who was so impressed by the boy's wit and geniality that he "would often say unto the nobles that divers times dined with him, 'This child here waiting at the table, whosoever shall live to see it, will prove a marvellous man.'" Pro-

bably in 1492, when he was fourteen, More was sent to Oxford, where he came under the influence of Linacre, Grocyn, and Colet, all of whom were enthusiastic adherents of the party of the New Learning. From them he received his first instruction in Greek, the study of which was regarded by strictly orthodox churchmen as the surest mark of a heretical tendency. Young as he was, More threw himself with characteristic ardour into what had become the dominant intellectual movement, not only at Oxford, but at every great university in Europe, and there was certainly nowhere a brighter or more zealous disciple of the Humanist school.

His Greek studies, however agreeable they might be to himself, were not at all to the taste of his father. Accordingly, after a residence of about two years, More was taken away from Oxford, and in 1494 he seems to have begun, at the New Inn, the work of preparation for the bar. In 1496 he was admitted at Lincoln's Inn, where for some years he continued the study of law.

While carrying on his legal studies, he was fortunate enough to secure the friendship of Erasmus, who, in the company of his pupil and friend, Lord Mountjoy, paid his first visit to England in 1498. Erasmus was about ten years older than More. He had not yet begun his career as an editor of ancient texts and as an independent writer, but he was already known to a wide circle as one of the most brilliant of the Humanists. During this visit to England, he lived chiefly at Oxford. Notwithstanding his many engagements there, he found time occasionally to write to the young student of law, and from one letter which happens to have been preserved (probably written in 1499), we can see that their friendship had quickly ripened into intimacy. It was a friendship for life, and appears never to have been for a moment interrupted even by a passing misunderstanding.

More made rapid progress in his studies at Lincoln's Inn, and became so learned a lawyer that after his call to the bar he was appointed reader at Furnival's Inn, a position corresponding to that of a professor of law in our time. Before receiving this office he read lectures in the church of St. Lawrence, in the Old Jewry, on St. Augustine's *De Civitate Dei*. These lectures were attended by all the greatest scholars in London, including his old friend Grocyn, who was now rector of the parish of St. Lawrence.

In 1503 More was elected a member of ırliament. A marriage which was destined to have great consequences had just been celebrated—that of the Princess Margaret, the eldest daughter of Henry VII., with James IV. of Scotland; and the king had summoned Parliament in order to obtain from it the "reasonable aid" to which he was entitled in consequence of this marriage. Avarice having become his dominant passion, he demanded three-fifteenths, which would have produced about £113,000, a much larger sum than he had a right to ask. Parliament had become so subservient that it was about to grant this exorbitant claim, when More ventured to rise and resist the proposal. He was an eloquent speaker, and the result of his intervention in the debate was that the king received only £30,000.

Had More thought of his own interests, he would have hesitated to take so bold a step. The king, informed that his scheme had been thwarted by "a beardless boy," was violently enraged, and soon afterwards revenged himself by causing More's father, who was a commissioner for Hertfordshire for the collection of the subsidy, to be thrown into the Tower, where he was detained until he paid a fine of a hundred pounds. More himself was obliged to withdraw from public life, and to remain in obscurity during the rest of Henry VII.'s reign. At one time he even thought of taking refuge in some foreign country, believing that his life was unsafe in England.

It was a characteristic of many of the Humanists that they turned away from the Church; not because they formally repudiated its authority, but because its doctrines did not interest them. More, on the contrary, was remarkably sensitive to religious influences, and from early youth he had probably reflected often and deeply on the inward meaning of human life. For some time after his retirement, this element of his nature became more than usually prominent. With his friend Lilly—afterwards the first head-master of St. Paul's School—he hired a lodging near the Charterhouse, and began to live in accordance with the rule of the Carthusian order. He scourged himself, wore a shirt of hair, and slept on bare boards, with a log for his pillow, and it seemed almost certain that he was about to obey an irresistible impulse to take monastic vows.

Gradually, however, he learned that the life of the cloister was not necessarily a life of high thought and chastened desire. He was also deeply influenced by the teaching of Colet, who began the discharge of his duties as dean of St. Paul's in 1504. As

Mr. Seebohm has shown in his masterly book, *The Oxford Reformers*, Colet, by his study of the original authorities, had, in a sense, rediscovered Christianity, and his self-sacrificing life bore irresistible testimony to the power of his convictions. More saw Colet frequently, both as a friend and as a father confessor, and missed no opportunity of hearing him preach in St. Paul's Cathedral. The counsels of so wise a guide could not but strengthen his increasing inclination to devote his energies to the duties of ordinary life. He never ceased to wear a shirt of hair, but for many years after this time he had full sympathy with the liberal theological ideas of Colet and Erasmus, and some passages in *Utopia* show that when that great book was written he was prepared for a policy of drastic reform in the discipline of the Roman Church.

After the death of Henry VII. in 1509, More—at the age of thirty-one—was able to resume the work of his profession. His action in Parliament having secured for him a high reputation, he was made under-sheriff of London, an office of much dignity, involving the exercise of judicial functions. This appointment did not hinder him from practising at the bar, and he was so thorough a master of English law, so ready in argument, and of so sound a judgment, that he soon became one of the most prominent lawyers in the realm. In 1515, when Henry VIII. resolved to send an embassy to settle some disputes which had arisen between England and Flanders, the merchants of London begged that their interests might be represented in the embassy by More, in whose energy and discretion they had perfect confidence. Their request was granted, and he did his work so well that about two years afterwards he was sent on a somewhat similar mission to Calais.

More was well-known to Henry VIII., and the king often expressed a wish that he would enter the royal service. But he preferred the independence secured by his position as under-sheriff and by his practice at the bar, and declined the offers made to him in the king's name by Cardinal Wolsey. It happened, however, that soon after his return from Calais he was engaged in a case in which a ship belonging to the Pope, which had arrived at Southampton, was claimed by the king "for a forfeiture." More argued so brilliantly on the Pope's behalf that not only was the forfeiture restored, but Henry VIII. insisted that he should accept a ministerial appointment. It was impossible to hold out any longer, and from this time (1518) More was constantly engaged for fourteen years in discharging the duties of some high office under the crown.

His first position at court was that of Master of the Requests, and within a month he was made a knight and a member of the Privy Council. At this time he acted also as Henry VIII.'s secretary, and on state occasions, when it was necessary that a speech should be delivered in the king's name, More was always chosen for a duty which no one else was able to fulfil with so much ease and grace. It was he who greeted Francis I. at the meeting of the English and French kings on the Field of the Cloth of Gold, and he had to play a similar part when, some time afterwards, the young emperor, Charles V., visited England. Henry VIII. was delighted by his secretary's knowledge and vivacity, and would often send for him, says Roper, to talk about "matters of astronomy, geometry, divinity, and such other faculties;" and sometimes, "in the night," the king would "have him up into the leads, there to consider with him the diversities, courses, motions, and operations of the stars and planets." At supper the king and queen were in the habit of calling for More, that he might be "merry with them," and he succeeded in escaping from these importunities, which made it almost impossible for him to quit the court, only by "dissembling his nature, and so disusing himself by little and little from his former mirth."

By and by More became Treasurer of the Exchequer, and in the Parliament which assembled at Blackfriars in 1523 he was appointed Speaker, an office which he in vain sought to decline. In this Parliament occurred the famous scene in which, falling on his knees before the splendid cardinal, who had come with a crowd of followers to impose his will on the national representatives, More excused the silence of the members, explaining that they were "abashed at the presence of so noble a personage, able to amaze the wisest and best learned in a realm," and declaring "that for them to make answer was it neither expedient, nor agreeable with the ancient liberty of the House." Wolsey was bitterly offended by this display of independent spirit. "Would to God, Mr. More," he said afterwards, "you had been at Rome when I made you Speaker." Jealous of so formidable a rival, Wolsey proposed that More should go as an ambassador to Spain; but More represented to the king that to send him to so hot a climate would be to "send him to his grave." "It is not

our meaning, Mr. More," replied the king, "to do you hurt, but to do you good we would be glad. We therefore, for this purpose, will devise upon some other, and employ your service otherwise." And he was as good as his word. In 1526 More was made Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, and he afterwards acted as English commissioner on two great occasions—first, in the negotiations which led to the treaty concluded between Henry VIII. and Francis I. in 1527, and then, in 1529, in the negotiations which led to the League of Cambray. It may have been on one of those occasions that More received a pension from the French king.[1]

Henry VIII. had now found out that his marriage with Catherine of Arragon had been a violation of the law of God—a discovery which he made just at the time when he was captivated by the black eyes and sprightly talk of Anne Boleyn. One consequence of the discovery was the disgrace of Cardinal Wolsey. A new ministry was formed in 1529, and Sir Thomas More succeeded the cardinal as Lord Chancellor. This great office had never before been held by a layman, and to a higher position even More could not be raised.

As Lord Chancellor he distinguished himself not only by the impartiality of his judgments, but by the extraordinary promptitude with which he disposed of the cases brought before him. Every day, in the afternoon, he sat in his place in Westminster Hall, and encouraged suitors to come boldly into his presence. It was his habit, before taking his seat, to kneel reverently before his father, who was now a Justice in the Court of King's Bench.

Meanwhile, More had passed through many a joy and sorrow in his private life. In 1505, when he was concealing himself from the wrath of Henry VII., he had married Jane, the eldest daughter of his friend Mr. Colt, of New Hall, in Essex. He settled with his young wife in a house in Bucklersbury, a street below the Poultry. Here their four children were born—Margaret, Elizabeth, Cicely, and John. His wife seems to have been of a gentle and pliant disposition. He loved her ardently, and tried to make her a sharer of his own pleasures, teaching her to appreciate music and literature. About 1511 she died, and soon afterwards—according to Erasmus, a few months afterwards—More married again, not so much for his own sake as for the sake of his children, to whom, in the pressure of business, he could not give the attention they needed. His second wife, Alice Middleton, was a widow, seven years older than himself. She was a little of a shrew, "careful and troubled about many things," but, like everybody else, she was subdued by her husband's goodness. To please him, she even learned to play the lute and other instruments. His children found in her a kind and prudent mother, and he in his turn treated her daughter as a member of his own family.

As in many other matters, so in regard to education, More had ideas which were far in advance of his own time. He did not think that women should receive only such training as may fit them for domestic duties and for the small-talk of society. He held that they are capable of the same intellectual development as men, and so his daughters, like his son, were instructed in all the sciences which were then taught at the highest seats of learning. Their tutors were selected with the greatest care, but More was not content merely to provide them with good masters; he himself superintended their studies, and made it his aim to secure that their knowledge should be ample and exact, and that it should be acquired in a manner likely to quicken and invigorate their mental powers. His method was justified by its results, for his children became excellent scholars, with something of his own keen and vigilant intelligence. This was especially true of his eldest daughter Margaret, one of the brightest and most learned women whom England has produced. She was not less remarkable for her grace and beauty and for the nobility of her character than for her intellectual attainments. More treated her to the last as the dearest of his friends and companions, and Margaret responded to his love with a devotion and reverence of which only the greatest natures are capable.

About the time when More entered the king's service, he left the city of London and went to Chelsea, where he had built for himself, to use the words of Erasmus, "a modest yet commodious mansion." It was not very far from the spot where, centuries

[1] For the fact that More received a pension from Francis I., I am indebted to Mr. Paul Friedmann. Among the immense mass of documents examined by Mr. Friedmann for his book *Anne Boleyn*, there is one at the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, containing a list of pensions paid by Francis I. to Englishmen. In this list More is included. The sum opposite his name is 110 crowns, which was probably a payment for three months.

afterwards, Carlyle was to make himself a great power in the intellectual and moral life of England. Behind the house were open fields, and in front a spacious garden reached to the Thames. In this pleasant dwelling More enjoyed a domestic life as beautifully ordered, sweet, and gracious as any of which we read in the best periods in the history of civilisation. In course of time all his children married, but they were not on that account permitted to separate from him. "There he lives," wrote Erasmus, "surrounded by his numerous family, including his wife, his son, and his son's wife, his three daughters and their husbands, with eleven grandchildren. There is not any man living so affectionate to his children as he, and he loveth his old wife as if she were a girl of fifteen. Such is the excellence of his disposition that whatsoever happeneth that could not be helped, he is as cheerful and as well pleased as though the best thing possible had been done. In More's house, you would say that Plato's Academy was revived, only, whereas in the Academy the discussions turned upon geometry and the power of numbers, the house at Chelsea is a veritable school of Christian religion. In it is none, man or woman, but readeth or studieth the liberal arts, yet is their chief care of piety. There is never any seen idle; the head of the house governs it not by a lofty carriage and oft rebukes, but by gentleness and amiable manners. Every member is busy in his place, performing his duty with alacrity, nor is sober mirth wanting." The picture would not be complete without reference to the fact that More was remarkably fond of animals. He kept a great many of them—among others, foxes, weasels, monkeys, and various kinds of birds.

Every foreigner of distinction who visited England found his way to More's house, and he often entertained scholars from Oxford and Cambridge. Sometimes the king came, and on one occasion, after dinner, he threw his arm around More's neck as they walked together in the garden. More was not misled by this show of affection. When Roper, the husband of his daughter Margaret, congratulated him on so signal a mark of favour, he replied: "I thank our Lord, son, I find his grace my very good lord indeed, and I do believe he doth as singularly favour me as any subject within this realm. Howbeit, son Roper, I may tell thee I have no cause to be proud thereof, for if my head would win him a castle in France, it should not fail to go."

There was one illustrious guest to whom More seems to have been warmly attached. This was Hans Holbein, who came to England in 1526, at the age of twenty-nine, with a letter of introduction to More from Erasmus. More cordially welcomed the great artist, taking him into his house, and obtaining for him important engagements. For this kindness Holbein made a magnificent return by painting what must have been one of the finest of his pictures, *The Household of Sir Thomas More*, in which there were portraits of More and his wife, of his father, of his children, of Margaret Gigs (who was brought up with his daughters), and of the young maiden, Anne Cresacre, to whom his son was betrothed. More's jester had also a place in the picture, and through a door two servants or secretaries were visible. On this masterpiece Holbein lavished the resources of his genius. It has unfortunately perished, but a sketch by Holbein, which was sent by More to Erasmus, is preserved at Basel. At Nostell Priory there is an authentic copy of the original painting, and in the collection at Windsor Castle there are matchless sketches by Holbein of most of the individual figures. Besides the *Household*, Holbein painted a special portrait of More, and of this work also (now in the possession of Mr. Huth) there is a beautiful sketch in the Windsor collection. More charmed all who came into contact with him by his eager and joyous talk, and probably many who only knew him slightly, fancied that his was always a cheerful mood. But Holbein saw that there was something in More deeper even than his wit, and the expression he has represented is grave and sad.

Long before More became Lord Chancellor he had written all the works with which his name is usually associated. Among these works an important place belongs to his Latin epigrams, some of which are translations from the Greek anthology. They were written at many different periods, and show that, like his friend Erasmus, he possessed, with more genial gifts, a remarkable power of biting satire. In 1505, while Erasmus was staying with him, More translated into Latin several of the *Dialogues* of Lucian, and in friendly rivalry the two scholars each wrote in Latin an answer to Lucian's plea for tyrannicide. At a somewhat earlier time More had been strongly impressed by a book which had come from Italy, a collection of the letters and other writings of Pico della Mirandula, with a sketch of his life. Pico, an Italian nobleman

of the fifteenth century, a friend of Savonarola, combined a love of learning with a burning enthusiasm for spiritual realities. About 1510 More translated this book into English, and his rendering has an enduring interest, not only because of the light it throws on his deepest sympathies, but because of the singular beauty of its style.

His next work was his *History of King Richard the Third*, written about 1513. The materials for this book, which includes a sketch of Edward IV., More probably derived from Cardinal Morton, who had played a prominent part in the events of the period. More's view of Richard III.—the view adopted by Shakespeare — has not been accepted by the most trustworthy recent investigators, and there are long speeches—evidently inserted in imitation of classical models—which cannot be literally accurate. The book, however, is written with such exquisite grace and simplicity that it may still be read with pleasure, even if we do not regard it as strictly historical. The pathetic passage in which, deviating from his central purpose, More records the fortunes of Jane Shore, is one of the gems of English prose literature.

Valuable as these writings are, each in its own way, they are insignificant in comparison with the greatest of More's works, *Utopia*. It was issued from the press of Louvain in 1516, the first part having been written shortly before; the second, in which the manners and institutions of the Utopians are described, in the previous year. This was by far the most original contribution that had ever been made by an Englishman to the philosophy of society. For some of its ideas More was indebted to classical writings, especially to Plato's *Republic*, and the freedom with which he handles his subject is the freedom of a mind in which a new intellectual life has been kindled by the study of Greek literature. But *Utopia* was not wholly due to More's classical studies. In its minutest details it is penetrated by modern sentiment. It expresses an ardent enthusiasm for human welfare, an enthusiasm springing in the last resort from More's belief in the inherent greatness and dignity of the spiritual nature of man.

In one sense *Utopia* may be described as a philosopher's dream, but it was a dream suggested by the actual needs of the world, and more particularly by the actual needs of England, in his own day. At that time England was infested by crowds of thieves and beggars, and the question how they ought to be dealt with had been for many years the despair of statesmen. More insisted that the real explanation of the evil was to be found in the rapacity of the well-off classes. Many landowners—churchmen included—had discovered that pasture was more profitable than tillage, and, in order to create sheep-farms, they had not scrupled to drive away their smaller tenants and even yeomen, whose possessions were taken from them "by tricks or by main force." "So those miserable people, both men and women, married, unmarried, old and young, with their poor but numerous families (since country business requires many hands) are all forced to change their seats, not knowing whither to go, and they must sell for almost nothing their household stuff, which could not bring them much money, even though they might stay for a buyer. When that little money is at an end, for it will be soon spent, what is left for them to do but either to steal and so be hanged (God knows how justly), or go about and beg?" More also points to the fact that these wretched classes were being constantly recruited from the armies brought together for useless wars in France, and from the hosts of retainers who were thought to be a necessary element in the households of the aristocracy.

In Utopia there are neither beggars nor thieves, for poverty is unknown. And the principal cause of this happy social state is that private property does not exist in that ideal island. The products of labour belong to the community, and every family obtains a share of them in accordance with its needs. Work goes on for only six hours a day, and this is more than is absolutely necessary, for all the inhabitants, both men and women, take part in the common industry, and they do not waste their energy in the manufacture of things which are incapable of giving real happiness. The cultivation of the soil being the basis of material prosperity, all are taught the science and art of agriculture, and every one spends some part of his life in rural settlements. But each Utopian also learns a handicraft, and is allowed to select the kind of work for which he or she may have the greatest aptitude. The people live in good houses with handsome gardens, and there are common halls and temples, in the beauty and splendour of which they take infinitely more pride than any wise man can take in a possession of his own. Their leisure hours they devote to amusement, and to the study of science, art, and literature.

For the proper working of the social arrangements of the Happy Republic its rulers are held responsible. Over every

group of thirty families there is a magistrate called the Syphogrant or Philarch, and over every group of ten Syphogrants, with the families subject to them, there is a Tranibor or Archphilarch. A supreme prince governs the whole community, and he is aided in his task by the Tranibors, who meet every third day to confer regarding affairs of state. Two Syphogrants are always called into the council chamber, and it is a rule that the same Syphogrants shall not appear on successive days. All these officials are appointed by popular election—the Spyhogrants and Tranibors directly, the supreme prince by the Tranibors, who have to choose one out of a list of four candidates selected by the community. The utmost care is taken that no measure shall be adopted hastily, and the prince (who is appointed for life, on condition of good behaviour) is at once dismissed if there is a suspicion that he is harbouring designs against the fundamental laws of the state.

There have been innumerable imitations of *Utopia*, and in our own age a party has been formed in every country in Europe for the advocacy of schemes not essentially different from the one sketched by More. He himself would have been much surprised if it had been suggested to him that the socialistic element in the institutions of Utopia should be transferred from cloud-land to the solid earth. The attempt would have meant —as it would mean now—the most terrible of civil wars; and to More, we may be sure, civil war would have seemed an infinitely greater evil than the worst of the social maladies which he deplored. Moreover, it must have been plain to him that even if the process could have been peacefully effected, the world was not ready for so vast a change. The Utopians, although very like Sir Thomas More, are not at all like ordinary men and women. Self-love has almost died out amongst them; the only passion by which they are dominated is a passion for the good of the community as a whole. It is easy for them, therefore, to maintain a social system which requires in all who are subject to it the highest conceivable moral qualities. The task would not be quite so simple if it were undertaken by a society less accessible to appeals to unselfish motives.

Nevertheless, More does excellent service by enabling us to turn aside for a while from the actual world with its struggling ambitions, and by revealing a beautiful ideal realm where we find only love and peace. He gives us at least the hope that there may be in human nature capacities for the evolution of an incomparably fairer social life than any that mankind have hitherto known. And this is by no means all that he does for us. He was the first to see clearly that crime and destitution are not wholly inexplicable phenomena, but are the effects of definite and ascertainable causes, and that to investigate those causes and to grapple with them are the foremost duties of the State. To More society did not appear to be merely an aggregate of individuals, each of whom has the right to thrust aside the rest in an ignoble strife for wealth and power. The only qualities he esteemed were the qualities of mind and heart, and he held that if a community is true to its highest obligations it will shrink from no effort and from no sacrifice that may be necessary for the intellectual and moral growth of the humblest of its members. All this he sets down, not in a series of cold propositions, but with enthusiasm, and in the manner of an artist, so that we obtain from him a vivid apprehension of lofty truths even when he is offering suggestions which, if applied, would have little chance of success at the present stage of the world's history.

In *Utopia* More does not confine himself to the consideration of social wants; he presents also some striking hints as to religion. The Utopians are practically agreed in the recognition of a Supreme Ruler of the universe and in belief in the immortality of the mind, and they have a simple religious service in which all may sincerely join. With regard to questions of minor importance, each is at liberty to think and speak as he pleases, and the only penalty inflicted even on those who deny what he conceives to be the fundamental principles of religion, is that they are not permitted to become candidates for public offices. So nearly, at this stage of his career, had More approached to a full appreciation of the doctrine of toleration.

Utopia at once took rank among the great and enduring books which make up European literature. It was read eagerly by scholars and statesmen, and by and by it was translated from the original Latin into nearly every modern language. Much curiosity was expressed about its author, and in answer to the inquiries of a brilliant German Humanist, Ulrich von Hutten, Erasmus (who had spent some years in Cambridge as a professor of Greek) wrote a long letter in which he gave a fascinating sketch of More's character and career.

About two years before the appearance of *Utopia* More had done an essential service to

Erasmus by the publication of his Latin *Epistle to Dorpius.* Dorpius was a respected theologian who, in the name of the theological faculty of Louvain, had written to Erasmus, protesting against what was supposed to be the dangerous tone of his *Praise of Folly,* and against his proposal to issue an edition of the Greek New Testament. In his *Epistle* More eloquently defended his friend, and tried to convince Dorpius (an attempt in which he succeeded) that great consequences, in religion as well as in literature, might be expected to result from the study of Greek.

More was so ardent a Humanist that when the Reformation began the Reformers probably anticipated that he would range himself on their side. He proved, however, to be one of the most resolute of their opponents. This may have been due in part to his official position, which made it hard for him to consider with perfect impartiality the questions in dispute; but there were other and deeper causes. In the first place, the extreme members of the reforming party, in their zeal for the study of the Scriptures, were in the habit of expressing contempt for all other studies. In arguing for the Roman Church, therefore, More seemed to himself to be arguing for the highest influences of civilisation. "There was never anything in this world," he wrote, "that can in any wise be comparable with any part of the Holy Scripture, and yet I think other liberal science a gift of God also. . . And therefore are, in mine opinion, these Lutherans in a mad mind, that would now have all learning save Scripture only clean cast away." He was also impressed by the conviction that the gravest dangers would arise from the general acceptance of some of Luther's theological doctrines. Luther's denial of free-will, for instance, appeared to him one of the most pernicious of heresies. "This execrable heresy maketh God the cause of all evil, and such cruel appetite as never tyrant and tormenter had, ascribe they to the benign nature of Almighty God." "Our mother Eve laid the wite [blame] of her sin to the serpent, and God was offended that she took not her own part to herself. But these wretches excuse themselves and the devil and all, and lay both their own faults and the devil's too, to the blame of Almighty God." "And this they call the liberty of the Gospel, to be discharged of all order and of all laws, and do what they list, which, be it good, be it bad, is, as they say, nothing but the work of God wrought in them."

Again, the essential tendency of Protestantism was to foster the spirit which is now sometimes described as individualism. It began by repudiating the authority of the Papacy, and by claiming for every man the right of judging for himself as to the meaning of Christianity and the obligations imposed by it. Now, it had been held for centuries that the authority of the Papacy was of supernatural origin, and More had no doubt that if it were destroyed, reverence for all authority would be undermined—an opinion in which he must have been confirmed, when, in 1524, the German peasantry rose in revolt against the princes, and very nearly succeeded in effecting a deep and far-reaching social revolution. To the author of *Utopia* the development of a defiant and lawless temper was even more alarming than to ordinary politicians. The citizens of his ideal State are, indeed, permitted to form their own judgments about religion; but in other respects short work is made of the liberty of the individual. All power belongs to the majority, and they, acting through their elected representatives, absolutely control the lives of the minority. In Utopia no one objects to this system, but More assumes that if any one did object to it, and sought to shape a career different from that prescribed for him by his rulers, he would be sternly punished as a traitor. This is necessarily a characteristic of every socialistic scheme, and More was too logical to shrink from accepting it with all its consequences. It was inevitable, therefore, that he should from the beginning look upon Protestantism with suspicion, and that he should detest it with increased bitterness the more vividly he realised its vital principle.

More helped Henry VIII. in the preparation of the work which secured for the English sovereign the title of "Defender of the Faith," and in reply to Luther's passionate answer, he wrote in Latin (under the pseudonym William Ross), an elaborate treatise in support of the Papacy. These were the first blows struck by More in the cause of which he ultimately became the most strenuous English champion. At a very early period in the history of the Reformation, heretical books found their way from the Continent into this country, and before the close of 1526, notwithstanding the vigilance of the authorities, Tyndale's translation of the New Testament—a translation marked by some of the highest qualities of literary genius—was in the hands of many Englishmen. The Government were dismayed by the rapid progress of the movement, and in the spring of 1528 More's friend

Tunstal, the bishop of London, wrote to him, begging him to publish an English book that would "expose even to rude and simple people the crafty malice of the heretics." In response to this appeal More set to work immediately, and in little more than a year he issued a folio volume, entitled, *A Dialogue of Sir Thomas More, Knight, one of the Council of our Sovereign Lord the King, and Chancellor of his Duchy of Lancaster, wherein he treated divers matters, as of the veneration and worshipping of images and relics, praying to saints and going on pilgrimage, with many other things touching the pestilent sect of Luther and Tyndale, by the tone begun in Saxony, and by the tother laboured to be brought into England.*

This is one of the greatest of More's works, and it may be doubted whether any English Catholic, Cardinal Newman alone excepted, has offered a more powerful defence of the Church of Rome. Every issue raised by the Reformers is examined, and, whatever we may think of the merits of the controversy, it is impossible not to admire the subtlety of his reasoning and the deftness of hand with which he penetrates the weak places in the armour of his opponents. In form the book is not less remarkable than in substance. The dialogue is supposed to be conducted by the author and by one who has secret sympathy with the Reformation, and there is much dramatic force in the brightness and animation with which each is made to play his part in the discussion. Sometimes, when More himself speaks, he rises to a high level both of thought and eloquence. For instance, in contending that miracles are wrought at the shrines visited by pilgrims, he argues that a miracle is not nearly so strange as many common facts, and he offers as an example the fact that the human being grows from childhood to maturity. The person with whom he is talking answers that if this seems a surprising fact to More it "will seem so to no man else." "No, quoth I, can ye tell what is the cause? No other, sure, but that the acquaintance and daily beholding taketh away the wondering, as we nothing wonder at the ebbing and flowing of the sea, or the Thames, because we daily see it. But he that had never seen it, nor heard thereof, would at the first sight wonder sore thereat, to see that great water come wallowing up against the wind, keeping a common course to and fro, no cause perceived that driveth him. If a man born blind had suddenly his sight, what wonder would he make to see the sun, the moon, and the stars! Whereas one that hath seen them sixteen years together marvelleth not so much of them all as he would wonder at the first sight of a peacock's tail."

More was of so lively and genial a temper that he could not refrain from an occasional touch of humour even in a serious theological debate. Arguing that all tales of miracles ought not to be rejected because some are proved to be untrue, he says: "Nor, though the Jews were many so naughty that they put Christ to death, yet ye be wiser, I wot well, than the gentlewoman was, which in talking once with my father, when she heard say that Our Lady was a Jew, first could not believe it, but said, 'What! ye mock, I wis; I pray you tell truth.' And when it was so fully affirmed that she at last believed it, 'And was she a Jew?' quoth she. 'So help me God and Halidom, I shall love her the worse while I live.' I am sure ye will not so, nor mistrust all for some, neither men nor miracles."

Having told a story of a Lombard, who had in vain besought the saints to cure his gout, and had at last called upon the devil, More continues: "I cannot think ye would believe in the devil as that Lombard did. Ye would rather fare like another that when the friar apposed him in confession, whether he meddled anything with witchcraft or necromancy, or had any belief in the devil, he answered, 'Believe in the devil!' quoth he. 'Nay, nay, sir, I have work enough to believe in God.'"

Tyndale replied to the *Dialogue*, and in 1532 and 1533 More wrote, in two parts, a long *Confutation* of his antagonist's *Answer*. He published also various other polemical works, dealing not only with the heresies of Tyndale, but with those of Tyndale's friend, John Frith. In these later writings there are few traces of the genius which shines in almost every part of the *Dialogue*. As the controversy advanced, More seemed to lose the power of vivid and penetrating thought, and he too often tried to make up for the lack of wit and logic by the violence of his denunciation. Unhappily, too, he forgot much of his own earlier teaching. He ceased to recognise the need of ecclesiastical reform, and he departed so widely from the finely tolerant spirit which, so far as religion was concerned, he had manifested in his description of Utopia, that he defended the use of fire and sword in the suppression of opinions with which he did not agree. This he had done even in the *Dialogue*, and the passages relating to the subject are dark and rather hideous blots on that otherwise brilliant

book. More was afterwards accused of having, as Lord Chancellor, put his theory into practice with shameful cruelty, but he himself denied the charge, and there is no evidence that he did anything against heretics which he was not compelled to do in the ordinary administration of the law.

In 1532 More resigned the Chancellorship, being convinced that Henry VIII. had resolved to marry Anne Boleyn, and, as a necessary consequence, to repudiate the supremacy of the Pope. About a year afterwards More declined to attend the ceremony of Anne's coronation, and it is probable that from this time she and her kinsfolk, irritated by his disdain and dreading his influence, were determined to ruin him. They began by causing him to be charged before the privy council with having accepted bribes from parties who had appeared before him as Lord Chancellor. He was asked whether he had not received a great gilt cup from a suitor by the hands of the suitor's wife. More confessed that he had, but not until long after the case had been settled. "Lo, my lords, lo," cried Lord Wiltshire, Anne Boleyn's father, "did I not tell you that you should find this matter true?" More then explained, and proved, that the cup was given to him at the new year, and that when he had pledged the lady from it and she had pledged him, he returned it to her, begging that she might present it to her husband as his new year's gift. So the accusation came to nothing, as every one who knew More must have felt certain that it would.

Next he was charged with misprision of treason. A fanatical nun, Elizabeth Barton, having attracted some attention by talking about her visions, in which, she asserted, she received supernatural intimations as to the destiny of the king and his new queen, a Bill was introduced into the House of Lords to attaint her, and More's name, with that of Fisher, the bishop of Rochester, appeared in the list of her accomplices. The accusation against Fisher was sustained, but the Lords would not go on with the Bill unless More was dissociated from it. When his daughter Margaret informed him that his name had been struck out, "In faith, Meg," he answered, "*quod defertur, non aufertur.*"

In March, 1534, the Act of Succession was passed, and More was summoned to Lambeth to take the oath. Now he knew that the great crisis of his life had come. Usually, when he left his house, his children accompanied him to his boat, before entering which he kissed them and bade them farewell. This time he would not allow them to pass the gate, "but," says Roper, "pulled the wicket after him, and shut them all from him." While he and Roper were being rowed towards Lambeth, he sat "still sadly a while." Then he turned suddenly and said: "Son Roper, I thank our Lord, the field is won."

In what sense the field was won he soon showed. At Lambeth he expressed his willingness to accept the decision of Parliament with regard to the succession to the Crown, but he declined to swear to the Act of Succession as a whole, since he could not admit the validity of the divorce of Catherine, and of Henry's second marriage. The result was that the Commissioners entrusted him to the care of the Abbot of Westminster, and, four days afterwards, sent him to the Tower.

And in the Tower he remained, to the dismay of his family. He occupied himself with writing religious treatises, meditations, and prayers, and sometimes his solitude was cheered by a visit from his daughter Margaret, whose tenderness never failed him. His wife was less sympathetic. The worthy lady could not understand why he hesitated to take an oath which had been taken by so many other great men; and Roper describes how, some time after More's arrest, she obtained a license to see him, and expostulated with him for being content to lie in prison, "shut up among mice and rats," when he might be at liberty, in the enjoyment of his "right fair house, his library, his books, his gallery, his garden, his orchards, and all other necessaries so handsomely about him."

While in the Tower, he declined to accept the Act of Supremacy, as he had before declined to accept the Act of Succession. He was careful, however, to avoid the expression of any opinion on the question whether the king could or could not be the supreme visible head of the Church. At last a certain Mr. Rich came forward and asserted that in conversation with him More had plainly denied the king's supremacy, and on this charge he was tried at Westminster Hall in 1535. More protested that he had not made the statement imputed to him, but it had been decided that he should die, and no defence would have availed to save him.

On his way back from Westminster Hall to the Tower he was met at the Tower Wharf by Margaret Roper, who had been waiting for him, knowing that she would never see him again. When he approached, surrounded

by a company of the guard and by a great crowd of people, she knelt and received his blessing. Then he passed on. But Margaret, unable to bear this last parting, pressed in amongst the throng, "hastily ran to him, and there, openly in the sight of all of them, embraced and took him about the neck and kissed him, who, well liking her most daughterly love and affection towards him, gave her his fatherly blessing and many goodly words of comfort besides." Again he passed on, and again she broke through the multitude, "and ran to him as before, took him about the neck, and divers times together most lovingly kissed him, and at last, with a full heavy heart, was fain to depart from him." "The beholding whereof," adds Roper, "was to many of them that were present thereat so lamentable that it made them for very sorrow to mourn and weep." A week afterwards, on the day before his execution, More sent to this beloved daughter a letter which he had written with a stick of charcoal. "I never liked your manner better," he wrote, "than when you kissed me last. For I like when daughterly love and dear charity hath no leisure to look to worldly courtesy." With the letter he sent her his shirt of hair, being unwilling that it should be seen by any eyes but hers.

Probably on the 6th of July, 1535,—there is some uncertainty as to the exact day—More was executed on Tower Hill. A blacker crime was never committed in the name of law and justice; yet Henry VIII. did not feel that he had done enough in killing one who had served him loyally, and whose genius had shed lustre on his reign. He drove Lady More from her home, seized her husband's lands, and confiscated property which More had made over to his children at a time when he had a legal right to dispose of it at his pleasure.

More was by far the most eminent of the early representatives of the Renascence in England, and through his best books we can still feel the charm of the qualities by which he fascinated many of the wisest and noblest of his contemporaries. The boldness and freedom of his thought, the lightness of his touch in the handling of great subjects, the depth and tenderness of his humanity—these are characteristics which produce almost as strong an impression on his readers to-day as they produced on his friends in his lifetime. For More is one of those teachers who seem to speak to us directly when we study their writings. In reading him we feel that we are being addressed by a living mind, which is ever on the alert for new ideas, and which works under the dominion of high and generous impulses. We feel, too, that he would not have been content with merely making converts to his opinions; that his aim was rather to quicken the intellectual energy of those to whom he appealed, and to inspire them with something of his own charity, and courage, and love of truth.

JAMES SIME.

A DIGGER'S LIFE.

DIGGER'S daily life is our subject; though the treasure dug up is not gold, but history; and the country is not one of the newest, but is the oldest of all—Egypt. A gold digger's life has an inevitable monotony, the object and the interest are always the same; but in digging for history the results are ever varying, no two sites are alike, no two days yield similar objects, no two discoveries are the same. Every day there is a new light on the past, a new clue to the work; unlooked for interests turn up, and in no matter is it truer that it is the unexpected that happens.

A museum seems, no doubt, to the generality of mankind to be filled in some mysterious way, perhaps some "'spect it growed," just as they see it; the how and where the things were found, their chance discoveries, and their strange wanderings, are all hidden in a decent and uniform veil of labels, or still worse a blank wilderness of no labels. Here we are not concerned with the chances and accidents of those things which come to light through the back-stairs of dealers, and which have perhaps passed through the hands of every nationality in the Levant—a sort of history that rivals those of diamond necklaces and wandering Jews—but rather with a better way which we may hope to see volunteers following in the future, when the scent of a mummy shall be as attractive as that of a fox, and the patience of the angler may be given to hauls which will be a joy for ever.

The other day the question was put, "But how do you begin on an ancient city? Do you dig into the side or the top?" My reply was "First find your city." Having found your city, find your labourers; and then whether you begin at the top, or the side, or anywhere else, is no matter, provided you begin with some definite clue to what there may be, and with some clear purpose in view for each step of the work.

The first business then is to get scent of a lucky site, or as many of such as can be found, either by cross-questioning native dealers in antiquities, or by miscellaneous travelling, map in hand. By a good site I mean one in which there is a fair presumption of finding something that will re-write whole pages of history for us, or alter all our ancient atlases; a place from which we may perhaps take a fresh departure in our history of art, or learn more of the literature or work of some age than was ever suspected before. Our site may perhaps be a low dusty mound in the midst of luxuriant corn- and bean-fields, or steep hills of ruins in the salt wilderness, with marshes all around, or a slight swell in the billows of desert sand, with houses and tombs and images half rising out of it.

Wherever we may settle the first business is to get quarters to live in, and to gain the confidence of the people. There are no cheerful notices of "Apartments to Let," there are no hotel touts to greet you; if you are in a rocky place you may be tolerably certain to get an ancient tomb-chamber or quarry excavated in some cliff-face, and no better lodgings are to be had anywhere for solidity and equable temperature; the minor advantages may be a question of taste, such as the gratis supply of ancient bones or mummy cloth in the dust and sand of your floor. But if no such accommodation can be had you may perhaps find a room or two in some bearable Europeanised habitation (Arab huts are unbear-

able) or else live in a tent, or build a house out of mud and stones and ancient sculpture and Roman bricks and anything else that can be had. Each of these dwellings has its advantages, but the tomb is the best. There will be all sorts of strange tales floating about, as to your object and your personality. You may be put down as a forerunner of a whole regiment of soldiers that are supposed to be coming, or a government surveyor for the land-tax, your money may be said to be all false, some one will swear that you are a Greek if you speak Arabic at all rapidly, and every one will be on the look-out—from the sheikhs of the village to the smallest child—to find what can be got out of you. The sooner therefore you show your hand, and declare your intentions, the better; and if you can get a dozen people to work within a week you have made a good beginning.

Trenches, pits, and holes of all shapes and sizes have now to be made, with only one uniform rule—wherever you begin *go to the bottom.* A house at Zoan took a man a week to clear it out, and just at the last in a corner of the cellar he found a rough red pot with a stone on top of it: in the pot were necklaces of silver and precious stones, and a ring of gold. Another house at Zoan that had blazed in the pillage of a civil war was cleared, and after dozens of tons of earth had been carried out and but little was found in it, there were some flakes of tinder, and we were upon baskets full of burnt manuscripts, priceless treasures, the religious and literary remains, the accounts and calendar and memoranda, of an old Romano-Egyptian lawyer, whose own statue was found a little lower down, in the bottom of the cellar. Of the successive temples of Apollo at Naukratis only trifling chips were left from the plunderings of stone-seekers, but going to the bottom of the ground the old rubbish pit of the temple was found with pieces of hundreds of bowls and vases dedicated to the great god of the Milesians—pieces so old that they were buried out of sight long before the Father of History trod the streets of that city.

The regular way of digging in Egypt—whether it be for the foundation of a Cairene house, for making a canal, or for finding antiquities—is for a man to chop up the ground with a sort of adze, next to scrape the broken-up earth into a plaited palm-leaf basket with the blade of the adze, and then to deliver it to a small boy to carry away on his head or back. Hence all the excavators are grouped in independent units, each consisting of a man and his boys; there may be only one boy if the earth is left close to where it was dug, or there may be four or five boys or girls to one man, if it has to be carried to any great distance. A great part of the art of excavating consists in grouping these children properly; if anything of intrinsic value is likely to be found, then cross the party, by taking a man of one place and children from another, so that they will not agree to conceal things. If many trifling articles are found, put on a sharp boy who has shown his skill by picking up things before; a really bright fellow will bring in a dozen times as much as a dull one in the course of the day. In all cases the children have to be proportioned to the distances and the class of the work; and this is but one branch of what really requires more attention than anything else—the adjustment and arrangement of the work. Glancing at a group of workers it might seem as if nothing could be altered for the better, but on watching them it will be seen that labour may be economised by some little change in the distribution or order of the work, making a man cut away this patch before that; making a fresh path here, or joining some cuttings there, throwing the waste heap a little to one side or the other, changing the children from hole to hole, or a host of other little points. Often a man will neatly contrive such an order of work as looks very fair, and seems to leave no ground of complaint, but by which he is really doing about two-thirds of his proper allowance. A favourite plan is to cut a hole so deep that the man cannot lift the basket to the boy's head outside the hole, hence each boy waits till the other returns from emptying his basket, in order to be helped up with his own, and thus the man and the boys all do about half their proper work. The cure is to make them cut steps down into the hole, so that each boy can go down and have his basket helped up by the man. Another dodge in a cutting where half-a-dozen children are engaged is for them all to wait until their baskets are all filled, and then go up together singing; they always go slowly when singing, and meanwhile the men stand idle below because there are no baskets; then the children all come down and carry their baskets down with them. Thus they all do half their work, and they are not best pleased when the singing is stopped, each boy or girl is made to go up the moment the basket is filled, and each is ordered to throw down the basket when empty, so that it may be filled ready for them by the time they have got down to the bottom of the hole

again. In short it is necessary to try to imagine some more efficient arrangement of labour before ever being satisfied with what you see going on before your eyes; and the density of the mechanical sense in the Arab mind is such that they will blindly continue any arrangement once begun, though it may afterwards be wasting half of their work to continue it; to adapt their plans to the circumstances is not dreamt of in their philosophy.

Having settled at a good site, and arranged everything in working order, the usual course of a day is much as follows. In the winter we begin an hour after sunrise, to somewhat avoid the thick fogs and raw reeking-wet air; but in the summer at sunrise, with a longer halt at midday. Turning off my blankets about 5 A.M., and slipping into as much clothing as the country requires, I go out with my own overseers or *reises;* they never belong to the place we work in, but are brought with me from a distance, so that their feelings may go more with me than with the people. Out we march, and pick up many of our ragged regiment along the roadside waiting for us, others are already in their holes, and the rule is that every one must be in and ready to begin when I come on the ground. Then name-taking begins, and going round with a wage-book in hand, every worker present has the day of the month entered against his name. Generally some of the hundred or hundred and fifty are absent, and the question goes round, "Where is Ali Basha," or Fatmeh um Ibrahim, or Mohammed Dakrori, as the case may be. "Not here to-day, but here is his brother, only just for one day." Now his brother may be anybody, a man's brethren are as universal as the Mohammedan address, "oh, my brother," which is applicable to any of the faithful. If the proper man is an old hand and a good one, his brother is taken, if not objectionable; but if I want to get rid of him, no brother of his will do. I turn to the tail which always follows me—new hands waiting to be taken on. There stand, anxiously watching me, some dozen or two of men, and a host of children, down to little mites who are almost lost beneath the basket they bear. I look at each; and each looks at me. Then, pitching on the best of them by his face, I call him out, and he springs down into the work, delighted to get on the books. It is worse than useless to take anyone on recommendation, or in fact to listen at all to any person's opinion of any one else. If a man is recommended by another inhabitant it merely means that the recommendor will expect a share of the wages of the recommended. And in order to maintain the honesty of one's own *reises*, it is necessary to let them distinctly know that if they favour or bring forward any one, it merely insures that their *protégé* never has a day's work from that time forward. The only opinion that they may give is one against a man, if they have had him under them for some time; though of course, if asked, they will speak up readily enough. The faces of these people are far the best guide; out of hundreds of workers I never had to dismiss but one that I liked when picking him out; and that one was an excellent fellow, barring an assault on a most irritating small boy, for which he had to go. On the other hand, many men got on the work on different chance occasions, whose looks I did not like, and some of whom I had rejected for weeks; every one of these had to be dismissed after a shorter or longer trial. Having then gone the rounds, directed them all, booked all the names, and started such fresh work as may be needed, after three or four hours, I turn back to the house; and if happy enough to have any helper with me, he comes out to keep the steam up while I am away. Then bath and breakfast set me up for the day. A petroleum stove is invaluable, and the fuel—*gaz*, as they call it—can be had all over Egypt. The quantity of both American and Russian petroleum that is imported into Egypt is astonishing; all the children at a house-building carry the mortar in old tins, and the doors of the fellahs' huts often bear a stamp of "Eclipse sun oil," or some such brand, being made of old boxes knocked to pieces. With an oil stove, and a store of biscuits and tinned food, one is independent of the country; and cooking is reduced to manageable proportions; some fresh vegetables, tomatoes, cucumbers, &c., and fruit, are all that need be marketed for, and eggs are to be had from almost any of the villagers. While at breakfast often a maiden or two from the huts below my house would come up with a batch of eggs in a fold of her dress, and stand and chatter and laugh at the door; then perhaps one would put her head in and turn and whisper to another in wonder at the strange ways and properties of the *khawaga*, or foreigner, which were always a source of amusement. Sometimes they indulged in two visits a day, coming up to ask if I wanted any eggs first, and then coming to bring them afterward; and the smallest joke was cheerfully received. If one of my *reises* came by they would scuttle off at once, for they are accustomed to but

scant courtesy from their own people. This, however, was on the west of the Delta, at Naukratis, near the modern Teh el Barud; the women on that side of the country have far less of the Mohammedan customs, and are never veiled unless they go to the large towns. They are thus unlike the Cairenes, or the people of the eastern side of the Delta, where even the little girls of ten years old are put into face veils. Most wondrously cumbersome their wealth is as thus displayed; one girl who brought up the water to my house at Zoan (about forty miles S.W. of Port Said), wore three gold coins, nearly thirty large silver coins, and a quantity of chains, beads, &c., all across her face, stitched on to the black veil which reached up to her eyes. The unveiled ladies of the west are quite as much patterns of propriety as their veiled sisters on the east, I believe, but they are happily free from a most oppressive custom. Perhaps we should look to some influence from the days of the Greek colonisation there to account for this difference.

Eggs bought, and breakfast done, I go out again to look over all my men, or to work with them in any part where special attention is wanted; and then at noon, or earlier, going to some point from which they can all hear, I sound a blast on a large whistle; from all sides goes up a shout, baskets are tossed up, and away scamper the children to their dinners; some go home, others form groups with the men, and the lettuce and onions and thin dried Arab bread is brought out, and many an invitation I have to join with them as I go about. Generally there is some work to do in putting away antiquities in the house, so I go back to attend to that. The noon rest is not very fixed in its beginning, but they are always allowed a definite amount; an hour in the winter and three hours in the long hot summer days, when they begin at sunrise and finish at sunset. The whistle sounds again, and every one is expected to fall in directly and go on with the work. Once at Zoan they became more and more lazy and dilatory, and tried to put off their return as long as they could; this was cured entirely and for ever by going down to them one day when they did not come up at the whistle, and saying that as they had not come it showed they did not want work, and so there would be none that afternoon, except for a few who were already up. I never had a man late again.

The afternoon is spent in watching the men in different parts, and often working with them if necessary. To keep up a proper activity in the work it is needful to hold the dread of dismissal before them continually. If a man is caught standing still he is noted, and after any further laziness is informed some morning that his services are no longer required. But if he is caught sitting down it is all up with him; he knows he is found out and works extra hard all the rest of the day, but next morning he is paid off. Naturally they try to show their best side when I am about, and hence some care is required to get at the truth. By examining the ground round the work, lines of approach can generally be found, by which it is possible to come near the men under cover; and when coming up, a quiet look at the work without showing more than the top of your head is advisable. They thus learn that the chances are that you will see them before they see you, and a sudden dismissal of any lazy man, when they imagine they have not been watched has a most healthy effect. They show some ingenuity in keeping up appearances; sometimes the children are set to carry empty baskets to and fro while the men do nothing; but even from a distance this may be detected by there not being any little cloud of dust which always rises on emptying a basket; a telescope soon clears up this device, and they suddenly find themselves all dismissed on the spot. Sometimes a boy is posted to give warning when I am coming; but such a plan only insures the dismissal of the whole party, and I always watch the ground carefully as I come up so as to observe if any one sees me. One of the most useful ways of spending a quarter of an hour is to stand quite still at a distance, where all the holes can be seen; and just observe if the baskets come up steadily at all points. If they come up all together in a hole, it shows that the children wait for each other, and so waste both their own time and that of the diggers; and if nothing comes out of a hole for some time, I just rush for it so as to catch them, or else clear out the party next morning.

Beside the detective business over one's own men, there were sometimes sharp steeplechases after Arab dealers. They know that their coming into the work is morally indefensible, and they have an indefinite dread of being identified or caught. As however by law nothing whatever could be done to them, the object is not to catch them, but only to act on their feelings so as to make them flee before you. The way is to walk straight at any suspicious character, openly and ostentatiously; he moves off; you follow; he quickens; you quicken; he doubles; you cross to cut him off; then he fairly bolts; and off you go, with perhaps a furlong be-

tween, across fields, jumping canals, doubling, hiding behind bushes, and so forth; if he once gains a village it is useless to look for him in the houses, so the way is to keep him out in the open for as much time as you can spare for the game; two to four miles is a fair run. This exercise is valuable both morally and physically; the rascals are always laughed at by my diggers for running away, so their habit of flight is worth cultivating. Far more serious matters, however, have to be attended to personally; if a find is expected at any point the work must be continually watched, and if there is a dunce at the hole he is shifted away, and a picked man put on, with special directions. If papyri are possibly to be found the anxiety is great, and the first little flake of tinder is the sign for stopping the men at once and taking up the work myself. Tinder, I say, because there is no chance in Lower Egypt of buried papyri being preserved from rotting unless they have had the good luck to have been carbonised in a conflagration. Then going down into the hole the earth must all be scraped away tenderly with a pocket knife, checking at once if there is the horrible silky rustle of scraping a papyrus; at last the earth is all picked away grain by grain, and there lies a mass of rolls of tinder, here and there burnt to white ash: and the difficulty is to undermine them so as to get them out without their dropping to pieces, for the smallest amount of earth lying on them when they are lifted will break them by its weight. Yet such may be their importance that no labour is too much to give in order to save whatever remains of them. Perhaps a whole lump all matted together can be removed *en bloc*, and carried up to my house for separation of the individual documents; then each wrapped in soft paper, and packed in small tin boxes, they will make the journey to England safely enough. After that the still more tender work begins of peeling leaf from leaf of the crushed rolls, which are generally cracked into separate slips; these slips mounted between sheets of glass then await the attention of some one who can *see* them—for all the writing is merely dull black ink, on noless dull black tinder—and some one who can *read* them. Another exciting business was clearing out the foundation deposits of a building at Naukratis. Under each corner of a building had been placed a set of model tools, &c., along with the founder's name; the building had all vanished, but these deposits in the earth still remained. The first was found by chance, and then at each corner we dug down carefully through some ten feet of earth which had accumulated since the building was destroyed. Coming to the thin line of white sand which had been placed beneath the wall, that was scraped away carefully, and then a small rectangular patch of white sand showed plainly in the dark earth around it. That was the top of a sort of box-shaped hollow filled with sand, which had been poured in over the models. Brushing it aside tenderly with the side of the hand, first a model mortar, then a model hoe, a chisel, an adze, a sacrificial vase, or some other delicate little object would be seen; all the sand as it was removed had to be lifted up in handsful, and rubbed through the fingers, for there were also buried in it chips of the precious stones which were used in adorning the building; scrap by scrap these chips were picked out, obsidian, jasper, turquoise, and lapis-lazuli. All this sort of work is beyond any native care, and such results can only be got by rigorous European supervision. To hack about in an irregular hole and look for gold, with some trifling attention to bronzes, is the Arab's notion of excavating for antiquities.

Another sort of work that must be attended to, is making plans and surveys; a map is the backbone of a research in any place, and no reasonable labour on it is wasted. It is well to have a rough plan as soon as possible, to guide the work, and to mark down on it any particular sites. But all this takes time, and it is almost impossible to do any continuous work of this kind while the men are on one's hands. Copying long inscriptions is also a tedious affair; but a cheerful tediousness, considering the value of the results. Beside this it is always requisite to keep an eye forward, and to have some pieces of work ready planned, to be taken up whenever a man is at liberty; it needs some imagination to invent fresh work continually, which shall have some fair reason for its performance, and some useful connection with what is going on already. All the facts yet known have to be remembered; as far as possible a sort of scheme of the site must be kept floating in the mind, and crystallising day by day as fresh facts turn up; everything that is likely to be found, from analogy with other places, or historical information, should be imagined as fitting in with the fixed data already found; and as many possible combinations have to be considered as in a four-move chess problem, which *may* have no solution.

When sunset comes near, it is time to go round to all the workings where things are likely to have been found, and take in the

spoils. One man hands up, perhaps, a perfect red jar, and some little scraps of figures, and I book in, say, threepence to Sidahmed Abdun; for owing to the scarcity of small change, and the quantity I should need, all the small payments are worked on paper, and settled when they have accumulated. Then at another hole there will be a small bronze figure and a few nails, and fivepence goes down to Mohammed Dafani. Then a boy brings a handful of scraps: one by one I look over them, and chuck them over my shoulder, and perhaps only a couple are worth having, so Mohammed Hassan Dahabiyeh gets a halfpenny to his name. So the selection goes on until sunset. Then the whistle sounds again, and up spring more than a hundred workers from the ground, and cover the plain where a minute before scarcely a sign of life was to be seen. The work over, then comes the saturnalia of the day: a shouting, joking, merry crew of men, and girls, and boys all speed homeward as fast as they can. I lead off at a brisk rate, and away we all go together; a man begins to race me in walking, and we spin along at well over five miles an hour until he makes a spring to keep up, and then he is laughed down for running. A little imp dances along in front, to try to tantalise me into catching him; he tries it once too boldly, a dash, and he is caught, and crows of delight come from his fellow imps behind as they see him tossed aloft. On we sweep to the crazy old bridge, every one tries to seize the inside of the curve round the canal, to be first on the planks; and then, some one way, some another, they file off in the orange twilight to their huts. Many, however, come on to my house; the girls bearing the baskets on their heads full of pottery and small antiquities, and many a child with some scrap, for which he or she hopes to realise the value of a chop of sugar-cane. I stand in my doorway and take in one thing after another until all the clear space on my floor is littered over with rows and heaps of fragments. When the last boy is settled with, they go off chattering, and I am left to pottery, dinner, and my own reflections. There is, however, a quantity of evening work to do, beside my cooking. The finds have to be sorted over, selected and marked, and the rubbish cleared out; plans have to be plotted; and a journal to be written up. Then at last it is well if I get under the blankets eight hours before I must turn out again; for eight hours is none too much after sixteen hours nearly all on foot. Such is a digger's daily life.

But Arabs will not work without money, any more than other men; and I shirk daily payments—the paytime is Saturday afternoon. At first in any place they want their money every evening, but as soon as one's character is established, and they find there is a steady flow of genuine money, they are quite content to take their pay weekly. This is a great saving of time; one of the best known explorers occupies more than an hour every evening of his work in paying off his men; but by booking names daily, which is done during the morning inspection, and in itself does not take a quarter of the time of paying, the accounts can be settled weekly. Beside that the scarcity of small change in Egypt is such, that even weekly I often have to join up a group of men to take gold altogether. On Saturday afternoon then, while the men are at work in their holes, they are paid off; the great advantages of paying while they are at work being that no time is wasted by ninety-nine men waiting while the hundredth is paid, and there is no crowding, confusion, or noise which wastes more time than the paying if they are in a body, and there can be no personation. At one hole I owe a man fifteen piastres (three shillings) for five days wages, and one-and-a-half piastres for things he has found; now it is impossible to get enough piastres in this country to pay every one, if you did you would be in a ceaseless strife over the false and the worn coins; so sixteen-and-a-half piastres I have to pay with one-and-a-half parisis (worth nine-and-a-half piastres each), half a franc (two piastres), and one-and-three-quarter-piastres in copper, which is worth one-seventh of the silver. Another man wants seventeen-and-a-half piastres, perhaps, so he is paid with a Maria Theresa dollar worth sixteen-and-a-half, and an actual silver piastre. Almost anything will pass, and the bulk of the currency is made up of Spanish dollars, Maria Theresa dollars, francs, lire, leis, drachmas, shillings, florins, parises (struck by the Egyptian government, and decried by them), Turkish gold and piastres, copper piastres (also struck by the Egyptian government and repudiated), and finally the silver piastres, which are the government money of account, but which are so largely forged, and so often worn that they are the most troublesome of all to do business with. I say government money of account, because shops keep accounts in current piastres worth half as much, and the petty fruit and vegetable sellers often reckon in copper piastres which are now worth only a seventh, since their repudiation. Now beside the "piastre" meaning three values,

(and lately the term "tariff piastre" has been taken by the country people to mean the current piastre instead of the government piastre), each of the above variety of coinage has two or more rates of exchange, the town rate and the country rate, and particular coins are in favour in particular places. Hence it is not so easy to pay your way in Egypt, even if you have the sinews of excavating in your money bag. A considerable part of a native's education consists in knowing the values of all the money that he may be lucky enough to get. There is a large number of Jews and Greeks who live entirely out of the fluctuations of exchange, and the intricacies of the currency. The government has its own rates of exchange at which all coins are taken for taxes and payments, and in this way either the subordinates or the head office make a good profit out of the necessities of the population, for payments must be made, and there is not enough government money in circulation to pay with; hence francs and other money must be used, at a loss to the taxed and a similar gain to the taxer. One little slice of the misgovernment of Egypt.

Beside all the digging work there are the happy days of prospecting, when you cast aside dull care, load up your donkey, and tramp off across the country day after day. This is a most delightful life, in a perfect climate where there is no rain to be feared, and no cold winds to be dreaded, for such is Egypt in the spring; one donkey easily carries a small tent, about seven feet by eight, a roll of blankets, a petroleum stove, a canvas saddle-bag with a store of provisions in it, and often a small boy on the top of all to drive the beast, looking at a little distance exactly as if he and the donkey were all trussed up together, ready for roasting, with the two tent poles sticking out crosswise from the mass. Then with a trusty Arab, whom you know, you can tramp over the hard mud roads, along the canals with the fragrant *sont* trees overhanging the path, through the bean and clover fields, and over the dusty plains. Mound after mound is seen on the dead-flat horizon, and visited. Sometimes nothing promising may appear, at other times some strange and unexpected find, and continually you see heaps of ruins of the towns of former days, which seem only to need you to put the spade in to turn up almost anything you can dream of. No wonder that a people living in such a country have their heads full of treasure and jinns, a country where continually peasants find what is equivalent to several years wages, and where you often hear of some man having been enriched by finding a donkey-load of gold. A most intelligent station-master, who had had a European education, told me of a Copt at Eshmunen (near Roda) who could get the treasures there hidden whenever he wished. On Fridays, at noon, when all the faithful are devoutly at their prayers in the mosques, or hearing the sermon, this son of an infidel, this Nuzrani, goes to the top of the desolate heap of ruins. There amid the wilderness of dust and potsherds he calls on the spirit of the treasure, and as he calls a door is opened. Inside there stand heaps of untold, illimitable, gold; but his time is short, in a few minutes the door will close again, and hurriedly he snatches out as much coin as he can, great gold pieces. Once, in his greed, he tarried too long, stuffing in gold like Alcmæon in the treasury of Crœsus, the door began to shut, and he only just fled out, but with a cut in his heel. Yes, it is all quite true, for the station-master saw the wound, and now he is a very rich man with all the gold he has gotten.

One amusing, but fatiguing way of travelling is to put up for the night at the village sheikh's. If you have the luck to light on a rich man you will probably have to sit up on the dais in the gateway, and hear some cases finished off in the dusk, for your host is magistrate of his village. At one end squats the clerk, reading over by a flickering lantern light the report of all the cases which he has drawn up, the sheikh putting in a correction now and then, which sometimes leads to a long discussion; meanwhile some other case is being heard by scraps, and finishes in this fashion: "You must pay a napoleon." "But I cannot, I have not got the money." "Well, then, three dollars." "But I cannot possibly pay it." "Then your brother must." Some bystander puts in: "He really is very poor, they certainly can't pay that." "Very well, then, two dollars, give me the money." "But I have not two dollars belonging to me." And after a long wrangle the big man is content with a fine of one dollar, and that to be paid next morning. At last, after almost going to sleep hearing the interminable drone of the old clerk, and the buzz of the busybodies, there is a welcome break up and some prospect of dinner, for it would be a mortal offence to set about cooking your own provisions if you go to a big man's house for shelter, and though you may have been on foot since sunrise, you must sit up in hunger and patience for a couple of hours of darkness before any food can be had. You may be

served with a table all to yourself, in French fashion—according to their ideas—if in an over-civilised place, or you may be asked to sit at the round table, where sits the sheikh or bey himself, his sons, his clerks and bailiffs, yourself, and your donkey boy, all around, each tearing off a leg or a wing of a fowl, and grabbing handsful of rice from the great dish to stuff in his mouth. Perhaps the backgammon board will come out afterwards, and a few games fill another hour before you turn in for the night. All this is wearisome after a long day's work, and the strain of having to talk and understand Arabic for hours, and make up conversation that shall be both interesting and intelligible, is not restful. On the whole it is far better to stick to your own tent and stove, and your independence; pitch where you like, feed when you like, and have a long night's rest after your fifteen or twenty miles' walk. Towards sunset you pick out a clean piece of ground near some village or town, and then with your man in a few minutes the tent is up, and everything inside; get a pan of water, light the stove, and go for a stroll while it is boiling up; if stopping near a Bedawi settlement you will be asked to dinner, and if you decline probably a big tray of fowls and rice and bread will be brought down in the dark, with perhaps some son of the sheikh come to dine with you. A few tins of jam make an excellent return for this. I have known a young Arab quietly save up the spoonsful of raspberry jam to which I helped him; when asked why, he said it was for the harem. So if you give a supply it is pretty certain to go through the tenthold, and thus put your name in good favour all round. One of the best forms of *bakhshish* in return for considerable help or services from well-to-do people is silver plate, and it is well to have some silver spoons (forks are useless to people who use their fingers), and a silver cup or two, if you expect to be thrown much on the assistance of sheikhs. The rule of the country is that when money cannot be given, some present of about equal or rather greater value is to be made, and your character will not stand very well if you behave unreasonably in this respect. But for small matters a most kindly spirit may be found among the country people. I have known a man insist on my riding his donkey across two miles of marsh, while he plowtered through on foot, and at the end stoutly refuse to take anything, even for his children, baring his wrist and showing the cross as his reason for dealing thus with a fellow Christian. He was a Copt.

If ever Egypt is to stand alone it must be on a Coptic basis. That race—the real Egyptians—who have for twelve hundred years held their creed against every persecution and in spite of a domineering fanaticism—has in it more vitality than is dreamt of in England. If no foreign influence is brought to bear against them, and real liberty be established in the country, the Copts will by sheer force of character and intellect rise to the top. They have in spite of everything been all through at the top of the civil service, with nothing but the foreign military caste and its dependents above them, simply by brain power. A people who—as I have seen—will in an out-of-the-way province, apart from all foreign influence, train up their children so that large numbers of boys at twelve years old can talk and read English and French fluently, without ever having seen a foreigner to speak to, have in them a foresight, a determination, a perseverance, and an intelligence which must meet their due reward sooner or later. Yet these were the people whom, under the cry of Egypt for the Egyptians, were hourly expecting to be massacred, and prayed night and day in their churches until they heard their answer in the clatter of English horse-hoofs, and went out, a free people once more, to welcome their deliverers. It is sometimes said that a Copt is a worse rascal than an Arab. Well, given a man four times as clever, he must be only one quarter as bad if he does not cheat worse than his neighbour. From all that I have heard and seen of actual dealings with individual Copts they strike one as far less grasping, more kindly, and as being truer gentlemen, than the race which has decimated them, and held them under the lash these many centuries. Of course a Copt is an eastern, and many of his ways would not be those of a western, we must not condemn him because he is unlike an English Christian, any more than we should condemn a Mohammedan for not comparing well with an English Unitarian. They all stand on a different plane to ourselves, in some respects higher, in others lower, and to civilise them—as we imagine—by westernising them, is simple ruin to their character; you take away all that is natural and genuine, and substitute an artificial form of a most artificial civilisation.

The country people or *fellahin* are a cheerful and kind-hearted race in general, compounded in varying proportions from a Coptic and Bedawi ancestry, according to whether the Egyptians in each place were driven out or forced into Mohammedanism at the conquest by 'Amr in the seventh century. In some

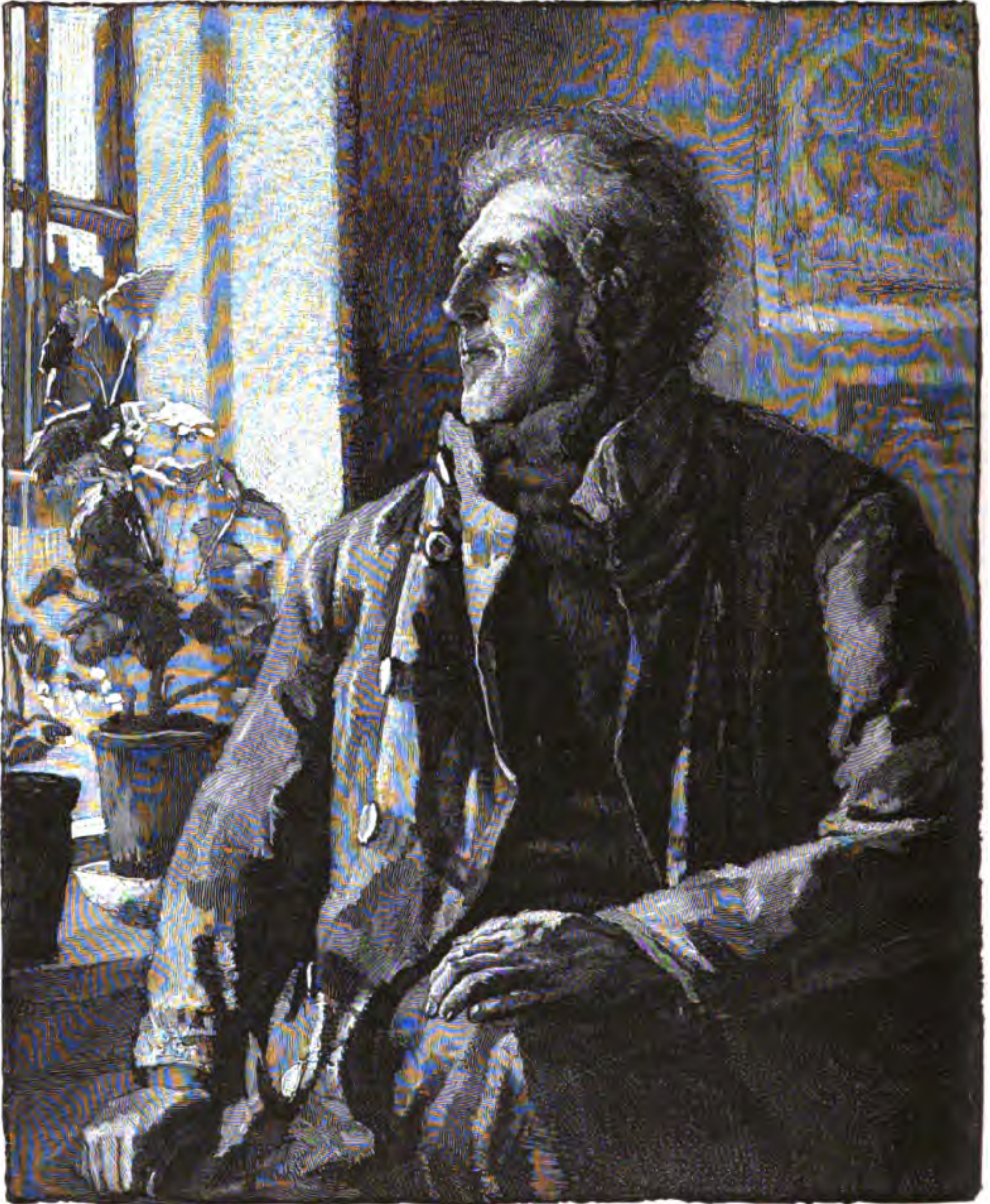
parts of Upper Egypt the people are nearly pure Egyptian, many large villages of Copts also remaining among them, while in the Delta Copts are scarce, and the people have probably as much Arab as Coptic blood in them. The one way to the fellah's respect is absolute firmness, and the one way to his goodwill is a good joke; but bright as he may be so long as he is under, he is intolerable if he gets the upper hand. An Arab or a Turk can bear being in authority, but there is no worse tyrant over his fellow-countrymen, and no more avaricious and unscrupulous leech than a fellah sheikh.

After reading of the work some one may ask where all the things found go to, and all the means come from. The antiquities go to the British Museum; Boston, U.S.A., and to various country museums, and abroad. As for the means, some hundreds of the British and American public, who like to have cities found and dug up, and like to receive reports on them, see to that side of the business by helping the Egypt Exploration Fund, and for every subscription sent there is more than half its value of voluntary labour added in the administration of it. Any one who may wish to hear more archæological details of the work had better write to one of the honorary secretaries.[1] But the exploration of Egypt needs men as well as money. Is there no hope of a Murchison of antiquities arising, of one of the squirearchy of England finding as much pleasure in hunting up cities as in hunting down stags, in potting pots of treasure as in potting birds? There are plenty of men in this country too rich to work, and too strong to be idle; surely to dig up history in Egypt is as interesting as a continuous round of salmon fishing in Norway or buffalo shooting in America. There is beside the attraction of studying and managing some hundred or two of one's fellow creatures, and that is no mean matter, and a taste that grows with habit. Some qualifications are requisite, but more of nature than of learning, and happily the most important of them are easily found in the race which governs so many others. We devote a farthing in the pound of our national income to keeping up a museum, but not a hundredth of that farthing to carrying on work to replenish that museum. All this is left to private enterprise, and may private enterprise look well to it.

Egypt is not at a standstill at present; it it is moving faster, for better or for worse, than it ever moved before. And this is true of its antiquities as well as of other things; the ancient cities are being in the present day dug away and their earth spread on the ground as a fertiliser; and this is going on at such a rate that some have almost entirely disappeared already, and fields of corn have taken their place, others are diminished to half the size they were a generation or two back, and are still diminishing every day. And the time does not seem very far distant when scarcely a site of a city will be able to be identified. Certainly Egypt will have exhausted its antiquity-fields before England exhausts its coal-fields. And up the Nile tombs are opened every year, and fewer left to be discovered. In one sense we are only just beginning to explore Egypt, and the treasure seems to us inexhaustible, but that is only because of the puny scale of our attack from the scientific side; in another, and terribly true, sense Egypt is exhausting itself, the natives are ceaselessly digging, and unless we look to it pretty quickly the history of the country will have perished before our eyes, by the destructive activity of its inhabitants. Never before has that land of monuments been so fiercely worked on, daily and hourly the spoils of ages past are ransacked, and if of marketable value are carried off; but whether preserved or not is a small matter compared with the entire loss of their connection and history which always results in this way. If we are not to incur the curse of posterity for our Vandalism and inertness, we must be up and doing in the right way.

W. M. FLINDERS PETRIE.

[1] Miss A. B. Edwards, Westbury-on-Trym, Bristol, or R. S. Poole, Esq., LL.D., British Museum.



JOE VERRILL, A NORTH-COUNTRY FISHERMAN.

Engraved by O. LACOUR, *from a Drawing by* NELLY ERICHSEN.

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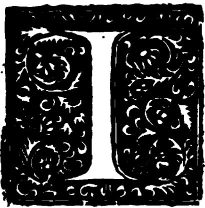
MY FRIEND JIM.

CHAPTER I.



REMEMBER it all as clearly as if it had happened yesterday afternoon. It is one of those little scenes which, without being specially significant or suggestive, manage somehow or other to imprint themselves upon the memory, and which remain there while so many hundreds of others fade away and vanish, as the years go on. When I closed my eyes for a moment just now the whole thing came back to me—the dark, musty-smelling study, with one broad sunbeam stretching right across it from the window; Bracknell, Jim, and I standing close together beside the high, empty fireplace; old Lord Staines, looking uncommonly smart and spruce (as he always did in those days), a flower in his buttonhole, and a smile of serene beatitude on his handsome face; and my tutor blinking through his spectacles and addressing himself, after his customary fashion, to no one in particular.

"I shall be sorry to lose these three fellows," says he. "They aren't bad fellows, you know, taking them all round, and I fancy they will succeed as well in the world as they have succeeded at Eton. Yes, just about as well. Bracknell—well, I don't see what more could have been asked of Bracknell than that he should get into the eleven, and avoid getting into any serious scrapes. He is good-looking, he is good-natured, and from time to time I have even observed gleams of—er—intelligence in him. Bracknell will do; he will adorn his station. Well, then, Maynard. Maynard is clever, if not quite so clever as he thinks himself. I hardly expect him to set the Thames on fire; but I hope his mother will never have reason to be ashamed of him, and I have written to her, telling her that I consider him my show pupil. More than I ought to have said, perhaps, but there's no fear of her disbelieving me. As for Leigh (here my tutor took a few steps forward and patted Jim on the shoulder), what is to be said about you, Leigh? In classics you are but moderate; in mathematics I understand that you are also moderate; you're not in the eleven; you're not in the eight; I doubt very much whether you would be in the boats at all if you hadn't so many friends. In short, Leigh, you are mediocre. But you're the best fellow of the lot, all the same. And, that being so," added my tutor, looking up with a queer, kindly smile at the young giant who towered nearly a head and shoulders above him, "I should be inclined to prophesy, Leigh, that you will always have plenty of friends, and that you will possibly be—er—more or less imposed upon all your life long."

Lord Staines broke out into laughter at this rather cynical prediction. "We'll look after him," said he; "we'll see that you aren't imposed upon, Leigh."

And I dare say he thought himself quite capable of so doing, although his own career might not have recommended him to an impartial person as being the fittest man in the world to undertake that task. He had always taken a good-humoured and somewhat patronising interest in Jim, whose father and mother were both dead, whose small property adjoined his more extensive one in Berkshire, and who—above all—was his boy's friend. He thought very well of the lad, and indeed was kind enough to say as much there and then. As for Jim's being "the best of the

lot," that of course was only a joke. It is not in the least likely that Lord Staines would have been angry with any one who should have seriously declared Jim to be Bracknell's superior. When one is fortunate enough to be the owner of a Derby winner one is not quite so silly as to lose one's temper with a man for proclaiming his own steady, useful roadster to be the more valuable animal of the two.

Poor old Lord Staines was a fond and foolish father, no doubt. I have heard him so described with such wearisome frequency that I should very much like to contradict the statement if I could. That being impossible, I will only venture to assert that there were excuses for him. Everything leads me to believe that if I had a son as handsome, as muscular, as recklessly brave and jolly, and devil-may-care as Bracknell was in those days, I should be proud of him. These attributes may or may not constitute a legitimate cause for parental pride; but I suppose it will hardly be denied that they usually excite it. At the same time, it must be admitted that Lord Staines was a little bit outrageous in his crowing and chuckling, and one can't wonder that some of his friends laughed at him, while others found him rather a bore. Whenever there was a cricket match on he would collect as many cronies as he could induce to accompany him, and would drag them down to Eton to watch his boy bowling and slogging. He himself never wearied of this delightful spectacle, and could not understand that it might eventually pall upon others. He kept Bracknell supplied with plenty of pocket money, laughing good-humouredly at the rapidity with which it was spent. I don't suppose that he even minded much when certain longish bills were sent in to him by the Windsor and Eton tradesmen, some of whom respectfully intimated that they had not been paid for three years. He, too, had always been open-handed, careless and extravagant; probably he thought it only natural that his son and heir should resemble him, and if by any chance he ever considered the effect of two generations of extravagance upon a not very magnificent rent-roll, he doubtless said to himself that some day Bracknell would marry a woman with money, and that then it would be all right. Such was the course which he had adopted, and it had answered admirably. That is to say that he had not, at the time of which I am speaking, yet reached the last shilling of his late wife's fortune.

He was, at any rate, evidently free from misgivings on that last day of Bracknell's Eton life; for he was literally brimming over with contentment and goodwill. He shook hands with us warmly when the time came for us to wish him good-bye, repeating to us both again and again that, although our friend's path in life would no longer be the same as our own (for Bracknell was to join the 4th Life Guards immediately, while Jim and I were to proceed in due course to Oxford), yet we were on no account to imagine that our friendship was at an end.

"We shall all meet at Staines Court before long. Well, perhaps not next autumn, because I shall be in Scotland until rather late in the year; but some time, you know—some time. And Bracknell will run down to Oxford and look you up. Or why not join us in the north, both of you? Are you fond of stalking? Never tried it? Well, well, everything must have a beginning. Bracknell is as fine a shot for his years as I ever saw. Now mind, we shall count upon seeing you. Good-bye, my dear fellows, good-bye."

Then he hurried off to Goodwood, taking Bracknell with him, and, I should think, forgot our existence with very great celerity.

I remember that, after we had seen the last of them, Jim said, with a sigh, "What a splendid fellow he is!" and was quite angry with me for pretending to think that he alluded to old Staines. I never shared Jim's enthusiastic admiration for Bracknell; but then I am not of an enthusiastic temperament, and have a quick eye (so, at least, I am assured) for any blemishes that may disfigure the characters of my friends. At all events, I thought I had discovered some blemishes in Bracknell's character, and that selfishness was one of them and fickleness another. My impression certainly was that he would trouble himself very little more about us from the moment that circumstances ceased to throw us together; and I have much pleasure in admitting that therein I did him an injustice. We did not, of course, take advantage of that somewhat vague invitation to become Lord Staines's guests in the Highlands; but a few months later Bracknell redeemed his father's promise that he should look us up at Oxford, and, falling in with many other old Etonians there, had such a gay and uproarious time of it that he was easily persuaded to repeat his visit at an early date. Indeed, during the following two years, he used to make periodical descents upon Christ Church, where a band of choice spirits was ever ready to welcome him, and where his arrival was invariably the signal

for a bear-fight upon an unusually extensive scale. On the ensuing day Bracknell would return to London, leaving poor Jim to face the college authorities, who, however, generally let him off easily. I fancy they knew pretty well that he was sure, under all circumstances, to be made the scapegcat; moreover, it really was not in human nature —no, not even in donnish nature—to be hard upon Jim Leigh.

Every now and again Jim would get leave to go up to London for a day, whence he would return a little pale and fagged, but quite delighted with the hospitality of the officers of the 4th Life Guards, whose existence, according to his account, would appear to have been a merry one. I can't speak of it from personal knowledge. Bracknell never asked me to visit him in London; nor did I participate in the bear-fights to which allusion has been made. For one thing, I was a reading man, and for another, I couldn't have ventured to run the risk of being rusticated and breaking my mother's heart. Jim, as I have mentioned before, was an orphan, and the worst that could have happened to him would have been no such serious matter in his case.

On attaining the age of one-and-twenty he was duly placed in possession of his estate, together with personal property which, I believe, made his income up to something over five thousand a year; so that he was in all senses of the word independent. At his request, however, his uncle and aunt who had resided at Elmhurst throughout his long minority, consented to remain there until he should marry; an event which I had reason to think might not be very remote. But this was a profound secret. Jim had let me into it because from our earliest boyhood he had had no secrets from me; but to not another soul had he spoken of his hopes—least of all to the lady who was the object of them.

I should be very glad to be able to write of Hilda Turner with perfect impartiality; for were that in my power I should probably convey a far better idea of her to the reader, who if he had met her in the flesh would doubtless have been fascinated by her, as most people were, and might even have fallen in love with her, as a great many did. But the simple truth is that I never could endure the girl; and so my evidence must be taken for whatever that of a prejudiced witness may be worth. I have, at any rate, no hesitation in allowing that she was extremely pretty, although her beauty was not of a regular order, and that her manners were charming, although they did not happen to charm me. She was one of those very fair people whose complexions are of the clearest white, the bloom upon whose cheeks is of the most delicate and exquisite pink, and who seldom become wrinkled before they reach extreme old age. I am told that these enviable peculiarities are due to thickness of the epidermis, and I have sometimes fancied that persons so gifted are apt also to be endued with a certain mental toughness of hide which may perhaps be of some assistance in preserving the smoothness of their brows. But I don't insist upon that point. Hilda had golden hair and blue eyes, and if everybody had teeth like hers the dentists would be driven to find another occupation. To be sure when you began to criticise there were plenty of faults to be found with her face. Her nose, for instance, was too short, her jaw was too square, and her lips were a trifle too thin. I remember once pointing out these defects to my mother, who shook her head, and said that if I expected perfection I should have some difficulty in finding a wife. Certain it is that I am unmarried still (though not, I think, on account of the cause assigned), but I am very sure that my mother would have chosen that I should remain a bachelor to my dying day rather than that I should fall in love with Hilda Turner.

I suppose that never since the world began did there live quite so poor a judge of character as my dear mother. Partly from having seen very little of the bad side of human nature—for she has been a confirmed invalid, unable to put a foot to the ground, almost from the time of my birth—partly from her unquestioning faith in the wisdom and mercy of an overruling Providence, which causes her to take an optimistic view of everything, her own constant sufferings included; partly, too, from the natural sweetness of her disposition, which renders her, I do believe, incapable of conceiving that any one can be intentionally wicked, she habitually regards others as she wishes them to be, and by no means as they actually are. Yet I recollect that upon one occasion she gave me to understand, with a good deal of circumlocution and hesitation, that she feared Hilda Turner was not an entirely straightforward girl. What her grounds were for formulating this tremendously severe charge I could not induce her to divulge; but I suspect that she had caught the young lady in an unequivocal fib. I could have told her that that was no uncommon occurrence, but I never did tell her such things when I

could help it, because the only effect of my doing so was to give her unnecessary pain.

If she had some misgiving about Hilda, she had none at all about Hilda's father, the rector of the parish, of whom she always spoke as "good Mr. Turner." Good Mr. Turner was—not to mince matters—an ass. There was no harm in him. He pottered about the parish, did a little work, preached us a sermon once a week, which had at least the merit of brevity, and was benevolent in a passive sort of way. Hilda ruled him—I won't say with a rod of iron, for no such formidable weapon could possibly have been required for so gentle a creature; but at any rate she ruled him absolutely.

Our neighbourhood not being a very thickly inhabited one, the few families who lived within a mile or two of each other were naturally intimate. Hilda and Jim and I had grown up from childhood together as companions, and when the Henleys were at Staines Court we also saw a good deal of Bracknell and his sister. However, after Lady Staines's death, the great house was generally empty. Lord Staines was always in London or in Scotland, or at Newmarket, or at some other of the resorts where he spent his money so freely, and it was only at rare intervals that quiet little Lady Mildred would come down for a week or so, attended by her governess and accompanied by one of the aunts who looked after her. She was a demure little mouse of a thing, with bright brown eyes, which saw a good deal more than was commonly supposed, and as kind a heart as ever beat; but as she was rather shy, and had a way of keeping her opinions to herself, nobody noticed her much. She and Hilda were by way of being friends, although it is scarcely possible that there can have been any real sympathy between them, and when Hilda was in her nineteenth year, Mildred's aunt, Lady Petworth, very good-naturedly invited the rector's daughter to spend a season with her in London, and presented her at Court.

"I rejoice," Mr. Turner used to say, in his placid, deliberate way, "that dear Hilda has kept up her friendship with Lady Mildred. I have encouraged it (I dare say he really thought that his encouragement might be a factor in the question) both because refined companionship cannot but be beneficial to the young, and because I feel that it is desirable that she should see something of—well of the best society of the day."

Doubtless Hilda also felt the latter result of her intercourse with Lady Mildred to be highly desirable. As for the refined companionship, I dare say she might have made shift to do without that at a pinch.

I can't tell whether it was after Miss Turner's introduction to the "best society of the day" that Jim first discovered how desperately he was in love with her; but it was about that time that—to my sorrow, though not to my surprise—he made me acquainted with the state of his feelings. It was not, however, until more than a year later, when we had both bidden farewell to Oxford, that matters approached a crisis. Up to then Jim's attentions had been of a most modest and tentative order. He had a poor opinion of his personal charms and preferred the agony of suspense to the risk of rejection. I am afraid I must plead guilty to having encouraged his diffidence. To confess the truth, I thought it was upon the cards that so captivating a young lady as Miss Turner might chance upon somebody in London whose claims to her regard might be greater than poor Jim's. But such did not prove to be the case. Five thousand a year is not a colossal income, yet, if you will take the trouble to run over the list of your acquaintances, you will find that the bachelors who possess as much are in a small minority; and it seems possible that Hilda may have made that calculation.

And so, one fine hot month of July, when Cranfield Rectory, embosomed among its spreading trees, looked the very spot for the enacting of a pastoral idyll; when the great level lawns at Staines Court were gay with flowers, which there was nobody but the gardeners to admire, and when our own humble domain was, as my mother, who took immense pride in it declared, "quite a show," it came to pass that two young people were constantly to be seen, riding or walking together among the lanes and woods, of whom it might be said that they formed a very handsome couple. Not that our big-boned, broad-shouldered Jim, with his hook nose, his quiet grey eyes and that large mouth of his, which, upon the smallest provocation, would widen itself into a smile extending from ear to ear, was strictly speaking a handsome man, but perhaps he was near enough being so to justify the above good-natured description, which was uttered by many persons, the Reverend Simeon Turner included. The Reverend Simeon was not ambitious. A son-in-law with five thousand a year, a high moral character, and a malleable disposition was good enough for him.

I was then about to be called to the Bar,

and was busy reading law, a study which I thought at the time, and think still, to be among the most repulsive that a moderately intelligent human being can bring his mind to bear upon. One afternoon, while I was sitting with somebody's *Common Law Procedure*, and I forget whose *Precedents of Pleadings* open before me, Jim lounged into my den and, seating himself sideways upon the table, remarked that he was the happiest fellow in Christendom, or something to that effect.

When you know that your friend is absolutely bent upon making a fool of himself the very stupidest thing in the world is to tell him so. I endeavoured to look delighted and said, "Has she accepted you, then?"

"Well, no," he answered; "she hasn't exactly accepted me, for the reason that I haven't asked her; but I think it will be all right. Harry, old chap, I don't know what I have done to deserve such luck!"

Nor did I. I am quite sure that he had never done anything to deserve it; but the thing had come upon him nevertheless; and, after all, one sees many prisoners who hug their chains contentedly. "And why," I inquired, "haven't you proposed to her?"

Jim laughed. "I'm such a duffer!" he replied. "It takes me a long time to get under way, and when I am coming to the point she always manages somehow or other to put me off. Well, it doesn't much matter; there's no hurry, you know."

"None whatever," I agreed, thinking to myself that, so long as the fatal words remained unspoken, there was always just the ghost of a hope left for him.

And then he threw himself into my armchair, lighted a cigar and began to rhapsodise after a fashion which it would be as tedious to write about as to read.

CHAPTER II.

It was at this somewhat critical juncture that Lord Staines took it into his head to come down to Staines Court, with the avowed intention of remaining there for a considerable time. His arrival, which had been preceded by that of his French cook, his house-steward, his groom of the chambers, and heaven only knows how many other domestic functionaries (for his style of living had always been far in excess of that warranted by his income), caused quite a little stir in the vicinity, and set everybody conjecturing as to its causes. What these were was revealed to us the next morning by Lady Mildred, who lost no time in walking over to see my mother.

"Papa has been very unlucky this year," she said, in her gentle, matter-of-course way. "First of all, his horse lost the Derby by a head, as you know——"

"My dear," interrupted my mother, "I am afraid I know nothing about the Derby, except that it is a race which takes place every spring."

"No, you wouldn't. But papa knows a great deal about it, and even I know something. Premier must have won if he had not been interfered with. It was nobody's fault, but it was poor papa's misfortune; and since then he has been unlucky at Ascot also. So there is to be no yachting this summer, and we are going to remain here quietly and ask hardly anybody to stay with us."

"It is an ill wind that blows nobody any good," remarked my mother; "it will be a great pleasure to the young people to have you near them. And, perhaps," she added meditatively, "these losses may prove a blessing in disguise to Lord Staines if they induce him to leave off betting on horse-races, which I cannot think right. Because, you see, if one man wins money others must lose it."

Lady Mildred admitted that that was probably the case, but doubted whether the losers were often prevailed upon to give up the game. "As for me," she said, "I would always rather be at Staines Court than anywhere else; and Bracknell is coming down in a few days, so that it will be quite like old times again. But I am afraid he will find it too dull to stay long."

"Oh, but he will have plenty of companions," said my mother, in the innocence of her heart. "There is Harry, you know, and Jim Leigh, and Hilda Turner."

Lying there upon her sofa year after year, day following day, with no change or the possibility of it, it was difficult for her to realise how quickly boys and girls become men and women. The boy, it is said, is father to the man, and one must assume, by parity of reasoning, that the girl is mother to the woman. The theory is a somewhat discouraging one, when considered, but I am bound to confess that my own observation tends to confirm it. When my tutor predicted that Bracknell would adorn his station, I take it that he spoke with a spice of that good-humoured malice in which he sometimes permitted himself to indulge. Bracknell at the age of twenty-three was

probably very much what my tutor had anticipated that he would be. He was one of the handsomest young men about London; he was immensely in request with that class who have come to be known in these latter days as the "smart people"; his *affaires de cœur* had been numerous and a trifle ostentatious; he was owner, or part owner, of several horses which had achieved a certain celebrity; and he was pretty deeply in debt. I should be puzzled to say what good qualities he possessed beyond that of pluck, but I do not in the least wonder at his great popularity. Jim, who persisted in regarding him as a bright particular star, was overjoyed on hearing that he proposed to honour our quiet neighbourhood with his presence for a time, and it struck me that Hilda's eyes glistened when this cheering intelligence was conveyed to her.

We all—that is, the Turners, Jim and myself—were invited to dine at Staines Court on the evening of his arrival; and I declare that we had not been seated at the table for five minutes before it was perfectly clear to me that Miss Hilda intended to make him her captive. What put this beyond a doubt was the obstinacy with which she declined to have anything to say to him. Lord Staines, who took her in to dinner, was obviously depressed and preoccupied when we sat down; but Hilda put forth all her very considerable powers of pleasing, and by the time that the fish was removed she had contrived to put her neighbour in the best of good spirits. No man was more truly appreciative of feminine beauty and wit than Lord Staines. Meanwhile, Bracknell, who had old Turner on his right hand, speedily realised that he had a very charming person on his left; and it was not a little amusing to see the look of blank astonishment which overspread his features when, after repeated attempts to attract Hilda's notice, it dawned upon him that she really preferred his father's conversation to his own. I suppose that never before in his life had he known a charming person display such extraordinary taste. In vain he brought his ingenuous arts to bear upon her, and forced her to look round while he shot languishing glances full into her eyes. The glances failed to arouse any response; she gave him politely but plainly to understand that his interruptions were unwelcome, answered him with a few monosyllables or a faint smile, and immediately turned away to resume her remarks to Lord Staines, who was evidently much tickled by the discomfiture of his heir-apparent.

Jim all this time was very pleasantly engaged in talking over bygone days with Lady Mildred, only every now and again his eyes wandered to Hilda and rested upon her with a ridiculous look of pride and affection. Doubtless he was thinking how good it was of her to take so much trouble to amuse the old gentleman at the head of the table. As for the Reverend Simeon and myself, we ate our dinner, which was an excellent one, and nobody took the smallest notice of us.

Later in the evening, when we assembled in the drawing-room, Lord Staines became grave and silent once more, black Care having, I presume, recalled herself to his memory. Very soon he murmured some excuse and slipped away—perhaps to try and establish a balance between revenue and expenditure in his study. Lady Mildred had some photographs to show to Jim, who may or may not have been as interested in them as he professed to be; Mr. Turner, for lack of a more worthy listener, was fain to favour me with his views upon the subject of secular education; and while he was expounding these at some length, I saw exactly what I had expected to see. Bracknell seated himself upon a sofa beside Hilda, who put up her fan and received him with a side glance which was half supercilious, half encouraging. He began to address her in a low tone of remonstrance. Presumably he was begging to be informed why she had treated him with such marked coolness, for presently I heard her reply, laughing slightly, "I wouldn't press that point if I were you, Lord Bracknell. If you do, perhaps I may ask for your version of certain stories that I heard about you in London."

"What stories?" he returned eagerly. "Depend upon it, there wasn't a word of truth in them. Surely you don't believe all you are told?" And so forth, and so forth.

The remainder of the colloquy was carried on in such subdued accents that the eloquence of the Reverend Simeon, who was standing very close to me and emphasising his periods by repeated taps upon my shirt-front with his forefinger, drowned it. But, indeed, I was not curious to hear more. How many times, I wonder, has that selfsame dialogue been conducted in identical terms since the world began, and how many times will it be repeated before the human race becomes extinct? Generally, I think, about five to ten minutes elapse before the point is reached when the lady invites unreserved confession as the preliminary to possible absolution; and then

the man tells her—well, I suppose he sometimes tells her the truth, though I should imagine that that is a rare case. What Bracknell said to Hilda, after they had moved away slowly towards the open French window, through which they presently vanished, I have no idea, nor can it be of the smallest consequence. What I do know is that they were absent for the best part of an hour, and that long before the expiration of that time Jim had grown fidgety, Lady Mildred was looking anxious, Mr. Turner had fallen sound asleep, and this humble chronicler was well-nigh worn out with desperate efforts to sustain a conversation which flickered and died the moment that it was left alone.

At length Lord Staines returned. He had been making hay with his hair, from which I concluded that he had failed to discover any arithmetical process by which the greater can be subtracted from the less; and unless I greatly misjudged him, his inward ejaculation on seeing us was, "What! not gone yet!" But he was far too polite to utter any words to that effect, and he discoursed amiably until Bracknell and Hilda re-appeared, which they did without the least symptom of embarrassment on either side. Then old Turner woke up suddenly, rubbed his hands and said that they had had a delightful evening, but that they really mustn't keep the carriage waiting any longer; whereupon we all wished one another good-night with much alacrity, and the party broke up.

Jim's dog-cart was at the door, and he had promised to give me a lift home; but as I was putting on my overcoat in the hall, he followed me and said, "Do you mind waiting a quarter of an hour, Harry? I should like to smoke a cigar with Bracknell before we go."

Of course I replied that I didn't mind at all, and accordingly we adjourned to the smoking-room, whither Lord Staines did not accompany us. I don't think I have ever met any one quite so straightforward as Jim. It never occurred to him to approach any subject by a little introductory beating about the bush, as almost all of us do. If he had anything to say to you, you might be quite certain that he would say every word of it, and lose no time about doing so either. His cigar was hardly alight before he had explained matters to Bracknell in the most unequivocal language.

"Look here, Bracknell, old chap," said he, "I don't want you to flirt with Hilda Turner. We are all friends here, so I don't mind telling you that I mean to ask her to be my wife, though I'd rather you didn't speak about it to any one else just yet."

Something in this announcement seemed to tickle Bracknell amazingly; for his mirth was so immoderate and so prolonged that Jim felt constrained at last to add: "It isn't a joke."

"Oh yes, it is, my dear boy," returned the other, still laughing: "It's a first-rate joke, if you could only see it. Be advised by me, Jim, and drop that young woman like a hot potato. She's not the wife for you."

"That's as may be," rejoined Jim quietly; "but at all events she is not the wife for you."

"I should rather think she wasn't! The wife for me is a lady with 50,000*l*. of her own. Of course it would be desirable that she should have more; but 50,000*l*. is the irreducible minimum; the governor has just been telling me so. By the way, do you think the fair Hilda is going to accept you?"

Jim, with a becoming blush, admitted that he was sanguine.

"Well, she *may*. Five thousand a year is not to be sneezed at in these hard times; and I suppose you're worth all that, aren't you?"

Jim got up and leant with his back against the mantelpiece. "Do you know, Bracknell," said he, "I don't like that way of talking. I am sure you have no intention of hurting my feelings; but, you see, it isn't pleasant to me to hear Hilda spoken of"—

"As if she resembled other women? All right, Jim; I'll spare your feelings for the future, and I don't think I'll marry Miss Turner, thank you. I suppose I may sometimes speak to her, though?"

"Of course you may," replied Jim, quite gravely. "If you tell me that you won't flirt with her, that's all I want. Only, don't you see what I mean? If you began to pay attention to Hilda, or to any other woman, what possible chance could I have? It stands to reason that I should have none. I'm neither good-looking nor clever, nor—nor anything. Why, I wouldn't even venture to pit myself against Harry Maynard!"

And with this homage to his friend's irresistible attractions and incidental acknowledgment of my own, Jim resumed his seat.

Bracknell was a little flattered, I think, and perhaps also (though I am not quite so sure about that) a little touched. "Go on and prosper," said he. "Marriage is the greatest mistake in the world; but if you will marry, you will. Let me know when

the event comes off, and I'll be your best man."

It is not always easy to tell how far the sense of duty and honour possessed by men like Bracknell may be relied upon. Doubtless there are certain offences against their fellow-men which they would under no circumstances commit; but as for the rest, I should imagine that it was very much a question of temptation. Truth compels me to admit that the temptations with which Hilda assailed the heir of Staines Court during the next few weeks were of a nature to try the stoutest powers of resistance. I don't say that her tactics were novel; but I do say that anything more clever than her employment of them I never saw. Of course "the young people," as we were generically termed by our elders, were continually together. There were rides, there were picnics, there was lawn-tennis—in short, all the ordinary amusements of country-house life in the summer-time; and to watch Hilda and Bracknell together on those occasions would have been most entertaining if it had not been also a little distressing. She stirred his curiosity; she roused in him a spirit of emulation; she flattered his vanity one day only to wound it the next. Sometimes she ignored him as obstinately as she had done the first evening; and every now and again, when Jim's back was turned, she would favour him with a look which I am quite sure must have sent a thrill through his whole person, though he had the credit of being accustomed to such looks. All this time she was charming in her demeanour to poor old Jim, with whom, however, she now avoided taking solitary walks; and the upshot of it was that, before a fortnight had passed, she had two sighing lovers at her feet instead of one. That may not have been a very wonderful exploit to accomplish, nevertheless it was accomplished with very great skill.

How matters must end was obvious enough; yet when the catastrophe (for I suppose it must be called a catastrophe) came, I confess I was slightly startled. It was Mr. Turner who apprised me of it. Strolling out in the direction of Staines Court one hot morning, I came upon him just as he was hurrying through the gates, and he at once pulled up, took off his hat and began to mop his forehead. Evidently he was a prey to conflicting emotions; and indeed his first words were a confession that such was the case.

"My dear Harry," said he, "I am upset—completely upset. Tell me now—for you have an old head upon young shoulders—did it ever strike you that there was anything between my daughter and Lord Bracknell?"

I replied that that idea had suggested itself to me.

"You don't say so!" exclaimed Mr. Turner. "Dear me! Well, I assure you that I never was more taken aback in my life than when Lord Bracknell came to me last night to tell me that he had proposed to Hilda and had been accepted. Ah, I see that you are astonished. The fact is that I had formed other—ahem!—anticipations. Possibly you may have shared those anticipations?"

I signified assent, and he went on: "To tell you the truth, Harry, I should have been better pleased if things had fallen out otherwise. Even now I am not sure—However, we shall see. I have just received a note from Lord Staines, requesting me to call upon him immediately, and I greatly fear that he will not be favourable to the engagement. You are very observant, I know: have you noticed any signs of his being disposed to—er—welcome dear Hilda as his daughter-in-law?"

I was quite unable to say that I had, and I really felt very sorry for the poor man, who seemed, through no fault of his own, to have got between the upper and the nether millstones. Nothing was more certain than that he was about to get into serious trouble with the patron of his living, and it might be safely predicted that, when he returned home, he would get into trouble not less serious with the controller of his household and his actions. I quite understood why he begged me not to mention this to *anybody*, and also who was meant by that emphatic "anybody:" for a squire in the hand is worth two viscounts in the bush. I willingly gave him the required assurance, and he hastened away towards the house, fanning himself with his pocket-handkerchief as he went.

CHAPTER III.

Lord Staines was a weak man, and, like most weak men, was exceedingly peremptory when roused to anger. It was certainly not poor Mr. Turner's fault that Bracknell had been brought within an ace of making an egregious ass of himself; for, as everybody knew, Mr. Turner had no more control over his daughter than he had over the Empress of China. Still, those who are invested with nominal authority should expect to be held responsible when disasters occur; and a sad

pity it is that this excellent rule is not more frequently made to apply to certain high functionaries whom one might name. Lord Staines, having got hold of Hilda's ostensible superior, led the unhappy man into his study and then and there gave him a tremendous wigging. I made a point of calling upon the Reverend Simeon in the course of the afternoon, and found him quite shattered. Never in his life before, he said piteously, had such language been used to him, and although it was his duty as a Christian to forgive Lord Staines's words, he feared that it would be long before he would be able to forget them.

As for Bracknell, he was packed off by the first train, with a flea in his ear, and, I dare say, a cheque in his pocket. He wrote a letter to Hilda, in which, as I understood, he represented himself to be broken-hearted, but powerless. His father wouldn't hear of the engagement and, since he was entirely dependent upon his father, there was no more to be said. Upon reflection, I feel quite sure that he must have received a cheque. Lord Staines possessed a fine old-fashioned temper, but he worshipped his son, whose will was a great deal stronger than his own, and if Bracknell had really been determined upon marrying the cook, I doubt not but that he would have snapped his fingers in his father's face and married her. Such may not improbably have been also the opinion of the fair Hilda, whose wrath at finding herself thus coolly left in the lurch was, as I gathered from her father, very great.

Her disappointment might have been easier to bear, and the whole affair might have blown over quietly, if only Lord Staines had had the sense to hold his tongue about it. But I suppose he was flushed with victory and couldn't hold his tongue. First he told Lady Mildred, which was perhaps unavoidable; later in the day, by which time he had fully recovered his good humour, he marched down to see my mother and boasted a little of the facility with which he had nipped this folly and nonsense in the bud.

"Rely upon it, my dear Mrs. Maynard," said he, "there is nothing like promptitude and decision in these cases. People tell me that I have over-indulged Bracknell, and possibly I have; but I believe he understands pretty well that there are certain limits which he had better not transgress. I can't afford to have a pauper daughter-in-law, and there's an end of it."

My mother said it was all very worldly and shocking, and that if Lord Staines had nothing worse than lack of fortune to urge against Hilda, he ought to be ashamed of himself. However, he was not at all ashamed of himself, and I take it that he must have gone about freely extolling the virtue of promptitude and decision, for in a few days the whole neighbourhood was in possession of the facts, together with such emendations and additions as individual taste had grafted on to them in the process of transmission.

Among the first to be informed of what had occurred was Jim, who rode over to our house in a great state of heat to ask me whether I had heard what he was pleased to call "an infernal lying report." When I was obliged to tell him that the report alluded to, however infernal it might be, was substantially correct, I really thought for a moment that he was going to hit me between the eyes. But he renounced that intention, if he had ever entertained it, and only dropped into a chair, with a look of pain and reproach on his face which hurt me almost as much as if I had deserved it.

"And you knew that Bracknell was humbugging me all this time?" he exclaimed.

I had not said so, but the fact was undeniable. I fancy that, upon the first blush of the thing, he was more grieved by Bracknell's treachery than by Hilda's inconstancy, and I could not get him to pay much attention to the excuses which I made both for the culprit and for myself; though I venture to think that these were neither intrinsically poor nor badly put. But when in the plenitude of my generosity, I began to make excuses for Hilda too, he stopped me at once.

"That's enough, Harry," he interrupted. "You mean well; but you don't seem to see that apologising on Hilda's behalf is implying that she is to blame. I can't admit that for an instant. She never gave me anything in the shape of a promise; and if I chose to imagine that she cared for me, the more fool I."

"Well, perhaps so," I agreed. "Anyhow, it's very evident that she did *not* care for you."

"Yes," he replied, sighing; "that's evident, I suppose. And yet I can't help thinking that she might have cared for me if Bracknell hadn't come down. But there's no good in talking about that now. I shall be off somewhere for the next few months, I think. You couldn't be persuaded to come with me to Switzerland, and perhaps spend the winter in Italy, could you?"

I reminded him that I was not a man of independent fortune and that my winter would have to be spent in the less agreeable atmosphere of Lincoln's Inn, where I had

already taken chambers; but I strongly advised him to go away and travel. He had so many friends that he was not likely to be left long without a companion. I fear that he did not find me very sympathetic; and in truth it was all I could do to restrain myself from openly congratulating him upon his escape.

Presently he said that if my mother was well enough to receive him, he would just go and say good morning to her, and I knew better than to accompany him to her room. From that quarter those who were afflicted in mind, body, or estate, could always count upon obtaining sympathy, if not comfort; and sure enough, when Jim emerged, after an interview of half an hour, he looked so much less inclined to hang himself that I was afraid my mother had committed the imprudence of advising him to try again. But that, it appeared, was a groundless alarm.

"Oh, no," he said quietly, in answer to my inquiry, "she didn't give me any hope. She was awfully kind though, and I believe it's quite true that I shall get over this some day. Only I wish Bracknell had been a little more straight about it."

Well, upon the whole, that seemed to be a very proper spirit in which to meet adversity, and I accompanied my friend down stairs, hoping that, after all, he might not be quite as hard hit as I had supposed. But when we reached the front-door, whom should we find talking affably to the groom and caressing Jim's horse, but Miss Hilda Turner in person!

Jim started violently, while I, for my part, inwardly commended her to the devil; for I could not doubt her purpose in waiting outside in that unseemly way.

"Why did you not come in?" I asked with a touch of asperity. "I presume you called to see my mother, didn't you?"

"I did," she replied calmly, and never so much as changed colour; "but when I saw Jim's horse at the door, I thought I would wait for him and call on Mrs. Maynard some other day. I know it tires her to have more than one visitor at a time. Jim, if you have nothing better to do, you might walk home with me."

"Good Heavens!" thought I to myself, "is she going to propose to him?" I took the liberty of raising my eyebrows ostentatiously, but I doubt whether any evolutions which I could have induced my eyebrows to perform would have disturbed her equanimity. She met my gaze with perfect composure, and it was I, not she, who eventually had to look the other way.

The countenance of that foolish Jim expressed mingled surprise, pleasure, and doubt. What was the good of my giving him a surreptitious dig in the back and making grimaces at him when he turned round? Hilda had but to beckon to him and he would have gone with her to the world's end. He went with her unhesitatingly to the end of our short avenue, leading his horse; and there they were lost to my gaze. But it was not necessary to be gifted with second sight in order to feel tolerably sure of what was taking place between them after they had vanished; and I returned to the study of the law with misgivings which were only too soon to be justified. An hour or so later, while I was immersed in pleadings, and was cumbering my brain with the absurd jargon of replications, rejoinders, surrejoinders, rebutters, and the like, I heard somebody ride full gallop up to the house, immediately after which my door was burst open, as by a charge of dynamite, and Jim, victorious and triumphant, stood before me once more. One glance at his face was sufficient to show me that it was all up with him.

"You needn't go into ecstasies," I said snappishly; "I know all about it."

"Now, my dear Harry," he remonstrated, "how can you possibly know all about it?"

"At least," said I, "I know that you are engaged to Hilda Turner."

He gave me to understand in reply that such was indeed his good fortune. "And do you know," he continued, "the truth is—it's so glorious that I can hardly believe it, and yet I feel somehow as if I had always been sure of it—the truth is that she has loved me all along!"

"Then," I could not help remarking, "she took the very oddest way of showing her affection that ever I heard of."

Jim said, "Not at all odd; the same kind of thing has often happened before, as everybody knows. It all arose out of my stupid bashfulness. She naturally thought that I couldn't care much about her, since I wouldn't speak out; and so when Bracknell made his offer she accepted him. She says she would have accepted anybody under the circumstances—and I can quite understand it."

Obviously reasoning would be thrown away upon such a lunatic; nevertheless, to set myself straight with my conscience, I endeavoured to reason with him.

"It appears, then," said I, "that she sought you out in order to avow her love. If she was not too proud to do that to-day, why in the world couldn't she have done it a few weeks ago?"

"Good Lord!" ejaculated Jim, "what a low opinion you have of your fellow creatures! Sought me out indeed! Why, my dear fellow, you wouldn't believe what trouble I had to extort the truth from her. What she sought me out for—not that she did seek me out—was to beg me to try and make peace between her father and old Staines. That, of course, led us to speak about Bracknell, and then I couldn't help telling her how long I had loved her, and then at last she admitted that she had only promised to marry him out of pique. But she was very unwilling to accept me, I can tell you. Harry, old chap, you don't know Hilda; she's the sweetest girl in England!"

If she was, I certainly did not know her; but to make such a rejoinder as that would only have been to expose myself to a surrejoinder which it would have been altogether futile to attempt to rebut; so I said what was expected of me with as good a grace as I could command, and as soon as Jim was gone I kicked those odious law books to the other end of the room, in token alike of my abhorrence for them individually, and of my disgust with a state of things which I was powerless to remedy.

(To be Continued.)

THE STATUE IN THE SEA WOOD.

In the sea wood he sits alone,
By men forgotten and unknown,
A soul struck suddenly to stone.

Unheeding through the centuries
The bloom and fading of the trees,
The ceaseless surging of the seas.

Bright flowers spring about his feet,
Above him where the branches meet
The little birds make music sweet.

He knows not of them, his still gaze,
Piercing Time's dim mysterious ways,
Sees but one day among the days:

The day that left him sitting there,
Through all eternity to bear
The burden of a fixed despair.

Forgotten all the men who trod
In the dead years that same green sod,
The men who worshipped him as god.

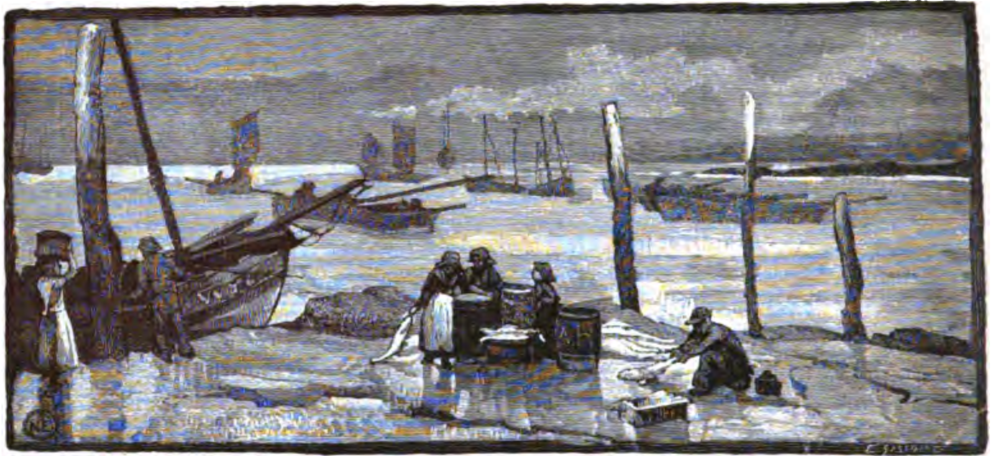
No shadow on his awful eyes
Has fallen from their prayers and cries.
From blood and smoke of sacrifice.

Intent, in silent majesty
He sits and looks upon the sea,
Sole sharer of his mystery;

Waiting until those mighty hands
Shall burst from out their stony bands
And grasp the sceptre of the lands.

He hears not the long waves that pour
For ever on the sounding shore
One sad song, "Never, never more."

D. J. R.



LANDING FISH.
From a Drawing by NELLY ERICHSEN.

A NORTH-COUNTRY FISHING TOWN.

OLD PRUDENCE.
From a Drawing by NELLY ERICHSEN.

DOWN on the very edge of the North Sea, thrust out on rocky ledges washed in winter by the salt foam, and climbing backwards up two steep headlands that tower above a brawling beck lies a little fishing town. The wind blows keen and fresh, giving a fulness and vigour to life, qualities much needed by the race of hard-working men and women whose existence, summer and winter, early and late, is a ceaseless struggle with the sea.

The rocky beach in the little bay is the centre of all their toil, and is never still.

Even before the dawn it is alive with flitting lanterns, and you may hear the regular rhythmical shouts of the fishermen as they haul down their cobles to the sea and sail away into the darkness. From then till nightfall, when the boats are home again and safely laid up out of reach of the waves, it is the scene of endless activity.

More especially is this so at the mouth of the beck, where the fisher lasses congregate, with fish, or baskets of linen to be washed in the stream, quite regardless of the fact that its waters are somewhat sullied in their passage through the town.

While they kneel and deal resounding blows to the garments with their wooden bats, they energetically exchange a running fire of chaff and very personal remarks, in loud fearless tones, with the crowd of young men at work stretching their nets or artistically painting their cobles near at hand.

Then the fish-carts are for ever thundering up and down the "Slip," a stony little road leading from the beach to the one street of the town. The first returning sail is sighted, and down rushes an excited crowd to meet it, women and children, cripples and old men, till not a soul is left indoors but the bedridden.

The sail comes nearer, another and another coble is sighted round the point of Coburn Nab. Now the colours of the foremost can be distinguished, or the number on its red sail. In the midst of a babel it is identified as the *Good Samaritan*, the *Labourer's Increase*, or the *Sarah and Anne*, as the case may be.

It is very near now—the sail is down, and a rope thrown ashore by one of the crew of three oilskin clad men.

The rope is seized on by the nearest in the crowd, and the wife, the grandmother, the little child and the old man—the one tottering with its baby weakness, the other with the weight of years—all form in line, some fifteen or twenty of them; the crew leap ashore and lay hold with the others, and with the usual shout the great coble is hauled up stern first over the lane of oars and spars that have been flung down to protect its double keel from the rocks.

The noise and confusion is worse than before as the boat is emptied of its living freight of fish, silver herrings from June to October, gaping cod and ling, halibut, skate, and congers in the spring and winter, together with strange monsters unknown in the markets of civilisation, but eaten here with great relish.

Suddenly there is a lull, the eager pushing crowd is silent and business-like, for the fish buyers have come down and the sale takes place at once.

This over, barrels are rolled down to the scene of action and knives come out. For the fish has to be prepared and packed, to be despatched to the station without delay.

Meanwhile, the tackle is not neglected. Streams of lasses carry off on their heads the lines or nets. The former to be rebaited and the latter to be spread out on the cliff top to dry.

By this time other bands of sturdy girls may be seen, all through the winter, winding their way across the slippery rocks towards the town. They have been gathering limpets for bait, and perhaps have walked eight or ten miles along the coast for them.

They stride heartily along, holding their heads very erect, as if the heavy baskets of limpets were of no weight at all; one or two of them with a bundle of driftwood picked up on the way adding to their burden. So things go on, the same scene day after day, save when the gale booms and whistles, when the air is full of flying foam, and the gulls shriek ominously under the black sky, for the cobles dare not put out then, and the work goes on indoors.

Invisible from the great northern highway, and, until last year, accessible only by the carrier's waggon that dragged its weary weight over the twelve hilly miles from Whitby, this busy town is little known to the outside world.

The twelve months old railway has not yet materially changed the old-time aspect of the place, or the kindly simple nature of its inhabitants — fisherfolk all, except a little settlement of miners on the cliff top.

Generation after generation of Verrills, Theakers, Wetherills, and Unthanks, have lived in the same steep red-tiled stone houses, and Verrill has married Weatherill, and Weatherill Unthank, until every man in the town seems to be akin to every other, and the consequent similarity of surnames, in addition to the general custom of naming children after father, mother, or uncle, creates a good deal of confusion, and gives rise to a free use of nicknames—partly geographical and partly descriptive—such as "Northside Cabbage," which is applied to a comely fisher-lass who lives on the north side of the beck.

The uninitiated stranger may find this habit troublesome at first. He may have entered into conversation on the beach with Dinah Verrill and learnt her name, and perhaps being proud of his acquaintance, may mention it to the fishermen he is sure to find lounging on the "Staith," at Seaton Garth, a wooden landing-place, much frequented by idlers. If so, instant humiliation will be his lot, and a storm of questions will ensue as to whether he means Joe Verrill's Dinah, that is Northside Joe's Dinah, or Blue Jacket Joe's Dinah, or old Tommy Verrill's Dinah, or some other Dinah. He will depart a bewildered but wiser man, having learnt that there are many Verrills, many Joe Verrills, and many Joe Verrill's Dinahs.

He may also hear a few keenly critical remarks on his intellectual inferiority or personal defects, and perhaps be conscious of a pitying smile from a passing company of women.

But these and a few other little peculiarities of custom and manner once accepted, no people can be more kindly. Having had occasion to spend some months of the autumn and winter in a farm on the windswept heights beyond the town, I had many opportunities to prove the truth of this statement. The first few weeks of my stay were too much taken up in exploring the country round to leave time for more than casual intercourse with the human element of the place, but by the beginning of October, when I had settled down to work and my solitary easel was daily set up on the beach, or in the steep and somewhat evil smelling paths about the town, the good folks became interested, made hospitable advances, and before long had adopted the unfamiliar settler as almost one of themselves.

The first signs of friendliness came from two or three battered old men, whose only occupation in life, now that some half century of exposure and buffeting on the sea had left

their gaunt frames rigid and crippled with the "rheumatics," seemed to be a vague but ceaseless perambulation of the town.

In the course of their rambles they would stop, and, after a steady silent stare of perhaps half an hour, would suddenly plunge into conversation. The most ancient of these

BY THE SIDE OF THE BECK.
From a Drawing by NELLY ERICHSEN.

ancient mariners, "Auld Billy," the wreck of a splendid man, with long waving white hair, whose huge bony limbs and bent back showed what he must have been in the days when time had not pressed so heavily on him, and when, it was said, "He hardlens kenned his ain strength," showed his kindly feelings in a most eccentric way.

For a long time he simply stared like the others, but one day being, I suppose, very cordially inclined, he suddenly thrust both hands into his pockets and uttered a mysterious gutteral sound, very loud at first, but which gradually died away into a kind of feeble piping whistle.

Then he took one hand out of his pocket and laying it gently on my shoulder said, in a tone of remonstrance and surprise,

"Thou hast a new jacket on, honey."

That was all. But he seemed perfectly satisfied that he had said quite the right thing, and toddled off chuckling softly to himself.

After that we were fast friends, and he never passed without emitting his inarticulate greeting, and making some friendly but totally irrelevant remark.

Seeing these old men stop and talk with the stranger, the younger folk soon began to do likewise, and among them I afterwards found some real friends.

Among the most interesting of them was one branch of the wide spreading Verrill tribe.

The father is Northside Joe. He is a short, thickset, powerfully built man, with a head fine enough to make one forget his not very dignified figure. His deep-set bright blue eyes tell the tale of his Danish descent, a fact of which he is very proud, and fond of dragging into the conversation in season and out of season, telling legends of his wild ancestors with a delightful ignorance and disregard of time and place. "Aye, my forelders was Danes," he would say. "Three brothers, I've heerd tell, comed from out foreign, Stockholm or Venice" (pronounced Venus) "or some o' them ports, and settled down in these parts hundreds of 'ears ago, mebbe thousands."

"And," added his wife, "they was a wild, fierce, fightin' lot."

The first time I saw Joe was while I was still a stranger. Some friends were spending the day with me, and we were wandering on the rocks. There we came upon some sea urchins and were watching them when Joe came up behind.

He had just come on shore, and very fine he looked in his sea rig. He saw what we were doing, took up an urchin and began telling us how some people set great store by them, how they dried them, and hung them up on strings for ornaments.

"They're queer fellows an all," he said, "all one big mouth. I'll show you," taking out his knife and calmly plunging it into the unfortunate beast.

"Doesn't that hurt it?" said one of the party, involuntarily shrinking.

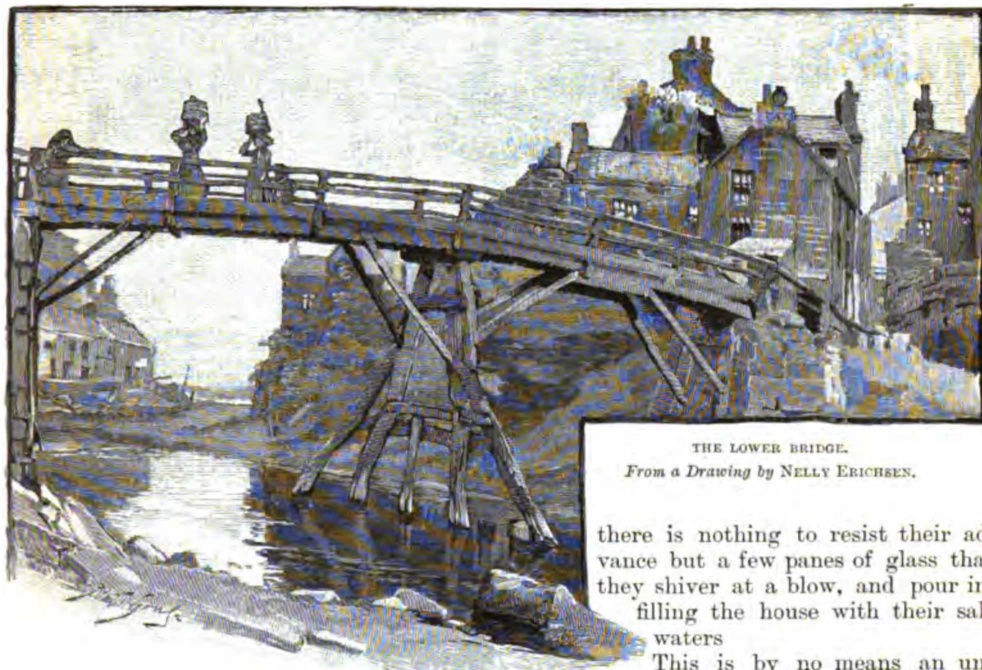
"Mebbe," said Joe, wiping his knife as he finished the dissection to his complete satisfaction, "but its feelings are not our feelings."

It was not conscious cruelty that made him so philosophically callous, but being a fisherman it probably never occurred to him that anything of the nature of a fish had feelings, and his face assumed an expression of blank amazement at the idea of any one considering the possibility of such a thing.

After a little further talk Joe yawned, and told us he had been out on the Dogger Bank all night, and that his Nancy would be expecting him home, in fact, that he saw her signalling from his door.

He took his pipe out of his mouth, a little black clay with scarcely an inch of stem, and pointed with it to the foot of the great headland that rose majestically in front of us. "That's where me and my Nancy and t'young 'uns lives, that's t'auld fisherman's cave," and giving us a friendly invitation to come in and rest there whenever we felt inclined, he nodded and rolled away.

The cottage he vanished into was the nearest of a straggling line of buildings, wedged in between the overhanging cliff and the beck. At high tide, even in fine weather, the waves wash right up over the little rocky platform that raises it a few feet above the beach, while many a time in winter they exceed their usual bounds, and knock, importunate and unwelcome guests, at the very doors and windows. Sometimes they find the house fortified against them, with shutters and storm doors tightly battened down, and then they have to rush back hissing over the rocks, baffled for the time. But when sudden squalls come, and Joe and his sons are away at sea, then they take their revenge. They are not expected and there is nothing to resist their advance but a few panes of glass that they shiver at a blow, and pour in, filling the house with their salt waters



THE LOWER BRIDGE.
From a Drawing by NELLY ERICHSEN.

This is by no means an unusual event in other houses as well as Joe's, for ground level enough to perch a house on is so precious that every available inch is covered down to the edge of high water mark. And every year the sea creeps in and steals away a few more inches, surely but silently undermining the foundation of house after house. But those whose homes are being washed from under them are loth to give up possession to the waves, and go on leading a damp existence as long as the walls hold together.

When a storm is coming they pack up their dearer household gods, lock the doors, and retreat to higher ground. But they are not always quick enough to escape the rising waters, and one hears many a tale of hurried flight and real danger.

MENDING NETS.
From a Drawing by NELLY ERICHSEN.

One old woman, the mother of many fishermen, never failed to tell me her experience whenever she had a chance.

She was alone, many years ago, with an infant a few weeks old. The weather was fine and still, her "measter" was at sea, and she, having no thought of what was coming, had gone to bed as usual on the ground floor. A gale sprang up suddenly, the sea rose and flooded the house. Still she slept on, and when at last she awoke, with a confused sense of cold and disaster, the furniture was floating all round her, crashing and banging together, and water still pouring in fast through the broken windows. She seized her dripping child, and with difficulty waded through water up to her waist and reached the staircase. The upper

rooms were not in much better plight, for everything was wet, the spray having forced its way through cracks and crannies in the dilapidated roof. There she waited, shivering, for hours, calling out into the black night, but scarcely hoping to raise her voice above the shrieking of the wind. No one came. The wind rose higher and higher, the house rocked under the tremendous blows of the waves, and she began to think that even if they were not buried under the ruins of her home she and the child must die of cold before help came. But friends were working for her all through this anxious time, and just when she had almost given up hope they reached her. They had broken through the roof from a house that stood on higher ground behind, and soon drew her up to a place of warmth and safety.

Joe Verrill's youngest son, a little lad barely five, almost fell a victim to another October gale. The greatest pride of his life is to exhibit a scar on his chin, the result of a blow from the prow of a coble that was carried away from its moorings by the wind, and dashed through the windows, just inside which sat baby Joe in his mother's arms.

Baby Joe is simply adored by his family—a fair, blue-eyed, little fellow, who has just escaped from the degrading thraldom of petticoats, and struts about in his newly acquired guernsey and very short wide trousers with no little dignity. Most of his life is spent in imitating the proceedings of his daddy—of whom he is a perfect miniature copy—and when he is not occupied in laboriously loading and sailing his fleet of toy cobles on the beck, or making mud pies on the beach, he is sure to be in the midst of the greatest bustle he can find, with his hands in his pockets, his little face full of eager and intent interest, taking mental notes of manly ways and expressions which he afterwards reproduces at home with great effect.

This home, whose outside is so bare and exposed, is very snug within. The bright green outer door opens upon another, which, with the rest of the house, is gaily painted with the three colours of Joe's coble. In this instance, chocolate and buff walls and salmon pink stairs, give a bright warm glow to the compact little living room that reminds one of a ship's cabin. The inner door opens straight upon it, showing the mother in her corner by the fire, knitting, as she always is, the endless guernseys, stockings, and mittens, that are needed to protect her husband and sons from the bitter cold of winter nights, keeping all the while a watchful eye, now over the fire, where a hot cake is baking on the girdle, and now on the long oak clock in the corner, for the cobles have come in, and she is expecting a rush of hungry sons and daughters. This was usually the state of things when I went in to have the "sup" of tea and the "bit crack," they so generously offered daily.

My temporary home at the farm was almost a mile from the town, a windy mile along the cliff top, so it was a real boon to have an hour's rest and warmth after standing all day in the bitter November air. And not less acceptable was the hot tea and home-made bread and butter and the very fascinating girdle cakes peculiar to the north. So it happened there were few days that I did not cross the old timber foot bridge, and pick my way gingerly among the strange and unsavoury accumulations of marine remains that litter the stony approach to the "fisherman's cave."

One visit will serve as an example of the rest. It is five o'clock, just dusk, and very cold. As I reach the bridge end I see little Joe playing on the doorstep. The son recognises "t' woman" and rushes in, calling out to his mother, "Dere she be, mudder"—his universal remark on every occasion, whether *she* be woman, boat, or cake. By the time I reach the door "mudder" has lighted the lamp and a pleasant glow is thrown on two fishes' heads and a dead cat that seem to have been Joe's playthings.

Once inside, I am divested of bundles and wraps, and invited to sit in an armchair very close to the fire, evidently the place of honour. But as the fire is a huge glowing mass of live coals, with two or three long beams reaching half way up the chimney, and the heat is intense, I am obliged to decline. This surprises Mrs. Verrill, as she thinks there is "naught like a bit o' fire these cold days."

She tells me, as she bustles about with the tea things, that the cobles came in late today, but she expects the family home in a few minutes. So we settle down to wait, and while she now and then makes a remark through the clicking of her knitting needles, and little Joe is rigging up a seat in one of his boats in which I am to sail home to London (the boat being four inches long, and the seat consisting chiefly of a match and one tin tack), I have time to look around. The room is as bright and home-like as the heart of man can desire, and though small and crowded with furniture, and the scene of all the family life, so clean and ship-shape, from the oak-timbered ceiling to the yellow painted canvas on the floor, that it is a

pleasure to sit in it. From the rafters hang substantial flitches of bacon and bunches of herbs, together with a varied assortment of battered sou'westers, oilcoats, and sun bonnets. The seafaring life of the family is everywhere evident; the pictures are all nautical, several prints of shipwrecks, a large oleograph, *The Fisherman's Return*, and, the gem of the collection, a real oil painting of a full rigged vessel. Texts are scattered here and there, all having reference to the sea, and what is known as a gospel compass hangs conspicuously above the fire. Just behind my chair is a heap of nets in course of repair, and a pot of Stockholm tar under the table gives a pleasant pungency to the atmosphere.

SEATON GARTH.
From a Drawing by NELLY ERICHSEN.

While I sit enjoying all this, and admiring a china effigy of Garibaldi on horseback, with pink eyes and marvellous boots, that elbows an angel, also with pink eyes, on the high mantel shelf, the door is flung suddenly open and in comes Joe. He is very hungry but radiantly cheerful. He only pauses to throw half-a-dozen flounders and haddocks into a bucket and to kick off his sea boots, before subsiding into a chair by the fire and beginning tea, which his wife produces very rapidly. A few minutes afterwards Dinah, the eldest daughter, comes in, with a line on her head, followed by the boys, John William and Addison, strapping youths of sixteen and eighteen. They and Elizabeth, the second daughter, bring in the other lines and odd properties from the coble. The teapot is again in demand, and great havoc is made among the bread and butter. The parents and I sit at the table; the young ones, being too shy to eat in sight of the stranger, sit about in corners, casually balancing cups and plates on their knees. Little Joe is not troubled with bashfulness; he is lifted on to "Daddy's" knee, and they drink by turns out of the same cup.

"Noo then, what's t' news fra Lunnon?" says Joe, and listens as long as I have anything to tell him of "that great city," as he calls it. For Joe is a traveller. He was once driven down the coast and obliged, by stress of weather, to put in at London, where he spent two days—the most eventful of his life, evidently. He is surprised that I do not know his landlady—whose name he has forgotten—and the house where he lodged. "Down Wapping way, just agin a public. By Gum, I dunnot mind what they calls it, but ye'll ken, mebbe."

But though he likes to hear what is going on in the world, he is too great a talker not to launch forth soon into a description of his own doings. First he discusses his day's work and the current price of fish, and from

that goes on to anecdotes of his adventures on the sea, his three shipwrecks, and the manners and customs of his fellow townsmen. He has a great gift of vivid narration and his racy northern accent and hearty laugh make his conversation most entertaining. A little, too, of the old Norseman's boastful love of telling of his own mighty deeds has come down to him, and when he warmed to his work and became thoroughly excited over the history of a certain October gale, when he and one of his four elder brothers had been lashed to the helm for eight hours, the only men among the crew of eleven who dared to stay on deck, and when they reached Scarborough harbour with a deck swept bare of everything, he sprang to his feet and swayed about, and his blue eyes shone, and he raised his voice as if he were there and then in the midst of it all. His wife, all the while, was just a little nervous and uneasy; she feared he was going too far, and using too much freedom, before the guest.

She was a gentle refined little woman, very talkative and kind, but utterly devoid of the rich sense of humour that Joe possesses so highly, and a little given to commenting on and explaining him in a slightly deprecatory way that is very amusing. "It is only Joe's way," or, "Get along with thee, Joe, how canst thee tell her sike tomfooleries."

By this time tea is over, and while we talk, the boys and girls get to work at the lines. When Joe has sufficiently recovered from his excitement he joins them, and the whole family is soon seriously busy, except little Joe, who flits about and croons away to himself over the treasures he picks out of the lines. These are brought in coiled up as they come from the coble, on flat baskets known as skeps, and it is no light task to uncoil, clean, and rebait the six hundred hooks attached to each. They smell gloriously of the sea, and glitter with the drops of phosphorescence that hang about the rare and delicate seaweed and shells entangled in them. Star-fish and tiny crabs, sea spiders, and other strange beasts, have also to be cleared away—poor inedible creatures that have rashly committed a useless suicide in greedily snapping up the mussels and tempting bits of herring that hide the sharp hooks. While they work I read to them extracts from the local paper, selected with some difficulty from the collection of hideous accounts of cannibalism at sea, wrecks and outlandish disasters of every description, that seem to fill its columns. By eight o'clock the work is done.

Three neatly coiled lines, with four or five mussels and limpets on every hook, are stowed away in the back yard, and a general scouring of tables and floor takes place. Joe and the boys vanish while this is going on, and come back in a few minutes "fettled up," and gorgeous in their best guernseys, ready for a stroll and chat with the neighbours. Joe lights his pipe and opens the door, as he does every night, to look at the weather. The clock reminds me that my farmer and his wife will be expecting me for supper. They have been afoot since early morning, and are generally ready for bed by nine or half past. So I make ready to depart. Joe comes in shaking his head.

"The wind has got up and it will be rough on the cliff. I'll just set thee up a bit, honey."

Regardless of remonstrance he plunges into a pea jacket, ties his sou'wester under his chin, and announces that he is ready. Mrs. Verrill has been mysteriously occupied in a corner for some minutes, and now comes forward with a damp, cold, parcel, which she confidentially gives me, saying, "It's rare eating." It proves to be a fine haddock, and Joe begins a detailed account of some particularly excellent way of cooking it. Then we plunge out into the night, and fight our way up the cliff with the wind in our teeth.

Amongst other picturesque acquaintances were Prudence, an old woman fourscore years, the daughter of a smuggler well known to the preventive men in the days the Brandy Hole under Boulby Head was still full of kegs—and famous as the wickedest old woman and the hardest swearer living; the reading fisherman, who had studied the history of art, and descanted on Phidias as "that grand old Roman;" and the fatalist fisherman who thought it would be flying in the face of Providence to learn swimming.

There were many others, but space forbids me to dwell on them, or to do more than hint at the charms of the surrounding country, the lovely woods hidden unsuspected in little dales, the old stone farms nestling on the side of the bare moors that stretch inland for miles, and the peculiar brilliance of the winter sunsets.

NELLY ERICHSEN.

DOROTHY OSBORNE.

> "IACH. Here are letters for you.
> POST. Their tenor good, I trust.
> IACH. 'Tis very like."
> *Cymbeline*, act ii. sc. 4.

THEY had set (it is years ago now) the Period of the Restoration as subject for the Historical Essay prize at Oxbridge. I had been advised to read Courtenay's *Life of Sir William Temple.* It would give me an insight into the times, and a thorough knowledge of the Triple Alliance.

It was in my uncle's library that I found the book—two octavo volumes of memoirs bound in plain green cloth, with mouldy yellow backs. I remember it well, and the circumstances surrounding it.

I threw open the windows, piled all the red cushions into one window seat, placed a chair for my feet, and took up the volumes. I cast my eyes over the contents of Vol. I.: a portrait of Temple—a handsome fellow—engraved by one Dean, after Sir Peter; a genealogical table. Ugh! And twenty chapters of negotiations to follow. My uncle was right, it was undoubtedly a dull book.

The second volume looked more interesting; there was something in it about Swift. Memory asserting herself, I remembered Temple to be Swift's first patron, and Stella, I fancy, was Lady Temple's maid. Happy Stella! At that moment a piece of paper fluttered out of the volume in my hand on to the floor, driving the dean and his affairs out of my head. I picked it up. An old paper, brown at its edges and foldings, singed by time. On it were some verses—a sonnet. It ran thus:—

"TO DOROTHY OSBORNE.

"Why has no laureate, in golden song,
Wreathed rhythmic honours for her name alone,
Who worships now anear a purer throne?
And chosen, from that lovely, loyal throng
Of wantons ambling devilward along
At beck of God's Anointed, one to praise,
Of brightest wit, yet pure through works and days,
Constant in love, in every virtue strong.

"Dorothy, gift of God, it was not meant,
That thy bright light should shine upon the few,
Within the straitened circle of thy life;
Failing to reach mankind and represent
His own ideal, manifest in you,
Of holy woman and the perfect wife."

I was a sonneteer myself, and therefore critical. This effort (was it my uncle's?) did not seem to me of portentous genius. I hate your sonneteer who has more than two rhymes in his octett. It proves him a coward at the measure, one who is burdened by those shackles in which he should move as skilfully and lightly as a clever dancer bound to the knees on stilts. Those two sub-dominant rhymes were misplaced; so was the sudden stop in the sixth line, the violent *cæsura* in the sense, sending a cold shiver through the cultured mind. I did not admire the sestett either in its arrangement, but much liberty has always been allowed in the management

of the sestett. For an amateur sonnet, I had read, nay, I will be just, I had written worse.

But whom does this sonnet describe? Dorothy Osborne, who is she? Lady Temple, answers Courtenay, and says little more. But she has written her own life, and painted her own character, as none else could have done it for her, in letters written to her husband before marriage. When I had read these, I pitied the unknown, and forbore to criticise his sonnet. I, too, could have written sonnets, roundels, ballads by the score to celebrate her praise. But I remembered Pope's chill warning about those who "rush in where angels fear to tread," and, full of humility, I did not apply it to my friend the sonneteer, but—to myself.

These letters of Dorothy Osborne were, at one time, lying at Coddenham Vicarage, Suffolk. Forty-two of them has Courtenay transferred to an appendix, without arrangement or any form of editing, as he candidly confesses, but not without misgivings as to how they will be received by a people thirsting to read the details of the negotiations which took place in connection with the Triple Alliance. Poor Courtenay! Did he live to learn that the world had other things to do than pore over dull excerpts from inhuman state papers? For the lighting of fires, for the rag-bag, or, if of stout paper or parchment, for the due covering of preserves and pickles, much of these Temple correspondences and treaties would be eminently fitted, but for the making of books they are all but useless; book-making of such material is not to be achieved by Courtenay, nay, nor by the cunningest publisher's devil in Grub Street. Here, beneath poor blind Courtenay's eyes, were papers and negotiations, not about a triple alliance between states, but concerning a dual alliance between souls. Here, even for the dull historian, were chat, gossip, the witty portrayal of neighbours, the customs, manners, thoughts, the very life itself, of English human beings of that time, set out by the living pen of Dorothy Osborne. Surely it was within his power at least to edit carefully for us those letters? Alas, no! All that he can do is to produce a book in two unreadable octavo volumes, and to set down in an appendix, not without misgivings, but forty-two of these charming letters.

But I will dare to put it to the touch to gain or lose it all. I cannot, I know, make her glorious by *my* pen, but I can let her own pen have free play, and try to draw from her letters, and what other data there are at hand, some living presentment of a beautiful woman, pure in dissolute days, passing a quiet domestic existence among her own family; a loyalist, leading, in Cromwell's days, a home-life of which those who draw their history from the pleasant pages of Sir Walter's historical novels can have little idea. To confirmed novel-readers it will be, I think, an awakening to learn that there was ever cessation of the "clashing of rapiers" and "heavy tramp of cavalry" in the middle of the seventeenth century.

Dorothy Osborne, born in 1627, was the daughter of Sir Peter Osborne, Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer (an inherited office) and Governor of Guernsey in the days of James I. and Charles his son. She was the only daughter now (1650) unmarried, and had been named after her mother, Dorothy, without further addition. Much more could be collected of this sort from the lumber in Baronetages and Herald's manuals; but to what purpose? William Temple was born in 1628.

It was in 1648, when the king was imprisoned at Carisbrook, in Colonel Hammond's charge, that Dorothy first met her constant lover. They met in the Isle of Wight. She and her brother were on their way to St. Maloes. Temple was starting on his travels. A little incident, almost a Waverley incident, took place here, worth reciting, perhaps. The Osbornes and Temple were loyalists. Young Osborne, more loyal than intelligent, remained behind at an inn where they had halted that he might write on the window-pane with a diamond, "And Haman was hanged upon the gallows he had prepared for Mordecai." This attack on Colonel Hammond, and the audacity of a cavalier daring to apply the Scriptures after the Puritanical method, caused the whole party to be arrested by the Roundheads, and a very pretty adventure was spoilt by the ready wit of our Dorothy taking the offence upon herself, when, through the gallantry of the Roundhead officer, the whole party was suffered to depart. "This incident," says Courtenay, on good authority, "was not lost upon Temple." Indeed, I think with Courtenay; but would add that much else besides was not lost upon him. Travelling with her and her brother, staying with her in Guernsey, is it to be wondered that Temple was attracted by the bright wit, clear faith and honesty of Dorothy; or that the brilliant parts and seriousness of Temple—a great contrast to many of the bibulous, rowdy cavaliers whom she must have met with—made her find in him one worthy of her friendship and her love? That Temple at this time openly

declared his love I doubt. Love grew between them unknown to either. Years afterwards Dorothy writes :—

"For God's sake, when we meet let us design one day to remember old stories in, to ask one another by what degrees our friendship grew to this height 'tis at. In earnest I am at a loss sometimes in thinking of it, and though I can never repent of the share you have in my heart, I know not whether I gave it you willingly or not at first. No; to speak ingenuously, I think you got an interest there a good while before I thought you had any, and it grew so insensibly and yet so fast, that all the traverses it has met with since, have served rather to discover it to me than at all to hinder it."

The further circumstances necessary to the understanding of Dorothy's letters, are shortly, these: Dorothy lived at Chicksands Priory, where her father was in ill health, and there she received suitors at her parents' commands. The Osbornes, it seemed, disliked Temple, and objected to him on the score of want of means; whilst Temple's father had planned for his son an advantageous match in another quarter. Alas! for the frowardness of young couples! They held their course, and waited successfully.

Hardly can we do better, that you may picture Dorothy and her mode of life clearly to yourself, than copy this important letter for you at length :—

"You ask me how I pass my time here. I can give you a perfect account, not only of what I do for the present, but what I am likely to do this seven years if I stay here so long. I rise in the morning reasonably early, and before I am ready I go round the house till I am weary of that, and then in the garden till it grows too hot for me. I then think of making me ready; and when that's done I go into my father's chamber; from thence to dinner, where my cousin Molle and I sit in great state in a room and at a table that would hold a great many more. After dinner we sit and talk till Mr. P. comes in question, and then I am gone. The heat of the day is spent in reading or working, and about six or seven o'clock I walk out into a common that lies hard by the house, where a great many young wenches keep sheep and cows, and sit in the shade singing of ballads; I go to them, and compare their voices and beauty to some ancient shepherdesses that I have read of, and find a vast difference there; but, trust me, I think these are as innocent as those could be. I talk to them, and find *they want nothing to make them the happiest people in the world but the knowledge that they are so.* Most commonly, while we are in the middle of our discourse, one looks about her, and spies her cows going into the corn, and then away they all run as if they had wings at their heels. I, that am not so nimble, stay behind, and when I see them driving home their cattle think it is time for me to return too. When I have supped I go into the garden, and so to the side of a small river that runs by it, where I sit down and wish you with me (you had best say this is not kind, neither). In earnest, it is a pleasant place, and would be more so to me if I had your company, as I sit there sometimes till I am lost with thinking; and were it not for some cruel thought of the crossness of my fortune, that will not let me sleep there, I should forget there were such a thing to be done as going to bed."

Truly a quiet country life, in a quiet country house; poor lonely Dorothy!

Chicksands Priory, Bedfordshire, is a low-built sacro-secular edifice, well fitted for its former service. Its priestly denizens were turned out in Henry VIII.'s monk-hunting reign (1538). To the joy or sorrow of the neighbourhood: who knows now? Granted then to one, Richard Snow, of whom the records are silent; by him sold, in Elizabeth's reign, to Sir John Osborne, Knt. (Dorothy's brother was first baronet); thus it becomes the ancestral home of our Dorothy. There is a crisp etching of the house in Fisher's Collections of Bedfordshire. The very exterior of it is Catholic, unpuritanical; no methodism about the square windows set here and there, at undecided intervals, wheresoever they may be wanted. Six attic windows jut out from the low-tiled roof. At the corner of the house is a high pinnacled buttress rising the full height of the wall; five buttresses flank the side wall, built so that they shade the lower windows from the morning sun, in one place reaching to the sill of an upper window. Perhaps Mrs. Dorothy's window; how tempting to scale and see. What a spot for the happier realisation of Romeo and Juliet, or of Sigismonde and Guichard, if this were romance. In one end of the wall are two Gothic windows, claustral remnants, lighting now, perhaps, the dining-hall, where cousin Molle and Dorothy sat in state; or the saloon, where the latter received her servants. There are old cloisters attached to the house; at the other side of it may be. Yes! a sleepy country house, the warm earth and her shrubs creeping close up to the very sills of the lower windows, sending in morning

fragrance, I doubt not, when Dorothy thrust back the lattice after breakfast. A quiet place, "slow" is the accurate modern epithet for it, "awfully slow." But to Dorothy, a quite suitable home at which she never repines.

This etching of Thomas Fisher, of December 26th, 1816, is a godsend to me, hearing as I do that Chicksands Priory no longer remains to us, having suffered martyrdom at the bloody hands of the restorer. For through this, partly, we have attained to a knowledge of Dorothy's surroundings, and may now safely let Dorothy herself tell us of the servants visiting her at Chicksands during those long seven years through which she remains constant to Temple. See what she expects in a lover! Have we not here some local squires hit off to the life? Could George Eliot have done more for us in like space?

"There are a great many ingredients must go to the making me happy in a husband. My Cousin Franklin says our humours must agree, and to do that he must have that kind of breeding that I have had, and used that kind of company; that is, he must not be so much a country gentleman as to understand nothing but hawks and dogs, and be fonder of either than of his wife; nor of the next sort of them, whose time reaches no farther than to be justice of the peace, and once in his life high sheriff, who reads no book but statutes, and studies nothing but how to make a speech interlarded with Latin, that may amaze his disagreeing poor neighbours, and fright them rather than persuade them into quietness. He must not be a thing that begun the world in a free school, was sent from thence to the university, and is at his farthest when he reaches the inns of court; has no acquaintance but those of his form in those places; speaks the French he has picked out of old laws, and admires nothing but the stories he has heard of the revels that were kept there before his time. He must not be a town gallant neither, that lives in a tavern and an ordinary; that cannot imagine how an hour should be spent without company unless it be in sleeping; that makes court to all the women he sees, thinks they believe him, and laughs and is laughed at equally. Nor a travelled monsieur, whose head is feathered inside and outside, that can talk of nothing but of dances and duels, and has courage enough to wear slashes, when everybody else dies with cold to see him. He must not be a fool of no sort, nor peevish, nor ill-natured, nor proud, nor courteous; and to all this must be added, that he must love me, and I him, as much as we are capable of loving. Without all this his fortune, though never so great, would not satisfy me, and with it a very moderate one would keep me from ever repenting my disposal."

These negative needs doubtless excluded many of the neighbours who were ready to throw themselves at her feet. But, from far and near, came many suitors, Cromwell's son, Henry, among others; who will be "as acceptable to her," she thinks, "as anybody else." He seems almost worthy of her, if we believe most accounts of him, and allow for the Presbyterian animosity of good Mrs. Hutchinson. However, Henry Cromwell disappears from the scene, marrying elsewhere; whereby English history is possibly considerably modified. Temple is ordered to get her a dog, an Irish greyhound. "Henry Cromwell undertook to write to his brother Fleetwood, for another for me; but I have lost my hopes there; whomsoever it is that you employ, he will need no other instruction, but to get the biggest he can meet with. 'Tis all the beauty of those dogs, or of any, indeed, I think. A mastiff is handsomer to me than the most exact little dog that ever lady played withal." Temple, no doubt, procured the biggest dog in Ireland, not the less joyfully that "she had lost her hopes of Henry Cromwell."

There is another lover worthy of special mention—a widower—Sir Justinian Isham, of Lamport, Northamptonshire, pragmatical enough in his love suit, causing Mrs. Dorothy much amusement. She writes of him to Temple under the nickname "The Emperor." This is the character she gives him: "He was the vainest, impertinent, self-conceited, learned coxcomb that ever yet I saw." Hard words these!

The Emperor, it appears, caused further disagreement between Dorothy and her brother. Like the kettle in the *Cricket on the Hearth*, the Emperor began it. "The Emperor and his proposals began it; I talked merrily on till I saw my brother put on his sober face, and could hardly then believe he was in earnest. It seems he was; for when I had spoke freely my meaning, it wrought so with him, as to fetch up all that lay upon his stomach: all the people that I had ever in my life refused were brought again upon the stage, like Richard III.'s ghosts, to reproach me withal, and all the kindness his discoveries could make I had for you was laid to my charge; my best qualities, if I have any that are good, served but for aggravations of my fault, and I was allowed to have wit, and understanding, and

discretion, in all other things, that it might appear I had none in this. Well, 'twas a pretty lecture, and I grew warm with it after a while. In short, we came so near to an absolute falling out that 'twas time to give over, and we said so much then that we have hardly spoken a word together since. But 'tis wonderful to see what courtesies and legs pass between us, and as before we were thought the kindest brother and sister, we are certainly now the most complimental couple in England: it is a strange change, and I am very sorry for it, but I'll swear I know not how to help it."

It is doubtless unpleasant to be pestered by an unwelcome suitor; however Dorothy has this compensation, that the emperor's proposals and letters give her mighty amusement.

"In my opinion, those great scholars are not the best writers (of letters I mean, of books perhaps they are); I never had, I think, but one letter from Sir Jus, but 'twas worth twenty of anybody's else to make me sport. It was the most sublime nonsense that in my life I ever read, and yet I believe he descended as low as he could to come near my weak understanding. 'Twill be no compliment after this to say I like your letters in themselves, not as they come from one that is not indifferent to me, but seriously I do. All letters, methinks, should be free and easy as our discourse; not studied as an oration, nor made up of hard words like a charm; 'tis an admirable thing to see how some people will labour to find out terms that may obscure a plain sense, like a gentleman I know, who would never say the weather grew cold, but that winter began to salute us. I have no patience at such coxcombs, and cannot blame an old uncle of mine that threw the standish at his man's head, because he wrote a letter for him, when, instead of saying (as his master bid him) 'that he would have writ himself but that he had gout in his hand,' he said 'that the gout in his hand would not permit him to put pen to paper.'"

The Emperor, it seems, this much to his credit, is much enamoured of Mrs. Dorothy; and does not take a refusal quietly. Or is she playing the coquette with him?

"Would you think it, that I have an ambassador from the Emperor Justinian, that comes to renew the treaty? In earnest 'tis true, and I want your counsel extremely what to do in it; you told me once that of all my servants you loved him the best, if I could so too, there were no dispute in it; well, I'll think of it, and if it succeed I will be as good as my word: you shall take your choice of my four daughters. Am not I beholden to him, think you? He says he has made addresses, 'tis true, in several places since we parted, but could not fix anywhere, and in his opinion he sees nobody that would make so fit a wife for himself as I. He has often inquired after me to know if I were not marrying: and somebody told him I had an ague, and he presently fell sick of one too, so natural a sympathy there is between us, and yet for all this, on my conscience we shall never marry. He desires to know whether I am at liberty or not. What shall I tell him, or shall I send him to you to know? I think that will be best. I'll say that you are much my friend, and that I am resolved not to dispose of myself but with your consent and approbation; therefore he must make all his court to you, and when he can bring me a certificate under your hand that you think him a fit husband for me, 'tis very likely I may have him; till then I am his humble servant, and your faithful friend."

But, at length, Sir Justinian marries some other fair neighbour, and vanishes from these pages; leaving, however, other lovers in the field vainly seeking Dorothy's hand. "I have a squire now," she writes, "that is as good as a knight. He was coming as fast as a coach and six horses could bring him, but I desired him to stay till my ague was gone, and give me a little time to recover my good looks, for I protest if he saw me now he would never desire to see me again. Oh, me! I cannot think how I shall sit like the lady of the lobster, and give audience at Babram; you have been there, I am sure, nobody at Cambridge 'scapes it, but you were never so welcome thither as you shall be when I am mistress of it." Also there comes to woo her "a modest, melancholy, reserved man, whose head is so taken up with little philosophical studies, that I admire how I found a room there." A new servant is offered to her: "who had £2000 a year in present, with £2000 more to come. I had not the curiosity to ask who he was, which they took so ill that I think I shall hear no more of it." Thus in one way or another, she gets rid of them all. But they are very importunate, these "servants," as they style themselves, requiring wit and determination to send them about their business. Dorothy is determined to marry where she loves. "Surely," she says, "the whole world could never persuade me (unless a parent commanded it) to marry one that I had no esteem for." It is doubtful if a parent's

command would suffice, did Dorothy come face to face with such.

Here is a sharp refusal dramatically given to one importunate servant, Mr. James Fish by name (fancy Dorothy Osborne as Mrs. Fish), who would fain have become master. "I cannot forbear telling you that t'other day he made me a visit; and I, to prevent his making discourses to me, made Mrs. Goldsmith and Jane sit by me all the while, but he came better provided than I could have imagined; he brought a letter with him, and gave it me as one that he had met with, directed to me; he thought it came out of Northamptonshire. I was upon my guard, and suspecting all he said, examined him so strictly where he had it, before I would open it, that he was hugely confounded, and I confirmed that it was his. I laid it by, and wished then they would have left us, that I might have taken notice of it to him. But I had forbid it them so strictly before, that they offered not to stir further than to look out of window, as not thinking there was any necessity of giving us their eyes as well as their ears; but he, that thought himself discovered, took that time to confess to me (in a whispering voice that I could hardly hear myself), that the letter (as my Lord Broghill says) was of great concern to him, and begged I would read it, and give him my answer. I took it up presently, as if I had meant it, but threw it sealed as it was into the fire, and told him (as softly as he had spoke to me) I thought that the quickest and best way of answering it. He sat a while in great disorder without speaking a word, and so rose and took his leave. Now, what think you; shall I ever hear of him more?" We think not, decidedly. He, like the others, recovers, doubtless, to marry elsewhere.

But Temple's father, Dorothy's brother, and her solicitous servants, are not the only obstacles these lovers meet with. There are long separations at great distances when the lovers can hear but little of each other. Few meetings, and these at long intervals, break the monotony of Dorothy's life of love.

> "'Tis not the loss of love's assurance,
> It is not doubting what thou art,
> But 'tis the too, too long endurance
> Of absence, that afflicts my heart."

Thus would Dorothy have written, perhaps, had she rhymed her thoughts in these days. Now and again, indeed, Mrs. Dorothy is in London, "engaged to play and sup at the Three Kings," or at Spring Gardens, Fox-hall; enjoying for the time, as gay a life as is possible, in these Puritan days. But this is not the life for our Dorothy. "We go abroad all day," she writes, "and play all night, and say our prayers when we have time. Well, in sober earnest, now, I would not live thus a twelvemonth, *to gain all that the king has lost, unless it was to give it him again.*" No! Dorothy's life is at Chicksands tending her father, writing to her lover, reading romances sent to her by him, and crying real tears over the miseries of their poor pasteboard heroines. In those days Fielding was not, and the glories of fiction were unknown and quite inconceivable. Mr. Cowley's verses reach her (in MS. Courtenay thinks), and occasional news of political matters. Here, set down in this dull priory house, she lives a calm domestic life without repining, without sympathy in her troubles. Is not this difficult; impossible to most, and worthy of a heroine? But, though her life is at Chicksands, her heart is far away with Temple; though her eyes are brimming with tears for the sorrows of Almanzar, it is because they mirror her troubles in their own weak fashion; and, whilst her soul is longing to commune with her lover, is it marvellous that by some mesmeric culture, she, quite untrained in literary skill, so portrays her thoughts that not only were they clearly uttered for Temple, but remain to us, clothed in the power of clear intention, honesty of expression, and kindly wit?

Perhaps, in these seven long apprentice years to matrimony, Dorothy had no trouble causing her more real anguish than her fears concerning Temple's religious belief. Gossiping Bishop Burnet, in one of his more ill-natured passages, tells us that Temple was an Epicurean, thinking religion to be fit only for the mob; and a corrupter of all that came near him. Unkind words these, with just perhaps those dregs of truth in them, which make gossip so hard to bear patiently. Temple, I take it, was too intelligent not to see the hollow, noisy, drum nature of much of the religion around him; preferred also, as young men will do, to air speculative opinions rather than consider them; hence the bishop's censure. Was it true, as Courtenay thinks, that jealousy of King William's attachment to Temple, disturbed the episcopal equipoise of soul, rendering his Lordship slanderous, even a backbiter? To us, brother servants of Dorothy, this matters not. Sufficient pity is it, that Dorothy is forced to write to her lover in such words as these: "I tremble at the desperate things

you say in your letter: for the love of God, consider seriously with yourself what can enter into comparison with the safety of your soul? Are a thousand women or ten thousand worlds worth it? No, you cannot have so little reason left as you pretend, nor so little religion; for God's sake let us not neglect what can only make us happy for a trifle. If God had seen it fit to have satisfied our desires, we should have had them, and everything would not have conspired thus to cross them; since He has decreed it otherwise (at least as far as we are able to judge by events) we must submit, and not by striving make an innocent passion a sin, and show a childish stubbornness. I could say a thousand things more to this purpose if I were not in haste to send this away, that it may come to you at least as soon as the other, Adieu."

Thus, you see, Dorothy is not without her fears; but, though she can write thus to her lover, yet, when he is attacked by her brother, she is ready to defend him; having at heart that real faith in his righteousness, without which there could be no love. "All this," she writes in another letter, "I can say to you; but when my brother disputes it with me, I have other argument for him, and I drove him up so close t'other night, that for want of a better gap to get out at, he was fain to say that he feared as much your having a fortune as your having none, for he saw you held my Lord S.'s principles; that religion and honour were things you did not consider at all; and that he was confident you would take any engagement, serve in any employment, or do anything to advance yourself. I had no patience for this: to say you were a beggar, your father not worth £4,000 in the whole world, was nothing in comparison of having no religion, nor no honour. I forgot all my disguise, and we talked ourselves weary; he renounced me again, and I defied him."

There is no religious twaddle in Dorothy's letters; her religion grew from within herself, and was not the distorted reflection of Scriptural beliefs coloured by modern sympathies and antipathies. She does not satisfy her tendency towards righteousness by the mock humility of constant self-abasement, or by the juggling misapplication of texts of Scripture. Indeed, the depth of her faith and belief is not to be seen on the surface of these letters—hardly, indeed, to be understood at all, I think, except from the charitable tendency of her thoughts, her deep silences and self-restraint. Dorothy, it appears, sees with her clear, smiling eyes quite through the loudly-expressed longings for the next world, which had helped to put some prominent men of the time in high places in this. "After all," she says, "who is weary of it more than in discourse? Who thinks with pleasure of leaving it, or preparing for the next? Nothing can wean us from the folly of preferring a mortal being, subject to great infirmity and unavoidable decays, before an immortal one, and all the glories that are promised with it. Is not this all very like preaching? Well, 'tis too good for you—you shall have no more of it. I am afraid you are not mortified enough for such discourse to work upon, though I am not of my brother's opinion neither, that you have no religion in you. In earnest, I never took anything he ever said half so ill, as nothing sure is so great an injury. It must suppose one to be a devil in human shape."

Seven long years! Which of you, my readers, has waited this time without a murmur and without a doubt? Was not this an acting of faith far higher than any letter writing of it? Let us think so, and honour it as such. Here is a letter, written when doubt almost overwhelmed, when the *spleen* (a disease as common now as then, though we have lost the good name for it) was upon her, when the world looked blank, and life a drifting mist of despair.

"Let me tell you that if I could help it I would not love you, and that as long as I live I shall strive against it, as against that which has been my ruin, and was certainly sent me as a punishment for my sins, but I shall always have sense of your misfortunes equal if not above my own; I shall pray that you may obtain quiet I never hope for but in my grave, and I shall never change my condition but with my life; nothing can ever persuade me to enter the world again; I shall in a short time have disengaged myself of all my little affairs in it and settled myself in a condition to apprehend nothing but too long a life, and therefore I wish you to forget me, and to induce you to it let me tell you freely that I deserve you should; if I remember anybody 'tis against my will; I am possessed with that strange insensibility that my nearest relations have no tie upon me, and I find myself no more concerned in those that I have heretofore had great tenderness of affection for, than if they had died long before I was born; leave me to this, and seek a better fortune: I beg it of you as heartily as I forgive you all those strange thoughts you have had of me; think me so still if that will do anything towards it, for

God's sake do, take any course that may make you happy, or if that cannot be, less unfortunate at least than your friend and humble servant,

"D. OSBORNE."

Such letters are, happily, not numerous. Here is another, of a quite different nature, in which you can read the practical English sense of our Dorothy, and her thoughts anent love in a cottage:—

"I have not lived thus long in the world, and in this age of changes, but certainly I know what an estate is; I have seen my father's reduced better than £4,000 to not £400 a year, and I thank God I never felt the change in anything that I thought necessary. I never wanted, and am confident I never shall; yet I would not be thought so inconsistent a person as not to remember that it is expected from all people that have sense that they should act with reason; that to all persons some proportion of fortune is necessary, according to their several qualities, and though it is not required that one should tie oneself to just so much, and something is left for one's inclination, and the difference in the persons to make, yet still within such a compass; [a little incoherent this, meaning, I think, that Dorothy does not believe that even the world would have you choose by money and goods alone], and such as lay more upon these considerations than they will bear, shall infallibly be condemned by all sober persons. If any accident out of my power should bring me to necessity though never so great, I should not doubt with God's assistance, but to bear it as well as anybody, and I should never be ashamed on't if He pleased to send it me; but if by my own folly I had put it upon myself, the case would be extremely altered." But this is Dorothy in her serious strain; often (how often?) she plays the lover, and though I disapprove of peeping into such letters, doubting if Cupid recognises any statute of limitations in these affairs, yet to complete the fabric we must play eavesdropper for once.

"It will be pleasinger to you, I am sure, to tell you how fond I am of your lock. Well, in earnest now, and setting aside all compliment, I never saw finer hair, nor of a better colour; but cut no more of it. I would not have it spoiled for the world; if you love me be careful of it; I am combing and curling and kissing this lock all day, and dreaming of it all night. The ring, too, is very well, only a little of the biggest. Send me a tortoiseshell one to keep it on, that is a little less than that I sent for a pattern. I would not have the rule absolutely true without exception, that hard hairs are ill-natured, for then I should be so; but I can allow that all soft hairs are good, and so are you, or I am deceived as much as you are, if you think I do not love you enough. Tell me, my dearest, am I? You will not be if you think I am not yours."

Space! Space! how narrow, harsh, and ungallant thou art; not ready to give place, even to Dorothy herself. We must hasten to the end. Dorothy, it appears, unlike some of her sex, does not like playing Mrs. Bride in a public wedding. "I never yet," she writes, "saw anybody that did not look simply and out of countenance, nor ever knew a wedding well designed but one, and that was of two persons who had time enough I confess to contrive it, and nobody to please in it but themselves. He came down into the country where she was upon a visit, and one morning married her; as soon as they came out of the church, they took coach and came for the town, dined at an inn by the way, and at night came into lodgings that were provided for them, where nobody knew them, and where they passed for married people of seven years' standing. The truth is I could not endure to be Mrs. Bride in a public wedding, to be made the happiest person on earth; do not take it ill, for I would endure it if I could, rather than fail, but in earnest I do not think it were possible for me; you cannot apprehend the formalities of a treaty more than I do, nor so much the success of it."

But her father is now dead. Her brother, Peyton, is to make the treaty for her. Here is the letter, dated for once (Oct. 2, 1654), inviting Temple to come, and she will name the day; at least Courtenay tells us, that "in this interview the preliminaries were settled. After a long debate with myself how to satisfy you, and remove that rock (as you call it) which in your apprehensions is of no great danger, I am at last resolved to let you see that I value your affection for me at as high a rate as you yourself can set it, and that you cannot have more of tenderness for me and my interests than I shall ever have for yours. The particulars how I intend to make this good, you shall know when I see you, which, since I find them here more irresolute in point of time (though not as to the journey itself) than I hoped they would have been, notwithstanding your quarrel to me, and the apprehensions you would make me believe you have that I do not care to see you—pray come hither, and try whether you shall be welcome or not."

And now one moment of suspense. A last trial to the lover's constancy. The bride is taken dangerously ill. So seriously ill, that the doctors rejoice when the disease pronounces itself to be small pox. Alas! who shall now say what are the inmost thoughts of our Dorothy? Does she not now need all her faith in her lover, in herself, ay, and in God, to uphold her in this new affliction. She rises from her bed, her beauty of face destroyed; her fair looks living only on the painter's canvas, unless we may believe that they were etched in deeply bitten lines on Temple's heart. But this skin beauty is not the firmest hold she has on Temple's affections; this was not the beauty that had attracted her lover, and held him enchained in her service for seven years of waiting and suspense; this was not the only light leading him through dark days of doubt, almost of despair, constant, unwavering in his troth to her. Other beauty, not outward, of which I may not write, having seen it but darkly, only through these letters; knowing it indeed to be there, but quite unable to visualise it fully, or to paint it clearly on these pages: other beauty it is, than that of face and form, that made Dorothy to Temple and to all men, in fact, as she was in name—the gift of God.

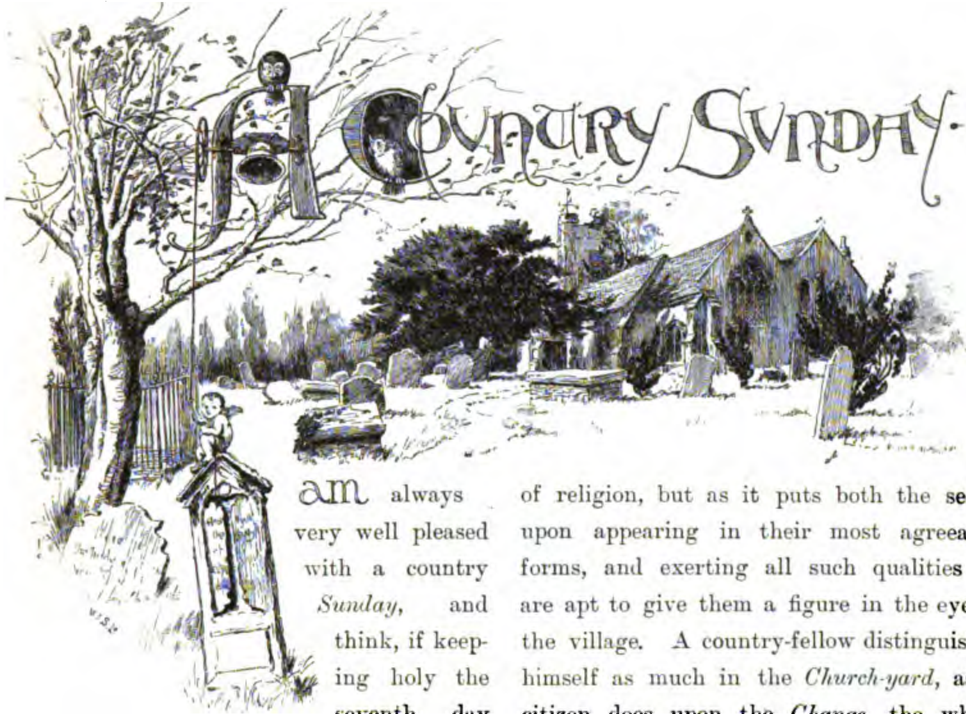
They are wedded, says Courtenay, at the end of 1654; and thus my task ends. Of Lady Temple there is little to know, and this is not the place to set it down. She lies on the north side of the west aisle, at Westminster, with her husband and children.

> "Her body sleeps in Capel's, monument,
> And her immortal part with angels lives."

You, reading for yourself, will perhaps gaze upon the darkened tablet, with new interest; and may, perhaps, thank him who has shown you this picture. Yes, thank him, not as author or historian, but as a servant holding a lamp, but ill-trimmed may be, before a glowing picture, careful that what light he holds, may not glisten on its shining surface, and hide the painting from sight; or as a menial, drawing aside with difficulty, the heavy, dusty curtain of intervening ages which has veiled from human eyes the beautiful figure of Dorothy Osborne. She herself is the picture, and the painter of it; the historian of her own history. But not even to her, are the real thanks due; these must be humbly offered to Him from whom she came, to represent

> "A holy woman and the perfect wife."

EDWARD ABBOTT PARRY.



am always very well pleased with a country *Sunday*, and think, if keeping holy the seventh day were only a human institution, it would be the best method that could have been thought of for the polishing and civilizing of mankind. It is certain the country people would soon degenerate into a kind of savages and barbarians, were there not such frequent returns of a stated time, in which the whole village meet together with their best faces, and in their cleanliest habits, to converse with one another upon indifferent subjects, hear their duties explained to them, and join together in adoration of the Supreme Being. *Sunday* clears away the rust of the whole week, not only as it refreshes in their minds the notions of religion, but as it puts both the sexes upon appearing in their most agreeable forms, and exerting all such qualities as are apt to give them a figure in the eye of the village. A country-fellow distinguishes himself as much in the *Church-yard*, as a citizen does upon the *Change*, the whole parish-politicks being generally discussed in that place either after sermon or before the bell rings.

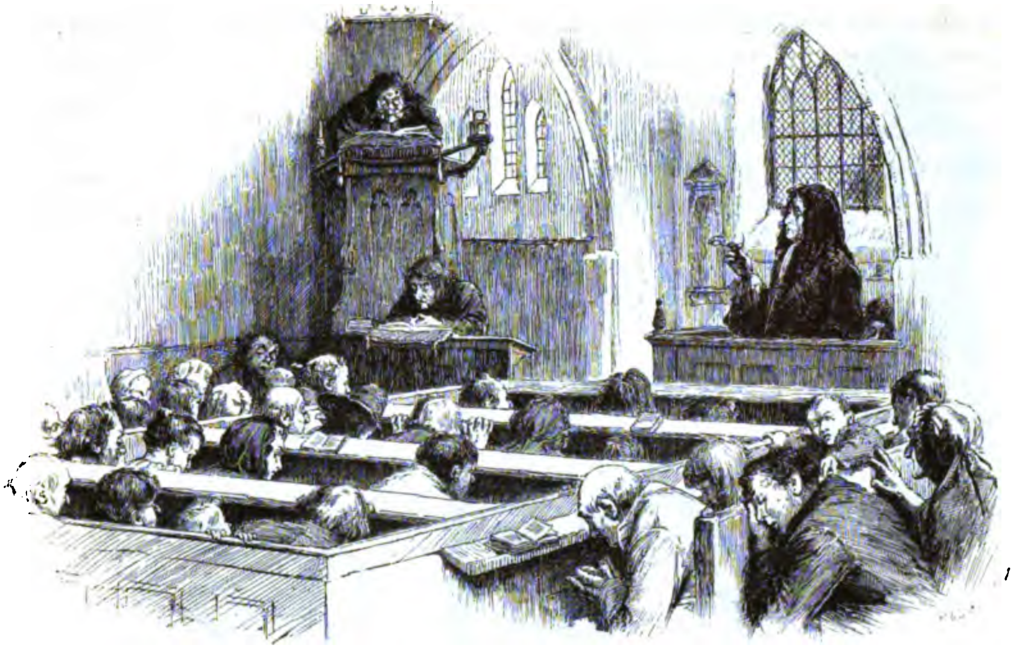
My friend Sir Roger, being a good churchman, has beautified the inside of his church with several texts of his own choosing: He has likewise given a handsome pulpit-cloth, and railed in the communion-table at his own expence. He has often told me, that at his coming to his estate he found his parishioners very irregular; and that in order to make them kneel and join in the responses, he gave every one of them a hassock and a common-prayer-book: and at the same time employed an itinerent singing-

master, who goes about the country for that purpose, to instruct them rightly in the tunes of the psalms; upon which they now very much value themselves, and indeed outdo most of the country churches that I have ever heard.

From a Drawing by Hugh Thomson.

As Sir Roger is landlord to the whole congregation he keeps them in very good order, and will suffer no body to sleep in it besides himself; for if by chance he has been surprised into a short nap at sermon, upon recovering out of it he stands up and looks about him, and if he sees any body else nodding, either wakes them himself, or sends his servants to them. Several other of the old Knight's particularities break out upon these occasions: Sometimes he will be lengthening out a verse in the singing-psalms, half a minute after the rest of the congregation have done with it; sometimes, when he is pleased with the matter of his devotion, he pronounces *Amen* three or four times to the same prayer; and sometimes stands up when every body else is upon their knees, to count the congregation, or see if any of his tenants are missing.

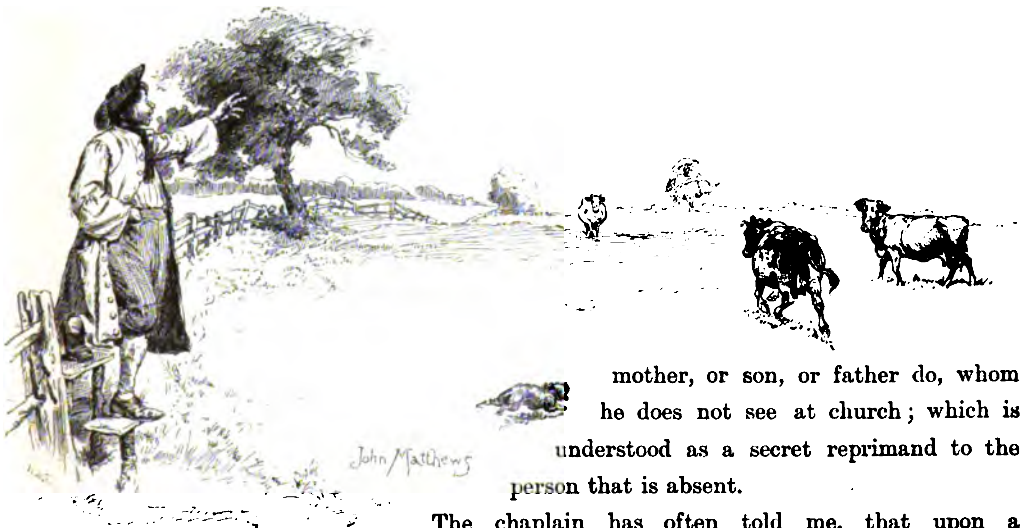
I was yesterday very much surprised to hear my old friend, in the midst of the service, calling out to one *John Matthews* to mind what he was about, and not disturb the congregation. This *John Matthews* it seems is remarkable for being an idle fellow, and at that time was kicking his heels for his diversion. This authority of the Knight, though exerted in that odd manner which accompanies him in all circumstances of life, has a very good effect upon the parish, who are not polite enough to see any thing ridiculous in his behaviour; besides that the general good sense and worthiness of



SIR ROGER STANDS UP TO COUNT THE CONGREGATION.
From a Drawing by HUGH THOMSON.

his character, makes his friends observe these little singularities as foils that rather set off than blemish his good qualities.

As soon as the sermon is finished, no body presumes to stir till Sir ROGER is gone out of the church. The Knight walks down from his seat in the chancel between a double row of his tenants, that stand bowing to him on each side: and every now and then enquires how such an one's wife, or mother, or son, or father do, whom he does not see at church; which is understood as a secret reprimand to the person that is absent.



JOHN MATTHEWS.
From a Drawing by HUGH THOMSON.

The chaplain has often told me, that upon a catechising-day, when Sir ROGER has been pleased with a boy that answers well, he has ordered a bible to

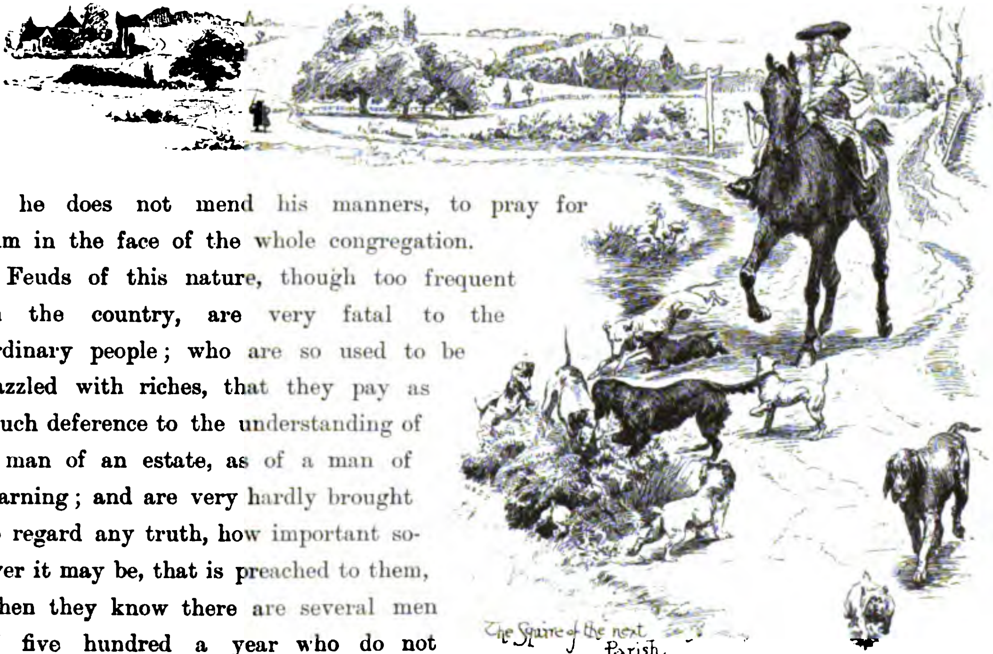
be given him next day for his encouragement; and sometimes accompanies it with a flitch of bacon to his mother. Sir ROGER has likewise added five pounds a year to the clerk's place; and that he may encourage the young fellows to make themselves perfect in the church service, has promised upon the death of the present incumbent, who is very old, to bestow it according to merit.

The fair understanding between Sir ROGER and his chaplain, and their mutual concurrence in doing good, is the more remarkable because the very next village is famous for the differences and contentions that rise between the parson and the 'squire, who live in a perpetual state of war. The parson is always preaching at the 'squire, and the 'squire to be revenged on the parson never comes to church. The 'squire has made all his tenants atheists and tithe-stealers; while the parson instructs them every *Sunday* in the dignity of his order, and insinuates to them in almost every sermon, that he is a better man than his patron. In short.

SIR ROGER AND HIS TENANTS.
From a Drawing by HUGH THOMSON.

From a Drawing by HUGH THOMSON.

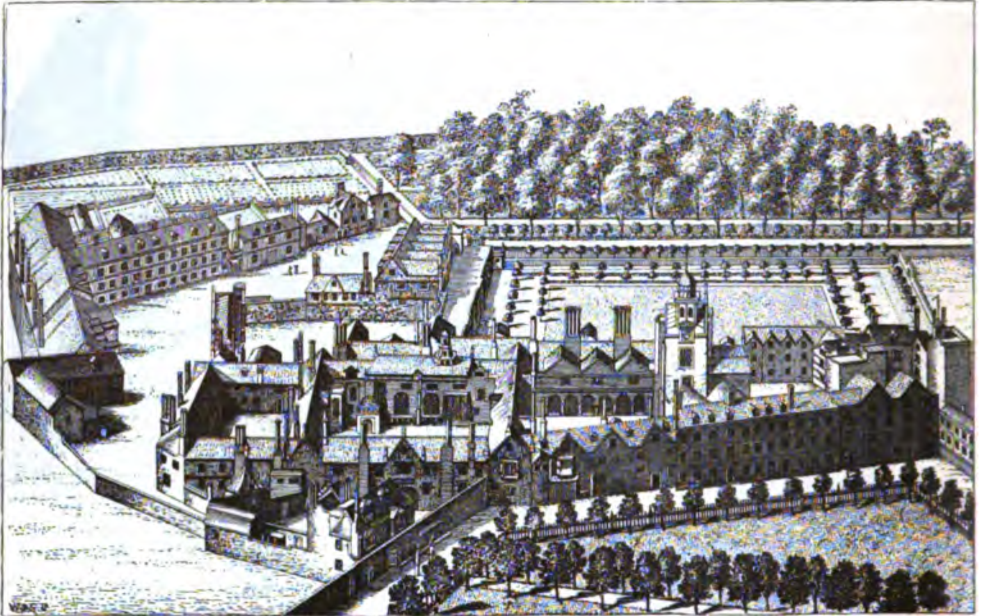
matters are come to such an extremity, that the 'squire has not said his prayers either in publick or private this half year; and that the parson threatens him,



From a Drawing by HUGH THOMSON.

if he does not mend his manners, to pray for him in the face of the whole congregation.

Feuds of this nature, though too frequent in the country, are very fatal to the ordinary people; who are so used to be dazzled with riches, that they pay as much deference to the understanding of a man of an estate, as of a man of learning; and are very hardly brought to regard any truth, how important soever it may be, that is preached to them, when they know there are several men of five hundred a year who do not believe it.



THE CHARTERHOUSE AS SUTTON LEFT IT.

THE LONDON CHARTERHOUSE.

The City of London would be a worse place to breathe in than it is if three Religious Orders of the Middle Ages had not planted houses near its then western boundary. Within the walls the Franciscans, or Grey Friars, founded the house to which Christ's Hospital has succeeded, and the Cistercians, a branch of the Benedictines, occupied the spot on which now stands St. Bartholomew's Hospital. Not far outside stood the Charterhouse. Within the walls of these Brotherhoods must have lain more than thirty acres. The greater part of this area is still open, and it rests with the inhabitants of London to say whether it shall remain so. A decision cannot long be postponed. The removal of Christ's Hospital into the country is a prominent feature of an official scheme already published, and many suggestions have been made for the future use of the site. St. Bartholomew's may escape change. But the lands of the Charterhouse, the most extensive of the three, and its buildings, the richest in historic interest, have been once nibbled at, and are now threatened with complete destruction. It may be worth while to consider what London would lose were the Governors to succeed in their project of converting these lands and buildings of the Hospital of the Charterhouse into shops and warehouses.

An old legend ascribes the foundation of the Carthusian Order to a miraculous message from the dead. A learned Doctor of Paris who had died in the odour of sanctity rose from the bier on which he was being borne through the streets to proclaim that he was condemned by the just judgment of God. This woful deliverance deeply moved the devout mind of the future founder of the Charterhouse and drove him to devise the austere rules of the Order as a way of escape from the wrath to come. The miracle is now repudiated by the Church of Rome, and the story of the foundation of the Charterhouse is a nobler one without it. In the eleventh century St. Bruno, a distinguished teacher in the schools of Reims, was touched by the desire for a solitary and austere life. Abandoning the position he had made by his learning, he set off with a small band of companions to seek the rougher

discipline for which he longed. After a visit to Molesmes, where St. Robert was soon to organise the Cistercian branch of the Benedictines, he travelled to Grenoble, where a former pupil was bishop, and begged for the grant of some remote spot in the mountains where he and his companions might organise a monastic life after their minds. St. Hugh, the bishop, had, it is said, dreamed a dream the night before St. Bruno's arrival, in which he had seen a vision of God building Himself a house in one of the neighbouring mountain valleys. He hailed St. Bruno's request as the fulfilment of his dream, and showed him the spot where his house should stand. It was "an upland valley in the Alps to the north of Grenoble, more than ten thousand feet above the sea, and only to be reached by threading a gloomy and difficult ravine. High crags surround the valley on all sides, the soil is poor, the cold extreme; snow lies there most of the year, and the air is charged with fog." The name of the valley, La Chartreuse (akin probably to the Kentish term, 'chart'), became that of the House; and, as the Order extended, the same name was applied to each new foundation, the first home of the Order being distinguished as La Grande Chartreuse. The spread of the Order was slow, and it was not till nearly a century after its foundation that a Carthusian monastery was established in England. Forty years later a second came into existence, but another century elapsed before further progress was made. In the fourteenth century six houses were founded, and amongst them was the London Charterhouse.

The slow spread of the Order is not strange when the trying character of the life it enjoined is considered. The production of a famous liqueur must not be taken as an indication that the life of Carthusians was one of ease and conviviality. St. Bruno had longed for a severe and contemplative life, and he sought to attain his end by reverting to the old idea of solitude. The Carthusian monks did not live in common. Each monk had his separate cell, in which he prayed, and worked, and ate in solitude. Only on rare occasions were the monks assembled in refectory, and the common services in chapel were less frequent than with most Orders. The monks fasted almost perpetually. They ate only bran-bread, never touched flesh, and never bought fish, though they ate it if given them as an alms. They had only one meal a day, except at the great festivals, and on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays this meal consisted of bread and water only. None therefore but those who were prepared for a life of great privation and almost absolute solitude were fitted for entrance into the Carthusian Order, or were likely to be attracted by it. The monasteries never reached two hundred in all, and each usually contained but twelve monks and a prior. But to a small percentage of humanity the life was congenial. At the lowest point of monastic decadence there was never complaint of empty cells in a Carthusian house, nor were scandals whispered about its inmates. Neither the Order nor any house belonging to it has ever been deemed to need reform from the days of St. Bruno to the present time. And pious men of the world have not infrequently taken refuge within the walls of a Charterhouse, finding rest and refreshment in a temporary acceptance of its quiet and solitude. Sir Thomas More was twice an inmate of the Charterhouse in London.

That fearful pestilence, which played so important a part in the social and economic history of England, the Black Death, was the immediate cause of the foundation of the London Charterhouse. London, a maze of densely populated narrow streets and high houses, felt the plague severely. The small confined churchyards of the numerous parish churches were quite inadequate to receive the dead, and the Bishop of London, Ralph Stratford, bought a plot of three acres, at a short distance to the north of the city wall, to form a burial-ground for the victims. His example was followed by Sir Walter Manny, who for a like purpose bought from the Hospital of St. Bartholomew thirteen acres and a quarter called the Spital Croft. Sir Walter has a good title to fame. His memory is preserved for us not only by the part he took in the foundation of the Charterhouse, but by his pleading with Edward III. for the lives of the Calais burgesses. "Ha, gentle Sire! bridle your wrath; you have the renown and good fame of all gentleness; do not a thing whereby men can speak any villany of you! If you have no pity, all men will say that you have a heart full of all cruelty, to put these good citizens to death, that of their own will are come to render themselves to you to save the remnant of their people." The same noble spirit which breathed in these words made Sir Walter forward to help the citizens of London in their distress.

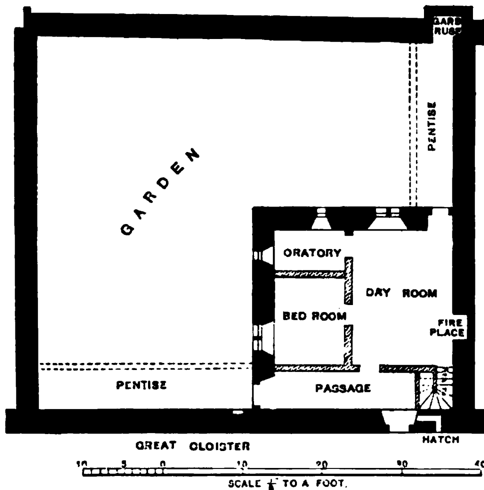
In the burial-ground formed by the Bishop and Manny it is said that 50,000 bodies were interred. It is probable that the number is overstated, but however this may be, it is certain that when the plague abated, and

there was no longer need of special sanitary precautions, the ground was by no means fully occupied. De Northborough had succeeded Stratford in the bishopric; and he and Sir Walter anxiously considered to what purpose they could fitly turn the land. They naturally thought of a religious house; and probably selected the Carthusian Order on account of the austere life it enjoined, and the strictness with which its members adhered to its rule. The ravages of the pestilence had struck men with awe; it was only fitting that a spot which would always be associated with so terrible a visitation should be devoted to high and holy uses. There could be nothing loftier, according to the view of the times, than a life of abstinence spent in solitary contemplation. Neither founder lived to see his work completed. Before long the bishop himself was dead of the plague, having left by his will £2,000 (a large sum in those days) towards the founding, building and finishing of the monastery, to which he also gave his divinity books and vestments, and certain holy vessels. Another ten years elapsed before the church was consecrated, and one of the first uses to which it was put, was the reception of the body of Sir Walter Manny. In 1371, on the Thursday following the feast of St. Hilary, the deceased founder was buried in the choir of the church, the king and all the court attending the funeral. In the same year a Royal Charter confirming the monastery in the possession of their lands was granted, and seven years later, in 1378, a Papal Bull endowing the monastery with certain benefices in the gift of Manny was obtained from Pope Urban VI. Probably all the cells of the monastery were not completed till even a later date. In 1378 a bequest for the building of a cell with a competent portion of cloister and garden ground, and the endowment of a monk to pray therein is recorded; and it seems likely that pious donors would from time to time add to the establishment after this fashion, just as beds are endowed in a hospital at the present day.

THE CHARTERHOUSE.
From a Drawing by H. Railton.

When completed, the London Charterhouse consisted of a double convent of twenty-four monks and a prior, besides a nearly equal number of lay brothers. All Carthusian houses were built on the same model, and the plan of such an establishment may readily be seen from the London Charterhouse of to-day. The monks' cells formed at once the leading and the peculiar feature of the monastery. They were ranged round the

great cloister, which itself surrounded the court or green of the monastery. Each cell was a complete dwelling in itself. It consisted of a house of two stories and a garden, along two sides of which ran a walk sheltered by a pent-roof. On the lower floor of the house were the rooms in which the monk ate and slept, with an oratory adjoining, and on the upper floor was a workshop. The cell communicated with the cloister by a solid door. In the wall by the side of the door was a square hole, or hatch, opening into an elbow-shaped passage in the thickness of the wall. Through this passage the monk commmunicated with the other inmates of the monastery. If he wanted anything—a book, ink, wood—he indicated his wish on a slip of



PLAN OF THE CELL OF A CARTHUSIAN MONK.
From the remains at Mount Grace, Yorkshire.

paper, which he signed with the letter distinguishing his cell, and placed in the passage. The lay brother found the slip as he passed along, and fetched the article required, which he in turn passed into the cell through the hatch. In the same way the monk received each day his allotted portion of food, without any interchange of speech. On the south side of the great cloister was the church of the monastery, not generally a large building, since it was not open to the public. To the west of the church, at the south-west corner of the court, were the prior's hall and the monks' refectory or fratry, and, around a smaller cloister, lodgings for guests and for laymen coming into temporary retreat, besides the kitchens and offices of the monastery.

We have said that the arrangements of the monastery of the Charterhouse in London may be traced from the buildings of to-day. The entrance from Charterhouse Lane, on the north side of Charterhouse Square is through the old gate of the monastery. If we bear to the right inside, after crossing the entrance court, we pass through a covered passage into what was formerly the little cloister. The range of buildings on the left occupies the site of the kitchen, and perhaps the lay brothers' refectory, of the monastery; those to the right, through which we have entered the cloister, stand in the place of the old guest-chambers. In front is the noble hall where the prior entertained his guests, for, like other Orders, the Carthusians recognised the duty of hospitality, and the prior cast aside the rigid rules of the house to receive passing strangers. To the left of the hall is the buttery, and to the west of the little cloister is a range of buildings which were used for menial purposes in the later days of the monastery. These buildings are ranged round a small oblong court known as Wash-house Court. They were built by Prior Houghton, who was afterwards martyred by Henry VIII., and whose initials are to be seen in the outer wall. Even these buildings have, no doubt, undergone some changes in the three centuries and a half which have passed since their erection. But substantially they are the same as when first built to meet the needs of the Charterhouse as a place of resort for distinguished strangers, and a dispensary of alms to the neighbouring and wayfaring poor. Returning to the prior's hall and proceeding northwards, we enter the monks' fratry, a comparatively low room dimly lighted by square windows, but preserving unmistakable signs of antiquity. Beyond this again stretches the west side of the great cloister, from which we look out upon the green, or great court of the monastery. In the walls of this cloister are still to be seen the hatches through which the monks received their food. They are now filled up with brickwork, but workmen employed in the Charterhouse remember to have found the passage still existing in its ancient form, when on some occasion the brick rubbish was cleared away from one of these apertures. These hatches and the marks of the cell-doors are the only traces now remaining of the monks' cells, which were the first part of the monastery to be demolished, being useless for the purposes of a private mansion. Great part of the monastic church is still intact. Whatever nave may have formerly

THE STAIRCASE.
From a Drawing by H. RAILTON.

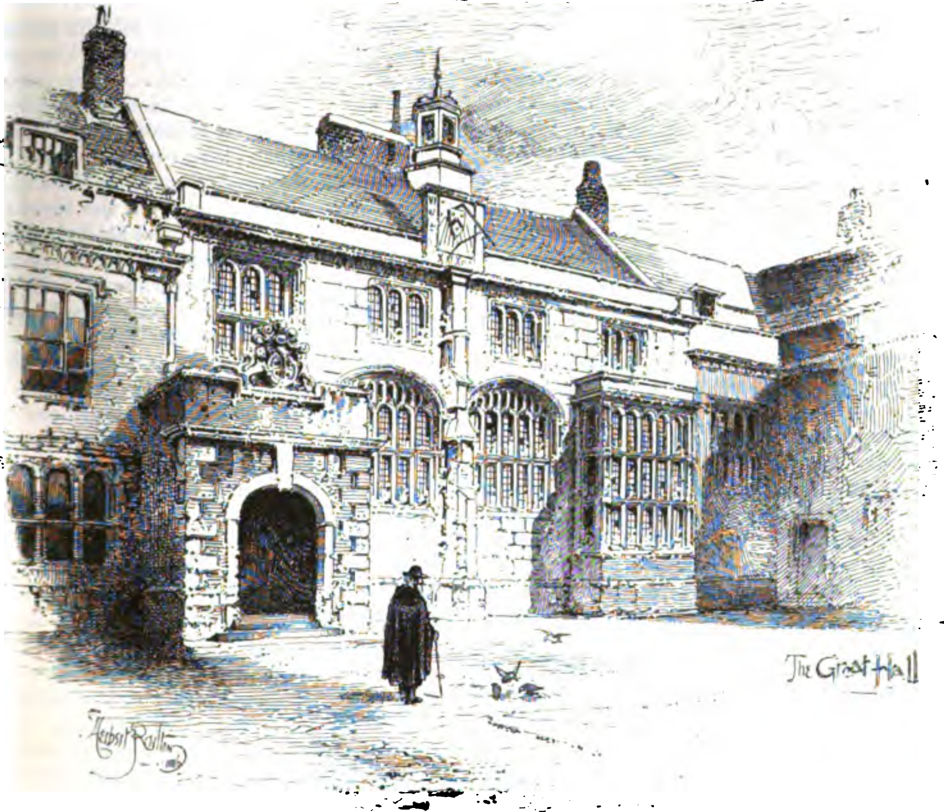
existed has been swept away, but considering the slight use of the church by strangers, it is probable that the nave was never a very important feature. The choir remains, and though Sir Walter Manny's alabaster tomb has disappeared, there can be no doubt that his bones still lie beneath the stones. The choir is now rich with oak wainscoting and benches, the work of more recent times, but its fabric is of the fourteenth century, and behind the panels may be seen some of the older stone mouldings. To the east of the church formerly stood the chapter-house, and beyond this again the laundry of the monastery. These were demolished by the first occupant after the dissolution, and no trace of them now remains. Outside the great cloister and the monks' cells to the north and west was a considerable space of open land, on part of which, no doubt, stood the stables of the monastery. The remainder was devoted to the growth of food, and served for an exercise ground for the monks on the one day in the week when the rules of the monastery allowed them for health's sake to take a more extended walk than their cell-gardens allowed. Not far from the outer gatehouse stood that indispensable adjunct to a monastery—a tank or reservoir of pure water, brought at great expense from springs at Islington; and near the walls stood the flesh kitchen, existing for the benefit of the lay brethren and visitors only, and slightingly alluded to as "Egypt."

Notwithstanding their secluded life the Carthusians seem to have felt the changes passing over men's minds without their walls. Their prior was from his position a man of the world, as well as a monk, and talked freely with the guests who sat at his table. The monks themselves were of course constantly replenished from without, and each new-comer would bring in a breath from

the outer world. During the fourteenth century, when the impulse of religious reformers was to simple piety and a severe life; when Chaucer contrasted the pious self-denying parson with the wanton friar and luxurious high-placed ecclesiastic—

"Christ's love and His apostles twelve he taught,
And first he followed it himself—"

devoted themselves to scholarship. And as the revolt against the Papal power and ecclesiastical abuses (which, commencing with Wycliff, had been crushed out with the peasant revolts at the close of the fourteenth century) rose again on the conclusion of the Civil War, Carthusians entered the strife in defence of the old order. A Carthusian's time was not however necessarily occupied wholly



THE GREAT HALL.
From a Drawing by H. RAILTON.

the Carthusians, as might have been expected, excelled in the study of the spiritual life. Devotional treatises, *Of the Contemplative Life; Of Receiving the Holy Eucharist; Of Suffering Tribulation; The Ladder of Spiritual Perfection; Remedies against the Temptations of the Flesh;* flowed from their pens. As in the course of the fifteenth century the revival of learning commenced, Charterhouse monks

in sedentary work. The wisdom of the founder had recognised that a certain amount of bodily exercise was necessary to the health, not only of the physical but of the spiritual frame. In their work-rooms some of the monks engaged in joining and wood turning. Others indeed spent their spare time in copying manuscripts, or embraced the study of drugs and medicine. Amongst

the monks of the London Charterhouse at the time of the dissolution was one Andreas Boorde who had shown so marked a turn for medicine, and so little for the "rugorosite" of a life of solitary contemplation, that its rules had been relaxed in his favour, and he had been allowed to travel in the pursuit of his favourite study. So well did he turn his opportunities to account, that he was enabled to gain that passport to fame with a medical practitioner, the reputation of curing a distinguished patient: in 1530 he healed the Duke of Norfolk of a distemper. At the dissolution he received a full dispensation from his vows, and subsequently became a physician of eminence and author of many books. His powers of observation and knowledge of plants are shown in a letter which he wrote to Thomas Cromwell, recommending the cultivation of rhubarb. "I have sent to yōr mastshipp," he quaintly says, "the seedes of reuberbe the which came owtt off Barbary; in these ptēs ·ytt ys had for a grett tresure. The seedes be sowne in March, thyn, and when they be rootyd, they must be takyn upp, and sett every one off them a foote or more from another, and well watered." These instructions were apparently not followed, or some other mishap befell the rhubarb, for the plant was not known in England till two centuries later.

The London Charterhouse dispensed lavish alms at the gate, and it is a strong testimony to the esteem in which the house was held, that it was enabled to continue its benefactions to the last. Thomas Cromwell's commissioners complained that though the annual income of the house was only £642 4*s*., the cost of victual dispensed each quarter was £658 6*s*. 3*d*. The monks were obstinate to continue their alms, notwithstanding "the present dearth." It is clear from the fact that such alms were supported, that the Charterhouse retained a strong hold on the affections of the citizens, who could have had no sympathy with the king's attack upon the house. This good opinion is further proved by the custom which obtained of seeking burial within the walls of the monastery. Indeed not only in London but throughout England, the commissioners of Henry VIII. found the Carthusian houses in irreproachable condition. The cells were full, and the discipline perfect. None of the charges which more or less justified the attack on other religious houses could be brought against the Carthusians, and at one time it was thought they would be allowed to maintain their mode of life. Nevertheless in the end, the London Charterhouse was treated with exceptional cruelty. The first visitation took place early in 1534, with a view to securing the adhesion of the monks to the doctrine of the royal supremacy. The monks were not compliant, and Prior Houghton, and the procurator, Humphrey Middlemas, were sent to the Tower. Some reason however,—it is hardly likely, from what followed, that it was fear of punishment,—changed the views of the prior, for a short time afterwards he and Middlemas with four monks and eight servants, took the oath of obedience to the king, and their example was followed in a few days by the rest of the convent. The monks were not however left in peace. A small commission was appointed to act as spies upon the monastery. They were soon able to inform against Houghton for "delivering too free an opinion of the king and his proceedings." The courageous prior was sent to the Tower, and on the 29th of April, 1536, less than a year from the time of his subscription, he was hanged at Tyburn with two other Carthusian priors, formerly monks of the London Charterhouse. In order further to strike terror into the breasts of the London monks, Prior Houghton's body was quartered, and one quarter, with singular barbarity, was hung over the inner gate of his own monastery. A month later Middlemas and two other monks were executed. The Charterhouse having been thus purged of the more prominent opponents of the king's dogmas, an attempt was made to govern it for a time without a prior. Cromwell's commissioners tried their hand at a reformed administration. They proposed that the number of monks and lay brethren should be reduced, and that the monks should be compelled to eat together in the fratry, four in a mess, instead of alone in their cells according to the rule of the Order. By this means the commissioners calculated that "the portion that now serveth but twelve shall suffice for twenty." They wished also to persuade the lay servants and strangers to eat flesh in the hall and parlour "contrary to the old custom," and to give the cloister monks a choice between flesh and fish. It is not clear with what object these changes were proposed; perhaps only to harass the monks and to make from their refusal a pretext for dissolution. After a time a new prior committed to dissolution was appointed, and on the 10th of June, 1537, the house was surrendered to the Crown. The majority of the monks consented to surrender, and were endowed with pensions of £5 a year, the prior receiving £20. Ten men, more

sturdy than their brethren, refused. They were sent to Newgate, and one of the commissioners, Bedyll, writing to Cromwell four days afterwards, epitomises their sufferings with fiendish satisfaction: Five "be departed," two "be even at the point of death," two "be sick," and "one is hole." In the long run only one survived the jail-fever, and he languished in prison four years and was then executed. Two monks were absent at the time of the surrender. They had been sent to the Charterhouse at Kingston-upon-Hull. When their concurrence was asked, it was refused; and they too were hanged, at York. The remnant of the monks who, from London and other places, escaped this persecution settled in Bruges, and returned to London on Queen Mary's succession, when they were then formally installed at Sheen. Queen Elizabeth again dispersed them, and they settled this time at Nieuport, in Flanders, where they existed as an English House till the end of the last century.

The excessive cruelty with which the London Carthusians were treated would lead one to think that amongst the reasons for such conduct was a covetous desire for their fair house and grounds. For some time, however, little use was made of the possession thus forcibly acquired. For a while the buildings were converted into a storehouse for tents and other furniture of war. But in 1545 the place was granted to Sir Edward North, the son of a London mercer, a distinguished lawyer, and a Privy Councillor. He at once set to work to adapt the Charterhouse to the uses of a nobleman's palace. He pulled down the monks' cells, probably to provide building stones, and converted their sites into a garden. He pulled down the Chapter-house and built extensively to the east and south of the church; and though it is difficult to tell what was his work, and what that of the Duke of Norfolk who succeeded him, it is probable that Howard House substantially assumed its present shape in the time of North. At one time North seems to have sold the place to the great Duke of Northumberland, with whom he was connected by marriage. This transfer may have been the price which North paid for some promised preferment he was to receive, had the Duke been successful in maintaining his daughter-in-law on the throne of England. If so, however, North saw in time that he had taken the wrong side, for he was one of the first persons of note to declare for Queen Mary, and was in consequence raised to the peerage by the title of Lord North. It is natural perhaps that he should not have stood so well with the succeeding Queen, although on two occasions she honoured the Charterhouse with a visit. The Charterhouse, indeed, was the first house in which Elizabeth slept as Queen, after leaving Hatfield. "On Wednesday the 23rd of November," says Nichol, "the Queen's Majestie removed from Hatfield into the Charterhouse in London, where she lodged in the Lord North's house." She stayed five days, rather, it is said, because of the largeness of the house, and convenience of the situation than from respect to Lord North. So well did she like the place, that three years later, when North was in no great favour, having been dismissed from the Council, she again held Court at the Charterhouse for a few days. The expense entailed upon the host by such a visit must have been very heavy, and was perhaps intended partly as a fine upon a peer in disgrace. Three years later Lord North died, and his son Roger sold the Charterhouse in the following year, 1565, to the Duke of Norfolk, reserving only some buildings on the site of the old Chapter-house; and the Charterhouse remained the property of the Norfolk family till its sale to Sutton nearly fifty years afterwards.

It was at this time that the mansion constructed by North and beautified by the succeeding owners gained the name of Howard House.

Howard House was in fact an Elizabethan mansion built round the old monastic halls of the fourteenth century. Above the monks' fratry still rises the beautiful presence chamber, or withdrawing room, rich with mullioned windows and tapestries, gilt cornice and panelled ceiling, where Elizabeth and her courtiers, in ruff and hooped petticoat, slashed doublet and hose of all the colours of the rainbow, sharpened wits and bandied repartee. Access to this chamber is given by one of the grand staircases of the time, guarded by finely carved balustrades and ceiled with a singularly graceful specimen of Italian plaster work. Round the little cloister no doubt ran in the time of the Howards long "galleries of the Presence," and from these stately rooms the Queen could, without descending many steps, take the air on a terrace walk constructed over the east side of the great cloister, whence she could look down, on the one side, on the old monastic green, then surrounded by rows of formal trees, and, on the other, on the walks and banks and flower-beds of the more ornate Italian garden; while at the end she might descend into one of those bits

of laboriously artificial nature which still "survive" in old halls and palaces of the time under the title of the Wilderness. The Wilderness has gone, although it existed in this century, and ugly warehouses occupy its place. Gardens and trees have vanished; the galleries have been cut into modern rooms, and the terrace walk is blocked at half its length. But the presence chamber and the staircase remain to give some idea of the grand scale on which Howard House was conceived.

ORIEL IN THE GREAT HALL.
From a Drawing by H. RAILTON.

The Duke of Norfolk who purchased the Charterhouse was the son of the Earl of Surrey of Henry VIII., and succeeded to the dukedom on his grandfather's death, in the first year of Queen Mary. Although of the old faith he was in favour with Queen Elizabeth during the earlier years of her reign. Four years after his purchase of the Charterhouse, he became suspected of an intrigue with Mary Queen of Scots, and was even credited with the design of marrying her. He remained in disgrace for some time, and according to the traditions of the Charterhouse was allowed to live as a prisoner in the place he had purchased. Finally he was thrown into the Tower, and subsequently tried and executed in 1572. The Norfolk family indeed fell upon evil times. The next possessor of the Charterhouse, Philip, Earl of Arundel, the eldest son of the Duke, also died in the Tower. The Charterhouse seems to have passed for a time into the occupation of Henry Howard, a brother of the late Duke, afterwards Earl of Northampton, and the builder of the house at Charing Cross known first as Northampton and afterwards as Northumberland House. His nephew, Lord Thomas Howard, the second son of the Duke, was in possession of the Charterhouse at the end of Elizabeth's reign, for he there entertained the Queen. A few months later, the Charterhouse received the succeeding monarch, who arrived from Theobalds on his journey to London. Riding through the meadows, after leaving Stamford Hill "he passed through great concourse of people with shouts and cryes and great casting up of hattes," and "came in at the back side of the Charterhouse over the fields. Thither being come he was most royally received and entertained by the Lord Thomas Howard. He lay there three nights with his trayne, in which time the Lords of Counsell often resorted thither and sat up on serious affairs." The tide had now turned and the Howards prospered. Lord Thomas had commanded the *Lion*, of 250 men, in the fight against the Armada, and had thus perhaps purged himself from the suspicion of disloyalty which had clung to his family. In 1571 he commanded the expedition to the Azores to cut off the Spanish plate-ships, but the glories of the day remained with Sir Richard Grenville, his vice-admiral, who fought the whole Spanish fleet with his single vessel. On the accession of the new monarch, whom he had entertained, he was made Earl of Suffolk, and as Lord Chamberlain he led the search in the vaults of the Parliament House which brought to light Guy Fawkes's tar-barrels. His character does not, however, seem to have been above reproach, for in 1606 he married his daughter, Lady Frances Howard, a child of thirteen, to the Earl of Essex, who was only a year older, and thus paved the way

for her subsequent intrigue with the favourite Carr, Viscount Rochester. This ill-fated child marriage must have been celebrated at the Charterhouse. Later in life Lord Thomas built Audley End, and it was perhaps partly to supply him with money for this enterprise, that in 1611 he sold the Charterhouse to Thomas Sutton, the founder of the Charity which has preserved the name and buildings to our day.

Sutton could not, like so many successful London merchants, boast of commencing life with half-a-crown in his pocket. He was not one of the Dick Whittingtons of the City. His father was a well-to-do gentleman of Lincolnshire, who was able to send his son to Eton and afterwards to St. John's College, Cambridge. On his father's death, in 1558, he succeeded to a moderate property, which he showed great talent in turning to account. He attached himself to the Duke of Norfolk, apparently as a man of business, and may possibly have negotiated for him the purchase of the Charterhouse from the second Lord North. Subsequently Sutton became secretary to the Earl of Warwick, and was, at the instance of that peer, appointed Master-General of Ordnance at Berwick-on-Tweed. As a volunteer he served in the expedition against the French army in Scotland, and commanded a battery before Edinburgh Castle. It was in business rather than in war, however, that Sutton's success was to lie. He embarked in coal-mining in the north, and in little more than ten years had amassed so large a fortune that when he returned to London he was credited with having more money in his purse than the Queen in her Exchequer. Not content, however, with his first venture, Sutton entered upon a second. In his youth he had travelled extensively on the Continent of Europe, and he determined to turn to account the knowledge of foreign languages and the experience thus acquired. He commenced business as a foreign merchant, and planted agents in every part of the world to which English ships traded. He contracted for victualling the navy and foreign garrisons, and according to the Charterhouse traditions his financial position enabled him to play as important a part in history as one of Lord Beaconsfield's moneyed giants. In conjunction with Walsingham he succeeded in draining the Bank of Genoa of money at the very time when Philip of Spain looked to it for the funds to defray the expenses of the Armada. The expedition was delayed, and England had time to prepare her defences. It was not with money alone that Sutton was ready to defend his country. For a second time he went on active service. He equipped a bark of seventy tons, manned her with thirty men, and commanded her in person. There is no record of the part played by the eighteen ships furnished by merchant adventurers, of which Sutton's was one, but we may feel sure that they would not be last in the fray.

Soon after this event Sutton began to think of the uses to which the fortune he had amassed should be put when he could no longer enjoy it. He conveyed large estates to the Lord Chief Justice and other distinguished trustees in trust to found a hospital at Hallingbury Boucher in Essex. A charity could not, however, be founded and endowed without a licence to alienate land in mortmain and a Charter of Incorporation. In the days of James I. these were not easy to obtain. Sutton's great wealth was noised abroad, and he seems to have been looked upon by the Court as fair game for pillage. Large sums of money were extracted from him by Sir John Harrington under promise of obtaining the authorisation of the hospital. Instead of performing his part of the bargain, Harrington impudently suggested that in consideration of a baronage Sutton should make Prince Charles his heir. Sutton refused in a dignified letter, and at length—in 1607—the opposition came to an end, and an Act of Parliament was obtained for the endowment of the hospital at Hallingbury Boucher. Before building began, however, Sutton learned that a still more eligible site could be had. The Charterhouse was probably rather a white elephant to the Earl of Suffolk. He was looking forward to the reversion of his uncle's mansion at Charing Cross, and fashion was already drawing westward. He was devoting his time and energy to the building of Audley End, and had neither money nor inclination for the maintenance and improvement of so large an establishment as the Charterhouse. And he knew that Sutton could afford, and could be made to pay, a good price. The place, indeed, suited Sutton. He would be saved the costly and tedious process of building, and he would be the more likely to see the realisation of his wish to found a noble charity before his life ebbed out. Moreover, by devoting the Charterhouse to public uses he would be conferring a benefit on the city in which he had made much of his money. A palace which had been thought fit for the Royal Court, and pleasure-grounds, designed to gratify the nicest tastes of the period, would be preserved for ever from demolition or mean uses.

A bargain was therefore soon struck. Sutton paid £13,000, five times as much as the Duke of Norfolk had paid Lord North forty-six years before. But, like a good man of business, he bought with the property that which had cost him so much time and money in the case of his Essex scheme. He stipulated that the Earl of Suffolk, who was high in the favour of the Court, should obtain the royal sanction for the foundation of the Hospital on the new site; and on the

A BIT OF THE EXTERIOR OF WASHHOUSE COURT.
From a Drawing by H. RAILTON.

22nd June, 1611, the necessary Letters Patent were obtained. It was only just in time, for before the end of the year Sutton was dead. But in the meantime he had conveyed to the Governors of the new Hospital the estates with which he endowed it, and had left by his will ample funds for its maintenance. For the additional buildings necessary for the purpose to which the Charterhouse would now be used he left £5,000. He added another £1,000 to be paid into the Treasury of the Hospital "to begin their stock and to defend the rights of the House." Not content with these special provisions he arranged for the formation of a fund of £20,000 with which his executors should "do such good work or charitable use for mine intended hospital and for poor people or otherwise as they may think fit." The liberality of this bequest and the wise breadth of the trust on which it was left, as we shall see, probably saved Sutton's Hospital from strangulation in the birth.

Sutton died on the 12th December, 1611, at the age of seventy-nine at Hackney. The body was embalmed, but its removal to London could not be effected till the following spring on account of the badness of the roads. On the first foundation of the Charterhouse the earliest duty of the inmates was to bury their founder. The church was, however, undergoing alterations to accommodate the increased numbers who would now attend its services, and a fitting tomb for the reception of Sutton could not be prepared in a day. The body was therefore deposited for the time in the vaults of Christ Church, Newgate Street; but with fitting ceremony. A grand funeral was organized by the State Herald. The body was preceded by one hundred poor men in black cloaks, and followed by many notables. The procession is said to have taken six hours in passing to the church, and after the funeral rites were performed, Stationers' Hall, draped in black and strewn with nine dozen bundles of rushes, was thrown open for the refreshment of the mourners.

The respect thus paid to Sutton's memory did not, however, prevent a very determined attempt to frustrate his wishes. Simon Baxter, a nephew, after having first vainly tried to obtain forcible possession of the Charterhouse, petitioned the King to set aside the bequests to the Hospital in his favour as heir-at-law, and commenced a litigation of formidable proportions in support of his claim. And now a very curious story is told. The claim of Baxter does not seem to have been considered on legal grounds alone. Sir Francis Bacon, the Solicitor-General, who acted as his legal adviser, did not confine his exertions to advocacy in court. He wrote a letter to the King in which he criticised the whole of Sutton's plan, and suggested other ways in which the funds left by the will might have been better expended. He described Howard House "as fit for a Prince's establishment, and as suitable to Sutton's charity as an embroidered cloak to a beggar;" and he hinted that the King might take the place for his own use or as an

instrument for rewarding a faithful servant. Suspecting the influences at work against them, the overseers of Sutton's trust determined to make a bold venture. They had, as we have seen, £20,000 to dispose of for any public purpose. Now at this time the King was under an obligation to spend £8,000 in building a bridge over the Tweed at Berwick. It was at Berwick that Sutton had laid the first foundations of his fortune. By a fitting act of munificence to the town the Royal Treasury might at the same time be relieved from an oppressive burden. Sutton's representatives accordingly wrote to the King on the 26th June, 1613, offering to defray the charge of building the bridge on the ground that "they could not discover any charitable work better for the commonwealth than the upholding, maintaining, and repairing of bridges." Five days afterwards, on the 1st of July, Sir Edward Coke gave judgment upholding Sutton's will; and on the 8th of July the money was paid to the King!

Sutton's Hospital was now at last in smooth water. The Governors met at the Charterhouse on the 30th July, and passed the first rules for the working of the house, and on the 12th December in the following year, the anniversary of Sutton's death, his body was brought by torchlight on the shoulders of his pensioners from Christ Church, and deposited beneath the costly tomb, which still stands at the east end of Sutton's aisle,—"a huge edifice emblazoned with heraldic decorations and clumsy carved allegories."

The "Hospital of King James founded in Charterhouse within the County of Middlesex, at the humble petition and only costs and charges of Thomas Sutton, Esq.," had for its objects to provide "an hospital, house, or place of biding for the finding, sustentation and relief of poor, aged, maimed, needy, or impotent people, and also one free school for the instructing, teaching, maintenance, and education, of poor children or scholars." The earliest rules of the place defined those to be admitted as pensioners as "such as had been servants in the household of the King, either decrepit or old, captains either at sea or land, soldiers maimed or impotent, decayed merchants, men fallen into decay through shipwreck, casualty of fire, or such evil accident." At one time a condition was added, that "pensioners should not be holden qualified except they be gentlemen by descent," but the limitation was not long enforced. The number was at an early date fixed at eighty, and the age for admission at fifty, unless the candidate had been wounded by land or sea, in which case he might be admitted at forty. Each brother was provided with a dinner daily in the old Hall, in which the Prior of the monastery and afterwards the Norths and Howards had played the host, with a daily allowance of bread and butter in his rooms, and with a sum of money for other expenses. An early order fixes the former allowance at £15 and the latter at £5, "besides physic, food, and a chamber furnished." Each pensioner was furnished every two years with a black cloak or gown, to be worn in chapel and in going to hall. An early order decrees, "none to wear any weapon, long hair, coloured boots, spurs or coloured shoes, feathers in their hats, or ruffian-like or unseemly apparel, but such as becomes hospital men to wear." The garb and demeanour of the pensioners were to be staid and sober, as became men taking refuge from fortune in a quiet haven to close their days on earth. There is a quasi-monastic air about this side of Sutton's foundation which is in keeping with the older uses of the Charterhouse.

It was perhaps a happy thought to bring together under one roof the involuntary brightness of youth with the quietude of old age. Although Sutton's design was apparently to educate "poor children or scholars," his governors so worded their rules as to allow a very liberal view of the qualifying poverty. "No children shall be placed in the school whose parents have any estate in land to leave them, but only the children of poor men that want means to bring them up." A curious commentary on this rule is to be found in the story of a holiday visit of two Carthusians of the early part of this century, narrated in a school magazine. The heroes of the story are the second son of an old Kentish baronet and a member of a good Essex family; and the description of their green cut-away coats, lemon-tinted buckskins, silk stockings, and other items of a dandy's attire forms a prominent feature of the sketch. Some of Pendennis's schoolfellows, it will be remembered, were in the habit of driving in the Park, and indulging in many other youthful luxuries.

The original number of boys on the foundation was forty, and to these was immediately added sixty day boys. The foundation boys were gratuitously boarded and lodged as well as educated, and were supplied during school terms with clothes and gowns. The first gowns were made of broad cloth at 9*s*. 6*d*. the yard, lined with baize at 2*s*. 4*d*., the whole cost of the gown, including the charge for making, being 36*s*. 2*d*. The day boys

WASHHOUSE COURT.
From a Drawing by H. RAILTON.

were from the first a source of profit to the master, and they steadily increased until the early part of the century when they numbered at one time over 400. Subsequently the idea of admitting boarders after the fashion of the other old foundations came into favour, and the day boys, as being the less desirable class, were gradually shouldered out. Finally, the conversion of the school into a fashionable if not aristocratic place of education, led to its severance from the hospital and its recent removal to Godalming.

When this removal took place the Governors of the hospital were authorised by Act of Parliament to sell to the Merchant Taylors' Company their school-house, the old green or cloister court of the monastery, and the open land beyond, formerly the Wilderness of the Duke of Norfolk, and afterwards the undergreen of the Charterhouse boys. The Merchant Taylors pulled down the old school-house and built a large new school of their own. They sold the northern frontage of the Wilderness for building, and hideous warehouses, already once burned down, have since stood thereon. The older buildings, the church, and the pensioners' quarters remained in the possession of the governors, and the more picturesque feature of Sutton's charity was unchanged. Codd gentleman and Codd soldier continued to meet in hall and chapel, though the boys who had dubbed them with that inexplicable prefix no longer ran in to tell of the match that was being played. Still may be seen the black-cloaked figures, among which Ethel Newcome looked anxiously for her uncle, wending their way by twos and threes from chapel to their quiet rooms, where tea and a book, and a bright fire await them. Even the school has not entirely lost touch of its ancient home. The examinations for Sutton's scholarships are held in the Duke of Norfolk's presence chamber, and Founder's Day is still commemorated by school and hospital alike in church and hall.

But the governors are tired of the play. They have resolved to put an end to this remnant of middle-age state and dignity.

Having already converted the "Free School" into a school that is not free, and removed it to a place that knew not Sutton, they now propose altogether to break up the house or place of biding for the poor. The modern view favours the conversion of hospitallers into annuitants, and Sutton's stately charity must be transformed in deference to this view. Unless at the eleventh hour the governors relent, or public opinion and parliament should force them to hold their hands, before another year is passed Sutton's Hospital in the Charterhouse may have entirely disappeared in favour of a middle-class school on the Surrey hills, and a few scattered annuitants.

This is not the place to discuss the wisdom of the step proposed by the governors as a question of charity administration. It is as an act of destruction that it must here be viewed. The Charterhouse is at present a piece of concrete history. It preserves for us visible evidence of the purer side of the religious life of Old England, of the splendour of the Tudor nobles, of the grand scale of the charities of former days. It is a piece of mediæval London left like a rock round which swirls the headlong tide of modern life. To destroy Howard House will be to deprive London of an unique monument. And even if the governors intend, as the Archbishop of York has stated, to preserve Howard House (though there is nothing in their Bill which obliges them to do so), Howard House, shorn of its outbuildings and open spaces, and hemmed in by modern warehouses, will be Howard House no longer and will scarcely long survive. Nor is London with impunity to be robbed of open spaces. At present the green of the Merchant Taylors, and the courts and gardens and quadrangles of the Charterhouse give many acres of uncovered land. It cannot be supposed that the Merchant Taylors will stand by and see their school hemmed in by lofty piles without considering whether it would not answer their purpose also to put the portion of the ancient estate in their hands to similar uses, to clear a handsome sum by the transaction, and to place their school elsewhere. The fate of the whole property depends upon the course now taken. Let the governors once obtain the powers they seek, and the tide of bricks and mortar will sweep over the Charterhouse, and London will lose that which she cannot replace, a source of pure air and a noble place of bygone times. Except that the desecration is to be performed in the interests of a corporation instead of a private individual, Strype's comment on a similar act of vandalism would well apply to such a catastrophe: "So for one man's commodity London lost so goodly an ornament, and times hereafter may none talk of it."

A CHARTERHOUSE BOY IN 1808.
From a Print in Smythe's "History of the Charterhouse."

THE FLOOD OF IS IN BRITTANY.

Crests of foam where the milch-kine fed,
Where the green corn whitened and tanned;
Crests of foam and breakers ahead,
And the deeps run smooth over rocks and sand.
Will the flood-tide back at the churchyard slope?
Mercy, God, from thy sea!
'Twill check at the church and the graves. There's hope.
Christ, let some land yet be!
The surf came sprinkling over the graves:
Then, human speed to the speed of waves,
And the drowning sank to the blessèd dead.

Fly who can! No moment to breathe:
If the homes wreck, life is worth most.
Sound from the front of surges that seethe!
'Tis the sea rolling in from the other coast.
Sea from the west! Sea from the south!
"Husband! snatched in the tide!"
"Child, thy mother?" "She kissed my mouth,
And sat with baby and cried,
For she could not carry him any more."
"Brother, farewell, lest neither reach shore."
Flood, flood right and left! Is there footing beneath?

Grallon rode, rode, and said no word,
Till the white foam splashed at his knee.
"Cling more close, my tender pet-bird;
No fear but stout Gael save thee and me."
St. Gwenolé rode behind the king,
Muttered low in his prayer,
"Can God will the life of this wanton thing,
She that scoffed everywhere?"
Foremost and fastest the great tide raced;
Dahut, clasped firm to her father's waist,
Prayed in her terror, and never stirred.

Speed of horse to the flood-tide's speed:
And the high land seemed ever more far.
Grallon cried out, and patted his steed,
"Hurry thee, Gael, or we drown where we are."

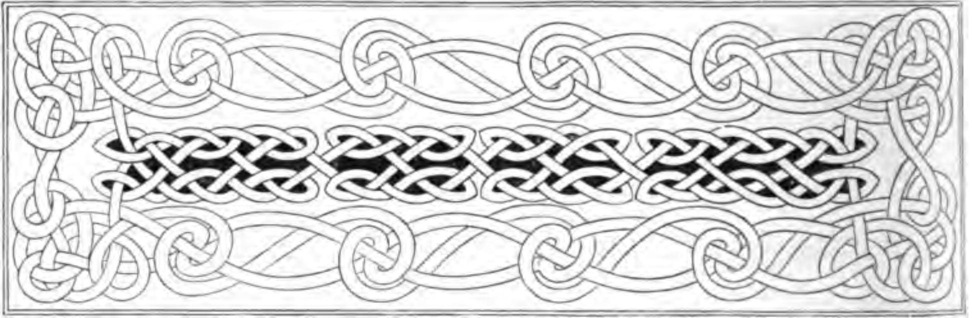
Spake St. Gwenolé, riding at Grallon's hand,
"Gael bears weight of sin.
She that has brought God's doom on thy land
Sits him: the tide will win."
Quoth Grallon, "Thou'rt holy, and I forgive;
None else could have spoken thus and live."
But proud fair Dahut gave scarcely heed.

Gael forced through amid the brunt,
Where the waves lashed at side and flanks.
St. Gwenolé's horse plunged on to the front,
St. Gwenolé cried, "Douarnenez banks
We'd reach them yet, if Gael bore one.
Grallon, God bids, obey:
Thy kingdom drowns for the sins she has done;
Cast the sinner away."
King Grallon spoke slowly, "She's my child."
Fair Dahut lifted her head and smiled;
And 'twas "Wait for Douarnenez, priest, for my thanks."

Dead and drowning came on with the scud;
And the swimmers clutched wrack and drift;
Mark's hill tore and slipped with a thud,
And the sea made a whirling pool in the rift.
Gwenolé's horse had the water shoal;
Grallon's kept losing his feet,
Swam, but once shrieked like a human soul:
Grallon's had two in seat.
On a moment's ground Grallon gave him halt,
Looked back. Oh, the Heavens for Dahut's fault!
No city, no landmarks—bare trackless flood.

"Heart! dear father: Gael must swim."
It was Dahut's voice at his ear.
Close she sat and clinging to him,
She the thing of the world he held dear.
Her little fingers were knitted so tight,
Grallon needed his strength:
But 'twixt such a two was no equal strife;
'Twas but a minute's length.
"Father!" she cried, and then, "Murderer!"
Then fell. So her sins were revenged on her;
And the flood-tide stayed at a low rock rim.

AUGUSTA WEBSTER.



THE UNEQUAL YOKE.

CHAPTER I.

T was about ten o'clock in the morning on a warm September day. The sun had not been quite energetic enough to break his path through a ceiling of fleecy clouds, but he seemed to have been trampling about upon them in such a way as to have split them into great fragments, through which there streamed a suffused and pearly radiance. In another hour he would shine forth; but for the moment the sky was simply bright, without being bright enough for figures below it to cast definite shadows. I am particular in stating the condition of the light, because the morning was one singularly unfitted to the use of the umbrella, which could not be unfurled against sun or rain without manifest affectation. And yet along the broad and quiet streets of a northern suburb of London there might be seen an umbrella being carried along, not merely unfurled, but drawn close to the person who bore it, as though the rays of the sun or the beating of the rain had been something very formidable indeed.

In the outskirts of London there habitually reigns a quiet which is very deceptive. At ten o'clock the decently paved streets, with their gardens of privet and sausage laurel, overhung with thin sycamores here and there, have a half-deserted air, which is instantly broken by the cheerful rattle of a crowd if anything happens to occur to convene such a crowd. On the present occasion, in coming townwards down the broad Colville-road, we might have been amazed to see a motley little company, a serried throng, coming very hastily in the opposite direction, headed by the figure we have mentioned—the figure that held up the umbrella although it neither rained nor shone. When the little throng had reached us, we should have had just time to perceive that this central figure was that of a tall and handsome girl, with a large quantity of yellow hair, pressed in a great disorder under a neat hat, from which it escaped in all directions. The decorum and dryness of the feather in the hat belied the condition of the hair, which seemed to be oiled in a very vulgar way; it could scarcely be wetness which gave it so streaky an appearance. The girl, whose cheeks were fiercely coloured, as if with exercise and shame combined, hastened on with rapid steps, showing a brilliant row of white teeth in a kind of nervous laughter, while she pressed the umbrella down upon her shoulders. She was dressed in a rose-coloured flowered sateen body, low in the neck and short in the sleeves, and her hands and arms were partly concealed by long swede gloves, of a pale fawn-colour, that reached to her elbow. The space between the elbow and the sleeves was filled by two robust and well-developed arms, that seemed to kindle with the unfamiliar exposure. She tried to hide them, but succeeded only in covering her neck with a black lace crossover. The flaunting dress, which was quite dry, was singularly dirty, and to add a final touch to its grotesque effect, it had a long train, although at that time dresses were worn quite short; and the girl had evidently a great deal of trouble in holding this troublesome pink tail over her arm. But underneath this dirty piece of finery a dark skirt, evidently sopping with wet, clung about her legs in miserable folds, and gave the lower half of her body something of the appearance of a drowned rat; while her boots, as each touched the pavement in turn, gave forth a peculiar little gobble and squeak which showed them to be full of water.

The spectator's first impression of this curious figure evidently was that it was that of a person in mental derangement. How sad that so young a woman should be so afflicted; and again, how improper that so afflicted a woman should be out without a keeper! This impression was increased by a little shrill falsetto laugh, which she gave as she went by; and the notion was plainly shared by all the members of the group that silently accompanied her. This group consisted of two little girls in the dress of a charitable institution, with blue aprons and white poke bonnets, who kept in the first rank, having taken hands in case anything startling should occur; and of a young butcher with a basket, and a dahlia behind his ear, who grinned a somewhat foolish grin of wholesome expectation; and of a little old woman, rather tattered and savage; and of various children of no particular class or avocation, one of whom distinguished himself, and became indeed a kind of herald or chorus to the group, by beating a stick upon an empty tin can with a good deal of cheerful circumstance.

At a considerable distance behind this procession, there followed a young lady who would scarcely have been noticed had she not rather ostentatiously affected to have nothing at all to do with the person in rose-colour, while at the same time keeping her eye upon her and following her at a discreet distance. She gained very little in dignity, had she only known it, by keeping thus aloof, for the spectators made up their minds that she was the individual whose duty it was to take charge of this poor lunatic, and accordingly went their way reflecting with some anger, as Englishmen are so glad to do, on the carelessness of the official commissioners in lunacy, and the untrustworthiness of the persons who are allowed to undertake the protection of these unfortunates. The procession, meanwhile, gradually increasing in numbers as it rolled on, but still advancing nothing in the way of audible comment or sympathy, continued, under the guidance of that harassing solo on the tin pot, to traverse several roads, which became more and more suburban in appearance, without ever happening to fall upon that policeman whose advent would for once have sent joy to every infant bosom. At last the little pageant came to an end. The draggled girl hastily put down her umbrella, and displaying a face that was rather white now than red, but which was laughing still, she darted into a garden which was partly concealed from outsiders by a thick wire fencing. She let her pink tail drop, and fled up a steep pair of stone steps into the house like some gigantic species of gaudy lizard escaping into a cavern. The crowd now babbled freely in speculation, but no one ventured to follow her, and after watching the house for a long while, and failing to find any key to the puzzle in its three decent stories of stuccoed front, or in its wasted garden, or through its somewhat bald and staring windows, they dispersed with a renewed sense of the flatness of life.

The girl herself, who—although we have seen her walking through London at ten o'clock in the morning, in a rose-coloured sateen, cut low at the neck—was anything but a lunatic, rushed in at the door, which was at that moment providentially opened by the cook, and, without a word, darted into the dining-room. It was a comfortable tastelessly furnished room of the old mahogany and gilt school, and in it, although the weather was still warm out of doors, a bright fire was burning. At the appearance of the girl in the doorway, two other girls and an elderly woman turned in their chairs.

"Really, Jane!" was all the elder lady said, on the first blush of apparition. "I wish you would just go up stairs and fetch me my spectacle-case from the dressing-room table. Really, charades at this time of day!"

"'Oh, she's to be Queen of the May, mother,'" said the youngest of the girls; but the second, who was between the sisters in age, a brunette with sallow, regular features, sprang to her feet, and cried, "She's dripping with wet! Mother! Sally! It is not nonsense at all—something has happened."

It was some time before the family could realise, or Jane Baxter could clearly explain what had happened. She laughed in hysterical enjoyment of the scene, and she told them about the procession before she let them know what caused it. Dripping as she was, she was placed in the largest arm-chair, and her sisters toiled and tugged at her cold and shrunken boots.

"It was down by the canal, you know, on the towing-path. It is a short cut that way. There wasn't a soul about except Martha Townley and me, and a little boy fishing. We looked into his hat, and he had caught three sticklebacks, and we had not gone on ten paces before we heard a great splash. I hope you allow that there is some use in learning to swim with one's clothes on now, Sally? Well! And he did not give a cry or anything, but just splashed."

"Well, did you jump in at once?"

"No. I held out the handle of Martha's

umbrella to him, and Martha seized me round the waist, and we tried to reach him. And Martha screamed, I will always say that for her, that at the hour of need she screamed. But still we could not reach him, and so I had just to jump in."

"And did you find you could swim in your hat and skirt?"

"Oh! well, of course I took off my hat first, and the skirt was no worse than the dress at the baths. But what was awkward was, that when I had landed him, I could not climb up myself. You know there is such a high parapet, and the water is so low that I thought I should stick in the mud all day."

"But where was Martha?"

"Martha had very properly run for assistance, and although she ran the wrong way, all up that little passage that leads to a dead wall, opposite the island with the four trees, still fortunately she had screamed, and a gentleman on the bridge came running down and held me with both his hands; I gave a great jump, and there I was."

"And the boy?"

"Oh! the boy had run away; he was none the worse."

"Didn't he thank you?"

"No! he didn't seem to happen to think of that. I am glad he didn't make a fuss. Of course the gentleman said all the silly things men say, of what a risk it was for a lady, and what extraordinary courage I had. I am afraid I treated him very badly, for I sent him to fetch a cab. And he was gone so long, and I began to get so cold, that Martha began to fidget, and suddenly I thought of Mrs. Pomfret."

"What Mrs. Pomfret?"

"Why, the new Scripture-reader's wife. She lives in that queer little cottage in the middle of the canal, under the bridge. They take care of the nursery garden at night. Of course she was full of advice, and wouldn't let me try to dry myself there, as I was all soaked with wet. So I asked her if she could lend me a dress, and the only one she could find was this. Look at it!"

"How strange for a serious woman like Mrs. Pomfret to have a pink sateen dress cut in that worldly shape!"

"Well, perhaps she had it before she was converted. It's dreadfully dirty. Perhaps somebody gave it to her where she went out charing."

"I can't think, Jane, how you could put on somebody else's gown like that, and a poor woman's too."

"Well, beggars cannot be choosers; as it was, I thought I should never have got home. I had this pair of long gloves in my pocket, but they would not quite meet the sleeves, so I seized Martha's umbrella, and rushed home with it as fast as I could, but I don't know what people must have thought of me."

The family took the incident in very good part. Jane Baxter was as healthy a young woman of twenty as we meet upon most summer days, and it occurred to no one to be frightened. She went on talking and laughing in a rather distracted way, while her mother fetched from the medicine cupboard a diminutive bottle, originally designed for hair-oil and now dedicated to brandy, while her sister Susan fetched a hot-water bottle, and filling it from the kettle, rushed up to warm her bed. Sally meantime smacked the soles of her feet with a sisterly vehemence.

"You see that Martha has not come into the house. I suppose she could not bring herself to face the butcher boy and the tin pot. Observe that when she does come she will excuse herself by saying that I walked too fast. Of course she was really ashamed of me. It would be rather a good way of testing one's friends to see how many of them would walk down Colville Road with one, if one were dressed in pink sateen and a sopping skirt. I hope the brandy and water is very weak."

"There! gulp it down, child, and be off to bed. You are beginning to look rather white."

As Jane rose there came a ring at the bell. "There's the guilty Martha at last," she said; broke into a shriek of laughter, melted into a storm of tears, and so the heroine of the morning was conducted very ignominiously to bed.

CHAPTER II.

THE young man who pulled Miss Jane Baxter out of her dilemma was Mr. Frank Capulett, of Her Majesty's Office of Agriculture. The bridge over the canal, from which he had the good fortune to see the girl's act of heroism, lay far indeed out of his usual beat. But at this time of the year Mr. Capulett had no usual beat, for his people were still away on the Continent, and he made it a habit to spend the early hours of the morning, before his work began, in exploring the outskirts of London. At dinner the night before he had heard a well-known author describe the bridge from which Byron bade his publisher observe the spot where another publisher had drowned himself.

The author had gone on to say that the view from this bridge reminded him of Venice, and Capulett had come to judge for himself. He was persuaded that he had found the right bridge because, though the view did not remind him of Venice at all, there was a certain Italian grace about it which was unmistakable. The canal divided into two parts just above the bridge, and the parapet of the course of each division swept out of sight with bold divergent curves, broken at the point of disappearance by two other bridges. A long island, paved with irises and stunted grass, and carrying four great elm trees, made a picturesque point in the centre of the picture; and behind the island rose a villa, certainly built in the Italian style, which gave the key-note to the prospect. Over it all lay the pale mouse-coloured mist that in a London autumn follows the milky vapour of summer and precedes the dark yellow fog of winter, so thin, however, and dainty as not to hide the fretted outline of the chimneys and churches of Haverstock Hill, though those bolder uplands, Hampstead and Highgate, were entirely out of sight.

He stood on the bridge and leaned over. He had just discovered that a little black object in the dim water was a dead mouse, and a larger green object far away was a cabbage-leaf, when the girls appeared below him on the tow-path. But his attention was immediately diverted from them to a low barge, extravagantly coloured, after the wont of English canal-barges, in scarlet and indigo-blue, which the mist divested of all crudity of tone, and left picturesquely barbaric. This strange form had glided noiselessly down upon him, and had passed in silence under the bridge, where, having explored the grey water without finding anything to observe, he suddenly heard the scream, and raising his eyes saw Jane Baxter skilfully striking out for shore. He did not give himself a moment to reflect, but rushed down the flight of steps and along the towing-path, just in time to seize Jane's cold, firm hands in his own, and feel her jump at him and cover him with drops like an emerging spaniel. We have heard already that she sent him for a cab. He did not know the neighbourhood, and wandered wildly for several minutes, till, by accident, in a little back street, he found a whole rank of sleepy hansoms. When he got back to the bridge she was gone; but while he was looking about him disconsolately, a child told him that the lady had gone into Mrs. Pomfret's, and so he descended the steps again, and knocked at the trellised portal.

Mrs. Pomfret was troubled with no reticence whatever, and, indeed, was too much elated with pride at the prowess of "the darling" to consider whether this curly-headed youth with brown and sparkling eyes was her proper confidant or no. He learned from her all that he wished to know about Miss Jane Baxter, and more than his present curiosity cared about. They lived at No. 1, Constantine Villas, Acton Road; and as to Acton Road, you called it Maida Vale if you wished to be genteel, but Kilburn came more handy to old residents. Dr. Baxter, the father, was a Baptist minister from Somersetshire, he had the care of a chapel in Colville Road, and it was thought that great shrewdness had been shown in bringing up so effective a preacher from the country to a large town congregation. Still Mrs. Pomfret admitted, with the air of a woman on her oath, that he had not been so much blessed in Colville Road as he had been in Bridgewater, but that might be because Kilburn was so case-hardened.

There were three young ladies and two young gentlemen, and they all lived at home. Dr. Baxter was supposed to have means of his own, for else he could not live at Constantine Villas, his income from the chapel being small. But the two young gentlemen had been to college, and she heard they went out by the day to teach. She had further heard that they did it in a coach, but she did not know what could be meant by that. At all events, Mrs. Baxter was quite the lady, and so were the young ladies, oh, perfect ladies, bless their hearts! And anything bolder than jumping into the water after that child she never heard; and why she did not stir out of her house when she heard the splash was purely and solely because she thought it was one of them suicides. So that Frank Capulett received in an amazingly short space of time a very succinct and on the whole very correct impression of the social position of his new friend.

He did not attempt to call upon her then. In truth the idea of doing so did not occur to him. He turned to walk towards his office, stepping more uprightly than usual and with a quicker pulse merely because an incident had happened. He felt curiously exhilarated at having assisted at an act of personal courage, at the saving of life, and as he thought about it he unconsciously exaggerated the part that he himself had had in it. If he had not been there—he did not continue the sentence, but the allusion was grateful to his senses. It was perhaps the first time in four and twenty years of guarded and tended life that he had actually done

anything very spontaneous in the way of coming to the aid of humanity. He wandered down the polite desolation of Westbourne Terrace, and as the sunlight forced its way through the now wholly shattered fabric of clouds, and flicked the monotonous white balustrade through the veil of plane leaves, and still more when the trees of Hyde Park began to form a green haze at the end of the vista, his spirits rose continuously until in the park itself, he gave himself up to so dreamy an ecstasy that he was as nearly as possible run down by some rascally dragoons who were practising there, and who would have hailed the notion of doing mischief under the guise of martial duty.

Everybody knows that the Office of Agriculture is one of the mainstays of the complex English Administration. But not every one knows where it is, even among Londoners born and bred. The cabman may or may not know it, but the odds are that without direction he will scarcely find Wycherley Passage. The passage is a thin vein running obscurely out of that noble artery, Whitehall, and you may wander up and down from the Nelson Column to the Houses of Parliament and never happen to notice the slender court that leads to the great Office of Agriculture.

It is a narrow roadway, between steep brick houses, too narrow for vehicles to pass one another in it, and a great deal of shouting and backing has to be got through before a question of coachman's precedence is settled. It bends gently, so that from the head of the court nothing can be seen of Whitehall, the ghostly roar of which sounds there like the voice of the ocean far away. But if Wycherley Passage itself is narrow it opens at its blind end into a handsome quadrangle, large enough to allow the Minister's neat little brougham to dash round to the doorway in considerable style. As a rule, however, it is the Minister alone who indulges in this display, the cabs and carriages of humbler folk usually depositing their burdens, if the weather is anything decent, at the entrance of the passage.

Outside, Whitehall is roaring like a wintry sea to an ordinary observer; to a friendless stranger from Tangiers or Tobolsk, the crowd here means no more than it means in Cheapside or Cornhill. But the carven trireme on the arcaded screen of the Admiralty looks down on a wholly distinct class of crowd from any that pushes and tramples in the City. The greed of personal gain is not prominent here, there are few faces drawn with the agonies, or swollen with the joys of speculation. The crowd in Whitehall is official, discreet, and impersonal. Here is the Secretary, revolving parliamentary measures which will ring through the country from end to end, but without the echo of his name; here is the clerk with his head full of dogs, or music, or lawn-tennis—a little degenerated already with the regular security of an unambitious official life; here is the meticulous office messenger, as confidential as a butler, carrying a large blue envelope from the Foreign Office to the War Office. And the colour in the street responds to its easy, reputable character. The white fragments of older palatial streets or buildings mingle with softer tones of yellow brick, and on the broad white pavements the constant going and coming, crossing and passing, of figures in black is broken by the vivid uniforms of the soldiers, and particularly by those of the recruiting sergeants, whose faces soon become as familiar to the habitual frequenters of the street as those of the offices themselves. Haunting the War Office and strutting across the line of the stately living statues that fill with equestrian scarlet the arches of the Horse Guards, the recruiting sergeants alone of the British army seem to belie its perennial youth, and growing grosser year by year in tight costumes of blue and yellow and crimson that were designed for slimmer men, seem, as they hook their arms into those of thin young country labourers, like some terrible species of fat and gorgeous spider, irresistible in its astute amiability.

But silence reigns a few paces off under the quadrangle shadow of the Office of Agriculture. Here the going and coming of clerks and messengers is hardly noticeable by contrast with the noise of waggons and cabs in the street outside. The Office itself is a conglomeration of old private houses. Part of the palace of an earl, with faded paintings by Verrio, forms the central façade, and humbler buildings have been drawn or adapted into the wings. It is full of winding passages, blind walls and stealthy descents that descend to nothing. The dingy dignity of its brick exterior belies the carelessness with which a succession of generations has patched it together inside to satisfy the instant convenience of each, and so unfit is it to fulfil the purpose of a great department that it has long been officially doomed to disappear. In ten years its winding staircases and quaint turrets and vast rooms with painted ceilings will be things of the past. Wycherley Passage itself will probably cease to be. In the meantime there lingers a sort of pathos over a patched-up piece of old London that totters so aristocratically

towards its inevitable grave. Nor is it at all certain that the grand new Office of Agriculture, which some Royal Academician will soon begin to raise in Queen Anne magnificence over the riot of Whitehall, will for a great many years contrive to collect around itself the romance which attaches to the old dirty structure that lurks at the blind end of Wycherley Passage.

The room in which Capulett worked lay on the opposite side of the buildings, and its two windows looked over a little public court, with a turnstile and a path between old law offices on the one side, and a great deserted garden on the other. It was a large bare room, with a carved marble fireplace, which had once been white, but which was now yellow everywhere, and stained with gum, and ink, and wine, and sealing-wax. For ornament the walls bore an official chart, on rollers, with chromo-lithographs of roots—carrots, parsnips, swedes, potatoes—in their apotheosis; these were facetiously supposed to be a series of portraits of heads of departments. Opposite to it hung a very antiquated map of the United States, which had evidently served before now as a target for pens. The furniture principally consisted of one enormous bureau, which almost divided the room into two parts, provided in front with the conveniences needful for Mr. Leyoncrona, the principal clerk, and fitted with green baize behind to keep out the draughts. This stood close to the fireplace, and behind it, at the further window, Capulett sat on a high stool before a sloping desk of an old-fashioned construction. At Mr. Leyoncrona's back stood a handsome mahogany book case, which was seldom opened, but which revealed, when the owner's keys depended from the lock, rows of official publications richly bound, the pale saffron-yellow backs of four or five French novels, a bottle of whiskey, sparingly used as a hospitable cordial for the department, a box of eau-de-Cologne, and a few other essentials of the official life.

Frank was late, as Mr. Leyoncrona mentioned, more in sadness than in bitterness, but little other notice was taken of his arrival. Two other clerks were standing on the hearthrug in discussion of a knotty point.

"Now I suppose you fellows remember that to-night is the night of the Artillery concert?" had asked a man of about twenty-nine, whose name was Sennett.

"Oh! of course; I gave up the Thompson's dance on purpose. Won't it be rather crowded?" said a thin man called Piper, who now sat down.

"Well, it is a bad time of the year. But now, look here, what are you fellows going to put on?" said Sennett.

"Just as we are, I should think," answered Piper, elegantly posing himself with his feet against the edge of the mantelshelf.

"Well, you know, the officers will all come in uniform from their mess, I should think. What does the Lion say?"

The royal animal referred to, the nickname being that of Mr. Leyoncrona, turned in his arm-chair, where he had been reading the paper, and answered sympathetically—

"On the whole, I think evening dress. It's always safe, you know."

"Yes," said Sennett with his hands under the tails of his coat, "it's always safe. It will be rather a scratch performance, I'm afraid; I don't like the notion of a comedietta."

"Will there be smoking?" asked Piper, but Sennett, without answering, suddenly addressed Capulett with—

"Oh, by the by, youngster, I've got you a ticket. Why, what's the matter with you? I thought you'd have skipped head-over-heels with joy."

"Well, the fact is," said Capulett, "that I've had an adventure."

The little story, which he did not fail to embellish in some of its particulars, found a really interested audience, and all the circumstances were being threshed out with unusual animation, when the door was thrown open, and a messenger appeared.

"If you please, Mr. Leyoncrona, the Minister of Uruguay has called to ask if you could kindly supply him with some facts about the growth of tomatoes."

"Now skedaddle, you fellows, and be off to your place, youngster. Show the Minister in at once," said Leyoncrona, relapsing instantly into the excellent clerk that he was.

But it was useless for Capulett to try to settle to work that morning. He gazed through the clouded window into the desolation of what had once been the garden of a Cabinet Minister, running in a series of terraces to the Thames. Two little mudlarks, who had evaded the police, were scuttling in and out of a great skeleton of a wherry, which stood high and dry in what had formerly been a green arcade. Everywhere, between him and the papers, between him and the lawyers' clerks hurrying by with their black bags, between him and the girders of Charing Cross railway bridge, and the phantom of the dome of St. Paul's beyond, there came those handsome ruddy cheeks, those bold pure eyes, that shapely form emergent; and still in the palms of both his hands he felt thrillingly the violent

pressure of those cold, girlish hands. And all day long it was so, and all day long her sharp voice and laughter broke in among the insipid sentences of official English, and disturbed his fancy between "*My Lord,—I am instructed by their Lordships to express their surprise*" and "*My Lord,—Their Lordships are unable to conceive.*"

At last, quite late in the afternoon, he could bear the mental irritation no longer, nor any longer endure to see the green baize curtain lightly rise and fall as Leyoncrona's foot fidgeted it. So from his distant stool he suddenly called out, "I say, Lion, do you mind if I go now?"

"Go now?" said that good-natured creature. "What? take half-an-hour of your annual leave? Remember you were late this morning."

"Well," said the younger man, coming forward to the fire, "don't you think I ought to call and see how that girl is getting on. Might have caught a chill, don't you know?"

"And you feel a little responsible for it, I suppose. I do think you ought just to go and inquire; so be off with you, and tell us to-morrow whether she is as pretty when she is dry as when she is dripping."

"I never said she was pretty."

"Oh! did you not? I somehow thought you did. I suppose you only looked it. Be off with you." Capulett delicately pulled his infant moustache, and loitered now that he had leave to go. But at last he went, and found his way before it was quite dark to the remote north-western districts of what is genteelly known as Maida Vale. That he knew how to direct the cabman may or may not be due to the fact that, instead of solacing himself at his lunch that day with *Punch* or the *Times*, he had been diligently studying a large map of London.

When he arrived at 1, Constantine Villas, he was told that Miss Jane had taken a slight chill, and was still in bed, but that Mrs. Baxter would be happy to see him. It was evident, he thought, that they expected the deliverer to call. It proved, however, that the maid had misunderstood the message given to her, which did not refer to Mr. Capulett. The ladies were more than polite, however, they were cordial, the result partly of good-nature, and partly of a consciousness that they could not press him to stay, since it was the night of the missionary meeting, and since their tea was ready. They asked him, however, to call again, and he said he would, to make sure that Miss Jane was none the worse, although they assured him that her chill was of no consequence. And so the two young people slipped into an acquaintance that was not a little momentous to them both.

CHAPTER III.

SEPTEMBER passed, the first weeks of October came, and the Capuletts still loitered on at their German Kur. Frank found the large Kensington house, in which his meals were served to him in lonely splendour, excessively dull. As the junior man at the office, he had been obliged to take what holidays the convenience of his elders left him, and these were not at the months that a fashionable taste selects. In the absence of the world he lived in, he was thrown upon his new resources, and his acquaintance with the people at Constantine Villas, which would under ordinary circumstances have languished and been dropped, increased with marvellous rapidity. The fine appearance of Jane, and his romantic introduction to her, formed the basis of the attraction; but it cannot be said that anything displeased him in the Nonconformist household. There was a hearty vivacity, a slightly boisterous cordiality, which struck a wholesome note in the nature of a lad whose father was an exquisite, his mother an invalid in an odour of musk, and his sisters cold and stylish fine ladies. These Dissenters were full of freshness and high spirits; they neither encouraged nor repelled his visits, but allowed him to glide into their life without doubt or inquiry. The dove had perhaps a little more of the serpent than he thought; for the brothers, whom he saw but little of at first, took his measure more carefully than he supposed. They were older men than he, and much older than their sisters, who were the daughters of a second wife. The eldest, who left upon Frank's mind only the memory of a broad-shouldered fellow of about twenty-eight, in flannels and a tennis shirt, seen casually in the garden of Constantine Villas, had taken pains to ascertain Frank's social situation and antecedents, and tolerated his presence with authority.

He had positively formed no definite plan of any kind, or even stated to himself any particular attachment to Jane Baxter when the last Sunday in October came. It was the last Sunday that he would spend before his people came back, and he vaguely perceived that this pleasant little interlude of social evenings, and tennis parties, and afternoon teas, would not survive the return of his worldly and exacting sisters. It was

already ten o'clock when he formed the sudden resolution to go to the Baptist Chapel at Kilburn instead of forming part of the sleepy congregation at his own family church. He walked briskly, and just contrived to reach Colville Road in time to be early. His first surprise was the chapel itself, which he had vaguely supposed to be a dismal conventicle, like a barn, and which proved to be one of the latest triumphs of Dissenters' Gothic; and he was still more startled with the interior, which reminded him of a large and well-appointed concert-hall. None but a Londoner born and bred could have been so totally ignorant as he of all the forms of modern Nonconformity, and his impressions were taken from novels of the last generation. He was shown up to the further end of the chapel by a courteous attendant, who would not hear of his being less prominently placed, and he saw that the eyes of the younger part of the congregation detected him at once as an unfamiliar figure.

He was seated at right angles to the main body of the worshippers, and close under a species of railed tribune which excited his wonderment. Over this there hung a sort of little gallery, in which he expected to see the minister appear. But the latter presently entered the tribune, and sat down in an easy chair, while Frank, suddenly congratulating himself on his commanding position, proceeded to rake the congregation for a familiar face. But he could not find one, and Dr. Baxter himself was not the minister of the day. At this point the anthem was given out, and Frank rose with the congregation to sing. The opening of the singing was a fresh phenomenon to his surprise, and he then first observed that the little gallery above the tribune was now filled with a choir, chiefly of girls, who directed the vocal service. But still he could see Jane nowhere, and a feeling of extreme lassitude and disappointment came over him. The congregation sat down to read, and rose again to sing. He found himself suddenly overwhelmed by his isolation in a crowd of persons, all of them entirely out of sympathy with him, and a servant-girl who stood beside him petulantly incommoded him with her elbow, plainly because his presence prevented her sweetheart, who stood in front, from sharing her hymn-book with her in comfort. Frank looked round once more for Jane Baxter, with a sudden intolerable yearning for sympathy, for company, but still in vain. The chant closed, and the congregation sat down again. He opened a book and pretended to follow what was read, but his heart beat hysterically and he felt almost as if he should faint. A woman in front of him took her handkerchief out of her pocket, and he was bathed in an enervating wave of patchouli. He found himself in such a condition of nervous irritability that if it had been possible he would have left the chapel with precipitation.

Suddenly the congregation rose to sing a short hymn, and he rose with it. As the last line was being chanted he cast his eyes in despair around the whole mass of crowded heads, and last of all glanced up into the choir. There, in the further row, with her eyes fixed full upon him, he saw Jane Baxter, who had evidently been watching him; and when their glances met, her whole rosy countenance broke into a frank and maidenly smile of greeting, full of pretty pleasure in the surprise. The congregation sank again, and settled for the sermon, and she was entirely concealed from him once more. But the revulsion of feeling was violent. The whole chapel, a moment ago so inimical to him, became genial and welcome. The preacher, whose *bombé* forehead and formal mouth had annoyed him with the likeness of a skull, seemed now to be a highly intelligent and earnest man, whose discourse he should presently listen to. Not at once, however, for Frank had first of all to discourse to himself. His heart, his brain, his ringing pulses went out in gratitude to Jane for her smile, and for the first time he said to himself that this bright and wholesome girl would make him a good wife. A hundred arguments supplied themselves from the stores of his inexperience to prove that it would be an admirable step, to take to engage himself, at once, without delay, and to this particular girl. The heat of the chapel, his agitation, the fading smell of the patchouli, seemed to combine to intoxicate him, and to surcharge his will with a kind of fever. He chafed at the length of the sermon, which delayed him in his project. Suddenly, in one of the upper galleries, a child which had been carelessly allowed to play on one of the forms, fell with a crash and a heartrending yell of terror more than pain. Frank felt his heart stop beating. The minister continued his discourse with scarcely a pause, but Frank found his courage absolutely gone. He seemed to have no more desire, or hope, or will; but his fancy began—as it were in a new place, to build up passive scenes, in each of which Jane moved beside him as his wife. The benediction snapped this chain of *tableaux*, and brought him face to face with reality. He glanced at the rising figures of the choir, and saw Jane smile at him again,

the same pure, frank, uncoquettish smile of free-and-easy maidenhood. He pushed out through the sombre crowd, accompanied by an odour of peppermint, and waited in the sweet fresh wind at the outer gate of the chapel.

When she appeared at last among the emergent mass of dingily dressed people, he was bitterly disappointed to see that Martha Townley was at her side, and annoyed at a visible nudging of the one and crimsoning of the other, as though he had been the object of their conversation. In the dense throng, however, that but slowly expanded and dispersed, Jane recovered her decorum, if she had ever lost it, and greeted him with a neat gloved hand frankly outstretched. He loitered to see whether Martha would say good-bye, and the girls to see whether he would not leave them, so that he had to ask whether he might walk with them part of their way. This by no means pleased Martha, who set her jaw like a vice, and showed the plainest intention of guarding Jane as a dragon. Jane, walking between them with unconscious sweetness, tried in vain to draw them into conversation, and wondered that two such chatty individuals should have become so strangely reserved. Providence, however, suddenly intervened in the shape of a noisy family of cousins of Martha's, who swooped down upon them at the corner of the street, and insisted on taking Martha home with them to dinner. It was now Frank's opportunity, and he seized it by courteously assuring them that he would have the greatest pleasure in seeing Miss Baxter home. Jane expostulated against there being any need to see her home at all, she went everywhere by herself, she said; but the end of it was that Martha, still extremely suspicious and unwilling, was dragged away by her cousins, and the field as far as Constantine Villas was left open to Frank Capulett.

The conversation of the young couple was much broken by the throng of returning church and chapel goers which glutted the streets, and constantly interrupted them. But this confusion, and the sense of privacy within publicity, encouraged them to be at their ease.

"I have been wanting to thank you." she said, "for being so very kind about the Humane Society, but I wish you wouldn't."

"Of course they must give you a medal. All the fellows at the office say that it was the bravest thing they ever heard of. And Mr. Leyoncrona, who is rather influential you know, has written a letter himself about it."

"How very kind of him. People make so much of any little thing one does, and of course one learns to swim on purpose to be useful if one had the chance. What a curious name, that is, Lion—?"

"Leyoncrona. Yes, his grandfather was a Swedish general, but he is quite English. He is such a nice fellow. I think you would like him."

To this no answer, but a fresh question. "How did you amuse yourself at the chapel to-day?"

"*Amuse* myself? Well, I suppose one doesn't exactly go to a place of worship for amusement."

"Oh! I didn't mean 'amuse' in that sense," she answered quickly, blushing again; "but you know we think that people ought to be bright and happy and all that, at all events converted people should."

"I thought the Dissenters were always moaning and groaning. I was quite surprised to find the service so—so amusing."

At this moment they were torn asunder by a phalanx of ladies coming from the opposite direction, and when they met her face was eager with inquiry.

"Were you really never in a chapel before?"

"No, I think not," he said; "does that seem very odd to you?"

"Yes, for we *have* been in a church. When we were at Salterby last summer there was no chapel, and we went to church four Sundays running. Do you worship with the Puseyites?" she asked.

"Well, I don't think there are exactly any Puseyites now. We *are* rather high."

"Do your sisters do much evangelical work?" she inquired again. "I hope you don't think it rude of me to ask you so many questions? You see we know so much more about you than about your people." When she said this she became conscious of want of tact, and bit her lip with vexation. Fortunately she had to leave Frank to steer round two elderly gentlemen and a child, and this restored her with a great sense of relief. When they met again she glanced very shyly at him, but took courage at seeing his face beaming with gratification.

"I don't think I quite understand what you mean. I suppose different sects give different names to the same things. But they are not interested in the poor, and in meetings, and in those sorts of things, as you all are. It is something quite new to me, and it seems to me that you all live much more useful lives than the people I have been accustomed to meet."

After this there was a perilous crossing, over which he conducted her with needless

care, since, as she said, no one took her over the streets when she went to distribute tracts in the slums. Then she proceeded, in answer to his ardent and sympathetic inquiries, to dilate very modestly on the work she did for the poor, which was not very much in itself, and which she made as little of as she could. To him, however, it assumed heroic proportions, but his admiration throughout was not of the work, but of her, and he smiled with confident self-gratulation to think that he was coming to take her away out of it all. And then she repeated her question about his sisters, and he was glad to talk to her of his home, of his sisters and their elegant ways, of his mother, and even of his father, who had been a very successful dramatist in his youth, the author of certain melodramas that still brought in a fortune.

"But I suppose you think the theatre very wicked," he said, smiling down on her from his warm brown eyes.

"Well, we do hold it to be inconsistent," she replied, with the candour that was her charm. "But a great change has come over the body of late; and even mother takes us once or twice to the German Reeds' entertainment every winter."

"Do you ever go to the Grecian," he asked, "because they are playing one of papa's pieces there now?"

"Oh, no! you do not quite understand. None of us have ever been into a real theatre in our lives."

"That does seem so funny, because even the Ritualists, who are so particular, do not discourage the theatre when it is respectable."

"Well, I know my brother Jack has never been, and he says that it is very absurd of us to think that we may go to the German Reeds', which is exactly the same in everything but name. But he is quite an old Puritan, and of course he must be wrong because they say distinctly there that it is only an entertainment."

"The difficulty is in knowing what an entertainment is. Some people might call your Sunday morning service at the chapel an entertainment, and think it was not solemn enough, might they not?"

"That is just what some of the old school of Dissenters do say. My grandfather thinks Mr. Baggs's references to Tennyson and Strauss quite profane."

"Do you think you shall always remain among the Baptists?" he asked, shaking his curls at her with great intensity of expression, for the precious minutes were slipping by, and his intention was plain before him.

"Oh yes, I suppose so," she answered, and glanced up at him, intending to ask him why he asked, but meeting something strange in his look, was troubled and forbore to speak.

They were within sight now of her house, vague in the misty whiteness some hundred yards away.

"You are so good and honest," he said with impassioned rapidity of utterance; "it seems to me as if I had never known anybody who was really good before, and I feel that I could live such a different life if I had somebody like you to help me. Would you let me take a class in your Sunday-school and help you with the poor? Of course I could not do much unless you taught me first. But I could learn anything from you. You might be my good angel, if you would. I have never seen anybody like you in my life. Don't be angry with me for being so sudden. When one is quite sure of a thing, there is no use in putting it off, is there? Tell me that you will." He pleaded in such loud tones that he was startled at his own sound in the silence that followed.

"Tell you what?" she said at last, in a tremulous and almost inaudible voice, totally in contrast with her habitual confidence of speech.

"That you love me!—that you will let me love you!—that you will be my wife!"

She said nothing at all, but quickened her steps, and in a moment they were at the gate of her father's house. She fumbled for the latch and he opened it for her. But, although she did not speak, she glanced up to thank him, and smiled a watery smile at him through blinding tears. And then he found himself alone outside, a prey to the most distracting sentiments of hope and fear.

CHAPTER IV.

About ten days after this walk from the chapel, the reunited family of the Capuletts were in their house at Kensington at dusk. On a sofa in the larger of two sitting-rooms, which opened into one another, the elder Mr. Capulett was stretched in a deep sleep, with a ghostly cambric handkerchief thrown across his face. In an armchair, drawn up close to the fire, which threw red reflections on the crystals of her spectacles, Lady Priscilla sat wrapped in a lamb's wool shawl in a brown study. In the further room, by the light of two wax candles, that threw but small illumination around them, Miss Edith Capulett sat between her piano and her harp, reading music from the former and translating it on the latter. The only other occupant of the rooms was her younger

sister Adelaide, who marched softly up and down the outer room in the darkness. To these the footman entered with a silvery clatter of tea-things, and was preparing to light the lamp, when Adelaide dismissed him. She went to the window and gazed out for five minutes at the yellow and dismal shadows that filled the garden, the black creepers swinging in the wind, the dripping skeletons of the trees, the squalor of the family cat. She then drew down the blinds, and Edith's twinkling stars at a distance were the only vestiges of light remaining, except the glow of the coal.

Adelaide still fidgeted about, as if it were impossible for her to be still, and at last walked into the further room.

"Will it be long before you have finished? Tea is ready."

Edith started.

"I had no idea you were there, Adelaide. I must really excuse myself for this improper proceeding. The fact is my own chimney smokes, and as mother rather likes to hear me practice, and as papa does not count, I brought the harp down here; I had no idea you were indoors. Just let me try this passage over once more, dear, if you don't mind? We have a rehearsal this evening, and I have not even looked at it."

She went through the passage, extinguished her candles, and joined the rest. Adelaide made up the fire. Mr. Capulett still breathed with a heavy regularity. Edith settled herself in an armchair, and leaned over the back of it, her sleeves still rolled up so as to show the plump white arms on which she balanced her delicate face. Adelaide gave her mother and sister their tea and then threw herself on the sofa close to them both, and the three women conversed in a whisper.

"Are you feeling pretty well, mother, this evening? Can you bear a shock, a kind of moral torpedo-battery?" said Adelaide in a rather agitated voice.

"Yes, I think so, if you won't make me guess what it is. Nothing unnerves me so much as a conundrum."

"I guess at once," said Edith; "Frank has gone and married a ballet-girl while we have been away?"

"No, it is not so bad as that, although it is rather bad. I will put you out of your misery at once. Frank has engaged himself to be married."

"I knew it," said Edith, with her eyes cast up in imprecation. "I felt that something of the kind was sure to happen."

"But you are joking, are you not, my child?" said Lady Priscilla.

"No, I speak the words of bitter earnest. And you need not ask me how I know, for I will tell you at once—he told me. He took me aside about an hour ago, and privately indulged me with this public confidence. At this moment he is in his bedroom, suffused with blushes at the thought that I am divulging it to you."

"Why did he not tell us at once?"

"Because he was afraid to do so. Because all men are cowards, and Frank particularly so."

"I won't have my darling boy run down like that. It is not pretty of you, Adelaide, after he has confided in you."

"Oh! I don't mean to be unkind, mother, but I am thoroughly vexed and disappointed. What is the good of our training that boy, and making a gentleman of him if he goes and marries a Dissenter?"

"A Dissenter?" whispered Lady Priscilla, with an expression of agony.

"You had better tell us the whole story, Adelaide, without sparing us any of the disgraceful details," said Edith from the hollow of her waxen hands.

"Well, it appears that less than two months ago—I suppose during our first or second week at Kissingen—Frank saved a young girl from drowning in the Paddington canal—"

"What an extraordinary thing that he should never have mentioned it in his letters," said the mother.

"And took her home to her people, who, of course, made much of him, and got him to come and ask after her. Evidently they laid a trap for him, and caught him easily, though Frank will not hear of this. He says that they are very good people, and I dare say they are respectable in their walk of life. Of course they want to marry their daughter."

"But I don't understand," said Edith; "what was her attraction?"

"Oh, her appearance, no doubt; Frank says she is excessively beautiful, so we may take it for granted that she is fresh and pretty."

"I must write at once to the bishop about it," said Lady Priscilla. "Do you think that Frank is at all deeply involved yet?"

"He says he is betrothed to her, and that neither gods nor men shall ever divide them. He seems very enthusiastic. He proposed to her after going to their conventicle last Sunday week, after the morning service."

"Just when we were enjoying a perfume of skulls in the church of St. Ursula," exclaimed Edith. "Only reflect, that if we had not gone to Kreuznach the week before that

we should have been home in time to stop this *mésalliance.*"

"She does not appear to have accepted him then and there, as I should have expected her to do. She left him in wretched doubt and despair, he says. His expressions are too poetical now to inspire respect. But he seems to have been pursuing her since, and she accepted him a week ago to-day—on the morning of the day that we came back."

"It seems rather an absurd thing to ask, but do you happen to know whether she has money?" asked Lady Priscilla. "It makes no difference in my decision. I shall in any case refuse to sanction the affair in any way."

"From what Frank says I should imagine not a penny. They live in a very quiet way. He says they work a great deal among the poor, and that his young lady visits the slums as assiduously as if she were a charity commissioner, which is, of course, extremely praiseworthy of her, as she can hardly know that it is now the fashionable thing to do. But evidently they are quite poor."

"What distresses me most is, that Frank, who has been brought up so carefully to respect the establishment, and with the principles that I have always inculcated about sectarianism, should have thought, even for a moment, of forming an attachment to a Dissenter. The bishop will be terribly grieved," sighed the mother.

"I suppose papa will have to be told?" said Adelaide.

"At what moment of the day do you think we should have the best chance of arresting his volatile attention?" asked Edith.

"I should think that this was as good an opportunity as any other. I know very well that he will not do anything in the matter and that is why I must write to-night to the bishop. But still I think your papa ought to know. So I will now just go up to Frank's room and have a little chat with him, and when your papa wakes up you may try to interest him in it. Perhaps if you could introduce the matter in an impersonal way, as a tale or scandalous anecdote referring to some other family, you might win his attention."

As she said this with scarcely the shadow of a smile on her thin lips, Lady Priscilla Capulett rose, and drawing the shawl closer around her throat, swept noiselessly out of the room, looking in the flickering twilight, like the tall and distinguished ghost of some old family portrait, and hiding, with the self-command which was part and parcel of her nature, the anger that rose within her ambitious spirit like a blinding cloud of smoke.

Frank inhabited a little suite of two rooms luxuriously and even coquettishly furnished. His mother had insisted on investing him, at his twenty-first birthday, with a sort of freedom of the house. A latch-key, in an envelope upon his plate at breakfast, had been her gift to him that morning; and she and his sisters installed him with pomp in the two upper rooms, opening one into the other, which had lain unfurnished since the exile of the eldest son. The little bedroom was a sort of downy nest, by far too delicate for a young lad, with its grey hangings, pale yellow jasmine wall paper, and ebonised furniture. The mother had deliberately arranged all this, full of a vague jealousy of the wife who should eventually cajole her boy from her, determining, at all events, that no neglect of petting or of material dignity should aid the "not impossible she," in her work of separation. The sitting room was larger, with a bright outlook towards the west, over a cluster of gardens. It contained a sofa drawn close to the fire, a long chair, a piano, and a couple of bookcases in wild disorder. The ladies of the house outdid the occupier himself in the persistence with which they respected the bachelor air of the room; and they even made a jest of it—accusing one another of pushing the tobacco-jar into needless prominence, and of arranging the beauties of the day in more fascinating groups around the mirror.

The mother would seem to have been attacked by a sudden spasm of her habitual neuralgia. How else, at all events, can we explain that between her dignified exit from the sitting-room and her gracious entry into her son's presence, she passed a brief interlude by flinging herself on the sofa in her own bed-room, and there spasmodically sobbing with dry eyes? The struggle, whatever it was, whether pain or rage, had entirely passed away when her son sprang forward from his armchair with a welcome too impulsive to be quite natural, and overwhelmed her with affectionate protestations. She consented to make herself comfortable on the sofa, and she commenced the attack, as careful strategists do, with misleading manœuvres which seemed to have nothing to do with the purpose of the campaign. At last she said, almost with an excess of innocence—

"You have been amusing yourself, Adelaide tells us, with a little flirtation while we have been away. I wonder you did not write to tell us about the adventure you had. You can have had no idea how dull we were at Kissengen."

"Kissengen could not have been more dull than Kensington was."

"Ah! I dare say. That is why I deprecate this custom of absolutely draining London at a certain moment of everybody that one can know. Of course, you poor child, there was not a single house you could go to."

"I suppose," said Frank, with a desperate effort at ease of manner, "that Adelaide has told you about my new friends?"

"Yes. She seemed even to be inclined to exaggerate the amount of the friendship. I was just saying to her that it was impossible that you, with your principles, could associate with any comfort with a set of persons belonging to one of the denominations. Of course, I know very well that a man must have acquaintances in a wider circle than his sisters move in. I am sure I am always reminding myself of the stupid fault parents make in not recognising that their children are grown up. In the choice of your associates I should never think of interfering, because I should leave you with confidence to your own principles. But I do think that, with your generous nature and want of knowledge of the world—the vulgar part of it I mean—you are very likely to be taken in, just because you imagine everybody to be as good as yourself."

"I have a great deal of insight into character, I can assure you, mother. If you think I am going to be persuaded to join the Baptists because I—just because she—for any reason—you are quite mistaken. But one may pluck the apple that hangs from the thorny tree, don't you know?"

"It will be sure to turn out a crab, my child. Now, quite seriously, tell me the exact truth about this scrape you have got into. Of course, we can perfectly understand that a sort of romance has attended your little adventure, and that you have been indiscreet. I don't even say that these good people have been actually designing. I hope that they will prove to us by the way that they behave that they have no such conscious notions. Of course it is a very great thing to them to be visited by a young man in your position. Now, just be candid with me, and tell me what we can do to help you out of it."

"You must not think," said Frank, "that I can allow you to help me out of it. I do not want to be helped out. She is a lovely girl, quite a lady in every way; I am sure you will take to her at once if only you see her, and she is so good and pious that it really makes one quite religious to talk to her. And she plays tennis splendidly, and swims, and all that; and she sings beautifully. If you will only get over the idea of her being a Baptist, it will be all right."

"You know how I have always looked forward to your being married by the Bishop of Wisbeach. Now that would be impossible."

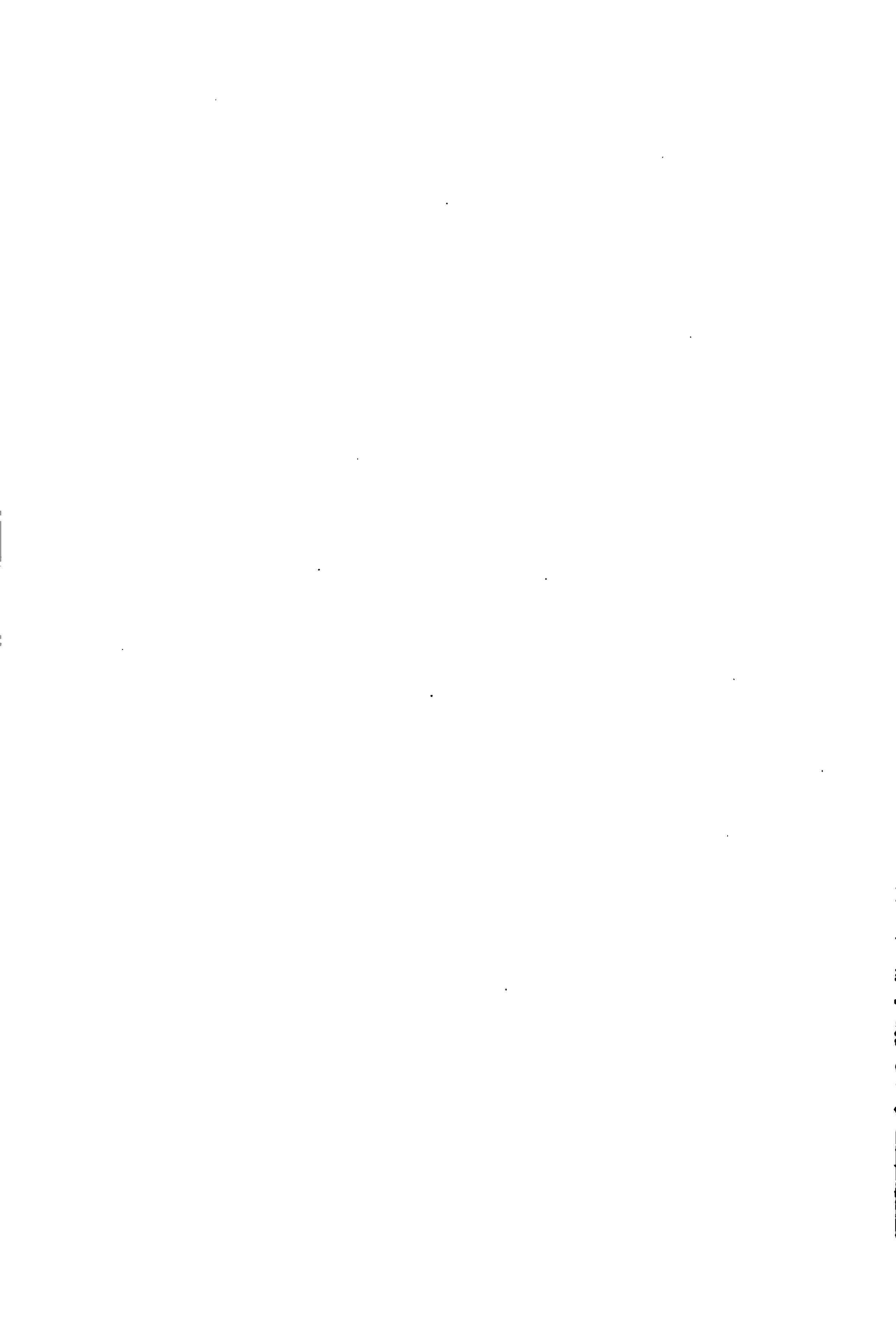
"We ought to be very glad to save him the trouble."

"Really, Frank, you must not jest about serious things. You know perfectly well that it never is a trouble to a Willoughby to serve another Willoughby. In a certain sense the bishop is the head of our family. As long as your cousin is under age, I shall always look to the bishop as our chief. And you know, as well as I do, that he would most deeply disapprove of the step you propose to take. Besides, I suppose that this young person is not well off. On what do you propose to marry? You must know perfectly well that we have no superfluous means. When your papa married me, whatever proverbs may say, I raised him to my position. The daughter of an Irish earl was something, though I brought him nothing but a little plate and a lapdog. I was useful to him in his profession, and I must say that he has never reproached me. But we did expect you to reverse the order of affairs. There is a great deal of sense in that thing about the Quaker, 'Go where money is.' We have done our very best to bring you where money was, and now you take advantage of our absence to go where there is neither money nor rank, nor even the establishment. I hope, Frank, that you are not really serious?"

"I am, indeed; I consider myself absolutely engaged to Miss Jane Baxter."

"You annoy me, Frank," said Lady Priscilla. "You are so unpractical and positive. I am not absolutely saying that I shall refuse my consent. I may tell you that if your brother made a similar match, I should absolutely refuse it; but then Augustus will be the head of the family and you will not. I recognise that you are in a certain degree independent. But I should grieve extremely if anything came of this attachment of yours, and it seems to me impossible that in so very short a time anything serious should have come of it. So without any prejudice to the young lady, I beg you to consider in your own mind whether you have not made a mistake. We will talk it over again some other day, and now I must positively kiss you, and hurry down to dress for dinner."

(*To be Continued.*)



MAY.

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MY FRIEND JIM.

CHAPTER IV.

IT has ever been my wish to look with an impartial eye alike upon the just and upon the unjust. Being, I hope, to some extent conscious of my own small failings and very desirous that full credit should be allowed to me for my virtues, it is but fair that I should acknowledge the virtues of those whom I dislike, if by diligent searching I can discover that they possess any. And so I am really glad to be able to say for Hilda Turner that I believe she was as fond of Jim as it was in her nature to be of anybody. This concession may the more readily be made because, to tell the truth, it does not amount to much when looked into. Other things being equal, she would, I take it, have preferred Jim to Bracknell; but other things were not equal, because Bracknell was a viscount, who would some day be an earl, whereas Jim would assuredly never be anything but a moderately well-to-do country squire. Still I am bound to confess that when her first string broke she took up her second with a very good grace. Whether, as I suspected at the time, she precipitated her engagement by way of conveying a slap in the face to the too dutiful Bracknell, or whether she had got wind of Jim's proposed exodus ard feared to lose him altogether by delay, certain it is that she bore herself with dignity and general amiability in a situation which must have been somewhat embarrassing, and also that she made Jim supremely happy. More than that could not reasonably have been required of her.

The young couple were, to all appearance, thoroughly satisfied with one another, and their satisfaction was very commonly, if not quite universally, shared by their friends and relatives. Old Turner rubbed his plump white hands, and declared that the wish of his heart was now fulfilled; Lord Staines was so delighted that he could not rest until he had walked over to the Rectory and announced his delight; and my mother, though secretly a little disappointed (for Jim was a great favourite of hers), did not hesitate to aver that all was for the best. It is true that she would have said and thought the selfsame thing if she had just heard me sentenced to be hanged by the neck until I was dead—such being her simple creed. Taking her stand upon certain passages of Scripture, she boldly asserted that it was not for us to judge whether this or that event would be productive of ultimate good or not, and, in short, adopted without reservation the doctrine that whatever is is right.

To fall in with my dear mother's views in this respect has never been possible to me, and amid the general chorus of approval I found some comfort in listening to a dissentient voice which harmonised with my own. It was a very quiet little voice, but it was a sweet one, and was seldom used to utter disparaging remarks about anybody. "Since you ask me," Lady Mildred said, "I am not glad, I am sorry. It seems to me that Hilda is not good enough for Mr. Leigh."

"That," I observed, "is beyond all question."

"Yes; and I don't understand her changing her mind so quickly. Of course it was impossible that Bracknell should marry her; but if it had been possible they might have got on together well enough, perhaps. I am fonder of Bracknell than of anybody else in the world, and I don't know that she is exactly good enough for him either. But he is different from Mr. Leigh. I mean that if he had found out afterwards that Hilda was not quite—quite what he had fancied her, I don't think he would have taken it so much to heart."

These were precisely my sentiments; but as no one had the remotest intention of consulting either me or Lady Mildred, we could not do better than keep them to ourselves; and we kept them to ourselves accordingly.

Of Bracknell I heard nothing, nor, I suppose, did Jim receive congratulations from that quarter, although I did not like to ask him the question. No doubt he had forgiven his old friend, as he could well afford to do, being more or less in the position of a conqueror. His marriage was appointed to take place in the ensuing month of January, and soon after hearing of this arrangement I left home to be formally called to the bar and to take possession of the chambers, where I am thankful to say that my legal library has remained unconsulted from that day to this. For then it was that I received my first substantial encouragement to persevere with those literary labours which have since made life pleasant to me, and have even enabled me to afford an occasional pat of butter with my bread.

During the autumn and early winter my mother, who writes the most delightful letters that ever were penned by mortal hand, kept me fully informed of all that was going on down at Cranfield; and by her account all was going on quite as it ought. Jim, assisted by the counsels of the bride-elect, was refurnishing Elmhurst from attic to basement; his uncle and aunt, a very uninteresting old couple, whom nobody ever saw, and whom nobody but my mother would have dreamt of regretting, had already taken their departure for Bath, where they proposed to reside in future; "and dear Mildred," my mother added, "is behaving *so* sweetly about it all. She seems quite to share Jim's happiness, and some day, I hope, she herself will be as happy as she deserves to be." I confess that the significance of the above encomium escaped me at the time; although I certainly might have perceived it if I had not been a little dense.

A few days before Christmas I seated myself in the down express from Paddington, being bound for Cranfield, with the twofold object of spending that festive season at home and assisting at Jim's subsequent nuptials. Just as the train was starting a young man of fashionable exterior jumped into the carriage, tumbled over my legs, apologised, and then said, "Oh, it's you, Maynard, is it? Going down to the old shop?"

I replied that such was my destination, but that I presumed it wasn't his—not that I really presumed anything of the kind, but because I thought that, taking everything into consideration, Bracknell would have shown better taste by remaining absent from the paternal abode at that particular juncture.

"Oh, yes, I'm going to Staines Court," he returned. "Why shouldn't I?"

"If you don't know, I'm sure I don't," I answered.

"My dear fellow," said Bracknell, lighting a cigar, "If you were to be bound to avoid every woman with whom you had ever been in love, your life would be a perpetual game of hide-and-seek. In fact, the thing really couldn't be done. How is that dear old duffer Jim getting on? Lord! what an existence he has before him! It was a bad day for him when the governor refused to let me take Miss Hilda off his hands. That girl will end by breaking his heart, you'll see."

"She does not," I observed, "appear to have broken yours."

Bracknell smiled, but it struck me that he also winced ever so slightly. "Women are all the same," said he; "a man who allowed one of them to break his heart would be a great fool. Jim is a great fool."

"If being too chivalrous for the world that we live in is being a fool, he certainly is one," I agreed; and I hardly know what prompted me to add, "I hope you will always be as loyal to him as he is to you, Bracknell."

It was rather a silly speech to make, and perhaps also rather an impertinent one, but Bracknell did not appear to resent it. He stared for a moment, and then said, "I suppose he didn't like my cutting him out, eh? It was rough upon him, I admit; but how the deuce was I to help it?"

Being unable to make any concise reply to that question, I only answered, "Well, it is all over now, and the less said about it the better."

So, by way of changing the subject, my companion began to entertain me with an

account of a steeplechase in which he had recently taken part, and this, with occasional breaks, lasted us to our journey's end.

I should have liked to witness the meeting between Bracknell and Hilda, but that pleasure was denied me. On Christmas Day I dined at Staines Court, my mother, who was unable to leave her room, insisting upon my accepting the invitation which had been sent to me to join the party assembled there. The house was full of Henleys and Beauchamps, relations of Lord Staines's, who were unknown to me; but the very first thing that I saw on entering the drawing-room was a little group, composed of Hilda, Lady Mildred, Bracknell, and Jim. They were conversing together in the most friendly manner, and had evidently made up their minds to let bygones be bygones. Jim beckoned to me, and very soon drew me aside to whisper, "Isn't Bracknell a good fellow? I don't believe there's another man in England who would have taken things as he has done and come down here just to show us that he bears no malice!"

It might be that Bracknell had come to Staines Court for that amiable purpose, but I had some difficulty in supposing it. In the first place, he can hardly have thought that any one would suspect him of bearing malice, and in the second, he might so easily have written a letter calculated to allay such apprehensions. There, however, he was, chatting to Hilda as unconcernedly as ever; and even if he was bent upon mischief—which, after all, did not seem very likely—it was certain that Jim would never believe it of him.

Miss Turner was not suffered to retain possession of him long. I think I have already mentioned that Bracknell was one of those happy (one must presume that they are happy) men whom frisky young matrons delight to honour. There were several ladies among the company who answered to that description, and they skirmished over him in a manner diverting to behold, and flattering, no doubt, to the subject of their strife. Between them they bore him away, a not unwilling victim, and until the evening was far advanced we country neighbours could only admire him from afar. Lord Staines, twirling his grey moustache, watched his son's triumph with a benign smile. Probably he had no objection to Bracknell's flirting with any number of ladies, so long as they were not unmarried and penniless. He himself was looking younger and more cheerful than he had done in the summer, having, as I learnt in the course of a brief interview with Lady Mildred, landed a handsome sum over the Cesarewitch.

At a late hour somebody—I suppose it must have been Bracknell—suggested a game of pool. About ten of us, including two or three ladies, adjourned to the billiard-room, and then it was that I was able to take a few mental notes of Hilda's demeanour towards her former lover. Her position was not a very comfortable one; because everybody in the room knew that she had consented to marry Bracknell only a few months before, and she must have known quite well that they knew it. Her serenity, however, was not ruffled, nor did she fall into any of the mistakes which she might so easily have made, and which a woman of more feeling could hardly have avoided making. She neither shunned Bracknell nor thrust herself upon his notice; she was neither over-friendly with him nor the reverse. When he spoke to her she answered him civilly and once or twice she even addressed him first, but indeed she was in an unusually quiet mood and spoke very little to anybody. If there was a criticism to be made upon her, it might have been that she was just a trifle too affectionate with Jim, whispering a word or two in his ear occasionally, as she passed round the table, and glancing quickly at him for applause whenever she had achieved a brilliant stroke.

After the game had been going on for some little time Bracknell came and threw himself down on the sofa beside me. "By George!" he exclaimed, in an undertone which had a ring of vexation in it, "that girl has no more heart than a stone!"

"That," replied I, "is no news to me and no business of yours."

"And to think," he went on, without heeding my remark, "that she has spent the whole of her life in a country parsonage! So much for rural simplicity! Why, there isn't one of these Belgravian women who could hold a candle to her for coolness!"

I don't know what he had expected her to say or do; but he was evidently annoyed, and added that he wouldn't be in Jim's shoes for a trifle. He was obliging me with his views upon feminine nature in general, which, I am sorry to say, were too disrespectful and too crudely expressed to bear repetition, when somebody called out to him that it was his turn to play.

He had a long and rather difficult shot to make, and at the instant when he was drawing back his cue Hilda all of a sudden stepped close behind him, so that he struck her sharply in the side with the butt end of

it. She gave a little cry and fell back upon the sofa where I was sitting. Bracknell, full of apologies and alarm, dropped his cue and peered anxiously at the blanched cheeks of the sufferer; Jim came tearing up from the other end of the room; somebody ran for a glass of water; the rest of the players crowded round the sofa, and we had quite a little scene. At length Hilda got back her breath, and, smiling faintly, assured us that she was not really hurt.

"It is nothing—nothing at all," she said. "It was my own fault entirely, and I shall be all right in a few minutes. Please go on with the game and don't look at me."

To this day I can't feel sure that she did it on purpose. If she did, I am glad to think that she received a considerably smarter dig in the ribs than she had bargained for. In any case, this trifling incident had the effect of producing a complete alteration in Bracknell's humour. He was naturally concerned at having hurt a lady, and it may be that his self-reproach was increased by the recollection that he had been saying hard things of her the minute before. He remained sitting beside her after she had gently pushed Jim away, and the others, at her request, had resumed their game, and I saw that a rapid interchange of words took place between them. Their colloquy was soon interrupted; but it had lasted long enough to bring a slightly increased colour into Bracknell's cheeks and a pensive look into his eyes. Knowing what I did of Miss Hilda, I was convinced that she must either wish to subjugate him once more or to avenge herself upon him; and, all things considered, there seemed to be a very fair chance of her succeeding in her aim, whatever that might be.

When I said as much to my mother on the following morning, after giving her the full account which she always likes to have of what had taken place at the dinner-party and after it, she shook her head. "Ah, my dear Harry," she sighed, "you are too ready to seek for bad motives and study bad people—that is, if poor Hilda is really bad. If I were you, I should find it much more interesting to study Mildred. Is she too good to be attractive?"

"Are you suggesting that I should fall in love with Lady Mildred?" I inquired.

"My dear boy, no! What would Lord Staines say? Besides, I am afraid you would be a day too late. Have you really not discovered Mildred's secret, Harry?—you, who are so quick-sighted!"

We all have our weaknesses; and amongst the many to which I should have to plead guilty, if placed upon my oath, is that of fancying that I can read the hearts and minds of my neighbours with some facility. Now, in truth it had not occurred to me until then that Lady Mildred had lost her heart to Jim, but as I could not bear to admit my stupidity, I made no direct reply, merely observing that there was a difference between what was attractive and what was interesting to study, and that bad people were more interesting to study than good ones because, as a rule, their motives of action were more obscure.

"I suppose so," agreed my mother absently. "Poor Jim!"

"Really," said I (because I was provoked with her for having seen what I had failed to detect), "I do not understand why you should pity him. All is for the best in the best of possible worlds, you know."

"I believe that all is ordered for our good," she answered simply; "though I fear that you do not. We must not presume to say that it would have been better for our friend to marry Mildred than Hilda, who, after all, has a great deal that is nice about her. Poor Jim!"

My dear mother permits herself a touch of dry humour at times which, I think, refreshes her. She glanced up at me half deprecatingly after this last ejaculation, and we had a little laugh together. I suppose she perceived as plainly as I did that there was trouble coming, but she did not choose to talk about it before it came, and probably she was quite right.

CHAPTER V.

I AM but a poor equestrian and can only speak upon such subjects with the diffidence which beseems me, but I have always understood from those who ought to know that the hunting in our parts is of an inferior order. The covert-shooting, on the other hand, is fairly good, and that belonging to the Staines Court property may almost be called famous. Now Lord Staines had left his coverts untouched until Christmas, being, as I verily believe, instigated to this act of self-denial by a desire to please his heir, who at that time was one of the best shots in England. Great, therefore, must have been his surprise, and great also his disappointment on finding that Bracknell perferred to follow the hounds during his stay, and that he

could not even be persuaded to take his gun out of its case on non-hunting days.

"It seems to me," the poor old gentleman declared in my hearing, "that he must have taken leave of his senses. I really can't account for his behaviour in any other way."

I could have accounted for it; though I am not prepared to say that my explanation excluded the hypothesis of insanity. I could have told Lord Staines that, indifferent as the hunting was, there was a certain country gentleman in the neighbourhood who was devoted to it, heart and soul; that this gentleman had recently presented a well-broken saddle-horse to his betrothed; and further, that when Bracknell was not out hunting with the couple aforesaid he was amusing himself in some other and perhaps less innocent fashion in the company of one of them. But I did not tell him this, partly because I was not asked and partly because I am constitutionally averse to being blown up sky-high. I will do myself the justice to say that I would have risked a good deal of personal discomfort to get Bracknell dismissed a second time from the neighbourhood; but I was well aware that nothing short of ocular proof would have made Lord Staines believe his son capable of behaviour unworthy of a gentleman. To make love to your friend's *fiancée* under your friend's nose must undoubtedly be described in that disagreeable way; and I hardly think that the circumstance of the lady in question being an unscrupulous minx can be admitted as an extenuating one.

If any palliation of Bracknell's conduct had been discoverable, I suppose one would have had to look for it in the tone of the society which he was accustomed to frequent. In certain sets it seems to be almost imperative upon a man that he should make love to somebody, provided always that she be not a person whom he can marry. Bracknell may have opined that Miss Turner was as good as married already, and that she was consequently a safe and fit subject for his attentions. For the rest, she gave him every encouragement. I used to meet them riding home from hunting together at a suspiciously early hour of the day; Bracknell was for ever dropping in to luncheon or tea at the Rectory; and Jim had no words to express his satisfaction at the good feeling which subsisted between his friend and his future wife. He confided to me that he had hardly ventured to hope for such a happy state of things.

When the hunting was abruptly put a stop to by a sharp frost, which in a few days rendered the ice on the great lake at Staines Court thick enough to bear, this estimable pair had further opportunities of showing how well disposed they were towards one another. Bracknell excelled in skating, as indeed he did in all sports and pastimes of an athletic nature; and in Hilda he found an apt pupil. Jim, who was by no means such a proficient, would listen respectfully to Bracknell's instructions, and when the couple skimmed away from him, as they often did, would watch them from afar, with pride and admiration in his eyes. They were the two people whom he loved best in the world, and I believe it gave him far more pleasure to contemplate their achievements than it would have done to obtain any kind of personal distinction.

For reasons of my own, I usually prefer to shun the giddy throng when on skates. One afternoon I had found a nice sequestered spot, screened from view by an island, and was very busy practising a graceful piece of figure-skating (outside edge forwards, inside edge backwards, and then down with a thump) when Bracknell and Hilda suddenly shot out from behind the clump of evergreen shrubs which had masked my movements. They swept past me, hand in hand, and in that still atmosphere a few words fell clear and distinct upon my ear. "Oh, *what* a bore! Can't we get rid of him somehow?" And then a low laugh from Hilda and a reply which distance rendered unintelligible to me.

An instant later came the sound of short, scuffling strokes, denoting the approach of an unskilful skater, and Jim's colossal form loomed into view. "Hi! you two," I heard him shout. "Wait for me!" And away he went, full tilt, round the miniature cape which Bracknell and Hilda had already doubled.

I hardly knew why this brief dissolving view should have set my blood boiling with indignation, for I really had not been in need of any further evidence that poor Jim was being made a fool of; but so it was. "Oh, you would like to get rid of him, would you?" said I to myself, starting off in pursuit. "Then, my good friends, you sha'n't get rid of him, nor of me either."

However, I was prevented from carrying out my benevolent intentions; for I had not got well under way before I encountered Jim, returning post-haste.

"Where are you off to in such a hurry?" I asked, holding up my hand to stop him.

He checked his career with some difficulty, describing an immense semicircle in order to bring up alongside of me. "Hilda wants

her jacket," he explained, breathlessly; "she has left it up at the house."

"And she has despatched you a mile to fetch it! One would have thought that she might have sent Bracknell. But never mind. You go back to her; I'll get her confounded jacket."

I could not help confounding her jacket, but I saw that Jim was a little surprised and displeased at my doing so. "My dear boy," he said, gently, "there's no occasion for you to give yourself all that bother. I don't mind going."

"Well, then," I returned, provoked beyond the limits of prudence, "*I* mind your going. Heavens and earth, man, do you imagine that it is because she is afraid of catching cold that Hilda orders you off on an errand which will take you a good three quarters of an hour to accomplish? Do you suppose, by any chance, that Bracknell has stayed down here all this time because he enjoys third-class hunting, or because he thinks skating on a pond better fun than disporting himself in London? It is not permissible to be so stupid!"

Jim's face became very grave. "Bracknell is staying here to be present at our wedding," he replied; "he has given up a lot of other engagements rather than disappoint us. As for Hilda, I may tell you that she wouldn't have let me get her jacket for her if I hadn't insisted upon it." He added, with something of an effort: "Harry, we're old friends, and I'd stand a great deal from you before I'd quarrel with you; but I'm bound to say that if you make such an insinuation as that again, we can't be friends any longer. I suppose you have got into a habit of suspecting that every man you meet may be a rascal, and now you can't help yourself. I don't want to preach to you, old chap, but it's a beastly bad habit to have got into, and that's the truth."

Such was the reward that I obtained for my well-meant, but injudicious meddling. I am sorry to say that I was foolish enough to feel deeply affronted by Jim's rebuke, and a coolness arose between us which might not have been easily dispelled, had not subsequent events drawn us together again. It was, at all events, pretty evident that, so far as I was concerned, matters must be allowed to take their course. I could not open Jim's eyes, and to remonstrate with Bracknell would have been sheer waste of breath.

Somebody was found, however, with sufficient faith in him and in herself to attempt this useless task. It was some days after the ice had broken up, and when we were within a week of Jim's wedding-day, that demure little Lady Mildred told me how uneasy the intimacy of her brother with the bride-elect was making her. "I don't mind talking to you about it," she said, "because I know you have seen it all as plainly as I have. I suppose you blame Bracknell very much, do you not?"

"Why, of course I do," I replied.

"Yes; but he is not really so bad as you think—he does not see anything wrong in it. He only laughed when I spoke to him, and said I didn't know what I was talking about. And so it will go on until something dreadful happens."

"My dear Lady Mildred," said I, "I don't think anything dreadful will happen. If I know the charming Hilda at all, she will always stop a little short of dreadful things. People who do dreadful things lose their place in society and have to put up with all manner of inconveniences. She will contrive to amuse herself, no doubt, but so long as her husband shuts his eyes and doesn't mind, what can that matter to anybody?"

Lady Mildred did not seem pleased with my philosophy. "That is as much as to say that you care very little what becomes of your friend," she observed.

"Quite so," I returned, keeping my temper. "When I venture to speak a word in season to my friend, he flies at me like a bull-dog, and tells me to mind my own business; when I leave him alone, you reproach me with caring very little about him. At this rate, a friend seems likely to prove a troublesome luxury."

The truth was that I trembled for poor Jim's future quite as much as Lady Mildred did, but when things are inevitable what can a wise man do but make the best of them? My confidence in Hilda's discretion was quite sincere; and that only shows how mistaken the wisest of us may be every now and then. Could I—could anybody—anticipate what the next move of that remarkable young woman was going to be? Anyhow, none of us did anticipate it.

A few days before that on which the wedding had been appointed to take place, I was invited to luncheon at the Rectory, it having been intimated to me that I should be expected to make myself useful subsequently in helping to move furniture and carry out other preparations for the feast at which Mr. Turner proposed to entertain his friends after the ceremony. When I arrived I found Jim and Mr. Sparks, the curate, seated in the drawing-room with our host,

but Hilda was conspicuous by her absence. Her absence had become quite disagreeably conspicuous when the clock struck half-past two, by which time we were all very hungry, besides having reached the extreme limit of our subjects of conversation. In the course thereof it had transpired that Bracknell had come over in his dog-cart two or three hours before, and had persuaded Hilda to go out for a drive with him. "But she assured me," said Mr. Turner, fidgeting about uneasily, "that she would be back very shortly, and I am altogether at a loss to account for this delay."

"Oh, they'll turn up all right," returned Jim composedly. "Bracknell never knows what time of day it is. I don't think they deserve that we should wait any longer for them, though."

Here the curate, a good-natured but not very intelligent young man, judged it appropriate to remark, with a loud laugh, "Upon my word, Mr. Leigh, you will have to look after this young lady. It's early days for her to begin driving off with a gay bachelor and finding his company so agreeable that she forgets to come home to luncheon."

After this graceful sally on the part of Sparks, we went into the dining-room and refreshed ourselves; but we listened in vain for the sound of Bracknell's chariot-wheels, and at length Jim, whose lawyer was coming down from London to see him, was compelled to leave us. His composure remained undisturbed up to the last; but as soon as he was gone Mr. Turner confided to me that he, for his part, was becoming seriously alarmed.

"I would not mention it while James was here," he said, "but it struck me that Lord Bracknell was driving a somewhat restive animal and I cannot help fearing that some accident has occurred."

If any accident had occurred within ten miles of us, we should certainly have heard of it by that time, and so I told him, but he was not convinced; and as the poor old fellow was evidently fretting himself into a fever, I could but offer to scour the country in search of the absentees. Accordingly I set out in one direction while the good-natured Sparks trudged away in another; and a very disagreeable walk I had of it through the rain, which began to come down immediately after I started. None of the people whom I met had seen Bracknell, upon whose head I did not invoke a blessing when I reached home after dark, drenched to the skin. I was perfectly sure that neither he nor Hilda had come to any physical harm; because persons of that kind very rarely get their necks broken (unless it be by the hand of the public executioner, and that only if they happen to belong to the lower orders), but I did think that between them they were carrying impudence about as far as it could very well be carried. However, as I did not at that time foresee that I should ever write the history of these delinquents, I ceased to think about them as soon as I had finished my dinner, and, having made myself comfortable with a blazing fire and a cigar, set to work upon an article of which I hoped to have the skeleton completed before bed-time.

I was getting on quite nicely, and had scribbled down several epigrammatic sayings to be scattered carelessly over my composition and to cheer the persevering reader on his way through it, when I was informed that Mr. Turner was down stairs and wanted to see me "most particular." This announcement was speedily followed by the entrance of Mr. Turner himself, in an indescribable state of agitation. On seeing his pale face and rumpled hair, I naturally concluded that I had done Nemesis an injustice, and exclaimed, "*Has* there been an accident then after all?"

But he spread out his hands with a gesture of despair and answered, "Ah, no! No accident—no accident! Design!" After which, he became so incoherent and unintelligible that I had to seat him in my armchair, and pour out a stiff brandy and soda for him. This he swallowed, throwing back his head and closing his eyes, as if it had been hemlock; and when he had drained the last drop of it, he felt in his pocket for a note, which he handed to me.

"Read that, Harry," said he, tragically. "Read it, my dear young friend, and tell me, if you can, what is to be done. Because I am willing to confess to you that what to do I know not at all!"

The note, which I perused with no small curiosity and astonishment, ran as follows:

"ROYAL HOTEL, STOKINGHAM.

"DEAR PAPA,—Lord Bracknell and I were married before the registrar here this morning. It is all quite legal and regular, of course; but we think we ought not to omit the religious ceremony, although circumstances have prevented us from going through it in the ordinary way; and so we propose to drive over early to-morrow morning and be married again *quite privately* by you. I am sure you will understand how advisable this is in order to prevent scandal, and I need not warn you that not a word must be said at Staines Court until it is all over and we have

left again. Afterwards you can break the news to Lord Staines. Bracknell thinks his father will not have been made uneasy by his non-appearance, as he often runs up to London without mentioning that he is going to do so. Please tell Sarah that I shall want all my things packed up, and that she must begin doing it *at once*, and sit up all night, if necessary, as there is no time to lose. I have engaged another maid to meet us in London, and shall not take Sarah with me. Do not distress yourself about this sudden resolution of ours; you will see that all will come right in the end. We shall be with you soon after nine o'clock to-morrow morning.

"Your affectionate daughter
"HILDA BRACKNELL."

I can testify that the above is a strictly literal reproduction, because I wrote it down word for word, immediately after I had read it, thinking it worthy of remembrance as a curiosity in the way of epistolary composition. Never, I imagine, was a treacherous act avowed with more cynical effrontery. The writer seemed to have forgotten altogether that she had been engaged to be married in the course of a few days to an honest man who had the folly to adore her. One can't think of everything, and I suppose she was fully absorbed by the important considerations set forth in her letter. She was anxious to avoid unnecessary scandal; she did not wish to incur the discomfort of a stormy interview with Lord Staines; and she was determined not to part with her new clothes. If she had wandered away from these main points she might perhaps have confused her father's mind, which, to be sure, was not a very clear one.

I really could not see my way to offering that unlucky man much comfort. "If you wish for my opinion," I replied, when he repeated his demand, "I should say that you had better read the marriage service over them and then pack them off with all despatch. After that, it will be your pleasing duty to impart the good news to Lord Staines, keeping well out of the reach of his arm while you do so. I don't know that it is any business of mine; but in common charity I will undertake Jim. May Heaven send us both a good deliverance!"

Mr. Turner sighed piteously, and declared that this would bring his grey hairs with sorrow to the grave. I was really sorry for him; for in truth his position was not an agreeable one; so I listened sympathetically while he bewailed himself for a time; but at length the habit of meek subordination which characterised him restored order to his ideas: he remembered that Sarah must be instructed to pack the trousseau forthwith, and, jumping up, trotted off homewards.

As soon as I had got rid of the Reverend Simeon, I went to bed. Nowadays I can take up my work and perform it with more or less of facility, whatever may be my mental condition; but I suppose that in earlier life I must have been less callous, for I felt that it would be out of the question to attack that unfinished article again while I could think of nothing but poor old Jim and the cruel blow which it would be my lot to strike him on the morrow. If any one who reads these lines has ever been obliged to kill a favourite dog, he will in some measure appreciate my sensations. The thing has to be done; it is necessary and merciful to do it; but the necessity is a horrible one, and makes you feel, for the time being, very like a traitor and a murderer. Unfortunately, too, Jim and I were not upon the best of terms, by reason of that fruitless note of warning which I had thought proper to sound in his ear, and I knew that, in acquitting myself of my present mission, I should have the air of saying, "I told you so!" Not that in reality I had foretold or foreseen what had occurred, for I had never dreamt that Hilda wished to marry Bracknell, nor, for that matter, that he would be so mad as to marry her if she did wish it; still it was plain that, under the circumstances, I should be an unwelcome ambassador; and as I lay broad awake, I almost regretted that I had not rather offered to face Lord Staines, who, if the worst came to the worst, could do no more than swear at me.

Being thus harassed, I naturally got little sleep that night, and was glad when the first glimmer of dawn gave me an excuse for getting up and stealing out of doors. I wandered about till breakfast time; but I did not go to church to witness "the religious ceremony" alluded to by Hilda, edifying though it would doubtless have been to watch the demeanour of the bride and bridegroom on that occasion.

CHAPTER VI.

As matters fell out, the task of enlightening Lord Staines was thrown upon my shoulders, in addition to that with which I had already

saddled myself; for scarcely had I finished my breakfast when Mr. Turner arrived, trembling and breathless, to say that he really did not feel equal to encountering the brunt of his patron's wrath.

"Indeed," he added, with a ludicrous effort to regain his accustomed suave pomposity, "I am not sure that it would be right on my part to do so. I have not forgotten the very improper terms in which Lord Staines chose to address me when I called upon him once before on—er—a somewhat similar errand, and both for his sake and for my own, any repetition of such a scene is—er—to be deprecated. To you profanity of language would be less shocking—at least, I mean that you must be more accustomed to hearing it; and—er—in short—"

"In short," I interrupted, not over respectfully—for really the Reverend Simeon's aspect at that moment was not calculated to induce respect—"you want me to do your dirty work for you. Very well; I don't particularly mind; I may as well be hanged for a sheep as for a lamb. Only I don't promise to prevent Lord Staines from going down to the Rectory later in the day, and shocking you with profane language. It may not be altogether your fault that your daughter has disgraced herself and inveigled Bracknell into disgracing himself with her; but you may as well be prepared to be told that it is. If I were in your place I should be a good deal more frightened of Jim Leigh than of Lord Staines."

"Gently, my dear young friend, gently!" returned Mr. Turner, with dignity. "You are excited, and I do not blame you for it; but to say that my daughter has disgraced herself is to say too much—a great deal too much. That she did very wrong in engaging herself to James, I allow, and he will not find me slow to express my sincere sorrow and sympathy; but we must bear in mind that her affections were given in the first place to Lord Bracknell. I will not say that the young people were justified in taking the law into their own hands; yet I may doubt whether Lord Staines's motives for forbidding them to marry were of the highest kind. Now do not answer me, I beg of you. I can see that you are not yet master of yourself. If you will allow me I will go up stairs and sit with your dear mother while you walk over to Staines Court."

Evidently Hilda had been talking to him, and it would be absurd to waste good indignation upon such hopeless ineptitude.

"Pray do so, Mr. Turner," I answered, "my mother will be very glad to see you. Only I hope you will kindly refrain from expounding your views with regard to your daughter's marriage to her, because she is rather subject to attacks of nausea."

With this valedictory shot, I set out to perform the first and least painful of the duties which I had accepted. I found Lord Staines in his study, and, apparently, in a rather bad humour.

"Oh, how do you do, Maynard?" said he, looking up from the letter which he was writing. "Do you happen to know anything about that fellow Bracknell? When I was his age it used to be considered the civil thing just to let your father know when you proposed to leave his house or return to it; but nowadays the young men seem to think that they needn't take any notice of their fathers, except when they want money. Here is Bracknell gone off, nobody knows where, at the very moment when I am making business arrangements for which his signature is required. I told him about it two days ago; but, of course, my convenience counts for nothing when it is a question of going to some confounded steeplechase or other."

I thought there was nothing to be gained by putting off the evil moment. "I can't tell you where Bracknell is, Lord Staines," I replied; "but I have come here to give you some very unpleasant news about him. He was married yesterday at the Registrar's office at Stokingham to Hilda Turner."

Lord Staines started up, overturning his chair. A rush of blood made his cheeks crimson for a moment, and then ebbed slowly away, leaving them of a chalky whiteness. For a full minute he uttered never a word; then he advanced slowly towards me from behind the table, trembling a good deal. "Maynard, my dear fellow," said he, quite quietly, "it is not possible that you can be telling the truth. Somebody has played a foolish hoax upon you."

And when I shook my head, "My good sir," he went on, with rather more impatience, "I tell you that the thing is impossible! You will allow me to know something about my own son, I suppose. Bracknell is what you please—I never called him perfect, God knows!—but at least he is a man of honour. You don't seem to take in that no honourable man could act in the way that you describe."

"It is not altogether unprecedented," I ventured to observe.

"I don't care whether it's unprecedented or not; Bracknell never did it. If he had been determined to marry this—this lady, he would have defied me and done it in the light

of day, like a man, knowing very well what the consequences would be. But as for slinking off with her on the sly and betraying the confidence of his friend—pooh! don't tell me! If you brought the whole parish to swear to it, I wouldn't believe it."

I suppose he was really less incredulous than he professed to be, poor old fellow, for presently he added: "And pray, where did you get this precious piece of information from?"

And then I told him the whole story. It was one of the most unpleasant things that I have ever had to do in my life, and when I had said my say I wanted to go away and leave him; but he held me back, gripping my arm tightly. So far he had listened to me quietly enough, scarcely interrupting me, and only once or twice muttering under his breath a word or two which I could not catch, but now on a sudden his anger burst forth in a storm of disjointed, incoherent sentences.

"I'll never see his face again—never! You may tell him so from me. He has chosen to take his own way, and by the Lord he shall have it! Not another penny shall he have. I'll stop his allowance—a devilish handsome allowance too!—and his debts, which I've paid again and again, by George! without so much as grumbling—A fool and his money—but he'll find that I'm not quite the fool he takes me for. Damn it all, sir! did you come up here with the idea that you were going to talk me over? You have got up this scheme among you—you and that girl and old Turner, a man who owes everything to me, and thinks he can play me such a trick with impunity. But I'll very soon let him see his mistake. He shall resign the living, as sure as I stand here!"

"I think you forget, Lord Staines," I interrupted, "that I, at least, can have had no conceivable object in furthering Hilda's schemes. If I had known anything about them, or had had any power over them, I should have done my best to put a stop to them, for poor Jim Leigh's sake."

"Yes, yes—I know," he answered, with a complete change of tone. "I beg your pardon, Maynard; don't mind what I said about you; I didn't mean it. I mean what I say about Bracknell, though—I'll never speak to him again. Oh, Harry, that boy has broken my heart! He knew it was essential that he should marry money—and then to ruin himself for the sake of such a girl as that! You needn't pity Jim Leigh; he's well rid of a bad bargain."

Very likely he was, but unfortunately there was no likelihood at all that he would take that view of the matter. I was beginning to say as much, but the words died away upon my lips; for at this moment the door was thrown open and Jim himself strode into the room. As soon as I saw his face I perceived that some one had been beforehand with me, and that there was no longer any occasion for me to consider in what words he might best be informed of Hilda's flight.

He glanced rapidly at each of us in turn. "It's true, then!" he exclaimed.

Lord Staines wheeled round upon him with an odd access of fury. "True!—yes, it's true enough. Why the devil shouldn't it be true? Did you make the mistake of supposing that my son was an honourable man? Why what a simpleton you must be! I—I——"

He stopped abruptly, stared at us for an instant with fixed, glazing eyes, and then, swaying forwards, would have fallen on his face if Jim had not caught him.

Between us we lifted him on to a sofa, and then the servants were called, and poor little Lady Mildred had to be sent for. I told her in as few words as possible what was the cause of her father's seizure, thinking it best that she should know the truth; and, so far as I could judge, she was not very greatly surprised. She kept her presence of mind admirably, displaying no agitation and doing what little could be done until the doctor came.

Later in the day a great London man was telegraphed for; but our local practitioner confided to me that he would not have considered this step necessary in the case of a patient of less exalted rank.

"Will he die, then?" I asked.

"Well, no," answered the doctor; "not this time. But he will never be the same again. I have told Lady Mildred that she may exercise her own judgment about telegraphing to Lord Bracknell, but that in my opinion he should not be allowed to see his father."

Jim and I left the house together. We had hardly exchanged a word as yet, and I did not like to begin; so that we walked in silence as far as the park gates, where our paths diverged; and there he came to a halt.

"Good-bye, Harry," said he; "I'm going away to-morrow."

"The best thing you can do," I answered.

"Is it? I don't know. Anyhow, I can't stay here. I shall go to India, or Australia, or somewhere — it doesn't much matter.

Harry, you are right: this world is peopled by a set of rascals and liars."

I said the world was bad enough, but that I had not brought quite so sweeping a charge as that against it.

"Oh, I thought you had. One thing I know: I will never trust man or woman again as long as I live. But it won't bear talking about, and, after all, what's the good of talking? Good-bye, Harry."

He turned and walked away a few paces, then suddenly faced about and came back to me. "Some day or other we shall meet again, if I live," he said; "but when that will be I can't tell. Don't forget me, old chap; I'll write to you when I can."

And so we parted. I confess that I did not take his words quite literally, and fully expected that he would be over at our house on the following day. But I was disappointed. He left England, just as he had said that he would do; Elmhurst was shut up; its owner was lost sight of, if not absolutely forgotten, by his many friends, and it was years before I saw his honest, kindly face again.

(To be Continued.)

THE PIAZZA SOPRA MURA, PERUGIA.
From a Drawing by THOMAS MACQUOID.

IN UMBRIA.

PART I.

CHERUBS, SAN BERNARDINO.
From a Drawing by THOMAS MACQUOID.

IT has been said that the face which exerts the most permanent charm is that one whose attractions defy analysis; a face of which the beauty is so subtle, so compounded of many and varied qualities, that gazing at the harmonious whole one cannot specialise its fascination. Such a face does not at first reveal its charm, for this does not lie in regularity of feature or in beauty of colouring, or even in the trick of a smile; the spell is so potent that when one tries to analyse, and so to learn its secret, the mind lazily refuses to dispel the sweet illusion by any such work-a-day process, and says with the hashish smoker, "Let us enjoy the sweet dream while we may."

Places, as well as faces, exert this undefined attraction, but, as a rule, association obtrudes itself as a conscious ingredient in the fascination these have for us. I am thinking, just now, of a place where many of the historic associations are repulsive, even horrible; if one lets the mind stray backwards, one is conscious that these old grey palaces, with their barred lower windows, were gloomy fortresses in their time, ghastly tragedies have been acted in them; sons have plotted how to take their father's lives, and in the grass-grown streets and squares blood has run freely, shed too by near kinsmen—even the churches have seen murder done in front of their altars.

It is true that in this hill-throned and hill-girdled city of Perugia there linger softer, quainter memories. Up the brick-stepped

way, beneath that tall dark arch, came, even in those same murderous years, the grave painter Giovanni Sanzio from Urbino, to place his fair-haired boy, Raffaelle, with the illiterate genius of Città del Pieve, Pietro Vannucci, who had already become a great painter in Perugia, "il nostro Perugino," as the people still fondly call him. One feels that Raphael must always have been tenderly cared for, and as he comes up in the sunshine, mounted on his mule, his dainty locks fall over his shoulders in glossy waves of brightness.

There are traces, both in the Sala del Cambio and elsewhere in Perugia, which prove that Raphael actually studied here, and that he worked under the great Umbrian painter with his fellow pupils, Pinturicchio, Lo Spagna, and the rest.

It is true that, except in the beautiful Sala del Cambio, little of Perugino's best work is to be found in the town where he held his academy.

The sun saw a very different picture when poor, roughly clad, coarse-featured, Cristoforo Vannucci trudged along on foot, holding tightly the red fist of his little son Pietro. The square-faced, square-headed boy was only eleven, and yet his father already believed in his genius, and had come all the way up from Città del Pieve to present Pietro to the great Umbrian master, Benedetto Bonfigli, then working at the famous frescoes still to be seen in the Palazzo Pubblico at Perugia.

But I am straying from my text—the nameless fascination which the old grey city has for those who linger in it.

Travellers who "do" Perugia in six hours, or find a likeness between the Via Appia and the Holborn Viaduct, will not come under the spell, they will see only a grey old city, part Etruscan, part Roman, and chiefly mediæval, placed on the top of a steep hill, girt with massive walls which look down on the fertile valley of the Tiber, on steep slopes silver with olives, golden with plots of maize, and green in autumn with richly festooned vineyards. They will, perhaps, notice the triple range of purple Apennines that form on every side a varied background to this picturesque fertility, and to the lesser hills crouching below, and to the spurs projecting boldly forward into the deep valley, above which the grey city shows her spires, towers, and massive walls.

They may notice, too, from below, how quaintly the wall is carried in and out as it follows the indentations of the hills, and how boldly at the angles thus made warm-tinted towers stand out against the sky. They will scarcely fail to notice these features, but they will hardly have time to study the exquisite variety in the forms of the hills, or to watch the sun set opposite grand old Subasio, turning the white houses of Assisi, which hang on its side, to a pale rose against the flame-like orange glow that seems rather to come from within the hill than to be reflected from the opposite side of the horizon. They will not have time to enjoy the charming drives among the olives in the valley, or the excursions to be made from Perugia, as numerous as they are interesting—they will never come under the spell of the grey old sorceress.

To me there is an indescribable fascination in wandering along her narrow streets in the deep shadows cast by the tall old palaces, with grated windows and bricked-up doorways, that border some of them; now passing under a lofty archway with uncemented stones on either side, so huge that one fancies they must have been placed there by giants, into a vaulted way beneath ancient houses, which are thus built across the street; sometimes these archways are low and round-headed, mere tunnels through which one almost gropes one's way, and then emerging finds a sudden descent on this side down a flight of bricked steps which turns out of sight so quickly that a keen interest is whetted to follow it, while on another side a flight goes steeply up to an old grey arch with a darkness beyond it equally tempting to the explorer.

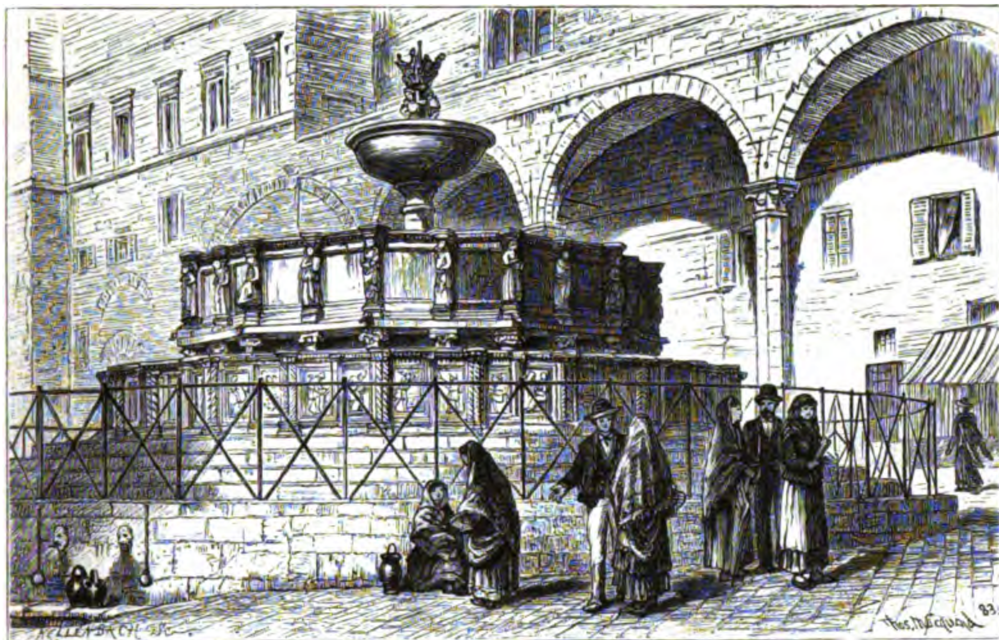
Day after day I wandered up and down those twisting hilly streets, often losing my way, constantly stumbling on some new interest, on some bit of Etruscan wall, or on some exquisite point of view perceived as a vista at the end of a grey street, or on a grander and more varied picture from the wall itself, with part of Perugia for foreground; sometimes getting a chat by the way with a woman weaving at a hand-loom, or some bare-footed child playing in the sunshine, and yet I never succeeded in exploring all the quaint lateral passages and flights of steps that offer unending stores of interest.

It is very easy to lose one's way in Perugia, indeed at first it seemed a hopeless maze of twisting streets—but a map is irksome and I think bewildering. There is certainly a trustworthy guide to be had, but a guide always gives me a crippled, infirm feeling, I would as soon go about in a Bath chair; so we declined Giovanni Scalchi's services, and after a little we began to realise the peculiar shape of the city. This is said

PORTA EBURNEA, PERUGIA.
***From a Drawing by* THOMAS MACQUOID.**

to be star-like; but to me it is more like a lobster with outstretched tail and claws; it is perhaps most of all like a star-shaped comet with a head on a long neck, inclined to one side, and a still longer tail pointing south-east.

One great charm for those who visit this city is the most comfortable, home-like resting place one finds at the Hotel de Perugia. This stands on a spur of the hill outside the city gates and just below the big Piazza Victor Emanuele. I shall not easily forget the pleasure of our first arrival. We had left Florence at night—the heat being too intense to travel by day—and as we came



THE FONTE DI PERUGIA.
From a Drawing by THOMAS MACQUOID.

into the hall and the long corridor of the hotel, the dim light fell mysteriously on plants and flowers, showing curios on the walls between; and when we were taken up stairs to a charming, cool room, and looking out saw the exquisite light of early morning breaking over the dim, far-off hills, I think we all felt that we had reached a sort of "earthly paradise."

Next morning was golden with sunshine and delightfully fresh; after being hospitably welcomed by the landlord and his wife, we strolled into the garden in which the hotel stands; at one end were two majestic aloes, their splendid golden blossoms reaching above the house; before the garden entrance was a clump of rosy oleanders, and through the door at the southern end of the corridor we came upon a bower of golden-green acacias, wreathed to the topmost branches with many-coloured convolvulus flowers. Under these were grouped seats and a table, with a background of roses, vines, and sunflowers, which grow luxuriantly at Perugia. In a hammock, suspended in the shade, we could lie and read, or rest, while we enjoyed the exquisite landscape gleaming in full sunshine; for the terrace at the end of the garden commands a beautiful and extended view over the valley and the surrounding hills; it also looks down on the Piazza d'Armi, where the little soldiers are for ever going through the goose step—sometimes by way of change waltzing together—from this height they look like so many dolls.

It is not possible to over-praise the Hotel de Perugia; we found it an ideal resting-place both for comfort and most attentive kindness; and there are charming views from some of its windows, both of the landscape with its mountain background and of the picturesque town. We became so much attached to our quarters that it was at first a grief to us to learn that Monsieur Brufani

and his wife intend very soon to leave this quaint and charming house for the large hotel they are building on the Piazza above. One thing is however certain, wherever this landlord and his kind English wife rule, there will exist perfect comfort; while in the larger space of this new hotel, the arrangements will be much better, and the view therefrom will be magnificent, as it commands the country on all sides. It adjoins the public garden on the Piazza.

The day after our arrival we went up some steps beside the hotel, gemmed with brilliant-eyed lizards darting in and out in the sunshine, and bordered by aloes not yet in bloom, and found ourselves under the lofty walls that once supported the fortress built by command of Pope Paul III. In this wall is bricked up and inclosed an ancient gate—the Porta Marzia—which came in the way of this tyrannical erection. One is glad for the sake of freedom to think that even in our own times, less than forty years ago, the citizens of Perugia pulled down and utterly destroyed this fortress, set up to subdue their audacity by the aggressive pope; yet, from a picturesque point of view, the fortress was probably more in harmony with the grey streets behind it, especially with the frowning walls, than are the modern buildings that now border the new Piazza, and take off the charm of the approach on this side. But the view from the terrace above is delightful, especially just at sunset. One need not, however, enter Perugia by way of the Piazza. Keeping below the huge wall, beside an avenue of green acacias, we climbed by a wide flight of shallow brick steps past the picturesque church of St. Ercolano, then through a lofty archway with huge projecting imposts into an old grey street with tall houses on either side.

One of these was evidently the back of a palace, and indeed we found that it belonged to the Palazzo Baglioni which fronts the next street—Via Riario; the very name Baglioni made one shiver, remembering the chronicle of that bloodthirsty race. We halted here before a shop, to whose owner, a well-to-do merchant of Perugia, we had been given an introduction, and he most courteously allowed us to see his wine cellar; on two sides of this is the veritable Etruscan wall of Perugia in excellent preservation. Some of the stones are about thirteen feet long and eighteen inches high—huge uncemented blocks of travertine. The floor of the cellar is formed by the ancient roadway, so that one actually treads the road used before Rome was thought of.

It is frightful to think of the amount of forced labour represented by these walls—for the stones around Perugia must have been brought from a far greater distance than those of Cortona. In Signor Betti's cellar the stones are certainly the finest specimens we saw in the city. The old wall must have gone on from here by way of the Porta Marzia to the Porta Eburnea, then going on northwards (there are visible fragments of it in the Rione Eburnea), it reached the famous arch on the Piazza Grimani, and so went on eastward to Monte Sole where it took a southern course to join these remains. Signor Betti's house stands on the edge of the hill, and from its back windows we had a charming view over the country on that side, and looking south, over the garden of St. Pietro de Casinensi, kept in order by the boys of the reformatory. The fine old machicolated spire of San Pietro and the quaint campanile of St. Domenico make striking landmarks from the high road winding out to the Tiber and Ponte San Giovanni. Perhaps we learned one of the secrets in the charm of Perugia when we turned from this lovely varied landscape to the vivid contrast offered by the old grey street.

Near to Signor Betti's is a little curiosity shop, and in its window we saw a proof that the belief in *mal occhio* still exists among the peasants. Hanging from a rough brass watch chain, much the worse for wear, was a little bunch of hairs from a horse's tail set as a charm, and considered to be a specific against *mal occhio*, or spells cast on horses, cows, &c. Near it was an irregular, stumpy bit of coral—a man's safeguard against a like disaster.

During our stay in Perugia we made acquaintance with a very learned professor of the university, who most kindly showed us not only a very interesting and valuable collection of implements and other articles beginning at the Stone Age, but also a collection of amulets and charms. Some of these, especially those for protection from lightning, are bits of prehistoric stones, and contain a grotesque mingling of pagan and mediæval superstition. A little case, embroidered with the Agnus Dei, contained a triangular stone arrow-head, and this used to be hung at the bed-head of the owner, between pictures of saints; on the occasion of a storm, candles were lighted and prayers were offered before the amulet. This collection of charms amounts to upwards of a hundred and seventy, and is so full of interest that it would require many pages to

do it justice. A very curious amulet was the fragment of a human skull inclosed in a little brass reliquary, and considered to be a sovereign protection against epilepsy and kindred disorders. Tradition said that this bit of bone had belonged to the skull of a person, dead some two hundred years before, who had worked so many wonderful cures by his skill in medicine, and had lived such a long and saintly life that he had been loved and venerated by all. The Professor told us that it was not at all uncommon when a body was dug up in the course of excavations, to find a bit of the skull missing, and this amulet doubtless explained the use that had been made of such lost fragments.

Another charm was a little cross of holly-wood carved by Capuchin friars, which had been found hanging at an old woman's bed-head, to protect her from the spells of witches. She would only part from it on condition that she might reserve some splinters of the wood, so as to prevent the witches from visiting her, and tormenting her for having parted from her safeguard. There were corals too of various shapes for women and children, for safety in teething, for protection against *mal occhio*, to stop bleeding, and above all, for the cure of melancholy. The dark stone with red spots, which I have heard called in England bloodstone, is said to be infallible in checking bleeding; it must be useful in a country where blood-letting and leeching are still common and frequent remedies.

One of the most amusing of the charms was a heart-shaped agate with a hole through the top. This was found in a house not far from Perugia, where it had from time immemorial been held in reverence, and in which its influence was supposed to have maintained perfect harmony among the inmates. Professor Bellucci did not tell us why its possessors were willing to give it up—perhaps they wanted a little change from this perpetual harmony.

Belief in witches is still very prevalent in Umbria: they are said to haunt cross-roads at night-time, and he who has to walk late in the environs of Perugia will do well to carry a few small coins in his pocket, and to fling them as an offering when he comes to a cross-road, for assuredly a witch lies there in ambush, ready to work him harm; also, when the traveller sees in some unfrequented by-road a heap of stones beside the way, he must at once add another stone to this cairn, so that he may keep down the phantom of the murdered traveller, whose unblessed body has been hastily put underground in this lonely spot. Among these *ciottoli*, however, I did not see any of the charming little coral hands with the forefinger and little finger pointed to defend from the *mal occhio*, which are to be found further south. It is possible that this belief in the virtue of coral may have originated the custom of the long coral necklaces, worn by peasant women of Umbria; this idea came to me when, a few minutes after leaving the curiosity-shop, we came out into the crowded market on the long Piazza Sopra Mura, and saw that almost every woman wore a string of coral beads.

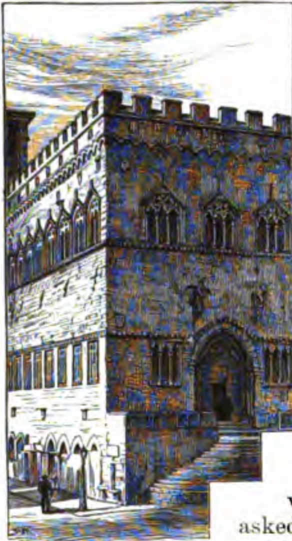
This Piazza is full of infinite variety. On the right are two quaint grey mediæval palaces with charming balconies and windows. One can fancy the sometimes inflammatory, sometimes soothing discourses that have been pronounced from the ringhiera of the ancient Palazzo del Capitano del Popolo. Nearly opposite stands a fountain. The contrast between these old buildings and the laughing, gesticulating many-coloured crowd was very vivid. There was colour enough in the market on that first day to make one's eyes ache—not much in the women's gowns, which were for the most part pale cotton prints, sometimes with white jackets on which the long necklace of coral beads made glowing spots of colour — the dark eyes and brilliant skins of the women actually seemed to burn under the gay flower-like kerchiefs which looked at a little distance like some huge tulip-bed, so bright was the orange, and chocolate, and scarlet, and rose colour mingled with white and green. The women laughed so gaily too, and mostly showed such white, even teeth. The buzz was so gay and animated that one wondered how they managed to do so much business in such a hubbub.

Close by us was an old dame with white hair showing under a gay kerchief with a sea-green border, and a nosegay of roses in the corner that hung behind her head. She too had a long string of coral that set off the orange-brown of her skin and her clear blue eyes. Her features were regular, and she had not lost her teeth, so that the form of her mouth was still good; she had been bargaining with a dark lustrous-eyed girl, with blue-black hair, for a pair of snowy struggling pigeons, and when she went back to her place behind a basket of ripe figs, she moved like an old Juno.

Many of the young women were handsome; among these peasants and the people of Perugia we noticed two distinct types of

face; regular features and deeply set eyes, like the faces in the old tomb of the Volunni, are frequent; some of these faces have blue eyes and beautiful red-gold hair, others — and perhaps the greater number of the middle-class—have a far less refined type of face, though many of them are very handsome, especially when they wear the graceful black lace mantilla, which suits well with their brilliant complexions, dark shining eyes and red full lips. Some of the men are also handsome, but they are not so well grown as the women are.

Probably the custom of carrying huge baskets and tall pitchers on her head up and down the hills and hilly streets gives to the Italian peasant woman the free but stately grace that distinguishes her movements.



PALAZZO COMMUNALE.
From a Drawing by THOMAS MACQUOID.

These peasants seem to take an interest in foreigners, and are much pleased to be spoken to by them. One girl who kept a handkerchief stall amused us. I had been trying to bargain with her for one of her gaily-coloured wares, but she asked such a price that we had turned away from her: she came after us almost crying; "If the signora will explain her ideas on the subject, we may be able to arrange," she said.

I am bound to say, however, that we met with much courtesy and fair dealing in Perugia. Even at the fruit-stalls, where we stood admiring heaps of melons, so full of colour from blueish-green to most golden of yellows, that they formed a perfect study, the owner left us in peace, and seemed pleased that we should take our fill of gazing.

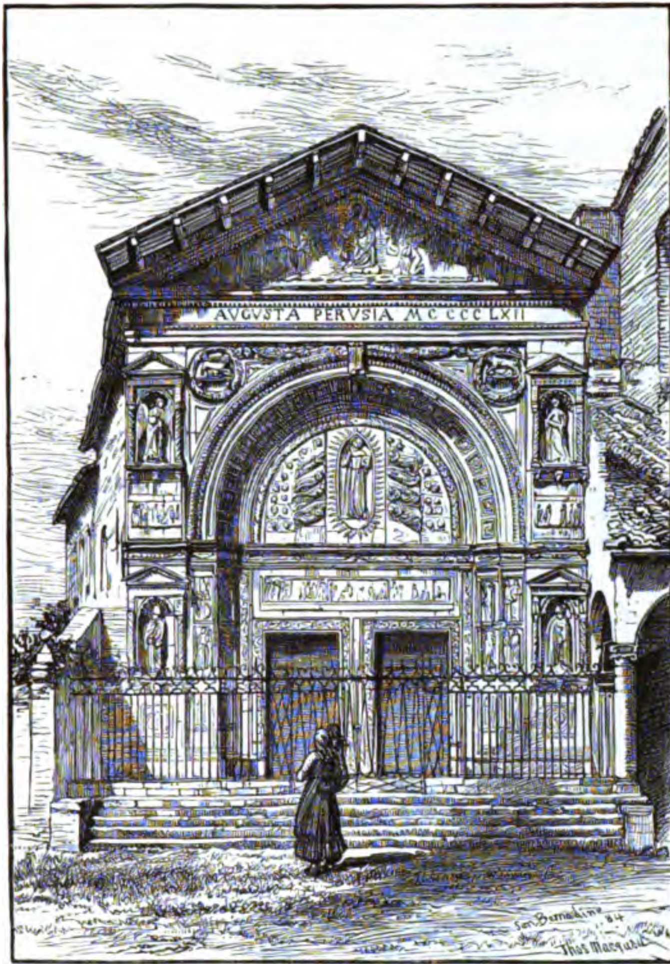
But the market does not last long, the baskets empty quickly, and the unhappy turkeys and cocks and hens, tied by the feet, are soon handed over head downwards to fresh owners; the lemon heap, exquisitely green, with a leaf or so hanging from the fruit stalks, is now flat on the large board near the fountain; and of the scarlet army of tomatoes not one is left to show where they glowed; all the cool, pink-fleshed slices of melon, sown with black seeds, have disappeared.

Up a side street we came into the Corso—the shops here are extra gay for market day, and the jewellers' windows are full of long strings of cut coral beads. Opposite us is a fine mass of 14th century building—the Collegio del Cambio and the Palazzo Communale. To the right, backing the broad Piazza del Duomo appears the rough red and grey unfinished cathedral, and in front of this is the famous fountain of Niccola Pisano, the Fonte di Perugia. This was designed by the famous Pisan sculptor in 1274, and erected by his son Giovanni. Niccola himself sculptured the twenty-four statues that surround it, now dark with age, but remarkable for the breadth of their exquisite carving. The delicate bas-reliefs of the lower basin are Giovanni's work, and are full of variety, the nymphs, lions, &c., of the upper portion are said to have been cast by Rossi. Water never plays now from the upper jets of the fountain, and it has, with all the beauty of its execution, a deserted and mournful aspect.

On the right of the Corso is another handsome palace, the Sala dell' Udienza—but this part of the town is painfully suggestive of the horrible. Here was the scene of the fierce struggles between nobles and plebs when Biordo Michelotti governed the republic in the name of the people, and here, perhaps, they took vengeance on his priestly murderer. But even these horrors were surpassed by the continual broils between the Baglioni and Oddi, who even fought in the churches. If the Perugians had known how to maintain internal peace they need not have fallen into the grip of Paul III., who broke the treaties of his predecessors, and robbed them of their privileges.

There seem to have been fewer frays under the papal tyranny, but this little incident at its beginning, taken from the old records, was a savage sort of portent.

"About 1540, while the Duke Pietro Aloigi stayed with his troops in Perugia, to order the new government, Agostino de' Pistoia and Antonio Romano, two of his soldiers, asked the duke's permission to fight out their quarrel in his presence on the Piazza of Perugia. The duke gave consent, and ordered that they should fight before the Chapel of the Cambio. There, surrounded by the populace, the duke being at one of



SAN BERNARDINO, PERUGIA.
From a Drawing by THOMAS MACQUOID.

the windows of the palace, they fought in their shirts with swords and daggers. Both showed much courage and daring, but at last Agostino of Pistoia, who was both handsome and tall of stature, fell on the ground dead, and at once victory was cried for Antonio Romano, who was, by his father's side, of Perugia; but from the many and grievous wounds the Pistoian had given him, Antonio was considered by many as good as dead, and was carried home by his friends; however, by the great care taken of him, he after a while recovered his strength."

Beside this Chapel of the Cambio is the Sala adorned with Perugino's famous frescoes; a little farther on is the richly sculptured doorway of the Palazzo, and within this is the Pinacoteca containing a very interesting collection; here are marvellous frescoes by Bonfigli, and pictures by him and by Piero della Francesca, Fiorenzo di Lorenzo, and others, besides numerous Fra Angelicos, and many pictures by Perugino and his pupils. We were too much interested in the town to-day to go into the galleries, and after looking at the doorway and the quaint iron lamps of the Palazzo, we turned the corner to see its other façade.

This has a charming loggia, and there are a salient lion and griffin on the wall; and the rusty chains commemorating the victory of the Perugians over the Sienese in the 14th century; the griffin, being the emblem of Perugia, is to be found repeated in all the decorative work of the city. This palace was built early in the 14th century from the design of the Benedictine Fra Bevignate of Perugia.

Past the cloisters of the cathedral we went

down to the bottom of the street. On one side is a fragment of an old palace, and on the right a quaint series of ancient grey arches full of most striking effects of light and shade.

A steep street goes down from this portal,

ANGELS, SAN BERNARDINO.
From a Drawing by THOMAS MACQUOID.

and we saw here, and afterwards in many of the old streets, carved stands for flower-pots built out from the grey walls, making a pleasant contrast to the brilliant red and orange flowers blossoming in these hoary receptacles; sometimes ordinary flower-pots are held fast by metal rings fastened into the wall. Outside the closed door of one of the houses was a pretty ragged fair-haired child, jumping or dancing on her bare toes and talking seemingly to the doorpost; she could not reach the knocker, and she was merrily amusing herself by talking to the flies on the wall while she waited.

We inquired for the house of Perugino, but it appeared that we were too far north, so we turned at a sharp angle, and soon reached a silent open space in front of a church, the Chiesa Nuova. Down an arched passage close by, and up a side street on the right, we came to the Perugino house, denoted by a tablet, in the Via Deliziosa. There was nothing special in its appearance, the hilly street was grass-grown, and as silent as the grave. We went back again, and soon descended steeply into a very old quarter, the projecting claw on this side that overlooks the deep valley at Porta Susanna, and forms one point of the Cupa. On our way we passed the last remaining fortress of the nobles, the tall brick Torre degli Scalzi, behind this are remains of the Etruscan wall. Presently we passed another church, gay with a scarlet and gold curtain ready for to-morrow's festa, then, by a quaint little street with brick flights of steps leading down into most picturesque side-turnings, we came in sight of a small house, its grey stone balcony screened by a vine-wreathed pergola; in a few minutes we reached the convent of St. Francis, beside which is the matchless façade of the Oratory of San Bernardino.

We found this façade even more beautiful in its detail than we had expected; and the charming colour of its marbles and terra-cotta adds warmth to the exquisite sculptures, which seemed to us finer, both in design and execution, than any Della Robbia work we have seen; and we are glad to find this opinion endorsed by Mr. Perkins in his *Tuscan Sculptors*. This façade is the work of Agostino Ducci, or Gucci, of Florence. A circular arch surmounts the two square-headed entrance doors, these are surrounded by beautiful and delicately carved ornament in low relief; above them is a frieze representing events in the life of San Bernardino—and over this, in the centre of the tympanum of the arch is a vesica, bordered by tongues of flame, and containing a figure of the saint. On each side of the vesica are four angels placed diagonally; each angel plays a musical instrument, and each one differs from the rest, the disposition of the drapery of these angels is most artistic and original; beyond them on either side, filling up the rest of the

space, are heads of singing cherubs. There are many other beautiful figures in bas-relief, those on the pilasters supporting the arch are specially lovely, (one set of these is given in the cut). This is all exquisite work; but scaffolding was outside it, and on inquiry we heard that it is about to be restored!

San Bernardino is close to gardens, and orchards, and drying grounds; beyond the convent of San Francesco the old wall goes up northward and then turns east towards the Arca Augusta, but we turned southward, and a short walk down a steep narrow street beneath an old archway led us out of the low browed passage of the Porta Susanna on to the wall itself. This rises up directly from La Cupa—as the indentation which the valley here makes is called. It is remarkable how the old wall follows the curves of the hills, always keeping close to the edge of the descent, and, as I have already said, where an angle is sharply turned, a bold round tower stands out against the blue sky.

Below the wall the fertile dell was literally covered with vines and olives, fig and mulberry trees, and below them were plots of cabbage and lettuce; in winter a torrent flows through the Cupa. This afternoon the long range of hills on the left was red-brown, variegated by patches of green and grey; behind its shoulder a more distant mountain showed opal, and on the right the varied houses of the ancient city rose one behind another—the old brick tower of the Scalzi above them all. Following the inward angle which the wall makes here, before it goes out far away westward to another point of the star-shaped hill, the view becomes more beautiful, mountains cross one another, and through the openings reveal another ridge behind, now a glowing opal tint as the sun sinks nearer; on the right the hills stretch in two long purple undulating lines, between which a rosy vapour moves slowly, deepening in colour as it rises towards the orange-tinted clouds above; these are partly obscured by masses of purple-grey, but southward the grey has taken a more lurid tinge, and across it floats a pale phantom-like cloud. Now the far-off hill, as we look southward, is a purple-blue, and, between us and it, the town seems to climb up from all this beauty in terraced houses, bowered in vines and gardens.

This is not so extended a prospect as some others that are to be had from the old walls of Perugia, but I am inclined to consider it one of the most interesting, from the double view it offers of the town, and of the quaint formation of the steep-sided, triangular valley with its mysterious depth of vegetation below.

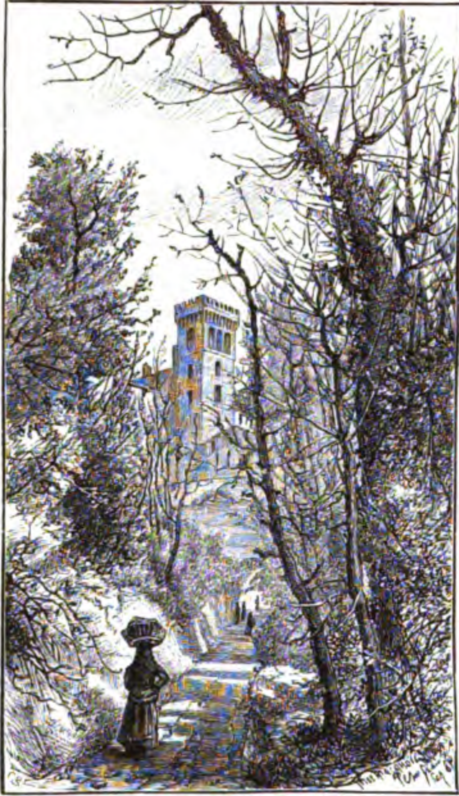
We keep along the wall as long as we can, then our road leads us away from it, between old stone garden walls with vines and figs peeping above them. Quaint side-streets look tempting on our left, and going up one of these we find a portion of old Etruscan wall with an archway of the same period. Beyond this the street goes up steeply to where a brick arch spans it; on one side a flight of broken steps leads beside the wall to a tall house above it; a sort of balcony, corbelled out from the face of the wall between the house and the grey pointed arch, is filled with charming foliage and flowers; an iron crane projects from the balcony over a square, brick water tank beside the broken steps. The arch has two projecting imposts, massive slabs of travertine, and beside one of these, gleaming out of the shadow, is a little shrine with a nosegay of freshly-gathered flowers.

In and out of narrow streets, up and down quaint steps, we reached at last the Porta Eburnea—a charmingly quaint old gate, from which a steep road goes down into the country.

Here is an extended view of the wall, which curves grandly forward to a boldly projecting point, and completely shuts out all view of La Cupa; the point itself is crowned by a most picturesque round tower, standing out vividly from its background of purple hills. The road from the Porta Eburnea looked attractive, to-day it was thronged with peasants on their way from market. Some of the women stopped just outside the gate, and taking off their boots slung them over their shoulders, or put them in their baskets, then they came down the steep dusty road with bare, brown feet. Most of these barefooted women wore handsome coral necklaces; and yet in the shops they asked from eighty to three hundred francs for a string of these beads. Just outside the gate a man and several boys were playing at a game with walnuts.

The pleasantest and shortest way to the railway is by the Porta Eburnea, and one fine morning I started with a friend for a journey into the country from this point by a steep path which leaves the road just outside the gate—the path curves along the side of the hill below the old wall—the bank was gay with autumn butterflies and wild flowers, and wreathed with a luxuriant growth of wild gourd, full of pale blossoms and small furry fruit; all was so wild, it seemed impossible that we had only just left a busy

city behind us. At the turn of the path we came into an exquisite lane between bramble-covered banks; on one side the dry bed of a little rill, the branches of quaint trees met overhead, and although from the custom of constantly stripping the leaves the foliage was scanty, we went down the steep path in cool and chequered shadow—lizards



ON THE WAY TO THE STATION.
From a Drawing by THOMAS MACQUOID.

darting across before us, and gleaming as they passed into the light.

This constant stripping of the leaves from the trees gives a strange appearance to many of them; in this lane the gnarled and twisted branches thus revealed looked grotesque in the bright sunshine. A man high up in one of them was singing as gaily as a bird, while he filled with leaves a sack fastened to one of the branches.

Now and then the transparent rich purple of the shadow was traversed by a bar of golden light, and sometimes this came in irregular flecks from spaces between the twisted trunks and crossing branches.

A woman coming up from the station with a heavy basket on her head said, "*Buon giorno*," and smiled pleasantly as she passed, and a countryman, a fine, handsome fellow with glowing black eyes, wished us a good journey. He was going at such a pace that he must have been bound for the station—for the easy, leisureful movements of its people seem to me one of the charms of Italy, so entirely in harmony with the burning, palpitating blue of its skies and the careless luxuriance of its vegetation.

Near the end of the descent is a washing place, and here a woman on her knees was hard at work scrubbing and soaping linen. Looking back up the lane we saw the grey town peeping at us through the trees—the tower of a house on the Piazza a prominent feature in the view. At the foot of the lane we crossed the dusty high road and again followed the short way—here very steep and rugged—at the end we came out at a cross road where the Fontana Borghese at one angle makes a striking feature; partly shadowed by tall cypresses, it glowed red in the sunshine. The date is 1615; its basin is green with age and the constant drip, drip of the water. It was surrounded with wine carts each drawn by a pair of huge white oxen; it seems fortunate these beautiful creatures are so gentle, for their wide-spreading, sharply-pointed horns make them formidable; indeed, when the wine season began during our stay in Perugia, we had sometimes to take refuge in a shop while they passed, for the horns of a pair of these splendid beasts stretched from one side of a narrow street to the other. Inside a little wine shop opposite the fountain we heard shouts of "*Dieci*"—"*otto*"—"*sette*." &c., from the players at morra.

One of the charms of Perugia is the freshness of the people. My companion on this excursion had stayed several times in the town, and when she appeared at the station all the officials were at her service, full of little friendly attentions—especially one giant-like porter called "Lungo."

The railway takes its course through the valley of the Tiber with mountain views on each side. Perugia stands grandly on the top of her hills, while stretching out like an advanced guard on one side is the church and spire of San Pietro, and on a spur to the west Santa Giuliana; but the city is not so picturesque from this side because of the modern buildings on the great Piazza Victor Emanuele. On the left we saw the outside of the famous Etruscan tomb of the Volunni, and soon after we passed the pretty village of Ponte San Giovanni, getting a glimpse of the Tiber. From the railway one gets a

LE FONTANA BORGHESE, PERUGIA.
From a Drawing by THOMAS MACQUOID.

good view of Assisi clinging to the side of Subasio, and the station is close to the church of Santa Maria degli Angeli, but we were bound for Foligno, and so we did not stop here to-day. As the railway circles round it, we saw what a splendid mass Subasio is in this chain of mountains.

Spello looks very bright and attractive perched on a spur of the great hill; but it was disappointing to find that the valley broadened out into a plain, and that Foligno stood quite tamely on level ground. It does not seem to be much visited, though it is a quaint little town.

On our arrival we were attacked by vociferous drivers and guides, so we got into one of the dirty little carriages and drove up an avenue past the huge statue of Niccolo

Alunno, who was a native of Foligno, to the Piazza. We were hardly out of our vehicle when up came a wretched-looking man, his bare chest showing red and hairy through his dirty shirt, a huge piece of green oilskin covered his shoulders, "It was not possible we could find our way," he said, and as he continued to persecute us, and our time was short, we submitted, and followed his guidance. The outside of the cathedral fronting the Piazza is curious. Two monsters, lions in red granite, guard the portal, one of these creatures has an eagle in its mouth. Above the doorway is a curious sort of arcade, the door-heading itself has been recently restored with the signs of the evangelists. There is nothing to see inside this church. Opposite the cathedral is a quaint old building, and on the right is the Tribunale del Commune. We had to wait some time here while the keys were fetched, and then followed the custode up an old stone staircase to an ante-chapel where there are some almost obliterated frescoes by Ottaviano Nelli. We went on into the little chapel—here the frescoes have been much restored, they represent the life of the Blessed Virgin, from her birth to her Assumption. Coming out we followed our ragged repulsive-looking guide down a street close by, and saw the Palazzo Deli, a handsome building designed, it is said, by Baccio d'Agnolo. There are three other churches; in one of them, St. Niccolo, is a Nativity by Alunno—the figure of St. Joseph is very fine. One of the statues in front of the choir has her toes bound with brass, and the sacristan told us that this had been done to preserve them from the devotion of worshippers who had already kissed away the ends of the saint's toes. The frescoes in Sta. Maria infra Portas, a very old church, are mostly ancient, but completely faded. Raphael's beautiful Madonna di Foligno, now in the Vatican, was once in the church of St. Anna in this town.

We took another little carriage, standing in a side-street, and drove very pleasantly to Spello—between vineyards and olive-fields, eating our lunch on the way. Spello looked very attractive as we approached it, its white houses gleaming in the sunlight against the green hill on the slope of which it stands.

We entered the town under a quaint and ancient gateway, the Porta Veneris of Hispellum, for Spello is an old Roman town, and the walls and some of the gates have been preserved. This gate has three figures outside it, a picturesque fountain stands near, and beside it sat a group of handsome peasants eating and drinking in the sunshine.

The steep old street was full of pictures as we drove up to the Piazza, on which is the Cathedral Santa Maria Maggiore. On entering we were at once struck with the remarkable early 15th century canopy, the work of an Umbrian sculptor, Rocca di Vicenza; it is made of the stone of the country called cacciolfo, and has a polished surface—the four pillars are in pairs, in front of two of them the artist has introduced portraits of himself and his wife; beyond, right and left, are Madonnas by Perugino. The sacristan told us that there is a still finer specimen of the sculptor's work at Trevi. On the opposite side of the church is the Cappella del Sacramento, the work of Pinturicchio; the three sides and the ceiling are covered with beautiful frescoes, a delightful harmony of colour. On one side is the *Annunciation* with the name and portrait of the painter, on the other walls are the *Adoration* and the *Disputa*—this last is a very interesting picture, and is also signed. On the ceiling are the Sybils—that mystic link between the old faith and the new—and the spaces between are filled with rich, harmonious colours. We could have stayed much longer in this chapel, for the frescoes seemed to us finer specimens of Pinturicchio's work than anything we had seen at Perugia. In the sacristy there is a beautiful Madonna by this painter. The mortuary chapel has a quaint pair of doors in perforated woodwork; near the west door we saw a curious square bas-relief of ancient work, on two sides of it is carved an olive-tree, and on another side a man on horseback: it looked like an old burial urn.

From the cathedral we went in search of the woman who had the keys of the church of San Andrea; she, however, being busy, handed us over to a young fellow with a face as lovely as Raffaelle's and with those wonderful Italian blue eyes, which have in them a glow not to be seen in more northern regions.

But at San Andrea, while we were looking at the Pinturicchio behind the high altar, a very intelligent priest came into the church and kindly removed the cross which had obstructed our view of the best part of the picture, the child St. John the Baptist, who sits at the feet of the Blessed Virgin writing on his scroll—this is supposed to be Raffaelle's work. St. Francis and St. Lawrence are on one side, St. Andrew and St. Gregory on the other; the embroidery on St. Lawrence's vestments is wonderfully painted, but as a

whole this picture is not nearly so good as the frescoes by the same master in the cathedral.

The priest showed us an elegant marble arcade surrounding the front and ends of an altar. This was discovered not long ago concealed beneath a much larger altar, placed above the chest containing the bones of San Andrea; the bones being sought for in order to remove them, the arcade was brought to light. The priest also showed us a fresco on the wall of the nave, and related graphically how he himself had discovered it only two months before under the whitewash when the church was being cleaned for a *festa*. Who knows how many treasures yet lie concealed on the church walls of these out-of-the-way towns; it must be owned, however, that the newly-found fresco at Spello is not artistically a treasure, or nearly as interesting as the story of its discovery.

From San Andrea our handsome, gentle-spoken young guide led us to the top of the town, crowned by the now deserted Capuchin convent. "They have sent all the brothers away," he said sadly, "there is only one left, and he may not live in the convent, he may only come up in the afternoon, and see the schoolboys play in the garden." There is a pathetic look about the deserted, peaceful, old place. From the platform in front of it we enjoyed a splendid view of the country. Assisi lay stretched out before us with Subasio towering over it on one side, and on the top of the hill behind, Perugia, looking at this distance like some giant castle.

At our feet in the green valley was the amphitheatre of Spello—not so perfect as that at Fiesole, but with clearly defined rows of grassed seats rising one above another.

We came slowly down the steep street, getting constant peeps through tall grey houses of the blue mountains. At one of these breaks a group of peasants sat, some spinning, some idling, beneath a vine that stretched from house to house, so that the light filtered through the leaves and became a golden green before it fell on the merry souls below. The men of Spello look fine, robust fellows, and the women are very tall and erect.

One handsome grey-haired dame met us as we came down; she was spinning from a distaff in her hand. "*Ah,*" she held it out to my companion; "*che brutto lavoro!*" "Would that I could do it," was the prompt answer, and the old dame went off chuckling with delight.

We saw so many charming bits by the way in Spello that it seemed as if one might spend some pleasant days in such an exquisitely placed spot; but we could not spy out any possible lodging; and after all it is an easy distance by rail or carriage from Assisi or Foligno.

Coming home in the train we travelled with a pleasant-looking Italian lady and her husband. But she seemed sad, and constantly put her handkerchief to her eyes; she was no doubt affected by some deep sorrow, and we felt sympathy for her. When we stopped at a station her distress increased, and she entreated her husband to get out of the carriage and see after the "poor little angel." When he gently refused she sobbed and almost howled, and then burying her face in her handkerchief, she leaned back and refused to be comforted. At the next station we heard the sharp yelping of a little dog, and then she cried out so loudly for the "*povera bestia*" that we began to understand, and seeing that we were interested, she sat up and explained—"the officials have taken my dog from me and have shut it up, though it would not hurt a soul," she said, with a fresh flow of tears, "its cries break my heart." Her husband got out looking much ashamed of himself, and when he came back tried to pacify her—"the dog is all right," he said; but she would not listen, and she actually sobbed and cried till we reached Perugia, where we left her on the platform with her pocket-handkerchief rolled into a ball and pressed close to her eyes.

There is a delightful walk down hill from Perugia, with a view of distant country between the vines and olives, through a lane with grassy, flowered banks that leads to the Etruscan tomb of the Volunni. It does not add much to the length of the walk, but considerably increases its charm if, instead of going out by Porta San Costanzo, one turns aside to the left at the Porta San Pietro or Romana, and leaves the town by the little gate at the bottom of the descent. This walk under the old walls with a view over the country and hills is perfect, but I may not follow it now, nor can I venture to describe in detail the weird mystery of the Etruscan sepulchre, where a whole family have been sitting for thousands of years watching over their own ashes—with Gorgon's heads, and owls and serpents as attendant spirits.

When we first went into the dark, still vault, lighted only by our guide's torch, it seemed as if we had entered some enchanted place in which the dwellers had been petrified into stone, surrounded by their attendants changed into weird guardian forms, for the

glare of the Gorgons overhead and the bristles of the snake heads that seem almost to hiss as they dart from the wall, might have been thought sufficiently alarming to keep the treasures of the tomb intact.

There is another walk, a great favourite of ours, with a less extended view than some of the others, and yet with a more special one. Going on past St. Ercolano instead of turning up beside it, you soon reach a pair of iron gates. Outside these you turn leftward (for the way is blocked on the right) and follow the course of the old wall; this is most picturesque; ancient grey houses rise above it, and the wall itself is crowned with flowers in pots, balconies wreathed with vines are here and there, and all at once at the far end of a sudden turn of the road Monte Luce comes in sight with its old church and a grand view of the hills. I believe the church is really called Sta. Maria Assunta; there is a pilgrimage there at the time of the great cattle fair that takes place annually on the green down on the other side of the road.

Going through the open gate of the convent you are in a very quaint and peaceful scene; a small grassed quadrangle closed in on the left by a wall, and the house of the sacristan; facing is the west front of the church with a large rose window under its low gable, the wall chequered with squares of red and white stone. Under a double arch are two green doors, almost as vivid in colour as the lizards; and on the right a low and singularly massive campanile, with a huge clock face of blue and white, gives a peculiar quaintness to the place; below is a projecting outside chapel, with slits of windows behind it; beyond this a cloister with its low tiled roof supported by solid whitewashed piers goes on to the angle where the convent buildings adjoin the church; from this angle the cloister extends along the southern and eastern sides of the little square to the entrance gates; but on this eastern side there is an upper story reached by a flight of bricked steps.

The woman who showed us the church and the little choir of the nuns behind the altar, told us that the Sisters from the suppressed and desecrated convent of Santa Giuliana had taken refuge in this convent of Santa Maria. They must have a charming prospect from their windows.

A few steps beyond this church we came to a low wall, where we sat and enjoyed the distant view framed in by tall trees; it is quite different from any other point in Perugia, having a more varied foreground. This is broken up by green hills with bright looking country houses nestling among gardens and orchards, and surrounded by dark trees; behind are the ever beautiful Apennines, and between is that mingling of colour that the luxuriant vegetation of this fertile valley creates, varied, as we gazed on this first evening, by the cloud-shadows that fell on its sunny mellowed glow.

Coming home into the town through another gate we lost our way, and finally came back, up and down steep streets and flights of steps, by the old church of San Fiorenzo. There is a curious, very old wall here with a garden above—the garden of the Curato a workman told us—and in the last gleams of sunshine the oleander blossoms in it showed out in glowing patches of colour above the grey-green stones.

KATHARINE S. MACQUOID.

ANGEL, SAN BERNARDINO.
From a Drawing by THOMAS MACQUOID.

NELL GWYNN: PLAYER AND COURTIER.

THE London playhouses which had been dismantled and closed during the Puritan period, reopened in the year of grace 1660, when Charles II. came back unto his own. Various troupes of performers then started into existence, and flourished until the end of the year, when their number was limited to two companies for which royal patents were granted respectively to Thomas Killigrew, an excellent wit and merry courtier, and Sir William Davenant, a man of parts and a lover of pleasure. The players Killigrew selected were known as the king's company; those who entertained the town under Davenant's management were called the Duke of York's company.

The latter opened a theatre in Salisbury Court on November 15th, 1660. Killigrew's company performed in Gibbon's Tennis Court, near Clare Market, whilst a new house was being built for them in Drury Lane, to which they removed in April, 1663. The members of the king's troop were enrolled on the list of the royal household establishment, styled in warrants gentlemen of the Great Chamber, and habited in liveries of scarlet cloth and silver lace.

Until the year 1661 actresses had not been permitted to appear upon the English stage; their parts being heretofore "represented by men in the habits of women." In the last month but one of the year 1629 (during the reign of Charles I.) a company of French players had striven to establish themselves in Blackfriars, when actresses were seen for the first time in England. According to Prynne's *Histrio-mastix* (1633): "Some French women, or monsters rather, attempted to act a French play at the playhouse in Blackfriars, an impudent, shameful, unwomanish, graceless attempt." The result of their undertaking is quaintly told by one Thomas Brande, in an interesting letter bearing date November 8th, 1629, and supposedly addressed to Laud, Archbishop of Canterbury. "Furthermore you should know," he writes, "that last daye certaine vagrant French players, who had been expelled from their owne countrey, and whose women did attempt, thereby giving great offence to all virtuous and well disposed persons in this town, to act a certain lascivious and unchaste comedye in the French tonge at the Blackfryers. Glad I am to saye, they were hissed, hooted, and pippen pelted from the stage, so that I do not thinke they will soone be ready to trie the same againe." In this surmise Thomas Brande was incorrect, inasmuch as the same wicked company sought on two subsequent occasions to gain a hearing, and met with receptions similar to that which greeted them on their first appearance.

The heroines of tragedy and comedy were, therefore, represented by boys, prominent amongst whom was Edward Kynaston. This lad boasted many qualifications for success; amongst them being a stately step "confined to a female decency"; delicate and well-cut features; a graceful deportment and a set of teeth "sound, white, and even as one could wish to see in a reigning toast of twenty." The power he possessed of expressing emotion astonished all who beheld him; and Downes assures us "it has since been disputed among the judicious, whether any woman that succeeded him so sensibly touched the audience as he." Samuel Pepys, who delighted in frequenting the middle gallery of the King's House at a cost of eighteenpence, likewise bears testimony to the excellent performances of this youth. "Among other things here," writes the diarist, on his return from witnessing *The Silent Woman*, "Kynaston, the boy, had the good turn to appear in three shapes. First, as a poor woman in ordinary clothes; then in fine clothes as a gallant—and in them was clearly the prettiest woman in the whole house; and lastly as a man, and then likewise did appear the handsomest man in the house." Not only in public but in private was this young actor a

prodigious favourite; as may be judged from the fact that when the plays terminated, usually about six of the clock, ladies of quality contended for the pleasure of carrying him in their coaches to drive round the ring in Hyde Park.

Kynaston and another lad, James Nokes, were, however, exceptions proving the rule of general unsuitability. Few boy actresses could sufficiently sink their individuality to render their performances pleasant. A conviction arose in the public mind regarding the unfitness of men for female parts, which was strengthened by the king's desire that women should take all characters suitable to them in public performances. Therefore before Charles had been many months on the throne Killigrew and Davenant were authorised to employ actresses in their companies. Accordingly on January 3rd, 1661, Pepys records seeing women players for the first time. The character in which the first English actress made her appearance was that of Desdemona; who the lady was is not known, but it is surmised to have been Peggy Hughes, afterwards mistress of Prince Rupert. The principal actresses who first appeared at Drury Lane were, besides the lady already mentioned, Mrs. Knipp (called Bab Allen), Anne and Rebecca Marshall, Mrs. Corey (sent to prison for imitating my Lady Harvey on the stage), and Nell Gwynn, the subject of this monograph.

The circumstances of her parentage and place of her birth remain matters of dispute. An anonymous pamphlet published in 1752, entitled *Memoirs of the Life of Eleanor Gwinn*, declares her to have been the offspring of a tradesman in mean circumstances; whilst a certain Van Bossen, avows she was daughter of Captain Thomas Gwyn, a gentleman descended from an ancient Welsh family. Moreover, the coal yard in Drury Lane, and the city of Hereford, are respectively named as places where she came into the world. Two things concerning her, are, however, certain: she was endowed with beauty, and she sold oranges in the King's playhouse. During the Restoration the performances at Drury Lane theatre were attended by crowded and brilliant audiences. Frequently the King and his brother, with their mistresses and courtiers, making in all a goodly show, filled the boxes occupying the first tier; which in the absence of royalty and its attendants were invariably thronged by people of the highest quality and consideration. In the second circle sat those worthy citizens pertaining to fashion and learning; frequenters of coffee-houses and taverns, who gossiped of the Court and Government, were familiar with politicians and players, and acquainted with poets and pamphleteers: whilst the pit was resorted to by ladies in vizards, and young gentlemen from the Universities and the Temple, who were occasionally obliged to abandon their enjoyment in disorder, and seek refuge elsewhere, when rain and hail descended on the partially roofed building. The house was lighted by candles fixed in sconces, and orange wenches stood in a row with their backs to the stage and their faces to the audience, crying out their fruit between the acts.

Amongst these, Nell Gwynn nightly took her place. Young, vivacious, and attractive, she was not long without gaining the notice of many men, and the interest of one in particular. This was none other than Charles Hart, grandnephew of William Shakspeare; a man of genial temper, a fellow of excellent wit, and an actor of fair renown. Falling in love with Nell he had not much difficulty in persuading her to abandon her trade as an orange girl and become his mistress. And presently, recognising her tact, humour, and intuition, he undertook to prepare her for the stage, for which he considered her person and talents were alike suitable. Her appearance was indeed not less calculated to please as an actress, than to fascinate as a woman. Her oval-shaped face, piquant in expression, and wondrously fair, was framed in red-brown hair; her figure, though not above medium height, was excellently proportioned and graceful.

In due time she was introduced to the town as a player belonging to his Majesty's company. On December 8th, 1666, Pepys mentions having seen her perform the part of Lady Wealthy, in *The English Monsieur*, a comedy written by the Hon. James Howard. The diarist declares the play to have been mighty pretty, "and the women" he adds, "do very well, but above all little Nelly." A month later this excellent gossip, who was devoted to the playhouse, and loved at least one player, was taken at the conclusion of *The Humorous Lieutenant*, behind the scenes and introduced to Nell, whom he heartily kissed, finding her "a mighty pretty soul." Her acting now bade fair to delight the town. Her name grew familiar in the mouths of coffee-house critics; her beauty became a theme for gallant discourse. Three months from the first mention of her performance by Pepys, we find her acting Florimell in Dryden's tragi-comedy *The*

Maiden Queene, which was "mightily commended for the regularity of it, and the strain and wit." The King, Duke of York, and the Court witnessed her play, as did likewise good Mr. Pepys, who fortunately records his impressions: "So great performance of a comical part," he writes, "was never, I believe, in the world before as Nell do this, both as a mad girle, then most and best of all when she comes in like a young gallant; and hath the motions and carriage of a spark the most that ever I saw any man have. It makes me confess I admire her."

Others also admired her exceedingly. The gaiety of her manner and charm of her person, attracted many petitioners for her favour, and amongst those she regarded with graciousness was Charles Sackville, Lord Buckhurst —afterwards Earl of Dorset, one of the most notable men of the day. As a poet, wit, satirist, courtier, and defender of his country, he was alike remarkable. Lord Rochester styles him "the best good man," and Bishop Burnet declares he was charitable to a fault, "for he commonly gave all that he had about him when he met an object that moved him." His excellence as a humorist, and vivacity as a courtier, endeared him above his other qualities to the merry monarch, who appointed him gentleman of the bedchamber, and made him companion of his pleasures. At those brilliant suppers in which the King delighted, where wine sparkled and love obtained, Buckhurst surpassed all others by the airiness of his wit and brilliancy of his badinage. And at this time, being in the morning of life and zenith of vigour, his adventures were many and strange. For in the second year of the Restoration, he, in company with some noble gallants, had been committed to Newgate Prison, charged with the robbery and murder of one Hoppy, a tanner, at or near Waltham Cross. A year later he was indicted at the Court of King's Bench for drunkenness and dissipation whilst at the Cock Tavern, in Bow Street, Covent Garden; and again was he with the gay Sir Charles Sedley brought before Lord Chief Justice Keeling, for "running up and down all night almost naked through the streets, and at last fighting the watch."

A man of his reputation was certain to impress the imagination of a woman possessing an ardent temperament. Accordingly, in July, 1677, she being in her seventeenth year, Nell Gwynn left Charles Hart, abandoned the stage, and became my Lord Buckhurst's mistress. In return he agreed to pay her the sum of one hundred pounds a year. And it being summer time, my lord, accompanied by his friend Sir Charles Sedley, carried the player to Epsom, then a resort of fashion. Here they kept a right merry house, where pleasure held full sway; but before three months had ended his lordship and Nell Gwynn had parted. She, therefore, returned to Drury-lane playhouse; but here some changes awaited her. The love which Charles Hart bore her had turned to hate; and such women as had previously envied her conquest now rejoiced at her downfall.

A few months after her return to the theatre, Pepys being again taken behind the scenes saw her; the description of his visit is worth preserving in detail. "To the King's House," he writes on October 5th, 1667, "and there going in met with Knipp, and she took us up into the tireing rooms: and to the women's shift, where Nell was dressing herself, and was all unready, and is very pretty, prettier than I thought. And so walked all up and down the house above, and then below into the scene room, and there sat down and she gave us fruit; and here I read the questions to Knipp, while she answered me through all her part of *Flora's Figarys* which was acted to-day. But, Lord, to see how they were both painted would make a man mad, and did make me loath them; and what base company of men comes among them, and how lewdly they talk, and how poor the men are in clothes, and yet what a show they make on the stage by candlelight is very observable. But to see how Nell cursed for having so few people in the pit was pretty."

And her attraction continuing, the position which Lord Buckhurst had held towards her was consecutively taken by two of the most remarkable men, and wittiest courtiers of the period. These were Lord Rochester and the Duke of Buckingham. But their characters being notably fickle, the love they bore her quickly waned. The latter, however, according to Sir George Etherege, on resigning all pretensions to her love, recommended her to the notice of the king. His Majesty had already elected a player—Moll Davis—to become his mistress, and now looked with favourable eyes upon Nell Gwynn. The occasion on which she captivated the monarch's susceptible heart is mentioned in the appendix to Downes's *Roscius Anglicanus*. At this time the rival theatre, the Duke's House, was affording considerable diversion from the fact that Nokes nightly appeared in an enormous hat when playing *The Citizen Turned Gentleman*. Dryden, "whose necessities very often made him stoop to the whim of the times," learning this fact resolved that

the King's House should surpass its rival by attempting a more daring eccentricity. Accordingly he caused a hat to be made, the leaf of which was as extensive as the circumference of a coach wheel, that Nell might wear it nightly in speaking the epilogue to one of his plays. This oddity we are assured convulsed the house, and so delighted the king that when the play terminated he went behind the scenes and requested Nell might accompany him in his coach to Whitehall. It is quite certain before the year 1667 had ended she had been several times invited by his Majesty to the palace. Though she became in consequence a person of consideration, she yet continued to delight the town by her sprightly humour and graceful acting. However, it happened on May 8th, 1670, she gave birth to a son at her lodgings in Lincoln's Inn Fields, shortly after which she retired for ever from the stage.

Bishop Burnet states that on her first acquaintance with the king, Nell requested a settlement of five hundred pounds a year, which his majesty refused, though in less than four years he lavished as much as sixty thousand pounds upon "the wildest and indiscreetest creature that ever was in a court." This sum, however, falls far short of the amount Charles subsequently squandered on his new favourite; for, according to an account the writer recently discovered among the Duke of Leeds's papers, 16,041*l.* 15*s.* 6*d.* was paid her out of the royal treasury between March 27th, 1676, and March 14th, 1679.

Having presented the monarch with a son, she henceforth took rank amongst his well approved mistresses. She was therefore styled Madam Ellen, provided with a liberal allowance, presented with a handsome mansion in Pall Mall, not far removed from the court, overlooking a fair vista of St. James's Park, and finally appointed one of the ladies of the privy chamber to the queen. Moll Davis having now fallen in royal esteem, and the Duchess of Cleveland being removed from court, Nell Gwynn's ascendency over his Majesty rapidly increased. Her merry wit amused, her musical laughter delighted, and her unswerving fidelity satisfied the king. In familiar discourse he habitually called her Nelly; and she mindful of her conquests over Charles Hart, and Charles Lord Buckhurst, styled his Majesty, Charles III. Prudent and virtuous John Evelyn records his sorrow at seeing one pleasant summer day "this impudent comedian looking out of her garden on a terrace at the top of the wall, and his Majesty standing on the green walk under it," whilst they engaged in pleasant conversation. But his regret must have been more poignant when he subsequently learned she formed one of the brilliant company of titled courtesans and profligate courtiers who surrounded the luxurious supper-table of the king; who in the full enjoyment of love, wine, and wit, forgot the world beside.

But of the women whom he delighted to honour none had his interests closer to heart than she; and the freedom of manner and liberty of speech permitted her, were frequently used in advising him. It is related that one day when Charles had left his council after hearing many unpleasant speeches, and witnessing considerable strife, he sought the player that her humour might banish care. "Ah, Nell," said he wearily, flinging himself on some cushions at her feet, "what shall I do to please the people of England—I am torn to pieces by their clamours?" She regarded him with a serious air and made answer: "There is one way by which you can satisfy them." He looked at her keenly. "Oddsfish, tell me what it is," he said eagerly. "Why," she replied, "dismiss your mistresses and mind your business, and all England will rejoice." Hearing which Charles laughed and pinched her pretty cheeks. But she, loving him well, regretted his sacrifice of duty in search of pleasure, and again ventured to reprove him. It happened the council sat one day impatiently awaiting his Majesty's presence, that matters of importance to the nation might be discussed. And Charles indolently refusing to join them, a noble lord made complaint to Nell, who promptly laid a wager the king would attend them presently. Therefore she sent in haste for Killigrew, who loved a joke no less than she; and having consulted with him for some time, she betook herself to the royal presence to await the results of her scheme. Presently the sounds of hasty footsteps were heard without the king's apartments, and immediately Killigrew entered, heavily booted and otherwise equipped for a long journey. Seeing his attire and noting his disorder, Charles asked where he was going. "As fast as I can to hell," replied Killigrew. "Why with such speed to hell?" inquired the monarch. "That I may fetch Oliver Cromwell thence," answered Killigrew, "for he will have some care for the nation, and your Majesty takes none," saying which he strode rapidly from the room. The good-natured Charles laughed heartily; but the joke worked its effect. Yawning wearily he took his slow way to

the council chamber, and Nell Gwynn won her wager.

A short time after this occurrence it became customary for the monarch and some of his courtiers to seek adventure in taverns and gay houses in the city, disguised as private gentlemen. This habit giving much uneasiness to Nell, she resolved to teach his Majesty a lesson. Therefore she instructed a few trusty friends, who were to accompany him on a certain night, how they should act. And in due time the merry king and his jovial companions, quietly leaving the palace, directed their steps towards a tavern famous for diversion. Here they encountered a company of roystering sparks and ladies of pleasure, drinking wine, interchanging wit, and freely enjoying themselves. And one of the king's friends finding an opportunity to address the lady whom Charles specially favoured, told her she must abstract all the money from that gentleman's pockets without his knowledge, and if discovered she need be under no apprehension of punishment, as he would bear the burden of his wrath, and explain the object of his joke. Furthermore he bade her immediately leave the house when she had secured the gentleman's gold. And she, consenting, in due time took the king's money unobserved; and the courtier joining his friends, they all slipped from the house. For some time Charles awaited them, but night advancing and they not returning, he rose to pay his reckoning and depart. Then he discovered his money was gone, seeing which the tavern keeper soundly abused him for taking an honest man's share with intention to defraud him. Charles explained his gold had been filched from him, and promised payment in full next morning; but the fellow swore he would not be cheated by such pretences, and he who had drunk his wine should not stir from the house until he had discharged his reckoning. The more his Majesty sought to pacify him, the more insolent the fellow became. And Charles knowing how imprudent it would be to discover himself, resolved on maintaining his disguise. Therefore fortunately bethinking of a ring he wore of great value, he took it from his finger and offered it as a pledge. But his creditor declared he had been defrauded by sham jewellery before, and would not accept it now. Then Charles begged he would carry it to a jeweller and have his opinion on its value. To this the tavern keeper, after some persuasion, consented, and hastening to a goldsmith close by, asked if the bauble would defray the cost of a few bottles of wine. The jeweller regarded it with surprise, and his questioner with disgust. "Why, fellow," said he, "there is but one man in England who wears so priceless a stone." Then inquiring what manner of man was he who gave it, the other replied, "a tall, black, ugly-looking fellow." Hearing this the goldsmith speedily put on his hat, hastened to the tavern, and finding the king there as he expected, went down on his knees and restored the ring. A light now dawning on the landlord's brain, he was covered with dread and confusion, and knelt before his Majesty; but Charles bade him arise, and jestingly asked if the bauble would defray the price of another bottle. Leaving him and the honest goldsmith to discuss this, he returned to Whitehall and sought such adventures no more.

Nell Gwynn's growing ascendency over the monarch sorely troubled his French mistress, whom he had created Duchess of Portsmouth. Proud of her claims of long descent, her grace looked with scorn upon one whose ignoble origin, she considered, unfitted her for the position of a royal favourite. Therefore a bitter feud sprung up between those ladies of pleasure which frequently disturbed the court and invariably amused the courtiers. The hauteur of the duchess was met with ridicule by the player. Indeed Nell seldom lost an opportunity of mortifying her rival, and the device she on one occasion employed towards this end diverted the king exceedingly. One day news reached England that a French prince and the Cham of Tartary had died. The duchess, who was exceedingly vainglorious of her connection with royalty both at home and abroad, immediately went into mourning for the deceased prince. The day following that on which she made her appearance in sombre attire, the court was astonished at seeing Nell likewise dressed in black. Surprised at her appearance, the king, in presence of the duchess, asked whom she mourned. "Ah," she replied, sadly, "has not your Majesty heard of the death of the dear Cham of Tartary?" "And pray," said Charles, "what relation did you bear him?" "Exactly the same," she answered, "as the Duchess of Portsmouth bore the French Prince." At this speech her grace flounced indignantly from the drawing-room, whilst Nell's rippling laughter rung in her ears.

But though her humour enabled her to triumph over the duchess in personal encounters she was mortified that her grace's son had been ennobled, whilst her boy was nameless. The king had frequently promised

to create him a peer, but had never fulfilled his word. At last there came a day when Nell resolved forcibly to remind Charles of his promise. Therefore when he paid her his daily visit he found the young mother playing with her son. And presently setting him down, the lad pattered about the room, when she cried out, "Come here, you little bastard!" "Oddsfish, Nell, don't call him such a name," said the king. "Alas, your Majesty," she made answer, "he has no other." The monarch accepted the hint, and on leaving her gave orders that a patent of nobility should be made ready creating Charles Beauclerk, son of Mrs. Eleanor Gwynn, Baron of Headington and Earl of Burford, should be made ready. This creation passed the great seal on December 27th, 1676. About seven years later, on January 10th, 1684, the young earl was furthermore ennobled by the title of Duke of St. Albans, and betrothed to the heiress of the twentieth and last Earl of Oxford.

In less than three years from the date of her son's creation as Earl of Burford, it was the king's good will and pleasure to issue an order requesting that the commissioners of his treasury should "pay or cause to be paid unto Eleanor Gwynn or her assignes the annuity or yearly summe of five thousand pounds dureing our pleasure, for and towards the support and maintenance of herselfe and Charles Earle of Burford, to be received by her, the said Eleanor Gwyn, quarterly, att the foure most usuall feasts in the year by equall porcions, the first payment to begin from the Feast of the Birth of Our Lord God, last, One Thousand Six hundred and Seaventy Eight. And these Our Letters shall be your sufficient warrant and discharge on that behalfe. Given under our Privy Seale at Our Pallace of Westminster the Eleventh day of June in the One and Thirtith yeare of our Reigne" (1679). Moreover his Majesty presented her with a mansion at Chelsea, and a summer residence know as Burford House at Windsor.

In 1671 she gave birth to a second son, who died at the age of nine, to the exceeding grief of the king. During the last years of the monarch's life Nell Gwynn indulged in great luxury and magnificence. Attired in rich velvets, rare satins, and costly jewels, she frequented the royal drawing-rooms, where she interchanged repartee with the gallants, and lost large sums at the gaming tables of the Duchess of Mazarine and Lady Cavendish. Moreover, her society was sought by noble courtiers, and her patronage courted by poets, playwrights, and romancists. Duffet dedicated his comedy *The Spanish Rogue*, Whitcombe his volume *Janua Divorum, or the Lives and Histories of the Heathen Gods*, and Mrs. Aphra Behn her play, *The Feign'd Curtizans, or a Night's Intrigue*, to Nell, who could not write her name to save her head. The language in which Mrs. Behn addresses her is not only laudatory but blasphemous; as a specimen of the extent to which sycophancy can descend, it is worth quoting in part:

"Your permission, Madam," says Aphra Behn "has enlightened me, and I with shame look back on my past ignorance, which suffered me not to pay an Adoration long since where there was so very much due; yet even now, though secure in my opinion, I make this Sacrifice with infinite fear and trembling, well knowing that so excellent and perfect a creature as yourself differs only from the Divine powers in this: the offerings made to you ought to be worthy of you, whilst they accept the will alone. And how, Madam, would your altars be loaded, if, like Heaven, you gave permission to all that had a will and desire to approach them, who now at distance can only wish and admire, which all mankinde agreed to do, as if, Madam, you alone had the pattent from Heaven to engross all hearts." This is excellent of its kind, but what follows is not less amusing. "Besides," continues Mrs. Behn, "all the charms, and attractions, and powers of your sex, you have beauties peculiar to yourself, an eternal sweetness, youth and ayr, which never dwelt in any face but yours. So natural and so fitted are all your charms and excellencies to one another, so entirely designed and created to make up in you alone the most perfect lovely thing in the world, you never appear but you glad the hearts of all, as if you were made on purpose to put the whole world into good humour whenever you looked abroad. And when you speak men crowd to listen with that awfull reverence as to Holy Oracles or Divine Prophesies, and bear away the precious words to tell at home to all the attentive family, the graceful things you uttered and cry. But oh! she spoke with such an ayr so gay, that half the beauty's lost in the repetition."

And so, flattered, courted, and honoured, her life sped gaily forward until one sad day in February, 1685, when dreadful rumours spread throughout the palace, that his Majesty had been suddenly stricken and drew nigh unto death. Then these women in whose company he had found over-much pleasure were no longer admitted to his presence. But Nell's voice sobbing woefully in an

adjacent apartment broke the silence of that darkened chamber where the mystic presence already bided. Nor did he who loved her in the past, forget her in the present; for, turning to his brother, he besought him saying, "Let not poor Nelly starve." Soon after the end came and she was left lone. But his Majesty's dying request was faithfully and literally obeyed by King James. Between him and Nell an honest friendship had been long established: begotten on his side from the fact that she had never meddled in political affairs, and on her part because of the affection Charles bore his brother. Therefore the new king remembered her. Even whilst the merry monarch lived she had known temporary difficulties. In a letter she caused to be written in April, 1684, to Madam Jennings "over against the Tub Tavern in Jermyn Street," ordering "gold stuffe" and a mantle lined with "musk colour sattin," she alludes to her plate being pledged. But soon after his demise she was encumbered by debt; when, as may be learned from the Secret Service Expenses of Charles II. and James II., the last-mentioned gave 729*l.* 2*s.* 3*d.* to Richard Graham, Esq. "to be paid by him over to several tradesmen, creditors of Mrs. Ellen Gwynne, in satisfaction for their debts, for which the said Ellen stood outlawed." A letter not heretofore printed, thanking his Majesty for this gift, has recently come into possession of the Trustees of the British Museum, and runs as follows:—

"The world is not capable of giving me a greater joy and happyness than your Majesty's favour: not as you are king and soe have it in your power to doe me good, having never loved your brother and yourself upon that account, but as to your persons. Had he lived hee told me before he dyed that the world should see by what hee did for me that he had both love and value for me. He was my friend and alowed me to tell him all my troubles and did like a friend advise me and told me who was my friend and who was not.

"The honour your Majesty has done me by Mr. Graham has given me great comfort, not by the present you sent me to relieve me out of the last extremity, but by the kind expressions he made me from you, of 'your kindness to me:' which to me is above all things in this world, having, God knows, never loved your brother or yourself interested by all you do for me. It is my resolution never to have any interest but yours, and as long as I live to serve you, and when I dye to dye praying for you."

The same year in which he paid her debts, James likewise presented her with the sum of one thousand pounds; and two years later an item in the Secret Service Expenses states, "To Sir Stephen Fox, for so much by him paid to Sir Robert Clayton, in full of 3,774*l.* 2*s.* 6*d.* for redeeming the mortgage of Bestwood Parke, made to Sir John Masters, to settle the same upon Mrs. Ellen Gwynn for life, and after her death upon the Duke of St. Alban's and his issue male, with the reversion in the Crowne."

From the time of Charles's death she lived in retirement, keeping faithful to his memory and working deeds of charity. It has been stated that owing to a suggestion of hers the merry monarch founded the Chelsea Royal Hospital for aged and disabled soldiers, but the truth of this has not been authenticated. That she was charitable her last will proves. This was made in July, 1687. "In hope of a joyful resurrection," it states, "I do recommend myself whence I came, my soul into the hands of Almighty God, and my body unto the earth to be decently buried, at the discretion of my executors." Her property she bequeathed to her son and his heirs; desired that Dr. Tenison might preach her funeral sermon, that a decent pulpit cloth and cushion be given to the church of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields: and that one hundred pounds might be distributed to the poor in the parishes of Westminster, St. Martin's, and St. James's. "That for showing my charity," she adds in a codicil, "to those who differ from me in religion, I desire that fifty pounds be put into the hands of Dr. Tenison and Mr. Warner, who, taking to them any two persons of the Roman Catholic religion, may dispose of it for the use of the poor of that religion inhabiting the parish of St. James."

Four months after the date of this will she was stricken with apoplexy, from which she speedily died, being in her thirty-eighth year. Colley Cibber assures us he was informed on unquestionable authority "her repentance in her last hours appeared in all the contrite symptoms of Christian sincerity." And so, on November 17th, 1687, this sometime merry player, witty woman, and royal favourite was laid to rest in St. Martin's-in-the-Fields. Her funeral was conducted with considerable pomp, at a cost of three hundred and seventy-five pounds, and a notable sermon in praise of her virtues was delivered by Dr. Tenison, who afterwards became Archbishop of Canterbury.

J. FITZGERALD MOLLOY.

HAVING often received an invitation from my friend Sir Roger de Coverley to pass away a month with him in the country, I last week accompanied him thither, and settled with him for some time at his country-house, where I intend to form several of my ensuing Speculations. Sir Roger, who is very well acquainted with my humour, lets me rise and go to bed when I please, dine at his own table or in my chamber as I think fit, sit still and say nothing without bidding me be merry. When the gentlemen of the country come to see him, he only shews me at a distance. As I have been walking in his fields I have observed them stealing a sight of me over an hedge, and have heard the Knight desiring them not to let me see them, for that I hated to be stared at.

I am the more at ease in Sir Roger's family, because it consists of sober and staid persons; for as the Knight is the best master in the world, he seldom changes his servants; and as he is beloved by all about him, his servants never care for leaving him; by this means his domesticks are all in years, and grown old with their master. You would take his valet de chambre for his brother, his butler is gray-headed, his groom is one of the gravest men that I have ever seen, and his coachman has the looks of a privy-counsellor. You see the goodness of the master even in the old house-dog, and in a gray pad that is kept in the stable with great care and tenderness out of regard to his past services, tho' he has been useless for several years.

I could not but observe with a great deal of pleasure the joy that appeared in the countenance of these ancient domesticks upon my friend's arrival at his country-seat. Some

of them could not refrain from tears at the sight of their old master; every one of them press'd forward to do something for him, and seemed discouraged if they were not employed. At the same time the good old Knight, with a mixture of the father and the master of the family, tempered the enquiries after his own affairs with several kind questions relating to themselves. This humanity and good-nature engages every body to him, so that when he is pleasant upon any of them, all his family are in good humour, and none so much as the person whom he diverts himself with. On the contrary, if he coughs, or betrays any infirmity of old age, it is easy for a stander-by to observe a secret concern in the looks of all his servants.

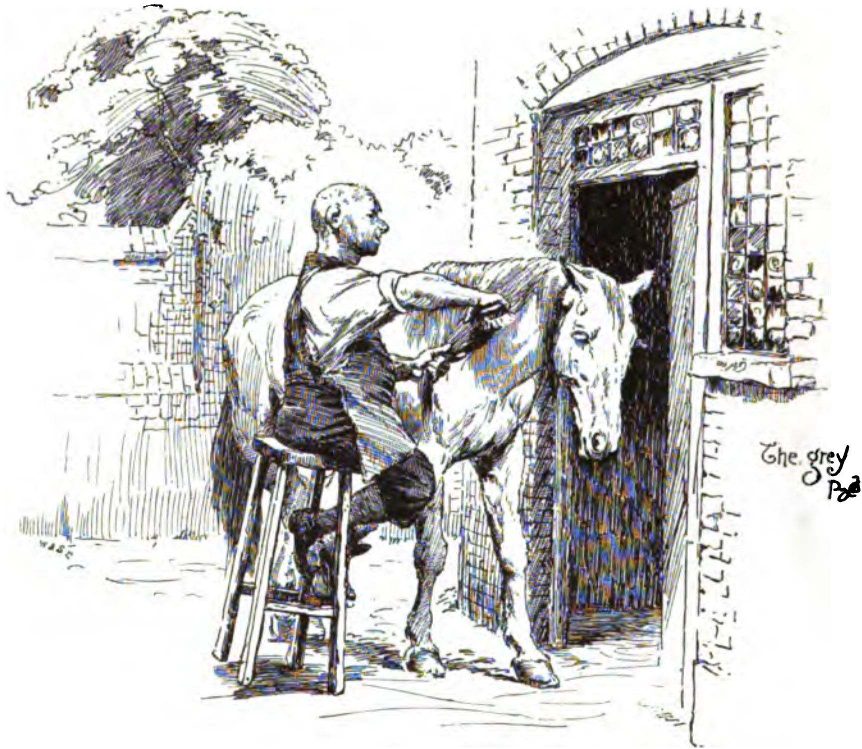
My worthy friend has put me under the particular care of his butler, who is a very prudent man, and, as well as the rest of his fellow-servants, wonderfully desirous of pleasing me, because they have often heard their master talk of me as of his particular friend.

My chief companion, when Sir ROGER is diverting himself in the woods or the fields, is a very venerable man who is ever with Sir ROGER, and has lived at his house in the nature of a chaplain above thirty years. This gentleman is a person of good sense and some learning, of a very regular life and obliging conversation. He heartily loves Sir ROGER, and knows that he is very much in the old Knight's esteem, so that he lives in the family rather as a relation than a dependent.

"I HAVE OBSERVED THEM STEAL A SIGHT OF ME OVER AN HEDGE."
From a Drawing by HUGH THOMSON.

I have observed in several of my papers, that my friend Sir ROGER, amidst all his good qualities, is something of an humorist;

and that his virtues, as well as imperfections, are as it were tinged by a certain extravagance, which makes them particularly *his*, and distinguishes them from those of other men. This cast of mind, as it is generally very innocent in itself, so it renders his conversation highly agreeable, and more delightful than the same degree of sense and virtue would appear in their common and ordinary colours. As I was walking with him last night, he asked me how I liked the good man whom I have just now mentioned; and without staying for my answer told me, That he was afraid of being insulted with *Latin* and *Greek* at his own table; for which reason he desired a particular friend of his at the University to find him out a clergyman rather of plain sense than much learning, of a good aspect, a clear voice, a sociable temper, and, if possible, a man that understood a little of back-gammon. My friend, says Sir ROGER, found me out this gentleman, who, besides the endowments required of him, is, they tell me, a good scholar, tho' he does not shew it. I have given him the parsonage of the parish; and because I know his value, have settled upon him a good annuity for life. If he outlives me, he shall find that he was higher in my esteem than perhaps he thinks he is. He has now been with me thirty years; and tho' he does not know I have taken notice of it, has never in all that time asked any thing of me for himself, tho' he is every day soliciting me for something in behalf of one or other of my tenants his parishioners.



THE GREY PAD.
From a Drawing by HUGH THOMSON.

There has not been a lawsuit in the parish since he has liv'd among them. If any dispute arises they apply themselves to him for the decision; if they do not acquiesce in his judgment, which I think never happened above once or twice at most, they appeal to me. At his first settling with me, I made him a present of all the good sermons which have been printed in *English*, and only begg'd of him that every *Sunday* he would pronounce one of them in the pulpit. Accordingly he has digested them into such a series, that they follow one another naturally, and make a continued system of practical divinity.

SIR ROGER ARRIVES AT THE HOUSE.
From a Drawing by HUGH THOMSON.

As Sir ROGER was going on in his story, the gentleman we were talking of came up to us; and upon the Knight's asking him who preached to morrow (for it was *Saturday* night) told us, the Bishop of St. *Asaph* in the morning, and Dr. *South* in the afternoon. He then shewed us his list of preachers for the whole year, where I saw with a great deal of pleasure Archbishop *Tillotson*, Bishop *Saunderson*, Dr. *Barrow*, Dr. *Calamy*, with several living authors who have published discourses of practical divinity. I no sooner saw this venerable man in the pulpit, but I very much approved of my friend's insisting upon the qualifications of a good aspect and a clear voice; for I was so charmed with the gracefulness of his figure and delivery, as well as with the discourses he pronounced, that I think I never passed any time more to my satisfaction. A sermon repeated after this manner, is like the composition of a poet in the mouth of a graceful actor.

I could heartily wish that more of our country-clergy would follow this example;

THE VILLAGE COURT OF ASSIZE.
From a Drawing by HUGH THOMSON.

and instead of wasting their spirits in laborious compositions of their own, would endeavour after a handsome elocution, and all those other talents that are proper to enforce what has been penned by greater masters. This would not only be more easy to themselves, but more edifying to the people.

SIR ROGER'S CHAPLAIN.
From a Drawing by HUGH THOMSON.

GREAT BLACK WOODPECKER.
From a Drawing by G. E. Lodge.

SKETCHES OF BIRD-LIFE IN SOUTH SWEDEN.

Forest and lake, miles upon miles of rough, wild primæval country, hill and dale densely covered with pine forest and birch wood, broad expanses of lake dotted with well-wooded islands and boulders of rock —here we can enjoy wild nature and study wild bird-life. Here we will dwell a while, and with the aid of pencil and gun strive to lay up stores of enjoyment for many a day, after we have bidden farewell to this land of natural beauty and its hospitable inhabitants. We confess to an ardent love of Swedish landscape and to a no less ardent love of Swedish birds, and, indeed, of birds of every clime and kind. Alas! that we cannot love birds without shooting them! But do we not love the living birds all the more, and appreciate their beauty all the more, after making ourselves intimately acquainted with them at close quarters? And this we cannot do without killing some of them. Moreover, such slaughter is necessary as the only means of enabling us to learn much about the nature and idiosyncracies of the different kinds, and every one should learn direct from nature rather than from books and museums. So we will set to work with a clear conscience to obtain possession of a few varieties, and will pit our cunning and dexterity against the natural wile and cunning of our feathered friends.

Now that the winter has passed away we must look out for new arrivals from the south, and shall greet the appearance of the strangers with joy. And yet the winter was replete with interest, although there was not much bird-life about. Was there not splendid skating on the miles of lake? the ice of which, after a single night's frost would be thick enough to bear for skating on the following morning—dark green, transparent ice, smooth as glass, with not a breath of wind to ruffle the surface, or a flake of snow to spoil the ice as it was forming. And the delights, too, of painting, regardless of cold, and with the trusty gun by our side, ever on the watch for any bird which might come in our way, while we work away and vainly endeavour to put on to canvas the view before us. Oh! those magnificent wintry sunsets, which it was always impossible to reproduce on canvas; the whole sky glowing with crimson and

gold; the miles of wet ice reflecting all the colour until the whole world quivered and melted in the golden glare; the dark purple pines bathed in the golden glow, and everything glorious and lovely beyond all powers of description, until it crimsons and purples and gradually fades away into darkness, and all is black and gloomy save for the shimmer of ice, and all is silent as death save for frequent thunderous splitting booms as the ice heaves and cracks with loud reports, expanding beneath the irresistible power of the giant frost.

And then, again, the glory of the whole world buried under deep snow! The pine forests, wonderful, grand, sublime! The towering pines with their branches drooping under their heavy snow-load—deep snow on the lakes, snow in the sky, snow everywhere! The snowstorm is upon us, and very quickly large silent flakes are falling, and the view is now shrouded in a white mantle; only the pines in the immediate foreground looming huge, indistinct, and ghostly, through the white mist of falling snow. The snow-cloud passes by, and again the sun shines upon the snowy expanse of forest and lake with exceeding and dazzling brilliancy, and everything glitters and flashes like crystal, causing our eyes to ache with the glare.

And now we can notice a few birds. Of course the ubiquitous hoodie-crow is here at all seasons, perhaps the commonest bird in Sweden, and the loud, hoarse croak of the raven is heard over the lake as he prowls about in search of food. When any carrion is discerned the ravens will congregate together with the crows and magpies, and in a very short time what was once a hare or other animal is nothing but an empty, draggled skin and clean-picked bones.

Up on the top of the nearest pine is a flock of cross-bills, twittering happily to themselves, and looking like crimson blossoms on the snow-clad pine. So low is their twittering that one would think they were some way off, instead of being just overhead. Sociable they are too, and very active in their movements, and it is very interesting to watch them dexterously clinging to the end of a bough while they cut off a cone with their powerful bills, having succeeded in doing which they fly to a convenient branch and there proceed to extract the seeds which form their principal food. This they do by forcing the scales of the cone apart with their peculiar-shaped bills, which are admirably adapted for this purpose, while they scrape out the seed at the base of each scale with the tip of their tongue, which is long and furnished with a sharp cutting edge. A fine old red cock is perched on the topmost shoot of the tree, and presently he utters his loud, sharp "tchip, tchip," and the whole flock fly rapidly off to another tree, uttering their loud call-note as they go, a note, by the by, which is scarcely to be distinguished from that of the greater spotted woodpecker. Presently, from the depths of the pine forest, there rings out a wild, mellow whistle, very loud and rather plaintive, repeated several times; this we know well to denote the great black woodpecker, a grand bird, much more often heard than seen, very wary and very difficult to stalk. Therefore are we all the more keen to get a specimen, and full of excitement we hurry stealthily on in the direction of that wild, mellow call. But it is very difficult to get near them, so watchful they are, and cunning, and suspicious of foes, and when once their suspicions are aroused they will often fly away to some distance, or will keep still and quiet, and will not betray their whereabouts by whistling to guide the would-be slayer to their stronghold. Several unsuccessful stalks have we had after him before this, but have never been in range except when the cover was so dense that, although not many yards off, all chance of seeing, much less of shooting our prey, was utterly lost. But now we view him, though out of gunshot, high up a goodly pine. He moves not, but seemingly lazy and indifferent taps listlessly at the trunk, while his whistle is much more subdued. Very black he looks against the snow-clad pine while his crimson crown flashes in the sun, proclaiming him even at this distance a cock bird, the hen having only a small crimson patch at the back of the head. Now he puts his head down to one side while he scratches it vigorously with his foot. Suddenly he is off uttering an extraordinary cry, which is only heard when he is on the wing, and is very harsh and grating, like the syllable "kra, kra, kra," repeated several times, and repeated so rapidly as almost to sound like one continuous note. This cry sounds like a death-knell to our hopes; but presently we are reassured by again hearing the wildly-sweet whistle which tells us that he has again settled. And so we keep stalking him until he is marked down in a patch of young pines and junipers very close together, and where we hope to have better success. And soon we are at pretty close quarters, although we only catch an occasional glimpse of his black form as he flies amongst the thick cover. A sudden whirring of wings brings our gun involuntarily to our shoulder, and we cover

a fine old blackcock stealing across a little bit of open ground, his glossy plumage glinting in the sun; but the woodpecker has superior charms, and the blackcock is allowed to go in peace. A hurricane of blows on some rotten stump betokens the near proximity of the woodpecker, and soon we view him; but the next instant, with a clumsy hop, he has vanished away, only to reappear, however, in a few seconds more. His hammer-shaped head is rapidly moving as with showers of blows he hammers away at the stump. His cream-coloured eye is plainly discernible, and his beak, yellow as to the base, looks immense. Without further loss of time the death-warrant has gone forth, and the next instant there is a harsh grating cry, and through the smoke our woodpecker is seen careering wildly about in the air. He has evidently got it in his head, but to make sure, he is dropped with the second barrel, and one of the ambitions of the time is a verity.

Besides the great black woodpecker, the green, great and lesser spotted, and the white-backed woodpecker, stay here for the winter, but their forces are most probably augmented in the spring from others which come up from the south, as they are infinitely more numerous in the spring than in the winter-time. The white-backed woodpecker is not to be distinguished from the great spotted one at a little distance, and its cry is exactly the same, but when in hand the difference is very apparent, the former bird being marked almost like the lesser spotted woodpecker, except that the red is continued further to the back of the head, the white back is not so barred with black, and the feathers under the tail are of a delicate salmon-colour. In size it is rather superior to the greater spotted, and the bill is longer and sharper.

Perhaps the most beautiful of all the European birds is the waxwing, which comes south in the winter time from its northern home. They are common wherever there are mountain-ash trees, for the berries of which they have a great liking. A more beautiful sight can scarcely be imagined than a flock of fifty or sixty of these lovely little birds, feeding on the berries of a snow-covered mountain-ash. They are so tame as to allow of a very near approach, and all their movements can be observed with ease, and very graceful they are as they cling in every position to the twigs to get at the scarlet berries, the raising and depressing at will of their long crest being particularly noticeable. They incessantly utter their note, a weak, high-pitched, tremulous kind of a twitter, "cir-r-r-r-r-r," which although feeble, can be heard some distance off, and betrays the whereabouts of the flock. They are very erratic in their movements and make long flights and wheel about for some time, perhaps after all to alight on the very tree from which they started. They settle at the tops of the trees in very close order, and several can be killed with one charge of dust shot. Unless care is taken to fill the throat and nostrils with cotton wool as soon as shot, there is great

LESSER SPOTTED WOODPECKER.
From a Drawing by G. E. LODGE.

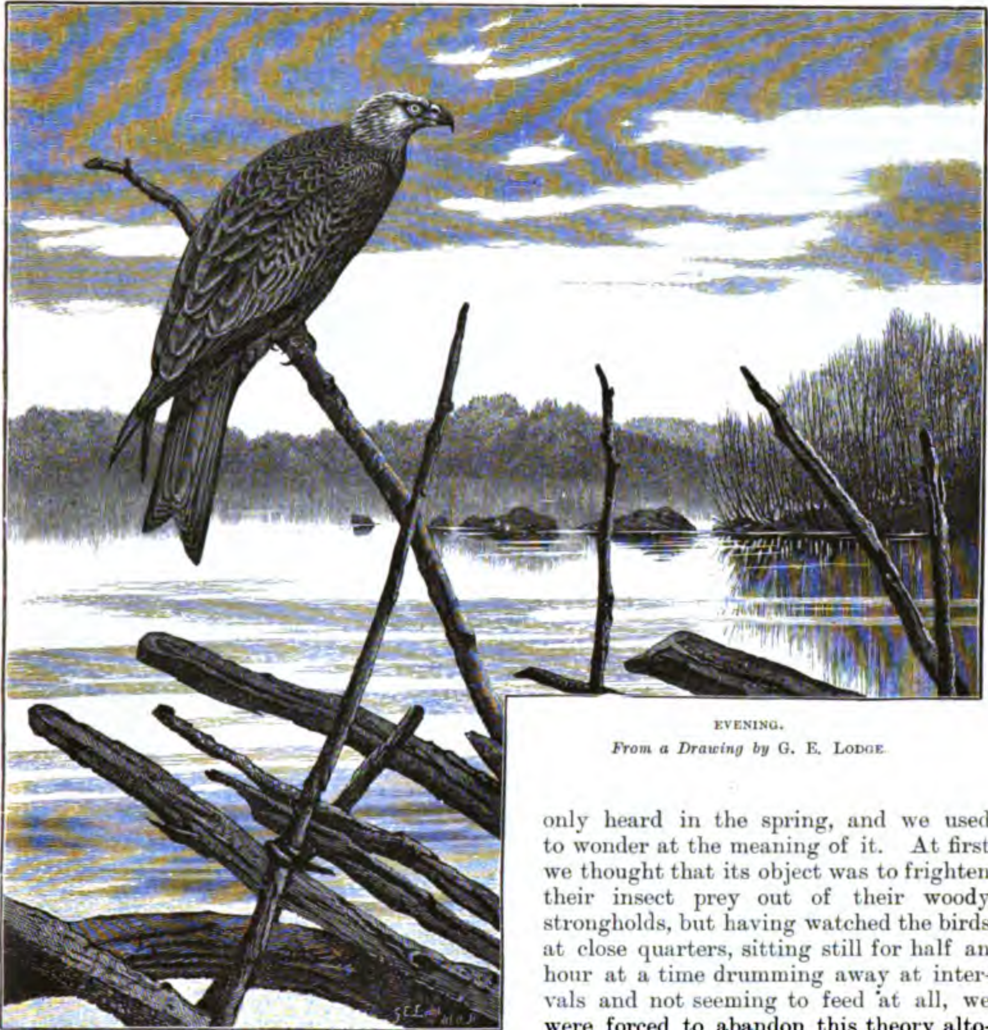
danger of their beauty being utterly spoilt by a dirty liquid which they exude from their throats, and which makes sad havoc of their delicate plumage.

Of course in the winter there are plenty of fieldfares, missel-thrushes, magpies, yellow-hammers, siskins, redpolls, mountain-finches, &c. But it is now spring time; the winter has gone, all the ice is broken up, and all the world is gay and full of hope and promise, with budding leaves and opening blossoms, long absent birds returning, and sunshine bathing everything in its genial rays. Everything seems to enjoy life to the very full in

its own particular way, even to the lizards and spiders basking on the dead leaves which strew the ground. The lakes are all alive with ducks, and goosanders and crested grebes, and graceful gulls wandering restlessly about screaming incessantly. Amongst the alders and birch by the margin of the lake are chaffinches, willow-wrens, and pied flycatchers innumerable, all singing merrily amidst the golden-green budding leaves, while the bees among the sallow catkins are humming joyously. Larks are singing in the heavens and martins swarm, catching their insect prey. In the roughly cultivated fields between the tracts of forest are wheatears, their pure white tail-covert showing dazzlingly conspicuous as they fly a little further off as we pass on our way to the forest. Noisy flocks of jackdaws are feeding here in the open, ever and again some of them breaking from the ranks and flying off to a neighbouring wood of oak and beech, where they make for their nesting trees, and fly in and out of the holes with excited chatterings. Among the oaks jays are screaming, ringdoves cooing, and stockdoves also with their hoarser notes. In the forest the blackcock is crooning all day, while the missel-thrushes are joyously shouting their wild sweet song. About the pines are hopping merrily tits of every kind great, blue, long-tailed, cole, marsh and crested, and the tiny gold-crest with its fiery poll. Presently an excited fluttering mob of these small fry proclaim the presence of an unwonted visitor, and on close examination we discover a grave old wood-owl, sitting upright against the trunk about half way up a fir tree, looking very sulky and much annoyed at having his sleep disturbed by this horde of small birds. We ruthlessly take the tits' part, and shy up a stick at the old owl who silently takes to wing, and diving down on broad wings close to the ground disappears amongst the trees, whereat the titmice rejoice greatly.

WAXWINGS.
From a Drawing by G. E. LODGE.

Meanwhile woodpeckers are getting very noisy, and seem to enjoy life and the balmy spring air as they sit on the topmost twigs of the trees, basking in the warm sun. They are at peace with themselves and, strange to say, with all mankind, and we if so minded could shoot any amount of them without difficulty. But we forbear. Their laughing "gleuk, gleuk, gleuk," is a joyous note, and seems to be shared in common by them all, though it is loudest in the great black species, while in the lesser spotted it almost approaches the note of the wryneck, that is to



EVENING.
From a Drawing by G. E. LODGE

say a note very similar to that of a young kestrel. These lesser spotted woodpeckers are particularly tame, and one can approach within a few yards as they sit still on a dead branch, every now and then drumming on the branch with rapidly-repeated blows of their beak. Very handsome they are, too, with their red crowns and black and white barred plumage. This drumming on dead boughs can be distinctly heard at a great distance. On still dull days it sounds most unearthly as it reverberates through the sombre depths of the wood. The bird sits on a dead bough and delivers such rapidly repeated blows with its bill that the eye cannot follow the motion of the bird's head, while the noise produced sounds like one long drawn-out continuous note. This drumming is only heard in the spring, and we used to wonder at the meaning of it. At first we thought that its object was to frighten their insect prey out of their woody strongholds, but having watched the birds at close quarters, sitting still for half an hour at a time drumming away at intervals and not seeming to feed at all, we were forced to abandon this theory altogether, nor could we substitute any other in its place, unless indeed the sound may be some sort of signal to their mates, perhaps of assurance, that nothing is happening to disturb the quiet which all good birds deserve to enjoy.

High above the forest soars a sparrow-hawk, with motionless wings and wide-opened tail, and the fieldfares, which are building in a small colony in some neighbouring birch and fir-trees, are in a great flutter at the unwelcome sight. One may sometimes see an immense edition of the sparrow-hawk in the shape of a goshawk, a noble savage, bold, fierce, and relentless, at war with all the world, strong enough—and ready enough too—to tackle even the lordly capercailzie. Very often he is mobbed by a rabble of shrill cawing hoodie crows, and at odd times we have seen as many as fifty in full cry after

him. There is a price on his head to the tune of four krona (1 kr. = 1*s.* 1½*d*), given by the "hunting society" of this part of the world, which is the same reward which is offered for foxes. Two krona are given for sparrow-hawks, and twenty-five öre for crows (100 öre = 1kr.). But the goshawk is not easily exterminated. He is too secure in his fastnesses and interminable tracts of pine-forests, where he brings up and educates his young fierce brood, and lords it right royally over everything furred and everything feathered. The appearance of a goshawk, sailing round and round in small circles, over a farmyard puts the inhabitants thereof in the greatest consternation; and no wonder, for many a head of poultry does he steal. He is also very partial to dovecote pigeons, and his Swedish name, *dufhök* (dove-hawk), is very appropriate. One evening we saw a kite flying high and a long way off; he was followed by a solitary crow, which presently left him. Another hawk appeared on the scene, evidently a goshawk, and gave chase, soon

GOSHAWK AND HOODED CROW.
From a Drawing by G. E. LODGE.

overtaking the heavier-built kite, at which he forthwith stooped. The kite shifted his ground and the goshawk missed, and was immediately pounced at by the kite. We watched them stooping at one another until they were out of sight. Whether they were in earnest and on murderous thoughts intent we could not say, but as far as we could see they never actually touched each other.

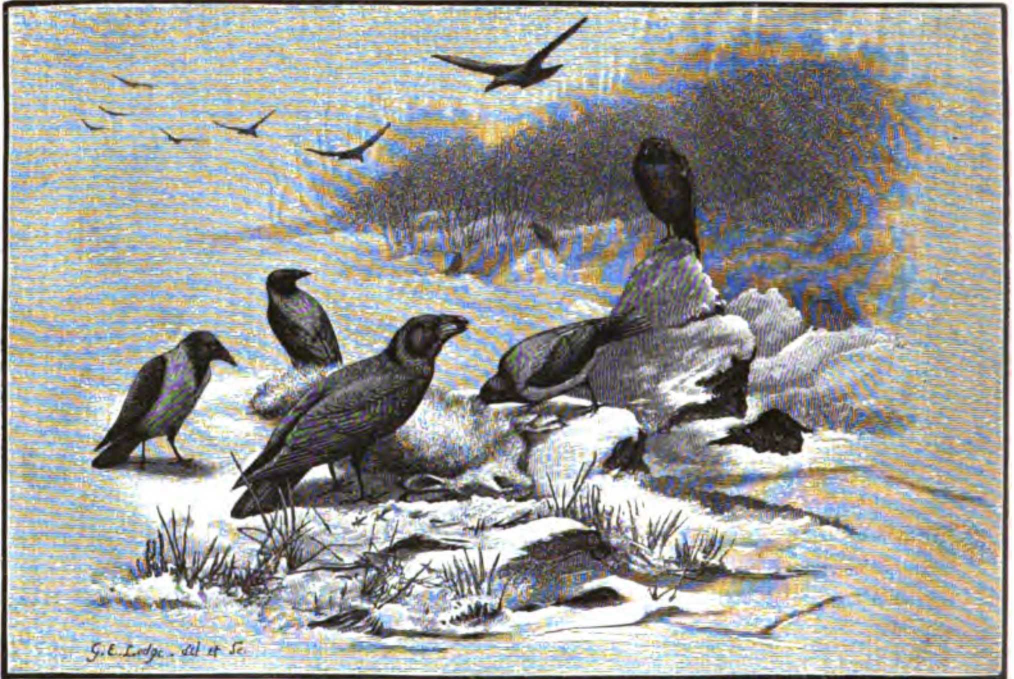
The kite is about the most frequently seen of all the hawks. His flight is magnificent. He has a spread of wing of over five feet—long hollow wings—and when he comes towards us he looks very like a heron, and he flaps along slowly and heavily. But see him—or see four or five of them together, as you can a little later on when the young ones have left their nest some time and are as large as their parents. See them flying up from some wood, wheeling about in grand circles, with wide-spread, motionless wings, their long forked tails spread to their full extent, tilting their bodies at a well-calculated angle, to get the full benefit of the pressure of air beneath, which mounts them higher and higher at

each gyration. They wheel, and curve, and soar about in the sky until they are soon mere specks, and presently vanish altogether in the blue ether, and no trace is left of them, except the sound of their far-off plaintive "mew," as they call to and answer one another, and our strained and aching eyes are glad to rest upon some nearer object for relief. In hot weather they seem to spend most of their time high up in the sky, and they probably feed mostly in the early morning and evening. In dull weather they never mount high, but prowl about near the ground, and seem to feed in the afternoon.

Buzzards have a fine flight too, but their much shorter wings and tail make them appear a much less graceful bird than the kite. The ordinary flight of the buzzard is a succession of flaps, and then an interval of sailing straight on with motionless pinions, while the kite flies slowly along with heavy, regular flappings. The buzzard may be seen flying along at a great height, and making great way by observing the following tactics: he will hover for a moment, then with half closed wings shoot down at a sharp angle, and then opening wide his wings will regain his former elevation, thus describing a succession of deep beautiful curves. There are ospreys too on these lakes, but we never had the luck to see one. But at all hazards we must shoot a kite, or half the enjoyment of our Swedish trip will have been lost. A kite must die; but how are we to kill him? There is no getting near them, so we must resort to stratagem and wile; and at the same time we will get some specimens of that crafty rascal the raven, at whom we cast longing eyes all the long winter through, but could not then succeed in circumventing him. So with deadly thoughts in our heart, and a crafty stratagem in our head, we build a wigwam on the shores of the lake, amidst a thicket of birch and alder.

AN AMBUSH.
From a Drawing by G. E. LODGE.

Very thick and secure we make it, first of large poles and boughs, and then piling up a cartload of smaller twigs and branches, thrown on "all anyhow." The top is thickly thatched with drift from the lake, and armfuls of moss torn from the neighbouring stones and rocks. A low opening is made on one side, through which we wriggle like a snake; and another small hole in the direction of a certain flat slab of rock, through which we hope to have a shot. Now we must have some bait, so we proceed into the farmyard and valiantly slay certain specimens of the common or garden cat, the carcases of which we place upon the sacrificial stone. And here in our den we sit, day after day, very patient, but hopeful withal. The lair is snug and dry, and we skin birds, read books, and write letters to wile away the time. And soon a little heap of cartridge cases begins to rise in the corner of the den—a tolerably clear index of our late occupation; and various ravens, kites, and crows have bitter cause to rue the day when we pitted our wile against theirs. Very exciting it was to sit still and snug, and watch from our loophole the hoodies wrangling over the felines, while we patiently await the arrival of the more honoured guests, which we can hear all around us, croaking hoarsely and flapping heavily about our ambush, reconnoitring before settling down to so savoury a morsel. And how grand the big old fellows look when they do at last come down and sit on the top of a pinnacle-shaped, lichen-covered grey stone, their glossy plumage throwing off purple lights. Then they hop heavily to the bait, and dig away with their powerful bills, all unconscious of the near proximity of their deadly foe. And all the time a troop of magpies are hopping and dancing about on the roof of the den, chattering and coughing and laughing, and actually trying to sing in the joy of their hearts, till we verily expect they will finish up by paying us a friendly visit inside. But now there speeds forth the leaden messenger of death, and a huge black rascal is sprawling on his back, and his hide will soon be added to our collection. And when a kite condescended to pay us a visit, occasions which were few and far between, there was great rejoicing in the camp. They only came on dull drizzling afternoons, and presented a



A SWEDISH CHRISTMAS DINNER.
From a Drawing by G. E. LODGE.

splendid appearance, feeding within easy reach of our gun, very cautious, taking keen glances round with their wild silver eye after every mouthful, their heads looking very white. On one occasion part of a pig was added to the bill of fare—the remains of a pig found in the woods and almost eaten up by ravens and crows, but still enough bacon left to be worth the trouble of impaling on a pole, and staggering off in the hot sun, to replenish the failing stock of bait at the ambush. And much they appreciated the bacon; they seemed to enjoy it heartily, feeding away with great zest and gusto. But they invariably got a dose of lead, on which they had not reckoned, and so three goodly kites died the death, and dying, bequeathed us their handsome remains. On another occasion a hoodie perched close by on a stone and was cawing fiercely at the kite, jealous probably that the kite should have arrived to spoil his feast. That crow shared the kite's fate, for on emerging from our den to pick up our quarry we passed the defunct crow, who had come in for a very palpable share of the pepper which was intended for the sole benefit of the kite. In the crop of one of the kites we found a big lump of blackcock, which we recognised by the upper mandible and scarlet comb over the eye. He had probably found it dead, as it is unlikely he would have killed so heavy a bird as a blackcock; as they mostly feed on small animals, lizards, frogs, carrion, &c., and are not active enough to pursue birds, though they probably kill a few by coming upon them unexpectedly. In all probability the blackcock was the remnant of a goshawk's feast, which the kite had come across and appropriated to himself. Another of these kites had in his crop a half-digested, small eel.

Before returning to England we mean, if possible, to get a few eggs, but cannot hope for many, as it is still too early in the season. However, we range the forests, and harry the hoodie crows' nests, and thus obtain some fine specimens of their eggs. They seem to prefer the pine-trees for their nesting sites, often building at the very top of the tree, though on one occasion we found a nest with four eggs about half way up a small silver birch on an island. Four is the usual number of eggs, and they vary very much in colour, the handsomest being very blue in ground colour, with large dark markings, though a very handsome variety is olive-green, the browner markings being so thick as almost to obliterate the ground colour. The old birds sit close when the eggs are near hatching. One that we went up to at the top of a tall Scotch fir, during a heavy rainstorm, would not leave the nest until our hand was over it, when it slipped dexterously through our fingers. There were three youngsters in the nest, and two eggs still unhatched. Of course the old bird did not like to leave her newly-hatched youngsters to the mercy of the pelting rain. There were plenty of jackdaws' eggs to be got out of the holes in the oak-trees in some of the woods; and here we also found some tawny owls' eggs. Fieldfares' nests and eggs are exactly similar to blackbirds'. They build in small colonies. One nest we found in a juniper bush, within reach of the ground, and another was at the top of a Scotch fir, about thirty feet high. Six eggs were the most we found in any nest. The birds get very excited when any foe is in the neighbourhood of their nest, and their vociferous screaming is similar to that of the missel-thrush; but they are not so bold as that bird, and do not menace the intruder at such close quarters. An egg of the great black woodpecker was brought to us, pure white, with a beautiful polish on the shell. The egg was taken from a hole in a small tree, either birch or alder, not more than ten feet from the ground, in a small wood of young scattered trees. The old hen was taken at the same time, but was soon liberated.

Fain would we stay longer, and hunt the forests for goshawks', kites', and buzzards' eggs; but our time is up, we must return to England once more, with the hope at some future date of having more rambles after birds and eggs in this most delightful part of the world.

G. E. Lodge.

THE UNEQUAL YOKE.

CHAPTER V.

HE winter was now fully come, and the tide of business began to beat with a louder pulse up Wycherley Passage. The Minister was back from his tour in the Hebrides, keen, bland, irreproachable, with a small white flower in his button hole—an object of despair to an offensive Opposition. The permanent secretary, too, Sir Eusebius Holcroft, whose shock of white hair and quick black eyes had seen the waxing and waning of government after government—Sir Eusebius, who knew more of the business of the office, as he was accustomed to boast, "than any man living or dead, my dear sir, living or dead"—he, too, was again on the box of the lumbering coach of the Department of Agriculture. From some ancient source, long hidden by the mists of time, there had flowed down into the office the custom of speaking of the permanent secretary as the Queen of Sheba. Why, nobody knew; but the title was not only universal, but *de rigueur*. If it had arisen in a spirit of chaff in those remote ages, all trace of such satire was gone. The title had even become a mark of good breeding in the man who used it—a social Shibboleth. Nothing is more curious than the way in which, in spite of Playfair schemes and levelling examinations, the line is sharply drawn in the large English public offices between "people whom one knows, don't you know," and "people whom one doesn't know, don't you know." Among the former class, to have said "Sir Eusebius" would have proved that the interlocutors were in all the dignity of a quarrel, or appalled by the rumour of an official earthquake, or else conscious of the presence of an outsider from the latter class, before whom to have said "the Queen of Sheba" would have shown an almost criminal want of tact.

Early in November the "office" was gathered together, as usual, in Mr. Leyoncrona's room. That gentlemen was peacefully glancing at the *Times*. Frank Capulett was perched on his round stool, adorning the office stationery with florid and conventional portraits of Jane. Piper, whose peculiarity was a tendency to wind his limbs around articles of furniture which were not intended to be used as seats, was perilously balanced on a substantial old fire-screen. He had been expostulated with, but he declared there was no danger, and that if he did slip, Sennett would break his fall. Sennett was seated in a chair before the fire, an abject heap, in a lethargy which betokened a too brilliant pursuit of pleasure on the preceding evening. A new-comer, Mr. Wordingham, stood in front of the fire, with his tails to it, in the rather obtrusive attitude that a man takes in returning to a circle of familiars after an absence.

"Did you have a jolly time in Greece, Wordingham?" asked the writhing Piper.

"Very. We couldn't travel about much in the interior. It is still awfully full of brigands. I did not care about the food much; too much grease and garlic. I couldn't help thinking what a lark it would have been if one had been captured by brigands. What would you fellows have done?"

"Well," said Piper, "we should have gone in a body to the Queen of Sheba, and have fallen at his feet, and have said, 'Buy back for us our beloved Wordingham, even though you have to sell all the sealing-wax, and all the red tape, and all the old steel pens in the department. Do not, do not spare the stationery,' we should have said, 'when a brother's life is in danger.'"

"Ah! you may play the fool, Piper, but I

can tell you it is a deuced nasty business to be caught by those fellows. I was rather glad when the yacht stood out for the Cyclades."

"Not much like Wycherley Passage, I expect, the Cyclades?" mourned the broken Sennett. "Just fancy being mewed up in this yellow hole for the winter! I feel like chucking the whole thing up, and going south somewhere."

"Any news in the office?" asked Wordingham.

"One very small piece of news," said Leyoncrona, smiling; "Capulett has engaged himself to a young lady."

"Hallo!" said Wordingham, slapping his legs, "I call that a very great piece of news; the youngster going to be married! Come here, you youngster, and tell us all about it."

"There isn't much to tell," said Frank, blushing as he serpentined through the chairs and bureaus to the fire.

"When is it coming off? Has she got money? Is she pretty? What's her name? Do any of us know her? Have you fellows seen her?" asked Wordingham in a volley of interrogations.

"The Lion has seen her," said Frank, "and so he can give you an account."

"I only saw her for a few moments, you know," said Leyoncrona, "when we were arranging about the Humane Society. By the way, do you know whether she has heard definitely from the secretary yet about the medal?"

"No, I don't think so. Oh yes! I think she is to hear after the next meeting, which will be held on Friday."

"Is she to receive a medal for her courage in accepting the youngster?" said Wordingham.

"She is a real downright heroine, I can tell you, my boy," said Sennett; "goes about saving drowning people like anything. She is just now the divinity of the department, and our only feeling is one of wanting to thrash Frank, if he does not treat her properly."

"Sennett is so sentimental that I believe he is going to be married too," said Wordingham.

"Marriage is always an epidemic," said Piper.

"Not I indeed! As long as I can find three other men at the club for a rubber, the card-room is my domestic hearth. I think a fellow was given his life to enjoy it," and the weary Sennett yawned at the fire and rubbed his chilly knuckles.

"I suppose you will hardly stay here if you marry," said Wordingham. "Your brother is doing uncommonly well out in Montana, isn't he?"

"I believe he is. He bought land just in front of the railways, and there is a city on the spot which was prairie when he took it. He has a very quick eye for localities. I don't think I shall go out to Montana, though, unless he specially invites me. He is a bachelor, you see, and, besides, no one can tell how soon he may feel inclined to realise his property, and start something else. He is not at all like me, he is a regular pushing man."

There was a laugh at the *naïveté* of this, and in the midst of it a messenger came in with a card for Capulett, on which was written, not engraved, the name of John Baxter.

"This gentleman wishes to see you, sir, if you are at liberty, and he is now in the waiting-room."

Frank did not proceed at once to greet his future brother-in-law, but mused, with a sort of apprehension, upon the cause of this visit. It vexed him that John Baxter had come to the office, and yet he could hardly have explained why. He had all his mother's horror of a conundrum, and was never quite sure of not being victimised by the unexpected. The room into which the visitor had been shown was a square, dismal apartment, with a painted deal table and some cane-bottomed chairs sprinkled over a cold expanse of oil-cloth. Its one large window looked out across the leads to a motley landscape of chimney-pots, over which the morning sunlight came raking. As John Baxter sat there, with the top-light isolating his forehead and illuminating his large brown moustache, he looked almost handsome, but Frank, who was too conscious of people's clothes, observed his billy-cock hat and a tie which lacked distinction. If Frank was conscious of shyness, Baxter was certainly no less shy in his own way, a rather dogged way that his throat and shoulders were apt to exaggerate. Frank was conscious of an unreasonable aversion to him when he rose and said, very civilly—

"I hope you will forgive my having taken the liberty of calling on you. I had something that I wished to say to you, and I thought I should be sure to find you here."

"It is not anything about—I hope that your sister—that Jane—is not—?"

"It was about her, of course, that I came to see you. But she has no idea that I am paying you a visit. It was quite my own idea."

As Frank merely expressed inquiry on his face the young man went on, gazing out of the window with a set look.

"I won't take up your time. You see, my father and mother are very unworldly people, and so I have sometimes, without their knowing it, to take their place. And their place would naturally be to arrange my sister's affairs for her. But my father is so swallowed up with the Lord's work that the things of this world are too apt to be neglected, and my stepmother has too soft a heart to hold her own. But I dare say you know very well what it is I want to say?"

"I really assure you I don't," said Frank, who spoke the truth.

"My sisters say I am too rough to understand women, and perhaps I am very foolish about it, not moving in the elegant circles that you do. But amongst us, Mr. Capulett, when a man wins a promise from a young girl his women folk come and say kind things, and treat her as a daughter, and take her to themselves in a way. And if they do not do this, then the mother thinks her daughter slighted, and she has a right to ask the young man why his parents do not come forward. Now I hope you will not take it amiss what I say. It is gone four weeks since you came and saw my stepmother, and that Jane promised herself to you. And yet your mother has not written to her or to any of us, and we know nothing of her mind nor of your father's. I make bold to say that this makes me unhappy, and my parents too, and they have made it a subject of prayer what they ought to do, and they have been guided to let it alone, only keeping watch and ward over Jane. But I do not think that that is what should be done, and so I have ventured to come and ask you, sir, whether, if your parents will not encourage your choice, you will not leave us, and go your way before my sister has had time to grow used to you?"

This was much less terrible than anything that Frank had imagined might be the reason of the visit, and he beamed with sympathy.

"You are perfectly just, and have done quite right to come and see me. I must tell you that I have had great difficulty with my people. They are very proud and obstinate, particularly my mother, and I think I have done wrong not to be more positive with her. I thought that if I left it a little and constantly spoke of Jane, and how good and beautiful she is, my people would gradually come round. But you are perfectly right in what you say. Of course it is a kind of stigma on Jane that she should not have my parents' sanction, and I will see at once that my mother calls upon her, and on Mrs. Baxter too."

He rose to signify that the visit was over, but John Baxter sat there still, evidently burdened with something yet left unsaid.

"I cannot ever be quite sure that these mixed connections are blest. You belong to one part of society and we to another. There is just the same difference between us that there is between Kensington and Kilburn. We should never have come into your acquaintance at all if you had not sought us out. I hope you'll remember that, Mr. Capulett. And if ever trouble should come of this alliance, for I can't say I'm altogether happy about it in my mind, you must be sure to recollect that it was you sought us, and not we you. You'll pardon my freedom in saying that?"

Frank put out his hand, and the two men met in an amiable shake of palms of varied hardness.

"You must not take that view of it, you know," said Frank. "Jane and I are awfully fond of one another, and we're exactly suited to make one another happy. Of course neither of us marries the other's relations."

He immediately had the grace to wish that he had not said this, but there was no sign of resentment in the grave eyes that were turned to him. He was therefore emboldened, in saying good-bye, to be almost spiteful.

"You'll excuse me," he said, "for not asking you to stop. It is hardly possible for me to see callers in the morning." And as he showed his visitor to the head of the flight of stairs, he wished again that John's hat and his neck-tie had been more worthy of one who sought alliance with the Capuletts.

CHAPTER VI.

There was no difficulty in making Lady Priscilla perceive that the neutral position she had taken was now no longer tenable. She was not supported, moreover, by her household gods. Mr. Capulett had refused to be interested in the affair, and the bishop, from the midst of some trying episcopal business, had snatched twenty minutes to write her what she considered a thoroughly lukewarm letter, about the necessity of bending to the democratic spirit of the age. His lordship seemed to bear the disappoint-

ment of not marrying Frank and his bride with entire equanimity; he did not refer to the subject. Edith, moreover, had been carried over to the Baxter side of the controversy by the warmth and persistence of Frank's descriptions of Jane, and when the young man insisted that good manners required his mother to call on Mrs. Baxter, he met with no serious opposition. Lady Priscilla consented to call; but she said that she still reserved her sanction of the engagement, and that she should take Adelaide with her because Edith was already prejudiced.

In the middle of the afternoon, then, of the ensuing day, Lady Priscilla and her second daughter drove over to Constantine Villas, which they had considerable difficulty in finding. The coachman and footman were so cross and the ladies so cold that they were on the point of abandoning the search when they were lucky enough to meet a local postman. After terrifying the Baxters' maid almost out of her propriety, they found themselves in a chilly drawing-room, into the fireplace of which the maid flung herself with a lighted match and came out again in a volume of smoke. She then left the ladies to their reflections.

The room was papered with a French gray paper, and a pattern in imitation of lace upon it in tarnished gold. Lady Priscilla sat up, grand and dogged, in an arm-chair, gazing at this wall-paper, while Adelaide darted lightly hither and thither in a flying sort of inventory. They looked at one another, and Lady Priscilla murmured, "What a smell!" The room was, in fact, pervaded by a faint odour, unpleasantly gamey or spicy. Adelaide examined the pictures—an engraving of cattle after Cooper, a water-colour sketch of a castle, a text illuminated in scarlet and silver and smartly framed, a photographic group of nine missionaries under a palm-tree, and the portrait in oils of an elderly person. She examined with curiosity the banner-screen before the fire, which was tied up in a bag of muslin; and then she darted into a chair, for there was a step outside. It passed, however, and she continued her *voyage autour de la chambre*, and noted the statuette of Luther in biscuit, under a glass shade, the three photographic albums, the piano, and at last gave a little cry of "Oh, mother! it's these white mice!" The smell indeed proceeded from an ingenious little set of apartments, with a glass front, which housed a large family of these small creatures. In a sort of upper bedroom, communicating with the lower premises by means of three holes, a group of infant mice lay in a nest. Adelaide listened for steps, and then, opening the lid, smartly plucked forth one of the infants and laid it in the hollow of her hand. The papa mouse, however, who was taking violent exercise on the whirligig down stairs, seemed to feel something was wrong, for he stopped revolving, and sprang to one of the holes in the first floor, through which his nose was eloquent. Adelaide had just time to restore his offspring to him, and to close the lid, when the door opened and Mrs. Baxter appeared.

She was a serious placid woman, whose fine features had been somewhat effaced by the hand of time, which had painted them with a more than winter colour to make up for loss of modelling. She had never been very like her daughter, and now the resemblance had grown faint indeed. When the first greetings had passed, with a good deal of formality, she went to mend the fire, and so revealed to the Capulett ladies the fact that she had been wearing a small woolly shawl around her shoulders, which she had thrown off to make way for a clean collar, but which had caught in a button of her dress, and hung down with comical effect between her shoulders.

"My son," said Lady Priscilla, "has been very anxious that we should know one another, Mrs. Baxter. I find that you made him very welcome here while we were away on the Continent this autumn."

"I hardly know how it began, I am sure. Our young people are so fond of lawn-tennis, they were glad to get another gentleman, I suppose."

"No doubt," said Lady Priscilla, "at such gatherings gentlemen are always at a premium."

"Her father and I had no idea it was anything serious, or I should have said a word to Mr. Frank, asking him not to come any more. I am not very observant, the girls say, and I noticed nothing, not even on the Sunday, when he walked home with her from chapel. Then on the Monday he came again in the dusk, just before tea, and Jane and he walked round our little back garden till I had to call her in; and he wouldn't stay to tea. And then I did notice something, for her hands were all trembling when she cut the bread for toasting. But it was that night, when she and I were coming home from the Dorcas meeting, that she told me about it, and that she thought she must have him. My heart quite sank within me, for it was my wish, and her father's too, that she should marry within our communion. But when

we got home, there was a letter come by post from Mr. Frank, a beautiful letter, saying how fond he was of Jane, and what a blessing it would be to him to come within her sphere of usefulness, and we laid it before the Lord in our simple fashion, and the consequence was we did not see our way to refuse."

This was not at all the attitude of mind against which Lady Priscilla had fenced herself in triple brass. She felt a little ashamed of what she had said about "the designing ways of these Dissenters."

"I am very glad indeed," she said, "to find that you have had that view of it, because it makes it easier for me to say what is in my mind. I quite think with you that people should remain in that religious body in which they were born. All our family, of course, have been brought up in the establishment, and, you must excuse me for saying so, I have always inculcated the idea that any form of sectarian independence in religious matters was most undesirable, and likely to lead to atheism and socialism and all sorts of horrors of that kind."

"I don't think we are socialistic at all," said Mrs. Baxter, mildly rubbing her hands, and dashing forward again to struggle with the unwilling fire, "nor atheistic, I'm sure. I often fancy we are too old-fashioned and run too much in a groove. It is a great responsibility marrying the children. Are any of your ladyship's children settled yet?"

"You must allow me to say, Mrs. Baxter, that I really am very pleased to find that we think so much alike upon this matter," said Lady Priscilla in a sympathetic glow. "I am sure that as we both think such a match would be undesirable, we can bring our influences to bear upon the young people, and break it off. I hope my Frank has not gone so far as to fill your daughter's mind with—with what we may call—ambitions—what is the word I am searching for, my dear Adelaide?"

Adelaide showed no anxiety to help her mother, and so Mrs. Baxter resumed, in her plaintive voice—

"My children are all of them very positive. I don't know how it is. Dr. Baxter is such a very gentle man, and I don't think I am very stiff-necked myself, and yet all of the children are so positive. It has been a great source of thankfulness to us that they have all turned out so well, with that strength of will. Now Jane is so frank on one side, that you seem to look right through her, but on the other she is as hard and dark, if she chooses, as a bit of iron. Now, what I don't rightly understand, if you let me be so plain, is whether she is or is not really in love with Mr. Frank, or whether she likes him—we all like him so much—and thinks she will be blessed to him. For I must explain to you, my daughters are different from ordinary girls in this, that they enjoy the innocent pleasures of life thoroughly, and yet I do believe their hearts are always full of heavenly desires. Now Mr. Frank, you see, has come upon Jane from this side, and he has made her think that she will benefit his soul."

"Most extraordinary, is it not, Adelaide?" said Lady Priscilla. "I must warn you, Mrs. Baxter, that my son is very sympathetic."

At this moment the door slowly opened, and Jane herself stood there. She had just come indoors, and her hair was still a little blown by the wind. She wore a dark blue walking-dress, and there was a high colour in her cheeks and light in her fine eyes; she looked an incarnation of girlish freshness. She had seen the ladies' cards, but by a little freak of innocent hypocrisy she pretended to be surprised, and made a feint of retiring. Lady Priscilla and Adelaide, who were a little ashamed of being found in the very act of plotting by their intended victim, received her graciously. Adelaide, indeed, was charmed at once, and took a sudden friendship for her. She went a little aside with her, where the two girls sat in a window and chatted, bruising their knees against the wirework stand in which some dusty azaleas were languishing, and looking out across the front garden to the deserted road. There was a certain freshness and sincerity in Jane that amused Adelaide. The latter was by no means a frivolous person by nature, but her surroundings, the claims of society upon her, and the life she was forced to lead in agitated idleness, had given an artificial air to her. In Jane's intelligence and experience she found as great a contrast to her own as lay between the rosy cheeks and full, soft form of the one, and the olive tones and chiselled outlines of the other.

Lady Priscilla also was charmed, but with far less resignation of purpose. She saw what the attraction had been, and she was much too clever a woman to undervalue these luminous cool eyes, this frank and lucid forehead, this bold and roseate maidenhood; but she also saw the nascent and now irradicable faults, as she conceived them to be, the excessive colour of the blood in the skin, the pulpy form, that in fifteen years

would be shapeless, the ungraceful action of the hands, the sharp twang in the voice. As she bandied agreeable nothings with Mrs. Baxter, she asked herself how far these faults could be modified, these degenerations avoided, by careful training in another school. Her thoughts were not altogether selfish, though they were hard and worldly. She was trying to solve the problem whether is was really possible that Frank could be happy with this girl, and she with him. Finally she thought that this might be.

In the drive home her scruples finally vanished, for Adelaide was full of enthusiasm for Jane. "She will be the very wife for Frank," she said. "She is strong wherever he is weak, and quite well enough educated. He is not at all a genius, you know. She seems to understand music, and that really is the only thing Frank cares about of an intellectual kind. Edith and I can take her in hand about her dress and one or two things. Don't you think she is really pretty?"

"Certainly; of course a little in the overblown or hollyhock style. She will simply kill every complexion in our house. You looked like ivory by the side of her. Now, tell me, did you gather that she is very fond of Frank; did she talk incessantly about him?"

"Well, that is just where I thought she showed such unexpected good breeding. She did not talk very much about him; and when she did mention him, it was not in the silly, blushing way that most girls would, but very gravely straightforward, with her dark eyes fixed upon me. I think she is most original."

"Do you? Well, that is exactly what I do not think. She leaves on me the impression of being an ordinary specimen of a very good type—a wholesome, right-minded girl, who has been brought up well in an old-fashioned way. They are evidently a very respectable family. What a dreadful smell those mice made, and neither of the Baxters seemed to be in the least aware of it. I think on the whole that that forms now my principal remaining objection to the match."

"What, that they keep white mice? Such dear little things, with pink ropy tails?"

"No, but that they keep them without noticing that they smell. It shows a blunted sense of propriety. Did you notice what hideous little magenta mats there were under the smelling-bottles on the back table?"

"Yes! of course I did," exclaimed Adelaide; "but how on earth you managed to do so, when you were perched up all the time, 'in state your glory well befitting,' in an arm-chair that looked the other way, is more than I can comprehend."

"My dear child," said Lady Priscilla, sententiously, "when you have reached my time of life you will have learned to have eyes in the back of your head."

But before they had reached home the ladies had decided that the engagement must be recognised, and during the evening a letter was written by Lady Priscilla to Jane, asking herself and her mother to tea on an approaching afternoon, and hinting at a visit that Jane must presently pay to the Capuletts at Kensington.

CHAPTER VII.

The return call was by no means an exhilarating affair. Mrs. Baxter required her own surroundings to show her off to advantage, and her pathetic softness was more than pathetic when it was deprecating also. But the visit did not pass without one remarkable event. As we have seen, it had not been thought necessary to instruct Mr. Capulett in what was going on, not from any unwifely or unfilial neglect of his feelings, but simply from the hopelessness of interesting him in it. He had heard the whole thing discussed, and he had gone through a brief ceremony of blessing Frank, a ceremony which was generally regarded in the family as a burlesque. At lunch on the day now under discussion a great deal had been said about the expected visit from Mrs. Baxter and Jane, but he had not appeared to pay any attention to it, nor allow it to disturb his appreciation of a new story by Droz, which occupied him all through the meal. His conduct, therefore, when the visitors arrived may be looked upon as epoch-making.

Mr. Capulett was a man who would have received not a single vote in a *plébiscite* for an English literary academy, and yet he had no small practical acquaintance with the outer confines of literature. He was the author of some of the most paying melodramas of our age, and there are more than one of his plays which everybody knows by name, and which most people have seen upon the stage. Yet his own name was scarcely known, and it was rapidly declining in reputation year by year, as a form of theatrical amusement less obvious and less mechanical than his came

into vogue. Yet Mr. Capulett was not quite an ordinary man. He had something of the pretensions of a poet, though his actual writing gift had at all times been very small. But no one had been more nimble than he with the scissors, no one a greater master of effect, and his intuitions of stage success had secured fortunes to manager after manager. For a dozen years in his youth, to secure Capulett's services was to secure money for the house. Later on he had begun to be voted old-fashioned; but his fine appearance, and on occasion his fine manners, and his languid wife, with her prestige as the daughter of an Irish earl, had preserved him on the upper surface of society where he was always enough of an artist by instinct to lean to the more graceful and intelligent section. But the melodramas, though still existing in every repertory, no longer brought in the fortune that they once did, and the Capuletts were slowly sinking a little out of their zenith.

The surprising thing that Mr. Capulett did was this. Having lunched in the costume that enraged his daughters—an old grey coat, with a wisp of pink silk tied round the neck, and a sloppy pair of slippers—he suddenly appeared, when the guests were being regaled with tea in the drawing-room, in a condition of almost dazzling gentility. He had changed his old grey slouch for a well-fitting frock coat, had discarded his silk wisp in favour of a vast collar of snowy whiteness with a sky-blue stock, and had arranged his small feet in a pair of very smart pumps. Thus adorned, with his grizzled curly hair brushed out like a halo round his head, he advanced into the room with an expression of seraphical sweetness on his face, and rather swam than stepped up to Jane, who rose somewhat awkwardly, embarrassed by her tea-cup. Lady Priscilla, who was in the midst of a long sentence about the difficulty of getting from their house to the park in frosty weather, suddenly stopped, as though she had been shot, and had no time to present the strangers. Mr. Capulett, however, taking no heed of Mrs. Baxter, swept up to Jane with both his hands extended, and said, in carefully selected tones, "No need to ask! This, I feel sure, is my new daughter!"

It was the opinion of Jane, and of his own daughters also, that he was now about to kiss her. Happily it did not occur to him to go so far as this; but after gazing at her for a few moments, he relinquished one of her hands, and, still grasping the other, sat down at her side. He said scarcely anything after this, and Jane, who was impressed by his appearance, and thought him a kind old man, received more smiles than answers to the remarks she felt bound to make, until at last, as she was saying something to him in a low voice, he rose abruptly, and bestowing on her a richer smile than ever before, said, "I shall see you again before you go," and left the room as unexpectedly as he had entered it; and of him that afternoon they saw no more. The visit indeed was not much prolonged, for nobody felt at ease. The opulence and elegance of the Capuletts' drawing-room, furnished in the latest style with barbaric importations from Bulgaria and Nubia and Japan, put Jane more out of countenance than the frigid manners of the ladies, who did not mean in the least to be frigid, but who, to confess the truth, were themselves consumed with shyness.

Frank, who hovered about, bringing Jane things to look at, and plying her with biscuits, gradually sank into a dull rage as he saw that the interview hung fire. He went out when the Baxters left, ostensibly to see them on their way home, but really to scold Jane for a fiasco which he vaguely put down to her dress.

The three people walked down the street silent at first, Mrs. Baxter weary and homesick after this unwonted plunge into fashion, Jane discouraged by the sight of the life that she was henceforth to lead, and Frank secretly raging with vanity that had been vicariously wounded, in the fact, as he thought, that his sweetheart had made a bad impression.

"I can't think why you wore that particular hat, unless you wished to annoy me," he said at last, in a spasm of petulance.

Jane had been so far from divining his annoyance, that she started, and looked sideways at him. He was black with temper.

"I put on this bonnet because it is the best I have. You shall teach me better taste," she said coaxingly, "but you must not say that I do things to annoy you."

But he was not quite appeased. "If it was not your bonnet, I don't know what it could have been. I wanted them all to admire you so much, and you sat there as mute as an owl."

She was driven again to meek defence. "I am sure I talked as much as I could. I talked to your father—as least I tried to. And I had a nice long chat with your sister, Miss Adelaide. Your mother frightens me, oh! so dreadfully, but I thought she was as kind as possible. I am so sorry you thought

the call a failure, for I did not find it, I think, quite so terrible as I expected."

"Why should you expect it to be terrible?" he persisted, no longer in an angry but rather a peevish tone.

A little silence followed, in the midst of which Mrs. Baxter, in an impersonal way, remarked, "There does not seem to be so much fog here as there is up at Notting Hill."

"I wonder you can't understand," said Jane, beginning to cry at last, but wrestling cruelly with her tears, "that it is more trying to make a visit like this than anything a girl has ever had to go through before. . . . I think you ought to see . . . ." And then tears and voice were arrested alike in a pitched battle of silence.

"The next turning but one to the left for our station," said Mrs. Baxter, who hurried them on like automata, and glanced neither at the one of them nor at the other.

In the tumult of people in the crowded thoroughfare where they now found themselves the lovers were hustled together, and by and by they forgot their troubles. Frank was obliged to take Jane's arm, ungallantly leaving Mrs. Baxter to struggle on by herself, and when they all turned the corner that led to the station they found themselves friends again. But when, at the ticket-office, Frank announced that he had promised to go back at once, the two women resigned him, the younger almost as gladly as the elder, for her physical endurance was tried to the utmost. In the underground railway, the fog and steam and the crush of passengers seemed merely to strain her more closely to her mother, and in their crowded second-class carriage they were glad to be pressed tightly to one another, and to take arms unseen under the shelter of their cloaks. When they got home at last, and found the white-haired father meekly reading close to the green shade of the lamp, and John stretched out on the rug gazing at the fire, and the girls sewing in their easy chairs, while the urn sang on the table, the comfortable homeliness of the scene, its familiarity, and its moderate demand upon her powers, rushed in upon Jane, and she almost detected herself in the act of regret.

For the next week or two very little happened which needs to be noted in this quiet chronicle. Frank was not to be blamed if the distance between Kilburn and Kensington seemed immense, and if his regular duties at the office made an irresistible demand upon his time. He saw Jane when he could, and he spent the whole of Sunday with her. Now that the engagement was a settled thing he said less, perhaps, about the religious effect upon his character which he anticipated from associating with her. Indeed, he almost rebelled against the multitude of services into which the Sunday was broken up. He did not venture to make any suggestion about the morning meeting, but went piously to Colville Road under Jane's convoy. When mid-day dinner was over, his lady-love had to prepare at once for the Sunday-school, in which she took a class from three o'clock to half-past four. This Frank found particularly irksome, and he did not scruple to say that he thought she had better give this up at once, as she would not be able to teach after her marriage.

This argument Jane did not attempt to meet, but waived it for the moment. Frank conducted her to the door of the malodorous little place, like a dingy hive, with its clusters of children hanging at the entrance, and spent the hour and a half in loafing about on the doubtful heights of Frognal, where a sort of hybrid country made up of meadows and little rows of shops, ancestral elm-trees and street lamps, old mossy barns and staring edifices of sheet-tin painted blue and red in stripes, mark the extremity of London. Then, with the wooded heights of Hampstead before him, a leafy fastness, he would forbear to climb them, but turning his back to them would contemplate a landscape that better suited his discontented mood. There, on the right, across the brick-fields, and the half-seen villas of Willesden, there stretched the vast and hideous flats of Wormwood Scrubs —a no-man's-land, drowned in cold white vapour; and, further east, London slowly began to sink upon the dull incline, shapeless, overhung with colourless cloud, a vague sea of pale fog out of which arose no point or island of firm land anywhere. And then he would walk back to the school-house, not very much benefited in spirits by his little country walk.

In the evenings of these Sundays he rebelled altogether, and carried Jane off after tea to hear some fashionable preacher in the body of London, enjoying the comparative excitement of the chase for religious instruction more than the fresh draughts at the old familiar fountain in Colville Road. On these excursions they were not alone, for one of her sisters always attended as chaperone, and when the hour for final parting came, and Frank leaped into a cab to drive home to Kensington, he found left upon his mind a sensation of not merely having been fatigued, but bored as well.

He looked forward with pleasure to Jane's ensuing visit to his parents, and flattered himself that he had nothing to do but to separate his bride from her surroundings to make his engagement the delicious and inebriating thing which he was at present surprising himself by not exactly finding it.

CHAPTER VIII.

One afternoon, early in December, as Leyoncrona and Frank Capulett were quietly at work in their room at the office, Sennett came in with some papers to be signed, and as Leyoncrona was examining them remarked:

"One of the evening papers brings up the subject of the Queen of Sheba's peerage again."

"Oh! I don't believe in it at all," said Leyoncrona.

"Well, if the Government were to go out of office, I shouldn't be surprised if he took it and retired. By the way, what an age it is since the last change of ministry. I should rather like another. The work is always so jolly slack in the interregnum," said Sennett.

"How would you like to be one of those poor devils of public servants in France and America, who are sacked when the Minister goes out of office?"

"You don't mean to say that? I call that uncivilised. Why, how can the new fellows learn the work of the place? I should like to know who would pick up the ensilage statistics if you and I were to be kicked out to-morrow. The new man wouldn't know the difference between a silo and a salamander. I wonder if the old Queen of Sheba will get you promoted before he goes! I bet he will forget all about it."

"He always has stood up for his men. He has been a first-rate administrator, whatever his faults have been, and the result of working for us has been that we've worked for him."

"You always stick up for him. He's a selfish old party, I believe. However, there never does come a change of ministry without doing somebody good, unless they put some awful old Tory in. Of course, I'm a Conservative myself, but I must say I like a Radical at the top of the office. More modern-like, somehow."

"By the way, Sennett, you had better look official, and not lounge there at the fire, for I expect the Queen of Sheba this afternoon to look over these new charts. He said as they were so cumbersome he would come himself and glance at them."

"Quite a nine days' wonder. I don't believe he has been in this end of the building for a year or more. Here he is!" said Sennett, stiffening himself, and brandishing a bundle of blue folios. But it was not the Queen of Sheba, it was a more veritable female apparition, and a more unexpected one. The door was thrown open, and a messenger, with an impertinent grin on his face, shouted out:

"Mr. Capulett, a lady to see you, sir."

In walked Jane Baxter, with her cheeks flushed to the colour of fire, and turning her dazzled eyes on two wrong men before she found the right one. There was a moment of extreme embarrassment. Sennett fled from the room. Leyoncrona made a slight effort to rise and bow, and then sank over his papers. Frank rushed to the door, without a word, and dragged Jane into the room away from the threshold.

"What is the matter?" he said, trying to steady his voice, and deadly pale.

"Oh! Frank, I beg your pardon for coming; I did not know I should disturb you."

"Is anything wrong?" said Frank, with desperate patience.

"No, indeed! But as mother and Sallie were shopping at the stores, and as we were so very near you for once, I thought you would be glad to see me if I came to fetch you, and so I left them in the Strand, and came on to see if you would go home with us."

"But how did you think I could go home at this hour?" asked Frank, still heroically calm.

And now Leyoncrona could not endure his false position. He came forth from the screen of his great desk, and with his courteous smile he presented himself to Jane.

"Good afternoon, Miss Baxter. I hope you recollect me. I am very glad to hear that, in spite of your protests, the Humane Society has done its duty. You saw the little paragraph in the *Times* this morning? It ought to have been twice as long. This boy here should be very proud of you, I am sure. You have come this splendid afternoon to lure him from his duties? Well! I suppose I must let him go with my blessing. By the way, Capulett, we must really get that scoundrel of a Jackson into better ways. He had no business to show Miss Baxter in here. We must really apologise to you; very trying for you, I'm sure."

His kind voice and apparent indulgence for her little hoydenish crime comforted her exceedingly. But even in her humiliation she would not screen herself behind the character of another person.

"You must not scold the messenger," she said; "it is I who was in fault. I thought Mr. Capulett lived in a room by himself, and I fancied I might save time if I asked to see him directly."

They were standing in a group in the middle of the room all this time, for in that semi-public place, with clerks of low degree for ever coming and going, it seemed to occur to neither of the men that a lady should be seated. But the climax of the *contretemps* was at hand. Out in the passage was heard a noise of steps and of voices, and above them all the shrill incessant sound of the Queen of Sheba himself. Leyoncrona fled to his desk, and the potentate entered, followed by his private secretary and a clerk bearing papers, talking all the while at the top of his voice.

"Here I am, Mr. Leyoncrona; if Mahomet won't come to the mountain, you know the alternative. As I was just telling Lord Oldham, there's not a corner of this office that is unknown to me—that is, in the past, of course. Ah! it used to lie in a nutshell, this office did, before your time, Mr. Leyoncrona. In the days when there was no minister here at all, when it was quite a minor office, I used to know every room in the place; I was a triton among the minnows then. No time now for gadding about. Well, where are these charts you speak of? Mr. Holbeck here has been good enough to pick out all the letters on the subject from the North Australian premier, and I think we can see what to do in the twinkling of an eye. What the devil is that young woman doing here, eh, Leyoncrona? Deucedly unofficial that!" These last phrases in a clearly audible whisper.

"It is a young lady whom Mr. Capulett is engaged to," answered Leyoncrona, in a lower whisper. "She has just this moment come to see him on some very important business, I believe."

But Sir Eusebius went on whispering, "I hope you do not encourage this sort of thing. It will never do, I assure you. It will stand in the young man's way in his promotion if he gets in the habit of this sort of thing. Nice young fellow, too; I know his mother. Ain't Lady Priscilla Capulett his mother?"

"Yes, Sir Eusebius."

"Ah! charming woman, charming! Just give the boy a hint—can't have this sort of thing going on." Then in a louder tone, "Now then, Mr. Holbeck, let us glance over the correspondence, and let us see what it really is that the North Australian government is asking for."

Frank put on his coat and hat, and swiftly hurried Jane out of the door, taking advantage of the cluster of faces turned in another direction round Leyoncrona's charts. They said not a word as they emerged into the chilly courtyard, nor as they hastened down Wycherley Passage, and in the roar of Whitehall they stopped a moment irresolute. Then Frank took Jane's arm, and they slowly strolled southward. Not till they were opposite the stately fretted façade of the Colonial Office did they break their silence, and then Jane said—

"O Frank, can you ever forgive me for behaving so badly?"

"Never mind about it, dear," he answered. "There is no harm done."

"Ah! but there is. I heard every word that dreadful little old gentleman said. He said my being there would interfere with your promotion."

"Oh no, you must have misunderstood him. That would be an absurd exaggeration. It could not possibly do that. It was a little awkward, as it happened. No one would have dreamed of that wretched Sir Eusebius turning up."

"I am so stupid. I had no idea at all what that place was like. You have so often talked to me about your room, that I thought you worked in it all by yourself. That is quite a public place, I see. And when I asked for you, and was passed on from one man to another, I became too frightened to stop, like when one begins to run down a steep place."

"I can't allow you to compare yourself to swine," said Frank; but she was too much agitated to laugh, and she continued to bewail her awkwardness and want of sense until they reached the corner of Parliament Street.

"Where are we going?" said Frank at last. "Oh never mind," he added, "I have given myself a holiday, and it is a lovely day, we will have a little stroll to nowhere in particular."

It was indeed an exquisite day, and even a December London looked beautiful under so soft and cloudless a blue. The grass of the inclosures, the dresses of the women, the uniforms of the groups of soldiers, looked brilliant to eyes that had been almost colour-blind through a dark November. The couple

loitered over Westminster Bridge, watching for tugs and barges as they shot or crept down stream, amusing themselves by peeping vertically down into the very recesses of the hold of each. The yellowish-grey water swirled beneath them, ceaselessly in uneasy motion from the constant navigation, coiling like the water on a harbour-bar when the tide is turning. They wandered on until they saw blue sky through the formal arcades of St. Thomas's Hospital, and on until they turned the corner, and saw the old grey palace, like a carefully-washed relic of the middle ages, with its grave little parish church behind it. All this was new to Jane, and she fell in love with the old inn and eighteenth - century shops at the top of Church Street, facing the palace-green, and laughingly she proposed that they should take lodgings there, on the second floor of one of them.

"We can come here when you are turned out of the office for my having visited you, and I will earn enough for both of us by taking in washing," she said; but Frank did not kindle at the suggestion.

"They are mean little places. I wonder they have not been pulled down before now. It is really ridiculous that they should stand here just looking out on the embankment."

They turned to the west, and observed for the first time that the whole sky was beginning to glow with the fires of sunset. They went down to the little pier at Lambeth, that floats out in the middle of the stream like a sort of moored gondola, and there they waited for a penny steamer. The little voyage north to the pier at Westminster was an unexpected pleasure. They were almost alone, and they took two front stalls at the splendid spectacular performance which nature prepared for them. As in most winter sunsets, the effects were so brief and rapid as to be almost visionary. While the lovers waited at the landing-place, the whole sky above them was rosy, paved with rippling golden fragments, and deepening into fire towards the horizon. But when they had taken their seats in the boat, they found it had changed already, and that the west was one smooth and fleckless expanse of rich amber, against which the outlines of the buildings were drawn in cold pearly grey. As they left the pier, they just had sight of the beautiful pinnacled mass of the Abbey, and nearer them the School, and just opposite them, magnified against the enchanting colour of the heavens, the great renaissance front of St. John's, Smith Square, with its pillared towers. But the quaint embattlement of spires and chimneys against the western sky was utterly dwarfed by the romantic outline of the Houses of Parliament, towards which they seemed to skim as though their bark was about to moor, in the ancient way, at some mossy water-gate at the very feet of the monstrous pile. In that dim and fascinating light the fretted forms of the building, even the clock-tower itself, had no modern character at all, but seemed parts of some vast mediæval palace, the centre of a little enchanted city, of which Bridewell was the far-away donjon-keep, and Millbank Penitentiary an eccentric sort of southern fortress. Glancing back, they saw the grey, four-square tower of Lambeth glow like the walls of the mystical castle of Sarras; and the very mud of the yellow Thames itself, as the paddle-wheels of the steamer churned it up, took reflections of steel-colour and honey-yellow from the remnant of blue in the zenith, and the suffused glory of amber in the west. At last they brushed the walls of the Houses of Parliament, shot under Westminster Bridge, and came out into the light of common day with the dome of St. Paul's just glimmering on the north-eastern horizon.

The darkness gathered fast around them as they walked past the gorgeous scarlet and white sentry that haunts the arch of the Horse Guards, and by the glimmering groves of St. James's Park, up the steps into Waterloo Place, and so gained Regent Street. All this commonplace walk had the fascination of novelty to Jane, essentially a country girl, who did not know her London. When she found herself at Piccadilly Circus she exclaimed with astonishment, for she had completely lost herself in strange ground. In Regent Street, Frank took her into a restaurant to have some tea, and over this aid to female courage she ventured to return to the subject of her maladroit visit.

"Is to-day the first day that a lady ever called upon you at the office, Frank?"

"No," he answered; "my mother has come to fetch me several times, and once Mrs. Percival called."

"Who is Mrs. Percival?"

"Oh! nobody you know. A friend of my sisters."

"And what did Mr. Leyoncrona do when he saw her?"

"Saw her where?"

"Well, I mean when she was shown into your room—to that room where you sit?"

"What, Mrs. Percival? Oh! she did not come up, of course; she sent up her card, and waited for me in her carriage."

"And does your mother wait in her carriage?"

"No. But then my mother has such an air that she might go into the presence of the Grand Lama of Thibet and not scandalise anybody."

"Do you think I shall ever have a grand air?" she asked, after meditatively playing with the sugar-tongs for a few seconds.

"Yes! to be sure you will, in time. Well, to be quite frank, I don't think you ever will be quite as stately as my mother. She is a wonderful woman, but I think if I were not her son I should be afraid of her. I don't at all wish you to be like my mother. But in time I am sure you will be just as much at ease in your own way."

"No, Frank," she said, "I shall never have a grand air. I have not the making of a fine lady in me. You might as well hope that this tablecloth, with all its holes and its darns, would become cloth of gold in time. The dreadful thing about me is, not that I do the wrong thing, but that I don't know that I am doing it."

"Nonsense!" he replied, as gallantly as he could; "you know that such pretty people as you are cannot do the wrong thing. If the old Queen of Sheba could have seen your face instead of the back of your bonnet, he would have been silenced into admiration."

"My bonnet did at all events keep its colour, whereas these poor silly cheeks, do what I would, went fuming and boiling up into something more scarlet than that lobster in the window, or than—than anything. I would give a good deal to have those pale cheeks of your younger sister, the colour just lies there for an instant, and then fades. It is so like a servant-maid to blush up to one's eyes."

"I wish you would not think about all that," said Frank.

"If we could always be alone together, I think I should be happy. Just now, when we sat hand in hand on the boat for those minutes, quiet by ourselves in the middle of such a beautiful world, I think I was more happy than I have ever been before. But it was all past when we landed among the people. It is something new and tiresome that has come over me; I never used to have these thoughts about myself. I suppose that is why I am so awkward, that I have not taken pains to think about what I ought to do. And now are you not coming home with me to Constantine Villas? You have been so kind and patient with me this afternoon."

"I am so very sorry," he answered, "that I absolutely promised to take my sisters out to a tiresome dance this evening. It is extremely awkward."

"Oh never mind," she said, with a little disappointed sigh, and allowed herself to be put into a hansom, which Frank carefully directed, and then dismissed.

CHAPTER IX.

A FEW days after this Jane came to pay her long-promised visit to Kensington. She arrived in the middle of the afternoon, was cordially received by the ladies, and was presently shown up to her room by Adelaide, who looked round to see whether she had everything she wanted, and then asked her, when she was ready, to find her way down to the drawing-room. They expected her to take off her hat and be with them in a few moments, but when ten minutes, and then a quarter of an hour, and then twenty minutes elapsed, Lady Priscilla began to speculate on the causes of her tarrying, and sent up a servant to say that the ladies were taking tea in the drawing-room, and hoped that she would join them. Jane then appeared in a total metamorphosis of her dress, with the aspect of one who has been unduly hurried. By the dim afternoon twilight they could not understand what it was that she had done to herself. When the lamp was brought in, while carefully avoiding seeming to examine her, and chatting pleasantly all the time, it gradually dawned upon them that she had dressed herself thus prematurely for the evening. In point of fact this was the cause of her delay, but the garment itself was sufficiently nondescript to excuse their hesitation. She had not thought it right to go to the expense of new clothes at this time of year, and so she had allowed herself to be persuaded to do up a light lawn-tennis merino with bows, so as to look quite smart. As Adelaide said afterwards to Edith, "It would have been quite a praiseworthy effort, if the bows had not contrived to be cerise."

The Capuletts had to exercise their utmost powers of tact to preserve her from being conscious of her mistake in dressing so early. There was a good deal of eye-telegraphy, and then Edith carelessly left the room, in time to stroll in again, dressed for the evening before the others needed to retire. By this means Jane was not left alone, and the Capuletts hugged themselves with the idea that she had not observed her own mistake. They were wrong, however, she had observed

it, and had painfully exaggerated it. At dinner she sat between Frank and his father, and in the general kindliness of the welcome she forgot her fears. Lady Priscilla had capitulated altogether, and nobody had now any other notion than to make Jane as comfortable as possible. But as soon as dinner was over, her trials began again.

"I hope," said Adelaide, "that you have not told Jane the surprise that is awaiting her." And Frank protested that he had not.

"Then, dear," said Edith, "will you hurry up with me and get on your cloak, for I hear the carriage now at the door. Mamma cannot go, she is not very well, and Adelaide is staying with her, so I am going to be your chaperone, with Frank and Papa."

It was not until they were in the carriage that Jane ventured to ask whither they were taking her. Edith again protested that it must be a secret, and they all smiled upon her with baffling sweetness. Mr. Capulett took her hand and held it so long that he forgot what it was, and threw it away from him in a fit of abstraction. They rolled on through the long defile of cabs and carriages till they came to Piccadilly, and Jane's conjectures were becoming more and more torturing. Suddenly she bethought herself that she had seen an advertisement of a classical concert that evening, the bill of which had seemed to her very tempting, and she reflected that it could hardly be "inconsistent" to hear Bach and Pergolese. How delightful of the Capuletts to divine what it was which she would like best! The drive seemed interminable, but she was too innocent to suspect that we do not go to the uttermost parts of the Strand to hear chamber-music. The carriage stopped at last under a flaring portico. They were rapidly hustled out to allow the next comers to alight, and Jane entered with the rest, dimly conscious of two rows of ill-dressed hungry-faced spectators, a windy flare of lamps, a bright procession of ladies with crape shawls, white and orange and grass-green. She found herself in a large vestibule, full of people in evening dress, and a proportion of men, whose expression vaguely appealed to her as non-classical. She began to be terribly embarrassed.

"What is this place, Frank?" she whispered, but at that moment he was apologising to a lady whose voluminous train he had touched with his foot, and she received no answer. They descended down a corridor between blank walls, and then were suddenly ushered into a little room, very dark and mysterious, which had no wall on the side that faced them. There was a squeaking sound of the loud tuning of fiddles somewhere beneath them. Edith seated herself in the front of the box, and pulling a chair beside her forward for Jane, said:

"Now you know where you are? But do you know what it is we are going to see? The first night of 'Cymbeline.' I dote on first nights, and we were so dreadfully afraid we were not going to get this box. The managers don't seem to remember papa quite as much as they used to do." Her pale cheeks were lighted up with enthusiasm, and as she peered down into the stalls, and surveyed the rapidly-filling boxes, she prattled on, and never thought to notice that Jane was leaning back against the wall of the box, pale with dismay and perplexity. But Frank noticed it.

"I was so afraid you would not come if we told you," he whispered. "I did not tell them that you had never been to the theatre; in our play-going household no one would realise the possibility of such a thing. But here you are at last, and now the ice is broken, I am sure you will enjoy yourself."

But Jane was wretched. A scruple of conscience, inherited without reflection from a long line of ancestors, is not so easily broken through, or defied with impunity. As the play proceeded, and as Edith gave herself up more and more to the intoxication of the evening, to that charm of the footlights which had been a second nature to her since she was a child, nothing but her politeness prevented her from showing how much Jane's coldness disappointed her. She put it down to want of intelligence, to an unsympathetic primness. Jane all the while was shrinking back as much into the darkness as possible. From a desire to avoid attention she fixed her eyes on the stage, but with a dull sort of terror on her which destroyed all pleasure. When there came a round of applause, or a lamp was broken by the excess of heat, her breath caught in her throat as if her sin had found her out.

She was not stupid, as Edith thought. She was saying to herself all the time, this frightened feeling is quite unreasonable—these people, and such as they, meet here every night, and go away unscathed—it is an old-fashioned and bigoted notion that there is any harm in all this, and if there were harm in it, it is not my fault, I was brought here unwittingly. She repeated these reflections to herself, and thought of Naaman in the house of Rimmon, but that did not make her happy. By and by the heat and the glare and the thin perfume of bergamot that rose from the

stalls began to make her drowsy, so drowsy that she could scarcely keep her lids apart; and when the last rounds of prolonged applause had roused her, and the ladies drew their cloaks about them in the darkened box, she rose with a feeling of exquisite shame at her want of *savoir faire.* In the carriage going home Edith was almost silent. To Mr. Capulett's inquiry how Jane had enjoyed it, she answered with pathetic alacrity, "Oh! it was very amusing, thank you," and then sank back by Edith's side.

This feeling of discouragement, however, passed off with a good night's sleep, and Jane steeled herself to put her habits and prejudices aside, and to share, as far as her conscience would permit her, the ways and thoughts of her hosts. It must be said that on their side the Capuletts made every concession to her inexperience. There was not a word, a sign, to show that they noted any difference between her mode of doing things and their own. They were not ungenerous, and having fought against the alliance and having been worsted, their capitulation was final, and they were too well-bred to keep up a sullen skirmishing on points of detail. None the less they felt, and could not prevent Jane from feeling doubly, the total unlikeness of her ideal of life from theirs; and if this prevented them from being entirely at their ease, it thwarted her at every turn and discouraged her at every moment. A great change came over her manner during the few days that she was with them. Her frank, almost bluff carriage, with its bright Amazonian charm, gave way to a hesitating, awkward manner, like that of a rather stupid child who is in the habit of being reproved for every action. When she was happy, and therefore natural and pleasing, was only when she was taken out of herself, when Edith allowed her to sit with her, and instead of trying to entertain her, became absorbed in her own harp-practice, or when Frank and she read to one another in the library. Jane read aloud with propriety, not very prettily, but much more easily and intelligibly than the Miss Capuletts, who had not been taught to enunciate; Jane was shy of verse, which indeed she had little taste for, but she read prose without fatigue, and so as to give genuine pleasure. As she glided smoothly down the pages of *John Inglesant,* Lady Priscilla, leaning her head luxuriously back among her cushions, could not banish the little secret thought, how much more welcome Jane would have been to her as a lady-companion than as a daughter.

On the last night of Jane's visit, the Capuletts gave the musical party which had been the subject of conversation in the family for three weeks past. Jane's visit had been studiously arranged so as to include this entertainment, and she was constantly congratulated on it as a thing which would be sure to delight her. Her love of music was known, and she had already been taken to one afternoon public concert, which she had genuinely enjoyed without reserve. The party was carefully planned, and went off remarkably well. Lady Priscilla, whose neuralgia had left her at the first beck of personal excitement, laboured for her guests with heroic forethought, aided by her genuine hospitality. When the ladies were gathered in state in the reception-room, while Frank and his father leaned over the mantelpiece and examined their shirt-fronts in the mirror, Lady Priscilla had time to glance round and pronounce that all was right before the first sound of wheels on the gravel set their pulses beating. Edith and Adelaide had taken the privilege of future sisters to adapt Jane's dress more to their liking. They had taken off the dreadful cerise bows, they had dressed her hair more loosely, and they had arranged some pale chrysanthemums in the bosom of her dress.

The rooms were fairly large, a suite of three pieces opening into one another, and ending in a dim conservatory. Lady Priscilla had avoided the error of over-crowding them, and her company moved about with ease, in a comparative width of space which rendered it possible for the ladies to display their toilettes to advantage, and form in groups that were picturesque as well as entertaining. The music was installed in the large room, where after about an hour it became incessant. The Bishop of Wisbeach, who adored music, had been secured by a promise of hearing the Dragonetta play, and Lady Priscilla's only moment of dismay was felt when the prelate came and the pianiste delayed her coming. Jane Baxter sat on her sofa and watched the world around her with vast entertainment, herself but very little observed. The Bishop, with his large ugly mask, and the kind eyes behind it, sat beside her chatting for five minutes, and showed no sign of consciousness that she was a Dissenter. Sir Eusebius Holcroft, small and sparkling, and Lady Holcroft, large and sentimental, an inseparable pair, brought the blood to Jane's cheeks with a fresh thought of her maladroit invasion of Wycherley Passage, but they were not introduced to her, and her agitation subsided. Frank was gallant, and kept close

beside her, telling her the names of the guests, and solicitous for her comfort and dignity; while the entrance of Mr. Leyoncrona gave her the additional comfort of one friendly face to glance at.

At last it was evident to Jane, without any intelligence from Frank, that the guest of the evening had arrived. "Here she is at last, Bishop," murmured Lady Priscilla to her cousin, as she swept in rustling beatitude towards the new-comer, and a little movement went through the rooms as if an event had occurred. Jane was fairly astonished at the entry of the Dragonetta. She was a tall, fierce personage, with a strident voice and a loud uncompromising laugh. Her complexion had, Jane knew not what, of the perplexing and distressing in its vivid whites and reds. Her hair stood out in a multitude of rolls and loops, and her dress, which was the only really low one in the room, was a maze of lace and flamboyant emerald ribbands. She was pinched to a wasp-like slenderness at the waist, and her hands were encased up to the elbow in yellow gloves. But her garments were nothing in comparison with her manner, her incredible manner, and Jane watched her as if she were a brilliant insect of vast size, one bite of which would certainly be fatal. Presently the Dragonetta released herself from the circle of her admirers, laughing all the time to excess and showing her glittering teeth, and after curtsying in the most florid style to the Bishop, she sat herself down at the grand piano with a preliminary crash of the keys that brought everybody crowding to the doorways. Frank made way for his guests, and retired to the outer room, where the plash of the little warm fountain in the conservatory rivalled the tenderer passages of the Dragonetta's performance in volume. Jane, meanwhile, was lost in wonder and delight, as the artist, now in her element, revealed the source of her fascination, as she brought out all the fire and romantic effect of a great sonata of Beethoven's. This, too, Jane saw, was a life that was lived to a good purpose, though so strangely distant from any ideal which had ever before come within her ken. And the final fugue, in the execution of which the pianiste's audacity and vigour carried her above all her contemporaries, was entirely missed by Jane, who sat lost in a wondering comparison between her own old life within its narrow comfortable limits, and the new life that was opening before her such startling horizons.

(*To be Continued.*)

A GIRL OF MOROCCO.

Engraved by R. TAYLOR, *from a Drawing by* G. L. SEYMOUR.

The English Illustrated Magazine.

JUNE, 1886.

MY FRIEND JIM.

CHAPTER VII.

HE hero of this narrative is, of course, Jim Leigh. It is true that Jim is not and never has been a particularly heroic personage; still, so far as writer and readers are concerned, he stands, for the time being, in that proud position, and must abide by the consequences of it. One of these is necessarily the occurrence of a considerable hiatus in the record of his career; for what is an unfortunate writer to do when his hero disappears into the interior of Abyssinia, or the least frequented provinces of India, and will give no account of himself for months together? If I only knew something of the circumstances under which, during all those years, Jim slaughtered lions and tigers and elephants and bears in the happy hunting grounds of three continents, I should doubtless have many a thrilling adventure to chronicle; but I could never get anything but the most bald and meagre recital of his performances out of him; nor do I dare to draw upon my imagination, for my own sporting experiences do not extend beyond the shooting of partridges and pheasants, and even those I am very apt to miss, when flurried.

Unfortunately, too, Jim is one of the worst correspondents I have ever had to deal with. I did indeed receive letters from him with tolerable regularity; but for any information of interest that they contained, they might as well have been written upon the back of a post-card. "It is awfully hot here, but I have got accustomed to it and don't mind. Yesterday we were very lucky, killing two fine tigers; but our average so far has been hardly up to the mark. . . . . . The top of Mount Everest is 29,000 feet above the sea, which seems a lot. I wonder why they never taught us modern geography when we were boys. . . . . . I find that there is nothing like cold tea for quenching the thirst." And so forth, and so forth. That is scarcely the kind of thing that one wants to hear from a man who has quitted his native land in a state of bitter disenchantment and misanthropy, and who at the end of six years ought surely to be much better or much worse than when he started.

Jim never alluded to his misfortunes, nor made any inquiry as to the fate of those who had caused them. I generously gave him a few items of intelligence without having been asked; but he did not refer to them in his replies, and in like manner he ignored my representations that owners of landed property ought not to be absentees for an indefinite period. Once or twice he spoke vaguely of coming home, but something always occurred to make him postpone his return, until, as I have said, he had been wandering about the world for no less than six consecutive years.

In the course of that time we who remained in England had all grown six years older; it may be that some of us had grown a little wiser, though I am not sure of it; and some had grown, if not famous, at least notorious. As for me, I had fulfilled my tutor's negative prediction, and had not set the Thames on fire. Nevertheless, I had so far succeeded in my calling as to be always provided with a sufficiency of work, and remunerated by what I suppose I must call a sufficiency of pay. Also I had largely extended the circle of my acquaintance, and, during certain months of the year, went a good deal into society, where

every now and then it was my great good fortune to meet with somebody who had never written a book nor even contributed to a magazine. I have always found such persons exceptionally clever and entertaining, but they are becoming more and more rare, and will soon, I fear, be extinct. The others —the majority, I mean, who have at one time or another put their ideas into print— are given to making conversation dreary for a poor man who gets his living out of literature, and who would naturally rather talk about any other subject under the sun in play-hours.

Now it came to pass that one hot afternoon in the height of the London season I had returned to my chambers, physically and mentally exhausted, after an intellectual luncheon-party, and was saying to myself—with very great truth and justice—that of all forms of social cruelty luncheon-parties are the most wantonly malignant, when a loud rat-tat, as from a heavy stick, made me glance at the door, through which, after an instant of delay, there strode into my presence a tall, broad-shouldered, bronzed individual, who had Jim Leigh's eyes and nose, surmounting a black moustache and beard entirely unknown to me. The nose, however, was enough to swear by; and I don't know when in the course of my life I have been more delighted to behold a familiar and prominent feature. I welcomed him with a warmth which I hope was as agreeable to him as it was sincere on my part, and he smiled all over his face, quite like the Jim of old; so that I freely forgave him his beard.

"And now that you have come back at last, you mean to stay at home, like a respectable English country gentleman, I trust," said I, after I had made him comfortable with an arm-chair and a cigar, and something cold to drink.

"Well—I suppose so," he answered, with a shade of hesitation. "To tell you the truth, I'm utterly sick and tired of foreign lands, and I should like nothing better than to settle down at Elmhurst for the rest of my days."

"What should prevent you from doing as you like? You can't mean that you haven't got over the trouble that drove you away yet?" said I, for I thought we had better come to the point at once.

"I believe I have got over it, I don't know for certain," he answered slowly. "Let us talk about something else. Tell me all about yourself."

So I told him all about myself, and his observations upon my literary achievements were flattering and discriminating, though I think he was a little bit nervous lest I should ask him whether he had read my works. Then we went on to speak of friends of former years.

"Poor old Lord Staines is still alive, I hear," he remarked.

"He is still alive," I replied, "and not likely to die, so far as I know; but you would hardly recognise him. On sunny mornings one meets him in a bath-chair in the park, with Lady Mildred walking beside him. He doesn't talk much nowadays, but he likes to see people, and he seems to be quite happy when he is allowed to have his little grandson with him. I told you that he was reconciled with the Bracknells long ago."

Jim nodded. "And how do they get on?" he inquired, asking the question with something of an effort.

"Many people are curious to know," I answered. "That is, if you mean, how do they manage to pay their way? They are said to get on together rather indifferently. On the other hand, they have got on in society with a success which leaves nothing, or very little, to be desired. Lady Bracknell has climbed to the very top of the tree, and sits there in a graceful attitude to be gaped at by a multitude of admirers. She likes admiration, as you will remember, and takes some pains to obtain it. She is very accessible, too, in spite of her brilliant position, and if you will go and call upon her in Wilton Place I am sure she will be glad to see you, and will begin exercising her fascinations upon you without loss of time."

"Don't!" said Jim.

But I went on all the same. "You had better call upon her; I don't think she will fascinate you, my dear Jim. Her hair has changed colour; it is a lovely bronze now, but her complexion requires no aid from art. She dresses exquisitely; she is addicted to private theatricals; and once or twice in the season she makes her father-in-law give a ball, and receives his guests for him, so that Lady Mildred may be free to remain by his side, in case he should want anything. When he snubs her, as he does every now and again, she won't allow him to see little Lord Sunning for a day or two. That brings him to his bearings, and he has to go round to Wilton Place in his bath-chair and apologise."

"I don't want to hear about her," said Jim. He added presently: "I suppose you sometimes see Bracknell, don't you?"

I replied that I did. As a matter of fact, I had latterly been a good deal in Wilton

Place, because I am credited with a certain facility for drilling amateur actors, and Lady Bracknell had found me useful in helping her to arrange the plays with which she was wont to entertain distinguished audiences from time to time.

"I wonder," said Jim, "whether he ever feels sorry for having treated me as he did. We used to be friends, you know, and—and I don't think he can quite have realised what an injury he was doing me."

That seemed likely enough; but I was unable to say that I had observed any signs of an awakened conscience in Bracknell. "I know exactly what will happen," I remarked. "You will be as great friends as ever by the end of the week; and before a fortnight is over he will have borrowed a sum of money from you which may probably be represented by four figures. What is the use of your trying to bear malice, Jim? You ought to have thrashed Bracknell six years ago. You could have thrashed him without any great difficulty; the process would have been consolatory to you and salutary to him. But instead of doing that, you chose to expend your wrath slowly upon unoffending lions and tigers, and the consequence is that you haven't a spark of it left for home consumption. You are dying to shake hands with your enemy now—you know you are."

"I don't know that I am particularly anxious to shake hands with him," said Jim, consideringly. "I would rather not think of him as a traitor, that's all. You see, it does make a difference if a man says he is sorry."

I was beginning to point out that expressions of sorrow must be taken for what they are worth, and that, although it may be right to pardon a man who has shamefully deceived you, it is extremely foolish to put faith in him again, when I was interrupted by the entrance of a second visitor, and who should this prove to be but Bracknell himself!

It was an odd coincidence that had brought him to my chambers on that afternoon of all others; for he had never so far honoured me before; but he had evidently not come with any idea of meeting Jim, whom he glanced at with an impatient frown and did not recognise. Jim was certainly altered, but Bracknell was perhaps even more so. He had lost his good looks to a great extent, and carried more superfluous flesh than he was entitled to at his age. His constitution was a fine one, but I believe he mixed his liquors in an appalling manner, and one can't sit up all night and every night, playing cards, without exhibiting traces of fatigue.

Jim stared at him in a sort of consternation; no doubt the change in his former friend was more apparent to him than it was to me. As he did not see fit to declare himself, the duty of making him known devolved upon me, and I watched with some interest the demeanour of the two men who were thus unexpectedly brought face to face once more. Jim got up slowly, looking very grave, and said, "How do you do, Bracknell?" But Bracknell burst into a laugh and seized his old schoolfellow by the hand.

"Jim Leigh, as I'm a living sinner!" he exclaimed. "Dear old Jim! Where on earth have you been concealing yourself for the last hundred years? Didn't somebody tell me you were going in for big game in Central Africa or somewhere? I wish I had been with you! Let me know when you start off again, and I'll see if I can't get out of this for a few months. By Jove! what a relief it would be!"

It was so evident that he had completely forgotten the trifling circumstance of his having once robbed Jim of a wife that I was shaken by internal laughter, and had to turn away to conceal my emotion; but Jim, I dare say, saw nothing to laugh at in such callousness.

"I don't think I am likely to be making any more expeditions of the kind yet a while," he answered coldly. "I have stayed away from England too long as it is."

"Have you?" said Bracknell, whose attention was already beginning to wander. "Well, I don't know; England's a beastly country to live in, unless one has about thirty thousand a year, clear. You don't mind my smoking, do you, Maynard?"

I said I did not; and he added, lowering his voice slightly, "I want just to have a word or two with you presently, if you're not busy."

Jim took this rather broad hint, and put on his hat. After I had ascertained his address, and had arranged a meeting with him for the following day, he turned to go; but Bracknell, starting out of a fit of abstraction, caught him suddenly by the elbow with renewed cordiality.

"Going to stay in London for a bit?" he asked. "You must look us up in Wilton Place, old chap. You know my wife?"

"I had the pleasure of being rather intimately acquainted with Lady Bracknell some years ago," replied Jim grimly.

"Oh yes, of course. Well, she'll be very glad to see you again. Come and dine with us some evening. I expect we're pretty deeply engaged just now, but I'll drop you a line."

When Jim had departed, I could not help

remarking, "It must be very convenient to have such a bad memory as yours."

Bracknell was apparently preoccupied. "Bad memory? How do you mean?" he asked. "Oh, I see! But it would be more to the purpose to pity Leigh for having such a confoundedly good one, wouldn't it? He looked as sulky as a bear. I say, Maynard, will you do me a small favour?"

"That depends upon what it may be," I answered.

"Oh, it isn't much of a one. You know the editor of the *Piccadilly Gazette*, don't you? Well, just run your eye over this paragraph that he has put into his scurrilous paper."

He drew a newspaper from his pocket and pointed to the following oracular announcement:

"A certain noble earl is not quite so enfeebled in intelligence as is sometimes supposed. Not satisfied with knowing that his son is heir-presumptive to a vast estate, he is moving heaven and earth to get his daughter married to the present holder thereof: so that, in case of the advent of an heir-apparent upon the scene, the property may at least remain in the family. And yet the heir-presumptive is not happy, they say."

"I don't want Alf Beauchamp to read that sort of thing, you know," said Bracknell.

"I can well believe that you don't," I answered; "but how do you propose to prevent him from reading it, since it is already in print?"

"Oh, that's nothing. Very likely he won't see it; and if he does see it, the odds are that he won't understand. What I want is to stop this newspaper brute from speaking more plainly. You might be a good fellow and manage it for me. Tell him we'll invite him to dinner if he likes, and if that won't do, find out what will do. I suppose he has his price."

"Very likely he has," I answered, "and I am much flattered by your intrusting me with this delicate mission. But I am like the editor—I demand my *quid pro quo*, and if I do this for you, you will have to do something for me."

"With all the pleasure in life; but it isn't much that I can do for any man, except ask him to dinner."

"You can do a little more for Jim Leigh, whom I think you will admit that you have treated rather badly. First of all, you can beg his pardon. Is that too bitter a pill for you to swallow?"

"Oh, I'll beg his pardon, if it will make him any happier," answered Bracknell, laughing.

"Secondly, you must promise that you will neither ask him to play cards with you, nor borrow money of him."

Bracknell opened his eyes. "Do you know, Maynard," said he, "that that is not very far removed from being an impertinent request?"

I replied that I might have said much the same thing of the request which he had addressed to me. Anyhow, I must have his promise, or I should not go to the office of the *Piccadilly Gazette*.

So he laughed again and gave the required pledge, and went his way, leaving me somewhat reassured as to Jim's future. Lady Bracknell, I knew, would try to make him fall in love with her again; but I was not much afraid of her succeeding. Clever as she was, she was not quite clever enough to understand that the surest way of disgusting Jim would be to show him that she was no more true to the husband whom she had chosen than she had been in days gone by to himself.

CHAPTER VIII.

One morning not long after this, Jim did me the honour to breakfast with me, and gave me an account of his first interview with Lady Bracknell, which amused me very much and contrasted favourably in point of style with his epistolary efforts.

"I thought," said he, "that I had better call and get it over; so I went to Wilton Place about six o'clock in the afternoon, hoping that she would be in the Park and that I might leave my card and retire. But as she was at home, I had to march into the drawing-room, feeling a little shy and awkward, don't you know, as one does after spending such a long time out of reach of civilisation. I dare say I got rather red in the face, and I was horribly conscious that my boots squeaked. There were a lot of men in the room, young fellows with bouquets in their button-holes and very high collars—I hear you call them 'mashers' nowadays—and they all opened their eyes and mouths at me, which was like their impudence. I confess that they made me uncomfortable at first; but after a bit I recollected that if I had ordered the eldest of them to run up to the Brocas for me eight or nine years ago he would have put his best leg foremost, and that set me more at my ease. Besides, I almost forgot them from the moment that Hilda began to talk to me. My dear Harry,

what an extraordinary—what a miraculous change! You never prepared me for anything of the sort."

"I told you that her hair had become debased from gold to copper," I remarked. "If I didn't prepare you for any more startling change, it was because I must own that I can't detect any."

"Can't detect any! Do you mean to tell me that Lady Bracknell is the same woman as Hilda Turner? Oh, I know what you are grinning at; you think the change is in me and that there never was really any such person as the Hilda whom I was in love with. Perhaps you are right; but for all that, she has transformed herself into something very unlike what she used to be. She doesn't look a day older, and speaking impartially—as I can now—I should say that she is prettier, if anything; but oh, dear! I didn't like her ways of going on at all. She is quite the modern great lady; she has all the fashionable slang at the tip of her tongue; and she said things which—which—well, I hate to hear ladies say such things. And it struck me that the mashers were anything but respectful to her. As I listened to her, I wondered how I could ever have been such an idiot—but no matter! You said she wouldn't fascinate me, and most certainly she didn't. I am quite cured, Harry, and I suppose I ought to be very glad, but when one has nursed a complaint for years it makes one feel rather queer to lose it all of a sudden. The sensation is something like having a double tooth out. It's a good riddance, of course; but it seems to leave an enormous gap behind it. Well, those young swells took themselves off, one by one, until she and I were left alone, and then—do you know what she did then?"

"To be sure I do," I replied. "She drew her chair close up to yours, put her head a little on one side, gazed pensively at you, and presently gave you to understand that you were the only man whom she had ever loved with pure affection."

"Oh, no; she didn't go quite that length; though I must say—However, perhaps I ought not to tell you."

"I do not see the use of having a tried and trusted friend if he is not to be let into your confidence. I think you decidedly ought to tell me what she did," said I. For I wanted to know.

"Well," Jim continued, "she began by abusing Bracknell—said he was a drunkard and a spendthrift, and that he ill-treated her, and I don't know what all. Fancy a woman speaking about her husband like that!"

Evidently this was a new and distasteful experience to Jim. "Perhaps it was true, though," I suggested.

"If it was, she ought to have been the last person to say so," returned that hard-hearted Jim. "But, between ourselves, I don't believe it was true. She has told me untruths before now, and why shouldn't she tell them again? I tried to stop her; but it wasn't a bit of good. She went on about her marriage having been a mistake and about her having been drawn into it and having repented when it was too late, and so forth. Do you suppose she says that sort of thing to everybody?"

I replied that I really didn't know; but that probably she endeavoured to suit her conversation to her auditor.

"Her conversation didn't suit *me*, at all events," returned Jim emphatically. And then he told me how Bracknell had begged his pardon in a very frank and manly way for the wrong that he had done him six years before.

"I went to call at Portman Square the next day," he continued. "Poor old Lord Staines was always kind to me when I was a boy, and I think it amused him to hear all about my adventures. He wanted to know whether I had seen little Sunning yet, and began to brag about the boy and his pluck and his beauty very much as he used to brag about Bracknell long ago. Poor old fellow! it was rather sad to hear him. He said, 'I hope you and Bracknell have made it up,' and when I told him that we had, he muttered, 'That's right—that's right. Old friends oughtn't to quarrel about a woman. Women aren't worth quarrelling about.' After which, he pushed his chair back and made a little bow to Lady Mildred. 'I don't mean you, my dear,' he said; 'you're worth your weight in gold, as everybody knows.' I remember your mother used always to be telling me that Lady Mildred was perfection, but somehow I never noticed in those days how pretty she was. I suppose I had only eyes for one person then. Ah, well! times are changed. I'd very much rather talk to Lady Mildred than to Lady Bracknell now. I had a long chat with her while her father dozed over the newspaper. It was pleasant to find that she hadn't forgotten me at all, though she said she would hardly have known me with my beard, which she didn't consider an improvement."

"Is that why you have shaved it off?" I inquired; for indeed Jim's long, thin face had been deprived of that ornament.

"Oh, well, one doesn't want to look more

like a backwoodsman than one can help, you know," he answered. "As I was saying, Lady Mildred and I had a good talk and discussed you all and enjoyed ourselves very much, until one of Lady Bracknell's mashers came in and interrupted us. A fellow called Beauchamp—do you know anything of him?"

"Alfred Beauchamp," I replied, "is a young man whom everybody knows something about, by reason of his being quite in the front rank of eligible bachelors. His rent-roll is said to exceed forty thousand a year; also he has coal-mines which, I believe, are expected to go on increasing in value. He is the only surviving son of the late Lady Staines's brother, and in the event of his dying without issue, the whole of his property would pass to Bracknell. As it would be dangerous to count upon his doing anything so obliging as that, the family have decided to marry him to Lady Mildred; only I imagine that they haven't ventured to tell him so, because, of course, he is his own master, and he might insist upon his right to choose a wife for himself. Did Lady Mildred receive him well?"

"I don't know what you call receiving him well," answered Jim, looking a little displeased. "She was civil to him; but I didn't stay long after he came in. I must say that he struck me as being rather a young fool and certainly not good enough for her. Do you suppose that she *wants* to marry him?"

"Lady Mildred is a dutiful daughter," I replied, "and Lord Staines is notoriously in embarrassed circumstances. I can't say for certain what she may want, but I think I can form a pretty shrewd guess at what she will have to do. She is not so very much to be pitied, after all. There are very few girls in London who would refuse Alfred Beauchamp, I can tell you."

"Ah, you're just what you used to be!" exclaimed Jim impatiently. "Why should you always take such a delight in representing that everybody is selfish and sordid?"

I pointed out that I had made no such general arraignment and that, so far as Lady Mildred was concerned, I had meant to imply that, if she married her cousin, she would probably do so from motives of filial and disinterested affection; but Jim did not seem disposed to listen to me.

"I dare say you know more about it than I do," he interrupted. "Anyhow, it's no business of mine."

I did not tell him that I had reason to doubt whether poor Lady Mildred would be happy with Beauchamp. My mother still maintained that the girl's heart had been given past recalling to Jim; but it would have been a pity to hint at such a state of things; because he was evidently a little smitten with her, and it was quite certain that she could not now accept him, whether he wore a beard or not. So I agreed with him that these projected marriages in high life did not concern humble individuals like ourselves, and suggested, by way of changing the subject, that we should drive up to Lord's to see the Eton and Harrow match, as we had previously arranged to do.

Nothing is more futile and foolish than to say "Matters used to be better managed in old days." Such assertions are never believed, and are tolerably sure either to give offence or to provoke covert sneers. At the same time, I should think that there can be few admirers of the present so infatuated as to deny that Lord's on the Eton and Harrow match-day has suffered a change for the worse. It is no longer the pleasant meeting-place that it once was; it is frequented by a vast concourse of people who care neither for Eton, nor for Harrow, nor for cricket; and as for chancing unexpectedly upon an old schoolfellow, you have a far better chance of doing that in Pall Mall or St. James's Street than in the midst of such a rabble. Jim and I threaded our way, grumbling, through the deep fringe of spectators, whose persons and vehicles effectually prevented us from catching a glimpse of the game, and, having been provided with tickets by a member, were about to turn these to account when we were arrested by hearing our names called out in a high, clear voice which was familiar to both of us. From the open carriage in which she was sitting, surrounded, as usual, by fashionable youths, Lady Bracknell beckoned to us to approach, and we could not do otherwise than obey her orders. Her ladyship was clad in Eton blue from the crown of her head to the sole of her foot, and very becoming the colour was to her. She attacked Jim at once.

"Come and talk to me," she said; "I have a thousand things to ask you. You don't want to look at that stupid cricket, do you?"

Jim, with a self-assertion for which I should not have given him credit, replied, "Well, I came here for that purpose." But probably the reluctance of the fly acts as an agreeable stimulus upon the spider.

"You shall go and look at it presently," Hilda said, and signed to him to get into the carriage beside her.

So I left them together and strolled on, feeling truly sorry for poor Jim, because I am sure that it must be a most unpleasant

thing to be obliged to talk to a woman with whom you have once been madly in love and whom you love no longer.

I had not proceeded very far before I came upon the Staines party—old Lord Staines lying back in his carriage, propped up by cushions which kept slipping down and demanded careful watching on the part of Lady Mildred; little Lord Sunning, standing upon his grandfather's knee to get a better view of the game; and Alfred Beauchamp, leaning over the carriage door and blowing cigarette-smoke into his cousin's face.

I stopped to speak to them, and Lord Staines said, "So your friend Leigh is back again at last, is he?—back at last, eh? Stupid fellow! if he had stayed at home, he'd have got over his disappointment sooner and thanked Heaven for it. I see more than that young woman fancies—more than she fancies by a long way."

The old gentleman had contracted a disquieting habit of thinking aloud. He went on muttering to himself now, and I dare say that if his remarks had been audible, they would have been found to be uncomplimentary to his daughter-in-law, whom he detested; but who, nevertheless, had reduced him to a state of tolerably complete subjection.

Lady Mildred looked a little nervous, I thought, and went on talking very fast to Beauchamp, a fair-complexioned young man, whose conversational powers were not brilliant, yet who was by no means such a fool as Jim had hastily assumed him to be. It struck me that he was bringing his mind to bear upon the thought that it might be a good thing if he were to marry his cousin and that he was succeeding very fairly well.

However, his attentions, if such they were, were soon interrupted. Little Sunning, who was rather a friend of mine, had clambered from his grandfather's knee on to my shoulder and had just dealt a resounding blow upon the top of my hat, by way of applause to a retiring batsman, when a vision of sky-blue flitted before my eyes, and a high-pitched voice (I forget whether I have mentioned that Hilda's voice had a metallic ring which no efforts on her part availed to soften) said: "You are a nice sort of person to make appointments with, Mr. Beauchamp! May I ask whether you remember begging me to bring you here to-day? And are you aware that I kept the carriage waiting for you three quarters of an hour?"

And then I heard Beauchamp murmuring excuses from the background. "By Jove! Lady Bracknell, I'm so awfully sorry. What an idiot I am! Can't think how I came to forget it!"

There was an indistinct rejoinder, followed by a gradual dying away of both voices, from which I concluded that her ladyship had taken the young man by the ear and led him off. Having persuaded Sunning that he would be more comfortable, and that I should be cooler, if he got up on to the box, and having thus regained the power of turning my head round, I perceived that Jim had taken Beauchamp's place and was conversing with Lady Mildred, whose eyes had grown perceptibly brighter during the last few minutes. She certainly looked very pretty in her white dress, and I could not wonder at the satisfaction which Jim obviously derived from gazing at her, but it was unlucky, to say the least of it, that he should have taken such a long time to discover her beauty. Six years before, when Alfred Beauchamp had had a father and an elder brother living, there might have been some hope for him; but his chance was now represented by a zero of a type so clear that one could only hope he might be enough of a reasonable being to see it. Reasonableness, however, was not his distinguishing characteristic.

Presently Bracknell made his way to the carriage and mounted the box beside his son. He took no notice of us, but hoisted the boy upon his knee, and they two became absorbed in contemplation of the game, the elder making occasional explanations to the younger which were listened to with interest and respect. I suppose paternal fondness must have been hereditary in the Henley family, for Bracknell was not one whit less foolishly devoted to his boy than his father had been to him in days of yore, and, to all appearance, was bent upon reproducing a system of treatment which had not been conspicuously successful in his own case. The child had Bracknell's dark hair and grey eyes. I could discern no resemblance to his mother in him, nor, in truth, did that strain of blood seem likely to infuse any fresh qualities of a valuable nature into the race.

While I was watching the representatives of three generations, Lady Bracknell and Beauchamp strolled by. The lady was talking with a good deal of animation, and the gentleman wore the air of one who is at once fascinated and puzzled. Bewilderment at the proceedings of Lady Bracknell was not, apparently, confined to him, for Lord Staines, following the pair with his eyes, muttered quite audibly:

"I do wonder what infernal mischief that

woman is up to now! Is it only spite, or is it a plot? And if it's a plot, what the deuce is the object of it, you know?"

Bracknell looked down from the box and laughed. "Well, Maynard," said he, "why are you looking so solemn? Taking notes, as usual? It seems to me that you have all the elements of a sensational romance ready to your hand here. There are bound to be some strong situations before long, I should say, and you had better try to be on the spot when they come off!"

"And what is the *dénouement* to be?" I made so bold as to inquire.

"Oh, don't ask me," he returned. "*I* don't know; and, between you and me, I doubt very much whether anybody else does either. All I can see is that there will be a row soon."

"What's that you say?" broke in Lord Staines querulously. "Why should there be a row? nonsense about a row! I wish to heaven, Bracknell, that you could induce your wife to let me manage my own affairs in my own way."

"I wish I could," returned Bracknell, with a shrug of his shoulders. "I wish I could induce her to let me manage *my* affairs in my own way. But I can't, you see."

CHAPTER IX.

If Lady Bracknell's motives for luring Beauchamp away from her sister-in-law's side were obscure to Lord Staines, they did not to a reflective person appear quite unfathomable. When only one life intervenes between your husband and a large property, it must, no doubt, seem deplorable that that life should be supplemented by others, and I can well believe that to see Beauchamp married would have gone to Hilda's heart, even though he should select as his wife a member of her husband's family. It is true that she can hardly have hoped to keep him permanently single, but she may have taken into consideration that existence is precarious, and that young men addicted to field sports run frequent risks of breaking their necks. Add to this she did not love Lord Staines, while she detested Lady Mildred with the intensity of an impostor who has been found out, and you have an explanation of her conduct which is at least plausible. I don't say that it is the true explanation, because I cannot pretend to be able to follow all the tortuous workings of such a mind as Hilda's; but that the course which events subsequently took was premeditated and contrived by her in cold blood seems to me too violent an hypothesis. In any case, there could be no question as to the fact that she had marked Beauchamp down as her prey, nor did she fail to capture him. The truth is that she very rarely failed in enterprises of that kind. She had no remarkable personal advantages, yet the men whom she wished to adore her almost invariably ended by adoring her. Of the methods which she employed in order to achieve the desired end I have excellent reasons for being ignorant. I suppose that if by an impossibility she had ever thought it worth her while to captivate me, I should have succumbed like the others; but she never did think it worth her while, and therefore I have never ceased to wonder at the ease with which her victims were gained.

Beauchamp gave no trouble at all. He surrendered unconditionally at the first blow, and spent the remainder of the London season upon his knees, metaphorically speaking. I used to meet him and his enchantress pretty frequently at balls and crushes, and always watched them with interest. Other people watched them too, making such spiteful, ironical, or condemnatory comments upon the proceedings of the pair as were prompted by their several dispositions and by the nature of the case: but by the persons who have been introduced into this history it so chanced that they were little remarked. Lady Mildred, who was in constant attendance upon her father, went very seldom into society; Bracknell had of late years ceased to frequent the circles which, as a bachelor, he had so conspicuously adorned; and those of Jim's friends who had not forgotten him during his long absence belonged for the most part to his own sex, and were not in the habit of giving balls. Thus Lady Bracknell was able to carry out her designs unmolested; and as Beauchamp continued to pay visits to Portman Square with unfailing regularity, any anxiety that Lord Staines may have felt on the day of the cricket-match was probably soon allayed.

Sunning, to be sure, very nearly let the cat out of the bag one afternoon when Jim and I called at his grandfather's house. We found him and the old gentleman with a tea-table between them, busily engaged in eating hot buttered toast. Lady Mildred was pouring out the tea, and Beauchamp, reclining in an armchair, looked very much as if he was wondering how soon he might venture to go away.

"I do think it is very dangerous," Lady Mildred was saying as we entered; and after she had shaken hands with us she appealed

for support to Jim. "Mr. Leigh, do you think it is safe for such a mite as Sunning to ride in the Row with nobody but a groom to look after him? And he always makes the groom ride a hundred yards behind."

"From what I have seen of the equestrian performances in the Row, I don't think it is an over and above safe place for anybody to ride in," answered Jim, laughing.

"But seriously," persisted Lady Mildred, "I don't like to think of that child in the thick of such a crowd. He has one of those wicked little Shetland ponies, too, which might overpower him at any moment."

Sunning, with his mouth full of buttered toast, was understood to say that he would like to see the pony that could overpower him.

Lord Staines chuckled. "He can take care of himself—trust him! All the same, I think Bracknell might go out with the boy."

Sunning, having swallowed his toast, informed us that his father never rode in London. "And I mustn't ride with mother when *he's* there," he added, pointing a greasy forefinger at Beauchamp.

"Eh?—what?—who?" ejaculated Lord Staines, pricking up his ears.

And Sunning did not mend matters by continuing, in his lisping, childish treble, "Before he came there was another genkleman, but I think he's gone away now. Mother says not to ride with her when there's a genkleman."

"Would he be so very much in your way?" asked Lady Mildred, turning to Beauchamp, with just the faintest touch of disdain in her voice.

"Not the least in the world," answered the young man. "I am very sorry if I have prevented Lady Bracknell from taking him out, and next time—if there is a next time—I'll make a point of requesting the favour of his company. But really, I don't ride with Lady Bracknell very often."

"Evely day," said the relentless Sunning, emphatically.

This was a little embarrassing, but Beauchamp, though young, was a man of experience, and his serenity was not easily disturbed. "You don't mean to say so!" he exclaimed. "I'm very much ashamed of myself, and I'll apologise to Lady Bracknell the next time I see her. But that is just the sort of stupid thing that I'm always doing. She good-naturedly asked me to ride with her one day, and I suppose I must have kept on going ever since from force of habit. I'll tie a knot in my pocket handkerchief at once, so that I may remember to forget to go to-morrow."

I don't know whether he was only anxious to stifle suspicion, or whether he still contemplated the possibility of an ultimate union with Lady Mildred; but he made great efforts to be agreeable to her during the next quarter of an hour, and when he took his leave Lord Staines, who had evidently been alarmed for a moment, seemed to be quite reassured.

Jim, after we had left the house together, informed me casually that he considered the manners and customs of savages very superior upon the whole, to those of so-called civilised Christians, but declined to enter more fully into the subject, when invited to do so. "It doesn't matter; only that's my opinion." he said.

I am not acquainted with the customs of savages, except by hearsay; but our own, I freely admit, might be improved upon. One very tiresome custom, which, I fear, has become almost endemic among us of late, is that of entertaining long-suffering spectators with *tableaux vivants*. No one who has not been concerned in the getting up of one of these exhibitions can have any idea of the worry and trouble that they entail, though a good many people must be acquainted with the tedium of witnessing them when got up. Still, since they are the fashion, there is of course nothing for it but to submit to them; and Lady Bracknell, who, as I have already mentioned, was dramatically disposed, must needs have her *tableaux*, like everybody else. No part in them was assigned to me; because, as she informed me, with that laughing candour which, for some reason or other, plain people are supposed not to mind, I really was not good-looking enough; but I was allowed the privilege of assisting in the formation of the groups. Beauchamp, it must be assumed, possessed the qualification which Nature had denied to me; for it was at once decided that he should have the honour of figuring in the only *tableau* of the evening which his hostess proposed to grace personally; that, namely, in which her ladyship, as Andromeda, with her beautiful bare arms chained above her head and her bronze hair rippling down over her shoulders, was rescued from destruction by a very Saxon-looking Perseus. I ventured to suggest that Bracknell might represent the monster, but this was considered to be a proposition of doubtful taste, and as no one else volunteered to undertake that ungrateful part, we had to have an appalling creature constructed out of inanimate materials for the occasion.

If only it had been permissible to make use of an inanimate Perseus into the bargain,

I should have been spared much mental wear and tear and a grievous waste of time; for Beauchamp declared that he was physically incapable of standing on one leg for sixty consecutive seconds, and it was obvious that unless he stood upon one leg he would spoil the whole thing. I had to put him through a complete course of gymnastics, and even then it was only by the most diligent punching and kneading that I could force him into an attitude which was not positively grotesque. Whenever I left his side he, so to speak, tumbled to pieces instantly. However, in the long run we achieved as near an approach to success as could be expected, and when the representation came off, this *tableau* was received with tremendous applause. I imagine that the majority of the spectators were lost in admiration of Andromeda's arms and shoulders and had no eyes for poor Perseus, who wobbled perceptibly.

Nevertheless, there were found persons to notice and remark upon Perseus too, if not exactly to admire him; and it chanced that, on the fall of the curtain, I was standing within earshot of one of these. She was an elderly lady, blessed with three marriageable daughters, and in that capacity naturally opposed to the goings on of unscrupulous young matrons, such as Lady Bracknell.

"It really is a little too bad," she said to her neighbour; "and I wonder that Lord Bracknell allows it. Of course we know that he is not over-particular, and, as far as that goes, I dare say his own manner of life doesn't give him the right to be so, but I should have thought that even he would have seen how outrageous this kind of thing is, considering that Mr. Beauchamp is as good as engaged to his sister. Under the circumstances, it's almost indecent."

I was having a little inward laugh at the "almost" in the above outburst of virtuous indignation when I became aware that some one besides myself had overheard it. Leaning against the wall behind me, was Bracknell, who had not thought it necessary to be at home in time to receive his wife's guests. but had now come in—probably from his club. From the scowl upon his brow I concluded that he had been losing money; from the brightness of his eyes I feared that he had been drinking; and from the murderous glance which he shot at the dowager whose speech I have quoted I gathered that her unvarnished strictures were not agreeable to him. He muttered a word or two under his breath and turned away, leaving me in some doubt as to whether he was incensed against his wife or against her critic. But very shortly afterwards all uncertainty as to that point was removed from my mind.

I had been invited to remain for a quiet supper after the departure of the general company. Beauchamp and a few others who had been similarly favoured had already gone down to the dining-room, and I was lingering on the deserted stage with the fair Andromeda, when Bracknell suddenly entered and strode towards us. He either did not notice my presence or was indifferent to it.

"Hilda," he said, "you'll oblige me by dropping this; it has gone far enough. You think yourself very clever, no doubt; but it strikes me that you are in danger of being a little too clever, for once."

She turned slowly and surveyed him with calm contempt. "Had you not better go to bed?" she asked. "Perhaps you may be in a state to explain yourself in the morning."

Bracknell had the family temper and I thought for a moment that he was going to treat us to a display of it; but possibly he may have learnt by experience that storming at his wife was a thankless task. "I am sober enough now," he returned quietly, "to tell you that I don't choose to have Mildred's marriage put a stop to for your gratification. How long do you flatter yourself that that young fool is going to trot about after you. like a lap-dog? Till this time next year? And what do you suppose will happen when you begin to bore him? You do begin to bore people after a certain time, I can assure you."

"I dare say that is quite true," replied Hilda meekly; "you ought to know. Of course I will obey you to the best of my ability; but I am afraid I can no more force Mr. Beauchamp to marry your sister than I can prevent you from insulting me before a third person."

At this juncture the third person executed a strategic movement in the direction of the door. But Bracknell intercepted me.

"You needn't withdraw, Maynard," said he, with a short laugh. "I've nothing more to say, and now we may as well go down and have some supper. I don't often interfere with her ladyship's little games, but I believe she knows that when I do, she must give them up."

I observed, however, a slight smile upon her ladyship's lips which convinced me that, in this instance, she had no intention at all of giving up her little game.

(*To be Continued.*)

BANK HOLIDAY ON YARMOUTH BEACH.
From a Drawing by HELEN H. HATTON.

YARMOUTH AND THE BROADS.

WE take our pleasures sadly, our French critics say. Do we? See Yarmouth on a Bank Holiday, and you will disagree with the French verdict. If we are occasionally coarse in our pleasures, we are not sad—always provided that Yarmouth on a Bank Holiday is a fair example of "the English taking their pleasure." But we are a difficult race to fix with a definite criticism. A critic can only generalise about us. We are a many-sided people, and we have numerous castes. "The English at the sea" would be a puzzling subject for a foreign student of our insular manners and customs. He might, for example, begin his investigations with something like satisfaction in one district, to have them entirely upset in another. He might form settled and comprehensive views at Yarmouth which Eastbourne would contradict. The English as they might appear to him at Ventnor would be a different race from the English he would encounter at Blackpool. British habits that may be eminently characteristic at Hunstanton he would find notable for their absence at Brighton. He would discover that the sea-side occupations of Tenby are entirely different from those in vogue at Margate. If he journeyed from Lowestoft to Torquay he would say the country presented as many contrasts of scenery as there are differences in the manners and customs of the people. When he had arrived at this conclusion, he might emphasise it by a trip from Penzance to Cullercoats, on the north-east coast.

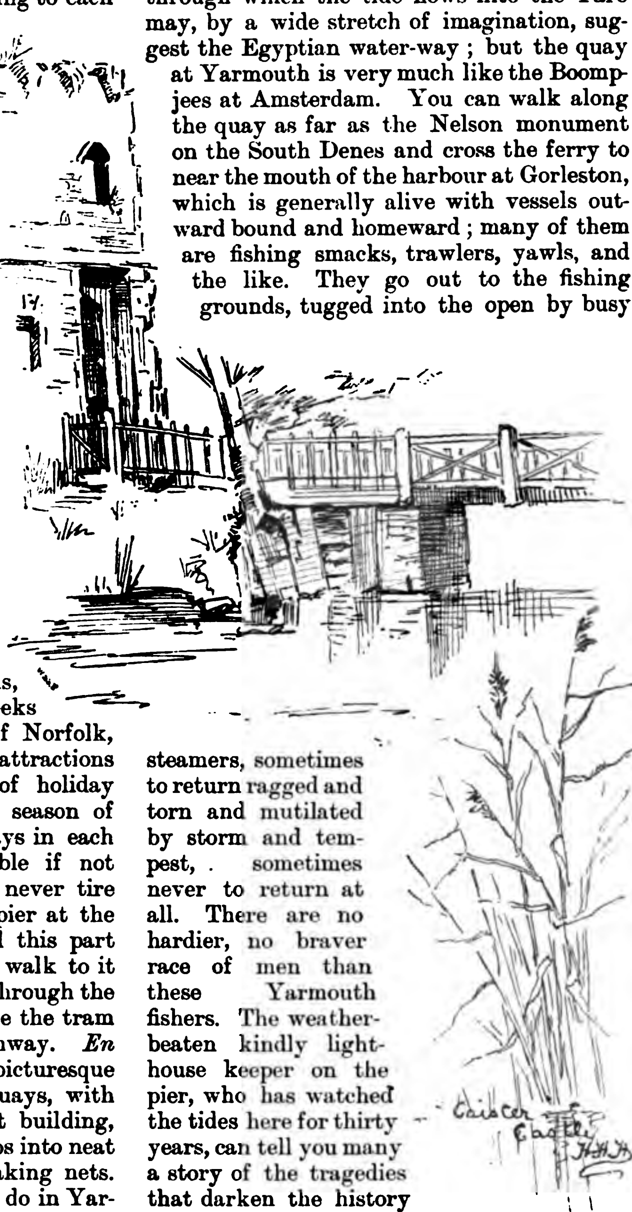
The truth is, we cannot be reckoned up and weighed as other countries may be. The head-quarters of the British empire are so small that the little island has been crammed with every kind of men, women, and scenery as a sort of compensation for its territorial insignificance. We appear to have almost as many dialects as counties, and although I know England pretty well, I never encountered a more strange and mixed crowd than I have seen on "high days and holidays" upon the beach at Yarmouth. Now and then, north, east, west, and south, pour their thousands into Yarmouth by railway and steamboat. They make a descent straightway upon the beach. By an unwritten treaty they engage to occupy little more than the space between the two piers (about half a mile), and here they "chortle in their joy." They belong to the lower middle class; they are small shopkeepers, clerks, and artizans. They bring with them their wives, children, and sweethearts. Most of them are here for the day. They have risen early; they will go home late. The day is theirs and the fulness thereof. And what a day it is! They have come from town and city, from loom and mill, from shops and narrow streets. Here they look upon hundreds of miles of sea and walk upon sand that is a soft carpet unto their feet. They proceed to enjoy themselves. The local caterers know them. The wily traders have provided them with boats, oysters, beer, sweets, open air concerts, donkeys, *al fresco* photographic studios, highly seasoned books, and, on the esplanade, tricycles of every size and pattern. 'Arry and 'Arriet, both mother and father, and Jane and Maria, all of them begin to "go it"—to quote the vernacular. They eat oysters, ride the

donkeys, go to sea in boats, have their photographs taken, listen to the concerts and join in the choruses, bring out from mysterious bags equally mysterious luncheons, give pennies to insinuating beggars, swarm on the piers, dabble in the sea, bathe in it, laugh and scream at their mishaps, and enjoy themselves—sadly? Not at all. You can hear them laughing and singing, screaming and shouting, a mile away. "Fine goings on at Yarmouth," remarked the light-house man at Gorleston, sweeping the shore with his glass, as I smoked a quiet cigar on the pier; "ay, sir, no wonder people as loves a bit of quiet comes to Gorleston."

When they have worked off the first pressure of their physical delight these holiday folk settle down upon the sands in every conceivable attitude, men, women, and children, some protecting themselves from the sun with umbrellas and parasols, others turning their great honest vulgar faces to it and revelling in the heat of it, which is temporised by a sea-breeze or a whiff of white spray from the sea. If you want to get away from the crowd the beach is free to you on the south, from the Wellington pier away to Gorleston, and you can cross the harbour there and wander into breezy deserts of sand; while on the north it is unoccupied from the rifle butts away to Caister and Hemsby, where there are sand-drifts that look like snow. Among the sand of the Denes, which are part of the sea-shore, grasses and flowers flourish to an extent you little dream of until you have prowled through the valleys, or reclined upon the soft yielding slopes to watch the distant ships—steamers from London bound northwards, coasting vessels, white-winged yachts, and brown-winged trawlers, freighted with herrings. One of the most beautiful of the plants that adorn this sandy desert is the sea holly, which makes of the spot where it grows what Mr. Whistler might call a symphony in purple, grey, and gold. The plant has a prickly leaf and a thistle-like flower. The leaf has sharp points as the holly has, but its hue is a soft pearly grey, which becomes purple in the thorny flower. It starts up out of the yellow sand in a strong grey stem without a suggestion of the root that is, no doubt, far below in search of moisture. If you pluck it the stem comes easily out of its bed, as if it had been recently planted there and had no established base. You take it home and put it into a yellow bowl, and wonder at the bountiful and fastidious hand of nature that had grown it in the desert, harmonising its colour with the yellow sand, and making it with other plants an agent in the building up of the embankments of the sea. From these Denes you get picturesque views of Yarmouth, with foregrounds of windmills, and great broad flats.

Whether it comes racing along the adjacent marshes, or over the sea from the distant shores of Holland, the wind is a power here. I wish I could put into this brief sketch the inspiration of its fresh salty flavour, the depth of its organ tones, the music of its rush along the shore. It is surprising how soon the vulgar human associations of the bit of beach, dedicated to cheap excursionists, fade out as you turn your face northwards and wander away upon these breezy Denes with Caister, its picturesque castle, its lifeboat and its gallant beachmen, a short way ahead; how the mind expands and takes in the world of land and sea that stretches away to the horizon whichever way you look; and how quickly you cease to begrudge the distant crowd its holiday of physical frolic and horse-play, its savage revel—intoxicated with the exuberance of its own freedom, as a master of phrases might put it. There was weeping and wailing recently at Caister, when six out of fifteen hardy beachmen were lost in a short voyage of rescue. The pathetic incident becomes tragic when one learns that their boat was stove in by a sunken wreck from which years previously some of them had, at a supreme moment of peril, gallantly taken off a half-drowned crew. Five weeks afterwards I saw a fishing smack tow into Gorleston the body of one of the sturdiest of the lost men. The fishers had seen it in the moonlight and had marvelled at it and were afraid. "It floated so uncommon strange," said one of them, "we didn't know what it might be; but we took it in tow next morning," and when they brought it in alongside of their little craft, it looked like a strong swimmer at his ease, the extended arms and legs rising and falling on the waves. But when the fishing smack was moored to the timbers of the pier and the white, bleached, mutilated face lay on the waters, and the white hands moved to and fro with the tide, what a solemn and ghastly mockery of human nature it was! "Yes, it's Joe Haylett," said one old fisherman, who was called upon to identify the body. "I knew him, and a fine fellow he was; he went out a giant, and this is how he comes home to his wife and children; a man as didn't know fear! They went out with never a cork jacket among 'em, and one of 'em as was picked up through

getting on a bit of timber says one of his mates as was drowning said to him, 'Thee's got a good horse to ride on.' They was actually a talking to each other in the water and one on 'em said good-bye!' "



Yarmouth is not a fashionable place. I say so in spite of the assurance of a local tradesman that if I would visit it in the latter part of September, I should find that it has "quite an aristocratic London season, for a few weeks." One does not go to Yarmouth for fashion, but for sea-air, for sea-fishing, for sea-side head-quarters of inland expeditions. Make it your starting place, your centre of operations, your home, for a month or six weeks loafing on the rivers and broads of Norfolk, and you will say Yarmouth has attractions that condone the disadvantages of holiday crowds. Even in the excursion season of August, there are two or three days in each week when Yarmouth is tolerable if not pleasant. For my own part, I never tire of a lounge on the battered old pier at the mouth of the harbour. They call this part of the town Gorleston. You can walk to it along the South Denes, row to it through the busy waters of the harbour, or take the tram cars that ply thither on the highway. *En route*, upon a tram car, you get picturesque views of the harbour and the quays, with incidents of sawing timber, boat building, landing fish, and at Gorleston peeps into neat cottages with women and girls making nets. You notice along the road, as you do in Yarmouth and the district generally, that most of the vehicular work is done by sturdy ponies. There are many things in Norfolk that remind one both of Holland and America. The local ponies are fast trotters. Much so-called American slang originates in Norfolk and Suffolk, whence the New England States were largely recruited in the old days; and Yarmouth has always been more or less intimate with the fisher-folk of Holland. Frank Buckland called Yarmouth harbour the Suez Canal. The long neck of water through which the tide flows into the Yare may, by a wide stretch of imagination, suggest the Egyptian water-way; but the quay at Yarmouth is very much like the Boompjees at Amsterdam. You can walk along the quay as far as the Nelson monument on the South Denes and cross the ferry to near the mouth of the harbour at Gorleston, which is generally alive with vessels outward bound and homeward; many of them are fishing smacks, trawlers, yawls, and the like. They go out to the fishing grounds, tugged into the open by busy steamers, sometimes to return ragged and torn and mutilated by storm and tempest, . sometimes never to return at all. There are no hardier, no braver race of men than these Yarmouth fishers. The weather-beaten kindly light-house keeper on the pier, who has watched the tides here for thirty years, can tell you many a story of the tragedies that darken the history of the North Sea that rages out yonder on windy days and nights. You will see many of Peggotty's descendants among

CAISTER CASTLE.
From a Drawing by HELEN H. HATTON.

the sailors, strong, sturdy, silent men; but the Yarmouth of *David Copperfield* has long since ceased to exist. If you would seek an idea of what it was you will find it at Gorleston, where the flavour of the old town lingers, and where you can realise the force and power of the sea as it comes thundering upon the worn and seamy timbers of the pier. A storm is a terrific sight at Gorleston. Many a vessel seeking the shelter of the harbour as a forlorn hope has come crashing upon the pier itself. Even the pens of Defoe and Dickens could fall short of depicting the awful grandeur of the sea that leaps upon the pier at Gorleston, and goes thundering along northwards to the Yarmouth jetty, and away to the lifeboat "look out" at Caister. Here and there the gaunt timbers of a sunken wreck right upon the very beach itself, grimly illustrate the ocean story. Dickens makes you feel the chill and fury of the storm, and shows you the pale wet face of the dead; but who shall describe the wash of the waters as they sweep the deck of the doomed ship, the shrieks of the wind, the shuddering timbers, the thud of the spars and blocks as they fall upon the deck, the thunder of the mighty waves beating down the struggling vessel, the blinding spray, and the swirl of the foaming waters? Who shall picture the sunshine that follows, the calm after the tempest, the swell of the blue flood without a broken wave to mark the locale of the few vestiges of wreck that are drifting towards the harbour bar? Such nights and days as these are common off Yarmouth. The sea will lie quiet for days, a veritable lake in its sunny repose. Then you shall see entire fleets of ships windbound in the Roads. At night when they show their various lights, a stranger standing on the esplanade might think he saw a great city with a mighty river between it and Yarmouth. One starlight night in the autumn I counted nearly two hundred vessels at anchor in the Roads. The next morning a breeze sprung up, and the floating city had flown like Aladdin's palace.

THE HARBOUR, GORLESTON.
From a Drawing by HELEN H. HATTON.

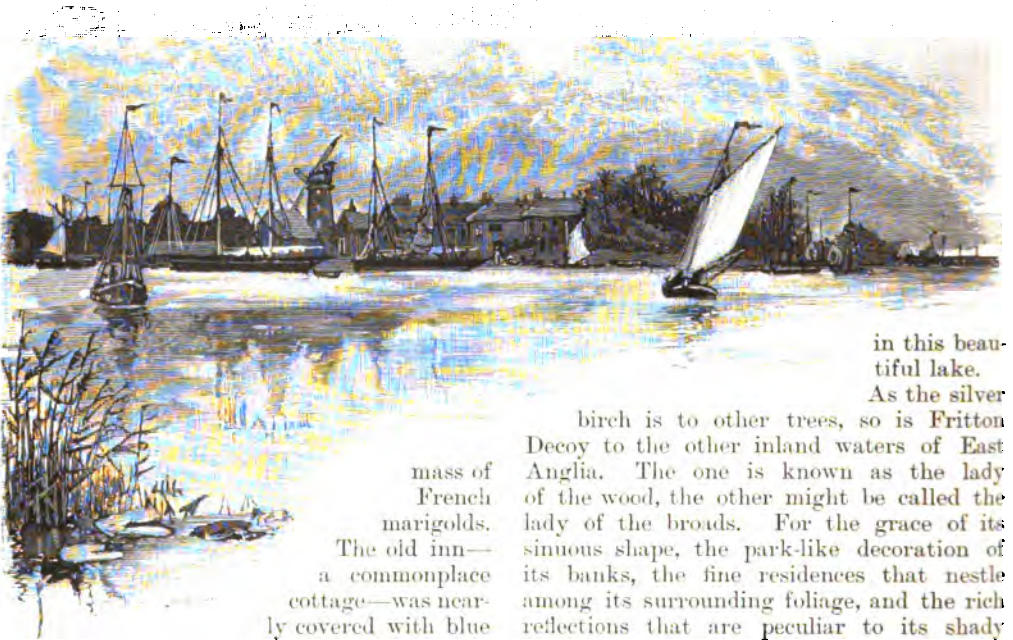
But there are waters flowing inland, and lakes that mimic soft reaches of the Thames and rough bends of the Mersey, where you may sail and fish, free from the dangers that beset those who go down to the sea in ships. Norfolk and Suffolk possess five hundred miles of inland waterways, that flow amidst rich meadow lands margined with reeds and water-lilies, or through low marshes, the haunts of stint, snipe, duck, whimbrel, and other wild fowl; by ancient villages with grey church towers; beneath bridges, over the parapets of which old men look down into the silent waters; and finally into the sea, from whence, if you are yachting, you pause to notice that the landscape you have left behind is marked against the horizon by a line of windmills and churches after the manner of Tennyson's Lincolnshire wolds and fens. Should you begin your river and broad expedition on Breydon water at Yarmouth, you will be invigorated with the sweep of the wind that fills your wherry sails, or be lulled into reverie by the quiet lazy life that seems characteristic of all waters on calm days. The old brig which is a conspicuous object on Breydon water—now reflected in the pools the tide has left, now almost high and dry upon the sand—is

a more or less pathetic incident of the locality. In sunshine and shadow its white-painted sides, black edged with wind and weather, have a ghost-like appearance. The fishermen who store ice in its hull have unconsciously decorated it with mourning emblems—black and white. It once was a brave live ship that sailed to foreign climes. "To what base uses may we return, Horatio!" But a ship, dead or alive, is always picturesque. This decaying old brig, kept together with caulking and paint, rears its white and black timbers against the grey clouds, mirrors its pitchy seams in the greyer water, and adds a distinct line of beauty to the far-off blue and purple uplands. You can sail over this Breydon water between white posts that mark the channel into the Waveney and the Yare, and if you are inclined to pass by many opportunities of anchoring in accessible broads, you can go straight away to Norwich, or round about to Lowestoft and the sea, taking *en route* Oulton Broad and Lake Lothing that debouch into Lowestoft harbour, as the Yare and Breydon do into the busier harbour of Yarmouth. Take up a good-sized map of Norfolk and Suffolk and you will be amazed at the number and extent of these inland lakes. Visit any of them as an angler or a gunner and you will be delighted at the amount of sport they will afford you. As for sailing, Holland hardly affords better opportunities for racing before the wind along flats that give the breezes of heaven full scope. Oulton Broad, which is accessible from Yarmouth by rail, is the most popular of the little fishing and yachting stations. The tiny harbour is crowded with boats of all descriptions, and on windy days you may see numbers of sailing wherries tacking about, now and then rushing into the river at railroad speed; while sailing along the Waveney, which drains the flat lands for many a mile, come great barges with black and brown sails. In the distance they might be giant bats skimming the surface of the land, for you see them mostly when you cannot see the river. The quaint little village of Oulton is represented on the broad by a couple of fishing inns, where you can procure boats, fishing tackle, and baits. If you are fastidious about your luncheon, and require the dainties of your club, with dry champagne and iced waters, bring these things with you; but if homely fare, sound claret, good beer, hot tea or cold milk are drinks you can enjoy, then Oulton will content you. The sketches which illustrate these notes were taken from the river end of the lake. Artists who are fond of cloud effects and "skiey influences" might visit Oulton with advantage. Others looking for river foregrounds with sedgy details will find them here in abundance. *Chill October* might have been painted from a boat at Oulton. Barton Broad, near Stalham, presents many special features to the artist, but Stalham is near Norwich, and though an easy distance from Yarmouth, is not one of the Broads which a Yarmouth visitor would consider as belonging to his own line of country. Oulton Broad, for that matter, is the water-play-

BREYDON WATER.
From a Drawing by HELEN H. HATTON.

ground of Lowestoft ; but Lowestoft is only fourteen miles from Yarmouth, and Oulton is a mile and a half on this side of Lowestoft.

Ormesby is a characteristic broad, lying among lowlands that are dotted with quiet homesteads and browsing cattle. On stormy days the reeds in the river bend their feathery plumes before the wind that whips the water into waves. The broad is approached through the old-fashioned garden of the "Eel's Foot" Inn. It was in August when I last saw it. The train from Yarmouth deposits you within half an hour's drive from the little landing-stage in the accompanying illustration. From the road I passed along a footpath fenced with climbing nasturtiums in full bloom, backed by a mass of French marigolds. The old inn—a commonplace cottage—was nearly covered with blue clematis. The south side of the house was bounded by half an acre of ground, divided into a flower and kitchen garden. The landlord of the "Eel's Foot" is evidently an experienced florist. His small plot of land was ablaze with flowers. There were borders of rich purple-blue pansies and yellow calceolarias, with beds of red and purple verbena, crimson geraniums, and rows of giant sweet peas. The paths were newly sanded, and the place was so trim and neat, so gay with colour, and so full of the perfume of lavender, sweetbriar, and a corner of herbs, that it was delightful to walk there.



OULTON BROAD.
From a Drawing by HELEN H. HATTON.

The landing-stage is on the small domain of the "Eel's Foot," and you can obtain boats and bait at a very moderate cost. The fishing is excellent. Pike, rudd, roach, and bream are taken here in large quantities. Rudd is a very game fish, and seems to be a speciality of Ormesby. Roach are plentiful, and have been caught weighing as much as two pounds. Pike will run up to ten pounds, and bream are taken up to five and six pounds. It is quite a common thing on good sporting days, when the fish are on the feed, for expert anglers to carry away as much as several stones' weight of fish. There is capital perch and pike fishing at Fritton Decoy. Perch weighing from one to three or four pounds are not uncommon in this beautiful lake.

As the silver birch is to other trees, so is Fritton Decoy to the other inland waters of East Anglia. The one is known as the lady of the wood, the other might be called the lady of the broads. For the grace of its sinuous shape, the park-like decoration of its banks, the fine residences that nestle among its surrounding foliage, and the rich reflections that are peculiar to its shady nooks, Fritton Decoy has no equal in East Anglia. As you row along this three miles of lake you frequently come upon the mysterious entrances of the wild-fowl decoys, which are a large source of revenue to the owners. The lake is closed in September for a period of weeks or months that this operation of the decoyers with their engines and nets may not be disturbed. On several fine days in August I fished its waters and rowed into its most inaccessible creeks, with a little family party. We agreed in comparing the lake to some of the best timbered reaches of the Upper Thames, but with greater breadth of waters and a more profound suggestion of depth. There were several parties of anglers

ORMESBY BROAD—THE LANDING STAGE.
From a Drawing by HELEN H. HATTON.

at work. Their boats were anchored fore and aft, not across the stream (for, indeed, there is no stream) as on the Thames. The absence of a "swim" makes the fishing a less active performance, except, of course, the sport be lively. We trifled with the delicate art, gave little heed to it, for there were pencils and brushes busy in our boat, but we caught a few fine perch nevertheless. We were distracted by many competing claims upon our attention, such as occasional rushes of small fish leaping out of the water in their fruitless efforts to escape pursuing enemies; a brood of tiny water hens following their mother across some small reedy bay; the cries of pheasants in cover; the cooing of wild pigeons; the illuminated ripple of the lake, each miniature wave a patch of colour; smooth sheets of water reflecting trees and reeds in a wealth of green and grey, broken in upon now and then by water-lily leaves, yellow as the tips of their latest flowers. Then there were cloud effects to be studied, and (let me be truthful even at the risk of being prosaic) the latest news to read, for we carried the London dailies and weeklies in our luncheon baskets; and is not the mid-day meal one of the pleasantest incidents of these vacation days? Yarmouth pork-pies are only excelled by Yarmouth sausages. "And why are they so good?" one of our party asked at the shop itself. "I will tell you," said the proprietor. "I am a Dutchman, I had made German sausages all my life. I married a Norfolk woman. She was a good hand at English sausages and pork-pies. We compared notes; we laid our two heads together, and we made sausages and pork-pies that combine the best knowledge of Germany and England; we do a great trade at Yarmouth, and we defy competition." Pork-pie, chicken salad, cheese-cake, and a bottle of lemonade poured into a jug of claret (Leoville), followed by cigarettes and a bunch of grapes, make Fritton Decoy all the more delightful after four or five hours rowing, fishing, and sketching.

He is a grey, grizzled, amiable old man who has charge of the boats at Fritton. You will find him smoking his pipe by the landing stage, or helping anglers to unload their boats. On one side of him there is a tall vigorous birch, upon which "Notice" is given that visitors may not land on the opposite shore, and against which there leans a collection of fishing rods, landing nets, and oars. On the other hand is a gnarled, crooked, lightning-blasted giant of the forest, that dips its half-naked limbs into the water.

"Ah, we none of us get younger!" said the old man.

"How long have you been here?" we asked.

"Fifty-four years," he said, as he took the fishing rods from us.

"That is a long time," was not a very wise rejoinder, but I ventured the remark.

"To look forward to," he said, "but it only seems yesterday to me."

There was a tone of regret, I thought, in his voice as he said, "to look forward to."

"You would like to be young again?"

"Yes."

"And stay here all the same?"

"Oh, yes."

"How old are you?"

"Seventy-four."

"That is not old age," I said encouragingly.

FRITTON OLD HALL AND FARM.
From a Drawing by HELEN H. HATTON.

"No, not much; seems nothing looking back, but I feels it's old age sometimes; however, it can't be helped."

"You have seen a good many changes in your time, even here?"

"Ah, yes, I have that; seen things change till they be upside down, so to speak. But it's all one at last."

"We have paid for the boat, what do you charge for the tackle?"

"Oh, I leave it to you—say sixpence, if you like."

We had had two rods and bait.

"Not had much sport," I said.

"No, but they're the right sort; and you haven't been doing much fishing. Ah, I like pictures! Did you notice the cottage at other end of lake?"

"Yes."

"Well, if I could paint a picture, I should take a view of that cottage."

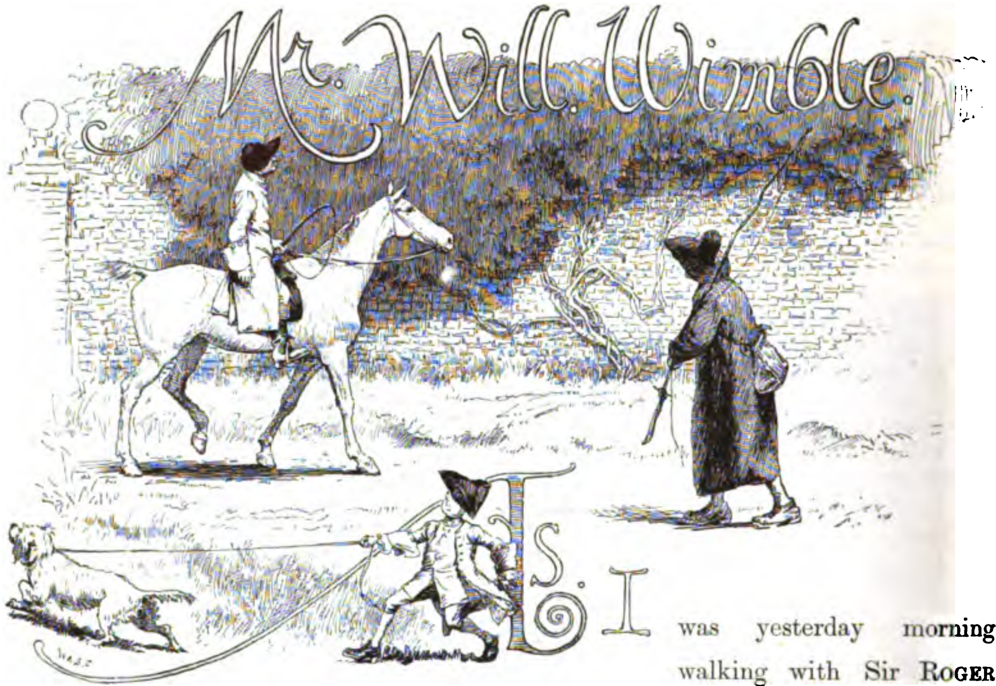
His eyes brightened as he said so, and he smiled a cordial approval of our compliments upon Fritton. It was easy to pay him largely in excess of his charges and still study economy (evidently a leading study with the majority of visitors at Fritton); and one felt happier for having chatted with that simple and contented waterman of the Norfolk lake.

I was all the more agreeably impressed with this experience because I had been reading an extract from a book on the natural history of the Broad' district, in which the Rev. Richard Lubbock recorded his meeting with an old fellow and his family who had "squatted" by the broad in his early days, and had lived on it and by it without moving away from it summer or winter. "'Our broad,' as he always called the extensive pool by which his cottage stood, was his microcosm—his world; the islands in it were his gardens of the Hesperides, its opposite extremity his *ultima Thule*. Wherever his thoughts wandered they could not get beyond

the circle of his beloved lake; indeed, I never knew them aberrant but once, when he informed me, with a doubting air, that he had sent his wife and his two eldest children to a fair at a country village two miles off, that their ideas might expand by travel; as he safely observed they had never before been away from 'our broad!'" This was forty years ago. It is strange to find to-day a living example of its possibility, though to-day men come down here by train from London in three hours, and can, if they choose, do a day's fishing and go back again, a journey which, in the memory of my living example, would have taken more than a week. I found myself wondering about the changes the old man had seen, and what their effect had been upon his mind in that narrow circle of his existence—fifty-four years by Fritton lake. Had he been married in that old thatched church close by? And was his family name written upon one of those white gravestones? Or were the unrecorded mounds only sacred to his memories of the more ordinary changes he had seen at Fritton? It were to inquire too curiously into the old man's life to pursue these thoughts; but he is a figure in the Fritton landscape that I shall always remember. I wonder how many old men who have lived in the great world and seen it at its best would, after fifty-four years' active experience of it, promptly and cheerfully say "Yes," to the question, "Would you like to be young again?" What battles to fight over again that being young once more would mean to most old men, who had lived in the great world and earned the right, having seen it at its worst, to see it at its best! What broken friendships, what bitter griefs to stagger through, what heart-breaks to fight against for others' sakes! But it may not be, except in fancy, in a poem, or on the stage; so let us pack up our sketches and note-books, and go home, for our holiday is over; it can never be repeated. The pleasure of it will, however, be a lasting remembrance; and, after all, life itself is but a continuous memorial of bygone joys and sorrows. *Pardonnez moi, messieurs les critiques français,* some of us *do* take our pleasures a little sadly.

JOSEPH HATTON.

Mr. Will Wimble.



AS I was yesterday morning walking with Sir ROGER before his house, a country-fellow brought him a huge fish, which, he told him, Mr. *William Wimble* had caught that very morning; and that he presented it, with his service to him, and intended to come and dine with him. At the same time he delivered a letter which my friend read to me as soon as the messenger left him.

"*Sir* ROGER,

"I Desire you to accept of a jack, which is the best I have caught this season. I intend to come and stay with you a week, and see how the perch bite in the *Black River*. I observed with some concern, the last time I saw you upon the bowling-green, that your whip wanted a lash to it; I will bring half a dozen with me that I twisted last week, which I hope will serve you all the time you are in the country. I have not been out of the saddle for six days last past, having been at *Eaton* with Sir *John's* eldest son. He takes to his learning hugely.

"I am,

"*SIR, your humble servant,*

"WILL WIMBLE."

This extraordinary letter, and message that accompanied it, made me very curious to know the character and quality of the gentleman who sent them; which I found to be as follows. *Will Wimble* is younger brother to a baronet, and descended of the ancient family of the *Wimbles.* He is now between forty and fifty; but being bred to no business and born to no estate, he generally lives with his elder brother as superintendent of his game. He hunts a pack of dogs better than any man in the country, and is very famous for finding out a hare. He is

SIR ROGER ON THE BOWLING GREEN.
From a Drawing by HUGH THOMSON.

extremely well versed in all the little handicrafts of an idle man: he makes a *May-fly* to a miracle; and furnishes the whole country with angle-rods. As he is a good-natur'd officious fellow, and very much esteem'd upon account of his family, he is a welcome guest at every house, and keeps up a good correspondence among all the gentlemen about him. He carries a tulip-root in his pocket from one to another, or exchanges a puppy between a couple of friends that live perhaps in the opposite sides of the county. *Will* is a particular favourite of all the young heirs, whom he frequently obliges with a net that he has weaved, or a setting-dog that he has *made* himself. He

now and then presents a pair of garters of his own knitting to their mothers or sisters; and raises a great deal of mirth among them, by enquiring as often as he meets them *how they wear!* These gentleman-like manufactures and obliging little humours make *Will* the darling of the country.

Sir ROGER was proceeding in the character of him, when we saw him make up to us with two or three hazle-twigs in his hand that he had cut in Sir ROGER'S woods, as he came through them, in his way to the house. I was very much pleased to observe on one side the hearty and sincere welcome with which Sir ROGER received him, and on the other, the secret joy which his guest discover'd at sight of the good old Knight. After the first salutes were over, *Will* desired Sir ROGER to

WILL WIMBLE IN THE HUNTING FIELD.
From a Drawing by HUGH THOMSON.

lend him one of his servants to carry a set of shuttle cocks he had with him in a little box to a lady that lived about a mile off, to whom it seems he had promised such a present for above this half year. Sir ROGER'S back was no sooner turned but honest *Will* began to tell me of a large cock-pheasant that he had sprung in one of the neighbouring woods, with two or three other adventures of the same nature. Odd and uncommon characters are the game I looked for, and most delight in; for which reason I was as much pleased with the novelty of the person that talked to me, as he could be for his life with the springing of a pheasant, and therefore listen'd to him with more than ordinary attention.

In the midst of his discourse the bell rung to dinner, where the gentleman I have been speaking of had the pleasure of seeing the huge jack, he had caught,

served up for the first dish in a most sumptuous manner. Upon our sitting down to it he gave us a long account how he had hooked it, played with it, foiled it, and at length drew it out upon the bank, with several other particulars that lasted all the first course. A dish of wild fowl that came afterwards furnished conversation

WILL WIMBLE WITH THE PUPPIES.
From a Drawing by HUGH THOMSON.

for the rest of the dinner, which concluded with a late invention of *Will's* for improving the quail-pipe.

Upon withdrawing into my room after dinner, I was secretly touched with compassion towards the honest gentleman that had dined with us; and could not but consider with a great deal of concern, how so good an heart and such busy hands were wholly employed in trifles; that so much humanity should be so little

beneficial to others, and so much industry so little advantageous to himself. The same temper of mind and application to affairs might have recommended him to the publick esteem, and have raised his fortune in another station of life. What good to his country or himself might not a trader or merchant have done with such useful tho' ordinary qualifications?

Will Wimble's is the case of many a younger brother of a great family, who had rather see their children starve like gentlemen, than thrive in a trade or

THE STORY OF THE GARTERS.
From a Drawing by HUGH THOMSON.

profession that is beneath their quality. This humour fills several parts of *Europe* with pride and beggary. It is the happiness of a trading nation, like ours, that the younger sons, tho' uncapable of any liberal art or profession, may be placed in such a way of life, as may perhaps enable them to vie with the best of their family: Accordingly we find several citizens that were launched into the world with narrow fortunes, rising by an honest industry to greater estates than those of their elder brothers. It is not improbable but *Will* was formerly tried at

HOW THE JACK WAS CAUGHT.
From a Drawing by HUGH THOMSON.

divinity, law, or physick ; and that finding his genius did not lie that way, his parents gave him up at length to his own inventions. But certainly, however improper he might have been for studies of a higher nature, he was perfectly well turned for the occupations of trade and commerce. As I think this is a point which cannot be too much inculcated, I shall desire my reader to compare what I have here written with what I have said in my twenty-first speculation.

THE UNEQUAL YOKE.

CHAPTER IX—*Continued.*

BOUT two hours after this, the whole face of the party was changed. The Dragonetta had gone, and the Bishop had gone also. Everybody had filed down to supper, and it was only those who were on a certain footing of intimacy with the family who had re-emerged in the drawing-room. The proportion of youth had greatly increased; the piano had been moved back to the wall, and a few lively couples were waltzing spasmodically round the room. Jane, of course, had never danced in her life; and had never even seen dancing before, except perhaps by accident at a country fair. Mr. Leyoncrona, who had kept up a more sustained conversation with her throughout the evening than any other person, now asked her to waltz with him, and pressed her to do so, because he thought her reluctance arose from some jealousy on Frank's part, which ought to be promptly snubbed. She was beginning to grow cunning, for while she continued to refuse, she did not blurt out the real source of her refusal. Frank had early in the evening grown tired of attending closely upon Jane, and as the excitement of the party gathered on him, and he felt the attraction of old faces and familiar voices, he almost forgot her existence, except when some guest would make a polite reference to his engagement. At last he bethought him of his duties, and looked round for Jane. She had been for half-an-hour past so overwhelmed with sleepiness that she had obtained Lady Priscilla's consent to slip off to bed unobserved, and as Frank was dancing with a great deal of exuberance, she did not interrupt him to say good-night. He therefore searched for her in vain through the rooms, and came at last to the conservatory, where he thought she might be hidden. He threaded the little maze in the damp refreshing air, brushing aside the moist fronds of the ferns and pendent plants as he walked, and was betrayed at last in the green twilight into sitting on a low rustic seat at the back of the mass of foliage, and into gazing down at the lustrous obscurity of the tank at his feet, where the orange fins of the gold-fish passed and repassed like phantoms. The dim verdurous light, sifted through innumerable leaves, the dank smell of the water, of the warm earth, of the crowd of living plants, refreshed and invigorated him, and he sat there for a few moments, lulled by the trickle of the patient fountain, bubbling from the vase of a little nymph of terra-cotta. As he sat thus, invisible and noiseless, he suddenly heard his name pronounced by a familiar voice, on the other side of the ferny buttress which ended the path he had taken. It was a woman's voice, and it said:—

"Well, now you have seen Frank Capulett's intended, what do you think of her?"

Frank was fatigued, seized with a lassitude born of his physical exhaustion and the relaxing warmth of the moist air; he might have risen and have retraced his steps with just a chance of being unobserved, but curiosity and weakness combined to make him stay, noiseless, gazing like a Narcissus, but into a deep that gave back no reflections. The answer came in a man's voice.

"I have seen her, yes, but I have not been introduced to her. She is pretty."

"Oh! do you think so? It is such a coarse type, totally devoid of style."

"Style may come. She is very shy and young. Can you not remember ever being shy?"

"You are very impertinent. I am sure I never was so *gauche* as she is. I am sorry for Frank; he is a nice boy."

"He is not shy, at all events. Perhaps he will be able to correct her fault. On the

whole I should think her rather to be pitied than him."

"There is not the least harm in Frank, but I am sorry that he is making himself so ridiculous. She was brought to sit by me, and I can assure you it fatigued me so much to hold ten minutes' conversation with her that I thought I was going to have a fit of hysterics. Positively no ideas, I assure you; could not be roused on a single subject—the theatre, pictures, society papers, politics, dances—seemed to have less intelligence than a child of ten; and a colour on her cheeks that is positively criminal. Why have you not spoken one word to me to-night?"

"My dear Julia, how unreasonable you are. You know perfectly well that you absolutely forbade me to do so."

"Yes, and so you sat directly opposite me scowling, until even that stupid girl observed it, and asked me whether I thought you were ill."

"I wonder you can think it very amusing for me to see you the life of a room, and be obliged to bow just coldly to you once 'Good evening, Mrs. Percival,' when all the time—"

Frank, who had turned as cold as one of the gold-fish sailing at his feet, now began to flush with fever. This would never do; this fatal eaves-dropping began to grow terrible, preposterous, and he rose on the tips of his toes to escape from it. Thanks to the patient nymph, whose terra-cotta urn still warbled plaintively, his lightly brushing steps were unheard, and he escaped into the drawing-room without attracting the attention of the unseen couple. But as he left the conservatory, his foot caught in a flower-pot and upset it with a clatter. He escaped, indeed, scot-free, but he left the lady and her companion with a most embarrassing conviction that a third person had assisted at their indiscreet little *tête-à-tête*.

CHAPTER X.

Frank slept badly, and woke next morning with a vague weight of apprehension on his mind. At breakfast everybody was feverish and languid, and he was obliged to hasten in order to reach his office in due time. His adieux with Jane were by these means, however, rendered of necessity public and rapid, and he was conscious that this was agreeable. They parted in a very friendly way, but without effusion on either side. He had no sooner started than Jane began to make preparations for leaving, since her visit had now come to a close. The last words were affectionate; Lady Priscilla parted with her as from an affianced daughter, and the girls seemed genuinely sorry to say good-bye to her. Adelaide thrust a discreet little parcel into her hand "not to be opened till Christmas Day," and kissed her with tears in her eyes. She drove away at last in the Capulett carriage, with a feeling of genuine affection for them all, mixed with a shamefaced consciousness of her own acts of omission, acts which filed before her memory one by one, an awkward squad, and ruined her peace of mind. Nor was her conscience quite at rest, either; the days she had spent at Kensington had not, she reflected in her innocent Puritanism, been spent to edification, and while she did not condemn the Capuletts, who only acted up to their lights, she blamed herself severely for not being able to summon sufficient courage to refrain from taking part in so much that was inconsistent in a converted character. The theatre, the adorning of the hair, the worldly conversation, the dancing—each of these came up before her and stabbed her over-tender conscience in a new place. She reached home in an excited frame of mind, ready to burst into tears, and without having once bestowed a thought on the young man who was to be her husband.

That young man was not so indifferent, or at least his indifference took a totally distinct form. Jane's visit to his parents had entirely destroyed his illusion, and now he was on the verge of saying to himself that he was the most unhappy of mortals to have bound himself with such a chain. He did not quite say that yet, because he was parading before his memory her sterling virtues of character, her truth, her maidenly sweetness, her fidelity. He was trying all day long to bully himself into a passion for her, but the effort was in vain. A chasm of a thousand miles, an epoch of a thousand years, seemed to divide him from her, and he found with distress that he could not even recollect her features. After an effort to stamp her face upon his mental retina, with eyelids shut, he was forced to succumb to the obstinacy of nature, and to take her photograph out of his pocket-book. All that photography does to injure a face which depends upon vivid colour and pleasant expression had been done in this case. It was a picture that a lover might have forgiven, for he could have clothed it with the hue and charm of his mistress. To Frank it was merely now a revelation of common-place beauty, of a set of features radically unsympathetic to him.

In this frame of mind his life became a wretchedness to him. He did not go to see Jane, nor write to her, for he waited for the cloud to rise, he expected every night to wake up next morning in love with her. The Baxters had asked him to spend Christmas Day with them. He had not accepted or refused. His parents and sisters were going down for the Christmas days to Brighton, and he had also been invited there ever since the summer. It would have been easy to have got himself excused on the plea of his engagement, but instead of this he had quoted it as a promise which he was bound to keep. He did not change the plan now, for he thought that his mind might become clearer at a distance. He hoped that separation might cure his coldness; he genuinely wished to be in love. His cousin, the Earl, a very unpleasant little boy with ringlets, was made an object of worship in a large dull Brighton house, by his mother, a dolorous widow to whom the passage of time brought no assuagement of her grief. To go to Brighton for Christmas was terribly dull, but at least, in Frank's present mood, it was a comfort that there no one would be expected to be jolly at that very trying season. He had not reached his aunt's house, however, before a darker cloud of *ennui* fell upon him, and he felt as though he were bound down by a fatal burden. He became overwhelmed with restlessness and depression, and on Christmas morning, very early, he sent off a telegram to Mr. Leyoncrona, asking him if he might come and spend Christmas with him. He paid for a return telegram, and the answer came—"Come by all means, delighted to see you, am quite alone, will you stop the night?" He waved the orange envelope at his aunt, told her that he was suddenly ordered back to town, and was in his friend's chambers before the afternoon had begun to draw in.

Mr. Leyoncrona had lived for many years in a quiet nook in the very heart of the noisiest part of London. It was too near Whitehall, far too near, for health, but the convenience of the rooms and their central position were too fascinating to be resisted. He possessed a little suite of apartments in a private hotel, kept by a man who had once been his father's butler and who had married old Mrs. Leyoncrona's maid; and these respectable people waited on him with great punctilio. His windows looked out on the paved blind street that ended in his house, and though the Strand was within gunshot of him, as the crow is shot, he hardly heard a murmur of that great volume of sound. Frank's hansom, as he rattled to the door, was quite an event to the silent cul-de-sac. At dinner, which the two friends ate alone, Frank's spirits rose to an ebullient pitch. He laughed and gesticulated, told good stories and made bad puns without intermission, except that he became sober once when Leyoncrona mentioned Jane, just as a person in high spirits will pause for a few instants, for decorum's sake, when a person is named who has lately died. He drank Leyoncrona's excellent Burgundy until the older man felt it to be discreet to offer him no more of it. But Frank was just as copious in his mirth when the wine was cleared away, and they sat on each side of the fire with coffee and a cigar. It became very dark prematurely, with a yellow fog, not so much dense as heavy, a canopy, not a blanket, so that they drew the blinds down early and lit the candles. Frank now suddenly asked leave to write some letters; and that he might be quite at ease Mr. Leyoncrona lighted the fire and the gas in a little further room, which opened into a slit of a bedroom, where Frank was to sleep, and left him there.

As he was coming up from Brighton he had resolved to write it—the fatal letter that with a sharp cut of pain should cut him off from the vague burden of apprehension which he carried about with him. What a letter that was to write! He made a dozen drafts of it, and none would do. His fingers were icy-cold, and would scarcely hold the pen. He went to the blind and peeped out. Through an atmosphere the colour of brown soup he dimly saw the blind head of the street, and three lamps, but no human figure was in sight. He looked at his watch. If no one came into the triangular area lighted by the lamps within one minute he would start off to spend the evening with Jane; if any one did, he would write the letter. His feverish face was pressed against the frozen pane. At fifty seconds there came a sound of "tramp, tramp" upon the pavement. Frank's heart beat fast; at fifty-five seconds a policeman, beating his arms together to warm himself, appeared round the further lamp-post, and took up his station just within the magic enclosure. Frank went back to the table, and wrote the following lines, without hesitation or erasure:—

Dear Jane,

I am afraid it will give you great pain to read this letter. You will have wondered why I have allowed a whole week to elapse without coming to see you, or writing to you.

Thank you for your letter, but I must tell you that I have not opened it—I did not dare to. I hardly know how to find words to tell you why. You will think me so cruel, so ungrateful, so unworthy of you. Indeed I find I *am* unworthy of you. I cannot make myself believe that I ought to let you be my wife. For some time past I have been very unhappy, questioning myself whether I do really love you as you ought to be loved. I have come to the conclusion that I do not, and as I do not wish that we should be unhappy all our lives, I think it is right to tell you so.

You will never know how much I admire you, and respect you. I think you *simply perfect*. I am afraid that is it—you are too perfect for me. I wish you could see how humbled I am, and how ashamed of myself. But I cannot help thinking that every one will agree that it is best *for both of us* to have found out the truth thus early. Of course, I need hardly say that if you still think it would be right for us to marry, I shall be willing to do so. I hope you will always allow me to consider you a friend.

Yours very sincerely,

FRANK CAPULETT.

Having sealed and stamped this epistle, he thrust it into the breast of his coat, and peeping into the other room, remarked to Leyoncrona that he was going to the post. His friend replied that the landlady would do that, upon which Capulett continued that he thought he should take a little run, and might he borrow the latch-key? Armed with this implement he descended into the night.

He found himself buoyed up by a strange excitement when he stood with the front-door closed behind him. The fog was not thick enough to be bewildering or dangerous. He made his way up into the Strand, and then wandered up into the City. All the shops, theatres, music-halls and restaurants were shut, so that the great nightly thoroughfare of pleasure was as mute and mournful as on a Sunday morning. He missed the glare of the dramatic lamps, the coloured bands of the luminous advertisements. All was as dull and heavy as the atmosphere, the streets only peopled by a few wanderers like himself, and a handful of wretches with no home to go to. No soldiers, no messengers, no milliners' girls, no costermongers, were to be seen. The very thieves and street-walkers had Christmas dinners to eat, jovial engagements of some kind to fulfil. He pushed up into the Arabian solitude of the City itself, where a treble silence reigned. Cat shrieked unto cat across a desolate thoroughfare which in twelve hours' time would be glutted to bursting with the traffic of the world. He sped across St. Paul's Churchyard, and gazed up at the vast and shadowy cathedral towering into the inane void of night. Through the Old Jewry he passed somehow into Lothbury, and saw the stolid mass of the Bank of England from behind. Here again there was a thin concourse of passers by, and he seemed in a world of living men; but soon after this he found himself hemmed in into the tortuous inclosure of Austin Friars, with the two churches frowning at him, in a soundless solitude that was unnerving. And now the fog began to get more dense. A panic took him that he would be snared all night in this labyrinth of the City, and he hastened to return. When he got well into the main arteries again, he found them fuller of the pulse of life; the Christmas parties were beginning to break up. All this time the letter to Jane was lying in his bosom. Whenever he thought of it, it seemed to sear him like a hot iron, and yet there it lay. It was not until he was in the Strand, and close to the turning that led down to Leyoncrona's hotel, that he took it out of his pocket. He walked with it nearly to the door, and then as he turned the last corner, a scarlet column loomed out of the darkness. He thrust the letter suddenly into the letter-box, and ran on like a guilty schoolboy.

In Leyoncrona's sitting-room there was no light but what proceeded from a glowing fire, but a voice greeted Frank from his host's bedroom.

"You will find the whiskey on the table, and the kettle in the grate. I hope you'll make yourself comfortable and excuse my having gone to bed."

Frank tapped at the bedroom-door and went in. Leyoncrona was sitting up in bed, with a dressing-gown round his shoulders, and five or six books scattered over the counterpane. The lamp close by him threw a strong light over his pleasant countenance. Frank sat down, with his overcoat still on, at the foot of the bed.

"So you have not gone to sleep. Do you always make a little Bodleian of your bed in this way?"

"I don't like having to get out of bed when I am once snug, so I think beforehand of all my literary wants. How did you find everybody at Kilburn?"

"I have not been to Kilburn," said Frank, with a kind of giggle.

"I beg your pardon for taking that for granted, but I really couldn't think of any other place where you could go on Christmas

night. You might have stopped and played picquet with me."

There was a slight pause, while Leyoncrona furtively glanced again towards the open book he had been reading. He would fain have finished the interesting page. Frank said at last, whirling his hat round his fingers as he did so:

"I have only been strolling round. I wanted to be by myself rather. I wanted to think something out."

Leyoncrona shut the book and pushed it from him; he awaited the obvious confidence that was coming.

"I expect you know that I have something on my mind that bothers me?" said Frank.

"Well, I can't exactly say that I do, or that I don't. I thought so two or three days ago, but to-day I thought you must have got all right again."

"Of course, I dare say you can't very well understand about lovers, as you haven't been in love yourself."

"That's a very bold assumption, my young friend," said Leyoncrona, "and the sort of one that you'll grow out of the habit of making. You give me the right to turn and rend you, and so I will allow myself to say that I don't consider you at all the ideal lover yourself. When I do fall in love, to carry on your inference, I hope I shall seem to like it better than you do."

"Ah! then you have noticed that I don't seem to like it very much?" said Frank, who was not in the least offended.

"You had better tell me what it is that I don't know about lovers. Never mind what I have noticed."

"Well, don't you believe in a secret sympathy, and the right people being irresistibly drawn together, and all that, a sort of *Wahlverwandtschaft*, don't you know?"

"Do I believe in it?" said Leyoncrona. "Partly I do, and partly I don't. I think that it is a very delightful thing where it occurs, but it does not always wear well; and for my own part, I fancy that some of the happiest matches in the world have grown out of something like mutual aversion, indifference at all events, at first meeting."

"But if there is a sudden liking at first, and it gets weaker and weaker, that is not a happy sort of affinity, is it?"

"No, that is not a fortunate conjunction certainly," admitted Leyoncrona. "You had better say right out what you are driving at."

There was again a pause, and then Frank said, being himself in darkness, but conscious of his friend's brightly-illuminated eye resting upon him:

"I am most awfully tired of my engagement." This struck him as a very crude thing to have said, and he rapidly added, "I don't feel at all sure that it will make either of us happy."

Leyoncrona was silent so long that Frank grew quite nervous.

"I wish you would tell me what you think."

"Really," answered Leyoncrona, "I can't take the responsibility of telling you what I think. I think so many things. You see I have never been in love."

"Oh, I wish you wouldn't chaff, old man. You know I think so much of your advice. I really came up to-day to ask you what you thought I ought to do. One can't help feeling rather queer about it. It seems so unkind to the girl."

"It is very thoughtful of you to consider her feelings, I am sure," said Leyoncrona.

"Oh, you needn't snub me like that. I am perfectly conscious how awkward it is, but I think it will be right for her sake to break it off."

"I see you speak in the future tense," said Leyoncrona, "so the whole thing is not settled yet? It would be very like what young people do if you had broken off the engagement before you asked my advice."

"Oh, no, it is not settled yet," said Frank, prevaricating, and thinking of the letter which still lay in the pillar-box.

"That removes a great difficulty from my mind," said Leyoncrona, "and I feel much more free to talk to you about it. If you had already broken off the affair it would have been too late, but as it is, one can reason with you. Now in the first place, however little you care for her, Miss Baxter is in love with you, is she not?"

"Oh, yes," said Frank, reduced to a condition of abject nervous misery, "she's most awfully fond of me."

"Well, then! But first of all I will reveal to you your own guilty plan. You have been walking about the streets concocting a jilting letter, and now you have come in with the intention of writing it, and of going out again to post it. You shall do nothing of the kind. Give me up the latch-key, and take off your great coat, and hang up your hat, for I shall not allow you to go out again to-night."

Frank acceded to this with alacrity. When he came back, Leyoncrona continued—

"If you really want my advice, it is this. You positively are bound as a gentleman to remember that it was you and not Miss Baxter who proposed and urged the alliance.

So that it seems to me that you are not at liberty to think entirely of your own feelings in the matter."

"But I should make a very bad husband if I married a wife I did not love," said Frank.

"I feel that. But are you quite sure that you are incapable of loving her?"

"Yes, quite."

"Perhaps you have seen somebody else who takes your fancy more?"

"No, I assure you I have not. It is sheer incompatibility of temperament."

"That, I take it, is putting it in the very strongest possible words. But whatever you feel, I think it will be cowardly to write a letter. It is much harder and more disagreeable to talk of such a matter face to face, and you ought to be punished for being so rash by not being spared a single disagreeable fact. I can assure you you will not find it a comfortable thing to jilt a young lady, and I am sure you ought not to find it so."

"You are rather unsympathetic, Leyoncrona; I thought you would have approved of my breaking it off. I am sure it is very immoral to go on pretending to love a girl when you no longer care about her at all."

"I do not wish to be unsympathetic. I feel exceedingly puzzled to know what is right and what is wrong in such a case. But I cannot help thinking more about the girl than about you, and if the crisis must come I tell you frankly that I should like it to bring the maximum of punishment to you and the minimum to her."

"I fail to see why there should be any punishment on either side. I am sorry I told you anything about it. I had no idea you would be so testy. So now I will say good-night."

And he went to bed much easier in his mind than he left Mr. Leyoncrona, who nevertheless had neither prevaricated, nor written a selfish letter, nor betrayed the traditions of his class. But it is the privilege of youth to be callous.

CHAPTER XI.

It was the custom at Constantine Villas for the whole household to unite in prayers directly after breakfast was over, in the old fashion. On Boxing Day there was so great a mass of work for the postman to do that the morning distribution of letters was delayed by more than an hour. Accordingly instead of their finding their correspondence by their plates when they came down to breakfast, the housemaid brought the letters in when she and the cook answered the summons to "worship." It would have been contrary to all rules and regulations to open a letter at the moment when Dr. Baxter was arranging the large silk marker in his Bible, and actually giving his preliminary cough, so all that Jane could do was to tilt her correspondence against her tea-cup, and try to guess what was in it by furtively examining the addresses. There was a thin stiff envelope, evidently containing a Christmas card, and a large soft envelope, probably containing a bill; and finally there was Frank's letter, which we have taken the liberty of reading.

It seemed to Jane as though she were suspended between the ceiling and the floor, and deprived of all her weight. She tried to sit perfectly still, in a sort of dreadful patience, and the blood once suffused her whole face, as she put aside a sudden temptation to set all laws of decorum at defiance, and snatch her letter there and then, reading it in the face of the prim, shy maids, and her own scandalised sisters and bewildered father. It scarcely seemed possible that any portion of the Epistle to the Colossians could be so long, so beset with knotty points, so qualified for interminable exposition, as that which they happened to have reached in that day's reading. However, everything comes to an end at last, and as the whole company rose, and turned to kneel upon the floor, with their foreheads against the backs of their chairs, Jane was so far carried away by her excitement that she grasped Frank's letter as she was in the act of revolving; and set herself very slowly and silently to open it unseen. The very first words startled her so much that she pushed it into its envelope again, and that into her pocket, and during the remainder of her father's long prayer she knelt there motionless. She was in such a fever of spirit, so conscious of her restlessness, that she took care to be the last to rise when the devotion was over. And then she rushed away to her own room.

In a large and active family it is very difficult to assert the right that trouble has to solitude and consideration. Jane felt that she would give anything to be able to spend one whole hour undisturbed, unperceived—one hour in which to measure the distance between the present and the past. But she had hardly stood three minutes at the window, reading and re-reading this agitating appeal of Frank's, before the servants walked in to

make her bed, and she was thankful to be able to escape from them without speaking. She stood on the landing irresolute, for the house seemed full of the noises of life, her mother shouting to her father, her brothers whistling, her sisters chattering on the stairs. She escaped into a little cheerless room, hung round with miniatures and virginal nick-nacks from her mother's maiden days, which was called Mrs. Baxter's boudoir, and which nobody ever used. She sat down on the decrepit little sofa, the unsympathetic glazed chintz of which crackled under her. She read Frank's letter two or three times more, and then put it down on her lap, and gazed blankly at the row of daguerreotypes on the opposite wall.

At this moment the door was softly opened, and her sister Sallie peeped in, and disappeared again, without attracting Jane's attention; and in a minute or two, in consequence of Sallie's report over the stairs of "You'd better go right up to Jane, mother, in your boudoir," Mrs. Baxter came gently in, and vexed the broken springs of her little sofa with the addition of her substantial weight. Neither said anything, but Jane passed Frank's letter to her mother, and took her hand. The letter was very slowly read, with much nervous adjustment of spectacles, and then laid again in Jane's lap by a very trembling hand. The old lady's eyes were full of tears, and she drew her daughter's head close to her own and kissed her two or three times. And then she rose, and from underneath the sofa-cushion, where it lay folded up, she dragged out an enormous old Scotch shawl, and wrapped it round them both, for there was no preparation for fire in the grate. Jane laid her head against her mother's shoulder, and listened to Mrs. Baxter's soft weeping. Neither had hitherto spoken a word, but at last Mrs. Baxter whispered:

"Let your tears come, sweetie; it will do you good to cry."

"I don't want to cry at all, mother," answered Jane in her usual voice. "I feel so bewildered, that is all. I seem to want a little time to collect my thoughts."

"Did you expect this letter in any way?"

"No, not in the least."

"What do you think has made him write it?"

"I don't know what to think."

"Did you have any quarrel when you last met?"

"Oh, no!"

"Do you know that there is any one else whom he likes better than you?"

"I do not think so. I think it is himself that he likes best," Jane answered, with a ghost of a smile.

"Ah, yes, dear! But that is nothing strange. All the men like themselves best, even the very nicest of them—only some of them have such a pretty way of showing it."

"He had a pretty way, rather, hadn't he?"

"I never thought that he had quite a lover's way with him. He always seemed very cool and collected," said Mrs. Baxter.

"I think I liked that in him. It seemed to leave my thoughts free for other things."

"Perhaps, dear, you were not in love with him, either, and you both made a mistake."

"I wonder whether we did."

"He need not have written you such a cruel, cold letter. He must be very selfish. I feel as if I should like to tell him so to his face."

"I am not sure," said Jane, sitting up as erectly as her mummified condition in the shawl would allow her to do, "I am not sure that he meant it to be at all an unkind letter. He is not unkind by nature. But he is very young. Do you know, mother, it used to be so curious to me that although he is so much older than I am, and cleverer, and has seen so much more of the world, he always seemed to me so very young—his opinions and his ways of looking at things, I mean. Often I used to say nothing at all, because I felt that I could not make him understand me. Now it seems to me that what strikes us as unkind in this letter is merely inexperience. He wants very badly to get free, and he doesn't know enough to know what a very little hint would have been sufficient. He shouts at me when he need only have whispered."

"What made you so determined to have him, dearie, if you won't think it intrusive of me to ask you?"

"Well, mother, he got a sort of power over me. If you will promise never to tell anybody I will try and explain it to you. It was very curious. You know that first day when he pulled me out of the canal with his two hands? Well, his hands seemed to take possession of mine for a minute, and—I never felt anything like it before—it seemed as if it gave him a power over me. And whenever I was with him those first weeks, and he spoke directly to me with that coaxing voice of his, I felt my little hands in his grip. That sounds like real nonsense, doesn't it, mother? I never put it into words before, and now I have said it, it sounds like a dream. But I think the real reason why I said 'yes' to him, and why I stuck to it

when you and father wanted me to break it off, was because I thought I could be blessed to his soul. You know I should never think it right to marry anybody just on such a chance, but when he proposed to me that Sunday, I liked him very well already, and he said that he loved me so much, and looked down at me in the way that made me feel the grip of his hands, as I was explaining to you; and then it was that he said that I should be such a blessing to him. I thought that it was the Lord's voice to me, perhaps."

"Then did you afterwards change your mind about it?"

"It seems to me rather that Frank—that Mr. Capulett changed his mind. How odd it sounds to say Mr. Capulett again! Gradually he said less and less about his soul, and my good influence on him. And I ceased to have a good influence. He made me worldly instead of my making him spiritually-minded. It feels too hot in this shawl; let me wrap it all round you, mother." And Jane got up, and paced about the room. Presently she said:

"I don't blame him or anybody, but I wish it never had happened. It makes me all on a flame when I think that somebody has kissed me who will never be anything to me but Mr. Capulett. There is where I say he is so young. I think an older man, even if he were much harder-hearted, would have remembered when he wrote that letter how it would humiliate me to think of the past. I suppose it does not matter to him—the past. We do not know much about men, do we, mother, you and I? I suppose he doesn't feel as if he were going mad when he remembers that I have kissed him. There, I shall never speak of that again, even to you, mother; but I think it won't be quite so terrible now I have said it once. Have you noticed that we can bear things so much better when one has talked about them? At least, I find I always can."

"And now, what ought we to do next, dearie?"

"I don't quite know. How very much less dreadful it would be if there was nothing that had to be done. It is like having a dead body in the house. There is not only the loss, but there is the horror of it, and the undertakers to talk to, and the mourning to order, and the funeral."

"And everybody's pity, too."

"Yes, everybody's pity, that will be the worst thing of all to bear. I think I could bear that better if I had loved him more. I shall feel a sort of hypocrite. By the way, mother dear, you must tell father, please, and brothers and sisters, and you must explain to them that they must not treat me as if I had lost anything that I valued very much. The kindest thing they can do is to take no notice at all. I have not got to answer this letter, mother, have I?"

"Well, I suppose you ought to send back all his letters."

"Except this one; I think it would look revengeful if I sent back this one."

"And his presents," said Mrs. Baxter.

"Yes, his presents. That is what they do in novels. The Lady Gonoria places the diamond necklaces and rich brocades in a golden coffer which has been the repository of his sumptuous offerings. Mr. Capulett hasn't given me many diamond necklaces. Let me see! He gave me a volume of selections from Mrs. Hemans, and a stylographic pen, and a great many boxes of sweets. Ah! and a seal that belonged to his grandmother. And several pieces of music. I have eaten the sweets, and lost the pen. We can hardly make up a parcel of the book and the music and the seal. I think we must waive the custom of sending back the presents. I think it would almost look spiteful. Do you think his people will take any notice?"

"I was just wondering whether your father ought to write to old Mr. Capulett, just to expostulate. I have so little experience in the ways of the world."

"I think, mother, you had better ask Jack about it. Only, I will not have anything said or written without my knowledge. And it must not be vindictive in any way, nor give the very least idea that I am sorry, and wish it all otherwise."

"Would you not take him back again, dearie, if he came and said he was sorry, and asked you to forgive him?"

"Oh! I should forgive him at once, but that thing could never be again; never, never. You must understand once for all that there is not a man in the whole world that I should so little think of marrying as Mr. Capulett. There are some things that cannot even be discussed, and this is one of them. And now you must sit there, with the shawl wrapped round your shoulders, for five minutes more, while I slip out and put my things on, for I am going for a long, long walk. I shall take care to be back again by dinner-time, and then I hope that everybody will have discussed it and discussed it, and be ready to talk about something else."

This she did; and stole out successfully

unperceived. She walked away and away in a north-westerly direction till she had left London far behind her.

CHAPTER XII.

Frank went down to his people at Brighton in the morning of Boxing Day. He was a little uncomfortable in the presence of Mr. Leyoncrona, and looked forward with much pleasant impatience to his reception as a free man by his own family. How glad they would all be to know that he was released! How kind they had been in their forbearance with his betrothal! He was quite modest about himself. How little knowledge of life he had shown in engaging himself so rashly! He was quite pious, too. How graciously Providence had watched over him, and brought him safely through his peril! He was even moved to a tender thought about Jane Baxter, and to a hope that she would be able to support her disappointment. He was able to bear thinking about her condition, which might otherwise have been a slightly embarrassing subject of reflection, by saying to himself that he had really saved her from a life-long error, which would have destroyed her happiness as well as his own. He had actually, he said to himself as he swept through the thin brown woods, proved himself to be her best friend. Her best friend! Yes, when she was a little older she would look back upon this episode with thankfulness that she had been rescued from a thoroughly false position. And accompanied by a series of such reflections, which all buzzed about his head like the assiduous sylphs around a dreaming Rosicrucian, he arrived at Brighton in the very best possible spirits, and completely assured of his own wisdom and virtue.

He did not like to blurt out his good news on the moment of arrival. His mother and the lugubrious Countess were sitting over the fire together in one room, while his sisters were romping with their little cousin in another. Frank found his father alone in the smoking-room, but the elder Mr. Capulett was not framed to receive confidences. It was only by the lucky accident that the petulant little Earl insisted on suddenly sending for his pony that Frank contrived to find his sisters disengaged. He gathered them to him with the promise of news, and then disburdened his breast of the secret that he had broken off his engagement, with as many laughs, and blushes, and broken sentences, as if he were divulging to them the secret of a maiden passion. It was some little time before they clearly understood what had happened, and then to say that their demeanour disappointed Frank is to use a very mild word indeed. It disgusted him. At last he was silent.

"You don't, of course, mean to say you have done all this," said Edith; "you mean that you want to know whether we should advise you to do it?"

"No, it is done. The letter went last night."

"You mean to say that you have actually had the assurance to jilt that charming girl?" said Adelaide.

"Oh! come now, Adelaide, 'jilt' is a horrid word. I haven't jilted her at all; I have said that if she wishes to go on I shall be very happy to do so. But of course she won't."

"I should think not. And don't you feel thoroughly ashamed of yourself?"

"Well, now, why should I feel ashamed of myself? That is just like you, Adelaide. I had no idea you would be so unsympathetic. You ought to be very much pleased. You know you were dead against the match."

"I can only tell you, for my own part, that I think it very unlikely that you will ever persuade any girl who is half so nice to be engaged to you again. She is simply too good for you, isn't she, Edith?"

"Well, I can't say that I quite think that. But I am shocked at the thought of what people will say. I feel that we have made up our minds to it, and everybody knows it that knows us, and it will look so stupid of Frank not to have made up his own mind. You can't go so far as that and then turn back."

"You both seem to think entirely of ourselves. I think of this poor Jane. At this moment I dare say she is lying on her bed, sobbing as if her heart would break, and here is Frank smirking away, and looking to us to congratulate him. I believe that I am more fond of her than you have ever been after all."

Nor was his mother altogether as consolatory as he had expected. She took him aside with her, and embraced him with a stately pomp which had too much of the air of a funeral ceremony about it to please him.

"My darling boy," she murmured, "my poor darling boy! The world will misjudge you, I dare say, but I shall always think you were right. What you must have undergone! My heart aches for you; what courage you have shown! My poor, poor darling!"

And Frank broke away from these commiserations, lest he should be led to pity himself, whereas his cue was lightheartedness, and the easy consciousness of manly virtue. He ran out into the streets, and had his hair blown about his ears by the stiff sea-breeze on the pier until luncheon time, wondering what could have come to all these women that they should be so sentimental. At the luncheon-table a general blitheness of manner mingled with a tender fondness showed him that he had been the subject of conversation among the ladies. No allusion, however, was made to his affairs till his little cousin suddenly said, in a loud voice from across the table:

"Frank, why are you not going to marry your Dissenter?"

"Hush, Mountborthwick, how can you be so rude?" said his melancholy mother.

"Well, but why aren't you?" persisted the child.

"Because we don't find ourselves suited to one another," said Frank.

He had no sooner made this remark than the head of old Mr. Capulett, which had up to this moment been hidden behind the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, appeared like a grizzled sun emerging from a cloud of paper.

"What?" he asked; and when Frank was silent, "What is that you say?"

"Frank has jilted his friend at Kilburn, papa," said Adelaide, "and we think it a great shame."

"Jilted? Just explain what all this means, if you please."

With a good deal of awkward hesitation Frank told him of the letter that he had written, and of the reasons that led him to do so. Nobody helped him with a word. His father glared at him all the time. The ladies kept their eyes upon their plates, and the wretched little Earl, who had been the cause of the scene, seized the opportunity, although in the middle of his meal, to gorge himself with crystallised apricots.

"I thought you would all be so pleased," Frank whimpered at last.

"The devil you did!" said old Mr. Capulett, bringing his fist down on the table with a bang which elicited a faint scream from the Countess. "You thought we should be pleased to see our name dragged through the mud because you chose to behave like the first dirty little clerk you can come across in the City? Why, what do you suppose these people at Kilburn will do next? Why, the very first thing we shall hear of will be a summons to you to appear in court to answer a charge of breach of promise of marriage. I know these Dissenters perfectly well. What they say is, 'Let us catch the youth. If he slips through our fingers, let us get hold of his money.' And now, who do you suppose is going to pay your damages? Not I!"

"Oh, papa! I am sure that they are the last people in the world to do anything of that kind. Their religious feeling would prevent them," said Edith.

"Religious feeling never comes in when there is money in the case. Of course they will try for their money. And we shall have some sweet pretty readings in the newspapers with our breakfast, 'My darling Janey-waney, your own Frankey'—'roars of laughter.' It is a frightfully vulgar thing that you have done, my boy."

Mr. Capulett having expressed himself in these agreeable accents, withdrew once more into the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, and conversation began again very fitfully.

"Just look at Mountey," the ladies cried in chorus; "he'll certainly be sick if he eats another apricot."

"And how about her brothers," asked Mr. Capulett, re-emerging; "she has brotners, hasn't she?"

"Yes, two."

"And are they vigorous men, with good fists, biceps well-developed, form brought out by lawn-tennis, and all that? No doubt they will be waiting for you somewhere to give you a thrashing. I dare say either one of them could do it by himself. I have very little doubt one of them has gone down to Wycherley Passage to-day. How fortunate for you that you are here. But they can wait, I dare say. Let me see, this is Wednesday; I should not wonder if you got a thorough good lacing on Friday."

"Don't be so horrid, papa," said the ladies in a choral terror at the image so ruthlessly called up.

"I am not horrid in the least. It is Frank that will look horrid when they bring him home in a cab. I should not wonder that if the brother punishes you thoroughly, they may let you off the breach of promise of marriage. And that will get into the papers too. 'Yesterday afternoon, a youth named Capulett, said to be the son of the distinguished dramatist of that name, was waylaid and severely chastised by the brother of a young lady whom he had ruthlessly jilted. The still breathing remains, injured almost beyond recognition, were conducted in a public conveyance to the home of the unfortunate young person.' Well, all I can say is, Frank, that I never supposed that—

I won't say a son of mine—but a grandson of the most elegant of the Earls of Mountborthwick, would have committed an act of such silly vulgarity," and with a noble wave of his hand to Lady Priscilla and the Countess, this handsome old specimen of a walking father retired to the smoking-room.

Mr. Capulett was never known to refer to the subject again, or to mention Miss Baxter's name. It is true that the terrible events which he had predicted did not even begin to come to pass, and there may therefore have been no reason why she should be recalled to his memory.

Next day the Capulett family returned to Kensington. Frank was by this time subdued into a surly condition of defiance, for he would not admit even to himself that he had done wrong, and he was absolutely unable to comprehend the reason why everybody seemed displeased with him for cutting the Gordian knot against the tying of which they had so loudly protested. He himself never thought of Jane, except occasionally with a slight vague resentment, as the soreness of a finger may half remind one of a thorn that has been extracted. The episode had come to an end, and it had been but an episode; it had led to nothing, it had developed nothing, it had meant nothing. Nor need we linger over it any longer than is necessary to lay before our readers three letters which were written in consequence of the events we have described.

The first of these was sent by old Mrs. Baxter to her sister, Mrs. Edward Sikes, at Petherton:—

December 31*st*.

Dear Susan,

At the close of another year I write in much thankfulness to the Lord for His dealings with us in the past year. He hath taken us out and brought us back again in safety—blessed be the name of the Lord. More especially do I thank Him for having surrounded you and your dear husband with journeying mercies in your late trip to Bridgewater, where you doubtless met with many of those who speak oftentimes one to another of His name, and were refreshed by communing in the Lord with them. It would have been very sweet to us to have been with you all once more on the Lord's Day.

The year has closed for us with much trial and chastisement, in which we seek to see His fatherly hand extended in mercy. You know that our dear Jane had engaged herself to a young gentleman, for at the time we told you of it that your prayers might be mingled with ours. It did not appear certain to us from the first that we saw plainly the Lord's hand in guidance, and doubtless it is our weakness of purpose which He is chastening. The dear girl acted, I am sure, for the best. She believed that she should be blessed to his soul, and you know how easily at that age we persuade ourselves that the voice of nature is His voice. But no blessing has come of it, and a week ago this young Mr. Capulett wrote a letter in which he set Jane free if she wished it. There could be no hesitation, yet, as you know is our way, we left the dear child quite free to act as her own conscience led her. And without a murmur she took the path of duty.

She has been sweetly resigned to the Lord's fatherly hand, but I cannot conceal from myself, though her dear father does not see it, that the shock has preyed upon her health. She wants a little change of air, and I do not scruple, sister, to ask you if you will graciously let her come and sojourn a week or two with you? She will take walks, and she will look about her; you know how much she loves the fowls, and the cows, and all the creatures, and in that sweet air of Somerset, where she was born, she will soon grow herself again. You know how good it is to breathe again our native air.

The family of tho young man have behaved well about it. They are ashamed of him, and one of his sisters has been to see Jane. I do not know what she said, but Jane was crying when the visit was over, though she had not cried before. But there is no fear that it will ever happen again. She will not henceforth wish to dwell in the tents of Kedar. The dear child has tasted the waters of worldly society, and has found them bitterness. The Lord bless you and keep you.

Your loving Sister,

Jemima Baxter.

The next letter is dated a few days later, and bears on its official envelope the words, "On Her Majesty's Service." It is from Mr. Leyoncrona to Mr. Sennet at Liverpool:—

Dear Sennet,

I send you on your pay-sheet, as you may find it convenient to cash it. The papers from the Inland Revenue are absolutely promised for this morning, so I expect to send them to-night. I hope you are having a pretty jolly time, and not overworking yourself. I saw the Queen of Sheba yesterday afternoon about something else, and he volunteered to say that your last report was capital. He laid two of your points before the Minister.

There is no office news. There never is. Poor old Bangle has broken his arm, but I am afraid you will only say that you wish it was his neck. Hendricks is engaged to be married, but perhaps we must not say too much about engagements, since Capulett has behaved so badly. Perhaps you don't know about the youngster? I had better tell you, in case you should see him when you come back. I am sorry to say that he has made a thundering little cad of himself about that nice girl he was going to marry. I cannot find out what the quarrel was, but I am ready to swear it was on his side, and he has jilted her. I can't recollect whether you ever saw her? She was a nice fresh girl—rather narrow, I dare say, and with very little experience, but so good and frank and candid that I confess she quite won my heart. I thought the youngster was a very lucky man. I suspect the ladies at home egged him on to throw her off; he never would have thought of it of himself. I have a notion that his elder sister sent him up to me to try and induce me to act as cat's-paw in the matter. I am sorry to say that it has had a bad effect upon his character; I find him lying. It is shameful of me to take away his good fame in this way, but I only say it to you—you and I have talked freely about things ever since he was in the cradle. But I am sure that a boy can't treat a girl with selfish heartlessness without its affecting his whole mind. By the way, when he was confessing his sins to me, he said I could hardly understand *since I had never been in love myself!* Well, good-bye, old man, and take care of yourself.

Yours,

A. C. Leyoncrona.

The final letter, with which our record of this little episode must close, is addressed to the Right Rev. the Lord Bishop of Wisbeach, at the Palace, Wisbeach:—

New Year's Day.

My dear Bishop,

Your short note was welcome in spite of its shortness, and beggars must not be choosers. I feel so fully what you say about the claims of business upon your time; I am sure the bishops are the hardest-worked men of the day. Your reward ought to be the sense of the noble work you are doing in stemming the odious tides of atheism and nonconformity that are sweeping over the country.

As I say, I was glad of your sympathy, though briefly expressed. I was especially glad that you did not join in reproaching my poor boy. I dwell upon the fact that he is saved *as by fire*—that is how I put it to myself. I am very glad you happened to be with us at Kensington the night that young Miss Baxter was staying here; you could see for yourself that we put no inhospitable obstacles in her way. I would not be inhospitable, I must say, even to a Dissenter. Poor dear Frank is very much altered by all he has gone through. Of course, it is a little awkward for him that all our circle know about his little escapade. I see that it embarrasses him. We have some thoughts of sending him out to Montana, to his brother, for six months. I told Sir Eusebius Holcroft how shaken the dear boy is, and that I considered that his health was quite undermined. He was very kind about it. I dare say you know that the Treasury does not interfere in any case of holidays under six months.

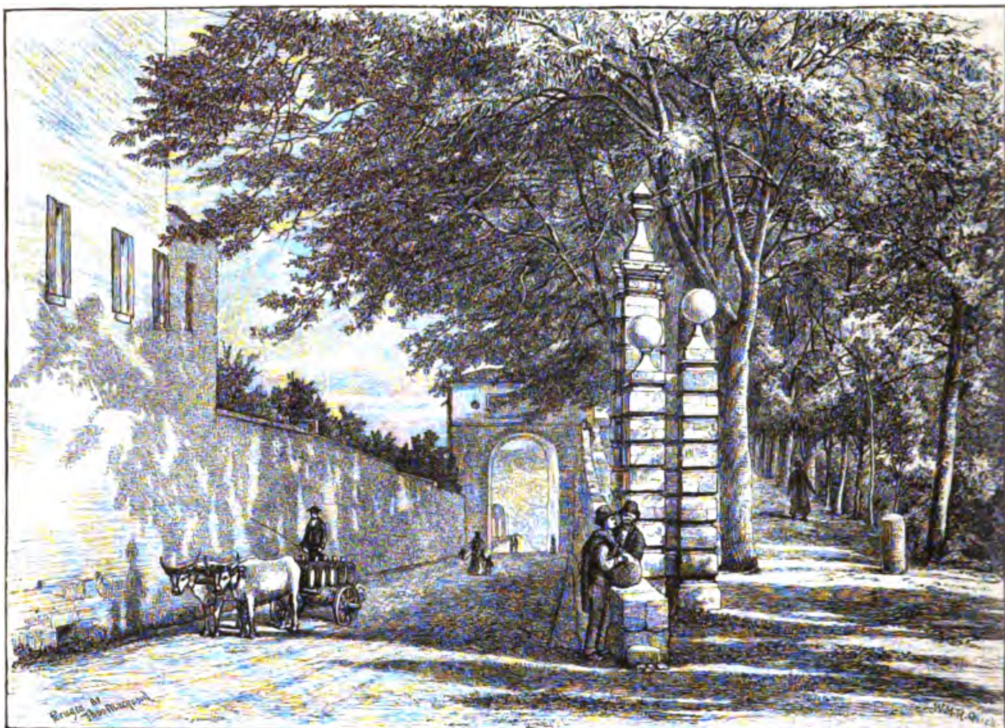
So there it rests at present. We hear nothing more of the family at Kilburn. I can't say that on the whole I think they behaved badly. We must not expect from them quite the same delicacy as from persons of our own class. Poor Adelaide, who is quite infatuated, persists in taking a very exaggerated view of the whole event, and I had to actually forbid her continuing to visit the Baxters. I cannot go through this ordeal by Dissenters with a second of my children. By the way, poor Sir Eusebius has not got his peerage, but dear Lady Holcroft was telling me the other day that she is very glad he has not, for his health would never bear the strain of attendance in the Upper House.

Forgive so long a letter, my dear Bishop, and believe me,

Your affectionate Cousin,

Priscilla Capulett.

THE END.



IL FRONTONE.
From a Drawing by THOMAS MACQUOID, R.I.

IN UMBRIA.

PART II.

AN UMBRIAN WINDOW.
From a Drawing by THOMAS MACQUOID, R.I.

SOUTH of Great Britain, though indeed they may be seen in our country, one is pretty sure to meet with brown-frocked friars with rope girdles and sandalled feet—living witnesses that the beautiful story of St. Francis, which reads now-a-days so like a legend is a historical fact.

Francis of Assisi probably did a far greater work than did Luther or any reformer of the Renaissance period. He did not attack popes and bishops, nor find fault with everything and everybody who differed from his special ideas; he lived the life he preached, and his example seems to have been all powerful in that brutal and licentious period—the beginning of the thirteenth century. The poverty, obedience, and chastity he enjoined seemed at first utter madness to his hearers; but it says something for the times in which St. Francis lived, that when the first outcry was over, he was left unmolested, and that he lived to see his order recognised both by Church and lay potentates, and its widely-spread communities firmly established wherever they wandered. The same thing may be said of St. Bernard and St. Dominic. They practised as much as they preached; but one feature peculiar to St. Francis is not chronicled of those two other revivalists. His idea of life was so much happier than theirs. In the next century Boccaccio did not preach perpetual joy as a duty of existence

a whit more strenuously than St. Francis did, although the two ideas of joy were taken from precisely opposite points.

It is very interesting as one drives out from Perugia to remember that the talk on the subject of human happiness between Francis and Fra Leone is said to have happened as the master and his disciple went out to Assisi from the city—a fatiguing walk of ten miles or so. The hills along this road have listened to the cheerful lays which this early poet improvised in the Provençal tongue as he toiled on through the dust; it was not till he used his hymns to teach with, that he caused them to be rendered into Italian verse so that they might be understood by the people. Reading the *Fiorêtti* one learns that Francis enjoyed his life, in spite of its austerity, and that there must have been a singular power of fascination in the man who could always, wherever he went, change sorrow into joy. Plainly, there was no gloom in the asceticism of Francis; he rejoiced in the beauty of nature and went singing along the white, dusty road between the silver olives and the grape-laden vines that, probably then as now, bordered the way on either hand—singing till the birds came fluttering round to share his gladness, and he had to ask the swallows to cease their twitter while he preached to the rest.

The story of his life has been told so charmingly by a contemporary[1] that there is no need to repeat its details, but we thought as we drove through the lovely and fertile valley, with its pretty villages nestling beside the tree-shaded Tiber, and passed over a grey, peaked bridge so ancient looking that Francis may one time or another have gone singing across it, that such a mind as his could hardly have lived amid such loveliness without becoming interpenetrated by it. The drive between vine and olive fields backed by grand purple hills is most lovely. The grapes were ripening fast, very pale in colour as they hung from the tender green garlands suspended between the trees they rest on. In some fields white long-horned oxen were ploughing the steep, lumpy land between the vines, golden stalks of maize lay on the rich brown soil. We had a perfect morning; mist lay between us and the hills, and the sun-touched summits of Subasio and his brethren looked like radiant clouds; the air was so pure and invigorating that it was a delight to breathe it. After a two hours' drive through a charming country we saw on our right the dome of Sta. Maria degli Angeli backed by lovely landscape.

[1] The Life of St. Francis of Assisi by Mrs. Oliphant.

Huge Subasio had been in front of us all the way, but now we could distinguish clearly the goal of our pilgrimage—Assisi; its long streets of white houses clinging midway up the ascent; above the houses rise on the right campaniles and churches, while on the left, supported by a double row of lofty arches, is the monastery and triple church of San Francesco.

Our road took a turn to the left, and we soon began to climb the steep side of Monte Subasio. Picture-art would find it very hard to give an adequate idea of the approach to Assisi, and it is impossible to describe it; probably the thrill caused by its associations intensifies the charm. For some time past the varied colour of the hills on either side had become more exquisite, and now we were in full view of the scene described by Dante—for the town seemed to cling to that

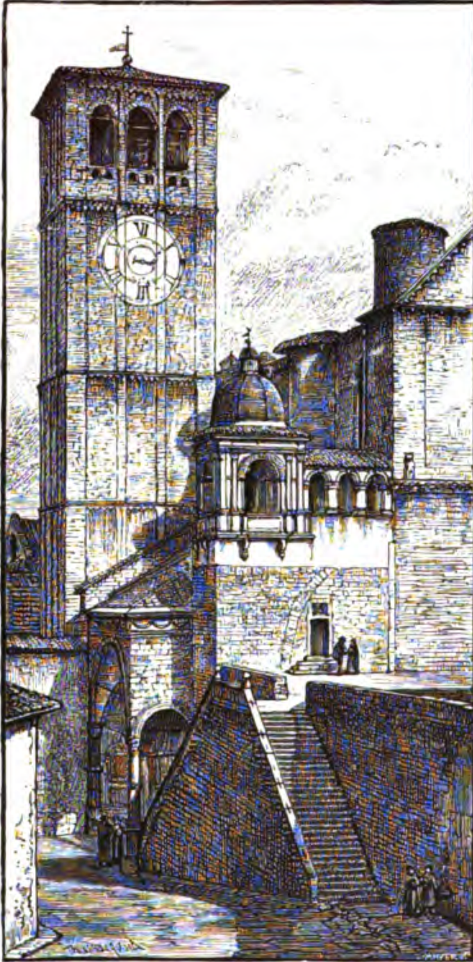
"Rich slope of mountain high, whence heat and cold
Are wafted through Perugia's eastern gate.
Upon that side where it doth break its steepness most, arose
A sun upon the world——"

For miles round, this building of San Francesco makes a striking landmark, and as long as it stands it bears witness to the strange and beautiful story of the youth who gave up all that seemed to make life worth living to save, not only his own soul, but those of others. There was no tardy justice in the recognition given to his holy life and the benefits worked by his disciples. Two years after his death Francesco Bernardone was canonised as St. Francis of Assisi and the lower church was begun. Before the century ended this church and the upper one had become a great centre of art-workers; in a sense we may look on Francis of Assisi as a source of inspiration to both Giotto and Dante, they were all three originators, and it is delightful to picture the two friends, Giotto and Dante, standing in the lower church on the spot where the high altar now stands, the imagination of the one helping the skill of the other to perpetuate the memory of the Spouse of Poverty.

Dante's description in the *Paradiso* shows that a lapse of centuries has not in any way altered the high esteem in which St. Francis was held less than a century after his death. Dante was born only thirty-nine years later, and as he certainly visited Assisi he must have been well acquainted with all the details of the saint's history. It may have have been in his exultation at the triumphs achieved by his friend Giotto at Assisi that

the poet writes, after mentioning Cimabue, "And now the cry is Giotto's."

As we mounted the hill, San Francesco seemed higher and higher still above us; the sun burned so intensely that the olives were pale as silver against the blue sky. It seemed to us, as we at last came to the street leading up to the monastery,



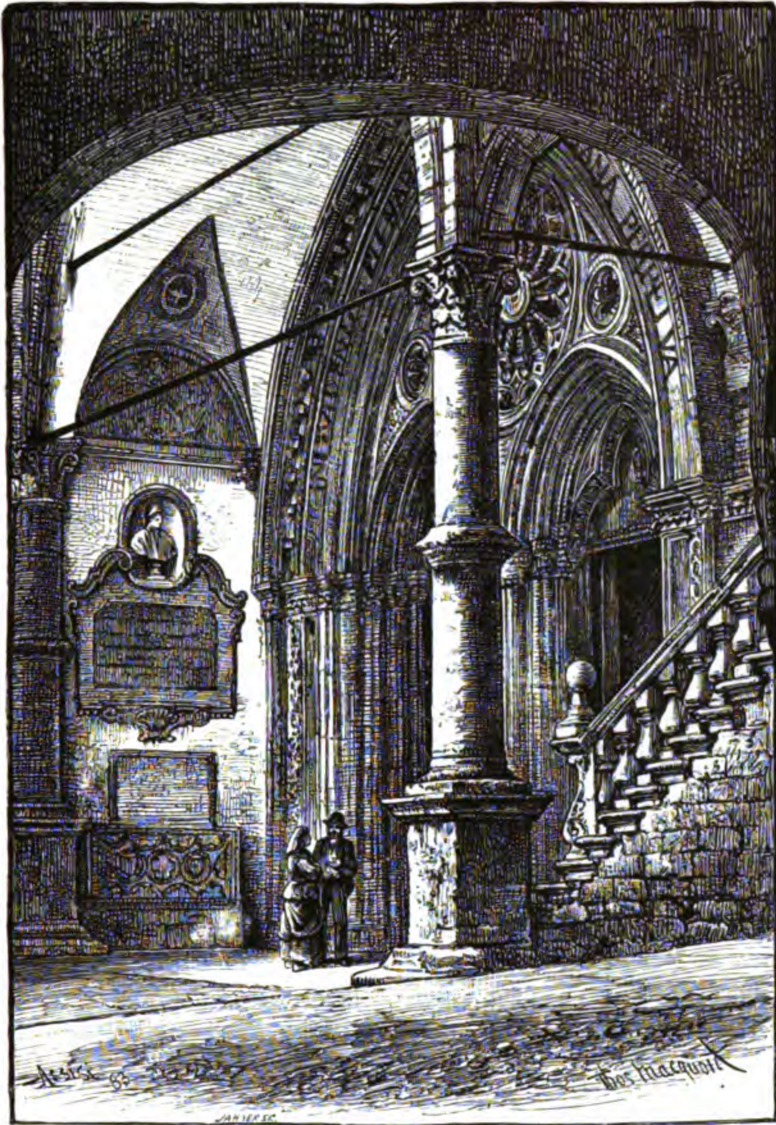
SAN FRANCESCO, ASSISI.
From a Drawing by THOMAS MACQUOID, R.I.

that we had reached a deserted town, it looked so still and lifeless; the very inn as we passed it seemed asleep. Only the flies and gnats let us and our poor horses know that the sunshine made them extra lively, and that we were a boon to them in this utter absence of life.

Passing through the cloister we reached a terrace from which we entered the lower church by a beautiful porch. Two years after the saint's death, the offerings made by pilgrims to his tomb at Santa Maria degli Angeli had amounted to so large a sum that the building of the lower church was begun, and about five-and-twenty years after, the upper church was also built.

As we entered the vestibule, as it may be called, the light was so dim, in spite of the brilliant sunshine outside, that we feared we should scarcely make out the frescoes that cover the walls and the low vaulted roof with mellow, delicious colour; the very air is painted as the light comes in through the stained windows. In the vestibule are some interesting tombs, one of them, in its arrangement, resembles Giovanni Pisano's beautiful monument to Pope Benedict XI. in San Domenico at Perugia; but we turned at once to the nave. It was difficult to believe that we were actually on the spot so filled with memories of those three great revivalists—St. Francis, Dante, and Giotto. The chief interest is in the centre of the church. In an open crypt below the high altar is the tomb of St. Francis, and on the vaulted ceiling overhead are four compartments; on these Giotto has depicted in the form of allegories the three virtues practised and enjoined by the saint. There is a tradition that Dante aided his friend in the conception of these designs—certainly the marriage of St. Francis to Poverty is founded on the lines in the *Paradiso*. In another compartment, a monk, a nun, and a lay brother are taking the vow of chastity while the Virtue herself, guarded by two figures, looks out of a little tower above; the third represents obedience; and the fourth is the glorification of St. Francis. The truth to nature in these figures is marvellous.

To the left of the staircase is another fine Giotto—St. Francis receiving the Stigmata. There is also a succession of Giotto frescoes which tell graphically how a child, killed by falling from a window, was restored to life by St. Francis; in one of these our guide pointed out a likeness of the painter. Many other frescoes and pictures cover the walls, some by pupils of Giotto. A beautiful series of frescoes by Simone Martine represents scenes in the life of St. Martin; there is a portrait of St. Francis, said to be by Giunto da Pisano and a Madonna by Lo Spagna, and in a chapel on the right of the nave are some frescoes by Doni. The roofs of the nave, transepts, and side chapels are rich with frescoes, some of these are said to be by a pupil of Perugino. This lower church is wonderfully picturesque, full of subjects for an artist; it



PORCH OF SAN FRANCESCO, ASSISI.
From a Drawing by THOMAS MACQUOID, R.I.

is difficult to give even an idea of the details of this storehouse of early art, for both the upper and lower church of Assisi seem to have become a sort of rallying ground for Giotto and the artists of his time, following the lead of Cimabue and Giunta da Pisano.

We had a most kind and intelligent guide in Fra Antonio, as he is called, and when we had spent some time in this lower building he opened a door leading into the quaint cloister. Here is a little wild quadrangle, seemingly left to itself, with the grey monastery round it; in some of the hollows of the rough ground we spied out rosy cyclamen flowers. The kind Fra at once tucked up his skirts and went out into the quadrangle, to gather me a bunch of them, to which he added tufts of maiden-hair fern that had niched itself in the old wall around the cloister-court. He asked my companions to come and get roots both of cyclamen and maidenhair. Here, outside the church, we found him a very merry companion, especially when we spoke of two English ladies—a certain Sig-

nora Maria and a Signora Carlotta—who had been more than once to Assisi, he sang their praises with enthusiasm. "Ah!" he said, "one day I shall see those good Catholics."

Going back into the church he took us to the sacristy and showed us the most marvellous strips of old embroidery mounted on frames, the worked faces of the figures were perfect, and the colours delicious. He told us that these were not generally shown, but we had become so friendly over the cyclamen that, although he knew we were heretics, he was ready to show us everything.

There is a remarkable portrait of St. Francis here, taken soon after his death. Fra Antonio next showed us the vestiary saying that Signora Carlotta had so much admired the lace that he fancied I should care to see it. Among it was some exquisite Venetian point lace on surplices which, I think he said, had been there about 280 years. There was also some fine embroidery in the way of vestments.

After this we went up a long staircase, and came into the upper church—built over the lower one about twenty years later—it is a graceful and beautiful example of Early Gothic. At the east end, where we entered, is the Pope's chair in red marble, and in front of this the high altar, surrounded entirely by a screen, for mass is no longer celebrated here. In the transept choir are frescoes by Giunta Pisano and Cimabue, but the walls of the nave are covered by a continued series of frescoes, the lowermost row said to be by Giotto, but of unequal merit. They are extremely interesting, as they form a sort of history of the life of St. Francis. Above is another range said to be by Cimabue, on one side, scenes from the Old Testament, on the other, from the New. Some of the frescoes on the roof are attributed to Cimabue, and all these designs show evident marks of unskilful restoration.

Splendid as are some of the frescoes, this upper church is not so interesting as the lower one; there is too much light, and it lacks the rich mellowness that fills the air below—a dim mystery of splendid colour, in which the red and white of the architecture show in vivid contrast. And now Fra Antonio said we had seen all he could show us; we should have liked to linger but we felt that he had already given us much of his time, and he added, quaintly, "I must go and get my dinner." He took us out through the west door, beneath the fine rose window, shook hands cordially with us all, and then stood watching us as we went down one side of the double row of steps leading from the raised terracė on which the upper church opens.

We were so very tired when we came out into the sunshine again that we sat down opposite a fountain at the foot of the steps where there was a little shade. Presently a girl came quickly up the hill behind us, her bare feet white with dust. She had a red kerchief on her head, and above this she carried a tall copper pitcher; her skirt was purple, and the blue body was laced up behind over a white under vest. In a minute she began to run fast spite of the tall pitcher, and then we saw a dark-eyed, long-legged lad evidently bent on getting first to the fountain. They seemed to fly along the dusty road, but the lad outran the girl, and when she reached him, panting and choking with laughter, he had the courtesy to fill her pitcher for her, and helped her as she raised it to her head. It seems wonderful how these women's heads can support the loads they put upon them. Sometimes they carry huge round baskets three feet across, laden with grapes or with heavy vegetables; we rarely, however, saw a man thus burdened; he seems to content himself in Italy, as he does in France, by looking on and admiring, while the women do the work.

From San Francesco we went up a long solemn street; in places grass was growing between the stones; some way up there were shops and here it was very steep; but no one seemed to be alive within the dark openings on each side, though from the wares displayed it was plain that the houses contained inhabitants probably asleep at this time of day. At the top of the street are old grey palaces on either side; one on the right has a projecting roof supported by long and beautifully carved brackets—this is the Ospedale, and the door is curious. On the left is the Palazzo Allemanni, and over every door and window is the legend *In Domino Confido*—beyond this is the house in which Metastasio was born. The pale blue range of mountain seems to end the street; but presently we come out on the piazza where there is a grand portico with five ancient classical columns (which, it is said, Goethe admired more than anything in Assisi), once the front of a temple of Minerva, it is now the front of a church. Going along the piazza we come on the right to a little square on which stands the Chiesa Nuova. We knocked here, and after some delay a very old Franciscan wearing the habit of his order, opened the door.

He seemed to be stone deaf, for he only nodded or shook his head in answer to our

questions. This church was built over the house of Francis's father, Pietro Bernardone. The high altar is supposed to occupy the site of the saint's bedchamber, and a side chapel on the right is said to be an unaltered room of the house, that in which his mother Pica dreamed her wonderful dream; the door is still standing at which, in her vision, the angel appeared to announce that her son would be born in a stable; the stable can still be seen at the back of the church. On the right of the altar is a dark cave; this is said to be the cellar in which his father confined Francis to cure him of his fanatical fancies. He was perhaps a captive here after his return from San Damiano; the little square in front of the church specially interested us, for here, tradition says, he restored to his indignant father the money acquired for San Damiano by the sale in the market at Foligno of the goods taken from Pietro's warehouse. Francis flung down first the money and then his coat and all his other garments, till he stood only clad in the hair-cloth shirt he wore next his skin, then before the bishop and the astonished townsmen of Assisi he made his memorable vow. The bishop flung his arms round the impassioned young fellow who had just renounced all for Christ's sake, and drew over him his own mantle as a covering, and presently, having borrowed the brown serge garment of a rough countryman, the young hermit began his new life.

The cathedral is not very interesting, but the church of Santa Chiara is a handsome building of red and white marble with a slender campanile. We did not go down into the crypt to see the body of the foundress of the "Poor Clares," but in one of the transepts we were shown the crucifix, once in the ruined church of San Damiano, before which St. Francis is said to have received his first divine inspiration. He considered that the command "build up" meant material church restoration, and he set to work first on San Damiano, and then restored another church before he built the Porzioncula at S. Maria degli Angeli.

Santa Chiara, after her dedication, lived and died abbess of the poor ladies of San Damiano, as they were called, till the name was changed to the "Poor Clares." This church and convent was built in her honour in the year of Santa Chiara's death in 1253; but fifteen more years passed before her remains were moved here and before the community took up their abode in the adjoining convent. The flying buttresses of this church are very remarkable, springing completely across the road. We followed this road till we reached the town gate on the brow of the hill. There is a wonderful view here of rugged hill and fertile valley, wilder and more picturesque than any we saw from Perugia. Soon after leaving the gate we turned to the right and went down the steep side of the hill; on either side was a silver haze, for the side of the hill was clothed with olive trees, and their leaves gleamed in the sunshine against the bright green berries and ancient trunks, so gnarled and shrunken that one often wonders at the abundant crop above; huge brown patches glowed like velvet on the grey trunks; and through the silver veil we could see the mountains in blue ranges, a more delicate tint indicating the valleys that lay between them. There was not an atom of shade unless we had climbed the bank and walked on the rough ground under the olives; and as these did not grow closely enough to give any shade worth having, and as the road under foot was fairly smooth, we trudged down hill in spite of the burning sunshine. At last, concealed among trees, we found San Damiano; no longer neglected and threatened with destruction by the cruel government which persecutes the Franciscans; Lord Ripon has bought it, and it is left just as it was. Our summons was answered by a young Franciscan, in face like the portraits of St. Francis. He showed us the quaint little chapel, with the marvellous crucifix, the legend of which is that an angel came in the night and carved the unfinished head of the figure. He also showed us, on the right of the entrance, the hole below the window into which Saint Francis flung the money gained at Foligno by the sale of the stolen goods, and also the little cracked bell with which Santa Chiara summoned her sisters to prayer. It is interesting to learn that though she ran away from her father's house at night to adopt a religious life, her mother, in after years, joined the community of the "second order," and placed herself under her daughter's rule. Behind the little chapel is the choir of the nuns left just as it was when Sta. Chiara died. The refectory on the other side of the cloisters is also unaltered, and above it is the dormitory of the nuns; at the end is Chiara's cell. Every step makes the poetic history more real, and it is hard to believe that these poor Franciscans have been so cruelly persecuted and that such determined efforts have been made to suppress them.

We went back, up the olive-bordered hills, to our pleasant little inn with windows that seem to hang over the lovely valley behind

the house. Just before reaching it there is a picturesque view looking upwards to San Francesco.

Even without the touching interest with which its story invests the little town, Assisi is delightful. On market-days it is very bright and cheerful, though certainly at first its streets have a deserted appearance. Wherever one looks between the old grey houses, there is the lovely valley full of rich colour, and the far-off soft outlines of the hills. Then, as one climbs the steep way up to the old grey castle, a magnificent prospect spreads out before one. To the west is Perugia, surrounded by hills, while eastward, many another town glistens below the line of hills. Behind the castle there is the wildest of ravines. Monte Subasio seems to be full of nooks and glens if one could only reach them. We were very sorry not to be able to get to St. Francesco delle Carcere, where the saint retired for prayer and penance when he found life too pleasant at the Porzioncula; we learned that a wood still exists at the Carcere, though the "*selva*" which evidently once surrounded Sta. Maria degli Angeli, and into which St. Francis used at night to retire for devotion, has passed away.

One is apt to forget that the history of St. Francis is not the history of his native town; but there do not seem to be any traces of the history of Assisi prior to its Roman occupation. In the Middle Ages it was governed by the different leaders who obtained power at Perugia—Galeazzo Visconti, Biordo Michelotti, and then Braccio Fortebracci, Sforza, and another less well-known Perugian leader, Niccolo della Stella.

As a matter of sequence one ought to visit first the Chiesa Nuova, then San Damiano, and Sta. Maria degli Angeli, San Francesco last of all as being merely a memorial church crowning the scene of his humiliations; as it happened we went last to the great modern church in the valley.

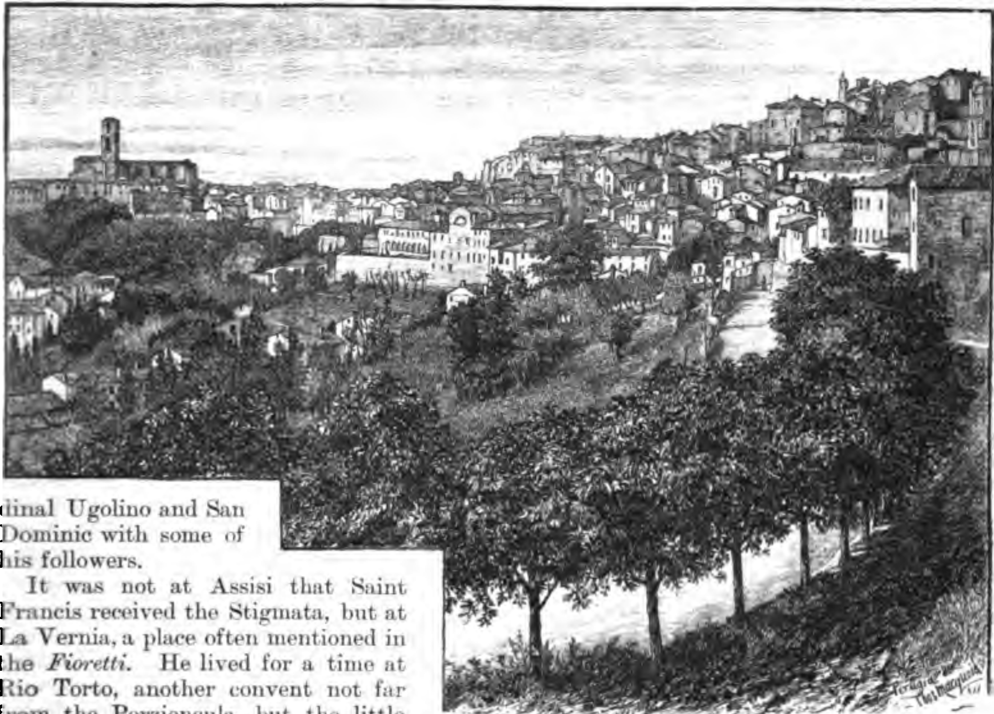
This was only rebuilt fifty years ago, when an earthquake had almost destroyed it. Its vast baldness looked very uninteresting as we entered, but at the east end of the nave is the little brown "Porzioncula," the original home of St. Francis and his seven followers, which remained uninjured when the earthquake shattered the outside of the church. The dark walls of this little chapel are covered with votive offerings. There is a fresco by Overbeck—the Vision of St. Francis—over the entrance, but the great interest of the place lies in its story. Two years after he renounced his home and his father, Francis was kneeling in prayer, when he received his second inspiration; and, according to his biographers, he hastily rose and, taking up a bit of cord near at hand, tied it round his waist as the outward badge of the new order of the Poor Brethren. On the right of the Porzioncula is a chapel, the site of the cell of St. Francis; his portrait is over the altar, and there are fine frescoes of his companions by Lo Spagna. Our guide was a Franciscan who looked as if he had come direct from the thirteenth century—but he had not the warm, loving glow that must have radiated from the founder of his order. I thought of Frate Elia as I considered this meagre, sour-looking friar. His scanty hair stood erect, and his red-veined blue eyes stared at us as the Gorgons did in the Etruscan tomb. At first he would scarcely speak; I fancy he thought heretics would not appreciate his information; but when we came to the little rose garden outside the Chapel of the Roses, he thawed and told us how an unbelieving English traveller had begged a rose tree so that he might try it in English soil, and how next year he had written to say that the rose tree was covered with thorns, whereas at Santa Maria degli Angeli these roses—brought here from Subiaco by St. Francis—have been thornless ever since the day when St. Francis rolled himself among the briars which St. Benedict had originally planted in the garden of his monastery, for purposes of penance. It is certain the rose-trees bear no thorns at Assisi. Our guide said we ought to pay our next visit when the roses were in blossom. From the rose-garden he took us into a chapel where, under the altar, is the den into which the saint retired for penance—a most wretched prison hole; then we went into the sacristy and our guide showed us a Perugino—in a little chapel was the portrait of St. Francis we specially wished to see—a very remarkable face, which looked like a likeness, painted on a plank which had formed part of the saint's bed.

Before we left the church we took another long look at the Porzioncula; the gable behind the little building is covered by a crucifixion originally by Perugino. There is so little space within that it is difficult to picture St. Francis and his brethren receiving the fugitive Clara into this place of refuge, when she fled from her father's house, resolved, in imitation of the saint's example, to renounce the world. Here Clara or Chiara took the vows, and here her beautiful hair was shorn from her head by St. Francis. Other memories of Santa Chiara cling about this church of Santa Maria. The space in

front, it is said, has never been built on, because it was here that the memorable meeting so quaintly described in the *Fioretti* took place between her and St. Francis.

The great chapter of the order convened by its founder eleven years after its beginning, also recorded in the *Fioretti*, took place here. The number of the brethren must have increased very rapidly for several thousands came over the hills and along the valleys from far-off parts of Italy, to look their founder in the face and receive his instructions; among others came the Cardinal Ugolino and San Dominic with some of his followers.

It was not at Assisi that Saint Francis received the Stigmata, but at La Vernia, a place often mentioned in the *Fioretti*. He lived for a time at Rio Torto, another convent not far from the Porzioncula, but the little chapel was evidently the place he loved best, and before he died he told his brethren they must never forsake it. The more one studies the life of this gentle saint the more one wonders at the persecution of Franciscans in Assisi; they seem to be much better off at La Vernia. As we drove back along the dusty roads which, to those who read the *Fioretti*, are full of memories of St. Francis and his favourite companions, Fra Leone, Fra Egidio, Fra Masseo, and others, we saw a sunset which he would have enjoyed the sight of; there were magnificent effects on the surrounding hills; especially on Subasio; it glowed like a carbuncle as it reflected the gold and scarlet splendour opposite, and while this faded slowly into purple the long line of the houses of Assisi blushed like a rose beside the mountain. We watched till the purple became a rich grey painted with pale-brown tints, while the sky just above the ridge of hills was now palest green, changing into yellow above; long lines of purple cloud barred these delicate tints, while on the bluer, now cool sky opposite, lay rounded masses of white cloud with grey under-edges. It was dark before we drove up the steep road into Perugia.



PERUGIA.
From a Drawing by THOMAS MACQUOID, R.I.

It would be difficult to say too much about the Sala del Cambio in Perugia, and the collection of pictures and frescoes in the Pinacoteca. These are both in the grand range of buildings at the end of the Corso, called the Collegio del Cambio and the Palazzo Communale.

We delighted in the Sala del Cambio; the harmony preserved throughout in the rich and artistic decoration of walls and ceiling is most soothing, and adds greatly to the enjoyment one feels in the beautiful little place. The lower part of the walls is wainscoted with dark wood inlaid with tarsiatura by

Domenico del Tasso; the doors have the date 1483. Near the entrance is the raised throne for the judge, and below this the desks and seats for the money-changers, and these are exquisitely carved. One account says that the intarsia designs were furnished by Raphael; another that Domenico del Tasso was both designer and executer of this beautiful work. In the record of the agreement between the authorities at Perugia and the painter Pietro Vannucci, he says that his intention in the frescoes which cover the upper part of the walls, is to recommend the merchants and magistrates therein assembled never to forsake the path of duty, but to remain faithful to the dictates of wisdom, of natural reason, and of religion. Faith and Love are emphasised by two large frescoes facing the entrance; the Transfiguration and the Adoration of the Magi, and Hope of an eternal future, by the prophets and sibyls on the wall to the right. On the left wall are moral qualities, Justice and Prudence, illustrated below by the figures of Fabius Maximus, Socrates, Numa, Camillus, Pittacus, and Trajan; on a lower level still is a portrait in oil of Perugino painted by himself, older, and not quite so hard as his portrait in the Uffizi; while the remaining half of the upper wall has figures of Courage and Temperance, and below them Licinius, Leonidas and Horatius Cocles, Scipio Africanus, Pericles, and Cincinnatus. There is no attempt at grouping, the figures stand singly severe and stately as if they were on the look-out to rebuke any cheating or covetous practices going on in the hall below. It is singular that the painter should have been accused of greed in the pursuit of his calling, when he considered it necessary to call up so many witnesses to protest against the love of money in others. The ceiling is divided into bays on which are represented the planets; in the centre is Apollo in his chariot; the spaces between are filled with ornaments and figures, some of which are said to be by Raffaelle. On a bright morning when the sun comes pouring into the little Sala the rich tone of these frescoes is marvellous, and so far as one can see they have been left unrestored. In the adjoining chapel are some sibyls and children attributed to Raffaelle; but the work here has been freely touched.

BRONZE STATUE OF POPE JULIUS III.
From a Drawing by THOMAS MACQUOID, R.I.

In the Sala del Cambio, Perugino is at his best; perhaps it is because the monotony of his style makes one weary of him, but the gallery devoted to him in the Pinacoteca is, as a whole, a disappointment, although in it there is of course much to admire. Far more interesting are some pictures by a rare and earlier Umbrian painter, Fiorenzo di Lorenzo, who with Piero della Francesca from Borgo del Sepolero, and Benedetto Bonfigli, had made a school of art in Perugia before Perugino appeared there to profit by their teaching. There are pictures too by Niccolo Alunno, of Foligno, another contemporary of Perugino's, and by some old Sienese masters, and there is a room filled with charming small bits of Fra Angelico; there is abundant material here for the student of early Italian

art. From a terrace leading from one of the rooms there is a most beautiful view of the surrounding country; the polite old cicerone showed us where Rome, and Siena, and Orvieto all lay hidden by ranges of blue hills.

I have yet something more to say about Perugia herself. Beyond the Palazzo Pubblico and the Piazza del Duomo in a little piazza of its own is a bronze statue, vivid green in colour, and raised high on a pedestal. An inscription on this tells that this statue was erected to Pope Julius III., and is the work of Vincenzo Danti.

This bronze statue has been sitting enthroned just outside the cathedral doors for more than three hundred years. In these years the sun has burned hotly on the grand old pope with hand outstretched in the act of blessing, and, looking at the brilliant colour, we were inclined to fancy that this golden sunshine, in coming down, had mingled with the intense blue of the sky overhead, and that the mingling had created this vivid green, which rivals even the lizards that dart in and out of the grey old wall behind the Duomo.

Looking at the old pope under different aspects, in the sparkle of morning sunshine, in its full meridian glow, or in the darkness that comes in Perugia so swiftly at the heels of day, one gets to see a different expression in that seemingly immovable face; in the morning it beams on the crowd of market sellers and their quaint wares, as these are spread out on the stones around its pedestal and to point proudly to the grand group presented by the Fountain and the Palazzo Pubblico; but at eventide a pensive cast comes over the face more in keeping with the grass-grown street behind it, and the ancient grey palaces that stand so near.

The old Pope was not sitting here at the time of the famous preaching of San Bernardino of Siena on the Piazzo del Duomo, when the Perugians flung their gauds and vanities into a heap and burned them as they did at Florence in the days of Savonarola. This preaching of San Bernardino is commemorated in an old window in the cathedral. Behind the adjoining Piazza dei Gigli an open space in front of the Sorbello Palazzo, is a way going steeply upwards to the right; it has bricked steps in the middle, but at the side of these is a long strip so irregularly paved that it might serve as a specimen pattern of the variously paved streets in the town, tufts of grass between the stones show that this way is not much used, its right side is walled by the church of S. Maria

THE VIA APPIA, PERUGIA.
From a Drawing by THOMAS MACQUOID, R.I.

Nuova, and high above it on the left are some quaint houses. This road leads to San Severo, a little chapel containing what is called Raffaele's first fresco; this unhappily has been very much restored, and the view between the houses near it is more interesting.

It is a very old part of the town, and presently through a tunnel under a low-browed arch we came out on the Piazza of Monte Sole surrounded by old palaces; we had now reached the summit of one of the two old hills on which ancient Perugia was built by the Etruscans. The other hill, Colle Landoni, is crowned by Palazzo Donnini and till the time of wise and valiant Forte Braccio, who seems to have been the best ruler the Perugians can boast of, the valley between these two hills existed; he caused it to be filled up, and the Piazza Sopra Mura, where the weekly market is held, takes its name from the levelling then effected.

Going on from the Piazza Monte Sole a few steps brought us to a tree-shaded terrace with benches placed along it. There is a grand view from the wall that bounds the terrace, and goes straight down into the valley. Just below us is the red cupola-topped church of Sta. Maria Nuova while the houses of the town lie thickly clustered below; the ancient wall from which we are gazing runs out northward on the right, and on the left goes on till it reaches the Etruscan arch on the Piazza Grimani—beyond are grassy heights on one of which stands the convent of S. Francesco, outside the extreme northern point of Porta St. Angelo; on the right we get a glimpse of Subasio. As we stand gazing, the Angelus begins—three—four—five—and then one long-drawn-out solemn note; the bells call to one another out of the numerous campaniles and give deep-toned musical answer across the grey-green valleys that vandyke themselves against the walled hill-side of the old town, while the sunset brings out in bold relief the grand balconied Palazzo Antinori, a charming house, with charming inhabitants.

Going out at the back of the terrace, we found the cathedral close by, and along an old twisting way behind it we reached a lofty arched opening with "Via Appia" printed on one side. The arch itself has a house above it, and a second opening, with grey projecting imposts, shows a broad steep descent, a long flight of shallow, brick steps which seem so undecided as to the course they shall take, that they curve first one way, and then another, before they reach the bottom of the descent.

Some way down, a viaduct supported by three broad arches, crosses the long flight of steps; transversely right and left are stone walls, that on the right is high and massive, and from the grey-green stones hang long garlands of white-blossomed caper-plant and trailing green pellitory.

Beyond, just before the wall joins some old stone houses, is a little pergola covered with the tender green of the vine. From the deep hollow into which the steps descend the town rises up in front, and as we went down, the old houses on our left with gardens and orchards, stood at a great height above us looking black against the glowing sky. From this viaduct we had an extended view over curious roofs with semicircular tiles, frosted with gold and silver lichens and patches of green moss; first came a series of gardens, green with vines and fig-trees, and beyond these, among the grey houses and gardens the great modern building of the University; beyond this is the silk factory of Count Faina, and behind all are the purple hills.

Instead of crossing the viaduct we went down to the bottom of the interminable brick staircase, through the viaduct arches on the left we saw a succession of pictures—cottages backed by trees in a vivid effect of light and shade, framed by the low, broad arches. We came out on a road with a pointed arch on the right, leading back into the town, spanned on the left by another broad arch of the viaduct. Through this a group of feathered acacias glowed golden-green in the sunshine against picturesque houses backed by the old hills. The pointed arch on the right looked quaint with the contrast of its huge grey stones and small many-shaped windows, some of them gay with scarlet flowers, while one had a faded green curtain and a birdcage hung outside. Through this arch was a strong effect of golden light and blue purple shadow; and while we looked, a donkey, driven by a merry-eyed, bare-footed lad, came dragging a cart heaped with brushwood.

A little way on along the road is the mosaic pavement discovered only a short time ago in some Roman baths. It is in singularly good preservation, and the design is very remarkable. Orpheus, a colossal black figure on a white ground, sits with outstretched arm, while a lion, a tiger, an elephant, a hippopotamus, stags, a rhinoceros, a horse, birds of various kinds, a snail, a monkey, a tortoise, and other animals are drawn towards him from all sides. A handsome, dark-eyed girl kept on sweeping it, and was eager that we should notice that the brickwork on one side pro-

bably hides a good deal more of the pavement that might be revealed by excavation. She was so bright and good to look at, that we felt she was quite a part of the show. Turning through the arch we very soon reached a Piazza with the Palazzo Antinori on one side, and close by the wonder of Perugia—the Etruscan gateway, or as it is called from the inscription set over it by the Romans when they took the city—the Arca Augusta. It was growing dusk, and the effect of this grand mass of stonework was stupendous; on each side of the arched gateway are massive towers—one of them surmounted by a loggia—the upper part of the structure is less ancient than the towers. Some of the blocks of stone in this Etruscan wall are enormous, many of them four feet long.

As we went home through the narrow dark Vià Vecchia, we saw a very quaint scene. In a long room lighted by two oil lamps hanging from the ceiling, a man and woman were selling soup and cold meat at a sort of counter. The brown characteristic faces and shining eyes of their ragged customers told wonderfully as occasional lamp-gleams singled them out of the semi-darkness. In this street we saw many examples of the walled-up doors by which the dead were formerly carried out so that the living might never pass by the same way.

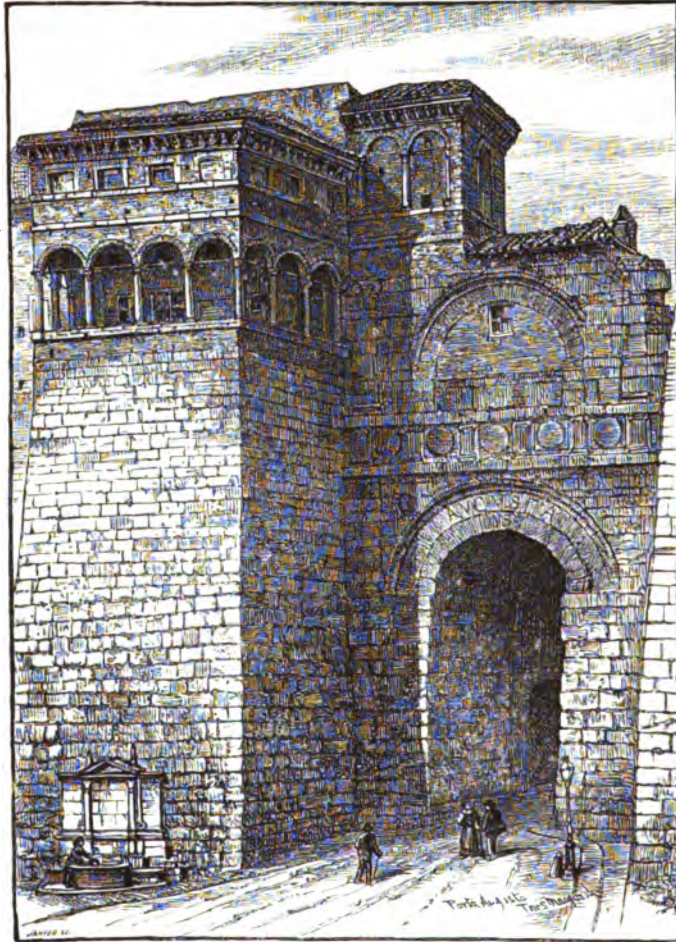
Our next view of the Etruscan arch was by daylight, for a great English painter, a master of taste in such matters, who was also staying in Perugia, had told us where to seek a special point of view from the old walls near this arch. The Arca Augusta is even finer in full light, which shows the immense strength of its construction. Instead of following the Via Lungara or Garibaldi as it is now called, we went down a narrow street that runs in a parallel direction till it is stopped by the inward curve of the city wall. Our way was blocked just before we reached this by two wine carts laden with barrels of new-made wine, and drawn by a pair of huge white or rather cream-coloured oxen with soft dark eyes and long horns, that reached from one side of the street to the other. I delight in these splendid creatures, they look so gentle and unconscious of their power. They moved on at last, and permitted us to reach the edge of the wall. Certainly this Porta Buligaia was the most beautiful point we had yet seen, and we felt very thankful to the accomplished artist who knows every street, and almost every stone of Perugia, for kindly telling us how to find it; the little narrow street opposite the Arca Augusta had hitherto escaped our notice, although we had spent so many weeks in the city.

Just before it reaches the gate, the old wall curves into a trefoil, and goes down steeply into the fertile valley. Through the open, green doors of the gate, the road winds down beside the grand old wall which strikes forward to the north, covered with greenery, with tall grass waving like pennons among the trees above it. The wall within sends out a long flank to reach the gate, and level with the top of it is a vine-covered pergola with quaint, gabled houses above; we thought these must have a grand view over the hills which circle round in varying shades of exquisite blue. Plots of maize glow through a grey mist of olives, and vines are golden-green as they swing themselves from tree to tree. As the road goes down by the wall beyond the gate it passes a white-walled cottage nestled in trees. The view tempted us along this road, and soon a path bordered by a black hand-rail mounted on the left beside the caper-wreathed wall. Following it we crossed a sort of farm-yard where enormous gourds lay on a brick wall sunning themselves among their grand leaves.

Beyond this, towards Perugia, the land was richly cultivated; maize, and vegetables, fruit trees, and vines covered every scrap of ground, with here and there a tangled bit of hedge over which the vines flung themselves. There was no primness anywhere, and yet the ground seemed well cultivated. Going on, as the road curved, the view became still more extended and beautiful, and at last we found ourselves in the road again, and went on till we reached the extreme northern point of Perugia—Porta Sant' Angelo.

Some little way outside this gate is the convent of San Francesco, and just within the gate from which there is another charming view, up a little side lane, is the round church of S. Angelo. This is very ancient, and is said to have been formerly a pagan temple; the lower part is round, the upper eight-sided, but within it is circular; the upper part is supported by a circle of sixteen dark-grey columns, and anciently there were three circles of these columns. All but one of the two outer circles have been taken away to other parts of Perugia. There are two in one of the palaces on the market-place. One still remains in the second circle at S. Angelo. This interior is very interesting. There is a well-preserved sacrificial altar, and the old woman who guided us explained with much unction how the victims were sacrificed. She also showed us some

horrible instruments of torture, and another altar said to be Roman. There is a curious bas-relief on the wall near the sacristy. We had already seen this church on a festa, when the altar blazing with candles, and the gaily-dressed people kneeling in front of it and between the surrounding circle of pillars had a very picturesque effect, marred, it is true, by the presence of sundry dogs among the worshippers, and the extremely cracked and untuneful sounds that proceeded from the music gallery.



PORTA AUGUSTA, PERUGIA.
From a Drawing by THOMAS MACQUOID, R.I.

To-day, our brown-faced, withered guide was full of talk, and when we got into the sacristy, she confided to me she had been foolish enough to marry late in life, and then "her man" had managed so badly as to die and leave her to take care of herself. "Ah, yes," she said, "and there is more than myself, there is a boy, and he is nine, and he must be taught, and school costs money; and yet what a thing it is, I can neither read nor write, and I wish my son to do better than I, and yet I am not sure if it is wise." I suggested that she must be right in giving her son schooling. She sighed heavily and gave me a keen glance out of her hungry dark eyes. "The signora is right, but if I spend money in teaching my son, I can have none for myself. What is to become of me when these"—she stretched out her hands—"can no longer work for me?" She gave a heavy sigh, and again she looked wistfully at me.

I said that if she did her duty by her son, he would be sure to take care of her hereafter; but at this her face showed me that we took different views; she shook her head.

"It ought to be so, signora," she said, "but I have lived in the world some years, and I have not found that men are what they ought to be. The signora has as much money as she wants, and she sees the other side of people."

Poor woman! I hastened to assure her that I was far from being in the state she fancied, and I felt so ashamed at giving her my modest fee that I said humbly it should have been larger if I had been as well off as she fancied; but evidently she was not greedy—she clasped both her brown hands round my arm and squeezed it while she thanked me warmly. Then she went back to the heap of stones near the entrance of the lane where I had found her sitting like a hungry spider, in wait for an inquiring fly, in the shape of a traveller.

In my limited space I may not venture to describe in detail the church of San Pietro de Casinensi, attached to the convent at the end of the southern point of Perugia; it is the most remarkable church in the city, and stands a little way within the gate named after San Costanzo, who is said to have been the first Bishop of Perugia. Standing just outside San Pietro, one is shaded by the trees of the Frontone, a public garden on the right, and at the end of the road there is an exquisite view of the near valley and distant hills framed in by the arch of the Porto Costanzo.

Going up the steps and entering the church through the boldly-carved marble doorway in the cloister, we saw a very rich interior, and every subsequent visit to the church revealed some fresh treasure.

The pictures in the sacristy, and the illuminated choir-books done by the monks of San Miniato are well worth seeing, and there are also some good pictures in the church. The dark grey columns on each side of the nave were brought here from the outer circles at Saint Angelo, and there is an altar-tomb—that of the Baglioni—by Mino of Fiesole. But the most remarkable feature at S. Pietro is the sculptured wood and intarsia work in the choir, and the doors leading into the balcony behind the apse, these are marvellously inlaid. The view from this balcony, of Assisi and the surrounding hills, is charming, and it is only when the doors are opened so that the light comes in, that one can appreciate the workmanship of the intarsia. They were executed by Damiana di Bergamo and his brother Stefano, from designs by Raffaelle. The choir seats take a long time to examine; besides the inlaid work of the backs and seats, and the delicate carving above the poppy heads, between each stall are wonderful creatures, almost every one different — a crocodile and a harpy, an elephant, a dolphin, a sphynx, &c.—there is constant variety, and the carving of each is excellent. There are many other treasures in this church, and the view from its cypress-bordered garden on the top of the high wall is beautiful. The priest who showed it to us said that this was kept in order by the lads of the Reformatory of the Convent; and just as we reached the outer door, a detachment of these lads in their pale-blue uniform and straw hats came trooping into the cloister. We had often seen them at work in the olive-fields outside the town, and had admired the picturesque contrast made by their blue garments against a background of silver grey leaves. They did not look quite so interesting on close inspection, though some of them had simple honest faces, and raised their hats and smiled at the Fra as they passed in to the cloister, but most of the bigger fellows had an ugly scowl, and went in with bent heads without any greeting. From the Frontone there is a splendid view over the country, and we often watched the sunset from under the trees here. Remarkable sunsets were abundant last autumn, but they seemed to us another of the special charms of Perugia, as well as the intensely blue skies.

The air became very cold up at this height directly the sun had departed, though the leaves had scarcely begun to change colour; but the wine-carts which thronged the town daily, warned us that the vintage was nearly over; and day after day flocks of sheep and goats were coming down from the mountains on the farther side of the town and trooped below our windows as they took their way along the dusty road towards the Maremma. The poor herdsmen looked picturesque in ragged skin trousers and patched coats; they wore high peaked hats; and, altogether they had a sort of make-believe appearance as they trudged along on foot behind their beasts. Every now and then came a padrone mounted on a mule, sometimes on a horse with quaint trappings; he always carried a long pole and a huge roll of green baize—his cloak—in front of him. We did not see any women or children, but we were told that the pecorai take their families along with them in these spring and autumn migrations, for they will go back to the hills

as soon as winter is over. As we watched them turning their backs on the town we felt sadly that we too had soon to say goodbye to Perugia, and to the friends who had been so kind to us.

One of our last walks was to Monte Luce, and coming back towards Perugia we stopped and watched the sun set; as it sank behind the purple-black hills, the sky was blood-red over them; above, stretched in long broad lines, a mass of greenish slate-coloured clouds. On the right these were reft, and showed a sea of golden glory, while higher yet, clouds of paler grey sailed over a rosy veil that stretched itself across a sky of luminous green. As we went on, the blood-red tint paled and faded; the clouds above took a deeper hue and loomed with storm-laden, broken edges over the deep valley that lay between where we stood and the projecting bastion crowned by the weird tower of San Domenico; this stood up in startling vividness against the almost appalling gloom that had so quickly gathered. Around us the view opened widely, the triple range of hills showed a sullen grey of differing tints; on some of them, where the grey light was lurid with a tawny tinge, it was plainly raining fast already, and yet, although thunder seemed imminent in the tumid clouds that hung lower and lower over the valley, we were told that probably there would not be a storm at Perugia. Certainly in the many weeks of our delightful visit we had perfect atmosphere and perfect weather. The town seemed to us very healthy in all ways—a place where winter and spring, summer and autumn might be spent with charm and profit to those travellers who love the nature and art of Italy. We were quite sad at saying goodbye to it; to its delightful hotel, and to our kind host and hostess.

The most interesting part of the journey to Cortona is the view of Lake Thrasymene, with its reedy shores and blue hill-islands and the picturesque little town of Passignano. As one leaves the station below Cortona and mounts the hill to the grandly-placed town, the lake comes in sight again and adds much to the beauty of the landscape. It is worth while to go to Cortona for the sake of the drive up from the station and for the exquisite view from the city walls—these walls, too, are wonderful masses of stone-work. But the inn leaves much to be desired, and although Cortona is placed at such a height, the moss growing outside the houses warns one how damp the place is.

If Perugia had seemed old, Cartona appeared antediluvian. According to the old historians Perugia sent soldiers to fight against Troy, but Cortona boasts that the father of Dardanus was buried within her walls. It was late afternoon by the time we reached the top of the hill; and when we had found our way, from the inn through the hilly, twisting streets, to the Porta Colonia the sun had already set; and although the sky still glowed, Lake Thrasymene looked pale against the olive landscape. Before us was a deep valley backed by a warm, purple, mountain ridge; behind us the stupendous Etruscan wall. We followed the course of this down the steep descent, for Cortona is built on the side of a rocky hill which yet towers above it. The blocks of travertine are larger than those at Perugia. Nestling between them, we found, as we went down, ceterach and several delicate aspleniums growing freely among these grim records of past ages. Suddenly, while we were stooping to look closely at the ferns in the fading light, there came down to us, as if from the clouds, a full-voiced chant, and deep, organ notes swelling above the sweet voices. When we had scrambled up again we saw that a convent was built above the walls. We stood for some time on the side of the hill listening to this aërial music. Behind was the deep purple of the valley—the vast plain below was fast changing into a brown-olive, a wild, desolate-looking expanse—yet overhead there was a peculiar clearness of atmosphere, and we saw the young moon above the towers; its light helped us to find our way over the rough ground till at last we reached one of the city gates and went back through the dark streets to our inn. There is not a deserted or sleepy look about Cortona; people were gossiping and trafficing in the streets, and there were plenty of customers in the shop we went into.

Next morning we found a market on the hilly piazza. The town hall is here, and some women spreading out orange and scarlet handkerchiefs in the loggia above gave some colour to the scene; but the people looked somewhat squalid and dirty after our bright Perugians, and they are indifferent and uncourteous to strangers. We turned into a side street to see a fine palazzo, and then crossing the market place, went on to the Palazzo Pretoria. The walls of this building both in the street and those round the inner quadrangle are curiously decorated with shields bearing the arms of ancient magistrates, and reminded us of the Bargello walls in Florence.

We went up stairs and were told that the

custode of the museum was not in, but if we waited he would be sure to come. We had, however, to send more than one messenger in search of him before he appeared. There are many Etruscan and some Roman antiquities in this museum of much interest; but its chief treasure is the famous candelabrum. This holds sixteen lamps, between the hole for each lamp is a head of Bacchus, while eight satyrs and eight sirens placed alternately form a marvellously worked border; within this circle is a fight with wild animals; then waves and fish with a Medusa as centre. The colour of the lamp, an exquisite mingling of blue and bronze, is beautiful. Near it is a painting on stone—a female—said to be very ancient.

We afterwards went into the cathedral and saw some pictures painted by Luca Signorelli for his native town; he was born at Cortona and was a pupil of Piero della Francesca. There also is, near the choir, a beautifully-carved marble tomb in which the people believe the Consul Flaminius was buried after the battle of Thrasymene. We had not time to visit the baptistry opposite, which also contains some pictures by Luca and by Fra Angelico. We were anxious to see the view from the church of Santa Margherita, above the town. Her statue stands just outside the cathedral, a little dog crouches at her feet. Margherita was not a native of Cortona, but on her repentance of an evil life she took refuge in a Franciscan convent here, and passed a holy life of charity and penitence for her sins. Her conversion is said to have taken place on the death of one of her lovers; as he left her house accompanied by his little dog he was assassinated. The little dog came back to the house, and by its cries and by its pulling at her dress induced Margherita to follow it to the place where her lover lay dead. For this reason she is always represented with a little dog beside her.

We went along the road past the platform where there is a fine view over the Chiana valley, and then in to see the pictures at old S. Domenico; but we could only see two, neither of them very remarkable. Another was being restored, the custode said. The campanile of this church is a picturesque feature of Cortona. The walk from this point up to Santa Margherita is delightful. The sunshine was brilliant and the air had a delicious touch of autumn crispness. The way beside the wall is steep, but there are constant views over the country, and gradually, as we mounted, Lake Thrasymene revealed itself in pale blue-green loveliness; a projecting hill, however, blocks the view, and only allows about half of the lake's expanse to be seen. The yellow turf was gay with wild flowers, some of them rare specimens; when we at last reached the church we were rewarded for our climb.

The Santa Margherita of Niccolo Pisano has been rebuilt, but the view from its platform is simply magnificent. In front is a screen of tall cypresses through which the purple hills show exquisitely. Within the church is a beautiful monument to Santa Margherita by Giovanni Pisano; it reminded us of Pope Benedict's tomb at Perugia; the saint lies sleeping with her little dog at her feet; in a bas-relief she is yielding her soul to angels who bear it to heaven.

The Fortezza behind the church is said to command a still finer view, but we were quite satisfied to sit on the flowery turf, enjoying the surpassing loveliness below us. Hills and valleys, far-reaching plains, the beautiful still lake, and the perfect sky overhead seemed to vie with one another and yet to blend into such perfect harmony that the sensation of gazing was one of complete repose.

Down a long, long flight of irregular steps, we found our way to the quaint little church of St. Nicholas. While we sat gazing above we had watched a brown-robed Franciscan go down these steps, so we felt sure they would lead us to somewhere; and we landed in the queerest little up-and-down village. Every one begged of us, the children being pertinacious. One bright-eyed monkey of a boy with bare brown legs and feet, and a red cap stuck over one eye, followed us down the broken way outside his cottage. All at once he stopped and pointed to three younger children even more ragged and dirty, but quite as bright-looking as he was. We asked him if he had a father or a mother, but he shook his head. "*Son padre di famiglia,*" he said with a merry laugh, and he pointed again to the black-eyed urchins sitting in a mud pool before the door.

His face and his tiny outstretched hand were irresistible, and he shouted for joy when we dropped a coin into it.

The little church is hidden away among the houses with a quaint little grassed cloister court in front of it and a row of ancient cypresses. On one side of the church is a charming little cloister; a vine-covered pergola supported on small columns fills up the small space inclosed. In the church is an altar picture, painted on both sides, said to be one of the last works of Luca Signorelli. Another fresco, said also to be his, has been much restored. This little church belonged

to a confraternity, and along the sides of the front court the seats still remain where the brethren have sat in council, or from which they have enjoyed the exquisite view over the wall that borders this quiet cloister.

As we drove rapidly down-hill to the station we seemed to look at the country through a silver veil, for the olive trees are larger here than at Perugia, and they literally cover the first part of the steep descent —so steep that the road has to descend by terraces zigzagged along the side of the hill.

We had told our red-headed, blue-eyed driver to take us to the Etruscan grotto, and he presently stopped at a rough break at the side of the hill with large stones placed so as to form irregular steps. He was greatly excited lest the horse should run away, and went on chattering patois to that effect; but though I told him I was quite able to climb up by myself, he would stand at the top of the break hauling me up with one hand and flourishing his whip with the other as if he were performing a circus feat. We left him there, and soon we entered a solemn grassed avenue of gigantic cypresses, their pale-grey stems gleaming in the sunlight. This avenue slopes upward and at the end the ruined grotto shows between the lines of tall, dark trees. It is very curious, circular in form, with neatly finished compartments in it for the urns. These have all been taken away, and only a part of the circular top of the sepulchre remains lying near the ruined stone; but even in its fractured state it is very impressive—alone on the hill-side and screened from the immense prospect before it by its surrounding of olive trees.

As we drove down to the station far below us, it seemed to us quite worth while to stay at Cortona for the sake of this wonderful drive down the steep hill-side—but the town is probably freer from damp in August than we found it in October.

KATHARINE S. MACQUOID.

ETRUSCAN LAMP, CORTONA.
From a Drawing by THOMAS MACQUOID, R.I.

THE WITCH MAIDENS OF FILEY BRIG.

HELEN CARDROSS is the plighted bride
Of Harold the Norseman. "Now, dear heart,
Wish me God speed, for my ship doth ride
At the harbour bar, and I must depart;
For the white witches dance upon Filey Brig."
She plucked him a rose and an evergreen sprig,
"Wear this, and my love, in thy breast."

Spoke he, "Heart's love nothing can stay;
Love like ours sure as the tides;
In life or death I am thine for aye.
Life may perish, but love abides;
Life is the rose, love the evergreen sprig.
Kiss me and part, for on Filey Brig
The witch maidens leap o'er the crest."

Oh! the long time, unending and drear,
Starved with hope's pitiful dole,
Her mind was possest of a nameless fear,
She prayed for him, body and soul.
"Mary in Heaven, keep my heart's choice
From the white witches dancing on Filey Brig,
And I'll hang at thine altar a silver sprig."

A tempest in autumn—the storm fiends yell
In the wind-swept vaults of heaven;
The sea is lashed to a boiling hell
Surrounding the witches seven.
And gruesome wreckers make devils rejoice,
As they light false fires with splinter and sprig
To lure the ships on to Filey Brig.

"Father, I see a ship in the gloom,
It nears the breakers—'tis his, maybe;
Now curst be you all if you bring to doom
The ship in her peril from land and sea!
Scatter the burning splinter and sprig
That are luring the vessel on Filey Brig,
To the clutch of the witches leaping."

Said he, "It must founder. If wrecked on shore
Better for us—for them no worse;
The kists are empty of stuffs and store,
And never a coin is left in the purse.
Heap, comrades, the fires with splinter and sprig,
That shall bring the ship round by Filey Brig,
Where the maidens are coiling and creeping."

Helen stood out on the headland height
In the blinding storm by the raving sea,
She wrung her hands, and prayed for the light
In her helplessness and her misery.
"Life is the rose, love the evergreen sprig,
And both are for him. Now to Filey Brig,
Where the witch maidens gleam in the gloom."

Down the path of the cliff she ran,
Touched the beach with her fear-winged feet,
Reached the rocks at the narrowest span
From north and south, where the waters meet.
"Angels, give power to the evergreen sprig
To daunt the white witches on Filey Brig,
Whose clutch of the living is doom."

Up to the heavens and down to the deep,
Ever and ever the ship is tost,
The billows unite, and in one fell sweep
It is lifted and riven, and all is lost.
No! No! by the might of the evergreen sprig
It is swirled past the witches of Filey Brig,
And carried high up on the shore.

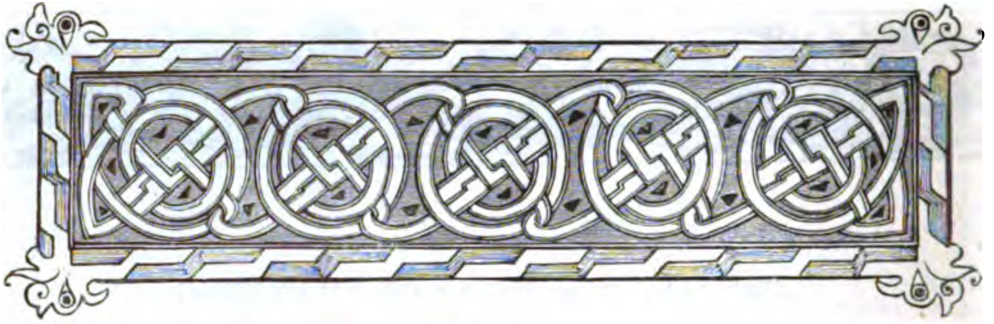
She gains the wreck; through the lashing seas
One thought in her mind as she makes her way;
Tho' many are struggling, but one she sees—
Harold, her love, as he senseless lay.
"Oh! woe to the rose and the evergreen sprig,
Have they won, the witch maidens of Filey Brig?
Shall I hear his dear voice never more?"

Desperate she clutches his ice cold form
With fiery impulse, God-given strength,
Drags him away thro' the deafening storm
And lays him down on the cliff-side length.
"Are they dying, the rose and the evergreen sprig,
Through the hateful—the witches of Filey Brig?
Then God take me, too, from the strife."

He breathes, he sighs, and his lids unclose,
He smiles on Helen with dim delight,
The smile and the sigh are more precious than gold,
Heaven opens, she thinks, on her longing sight.
Bereft are the witches of Filey Brig—
There waves in her heart the fair evergreen sprig
As trembles the rose of his life.

He wakes—he rises—the death dream is past.
"Saved! Harold, saved!" "Ay, love, and by thee.
The tempest is dying, 'tis daybreak at last,
And blue breaks the heaven above thee and me.
In the deeps sleep the witches of Filey Brig;
Through thee has prevailed the blest evergreen sprig,
And blossoms the rose of my life."

H. A. H.



THE SINGING VOICE.

IN listening to Joachim or Rubinstein the predominant impression in most people's minds is probably admiration of the artist's *skill*, which not even Dogberry could suppose to "come by nature." When, however, the witching voice of Nilsson or Albani "takes the prisoned soul and laps it in Elysium," it is the *gift* of the singer which the bulk of the hearers finds most wonderful. Yet it is not too much to say that just as much *art*, *i.e.*, acquired mastery of the instrument of expression, is displayed by the latter as by the former. In other words, the human voice is the production of a musical instrument, the stops and strings and other parts of which have to be managed in a way which must be laboriously *learnt* if they are to discourse the most eloquent music of which they are capable.

Let us give a hasty glance at the construction of the vocal instrument. Its essential part is the larynx, the situation of which in the neck is indicated, in men, by the prominence known as Adam's apple. The little organ is in fact the upper extremity of the windpipe expanded into larger dimensions, girt about with walls of greater solidity and fitted with two vibrating membranous bands or lips. It is sometimes absurdly called the voice-box, as if it were one of those ingenious toys which grind out automatic strains of metallic melody on being wound up. The larynx as a whole is not unlike a hollow wedge in shape, the sharp edge being in front. It is placed on the upper end of the windpipe like a funnel on the top of a tube. Its framework is composed of cartilage or "gristle," and consists, roughly speaking, of two main pieces, the cricoid or signet ring, and the thyroid or buckler, cartilage (Fig. A, *cc* and *tc*). The former is remarkable,

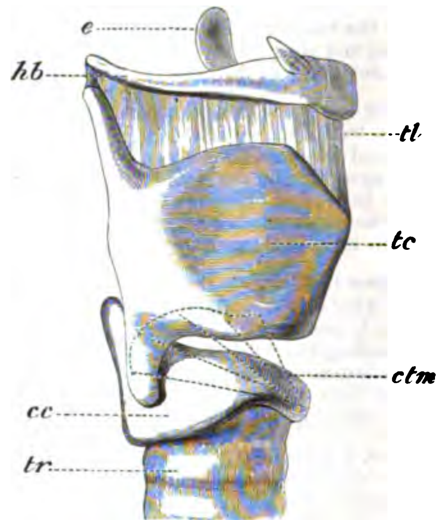


FIG. A. LATERAL VIEW OF THE FRAMEWORK OF THE LARYNX AND HYOID BONE. (SEEN FROM THE OUTSIDE.)

in the first place, as being really very like the thing it is named after—a rare merit in anatomical nomenclature. It is a complete circle of cartilage, broadening out symmetrically at one part of its circumference. The hoop of the ring is in front, whilst the "seal" is at the back, the cartilage as a whole forming the upper end of the trachea or windpipe (Fig. A, *tr*), which consists of a number of similar rings but much less massive, and incomplete behind. Above the cricoid is the buckler cartilage, which is bent in front into an acute angle forming the sharp end of the

wedge; its sideplates, or "wings," which diverge widely from each other behind, are square in outline, but their posterior corners are prolonged upwards to the hyoid bone and downwards to the cricoid cartilage respectively. The space between the hinder edge of these plates is partly filled by the posterior expanded portion of the signet of the cricoid, with which the thyroid is united at each side by a small joint which allows a certain amount of movement between the two cartilages. On the upper edge of the cricoid behind are placed two small bodies somewhat pyramidal in shape, and known as the arytenoid cartilages (Fig. B, *ac*) from the resemblance to the mouth of a drinking vessel which they assist in giving to the upper orifice of the larynx. The pyramid is crowned by a tiny piece of gristle (Fig. B, *cS*) which keeps alive the name of its discoverer, Santorini, and near it, but to the outer side, is another which confers a like immortality on its Columbus, Wrisberg. These little cartilaginous bodies serve to give solidity to the upper rim of the larynx, like the card-board and other contrivances which give stiffness to a lady's dress. The base of each of the arytenoid cartilages is hollowed out and fits on to a corresponding convex surface on the cricoid. On this pivot the arytenoids can be turned inwards or outwards, and drawn close together or away from each other.

The three angles or spurs at the base of the arytenoids form convenient points of attachment for the muscles, which open and close the upper aperture of the windpipe, and stretch or relax the vocal cords. One of the spurs projects directly forward, whilst another runs outwards from the middle line. The latter forms the lever-arm, by the aid of which most of the muscular movements belonging to the larynx itself are performed. To the former on each side is attached a strong ligament composed of fibrous and elastic tissue which extends to the inner part of the angle of union between the two sides of the thyroid cartilage. This is the vocal cord or vibrating lip of the glottis (Fig. B, *vc*). The two cords are close together in front, but diverge behind; they can however be approximated and made parallel to each other by muscular action. The interval between the two cords is called the *glottis*, and it is clear that it must vary in size and shape according to the position of the cords. With the latter separated to the fullest possible extent, the glottis is an isosceles triangle, the apex of which is in front at the thyroid cartilage, whilst the base is behind, and corresponds to an imaginary line passing through the bases of the two arytenoid cartilages from side to side. When the cords are close together the glottis is reduced to a mere linear chink or fissure, through which the edge of a piece of the most finely beaten gold could scarcely be passed.

The muscles which move the various parts of the larynx and thereby change the form of its orifice are arranged in an extremely complex manner. A very cursory description, however, will suffice for my present purpose. In front there is an interval between the lower edge of the thyroid and the upper rim of the cricoid cartilage; in this space there is a muscle the fibres of which pass from one cartilage to the other, spreading out like a fan on each side at their upper (thyroid) point of attachment. As the function of a muscle is by shortening itself to bring its two ends with the points to which they are connected nearer to each other, it is clear that the *rôle* of this crico-thyroid muscle must be to bring the lower edge of the buckler cartilage into closer proximity to the upper edge of the cricoid. It has generally been taught that this is effected by pulling the thyroid cartilage downwards; it is now certain that it is the cricoid which is drawn upwards. The rising of the forepart of the ring must evidently force the hinder portion of it downwards—a movement in which the arytenoid cartilages, which are attached thereto, must of course participate. The arytenoids again

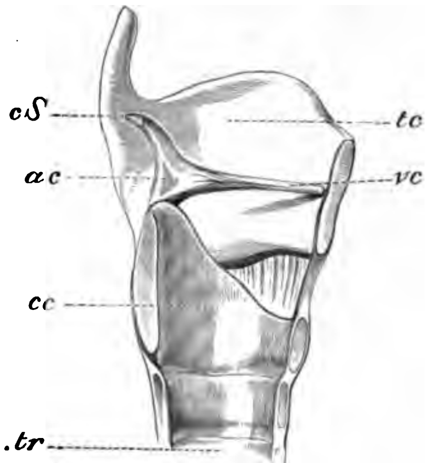


FIG. B. LATERAL VIEW OF THE FRAMEWORK OF THE LARYNX FROM WHICH THE EPIGLOTTIS HAS BEEN REMOVED. (SEEN FROM THE INSIDE.)

draw down and back with them the posterior ends of the vocal cords, so that the effect of

the approximation of the cricoid to the thyroid cartilages in front is to put the vocal cord on the stretch. Passing from the cricoid to the *back* of the outer spur of the arytenoid behind is a muscular slip (posterior crico-arytenoid) which draws these little cartilages asunder, and thereby separates the vocal cords. Another muscle (lateral crico-arytenoid), on the other hand, runs from the side of the cricoid to the *front* of the same spur, and by twisting the whole arytenoid cartilage on a vertical axis pulls the anterior spurs together and thereby puts the vocal cords in apposition. At the back of the larynx is a muscle (posterior arytenoid) connecting the two arytenoid cartilages; by the shortening of its fibres these two bodies are brought into close contact. Lastly, there is an important muscle (thyro-arytenoid), having for the most part the same direction as the vocal cord, the substance of which in fact it partly forms. The muscle extends horizontally between the front surface of the arytenoid and the inner part of the thyroid cartilage near its angle, sending offsets however in various directions to the sides of the larynx above the glottis, and to the ligamentous portion of the vocal band itself nearly all the way along from one end to the other. The muscle is closely united to the inner surface of the thyroid cartilage by connective tissue; the vocal band is thus not really a "cord," but a "lip" with only one free edge, in fact, a *reed*. The action of the thyro-arytenoid muscle is as complicated as the arrangement of its component fibres, but its most obvious and important function is to bring the arytenoid cartilage nearer to the thyroid, thus *relaxing* the vocal cords. This sketch of the laryngeal muscles, brief as it is, will enable the reader to understand the essential movements of the larynx. These are, (1) approximation and separation, and (2) tension and relaxation of the vocal cords. Besides this, the larynx as a whole can be raised or lowered in the neck by other muscles which need not be mentioned in detail.

At some little distance above the upper rim of the buckler cartilage is the hyoid bone (Fig. A, *hb*), which consists of a small central part or *body*, and two long slender offshoots curving outwards and backwards. Roughly speaking, the bone is like a horseshoe in shape, and is placed horizontally in the neck with the concave part directed backwards. The space between this bone and the thyroid cartilage is filled with a sheet of membrane, which terminates below, just above the vocal cord in a well-defined edge. This used to be known as the false cord, but is now generally called the ***ventricular band*** (Fig. C, *vb*). Its posterior and anterior extremities are attached close to the corresponding parts of the true vocal cords; there is therefore a horizontal slit between them which in reality is the opening to a little pouch or *ventricle* (Fig. C, *v*). Connected with the thyroid in front is a small piece of cartilage called the epiglottis (Fig. A, *e*, and Fig. C, *e*); it is rather like a leaf in shape, and in the ordinary way occupies a more or less upright position behind and below the tongue, but in the act of swallowing falls down and backwards so as to cover the glottis like a lid.

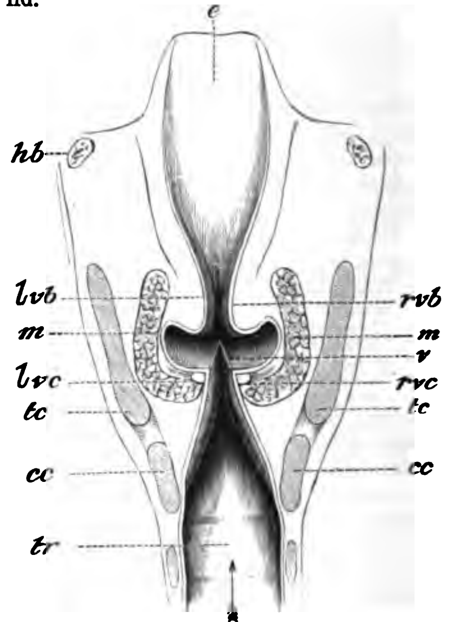


FIG. C. TRANSVERSE VERTICAL SECTION OF THE LARYNX

The female larynx is smaller in all its dimensions than the male; thus the vocal cord measures about half an inch in length in the former, and three-quarters in the latter, and this ratio (2 to 3) may be taken as fairly accurate for the other parts of the organ. The cartilages in women are more slender and pliable, and do not as a rule harden into bone with advancing age as in men. Before puberty the larynx has pretty much the same size in the two sexes, but about the age of fourteen or fifteen the organ in boys undergoes a more or less rapid development in size and solidity, which is the cause of the change of voice observable at that time. The lower orifice of the larynx communicates directly with the windpipe, and through that with the lungs, whilst

the upper outlet opens into the pharynx (the space popularly known as the "back of the throat"), and through that again with the cavities of the mouth and nose. The soft palate, with its tongue-like appendage, the *uvula*, hangs down at the back of the mouth, but being formed of muscle has the power of altering its shape. Thus it can draw itself up and back till it touches the pharynx behind, and shuts off the nose from the throat. It only remains to be added that there are numerous hollow spaces in the bones of the skull, all of which communicate directly or indirectly with the nasal passages. These little cells or *sinuses* vary greatly in their degree of development, both in individuals and in races. All these little caverns, together with the nose, the mouth, and the interior of the throat, larynx, windpipe, and lungs, are lined with the delicate moist red skin called *mucous membrane*.

The larynx, therefore, consists of pieces of cartilage articulated together by joints which allow of certain movements between them, of the muscles which are the mechanical agents in producing these movements, and of the vocal cords, which may be said to be the *raison d'être* of the rest of the machinery, since the working of the other parts is directed chiefly towards the placing of the lips of the glottis in proper position either for respiration or vocalisation. The vocal cord itself has three component elements: (1) the ligament proper, (2) the thyro-arytenoid muscle beside it, and (3) the mucous membrane covering the ligament.

Voice is produced by the propulsion from the lungs of air which is as it were moulded into a column in the windpipe; this strikes against the vocal cords, which come together as if to resist its passage, throws them into vibration as it rushes out, and reverberating from the base of the skull to the roof of the mouth, the nasal passages, and the hollow parts of the skull, issues from the lips as sound. The rapidity of vibration of the cords varies from about 50 to nearly 2,000 per second; the former number representing a low bass and the latter a very high soprano note. It cannot be too clearly understood that *voice* is produced only by the vibration of the lips of the glottis, and the idea that it can be drawn from the skull, the pit of the stomach or anywhere else than the larynx is utter nonsense, founded partly on the literal acceptance of figurative terms, and partly on the wrong interpretation of obscure subjective sensations.

The vocal instrument is composed of three essential parts: (1) the lungs or bellows which furnish the air-blast, (2) the membranous lips of the glottis, which by their vibration produce sound, and (3) a sounding-board or resonance apparatus. The first factor regulates the *intensity*, the second the *pitch*, and the third the *quality* of the tone. There has been much controversy as to the class of musical instrument to which the human voice belongs, and it has at one time or another been likened to nearly every known mechanism of the kind except the drum and the triangle. Musical instruments, setting aside differences of detail, belong in their essential features to one of three distinct classes: (1) those in which the sound is generated by stretched *strings* which are set in vibration by striking; (2) those in which *reeds* (elastic tongues or lips) are made to vibrate by being driven more or less quickly to and fro by a current of air; (3) those in which the air column itself is made to vibrate in pipes or tubes of greater or less length. There may, of course, be a combination of some of these principles in a given instrument. To which of these categories does the human voice belong? To none of them exclusively, since it has features in common with all three. It presents the closest analogy, however, to instruments of the reed class, the glottis with its two vibrating lips corresponding in some degree to the double reed of such an instrument *e.g.* as the hautboy. The human reeds, however, have the advantage over all those "made with hands" that they are *living*, and consequently can alter for themselves their position, length, thickness, and degree of tension, in such a variety of ways that one small cord represents a vast number of separate reeds. The other parts of the vocal apparatus have a similar power of self-adaptation, and throughout the entire structure of the larynx, Nature's constant principle of economy of material combined with the greatest amount of *work* is marvellously exemplified. It is the merest truism to say that it is the most wonderful of all musical instruments, even from the mechanical point of view. The learned German professor who thinks the eye such a bungled piece of work has not yet, I believe, been able to suggest improvements in the organ of voice.

Song may be said to differ from speech as dancing does from walking. It is rhythmic, varied, and sustained use of the voice, as compared with an irregular, broken, and more or less monotonous delivery. The range of the whole human voice, from the lowest note of the bass to the highest of the soprano, is a little over five octaves. The compass of

individual voices is of course much smaller, the average being probably of little more than two octaves. A range of three octaves is exceptional, and one of four almost prodigious.

Woman's voice is higher in *pitch* than man's because her vocal cords are smaller; the difference in *timbre* on the other hand depends on the difference in the size of the resonance chambers, and in the density of their walls. Up to the so-called "cracking" period the boy's voice is undistinguishable from the woman's except by its comparative lack of richness and volume, and above all by its want of *soul*. The boy's voice, even when most beautiful, is to the woman's what new wine without body or bouquet is to a rich ripe Burgundy made fragrant and mellow by the subtle chemistry of Time. I am not, however, dealing with the voice from the æsthetic point of view. My present object is the humbler one of explaining in a way which the least scientific reader can understand the physiology of the voice, and the means whereby such a variety of tones is got out of so small an instrument.

Though all observers are agreed as to the conditions necessary for simple *phonation*, or the act of sounding the voice, there is much difference of opinion as to how modification of pitch is brought about, and it may be said that the higher up the scale we go the more obscure does the problem become. To speak figuratively, philosophers agree as much as can be expected of their kind about the voice on the level plain, but halfway up the hill-side they begin to call names, and at the top they come to blows. In truth the subject is not an easy one, and Nature, though cross-examined in the cleverest way, seems loth to disclose her secret. The view which I am about to propound has nothing particularly original about it, and I do not wish it to be considered a master-key which will unlock every mysterious recess of the subject. I merely offer it as what may be called the solid residue after the various theories have been submitted to the flame of criticism, and their gaseous elements (which are largely in excess) dispersed.

For the production of *voice* three things are necessary: (1) a column of air blown upwards with sufficient force by the lungs; (2) approximation of the vocal cords so that the air-current may strike against them; (3)' a sufficient degree of tension of the cords to make them quiver with the shock of the air rushing through the chink. If the blast is too weak or the opening too wide, or the membranous lips not tightly enough stretched, there can be no sound above a whisper. In the delivery of low notes the cords are in a state of comparative relaxation, and with each rise of pitch there is a corresponding increase of tension up to a certain point, beyond which the voice cannot be forced unless a different mode of production is adopted. The change is accompanied with a feeling of relief, as if an overbent bow were suddenly unstrung; if, however, the pitch still goes on rising, the sensation of strain again begins to make itself felt until a point is finally reached which it is found utterly impossible by any effort to pass. The "break" marks the division between two parts or "registers" of the voice, and it occurs, not, as generally stated, at or near one definite fixed point in the musical scale, but at or about the same *relative* level in all voices. According to modern singing-masters there are several such "breaks" in every voice; some are satisfied with three, whilst others bewilder their pupils and themselves with five. One might almost fancy that this notion of vocal ascent was founded on the analogy of a zigzag pathway up a steep incline. I do not doubt that these refinements have their use in *art*, but science must dismiss them as needless complications of a problem which is quite puzzling enough in itself.

There are then two fundamental divisions of the human singing voice. They are usually called "chest" and "head" registers, but it would be much better to call them simply "lower" and "upper," as much of the confusion which surrounds the subject has arisen from want of precision in the use of words. I take this opportunity of remarking that by the term "register" I mean *the series of tones of like quality producible by adjustment of the lips of the glottis according to a certain distinctive type.* When the particular mechanism employed will carry the voice no further, a device is resorted to whereby it is as it were hoisted up and started anew on a higher level. If I may speak aquatically, a register is a vocal *reach*, whilst the passage from one register to another may be compared to a *lock*. The break, or, to carry on the metaphor, the *weir*, occurs as already said, much about the same distance from the mouth in each river of vocal sound. In the male voice, however, most of the notes belong to the "lower" register, whilst in the female there is a greater range in the "upper." The so-called *falsetto* I look upon as being an unnatural method of voice-production whereby men imitate the head tones of the female voice. The term is altogether misleading when used as it generally is to denote a legitimate

register. As regards the female voice the expression has, properly speaking, no meaning, and should therefore be abandoned; and with reference to the male voice, it should be restricted to the designation of notes not only of a particular pitch but of a special unnatural *timbre* which is generally at once recognisable by the ordinary musical ear. Between the lower and upper registers a middle one may for the sake of convenience be allowed, as in many voices the first few notes above the ordinary "break" are altogether different in quality from those of either the "lower" or "upper" series. Singers as a rule feel that they do not deliver their "high" notes in the same way as those in the "lower" register, and their hearers are also sometimes aware of an objective difference in the quality of the two sets of notes. Whilst the low tones are fuller, stronger, easier to hold, and accompanied with shaking of the chest-walls, and a "wound-up" sensation in the larynx, the upper are softer, thinner, difficult to sing loud, give rise to no thoracic vibration, and to comparatively little feeling of tension *within* the larynx, but are generally associated with a marked sense of constriction *above* it.

How then is the difference brought about? This has always been the *crux* of investigators. Experiments have been made upon dead men and living dogs (would Madame Nilsson, by the way, allow that the mechanism of a cur's yelp is likely to throw light on the production of her perfect tones?); analogy more headstrong than Mrs. Malaprop's "allegory" has run riot among musical instruments; the scientific use of the imagination has been practised to an extent probably undreamed of by Professor Tyndall; the throats of singers have been scanned with the laryngoscope as attentively as the spots on the sun have been scrutinised with the telescope, the dissecting knife has done its best, and the photographic camera its worst—all this expenditure of energy has been very inadequately rewarded in the way of solid result. A remarkable feature in the dispute is the completeness with which each theory is upset in turn, and the absolute contradiction as to *facts* is still more curious. It would only confuse the reader's mind, and disgust him with the whole subject to set forth the various opinions in detail. I therefore only give them in rough outline. The false vocal cords have been supposed to be concerned in the production of "high," as the true are in the delivery of "low," tones; the gradual tightening and approximation of the walls of the larynx *above* the vocal ligaments has been suggested as the characteristic appearance in "high" production; and again there is what may be called the respectable orthodox view that the *whole* cord vibrates in "low" and only its *edge* in "high" notes. Lately it has been given out, in something of the *Bos locutus est* tone, that the change is due to a modification of the vocal lips, which are said to be "thick" in the deeper, "thin" in the middle, and "small" in the upper notes. Without stopping to discuss any of these theories, I proceed at once to state my own view, which is briefly that the change is due essentially to the substitution of a "short" for a "long" reed in the mouth-piece of the vocal instrument, that is to say, the glottis. Other accessory changes there are no doubt, both in the larynx itself and the cavities above it, but these are incidental, and affect only the *timbre*, or co-operate in the general result. It is an elementary principle in physics that the longer the reed the slower is its vibration, and consequently the lower its note. The pitch may be raised by simply augmenting the force of the blast. As this involves increase of tension, it is obvious that when the cord is stretched to its maximum no further heightening of pitch can occur. The difficulty is overcome by the simple expedient of *shortening* the vibrating part of the cord when the process is repeated *da capo* but with less wind power. The modification of the reed is effected by a method analogous to the "stopping" of a violin-string with the finger. The two cords are pressed together for a certain amount of their length so tightly as to "jam" or check each other's vibration at the point of contact. This usually occurs at the posterior part of the glottic slit, and as much as one-third or even more of the vocal lip may be stopped. In certain cases there is a mutual checking action in front as well, so that the vibrating part of the glottis is reduced to an oval opening situated nearer the front than the back, and gradually diminishing till the upper limit of the voice is reached. The difference in compass between one voice and another depends on the extent to which this "stopping" manœuvre can be performed, and that of course will vary *ad infinitum* according to differences of structure which are mostly too minute to be recognised in dissection. Practically no two larynxes are alike, just as no two faces exactly resemble each other. To sum up, we may say that in the "lower" (chest) register the whole reed vibrates, and pitch rises with increase of blast, and corresponding increase of tension, whilst in the

"upper" (head) register the pitch is raised by gradual shortening of the reed.[1] It follows that in the latter the blast must become progressively weaker, and this is why it is impossible to deliver true head notes *fortissimo* and difficult to sing them even *forte*. Exceptional voices are sometimes met with in which, from extraordinary elasticity of the vocal cords, the entire compass can be delivered in the "long reed" or chest register. This *singolarissimo dono*, as Mancini calls it, is more common in women than in men, and for the vast majority of mankind a "break" at some point or other is the rule. Accordingly the first and most important duty of the teacher is to "unite" the registers, dovetailing them into each other, and as it were *planing* the surface of sound till the voice is uniform throughout the whole compass.

The *timbre* is the special quality by which each voice can be distinguished from all others; in a word, its physiognomy. It depends not on the vocal cords themselves, but on the configuration and structural peculiarities of the parts above the larynx proper. It has been shown by Helmholtz that no note is simply one sound, but is in reality made up of several others of higher pitch. These occur at definite intervals from the primary tone and are called its *harmonics*. Now the laryngeal ventricles, the pharynx, the mouth and the nasal passages, with the various cavities in the bones of the face which communicate therewith, are all *resonators*, and each resonator has a natural pitch of its own which makes it vibrate sympathetically when a tone of that pitch is sounded. The difference of *timbre* therefore depends on the number of harmonics belonging to each laryngeal note, and on the extent to which they are strengthened by reinforcement from the resonance chambers. *Timbre* is thus a natural endowment which cannot be acquired, or even cultivated to any great extent. The singer is supposed to start provided with a good instrument, just as the violinist has his Straduarius or Guarnerius perfect in construction, and with all its parts ripened by time into harmonious sweetness of tone.

Given the instrument, however, the use of it has to be learnt, and the *technique* of the vocal organ is not less difficult than that of the violin. The art of singing consists in, first, proper management of the motive power, the breath, so that its delivery shall be perfectly under control, and not a particle of it be wasted. Secondly, exact adjustment of the membranous lips of the glottis in such a manner as to catch the outrushing stream of air just in the right way, that is to say, they must not close too soon so as to imprison the air, nor too late so as to allow any portion of it to escape fruitlessly. Thirdly, mastery over the laryngeal muscles, which are, as it were, the fingers by which the instrument is played. Each of these factors must be developed separately to the fullest possible extent, and drilled so as to work together in perfect concert. In this, as in all the imitative arts, assiduous practice and conscientious study of good models form the only true method of work. Some slight knowledge of the structure of the vocal machinery may be advantageous to the singer by teaching him to take more care of it than he might otherwise think it worth while to do, but the smattering of universal science to which so much importance is now attached in certain quarters is quite unnecessary, and is, in fact, more a hindrance than a help. Let the pupil leave the scalpel and the laryngoscope to doctors, and cultivate the powers of his voice as the pugilist develops his arms or the runner his legs, without caring to know the details of the mechanism which his will sets in motion, and which trained instinct will manage better than the most exact anatomical and physiological knowledge.

MORELL MACKENZIE.

[1] My views, which are founded on careful examination of many of the best singers of the day (including Mesdames Nilsson, Albani, Patey, Signor Foli, the late Mr. Maas, and many others), will be given in full detail in a book which is already in the press (*Hygiene of the Vocal Organs: a Practical Handbook for Singers and Speakers.* Macmillan and Co.).

AUTUMN.

Engraved by O. LACOUR, *from a Drawing by* DAVIDSON KNOWLES

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MY FRIEND JIM.

CHAPTER X.

FOR some little time after the evening of the *tableaux* I did not happen to meet the Bracknells, so that I could not judge from personal observation how far Hilda had obeyed her husband's commands and dropped Beauchamp, but divers rumours which reached me pointed to the conclusion that she had not dropped that foolish youth at all; nor indeed had I supposed for one moment that she intended doing so. It seemed probable enough that she had been able to convince Bracknell of the wisdom of a policy which she had not cared to expound in my presence, and if he had been brought to see that his sister's interests and his own were antagonistic, there could be very little doubt but that he would acquiesce in the sacrifice of his sister's interests with complete philosophy. Jim, who had returned to London, after a flying visit to Elmhurst, amused me by an account of a remonstrance which he had felt it his duty to address to Lady Bracknell and of the manner in which his intervention had been received.

"Lord Staines doesn't see it," he said confidentially, "but between ourselves, it's as certain as anything can be that she is doing her best to prevent Beauchamp from proposing to Lady Mildred."

I expressed much surprise, and congratulated Jim upon his insight into the crafty ways of feminine diplomacy; to which he replied modestly that he believed he was about as wide awake as most men nowadays. "One can't mix long in London society without having one's eyes opened," he explained; "and, as you know, I have good cause to distrust Hilda."

He paused, sighed, and then resumed; "I don't want other people to suffer through her as I have suffered. I thought she might perhaps be disposed to admit that she owed me some trifling favour, by way of reparation for the past; so I called upon her the other day and appealed to her to leave Beauchamp alone. It seemed to me that one admirer more or less could make very little difference to her, and I couldn't suppose that she had any deliberate intention of making Lady Mildred unhappy. At least, that's what I said to her."

"Are you so sure," I inquired, "that the loss of Beauchamp will make Lady Mildred unhappy?"

"Oh, yes, I'm afraid so—that is, I believe so," he answered. "From different things that she has said to me, I feel pretty sure that she would accept him if he proposed to her; and after all, why shouldn't she? I don't myself think him particularly attractive, but he is a good-natured fellow and he isn't bad-looking, and—well, I suppose there would be nothing very extraordinary in any girl's falling in love with him. So, as I tell you, I made my appeal to Hilda; and I wish I hadn't, for it didn't succeed. She began by denying that she had led Beauchamp on, giving me to understand that he was infatuated about her and that she really couldn't help it. Then, when I persisted that she could put a stop to his infatuation very easily if she chose, she got angry and said that I, at any rate, ought not to object if Beauchamp proved faithless. I asked her what she meant—because really I didn't

know—whereupon she calmly accused me in so many words of being in love with Lady Mildred myself!"

"How insolent!" I exclaimed. "And how palpably untrue and absurd!"

"Well, yes," Jim agreed, "I think it was rather insolent, and of course it was untrue. I don't know about the absurdity of it; but what does seem to me absurd is that friendship between a man and a woman should be considered impossible. Like a fool as I am, I said so to Lady Bracknell; and she immediately turned round upon me and asked why she wasn't to be allowed to make a friend of Beauchamp. That rather shut me up. All I could say was that I didn't believe she cared two straws about Beauchamp's friendship; whereupon she retorted that she didn't believe in my disinterested friendship for Lady Mildred. So the dispute ended in a draw."

Lookers-on see most of the game, and when one is condemned to be a looker-on one must endeavour to be satisfied with that somewhat questionable advantage. There is, no doubt, a certain satisfaction and amusement to be derived from understanding your neighbour's state of mind better than he himself understands it, but this is apt to be neutralised by the consciousness of impotence with which lookers-on are commonly afflicted. If I had been a magician, I should have made everybody happy by transferring the bulk of Beauchamp's property to Bracknell for life, with remainder to his son. Being only a poor literary man of prudent instincts, I could do no more than strongly advise Jim to leave London and turn his attention to the management of his home farm. And perhaps it is hardly necessary to add that he neither took my advice nor thanked me for it.

It was about this time that I received a letter from home, informing me that "good Mr. Turner" was about to pay a visit to the metropolis; and closely following upon the heels of this announcement came good Mr. Turner himself to call upon me, it being very evident that he had been commissioned to inspect and report upon my humble abode by my mother, who has an ineradicable conviction that, when absent from her, I never attempt to make myself comfortable. Mr. Turner, urbane and patronising as of old, dropped in whilst I was sitting over a late breakfast and was kind enough to join me in that repast. He remarked that they had given him nothing but eggs at his hotel, and eggs he was unable so much as to look at, owing to chronic derangement of the liver.

"I am staying at an hotel," he went on to say. "Dear Hilda thought it best that I should not go to her. She has reasons, you understand—good and sufficient reasons."

I said I was quite sure of that; and indeed the reasons in question did not strike me as being of a recondite character.

But Mr. Turner thought it necessary to give his version of them. "Bracknell," he continued, "is, I am persuaded, both kind-hearted and well-meaning and would not hurt my feelings for the world; but his habitual companions are—well, not precisely congenial to me, and he has contracted, from associating with them, a tendency to use words and expressions which, though possibly uttered in what I may almost call an innocent spirit, are such as I might find it my duty as a clergyman to protest against. Dear Hilda thinks—and I quite agree with her—that all risk of unpleasantness should be avoided, and therefore she has kindly secured rooms for me in a very well-conducted hotel. I must remember, however, to tell them that eggs disagree with me."

Now I knew very well that Bracknell might use language fit to make a bargee's hair stand on end before the Reverend Simeon would dare to uplift his voice in rebuke; but I said, with strict adherence to truth, that I had no doubt he would find himself more comfortable in his present quarters than in Wilton Place; and he presently remarked, sighing a little, that the only thing he regretted was being cut off from the society of his grandson.

"Had I been under the same roof with Sunning," he added, rather pathetically, "we could have amused ourselves together without getting into anybody's way; but I dare say they will let him come and see me when it can be managed."

Poor old Turner's adoration of his grandson was quite upon a level with that of Lord Staines, and the little fellow was fond of him too, although their natures were so unlike. I don't know why with advancing years we should become less tolerant of the infirmities of our elders, but I am afraid that with most of us it is so. Sunning was so sharp that he can hardly have failed to recognise an old donkey in his maternal grandpapa; but children—perhaps from having been such a short time in the world—love those who love them, and value kindness more than wisdom.

After Mr. Turner had conferred a few words of patronising encouragement upon me (he had a great disdain, tempered by benevolence, for dwellers in Grub Street),

and after he had ambled away, with his umbrella under his arm, I began to feel very sorry for him in his loneliness, and it occurred to me that I should be doing an act of true Christian charity by giving him and the other grandfather a day's outing with their common descendant. And, being in such an amiable mood, I thought I might combine this good deed with the bestowal of a certain amount of harmless pleasure upon two other persons, as well as a fairly-earned holiday upon myself. So, having concocted my scheme, I imparted it to Jim in the course of the day, and he jumped at it with enthusiasm. We had already agreed to revisit Eton together some time before the close of the season; but to me belongs all the credit of the happy suggestion that Lord Staines, Lady Mildred, Sunning, and Mr. Turner should be added to our party. Jim represented that he was particularly anxious to carry out this plan because it would cheer up Lord Staines, who had been looking tired and worried of late; and of course that may have been his motive. But he disagreed with me quite sharply when I said that it would be kind to take the old gentleman off Lady Mildred's hands for a day and leave her to enjoy her liberty in London.

"She wouldn't enjoy it at all," he declared; "it would be about the last thing in the world that she would be likely to enjoy. Besides, I don't believe old Staines would go without her. Now, I do hope you won't put forward that idea, Harry; because if you do, the whole thing is certain to fall through."

So I said that, in that case, I wouldn't put it forward; and as both Lady Mildred and her father received our proposition favourably, it only remained for us to beg leave of absence for Sunning and let Mr. Turner know of the treat that was in store for him. The Bracknells we did not ask; because, for one thing, they would certainly have declined, and also (which was, perhaps, more to the purpose) because we didn't want them.

We all went down from Paddington together in a saloon-carriage, Lord Staines as brisk as a bee, Mr. Turner benignly complacent, Sunning dividing his attentions with strict impartiality between his two grandfathers, so as to avoid making either of them jealous, and Lady Mildred and Jim conversing quietly in a corner. And if anybody thinks that it was a cruel sort of kindness to throw the last-mentioned couple together, I can only say that the mischief was already done, and that, in my humble opinion, when an opportunity of securing a few hours happiness, without injury to others, presents itself, it ought to be unhesitatingly seized; because such opportunities are rather the exception than the rule in life.

We reached our destination pretty early in the afternoon; and since it was such beautiful, hot summer weather that no old gentleman could possibly be the worse for being taken out upon the river, we drove straight to the Brocas. There we hired a roomy craft, into which we packed our party. Lady Mildred undertook to steer; Lord Staines and Mr. Turner were made comfortable with cushions on either side of her; Sunning, after binding himself by a solemn promise not to jump about, was permitted to crawl into the bows, where he lay flat upon his stomach, as good as gold, the whole time; and Jim taking the stroke oar we pulled them all up to Surly.

I don't know what Jim may have thought about it; but I confess that to me the distance appeared to have enormously increased since the days of my boyhood. However, we took a good long rest, which some of us—two of us, I believe—employed in strolling away across the grass, while the others sat still and enjoyed the peace and quietness of it all, after the turmoil of London; and then in the cool of the evening we dropped leisurely down stream towards Eton once more. Lord Staines, a little excited by the influence of those once familiar scenes, became talkative, and was almost like his old self again. I could hear him repeating the names of the various landmarks to Sunning, whom he had prevailed upon to sit beside him—names which already sounded a little strangely even to me, though my acquaintance with them was so much more recent than his.

"That's Athens, where you'll bathe when you're a big boy; and Upper Hope—but they won't let you go there till you've passed. The small boys are sent to Cuckoo Weir, where the water is apt to be muddy. Pea-soup, we used to call it. You must learn to take headers, my boy; I used to be pretty good at it. The great thing is to have confidence, and ——"

"Did you ever take a header off there, grandpapa?" interrupted the boy, pointing up to the railway bridge ahead of us.

Lord Staines had to own that he had never accomplished quite so great a feat as that.

"But father has," Sunning said, in his eager, lisping voice, broken by little gasps. "He took a header off a bwidge—he told me so—and I don't know if it was that bwidge but it was as high as—as—oh, ever so high! And he did it for a bet—and he said it

stung like *fun*—and he wouldn't do it again. But he won his bet."

"Did he?" said the old man, with a troubled look. "Ah, I dare say, I dare say. Don't you bet, my boy; it's a poor game. All that," he added, with a wave of his hand towards the Great Western viaduct, "is new. It has been put up lately—since I left."

I suppose he must have left somewhere about the year 1830. Very likely he had forgotten, until that casual mention of Bracknell's name occurred, that it was to his grandson, not to his son, that he was talking. After this, he was silent and abstracted for a time; but cheered up again when we dined together at the old "Christopher" and drank to the memory of former friends in the best champagne that that establishment could produce. Probably the memory of Lord Staines's school friends was cherished only by a very small band of survivors; but the old man ran over their names and their exploits, one by one, relating the merry life that he had led with them and the astounding breaches of discipline of which they had been guilty, until at length Mr. Turner, taking heart of grace, ventured to doubt whether the doings described would have been tolerated by any head-master worthy of his high and responsible post.

"My dear fellow," said Lord Staines, with superb contempt, "what do you know about it? Head-master indeed! But of course you don't understand Eton traditions. You were educated at Harrow, or some such place, weren't you?"

But Mr. Turner was flushed with wine, and did not choose to be sat upon. "Harrovians may be poor sort of creatures in your opinion, Lord Staines," he returned; "but at any rate we can generally show an eleven good enough to beat yours at cricket." Which was an extremely rude thing to say, besides being very false.

I don't know whether the harmony of the evening might not have been seriously interfered with by this unexpected onslaught of the lamb upon the lion, had not Jim jumped up, saying that if we were going to take a look round Eton, we really ought not to lose any more time. Obviously, a single vehicle could not contain us all; so Jim and Lady Mildred walked on ahead, while the rest of us packed ourselves into a fly and were driven as far as the entrance of the school-yard. Here Lord Staines insisted upon getting out and managed, with the help of my arm and his stick, to hobble for some distance across the flag-stones which have been worn smooth by the passing feet of so many generations. Mr. Turner and Sunning wandered away, it was getting late and close upon lock-up time, so that we had the place to ourselves.

The old man, who was leaning upon my arm, paused and looked about him a little wistfully. I could guess from my own sensations what his were likely to be. Everything was so strangely unaltered! There was the old clock-tower, looming high and dark in the twilight; there was the chapel, with the spaces between the buttresses, where the lower boys used to play fives sometimes, and where the head-master used to take up his position to call "absence;" in the middle of the quadrangle, encircled by his iron railing, stood the Pious Founder, with sceptre in one hand and orb in the other, silent and indifferent as of yore; but I and my contemporaries, who had once claimed a sort of property in all these things, had now neither part nor lot in them. We were clean swept away and forgotten, as in a very few years our successors would be also. One can't, at such moments, help feeling a certain tightness about the region of the heart and a sense of personal insignificance which may be salutary, but which is rather painful. But when Lord Staines spoke, it seemed that his thoughts had not been occupied with reminiscences of his own schooldays.

"I recollect," he said, "coming down here one Election Saturday. It was just before Bracknell left; and you and Leigh were leaving at the same time, you know. I walked back from Upper Club with Bracknell, and I remember that we stopped and talked for a moment just about the very spot where we are standing now. He told me he had backed my horse, Jupiter Tonans, by Thunderer, for the Leger, and I warned him that he had better hedge, because, as I dare say you are aware, Thunderers never stay; and sure enough, Jupiter Tonans finished third. I thought at the time that he would have stood a little more preparation—but no matter. Well, you know, Maynard, I suspect that what applies to horses applies pretty much to ourselves. One hears a good deal about education and training, and example, and this, that, and the other; but when all's said and done, it's breeding that has the last word. Like father, like son. I have been reckless and extravagant all my life; he has followed in my footsteps; and the upshot of it is that we're both deuced nearly ruined now."

I said I was very sorry to hear it.

Lord Staines shook his head. "Bracknell

ought to have married money. I always told him so. He chose to marry the parson's daughter, and it caused a coolness between us, as you will remember. I could have overlooked his imprudence and disobedience; but you see, I didn't think he had behaved well in the matter—no; I didn't think he had behaved well."

"It doesn't much signify now," I remarked.

"Not much now, perhaps; but it was hard upon poor Leigh at the time, and he felt it more than I should have expected. He was speaking to me about it not long since. He is a good fellow, that; I wish he had a little more money. I looked at him and Mildred this afternoon, and I thought to myself, 'I wish he had a little more money!' Only a fancy, you know."

"I suppose he hasn't nearly enough money?" I hazarded.

"Oh, Lord bless your soul, no!" answered Lord Staines. "Nothing like it!—nothing like it! No—she will have to marry Beauchamp; and, indeed, she might do worse. Come, Maynard, we'll go on and get into the carriage again; we haven't much more than time to catch the train."

So we moved slowly away to Weston's Yard, where the fly was waiting for us, and where the other members of our small party were already assembled. Jim climbed up on to the box, and we were driven away to the station, Sunning falling asleep before half the distance had been accomplished, and none of us talking much. It was natural that we should be a little tired and disinclined for conversation on the return journey. I myself, I believe, had a nap in the corner of the saloon-carriage; and even if I had been awake, I could not have scrutinised the countenances of my fellow-travellers in that dim light; but when we alighted in the full glare of Paddington Station, I could not help noticing how pale Jim was, and that Lady Mildred's eyes were suspiciously red.

Lord Staines shook hands with me on the platform. "Good-night, Maynard," he said, "good-night, and thank you for giving us all a very happy day."

Poor old fellow! I think it was the last happy day of his life. His life is over now, and I suppose one cannot say that it was a well-spent one; yet who knows the truth about any man's life? Perhaps, when all secrets are revealed, it may be found that some of those whose statues look down upon us in public places, and whose names are recorded in history, have a less favourable account to show than this old nobleman, who was worldly, and a spendthrift, who was of little use to the community at large, who took no active part in politics, who excelled in nothing, except, to a limited extent, in the breeding of race-horses; but who never, to my knowledge, was guilty of an ungenerous or dishonourable action, and who, as it seemed to me, gave away more than he received both in the way of money and affection. He was by no means a show specimen of the order to which he belonged, but he possessed some of its good qualities. The coming democracy will doubtless be able to exhibit all these to the world, combined with others into the bargain; and in the meantime, I regret to say that I have more than once heard Lord Staines spoken of as a standing argument for the abolition of hereditary legislators.

CHAPTER XI.

I FELT tolerably sure that I should not have to wait long before receiving a visit and a full confession from Jim. I am accustomed to being utilised (if I may so express myself) as a sort of waste-paper basket or dustbin, into which my friends shoot the cares, anxieties, loves, fears and the like which they cannot keep to themselves, but which they often hesitate to confide to those nearer and dearer to them. One is glad to be useful in any capacity, however humble, and I cannot disguise from myself that my great value lies in the patience and attention with which I listen to what is told to me. It is true that I am frequently asked for advice, and sometimes give it; but I cannot at this moment recall a single instance in which it has been acted upon; except, indeed, when it has chanced to coincide with the views of my confidant. The only advice that I could possibly offer to Jim must of necessity be so unpalatable that I determined not to bother him with it. If—as seemed almost certain—Lady Mildred and he had avowed their mutual love down at Eton, the hopelessness of that love must be sufficiently obvious to both of them to stand in need of no emphasising from me; and I thought I might safely confine myself to expressions of sincere regret. When, however, Jim duly presented himself at my chambers, his avowal did not prove to be in all respects what I had anticipated.

"Harry, old fellow," he began, after he had cast himself down upon my sofa and had

assumed a most woebegone air, "I've lost my self-respect."

"I shall be very pleased to assist you in looking about for it," I replied cheerfully, "and I dare say, between us, we shall manage to discover it again. It was mislaid, I presume, somewhere in Windsor or Eton on the afternoon or evening of the 20th instant?"

He nodded. "Well, yes; I suppose so. At any rate, I wasn't quite certain of the loss until then. Of course, with your sharp eyes, you saw long ago how matters were going with me; but I give you my honour that I didn't. Not that it would have made any difference if I had; for one can't help these things. If you had asked me, any time during the last six years, whether I could ever love another woman as I loved the one whom I was once so nearly marrying, I should have laughed at you. Yet that is what has happened to me; and I confess that it makes me feel a little uneasy and ashamed."

I could not see why a man who has remained faithful all his life to a woman who has deceived him and thrown him over should have any particular right to respect himself for being such a dolt, and I said so; but Jim observed that I didn't seem quite to catch his meaning.

"I owe nothing to Hilda," he said, "and it stands to reason that if one has been jilted, one is free. It isn't to her that I have been untrue; it's to myself. I'm too stupid to explain myself; but six years is a longish time, you know, and to find myself madly in love again, after having been quite positive for six years that that was the one sensation which I never could possibly experience a second time, is a little upsetting. It makes me feel that I am not the man I took myself for, and also that I have been a most stupendous fool."

"You have indeed, my dear fellow," I agreed, with ready sympathy.

"Yes, because, now that I look back upon it all, I am convinced that I never was really in love with Hilda. I thought I was, but it seems to have been a gigantic mistake from first to last; and what sort of opinion can one have of anybody who can make such mistakes as that?"

"Be comforted," I replied, "your case is not without numerous precedents, and so far as you have stated it, it seems to me to be one for plenary absolution. At the same time, if you are so very anxious to frame an indictment against yourself, I think that might be managed without going so far afield. I don't blame you for falling in love with Lady Mildred, for that you couldn't help; but, since you must know as well as I do that you can't marry her, it might perhaps have been a little more considerate not to tell her that you loved her."

"Good Lord!" ejaculated Jim; "you don't suppose I have told her, do you? Why, I never knew it myself until the other day, down at Eton, when the truth flashed upon me all of a sudden. It may seem very ridiculous to you; but I assure you that up to that moment I had been under the impression that I only cared for her as a friend. And it is only as a friend that she thinks of me."

"Really?" said I, somewhat staggered by this announcement. "Then—excuse my curiosity; but what made her eyes so red after you and she had been talking together?"

"Her eyes were red because she had been crying," answered Jim curtly.

He looked so savage that I did not like to press him with further inquiries; but he resumed by and by of his own accord: "She had been telling me about her family affairs, and a nice mess they seem to have got into! There is no inducing Lord Staines to economise. He has left off racing; but I believe that is the only expense that he has put down; and of course he has to support the Bracknells. In point of fact, I didn't come here to speak to you about myself and Lady Mildred, because that it is a perfectly hopeless business and neither you nor anybody else can help me; but I'm troubled in my mind about Bracknell. He has been very kind and pleasant to me since I have been back; but I know he is in a sea of difficulties and"——

"I expected this," I interrupted, in some vexation. "So much for his promise! Of course he has been borrowing money of you, and he is just about as likely to repay you as if he were a South American Republic. You may as well make up your mind that you will never see *that* money again."

"Do let a man finish his sentence," remonstrated Jim. "In the first place, he hasn't borrowed a shilling of me, and in the second, it wouldn't distress me in the least if he had borrowed a thousand pounds. But do you know, Harry, sometimes I am half afraid that Bracknell is a scoundrel."

He said this so hesitatingly and with such a look of anxious deprecation on his honest face that I had not the heart to tell him how extremely probable it was that his apprehensions were well-founded, although I could not go so far as to meet him with the contradiction which he evidently hoped for. So I only begged him to be more explicit.

"I suppose you know," he said, "that Bracknell has been several times upon the brink of a smash, and that his father has paid his debts over and over again. Lord Staines is the kind of man who would cheerfully give away ninety-nine pounds if he had only a hundred left in the world, and he seems to have gone on meeting these periodical demands without a murmur, until one fine day he discovered that he couldn't raise another five-pound note by hook or by crook. Then he took to his bed and said he was going to die. Bracknell wanted a lot of money—how much it was Lady Mildred doesn't know, but she thinks it was a very large sum—to save him from immediate bankruptcy; and the poor old man was so cut up about it that he almost went off his head. He declared that he was the only person to blame; that he had squandered money which ought to have been saved for his son; that he had brought Bracknell up to be extravagant and was bound to see him through, and so forth; and when he was in the midst of his despair, as luck would have it, Alfred Beauchamp came in to see him. I suppose," added Jim, with a touch of reluctance, "that Beauchamp must be a good fellow. Anyhow, he insisted upon lending his uncle the money; and so"——

"And so Lord Staines rose from his bed and promptly forgot all about the matter," I suggested, as Jim came to a halt.

"No; not exactly that. He told Beauchamp frankly that he didn't think there was much prospect of his ever being able to discharge his debt, but that—that, in short, he wouldn't so much mind owing the money to his son-in-law as to his nephew. Do you see?"

I could not help laughing at this amazing method of cancelling a liability, which assuredly would never have entered into the head of any human being but Lord Staines. "I can't say that I do see," I replied. "Fathers don't, as a rule, expect to be handsomely paid for allowing their daughters to be taken off their hands; on the contrary, it is they who are expected to make settlements upon their daughters."

"Yes, but the husband makes settlements too; and it appears that Beauchamp was to deduct this sum from the amount that he would otherwise have settled upon Lady Mildred. Most likely the fact of the matter was that he was overflowing with money, and that he was a good-natured sort of chap, and that he was glad to hold out a helping hand to his uncle. Whether he was really anxious to marry his cousin at that time or not I can't make out; perhaps it was only to pacify the old man that he said he was. But he certainly wasn't in any hurry to change his condition. He begged Lord Staines not to mention the subject for another year, because he had made arrangements to go off to Newfoundland and Canada for salmon-fishing and couldn't tell how long he might be away, so Lady Mildred never heard a word about it until a few weeks ago, although of course she suspected that it was Beauchamp who had got her father out of his difficulties, and she couldn't help knowing that her people wanted her to marry the man. When she met him again in the beginning of the season he paid her a great deal of attention, and everything seemed to be going smoothly until Lady Bracknell, for reasons best known to herself, took it into her head to put a stop to the affair. You must have seen how easy she has found it to do that. Everybody has seen it, except Lord Staines, who was frightened at first, but was quite reassured after Bracknell had promised to make his wife drop Beauchamp."

"Bracknell knows about this curious money transaction, then?" I asked.

"He knows now. His father thought it best to tell him when Hilda's game became evident; and that is what makes me afraid that he isn't as straight as he ought to be. Because Lady Bracknell hasn't dropped the man; and when you come to think of it, it is clearly to Bracknell's interest that Beauchamp should remain single."

That was undeniable, but what interested me more than Bracknell's probable bad faith was the singular attitude assumed by Jim, who seemed to be not only prepared but anxious to give up the girl of his heart to Beauchamp. I ventured to express a little of the surprise that I felt—which had the unexpected effect of making him very angry. What, he wanted to know, did I take him for? And as I made no reply, being unable to hit upon one which should be at the same time truthful and flattering, he went on to explain that true love (a sentiment of which I was evidently ignorant) is in its nature disinterested; that the true lover desires the happiness of the beloved object, not his own; and further that, after what had passed between Lord Staines and Beauchamp, Lady Mildred's marriage with the latter was the only conceivable means of averting disgrace from her family.

"As to the nature of true love," I answered, "I will bow at once to your superior knowledge, although my own limited opportunities of judging would have led me to

think otherwise. But with regard to these subtleties about the disgrace which threatens the house of Henley I confess that I can neither follow you nor agree with you. Beauchamp, it seems, has lent money to Lord Staines, and if you say that Lord Staines or his successor is bound in honour to refund the money eventually and to pay interest upon it in the meantime, I am quite with you. But when you assert that honour can only be satisfied by Lady Mildred's marrying, against her will, a man who doesn't want to marry her, you really do get a little beyond my depth."

"Who told you that it would be against her will?" asked Jim.

"My dear Jim," I returned, with excusable impatience, "am I an absolute idiot?"

He did not reply in the negative with that promptitude which I should have expected.

"N—no," he said hesitatingly, after a pause, "but you may be mistaken. So, of course, may I; only I don't think I am. You see, I couldn't ask her point-blank whether she loved the man, could I? All I know is that she had made up her mind to marry him if he asked her, that she thinks it her duty to marry him, and that she is awfully distressed about Bracknell's behaviour. I haven't such a bad opinion of Bracknell as you have. My belief is that, if matters were put plainly before him, he would see what a dirty business this is and would refuse to have anything more to do with it. And I've a great mind to look him up and tell him what I think."

I endeavoured to dissuade my friend from taking this uncalled-for step; I represented to him, in the prettiest language at my command, that he would do far better to mind his own business, and that if he insisted upon meddling with what did not concern him, he would only get rapped over the knuckles for his pains; but, as I mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, very few people are wise enough to act upon my advice. Jim assured me that he did not in the least mind being rapped over the knuckles, that he intended to do what he was pleased to call "the straight thing," without regard to personal consequences, and that, for the rest, he was far too unhappy already to be made either more or less so by Bracknell's displeasure.

So I let him go, without attempting to comfort him about Lady Mildred, or telling him what was my own belief with regard to her affections. It would not, I imagine, have made him any happier to know that she was in all probability as unhappy as he, and the prospect of this love-affair reaching a successful issue was so very slight that it seemed best to let it die of inanition, as all love-affairs will, if only sufficient time be allowed them.

CHAPTER XII.

Not long after Jim had left me, I walked down to the club to glance through the evening papers, *sicut meus est mos*, and finding my favourite arm-chair by the window vacant, I settled myself comfortably in it and took up the *St. James's Gazette*. The political article did not look very interesting; so I skipped it and went on to the next, which was printed in smaller type, and was headed "Infants in the Saddle."

"A much-needed warning to parents," it began, "will, we may hope, be conveyed by the sad accident to Lord Bracknell's child which we report elsewhere. The wonder is that such accidents are not of more frequent occurrence."

I read no farther, but hurriedly turned over the leaves of the paper until I came upon the following paragraph—

"Accident in Rotten Row—Lord Sunning, the only child of Lord Bracknell, and grandson of the Earl of Staines, was riding in Rotten Row this morning, attended by a groom, when his pony suddenly became unmanageable and bolted. The animal galloped for a considerable distance, then swerved, and fell, throwing its rider with great violence against the iron railings. Lord Sunning, who was rendered insensible by the fall, was at once removed to his father's residence in Wilton Place, where we regret to say that he lies in a precarious condition, having, it is feared, sustained incurable injuries."

I ordered a hansom and started at once for Wilton Place, hoping against hope that the newspaper report might turn out to be an exaggeration. There are calamities against which the reason seems to revolt. "Such a thing cannot be true," one is often inclined to say to oneself; "what would be the good of it?" My dear mother maintains that these trials are sent to us to test our faith, and it is not for me to dispute the truth of her assertion; yet I could not help feeling that if poor little Sunning was to be cut off in the bright morning of his life for such a purpose, the sacrifice would probably be made in vain. Of all those who loved him

there was not one who was likely to lay that lesson to heart, unless indeed it might be old Daddy Turner, who, I suppose, held religious convictions of a kind. Then I remembered what splendid constitutions all the Henleys had, and that Bracknell, as a boy, was for ever tumbling about and escaping scot-free from accidents which would have killed anybody else; so that by the time that I had reached my destination, I had almost persuaded myself that this would prove to be a case of concussion of the brain which would leave no permanent mischief behind it.

But before the butler who opened the door for me had spoken a word, I knew that there was no hope. In a few moments I had heard all about it. The great doctors had been and had gone away again, saying that nothing could be done. Sentence of death had been pronounced, and the boy would hardly live until morning. He was conscious now, and had no pain, the butler said. "Perhaps his lordship would see you, sir," he added, in a low voice; "he's bearing up wonderful."

I entered the hall, where several servants were standing about, and one of them went to tell Bracknell that I was there. At the foot of the staircase sat a man in groom's dress, bending forward, with his elbows on his knees, and a look of such blank despair upon his face that I could not refrain from making an effort to comfort him, "It wasn't your fault, you know, James," I said—stupidly enough.

The man lifted his heavy eyes for a moment. "His lordship spoke terrible 'ard to me, sir," he said.

I could well believe it. Men like Bracknell are apt to be cruel and unjust in their grief, and to attack the first person who chances to cross their path; but to them, in their turn, it is an injustice to remember words spoken at such times. I was endeavouring to say as much to the unfortunate James, who, however, did not appear to hear me, when Bracknell came down the stairs, with a slow, steady step. Except that his usually florid complexion had become perfectly colourless, he showed no traces of emotion. He waited until he was close beside me, and then said, quite quietly, "Sunning has broken his back, Maynard."

All of a sudden the groom burst out crying. I don't know anything more painful and pathetic to witness than the unrestrained weeping of those who belong to what we call the lower orders. It is all very well to say that they feel less deeply than we, who have been schooled to control ourselves; but sometimes I doubt whether they really do feel less deeply, and whether, after all, we have much right to consider ourselves superior to them because, as we assume, our sorrow outlasts theirs. For in truth all sorrow is short-lived enough.

Bracknell glanced at the man, knitting his brows. "James," he said, "I believe I blamed you just now. I was wrong; you were not to blame. I beg your pardon, James."

He spoke in a hard, level voice. He had made a mistake and apologised for it; but he was not, apparently, moved. Presently he turned away, taking me by the arm and saying, "Come up stairs and see the boy. There is no more suffering now; but he is dying, all the same. Won't last through the night, they say."

I followed him up the stairs and across the landing, wondering a little at his calmness. But with his hand upon the lock of a door, from the other side of which came an audible murmur of voices, he faced about abruptly, his eyes blazing and his white face set.

"Damn that woman!" he exclaimed. "She promised me that the boy should never ride alone again, and she has killed him rather than have one of her cursed flirtations interrupted."

I caught him by the arm to stop him, for his voice rang through the silent house; but he guessed what I was afraid of, and broke into an odd, savage sort of a laugh. "Oh, don't distress yourself," he said; "it's all one to her—*she* doesn't care!"

Then we went into Sunning's room.

The poor little man was lying flat on his back where they had laid him. His cheeks were as white as marble, and his features were pinched and sharp, but of all the crowd of faces which I saw confusedly as I entered, his was the most cheerful. Lady Bracknell was sitting by the window, pressing her handkerchief to her lips. She looked frightened, I thought. Beside her stood Jim, who, I suppose, had come to the house upon the errand that we know of, and had been admitted. Lady Mildred was there too, and Sunning's old nurse, and Lord Staines, and Mr. Turner; but none of them spoke to me, nor did I venture to do more than glance at them.

Sunning had his dog, a little blue Skye, on the bed beside him. He held out his left hand to me, for his right arm was crushed and powerless, and smiled. We had been friends—more so than I have had any

occasion to mention in the course of this narrative—and I think he was glad to see me. He wished me to have the dog, he said; and I was to take him away with me, please, because he wouldn't lie still much longer, "and he hasn't had his walk to-day." He had a few last words to say to me, but they were only a few; for his strength was evidently ebbing fast, and I could see that his childish brain was preoccupied. His eyes kept wandering from one member of the group to another, but always rested longest upon his father, whose broad shoulders were turned towards us, and whose elbow I touched at last, feeling sure that the boy wanted to speak to him.

Bracknell wheeled round hastily, and dropped on his knees beside the bed. "Yes, my boy," he said; "what is it?"

"Father," whispered Sunning, "you won't have Sheila shot, will you? I don't want Sheila to be shot."

His eyes grew very large and piteous, and there was a quiver about the corners of his mouth. No doubt he had had some experience of his father's passionate nature and feared that, in a fit of unreasoning fury, he might take vengeance upon the irresponsible cause of his son's death.

But Bracknell answered gruffly, "No, my boy; nobody shall harm her. I'll swear that."

Sunning gave a little sigh of relief, looked curiously at his father for a moment, and then turned his head towards Lord Staines, who was sitting motionless on the other side of the bed, in what seemed like a state of nerveless stupor. "Never mind, gran," he said; "it doesn't hurt." And then, "You're so awfully old, too, gran—you'll come soon."

Lord Staines made no answer, but Mr. Turner rose and approached, wiping the tears away from his foolish old eyes with a large silk pocket-handkerchief. "We shall go to you; but you will not come back to us, Sunning," he began. I don't care to quote the rest of his remarks. He was a cleric of the old-fashioned school, who had not, I should imagine, occupied himself much with the subject of eschatology. It was, perhaps, right that he should give utterance to his views, which, I am sure, were at any rate sincere; but those stereotyped phrases about the New Jerusalem and white-winged angels and golden harps, enunciated with a certain pomposity, despite the occasional quavering of the speaker's voice, jarred somewhat upon my ears, as I dare say they did upon those of several other persons present. Sunning listened patiently. Thank God, he had not many sins, even of a childish kind, to reproach himself with. He had always been a good boy, as well as a brave one, and had no need to dread the unknown future, be that what it may.

After a time, he beckoned to me and put the dog into my arms. "Good-bye, Bluey," he whispered. The dog licked his face and he patted its rough head, and then for the first time two great tears welled up into his eyes and brimmed over

I bent over him and kissed him, and then I picked up the dog and went away. I had no right to intrude upon the scene which I could see was close at hand; and besides, to tell the truth, I couldn't bear it any longer. Many sadder things than a child's death are happening in the world every hour. One may look back upon it dispassionately now and say that it was perhaps well that our poor little Sunning should have been taken from us—that if he had lived, he might not have been happy; that he would almost certainly have been badly brought up; that he would have succeeded to a diminished property; that he would very likely have followed in the steps of his father and grandfather, with less means at his disposal, and consequently greater temptations than theirs, and so forth; but the fact remains that he was the brightest and most promising child I have ever known, and that, humanly speaking, his life was cut short because his mother did not choose to take the trouble of looking after him.

(*To be continued.*)

ROOK HAWKING.
From a Drawing by GEORGE E. LODGE.

MODERN FALCONRY.

ALTHOUGH the art and practice of falconry have long gone out of fashion in these islands, it is quite a mistake to suppose that the old sport has ever become extinct. The falconers of to-day, both amateur and professional, are successors in a direct line of those who in a distant age claimed to hold their heads as high as any leader of the chase. It is true that at times the line has nearly been broken, and it has seemed as if nothing could save the art from becoming lost; but during the two centuries which have now almost elapsed since gun and cartridges usurped the place formerly occupied by hood and leash, there has never ceased to be a sprinkling of men, both gentle and simple, who have taken a pride and pleasure in their trained falcons and hawks.

That little should have been heard or known of these stubborn votaries of an unfashionable sport is no surprising matter. Little is now known or heard of the falconers who nevertheless survive in various parts of England, Scotland, and Ireland. They neither have, nor wish to have, any chronicler. They console themselves easily for the absence of any loquacious reporter to describe their doings in the style which we know so well in accounts of a long day with the Pytchley or a fast run with the Quorn. Their operations are carried on of necessity in remote and solitary districts, where jealous game-preservers or interloping cockneys have the least chance of interfering to spoil their plans. It is very difficult for any chance stranger to procure even a sight of a trained hawk, and still more hopeless to think of getting out to see one flown. It may therefore be all the more interesting to explain to the uninitiated some of the mysteries of this occult art, and exhibit for their benefit some of the *dramatis personæ*, by whose aid it is practised.

The noble bird which is represented on page 656 belongs to the family of falcons which was most highly esteemed by the old falconers. Naturalists call it the gyr-falcon, and for a long time believed that it was one of those species which assume a different plumage according to the part of the world in which they are found. The better opinion now seems to be that there are three distinct species, all owning the common appellation of *gyr*—which is derived probably from the *gyrations*

they describe in the air, just as the Greek name for a falcon signified the "circling" bird—but also having each a special distinctive name. The commonest of these three is the Norway falcon, which is somewhat smaller than the others and of a darker colour, often in its first year as dark as a peregrine. Next comes the Iceland falcon, which is of a much lighter hue and a more robust make, with a longer expanse of wing in proportion to its length. Third and largest of all is the Greenland falcon, represented in our illustration, which, although it is almost as brown as a peregrine in its first year, becomes gradually lighter until after many moults it appears almost of a pure white. The last spot where the dark brown disappears is the end of the long wing feathers where they cross over the upper part of the tail.

The reasons for believing that the Norway "gyr" differs from its congeners which inhabit the Arctic Circle depend not alone upon the difference in the markings. It is known that the ancient falconers paid higher sums for the Icelanders than for those from the mainland; and when the King of Denmark sent, as he often did, a complimentary present to some other potentate, he always sent to Iceland for them, and not to the neighbouring mountains of Norway. The courage of the more northern bird was admitted to be greater, and its style was also regarded as more grand—a very great point, as we shall see, in estimating the worth of a hawk. Nor was this all; the very character of the two species—for the Greenland falcon was hardly known then — showed a decided variance, and made it necessary to set about the training of the two species on a somewhat different system.

In our own times few gyr-falcons of either kind have been trained and flown in England. John Barr had some half-trained Norwegian gyrs near London about nine years ago, and a few years before that he had made a special journey to Iceland, and there trapped some Iceland falcons; but it does not appear that any one of these achieved great renown in this country. Within the last ten years the Old Hawking Club has had a gyr which flew rooks well; and Major Fisher also had one of which he expected great things at the same flight; but it died before it could be properly tried. On the whole, however, this sort of hawk has gone quite out of fashion. Some modern falconers declare that gyrs are not practically better than peregrines; and it is true that for the kind of flying now possible the peregrine is quite good enough. The merit of the gyr, and especially of the Icelander and Greenlander, is that they will attack such powerful quarry as the crane, the wild goose, and the kite, which may be said to be beyond the power and strength of even the best peregrines. The advantage possessed by the larger falcon may be fairly estimated by comparing its size with that of the second on the list. The female gyr figured by Yarrell measured twenty-three inches from beak to tail, whereas very few female peregrines exceed eighteen inches. As the symmetry of the two species is almost identical, and the proportion of wing and tail power is about the same, it is reasonable to suppose that in weight and strength the gyr has an advantage of at least twenty per cent. The wing feathers of the latter seem, however, to be stouter in proportion to their length, while the whole frame appears rather more firmly set. Accordingly, although the difference in speed between them may not be great, it has always been observed that, in spite of its far greater weight and momentum, the gyrfalcon turns more quickly and easily than the other.

The peregrine—so called because it is found in almost all parts of the world, and migrates annually to unknown distances—is now *par excellence*, in England at least, the falconer's favourite. The illustration shows two of these beautiful birds standing on one of the perches which are commonly occupied by trained hawks when they are indoors. The bird on the right hand, wearing a hood, is a male or tiercel, and will be seen to be, as his name implies, about one-third less in size than the falcon beside him. The markings on his breast and flanks running transversely and not longitudinally, show him to be in the adult plumage, or in other words, to have gone through at least one moult; and the fact that these markings grow very faint on the upper part of the throat, fading away into an almost perfect white, show that a good many of these changes of plumage have been made. This is indeed the representation of a tried and valued servant of one of our most skilful falconers—a game hawk which has been flown for several seasons, and has a long score of partridges as well as some half-dozen grouse standing to his credit in the game register. The larger bird which stands unhooded on the left is a female peregrine, or "falcon," technically so called in contradistinction to the tiercel. She has only lately been caught and reclaimed, and is still in the immature plumage, with dark chocolate-coloured feathers on the back, and

streaks of brown passing down her breast longitudinally. On the left leg of each of these, hidden beneath the feathers, is a small brass bell like that which they use on bicycles, but much finer and lighter, and on each of their legs is a "jess," or strap of thin leather, neatly fastened round it. The ends of each pair of jesses are attached by slits in them to a brass swivel made in the form of a figure 8; and through the further end of this swivel is passed the leash by which it is firmly tied down to the perch by means of a "falconer's knot." By rights the perch should have close underneath it a screen of canvas hanging down, by which the hawks, if they jump off, may climb up again; but as this would have rather interfered with the full view of the bird's feathers it has been omitted in the sketch. For a similar reason the two birds are represented as standing closer together than they would be on a real perch, where care is taken to keep each out of arm's reach—or rather out of leg's reach of his or her neighbour.

How do they come to be standing so quietly there, as if nothing could be more natural and agreeable to them? To describe the whole process whereby this effect is produced—whereby their natural wildness and fierceness are subdued, and they are reconciled to captivity and to the presence of man—would lead us rather too far. The training of hawks is a business in itself. In the old days every well-born and well-bred countryman went through a long apprenticeship to it. Seldom, even then, was a man an adept at managing more than one kind of hawk. He will be clever, now, if he thoroughly understands even one kind of flight. Men who have for years kept and flown hawks in this country readily admit that they have still a great deal to learn, and are not above picking up a hint from their Oriental *confrères*. But it may be explained that there are two different classes of peregrines commonly used for the chase, of which the two birds figured above are representatives. The first is the "haggard" or "passage" falcon, caught after it has for some months or years found its own living; and the other is the "eyess" or "nestling," taken from the nest before it can well fly, and brought up from that time under the eye of its master. There are, of course, "passage falcons," and "passage tiercels," according to the sex; but, as it happens, the demand for the latter has now almost died out. And there are in like manner eyess tiercels and eyess falcons, which are now in about equal request. A few words must suffice to explain the several methods of procuring and training these birds.

Passage peregrines are caught regularly, while on the autumn passage, by Dutch falconers, who lie in wait for them on the broad open plain of Valkenswaard, where for many long centuries the same elaborate devices have been employed for a like purpose. Old Adrien Mollen and his sons sit ensconced in concealed huts on the plain, luring down the migratory hawks, whose approach is notified to them by a tame butcher-bird kept on a perch close by. There come down to the lures annually some twenty or thirty peregrines, a few merlins, and an occasional goshawk, besides some few of the baser sort of hawks, as buzzards and harriers. The tiercels which are taken are usually all set free again, for there are, as already mentioned, few purchasers for them. The falcons are all kept, unless indeed, as sometimes is the case, the purchasers insist upon having only young birds. The present fashion is to use in preference for rook-hawking, the "red" falcons—in their first year's plumage. "Haggards," in the "blue," or adult plumage, are said to range too wide and give too much trouble. Consequently it is sometimes necessary to liberate also some of the old passage falcons as well as the tiercels. But all red falcons are carefully kept, and so usually are the merlins and goshawks, for whom it is pretty easy to find owners. Occasionally a wild peregrine is caught in England. One was taken early last autumn on the Plain by a well-known falconer, and is now in training. But however the passage hawk is obtained, it is dealt with in much the same manner. It is hooded and kept very quiet till the first wildness has worn off; then handled skilfully and gently, and taught to know its owner; next made to come to the lure for food; and lastly, taught to "wait on" in the air around the falconer. When thus "reclaimed" it is ready to be flown at the quarry intended for it. The passage hawks caught in November are ready by the early spring, and should be flying rooks in February, or at least in the beginning of March.

Just such a falcon is "Lady Jane," above represented. Let us follow her fortunes for a day in March, and see how she acquits herself on the bleak expanse of Salisbury Plain, where perhaps the best rook-hawking in the world is now to be had. Early in the morning she will have been taken from the screen-perch on which she passed the night, and fastened by the leash to the ring of the block which stands in the paddock outside.

GREENLAND GYR-FALCON.
From a Drawing by GEORGE E. LODGE.

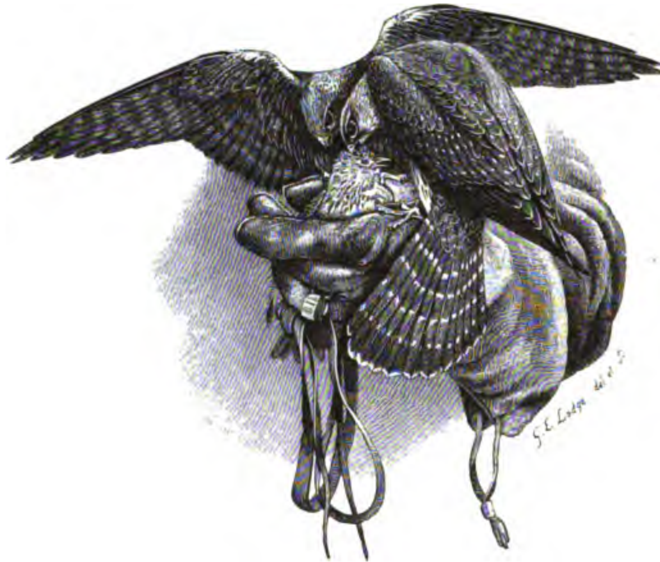
LARK-HAWKING, ADULT MALE MERLINS.
From a Drawing by GEORGE E. LODGE.

By falconers this is termed "weathering." There she will sit pluming herself and ruffling her feathers, looking now at the distant clouds, or at some passing bird too far off to be seen by human eye, and now at her companions, who sit on each side of her on similar blocks. About eleven o'clock she will be called to the fist of the falconer, and by him hooded and placed on one side of a "cadge," or else in the "van." A cadge is a sort of light frame which one sees in hawking pictures, or in a representation of *As You Like It* on the stage. On its padded sides are tied several hooded hawks—six or eight, perhaps—and in the middle of this walks the falconer's man, anciently called the "cadger," carrying the whole affair by means of straps crossed over his shoulders. The van is a more elaborate structure—a sort of omnibus with perches inside, drawn by a horse or a pair of horses, and forming a much more comfortable place for the occupants, as it shelters them from the bitter wind as well as the rain and sun.

But when "Lady Jane's" turn comes to fly, she is taken from her place, whether on cadge or in van, on to the fist of her master, who rides off straightway to the place where a rook is known or expected to be. Her leash is taken off; the swivel which attached it to the jesses is removed from them, and their ends are grasped between the fingers and thumb of the man who is to let her go. Moreover, that there may be no delay at the critical moment, the straps of her hood behind are drawn, so as to loosen it, and enable it to be pulled off at any moment. Thus everything is ready as the falconer rides along at a smart pace holding his gauntleted left hand as steady as he can, and keeping his weather eye open for any rook that may come towards him down the wind, or pass on the windward side. No rook must ever be flown when he is to leeward of the hawk; a hundred yards' start that way is a greater advantage to him than half a mile in the other direction. But suppose one to pass obliquely across about a quarter of a mile up wind? Just as he crosses the exact line in which the wind blows towards "Lady Jane," her hood is

pulled off, the falconer's arm is raised, and with a short whoop of encouragement she is "cast off" at the quarry. There is very little delay at the start. If the wind is very high the falcon will perhaps swerve a bit to the right or left. But in a second more she steadies herself, and with a single glance at the rook, begins to "mount" towards him in a long slanting line.

It is amazing how quickly both the pursuer and the pursued know "what is up." An old cock rook, who, like his younger relatives, is in the prime of condition in February and March, will begin climbing up into the sky as quickly as the falcon is from that height, after a long, long climb upwards, that she comes down in a steep descent, not flying, nor yet falling like an inanimate mass, but gliding downwards obliquely, with wings half-closed and tail compressed. As she nears the rook he also swoops about in a strange manner, wriggling, as it were, in his flight so as to baffle the pursuer; and in nine cases out of ten he succeeds in his purpose. It is far more difficult, of course, for a hawk to strike a bird in the free air than for a greyhound to pick up a hare on the flat surface of the ground. The impetus of the falcon falling from a height above gives her, it is true, plenty of speed to overtake her quarry, but



CAST OF MERLINS—IMMATURE PLUMAGE.
From a Drawing by GEORGE E. LODGE.

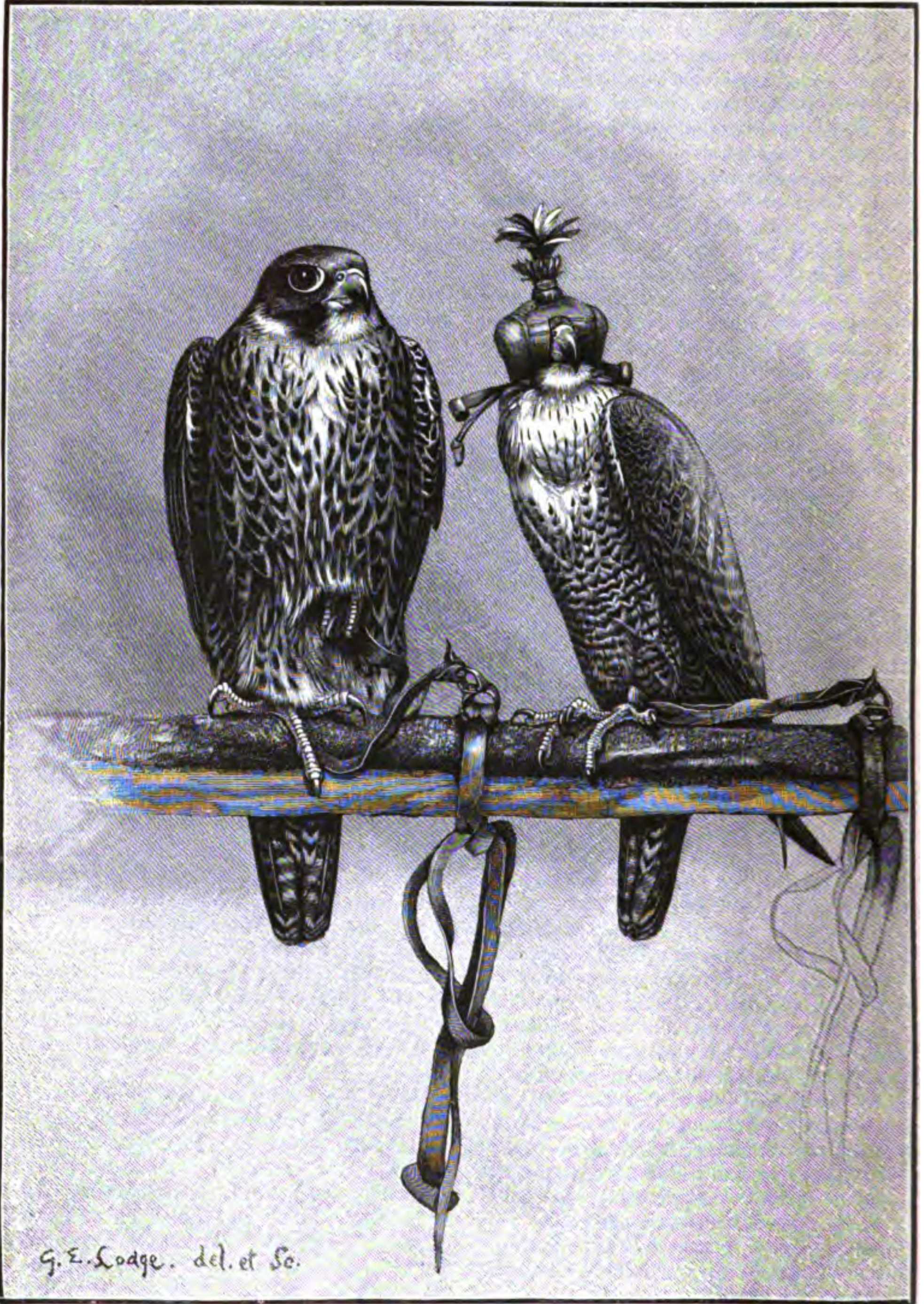
behind him, and if he has had a good start, may go up some hundreds of feet before the enemy approaches. From a bad peregrine—from many of the eyesses, for instance, and from every peregrine that is badly trained, or insufficiently fed—such a rook will fly away altogether, without a single "stoop" being made at him. But "Lady Jane" is a fast hawk. Before she was caught in Holland she had struck down many a wild duck, and even a few big gulls, which are ever so much stronger on the wing than any rook. She goes for the quarry in masterly style, not making straight for him at all, but going in a line which takes her wide of him, and far higher in the air. It it makes the steering very difficult; and however keen her sight and quick her turns, she seldom does more at the first attempt than brush close past the wriggling body of the rook. But then, having missed, she shoots up, if she is a good hawk, instantly, utilising the last remains of her impetus. Sometimes this shoot upwards takes her fifty feet or more above the place where she passed the fugitive, and after a few beats of her wings, to bring her into convenient position, she is ready to be at him again. Sometimes when the rook is clever and has made a good shift from the first stoop, a long climb has again to be made, and before a second stoop can be made, the two birds

are many hundred yards away from the scene of their first encounter. But throughout the flight, however long, there is a repetition of the same tactics—mounting on the part of both till a stoop can be made, and then a trial of skill very much resembling that between the hare and the greyhound. Some flights are quickly over, in others there will be perhaps a dozen stoops or more, and the space traversed will be a mile or more as the crow flies, but three times that distance reckoning in the *détours* made by the principal performers. Often, if the country is at all enclosed, the rook will make good his escape to cover, and from the safe shelter of a belt of firs, or even a single tree, bid defiance to the falcon and to the whole company of mounted men who follow behind. If the tree is tall, it is seldom possible to dislodge the fugitive. Even climbing into the branches is of little avail, for the old rook will shift from twig to twig, and altogether decline to go out into the open while the falcon is wheeling about in the air overhead. But if no cover be near, and the peregrine is in good wind and fettle, there comes at length the moment when a stoop, more deadly and well directed than those before it, brings the two flying bodies together. The sharp talons which lie hidden underneath the falcon's white feathers come into contact with the wing, back, or neck of the fugitive, and either catch there, or else tearing through the flesh, topple the victim over. In rook-hawking, the falcon having once caught hold seldom lets go again: the helpless body of the rook is dragged along by the victorious foe, and both descend to the ground, where a few seconds suffice for the peregrine to despatch her quarry.

There are two other flights for which this kind of hawk is commonly used. The more characteristic of these is game-hawking, which by many good falconers is preferred to the sport with rooks. But as it is followed at quite a different time of year there is no reason why the same men should not be fond of both; and indeed many of the peregrines which do duty on the plain in March are found distinguishing themselves equally on the moors in the following August and September. But though the same hawk may be employed, her tactics must be very different. When grouse are the quarry a first-rate pointer or setter should be employed. When the dog comes to a point, the peregrine is unhooded and thrown off, and she mounts in easy circles to a considerable height above him. Then the birds are flushed, and "Lady Jane," "towering in her pride of place," comes down like a thunderbolt behind them, sweeping with tremendous speed through the fast-flying pack, and either striking one down as she passes, or "throwing up" again instantly for another stoop. In this business the stoop is much grander, for the falcon falls headlong almost like a stone from her great height, and the force of the stroke is such as often to break the back or even sever the head of the unlucky victim. Falcons are most used for this sport, and occasionally, though not often, the "eyesses" prove as good at it as the more practised "haggards." They are moreover generally to be flown with less risk, for when the haggard is aloft, perhaps half a mile high, there is a great temptation to her to start in pursuit of some distant quarry—a passing rook or wood pigeon—instead of patiently "waiting on" in attendance upon the dog and men below.

For partridge-hawking tiercels are good enough, and the manner of flight is the same. Eyesses are most often used, and these will often continue to improve not only during their first season, but during several years after they have been moulted in captivity. The "blue" tiercel in our engraving is one that has so been moulted. He came from Lundy Island—a famous eyrie—and is called "Lundy," one of the best hawks that ever flew at game. No fear when he is thrown off in a big field of swedes that he will "rake away" after vain pursuits. Well he knows the sight of the dog standing motionless at the point; well he knows that if he is to have a chance to cut down his partridge before it reaches the hedge, he must mount high into the clouds, and keep a little to windward of the pointer. Very deadly is his first stoop, which he knows is the most formidable. And he is tamer than a parrot withal, never moved in the spirit to carry off his slain quarry, or to object to being taken from it by the falconer and hooded ready for another flight.

Magpie-hawking is a sort of combination of these two different kinds of flight. It is a favourite sport in Ireland, and affords an immense amount of exercise to the followers on foot. That cunning knave "mag" is found in some bush or spinney, dislodged therefrom with shouts and whips, and at once pursued by a tiercel or two. If not cut down at the first stoop, he will soon be back to some spinney, or tree, or hedge, and thence the whole company must drive him, somehow or other, while the hawks "wait on" in circles over the spot. A deal of patience



CAST OF PEREGRINES—RED FALCON AND BLUE TIERCEL.
From a Drawing by GEORGE E. LODGE.

and some considerable strength of wing is required on the part of the hawk to enable him to keep his position in the air so long. Meanwhile the task of the pedestrian is neither light nor short. A dozen times the shifty quarry will sneak back to some friendly shelter. and as many times will the hawking party with whoops and cracking of whips have to force him back into the open again.

SPARROWHAWK AND BLACKBIRD.
From a Drawing by GEORGE E. LODGE.

We come now to a different kind of hawk—the smallest of all the English falcons. The female merlin is only about twelve inches long; the male or "Jack," only ten—exactly the same length as a big blackbird. Yet both these little creatures have occasionally been trained to take young partridges; the females have been known to fly at magpies, and will readily take large pigeons. A great deal of sport may be had with either of them at blackbirds and thrushes, which they will pursue in the same way as sparrow-hawks. But the flight *par excellence* of the merlin is at skylarks; and this alone is worth a special description. It is an almost perfect copy of the old flight at herons, save that it lacks the very doubtful attraction of a fight on the ground to follow. The merlin, or the pair of merlins, whether male or female, whether eyess or wild-caught, are taken unhooded into the field, and a lark is walked up, after which both start like lightning from the fist. Then ensues a long climb upwards into the air, the lark mounting in small circles, and the falcons in larger rings, either from right to left or from left to right, as chance ordains. When the hawks are close to their quarry they stoop at it like peregrines, one backing up the stoop of her fellow by a second one. Many a good lark will run the gauntlet of thirty such stoops and get off safe to cover. Sometimes the lark will mount up in a clear sky till he is altogether out of sight, and from thence be brought down yard after yard by the fierce attacks of his little enemies. The twists and turns of these small birds are much more swift and active than those of the peregrine and rook, and what the flight of the merlin loses in grandeur when compared with that of the big falcons, it is often thought to gain by its neatness and extreme rapidity. Here everything is on so small a scale that the flight can often be followed on foot, and the little hawks seen stooping and recovering themselves within a few feet of the spec-

tator, as shown in the illustration. Eyesses have been known to fly a dozen larks each in one day, and kill four or five of them. But the most deadly performer is an old male such as "Peter" above represented, who, as he "throws up" after an unsuccessful stoop, shows the splendid markings of his blue plumage in which, before he was snared, he struck down many a winter lark, and perhaps even some snipe and youthful swallows.

Merlins are almost absurdly tame and easy to train, but they are deeply addicted to the vice of "carrying," or, in other words, bolting with their quarry. The only remedy for this is to make complete pets of them, feeding them together on the fist, as in a foregoing illustration, whenever there is an opportunity after they have finished their day's work and are engaged in a friendly meal upon the lark which they have together pursued into the sky. These youngsters—only three months old—have exactly similar markings, and differ only in size, the male being about one-sixth smaller than the female. But the adult male, with his slatey-blue back and broad black bar at the end of the tail, is almost as unlike what he was in the chocolate-coloured plumage of his youth as a wood-pigeon is to a partridge.

Thus far we have spoken only of the nobler race of birds of prey—the "falcons," properly so-called, or "long-winged" species, the tips of whose wings when folded as the bird is at rest cross one another above the tail, and reach almost to the end of the tail-feathers. The other sort—the "short-winged" hawks—are, as the name implies, distinguished by their shorter and more rounded wings, longer tail, and by the colour of the eyes, which are yellow instead of the dark hazel-brown of the falcons. But their style and manner of flying is altogether different, and so is also their character and the manner of training them. In this class are included, as far as the falconer is

RABBIT HAWKING—ADULT GOSHAWK.
From a Drawing by GEORGE E. LODGE.

concerned with it, only two species—the goshawk and the sparrow-hawk—but each of these has its own very distinct quarry to pursue, proportioned duly to its size and strength. As the sparrow-hawk is still a common bird in England, and can often be procured, it may be well to describe it first, although by reason of its queer temper there are few amateurs who will be at the pains to train it.

The best sparrow-hawks are those which have been caught wild; and one may be not unfrequently picked up from a bird-catcher, into whose nets it has come after one of his call-birds. For several days and nights consecutively the captive must be kept awake on the glove of its master or an assistant, and for many a day it must feed there only, and be taught gradually to come longer and longer distances to the fist for food. Indeed, the short-winged hawk, according to a maxim of the old falconers, "should know no perch but its master's fist." The more it is carried on the hand and talked to and stroked with a feather, and fed with small pieces on the end of the finger, the sooner will it put off the Old Adam of fierceness and suspicion, and begin to come readily to the master when called. As soon as this desirable stage has been reached, the hawk may be taken into the field and flown at a suitable quarry. The female sparrow-hawk, which is about fifteen inches long, is often strong enough to take partridges, but must have a good start, or she will not have sufficient speed to overtake them. There is, of course, no chance of making any short-winged hawk "wait on" in the air above. She must be thrown off at the bird as it rises, in the same way as described in rook-hawking or lark-hawking. The Oriental falconers, indeed, who deservedly think a great deal of this hawk, and make a large use of it for taking quail, carry it bodily in their hand, grasping it round the middle, and, as the quarry gets up, throw it at them like a hand-grenade; and it is said that the hawks very soon become accustomed to this practice, and rather enjoy the fun than otherwise. But the more common objects of pursuit, even with female sparrow-hawks, are the larger hedgerow birds—thrushes, blackbirds, and an occasional redwing or missel thrush. When these can be walked up in a large field of swedes or turnips, as is often the case in September, a good open flight is certain, and a kill very likely indeed; but when the hedges have to be beaten, the pursuit becomes very like magpie-hawking, with this exception, that the hawk, instead of waiting on above, returns to the fist and remains there, waiting in the utmost excitement for the fugitive to be driven out. Moreover, the latter must choose a very thick spot in the hedge to creep into for safety, or his pursuer will come after him, and, plunging headlong into the thicket, drag him forth from his hiding-place. One of our illustrations shows a blackbird darting into cover with the sparrow-hawk close behind, swooping over the top of the hedge just too late to catch him before he reaches a safe thicket of thorns.

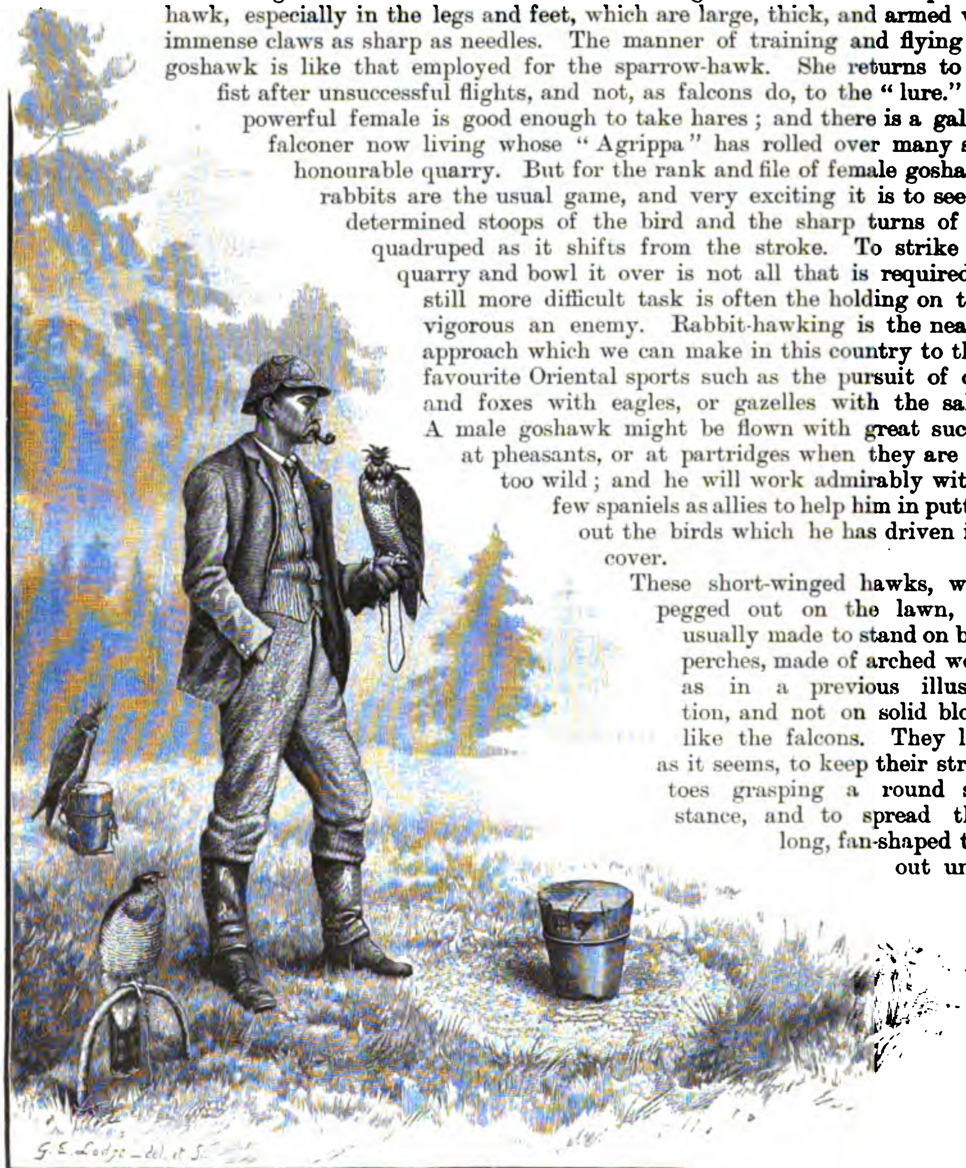
GOSHAWK ON BOW PERCH (IMMATURE PLUMAGE).
From a Drawing by GEORGE E. LODGE.

The male sparrow-hawk, or "musket" as he used to be called, is a very much smaller bird, but slimmer looking and perhaps rather better proportioned than his sisters. Some individuals are very tiny indeed, and with their thin long legs and slender feet look quite like miniature hawks. Their character is also usually less sulky and unmanage-

able. It is a pity that more beginners do not try their hand at this sort of hawk. The difficulty is that they are extremely delicate—perhaps even more so than merlins—and liable, if the least mistake is made, to be attacked with cramp in the legs. There is, however, no doubt that in the old times many a cheery afternoon was spent by the yeoman and his friends beating the hedgerows for small birds with no other companions than a few sparrow-hawks. And now that the country is so much enclosed, this sort of hawk would be still more handy in most parts of England. But why lament over the bygone glories of "birding," as Shakespeare calls it? Is there not to this day an enthusiastic squire in Herefordshire who flies his impetuous little "Blanche" at blackbirds with as much ardour and success as his mediæval ancestors?

The last, but in many respects the most valuable, of our feathered friends, is the goshawk —a large, powerful creature, having a body somewhat larger than a peregrine, but with a much longer tail. This hawk is of far stronger build than the sparrow-hawk, especially in the legs and feet, which are large, thick, and armed with immense claws as sharp as needles. The manner of training and flying the goshawk is like that employed for the sparrow-hawk. She returns to the fist after unsuccessful flights, and not, as falcons do, to the "lure." A powerful female is good enough to take hares; and there is a gallant falconer now living whose "Agrippa" has rolled over many such honourable quarry. But for the rank and file of female goshawks rabbits are the usual game, and very exciting it is to see the determined stoops of the bird and the sharp turns of the quadruped as it shifts from the stroke. To strike the quarry and bowl it over is not all that is required; a still more difficult task is often the holding on to so vigorous an enemy. Rabbit-hawking is the nearest approach which we can make in this country to those favourite Oriental sports such as the pursuit of deer and foxes with eagles, or gazelles with the saker. A male goshawk might be flown with great success at pheasants, or at partridges when they are not too wild; and he will work admirably with a few spaniels as allies to help him in putting out the birds which he has driven into cover.

These short-winged hawks, when pegged out on the lawn, are usually made to stand on bow-perches, made of arched wood, as in a previous illustration, and not on solid blocks like the falcons. They like, as it seems, to keep their strong toes grasping a round substance, and to spread their long, fan-shaped tails out under



THE FALCONER.
From a Drawing by GEORGE E. LODGE.

them as they face the wind. The modern practice is not to keep the short-winged hawks hooded except when travelling about, but it seems probable that in early times hoods were worn a good deal more. These hawks have a tendency, when left unused for a while, to become quite dull and sluggish, and then need a deal of carrying on the fist to bring them into fettle again. Their bells are attached, not to the feet, as in the case of falcons, but to the central feathers of the tail, which, as it is almost constantly in motion, even when the hawk is sitting still, affords a better indication of their whereabouts than the other plan.

A falconer who has the exclusive care of half a dozen trained birds, whether falcons or hawks, or both, finds little time hanging heavily on his hands. By the time he has moved out his charges to the lawn and set their nocturnal abode in order, he will have got an appetite for his own breakfast. Then there is the business of feeding those hawks which are not to fly, and perhaps exercising most of them to the lure, in the manner so graphically described by Izaac Walton. Then the bath or baths must be filled, and the hawks which are to be indulged with that luxury moved to a place where they can jump in and splash about to their hearts' delight. Then the plan of the day's campaign must be arranged, having regard to wind and weather, and the chance of where the quarry is most likely to be found; and when the day's work in the field is over the falconer's day is not nearly done. There is the "feeding up" of the hawks that have not been allowed, or have not had time, to "take their pleasure" on the quarry. Everything depends upon meting out to the hungry creatures just that quantity of food which will keep them in full health and strength, but without over-gorging them or making them inactive on the morrow. If a feather has been broken by some accident during the day it must be mended at once; if a jess is worn out it must be replaced. The feet and beaks of all the hawks should be cleansed, their hoods seen to, and the lures made ready for use on another day. Nor let it be forgotten that there is such a thing as losing a hawk. When this disaster happens the country is scoured till dark in search of the truant, and, if not found, the falconer, before break of day, is again on the look-out with his lure in hand. A successful falconer lies on no bed of roses. Only constant attention will make his hawks fond of him. But when they are so, he stands amongst them a friend amongst faithful friends. At a sign from him they will jump towards him; nay, at his first appearance—in the words of the old sportsman—they "rejoyce." The character of each of them—for hawks differ in character as much as men and women—is as well known to him as his own. He knows what can or cannot be done with each; and thus he is still able to carry on the most difficult of all sports without the disappointments that have frightened away from it less patient and persevering tyros.

E. B. Michell.

ON HANDWRITING.

I DO not propose in this paper to write a disquisition on the art of telling the character from handwriting, nor upon the, shall I call it mania? of collecting autographs. Undoubtedly there is a good deal to be said upon both subjects. The elder Disraeli in one of his interesting papers says, "Some pretend to be able to tell the characteristics of individuals from their handwritings;" and goes on to say, "I am intimately acquainted with the handwritings of five of our great poets. The first in early life acquired amongst Scottish advocates a handwriting which cannot be distinguished from that of his ordinary brothers; the second, educated in public schools, where writing is shamefully neglected, composes his sublime or sportive verses in a schoolboy's ragged scrawl, as if he had never finished his tasks with the writing-master; the third writes his highly-wrought poetry in the common hand of a merchant's clerk, from early commercial avocations; the fourth has all that finished neatness which polishes his verses; the fifth is a specimen of a full mind not in the habit of correction or alteration, so that he appears to be printing down his thoughts without a solitary erasure. The handwriting of the first and third poets, not indicative of their characters, we have accounted for; the others are admirable specimens of characteristic autographs."

This points to the opinion expressed by Pope:—

> "'Tis education forms the common mind,
> Just as the twig is bent, the tree's inclined."

For while, in spite of Dogberry's assertion that "to write and read comes by nature," undoubtedly early training has a good deal to do with style of caligraphy, and I cannot but think that certain characteristics do find expression, not only in modes of thought, but also in forms of letters. In one of the essays of Elia, we read of a man "whose handwriting was as rugged as his manners;" and while Winchester boys know, from frequent repetition, that "manners maketh man," I cannot but think that manners very often have a good deal to do in forming a handwriting.

As regards autograph collecting, let me say at once that to me it offers great charms. Old china to one, rare prints to another, money to most people, are some of the vents in which restless activity, call it, of mind or body, of head or heart, finds occupation, and surely as personal mementoes of well-known characters, autographs are at the least interesting. I have a letter from the late Charles Mathews—which will be found in facsimile further on—in which he thus describes the pursuit: "The man who, in cold blood, treasures up people's mere signatures and pastes them in books, *must*, in my opinion, end his days in Hanwell as a gibbering idiot. A characteristic autograph from an eminent and most interesting man (like myself) is, of course, a very different thing, and may be tolerated." This is very expressive, and although the volatile comedian is more graphic than polite in his language, I am content to leave the matter as he puts it.

It has occurred to me that it might be interesting to the readers of this Magazine, to see for themselves, and to draw their own comparisons on the handwritings of certain more or less well-known members of the community. The editor falling in with this view, I propose in the following pages to submit specimens of the caligraphy of some representatives of politics, literature, art, and the drama. For the purposes of comparison I have arranged them according to

their respective callings, and for the convenience of the Magazine they are presented in miniature.

The Right Hon. George Canning holds the unique position of being Prime Minister of England for a shorter period than any other Premier in the present century. It will probably be remembered that he reached that position in April, 1827, and that he died in September of that year. I believe that the exact number of days during which he was at the head of the Government was 121, while those whose terms of office since then have been under a year are

Lord Goderich who was Premier	168	days.
Lord Melbourne (first time) ...	128	"
Sir Robert Peel	131	"
Lord Derby (first time) ...	293	"
Lord Russell do. ...	241	"
Mr. Disraeli do. ...	285	"

Mr. Canning was educated at Eton, from thence he went to Oxford, and afterwards to the bar. He entered Parliament at the age of twenty-three, and from the first took an active part in political life. Three years after he was elected a member of the House of Commons, he was Under-Secretary of State under Mr. Pitt, of whom he was always a warm supporter. From that time until his death, thirty years later, he was one of the most prominent figures in the political arena. His character was well summed up some years ago by an able writer, thus: "As an orator he has rarely been excelled for finished excellence and classical taste; pouring forth his eloquence in a persuasive, impassioned, and fearless tone; or in a happy vein of caustic irony demoralising the arguments of his opponents. That he was impatient of place and power, and that during his political career he made some sacrifices of principle to expediency, no one will deny; but as a statesman his great aim was to uphold the honour of his country, and to pursue a liberal line of policy at home and abroad; while he was a decided enemy to all intermeddling with those institutions which the wisdom and experience of ages had built up and cemented."

Whether or not this training had any influence on his handwriting I cannot say, but there is a great similarity to me in the writing of many of our Prime Ministers. Sir Robert Peel, Lord Palmerston, Lord Beaconsfield, and Mr. Gladstone all write large, free, and fluent hands, although the last perhaps is rather cramped from the frequent use of post cards.

As to the immediate matter of the letter before us, it will possibly suffice to recall the fact that both Lord Castlereagh and Mr. Canning were holding office in Mr. Perceval's administration, and Mr. Canning, it was alleged, had unfairly endeavoured to cause Lord Castlereagh's dismissal from office. Had we the correspondence referred to in the letter, we could possibly form an opinion on the rights of the case, which at this interval it is almost impossible to do.

Six months after Mr. Canning died, Lord Goderich, who succeeded him, resigned office, and King George IV. called upon the Duke of Wellington to form a cabinet. This gave rise to some considerable opposition—one of the most formidable enemies of the new Premier being Lord, then plain Mr., Brougham, and one of the most eloquent members of the House of Commons. He called it "unconstitutional" that this country should be ruled by a military Premier, and it was in the concluding words of his speech on this occasion, that he introduced a phrase that has since become literally a household word. Speaking of the soldier, he said, "In the present age he could do nothing. There was another person abroad, a less important person in the eyes of some, an insignificant person, whose labours had tended to produce this state of things—the Schoolmaster was

Gloucester Lodge
Octr. 2. 1809

My Dear Pitt,

I am doing very well. Perhaps you will be glad to hear how I came to this condition. I send you therefore in an accompanying packet the letters which passed between Ld C. & me, a short statement of the

abroad." This is not the place to criticise the Duke's conduct of public affairs. Though he was really defeated upon a question of the Civil List, it cannot be denied that the true cause was his declarations upon the subject of Reform. These declarations, which were made, as Sydney Smith said, "in perfect ignorance of the state of public feeling and opinion," caused an intense but happily short-lived hatred to be aroused against him. He was warned not to attend the Lord Mayor's banquet unless strongly guarded. Before the Bill was finally passed, his house was attacked and all his windows broken by the mob. But it was not long before the "Dook" was again as heartily cheered as he had been hooted, and loved as he had been hated.

The Duke's handwriting it will be seen is large and fairly clear; but one would hardly expect to find in a man who had

> . . . . "Used
> His dearest action in the tented field,"

a handwriting as good or as perfect in the correct formation of letters, as in one whose sphere of life had been of a more sedentary nature. This letter was written when the Duke was sixty years old, and at a time when he was harassed with the great Reform controversy alluded to above.

London Dec. 10 1829

My dear Lord Bathurst

I received your Note at Stowe. I have not offered the House to any body; nor will I say any thing about it till I shall hear from you.

Believe me Ever Yours most sincerely Wellington

The next and last deceased Prime Minister on my list is he who passed away on 19th April, 1881. Lord Beaconsfield's tenure of the post of Premier was close upon seven years in his two Governments, and, unlike Lord Palmerston, he had only held one post before (Chancellor of the Exchequer), and that, although on two occasions, for only short periods. It was a longer time with the exception of Lord Liverpool and Mr. Pitt than any other, and it was a marvellous

close to an astonishing career. This is not the place in which to enter upon an inquiry into Lord Beaconsfield's policy, but upon his handwriting; I would remark that I fail to find therein any traces of the early training in the lawyer's office, of which we have heard a good deal, and which, according to his father's dictum, quoted above, should leave its distinctive mark on the future writing. A recent writer in the *Daily News* described Lord Beaconsfield's writing as "bold and resolute. It seemed to challenge attention by a certain blending of dash and ornateness." This might be taken as indicative also of his character, and I think the following specimen of his writing bears it out. It is an entry in the order-book of a library, and is interesting as showing the style of books the reader read.

Return enclosed, if you please
The
7 June Life of Porson &
D'Israeli

Let us now go from politics to literature, and see how some of the ornaments of that profession wield the pen.

Here are five lines of verse written by the "Author of *Waverley*," or "the great unknown" as Sir Walter Scott, until his identity was known, was spoken of. It is difficult in these days of multifarious authors, and editions of all sorts and conditions, from the quarto page where a "neat rivulet of text meanders through a meadow of margin," to the closely printed volume in "pearl old style," or from the lordly three volumes at "thirty-one and six" down to the "threepenny Dickens," or the "penny Bunyan" as hawked now about the streets, to realise the sensation that was created by the "rapid appearance of that series of novels, of which *Waverley* was the first, that surprised the world into a new source of delight." The admiration excited, when it was officially made known that they were by the talented author of the *Lady of the Lake*, of whom an *Edinburgh Reviewer* wrote in 1810, "Mr. Scott, though living in an age remarkably prolific of original poetry, has manifestly outstripped all his competitors in the race of popularity, and stands already upon a height to which no other writer has attained in the memory of any one now alive," would be now-a-days difficult to realise.

Turning to the writing it will be seen that while small it is very clear, and though the words do run somewhat into each other, that fact does not in any way deteriorate from the excellence of the writing. It appears a fluent, easy style, and seems to me eminently characteristic of the *Last Minstrel* of the school of narrative poetry.

Sir Walter Scott died in 1832, and amongst the most prolific writers at that time was one, who wedded the charming airs of Ireland to new and pathetic words of his own—a work, which, under the title of Moore's *Irish Melodies*, will always fill a warm spot in the hearts of all lovers, not only of the "Ould Counthree," but also of beautiful ballads and charming music. Thomas Moore, born in 1779, began early to show his powers of versification, for in his thirteenth year he was a contributor to a Dublin Magazine, and in his nineteenth published a translation of Anacreon. His, too, like Sir Walter Scott's was in some respects a sad career. When at the height of his popularity, when the *Irish Melodies* had shown his powers as a pathetic and patriotic lyrist and *Lalla Rookh* had displayed his remarkable skill in depicting Oriental scenes, he was suddenly involved in ruin, by the peculations of a person he had employed as a deputy to fill a post in the

I Walter Scott of Abbotsford a poor scholar and no soldier but a soldier's lover
In the style of my namesake & kinsman do hereby discover
That I have written the twenty four letters 24 million times over
And to every true born loyal I do wish as many golden pieces
As ever were hung on Medea's or Jason's golden fleeces

Bermudas conferred on him by the Government. Like Scott, whose misfortunes I have not alluded to, deeming them already well known, he set himself by the aid of his pen to pay off his liabilities, and turning his attention to prose, achieved some remarkable successes in that branch of literature. He has been fortunate in his biographers. Lord Byron wrote of him as "the poet of all circles, and the idol of his own;" and Lord John Russell, who edited his *Memoirs, Journal, and Correspondence.* spoke of him in the warmest manner.

His writing is cramped, and not very easy to read, but as when this letter was written he was immersed in literature, writing, now in the *Times*, now in the *Morning Chronicle*, now political satires, now humorous rhymes, and anon biographies, which very considerably enhanced his reputation and lined his pockets, some allowance must be made.

At about the time that Moore and his friend Rogers were starting for their trip to Paris, there lay a-dying a man, of whom the Editor of *Half-Hours with the Best Authors* says, "It is not too much to say that his songs were worth more for national defence than a hundred 'towers along the steep.'" Charles Dibdin, born in 1745, had a long and chequered career. As an actor, a dramatic author and musical composer, he was very popular, least so perhaps as an actor. He might also be called the founder of that single-handed performance which the elder Charles Mathews brought to perfection, and which in our own days Mr. George Grossmith, before he made his mark in the Gilbert-Sullivan operatic school, was a proficient—an entertainment of songs, music, and recitations, of which he was sole author and performer. In his early days he must have made money, for in addition to his own earnings, he received for some years a pension of £200 a year from government for his patriotic songs, losing it on a change of ministry; but he seems to have been somewhat careless and improvident, for in his old age he was in such poverty that a public subscription was made in his behalf and an annuity purchased. He wrote several dramas, and a vast number of songs, many of which are now as popular as they were then, and are the delight, not only of the honest tar, but of all classes of the community. Crowds will attend the Albert Hall, when a popular favourite is advertised as about to sing "Tom Bowling," while the

> "Sweet little cherub that sits up aloft
> To keep watch for the life of poor Jack"

has afforded more pleasure and more sympathy to British sailors than any amount of "grog" could do.

The letter given here is touching as bearing not only upon those troubles that embittered the close of his life, but also as showing that he had some personal friends to whom he could still turn. His writing will be pronounced, I think, as good, but not perhaps as indicative of character.

Before the present era of magazine literature, *Blackwood's Magazine* and *Bentley's Miscellany* were foremost. In their pages some of our best essayists were cradled if not schooled, Christopher North (John Wilson) Charles Lamb, De Quincey gave to magazine literature a power and strength that took the public by storm. But mixed with the

pages of prose were lighter compositions, that helped materially to carry them over the stormy seas of popular taste, and foremost amongst these in the pages of *Bentley* were a number of poetical effusions that afterwards appeared under the title of *The Ingoldsby Legends.* Of these legends a critic has said, "For originality of design and diction, for quaint illustration and musical verse, they are not surpassed in the English Language." The writer was a Minor Canon of St. Paul's, and Rector of St. Augustine and St. Faith, London. He was on terms of intimacy with another member of the Chapter, generally known as "the witty Canon of St. Paul's," the Rev. Sydney Smith, and whom it is said in many ways he much resembled. The Rev. Richard Harris

I have the honor to be
Revd. Sir
Your very Obdt. Servt.
R H Barham.

Barham was born in 1789. Though educated for and fairly launched in the Church, he was more of a humorist and writer than anything else, although I believe he always fulfilled his clerical duties with strict propriety. But Thomas Ingoldsby will always have a wider reputation than Mr. Barham, and the "last lines" he wrote—

> "As I laye a-thinking, her meaning was expresst :—
> 'Follow, follow me away,
> It boots not to delay,'
> 'Twas so she seem'd to saye,
> *Here is rest*"—

will find an echo in men's hearts for many a day.

The little bit of MS. that follows is part of the "Lay of St. Nicholas," one of the most amusing in the series. The allusion in the last verse is to the paragraph in Sterne's *Tristram Shandy* which, it will be remembered, runs as follows:—"'He shall not die, by God,' cried my Uncle Toby. The *accusing spirit* which flew up to Heaven's chancery with the oath, blushed as he gave it in, and the *recording angel*, as he wrote it down, dropped a tear upon the word, and blotted it out for ever." I must admit I do not understand what the word "Byers" alludes to, or why the words in italics were altered. It will be noticed that the last line differs from the printed lay, where it runs

> "Wept" (see the works of the late Mr. Sterne).

The lay brother gazed
On each other amazed
And Simon the Deacon with
grief & surprize
As he peeped thro' the keyhole
Could scarce fancy real
The scene he beheld or believe
his own eyes

In his ears there was ringing
The Lord Abbot saying
He could not distinguish
all the words very plain

But 'twas all about Cole
And a jolly old soul
And fiddlers & punch &
things quite as profane

The accusing Byers flew up to
Heaven's Chancery
Blushing like scarlet with shame
and concern
The Archangel took down his
tale & in answer he
cried like a child (see the late
Mr Sterne)

Turning now from poetry to prose, I should like to compare the writing of Lord Macaulay with that of Thomas Carlyle; the author of the *History of William the Third* with the author of the *History of Oliver Cromwell.* I need say nothing personally of the former. Mr. Trevelyan's last publication has given us so interesting and graphic an account of his distinguished relative, that his life and

Albany London
January 22. 1843

Sir,

Your apology was quite unnecessary. It is most gratifying to me to learn that I have given any pleasure to an intelligent reader who is a stranger to me, and whose judgment must be unbiassed by personal consideration.

Most of the papers which you mention are mine. You are wrong however about three, Uneducated Poets, Alison, and De Witt.

The bulk of what I have written for the Edinburgh Review will be republished. But some selection it has been necessary to make. The collection will make three large and not loosely printed Octavo volumes. If two more volumes had been added, filled with juvenile declamation or with controversy on questions which had only a transitory interest, the patience even of readers so indulgent as yourself would have been worn out.

I have long entertained the design of writing the History of England from the time of the Revolution. The execution of this design will probably be the chief employment of my life. But some years must elapse before any part of the work is fit for publication.

I have the honor to be,
Sir,
Your faithful servant,
T B Macaulay

career are probably well known to most of us. Of his literary work a well-known critic, George Gilfillan, has written thus, and it seems to me with much truth:—"All his prominent qualities, his muscular nerve, his balanced antithesis, his sharp, short form of sentence, his thoroughly English spirit, his enthusiasm breaking out at intervals, his elaborate pictures set at distances, his decisive tone, his unbounded command of illustration, his keen and crushing contempt, his intimate knowledge of floating personal history—any one of his articles is worth a hundred of the ordinary works which are dignified by the proud name of history."

The letter given below was probably the first intimation given to a stranger of Lord (then Mr.) Macaulay's intention to write a history, though no doubt it had been frequently hoped and the hope frequently expressed. But the letter seems written in the same rich style as the author's published works, with flowing sentences and rounded points, although evidently penned in some haste. It speaks for itself.

So much has been said and written lately about Mr. Carlyle's letters, that no apology is perhaps needed for introducing another, especially as the present contains no criticism on other people. The letter was written when Carlyle was some sixty-five years old, and when some dropping-off of style might perhaps be looked for and allowed. It was just about the time when he was preparing for the press—possibly correcting the proofs of—*Frederick the Great.* It may perhaps be interesting here to mention the order in which his chief works appeared. His *French Revolution* was published in 1837, when he was just forty-two (he was born in 1795), *Oliver Cromwell's Letters and Speeches* in 1845 and *Frederick the Great* in 1860-4. I can hardly enumerate when all his other works were given to the public. They were mostly essays contributed to reviews and magazines, or lectures delivered in public. *Sartor Resartus* among the former, appeared in *Fraser*, the *Life of Schiller*, *Jean Paul*, *Life of Goethe*, &c., were published in the *Edinburgh*. *Heroes and Hero Worship* were a course of Lectures "delivered to a very select audience, including six bishops, many clergymen, fashionable ladies and the *élite* of the literature of London." The letter given here is quite "Carlylian," if I may coin an adjective, in its style. As a critic once wrote, "Carlyle's epithets are not beautiful but they are his." So here his expressions are not elegant, "but they are his." Gilfillan, whose opinion on Macaulay I have just quoted, wrote thus of Carlyle, although he greatly admired him: "He is so utterly different from every other writer; his unmeasured sentences; his irregular density; his electric contrasts; his startling asseverations; his endless repetitions; the levity in which his most solemn and serious statements seem to swim; the air of mild, yet derisive scorn, with which he tosses about his thoughts, and characters, and the incidents of his story; his peculiar and patched up dialect; the far and foreign strains of his allusions and associations; the recondite profundity of his learning; and those bursts of eloquent mysticism which alternate with yet wilder bursts of uncontrollable mirth and fuliginous irony—produce an 'altogetherness' of impression exceedingly startling." But he adds that these defects are "rarely of

substance and never of spirit," and "form but a feeble counterpoise to his merits," and elsewhere, that "we love the book all the better for them while questioning their taste." Without further comment here is the letter, in which it will be noticed that the writing strongly resembles the style and diction.

12 Carlton Hill East
St John's Wood
9th Augt 1882

My dear Sir

I will take care that no one gets your drawings while you are away. I quite hope to get the small one done for you in about a fortnight.

Glorious weather for the country. I hope you will enjoy yourself.

Yours very truly
Birket Foster

I propose to conclude this paper with two or three specimens from the schools of art to illustrate the matter from their side. They are naturally of a more modern date.

Birket Foster who is best known perhaps on account of his charming little illustrations to our books of ballads, and other volumes, has been before the public for very many years. His quaint interiors, his homely glimpses of cottage life, and his charming scenes in country lanes, and on village greens, all mark him as being perhaps more so than any other recent artist, thoroughly English. Long known and long appreciated by the public the acknowledgment of his merits by those in authority was tardy. His handwriting to me is decidedly suggestive of his art, though perhaps the fish that is depicted coming unwillingly out of the water, is drawn, though by a clever pen, yet with a rather thick rod, and a "long bow."

"Alfred Crowquill" is another well-known etcher and illustrator. In his young days he was associated with Theodore Hook and Mr. Disraeli in a magazine called *The Humorist*, the fate of which I have been unable to learn. He was born in 1805, and his real name is Alfred Henry Forrester. His writing is small and neat, and quite the opposite to George Cruikshank's, a kindred artist who is too well known to need much comment here, and whose rugged writing corresponds well both with his personal appearance and his artistic style.

The last time I saw Cruikshank was at a Volunteer Review in Hyde Park, where he appeared in command of regiment of water-drinkers, of which he was colonel, mounted on what one of the journals described as a "very groggy horse." Just before that I had met him in a friend's office, and we had been talking about writing. "By the by," I remarked, "how do you manage to make those extraordinary 'ks' in your signature?"

24 Nov. 1866
3 Portland Place North
Clapham Road

I wish you to send me your autograph & a photograph, to place in my curious "Book of Records"

Thus by return of post, if you will be so kind?

"Oh! like this," he said, and taking up a pen wrote me the signature here appended. In the letter also here given the allusions to his picture, *The Worship of Bacchus*, one of the most extraordinary paintings of modern days, will be duly appreciated.

These writings are certainly worthy of the

description quoted at the commencement of this paper, "characteristic autographs."

This phrase "his own" also well describes the following letter, quoted already on page 666, from the late well-known actor, Charles Mathews. One would hardly expect in the lightest of light comedians, say in Sir Charles Coldstream or *My Awful Dad*, a heavy style or a thick form of letter, and

Geo Cruikshank
Apr. 2nd. 1868.

I think his writing admirably bears out both the man himself and the parts he played. I must say I was not aware that his father had such a letter, as that from Sterne alluded to therein. In contradistinction to his style of writing, I may mention that two well-known tragedians, Macready and Charles Kean, wrote, the former a small finikin hand, and the latter a large and bold writing.

263 Hampstead Road N W
(late Mornington Place). Sept. 15th
1863

Dear Sir,

I have to acknowledge the very kind manner in which you have acted in the matter of my picture of the worship of Bacchus, & which patronage I most highly appreciate, but if you will kindly favour me with a private interview for a few minutes at your convenience you will confer another obligation upon, Dear Sir yours very truly

Geo Cruikshank

James Gurney Esq. – &c &c &c

Lime Lodge
Fulham
Sept 18 1861

My dear Compton,

I have thrown every difficulty in the way of your obtaining my autograph because I used to think it very absurd a pursuit while you are still a young man, lest it grow upon you as you get older, till you become a positive pest to your friends and a burthen to yourself. The man who in cold blood trimmes up people's mere signatures and pastes them in books, must in my opinion end his days in Hanwell as a gibbering idiot. A characteristic autograph letter from an eminent and most interesting man (like myself) is of course a very different thing and may be tolerated.

My Father had a long letter from Sterne, in the most humble manner asking for £50 as the price of the copyright of "Tristram Shandy." This was worth having. But in your heart do you think the signature of "Monsieur Gouffe" the "Man Monkey" to be equally valuable? You dare not answer and I honour you for it.

"I say Gouffe", said an actor to him when he was acting in Liverpool, "give us your autograph."

"Pon my soul I can't, old fellow" said he, "I must have a bus home and help me bob I've only got a fourpenny piece in my pocket."

Isn't that anecdote worth more than his autograph?

My dear Compton
Autographically yours
C J Mathews

A. W. MACKENZIE.

BRAMSHILL FROM THE BROADWATER.

CHARLES KINGSLEY AND EVERSLEY.

IN April, 1842, Charles Kingsley wrote: "I hope to be ordained in July to the curacy of Eversley in Hampshire. In the midst of lovely scenery—rich—but not exciting." And again in May, 1844: "I shall return to you Monday, perhaps rector of Eversley! A bright future opens. Blessed be God. . . . All is settled at last. Sir John has given me the living, and he wishes me to settle there as soon as possible. God never fails those who put their trust in Him."

There are few prettier places within easy reach of London than Eversley and its neighbourhood. The features of the country certainly are not grand, but they are full of picturesque effect. The sweep of open moorland that lies beyond the glebe, and covers many miles, is very striking; and the mass of colour there in autumn, when the heather is in bloom, is superb. Bramshill Park, too, with its noble avenues of elm and oak and fir and lime, and its deep woods, and quiet lake, and blue distances beyond the gates and wall, is at every turn a study for a painter. The park boasts the finest Scotch firs south of the border, said to have been brought here and planted by King James I. And somewhere in the dark recesses of these woods Archbishop Abbot, an ancestor of the Kingsley family, whilst hunting, shot and killed a keeper with a bolt from his cross-bow, and, so runs the story, was never seen to smile again. Looking from the Mount, the rambling rectory-house with its quaint gables, and straggling garden gay with flowers, and the old red tower of the church and well-ordered churchyard, are seen below; backed with fields and copses, and line after line of wood and hedgerow, as the country climbs up towards and past Heckfield and Strathfieldsaye. There is a charm and romance about this part of England which linger on in spite of the ravages of civilisation and the desolating hand of builders. Even now there are bits of primæval forest to be found, and still spaces where the birds make their nests and the trees rejoice in undisturbed security.

Here, in 1842, Charles Kingsley came, little more than a boy in years, fresh with honours from Cambridge, and "buried his first class"—and much besides which the world would value more, and which was then

little suspected—"in a country curacy." Here, for the greater part of thirty-three years, he lived and loved and laboured and fought his way to fame, often against great odds, and gradually made his voice heard far and wide. And here, at last, he died, whilst yet in the fulness of his powers, and was laid to rest, mourned by high and low.

Charles Kingsley's name is associated in the popular mind with the thought of restless energy and gallant adventure. Notwithstanding his own amusingly vigorous repudiation of the phrase, he is and always will be regarded as the founder and representative of "Muscular Christianity." He is the patron-saint of mighty hunters and men of war, and those who go down to the sea in ships and occupy their business in great waters, and those who wander in the wilderness and solitary place. And yet, as a matter of fact, he himself was content and thankful to live out his days at Eversley; visiting the poor, nursing the sick, preaching in the same church, talking to the same people, fishing the same streams, looking on the same fields, year after year—living, in short, what many men would consider a dull, monotonous life — yet without a touch of bitterness or regret, and with no sense of loss or weariness, or impatience or restraint; happy with his home and friends and books and literary work and simple manly amusements, and never failing to find abundant interest and beauty and wonder and ample room for the exercise of his splendid vitality and energy in common things around him.

Such a man was bound to win the hearts of the people with whom he had to do at Eversley. And in a very short time Charles Kingsley won them all—from the old-fashioned squire and master of hounds at the stately, memory-haunted Elizabethan mansion, where once Prince Henry, the friend of Raleigh, lived, to the heath-cropper in the tumble-down cottage on the edge of the great flats, or the old poacher who had built himself a rough mud-hut by the dyke on the back common. They respected as well as loved him. For they saw that their Rector was not only an earnest parish priest, but also a man of shrewd common-sense, with much knowledge of the world, observant, handy as themselves, acquainted with affairs known and unknown to them, incapable of cant, and quick to detect and punish it in others, without a trace in tone and bearing of the professional manner.

Eversley, however, was not only a happy field of parochial labour for Charles Kingsley, it was also—and this was very necessary for a man of his poetic and nervous temperament—a playground and fairy garden, a sanctuary and refuge for him from the busy turmoil of the world and the noisy strife of tongues. Here, after the excitement of Chartist meetings, and anxious discussions with Christian Socialists; after the storm of reviews that followed on the publication of his earlier books; after the lionising that awaited him in many circles of society; and, later, after the strain and fatigue of his work in the chair of modern history at Cambridge, and in the pulpits of Chester Cathedral and Westminster Abbey, he could retire and recover his spent strength and breath in the companionship of his beloved fir woods and the silence of the far-stretching moors. "I must get away and stand upon my head," he would say, "and think about nothing at all." When pressed and harassed and tired it was all very dear to him, very soothing, very healing, very reanimating—the sheltered lawn by the study door, the little trout stream in the field beyond, the young plantation on the Mount, and then the wide flats of Hartford Bridge out beyond, that rolled away and away, rich with purple heather and dark pines, to Bagshot and Windsor. Here, at all events, he was free; secure alike from curious observation and foolish praise and ill-natured censure. And he needed this repose and rest of spirit. Without this probably he would have broken down again and again. For he could not stand the wear and tear and daily burden and worry of methodical, highly-organised, carefully-planned, and rigorously-sustained work. Seldom has any one toiled harder, or with wider range, than Charles Kingsley. But he was always obliged to work in his own way. He could not fight his battles with Saul's armour. He must follow his own devices. He would give himself without sparing whilst the work was actually in hand; but when the word was spoken, or the blow struck,—when he had done his best fearlessly and gallantly, and the world was shouting applause or disapproval, and eyes were strained to see the bold poet-priest, and hands were weaving garlands for him, and lips prophesying great things concerning him, then he must needs go back to Eversley, and forget all about the hubbub, whilst he busied himself with his garden and his fishing-rods and his fly-books; and with birds and beasts and insects and trees and flowers; and with much talk of the farmyard and the harvest-field and the stable and the kennel; and with happy impersonal thoughts about the geological formation of hill and valley, or the antiquity and genesis

of the woods around him, or the meaning and purpose of the century-old road-tracks in the heather under his feet. For many natures stirred within him: and though he was always a worker, always a teacher, always a lover of man, there was in him also a strong necessity for freedom and space and fresh air, for the leisure and repose and confidence that can only be found in quiet, untroubled brooding amid country sights and sounds.

Eversley then suited him, as the saying is, down to the ground. It gave him exactly the home, the surroundings, the interests, the amusements, at times the disengaged liberty that he wanted. Indeed he never seriously wished for any other field of action. At Eversley he knew he could be himself, as he never could have been shut up in the streets of London, or a bishop's palace. The machinery, the routine, the punctuality, the respect for proprieties, the cumbrous dignity often incidental to the higher seats of the clerical world would have been intolerable to him. He would have been stifled with "the care of all the churches." And he knew this very well himself. "You never were more right," he says, "than when you said that I should not like to be a bishop. And even a deanery I shrink from; because it would take me away from Eversley, the home to which I was ordained, where I came when I was married, and which I intend shall be my last home." From every point of view, at Eversley he was emphatically the right man in the right place. And one cannot doubt that this fact was a great and abiding help to him in his work throughout. At Eversley he needed no system save his own. He worked as he liked—mainly by impulse—doing what he had to do with all his might; doing it in a way that made a deep impression on the mind and character of his people, but with very little regard to any recognised method or established order. He was by nature no organiser, no administrator. He was a voice and an example. And his message and influence were best felt and understood when he was seen and heard, like the Baptist of old, standing and speaking, not in the crowded highways of the city, but in

EVERSLEY RECTORY.

green fields and by rippling streams, in the fair, fresh, open country.

It has been said that whatever the gain to the Church may have been when Charles Kingsley was ordained to the curacy of Eversley the loss to the world was very great. That the poet, in short, was then sunk and submerged in the priest. Now at first sight there seems, it must be admitted, some truth in the remark. Few who are well acquainted with the writings of Charles Kingsley—and especially with the delightful volume of poems—can fail at times to feel that had he been free from the cares of parochial work, free to devote all his time and genius to letters, free to speak his whole heart out, without the slightest regard to Church authority or Church councils, he might have secured a permanent place for himself among the great poets of the nineteenth century. Surely, we say, there was yet more to come, more that was never uttered, more that was buried, alas! for ever in silence, partly owing to the trammels of his profession, partly by the voluntary suppression of his poetic gifts—a deeper fount of song—a richer, fuller range of emotion—in the heart and mind of the man who wrote the *Saint's Tragedy*, and *Andromeda*, and the *Three Fishers*, and the *Sands of Dee*, and the scene in *Hypatia* where Pelagia dances in the theatre, and the story of the sea-fight off La Guayra and the sinking of the *Sta. Catharina* at Lundy, in *Westward Ho!* Here are proofs of poetic and dramatic power such as are not often found. Surely, had he been so minded, had circumstances been propitious, had he been free to follow the bent of his nature, had the work at Eversley not stood in the way, he might have won for himself eternal renown as a master of immortal verse. Even now there are lines and passages of his which the world will not soon forget; which hold their own for strength and beauty and pathos with the best our literature can show. What might not then, we say, this man have done had he given himself wholly to art, and told us without any reserve or constraint the uttermost that was in him?

Certainly no one can deny that the true poetic faculty was in Charles Kingsley, and that all he said and did was touched with the fire and fancy of a born poet. No less an authority than Baron de Bunsen believed that a great career was open before him. Writing to Professor Max Müller, Bunsen says: "In the *Saint's Tragedy* and *Hypatia* I find the justification of a hope that Kingsley might continue Shakespeare's historical plays. . . . The tragedy of St. Elizabeth shows that Kingsley can grapple, not only with the novel, but with the more severe rules of dramatic art. And *Hypatia* proves on the largest scale that he can discover in the picture of the historical past the truly human, the deep and permanent, and that he knows how to represent it. How, with all this, he can hit the fresh tone of popular life, and draw humorous characters and complications with Shakespearean energy is proved by all his works. And why should he not undertake this great task?" Charles Kingsley himself seems at times to have felt the divine call strongly. "What you say," he writes in 1852, "about my *ergon* being poetry is quite true . . . there is no denying it; I do feel a different being when I get into metre. . . . When I have done *Hypatia* I will write no more novels; I will write poetry—not as a profession—but I will keep myself for it, and I do think I shall do something that will live." And yet it may be questioned after all, whether in electing to be a priest, and holding the cure of souls at Eversley, he did not take a truer measure of himself, and of his proper calling and genius, than those who think he might have won imperishable honours as a poet. "I feel in myself," he said in 1858, "a deficiency of discursive fancy. . . I know I can put into singing words the plain things I see and feel; but all that faculty which Shakespeare had more than any man—the power of metaphor and analogue—the intuitive vision of connections between all things in heaven and earth, which poets *must* have, is very weak in me, and therefore I shall never be a great poet. And what matter? I will do what I can; but I believe you are quite right in saying that my poetry is all of me which will last." "I will do what I can"—probably all men in the long run do what they can; and when we lament that they have not done otherwise, or done more, we are lamenting the impossible. To all who knew Charles Kingsley, or who carefully read his works, it must be obvious that there was in him a strange crossing and recrossing of what, for the sake of brevity, we may call the artistic and moral natures. The elements were subtly mixed. He was drawn two ways at once. Imagination was often to him rather a tyrant that troubled him than a guide gladly and exultingly followed. "If you wish to pray against a burden and temptation, pray against that awful gift (for it is a purely involuntary gift) of imagination, which alternately flatters and torments its possessor—flatters him by making him fancy that he possesses the

TREES ON THE RECTORY LAWN, EVERSLEY.

virtues which he can imagine in others; torments him because it makes him feel in himself a capacity for every imaginable form of vice." The artistic side of him struggled for a license which the moral side would never grant. The results to himself were often probably very painful. The silent inward conflict may have helped to shorten his days. But the victory always lay with the moral side—and that by his own deliberate choice. For morality was the deepest, strongest principle in him throughout life. "The first and last business of every human being," he said, in a university sermon, "whatever his station, party, creed, capacities, tastes, duties, is morality! virtue, virtue, always virtue,"—this was the burden of his teaching for others and for himself. "I am nothing," he one day said to me, "if not a priest." The priestly instinct was as authoritative in him as the poetic. Perhaps more so. It is a significant—may we not say prophetic—fact, that his earliest recorded words, in the *Memories of his Life*, take the form of a sermon, written when he was four years old. Then follows a poem, written when he was five years and eight months old. Teacher and Poet. But Teacher stands first, and always stood first. Some of us indeed may think that at times he was scarcely fair to art and artists; that he was disposed to be a trifle contemptuous of art, and to sweep its children aside as "idle singers of an empty day." Perhaps this inclination, however, was only a self-protective instinct on his part; an unconscious but firm resolve not to let the lower call, as he regarded it, interfere with, or impinge upon, the higher call in his own case. At any rate he writes to the Rev. F. D. Maurice in 1855, "Do not fear that ultimately I shall be content with being an 'artist.' I despise and loathe the notion from the bottom of my heart. I have felt its temptation; but I *will*, by God's help, fight against that. . . . Everything seems to me not worth working at, except the simple business of telling poor people, 'Don't fret, God cares for you, and Christ understands you.'" And so we may believe that the world lost nothing by Charles Kingsley's residence as a clergyman at Eversley. The teacher in him naturally took precedence of the poet. Eversley was no clog upon his genius. Rather, according to his own account, "it was the source of inspiration to him." "My amusements are green fields and clear trout streams, and the gallop through the winter fir-woods; and perhaps this fine healthy life makes my little lark's pipe all the fresher and clearer when it tries

a song." Those songs of his—so simple, touching, pure, and true—so perfect in form, so exquisite in feeling, will live on far down the coming times.

The *Saint's Tragedy* was published in 1848. From that year to the end of his life his pen was never idle. As a rule, he wrote rapidly and easily; the flow of ideas and words was no labour to him. He knew at once what he wanted to say, and said it without let or hindrance, or beating about the bush, plainly, clearly, forcibly, and directly; yet with a play of fancy and imagination, and a wealth of illustration which very few writers can command. The list of his books is long; something like thirty volumes in all: poems, novels, fairy tales, lectures, essays, sermons; and nearly all of them were written at Eversley; thought out as he walked about the parish, or in the garden, and then quickly transferred to paper in the pretty low-roofed study, packed with books and fly-rods, and hunting-whips, and pipes, and MSS., where the window usually stood open to the ground, facing the soft southern sky.

Charles Kingsley has declared in his own matchless way the special work he set himself as a priest. "What if it has pleased God," he wrote in 1858, "that I should have been born and bred, and have lived ever since, in the tents of Esau? What if—by no choice of my own—my relations and friends have been the hunters and fighters? What if by long living with him, I have learned to love him as my own soul, to understand him, his capabilities, his weaknesses? What if I said to myself, Jacob has a blessing, but Esau has one also, though his birthright be not his; and what blessing he has, he shall know of, that he may earn it? Jacob can do well enough without me. He has some fifteen thousand clergy, besides dissenting preachers, taking care of him, and telling him that *he* is the only ideal. . . . Therefore my mind is made up. As long as Esau comes to me as to a friend, and as long as Esau's mother comes to me to save her child from his own passions and appetites—would God that I could do it—so long shall I labour at that which, even if I cannot do it well, seems to me the only thing which I can do."

LICH GATE, EVERSLEY CHURCH.

And Esau did come and listen with a thankful heart and eager ear to the man who spoke that which he knew, and testified that which he had seen, and told him good news of God. Long before the death of Charles Kingsley, the pulpit of Eversley became a distinct factor in the religious life of England. There was a ring in that voice that claimed attention and roused enthusiasm. Men could not choose but listen: men of all shades of opinion. For they felt that here was a man utterly in earnest, one who spoke straight from his soul in words which kindled the "fire that in the heart resides." They felt that the Rector of Eversley had something to say which made a perceptible difference in the aspect of things to them, and which put new life and vigour into the faith and hope by which they shaped their life and conduct. The teaching that came from the little village church in Hampshire—most of the printed sermons were first preached at Eversley, and were given to the public with few alterations—was unique in its way. There was a good foundation laid of knowledge and careful thought. But manner and method were wholly original. No shibboleths, no empty forms of words, no straining after effect, no mere word painting; but straightforward talk, in clear terse language, combined with marvellous insight into human character and motives, and wide sympathies with human weaknesses, and quick understanding of human temptations, and always a noble righteous love of truth and honour, of self-control and endurance, and noble scorn of falsehood and meanness, of self-indulgence and cowardice. These sermons were by no means always equal. But there was never wanting in them a peculiar quality, a touch of himself—and sometimes the full strength of the man was poured into them, and then they rose into almost unrivalled eloquence. Is it too much to say that the sermons of Charles Kingsley restored to the Church the too long lost ideal of Christian chivalry? At any rate men felt that at last they had found here a leader behind whom they could range themselves and march, without losing one jot of their manhood, or wearing sad countenances and simpering looks.

"Joyous knight-errant of God, thirsting for labour
and strife."

Charles Kingsley might have had his last earthly resting place in the great Abbey at Westminster which holds the dust of our kings and statesmen and soldiers and poets. "Here we should be too glad to lay him," wrote Dean Stanley at his death, "not by that official right which I try to discourage, but by the natural inheritance of genius and character." But the matter had been decided by himself long before. His wishes were well known, and there was not a moment's hesitation as to the place of his burial. "Go where I will," he had said, "in this hard-working world, I shall take care to get my last sleep in Eversley churchyard." Therefore, in the midst of the people he knew and loved, close beside his own "romantic home," and the altar where he had so faithfully served his Lord and Master, they made his grave. There, under the shade of the solemn fir-trees, where the "air-mothers" from the moor above come down and rock the heavy boughs in summer and winter over his head, Charles Kingsley sleeps in peace and hope.

WILLIAM HARRISON.

A GARDEN OF MEMORIES.

[This Garden of Memories holds a sad and most tender memory for me. Thus far in my work I have had my sister's sympathy, and I shall have it no more. Even in her weakness she cared for the beginning of this story, chose it to be a remembrance of her, came, as it were, with faltering steps, a little way into my garden, and I feel as if her grave were among its blossoms. Often as I have wished that work of mine might better deserve to live, I never wished it more than I do at this moment, when, having finished this, I write upon it the name of Constance.]

I.

WITHOUT.

"June weather,
Blue above lane and wall."

HE June sunshine lighted a dull little street, where a row of small houses, mean, dirty, dilapidated, faced a high wall. It was about three o'clock, and Garden Lane was almost deserted, the children being at school, and their elders at the factory. Two or three loud-voiced, slatternly women appeared and disappeared at the cottage doors, looking after the babies who seemed to have casually dropped into the squalid life of the place, and the decrepit old folks who were near to dropping out of it.

Even in its peaceful condition the lane did not seem likely to attract visitors. Yet a couple of well-dressed men lingered there, talking earnestly, and had already lingered for ten or fifteen minutes, though there were pleasanter spots within easy reach. The elder of the two, a tall, neat, grey-whiskered man of sixty or more, stood on the footpath, with his back to the cottages, and poked at the dust with a slim gold-headed cane. His companion, much younger than himself, had halted in the roadway, and was speaking rather defiantly, with his hands in his pockets.

It was natural enough that the elder man should raise his eyes from time to time, and that they should rest on the wall that faced him. But the other had his back to it, and it was less obvious why he should cast quick glances over his shoulder, as if the wall made a third in the conversation. They were curt, half hostile glances, and yet it was the pleasantest thing to look at in Garden Lane. It was a substantial piece of old-fashioned brick work, which rose with an air of strength, almost of stateliness, above its sordid surroundings. Its base was polluted with the filth of the street, and defaced with smears and chalk-marks, but higher up it took the southern radiance on its warmly coloured bricks, touched here and there with lines and patches of bronze-tinted moss, and over its crest, against the blue June, flickered little wanton sprays of ivy and vine. By standing very near the unsavoury cottages the sunlit boughs of trees within the enclosure might be descried.

The two men, however, betrayed no such extreme curiosity. There was a small door just opposite, set in the wall, with a projecting ledge of brickwork above it, on which a tuft or two of snapdragon grew, and thin, dry grasses seeded airily. Evidently it was seldom opened, for the children had made little erections of stones, and dirt, and oyster-shells, upon the threshold. The elder man's eyes lingered familiarly on the little entrance, as if he could see some pleasant sight beyond, but the other, when he turned to look, ignored the doorway, and flung his glances higher, where the glowing line of red bounded the sultry sky.

"You know me," he said, with a touch of resentment in his tone. "You ought to know me well. You know I don't want to do anything but what is fair and right. But, I put it to you, am I not offering more than it is worth?"

"Decidedly more than it would be worth to any other man," the other agreed. "And I think," he added with a smile, "that you are offering a little more than it is really worth to you."

"Well then?" said the young man crushingly.

But his companion made no answer. He continued to smile, looking down and drawing vague lines in the dust at his feet.

"Why don't you tell her she'll never get such an offer again?"

The point-blank question roused the other to stare and exclaim, "Bless the man! Do you suppose I *haven't* told her?"

"Well then? Why doesn't she take it? What more does she want?"

"No more. Unluckily for you she doesn't want so much. She simply wants her own house and garden. She won't sell."

"But why? What reason does she give?"

"Do we ask a lady for a reason?" said the other. "If we do we don't get one."

The fierce young man seemed to take the little commonplace speech as a weighty truth. "Heaven help me!" he said, "what have I ever done that I should have to do business with a woman?"

"Don't trouble yourself too much about that, Brydon. I don't think you'll have any business to do with her."

Brydon stood pondering—incredulous, yet gloomy. "But it's absurd," he said. "Look here—I'm not unreasonable. If the place had been a long while in the family, if it had even been her home when she was a child—well, I suppose it might be called sentimental to refuse a good offer, but it would be the kind of thing one could understand, you know."

"Certainly," the other assented.

"One could understand it," Brydon continued, "and, if it were only a question of a good offer, I, for one, could respect it. Yes, with all my heart."

He paused, giving his companion time for an affirmative gesture, then went on.

"But what has Miss Wynne to do with the place? She bought it—how long ago? A year? A year and a half? Well, a year and a half, then. I suppose from what they tell me she only happened to know of it because she was once here for two or three months when the Macleans had it; they say she was a sort of companion to old Miss Maclean in those days. I shouldn't have cared much to go as companion to Mary Anne myself, and she doesn't seem to have liked it long! But a year or two later, when the house was empty, back she comes with money and a new name, and buys it. Cheap too! Isn't that so?"

"Just so."

"Well, is there anything in that to make a woman refuse a good offer for it, when she knows what her refusal means? Look at those cottages—*look* at them, Eddington!" he threw out his hand towards them with sudden passion. "Are they fit for her fellow creatures to live in? There they must live, however, there they must crowd together beyond all chance of cleanliness or decency, there they must die, because Miss Wynne has taken a fancy to keep the only bit of ground on which I could build them decent dwellings, for a flower-garden! The devil take such fancies, say I!"

"Of course you feel strongly about it," said the other. "It's only natural. But, after all, Miss Wynne bought and paid for her house—you can't confiscate people's property, you know."

"But what does she want it for—tell me that! The house is well enough, but there are better ones on the Daleham Road. And as for a garden—is she bound to have a garden in the densest and dirtiest part of the town? They say Norman's Folly is to be sold—why doesn't she buy that? She would get a really good garden there."

"So is this a good garden. Do you know it?"

Brydon shook his head. "The factory is on one side of it, of course, but we have no windows that way. And my uncle never got on with the Macleans, you know. He used to say he thought he could have put up with old Teddy Maclean, but he could *not* stand Mary Anne, so we didn't visit."

"Well, you know Miss Wynne?" said Eddington, beginning to move slowly along the footpath.

"I have met her," the young man answered, "if you mean that. Somebody introduced us at the vicarage one day. She made me a little bow and a remark on the weather."

The other smiled. "She can be better company than that."

"Very likely. But I would have you remark that it is Miss Wynne's room I want, and not her company at all. I think I should prefer the Macleans."

"I dare say! You think you could have

bullied poor old Teddy, and had your own way."

"But I could not have bullied Mary Anne! Still I think I could have made a bargain with her."

"Why not try with Miss Wynne?" said Eddington, as they emerged into the High Street. "Why leave all the arguments to me? You might be more persuasive."

"Oh! Persuasive!"

"Yes. Why not?"

"I've no arguments but pounds, shillings, and pence," the young mill-owner replied. "Will they sound bigger from my mouth than from yours?"

"You might find others."

"No. She doesn't care for the weavers and their wretched cottages. And, being a fine young lady, she probably thinks drainage an unpleasant subject, and would not thank me for explaining to her that she may be poisoned one of these days by the filth of Garden Lane."

"Well," said Eddington, "I can't say whether she cares for weavers and drainage, or not. But I don't think she cares for pounds, shillings, and pence."

"Tell me," said Brydon abruptly, "do you know her reason for refusing to sell? Keep it a secret if you like, only tell me, do you *know* it?"

"I do not."

"Well then, I'll try." He had spoken hitherto in a defiant and rather masterful fashion, but now he suddenly stood revealed as a shy young man. "I'll do what I can," he said, as if he needed the assurance of his own reiterated pledge. "But it won't be any good. I wish she *were* Mary Anne!"

"Thank you. *I* prefer Miss Wynne for a client."

Brydon paused for a moment with his great dark grey eyes fixed upon vacancy. "Yes, I'll try," he repeated. "Well, good-bye for the present."

"Stop," said Eddington. "Miss Wynne will have some people there to-morrow—tennis and afternoon tea, you know. Suppose you go with me? We are very good friends, she and I, I'll undertake to promise you a welcome."

"But I don't care for tennis."

"Very well, then, you can hand tea-cups. It will be all the better for me."

Brydon hesitated. "But how is one to do any talking? That kind of thing is nothing but idiotic chatter."

"Oh, you can't drive a bargain then and there, and pay the money down with the tennis players for witnesses! No, no, you may leave your cheque book at home. But, all the same, you had better come with me—see how the land lies, and have a look at the walled paradise—you may understand Miss Wynne better after that."

"But I hardly ever go to these stupid afternoon affairs; I'd much rather be at my work—I hate 'em," growled the young man. "Well, I'll go—what time?" he added in a hurry, as if he were afraid that Eddington might give up the idea.

The other smiled a little. "All right—call for you at four," he said.

II.

WITHIN.

"Roses that down the alleys shine afar,
And open, jasmine-muffled lattices,
And groups under the dreaming garden-trees."

Mr. Thomas Brydon, standing a little apart from the tennis players, eyed the coveted garden with stealthy eagerness. He knew its precise extent and shape, better than any other person present, but the vision which had haunted him for months was that of a somewhat irregular four-sided patch, washed over with a uniform tint of light-green, bounded by pen and ink lines, and conveniently supplied with a scale of measurement and the points of the compass. The delineation was accurate enough, yet the reality took him a little by surprise.

He had had some idea of the ordinary suburban garden, with its neat machine-mown lawn, and yellow gravel walks, its slim young trees, laburnum and lime, and its gay stripes and masses of bedding plants. He had walked many a time in such gardens, and remembered their well-raked borders, their standard roses, bearing pendent labels, and their latest novelties in variegated foliage. He knew the rock-work in a shady corner, dotted here and there with little homesick ferns. All these things were familiar to him.

But not this walled enclosure, where everything told of long continuance. So many generations had laboured within its bounds, each its allotted span, so many seasons of sunshine and rain had quickened the great trees whose white roots were groping far below, that it seemed as if one need only turn a spadeful of the deep black earth for buried memories to germinate and bloom. Spring flowers here were but the last links in a

long garland, stretching across the years to hands that tended those same blossoms in pleasant old-fashioned times. It was like the quaintest masquerade, only to think of the women who had walked in that garden. Who was the first—the woman for whom the pleasure ground was planted? And was Mary Wynne to be the last?

Already it was but a narrow plot compared to what it once had been. Tall buildings hemmed it in, turning blank walls on its green seclusion. Here were massive warehouses, there, above a quivering screen of poplar-leaves, rose a heaped confusion of tiled roofs, a bit of torrid colour in the midsummer sunlight, slopes of varied steepness, blackened in places with soot and moss. Little long-drawn clouds drifted from their clustered chimneys across the western sky. There was a grey glitter of glass in distant windows, but it was strange how remote all eyes seemed to be from Miss Wynne's shady lawn.

Half a minute had sufficed to give Brydon a distinct impression of his surroundings. Then with no change of attitude he lowered his glance and surveyed the company. His young hostess had given him the welcome that Eddington had promised, and had only turned away to greet a later arrival. He looked after her, curiously, anxiously—his impression of her was anything but distinct. How was this? She had talked to him for at least a couple of minutes, and Brydon believed himself to be quick at reading faces. He began to suspect that perhaps he had never looked at her while she spoke.

The tennis party was an ordinary specimen of such gatherings in a provincial town. There were a good many ladies. Elderly clergymen had brought their wives and daughters, and the wives and daughters of busier men had come with apologies for their absentees. Two or three lads, just old enough to be reckoned as grown up from a lawn tennis point of view, loitered about, always keeping together, and looking on the women, the old people, and polite manners generally, as hindrances to rational enjoyment. The legal profession was represented by Mr. Eddington, smiling and talking in every direction, and a self-possessed junior partner. There was a good-looking country squire who had driven in, with two sisters and a cousin, from a manor-house some four or five miles away. And finally there was a curate from his lodgings in the High Street.

Some of the girls were pretty, but Brydon's eyes seeking Miss Wynne lingered only on a tall, willowy young woman, as distinct from all the rest as if she were a foreigner. In point of fact, her dwelling place was nothing more remote than Kensington, whence, being a little tired, she had come for ten days' change, and was restfully going through the three tennis parties, one flower-show, and one re-opening of a church, which her friends had offered as a round of gaiety.

Brydon's glance encountered hers, for she was gazing fixedly at him from under her slanted parasol while she talked to Mr. Eddington. His story interested her, it was an excitement, an enthusiasm, a struggle for mastery, and the issue was uncertain. Perhaps it might be divined by a little study of the young man. She was like a traveller landed on an unknown shore, ignorant of the local scale of values. She took no interest in the good-looking squire, decidedly the most important person there, she passed by the curate and the young lawyer with complete indifference, but she expressed a wish to make Mr. Brydon's acquaintance, and the next moment she was rustling softly over the grass with Mr. Eddington in attendance. Brydon saw them coming, and felt a shock of surprise and alarm. What the deuce did Eddington mean by it—couldn't he mind his own business, and leave other people alone? But he had not presence of mind enough to attempt an escape, and he stood, shifting uneasily from one foot to the other, till he was captured, and duly presented to Miss Hillier.

The worst of it was that her progress across the lawn had attracted attention. The boys, standing strictly on the defensive behind a convenient tree, silently conveyed to one another that she was a guy. Their sisters looked after her with curiously mingled feelings of disapproval and envy. Their own freshly made costumes somehow seemed too new, and too neatly put on, by the side of those faintly-coloured folds which twisted and trailed and clung about the Kensington young lady. It was true that the draperies and soft laces which composed a harmony in yellows were slightly tumbled and dingy. One felt that they had been worn in a smoke-laden atmosphere, and crushed in crowded little drawing-rooms. But, nevertheless, there was an air of indefinable superiority about Miss Hillier's dress, a careless completeness of detail, to the yellow beads at her throat, and the cluster of yellow roses, which seemed half-ready to fall, so loosely were they fastened.

Two sisters stood watching her, and the

younger, a pert school-girl, spoke under her breath.

"You don't call *her* pretty, I *hope*—a limp, affected thing! And I *do* think when people go to parties they might be *clean!* I should like to send that dress to the wash—looks as if she had slept in it."

"Yes," said the elder with a doubtful smile, "perhaps it does. But she must have slept in beautiful attitudes."

Brydon, embarrassed by the introduction, looked sideways and down, while Miss Hillier smiled languidly. "I've been hearing incredible things about you, Mr. Brydon."

He was obliged to answer. "I—I wouldn't believe them," he said.

"I shall be delighted to believe exactly the contrary on your assurance."

He looked round despairingly, but Eddington was gone. "I really don't know what I'm expected to say," he replied. "I don't know what the incredible things are."

"Tell me that you don't want to desecrate this sweet old-fashioned place by building cheap houses all over it!" Miss Hillier shuddered as she spoke. "There are so many cheap houses in the world, and so few old gardens. Mr. Brydon, you couldn't really be such a Vandal! Not really!"

"I don't know who has been talking about that."

"Everybody! We are all talking about you—all watching you. Nobody knows what dreadful things you may be plotting. You haven't the evil eye, I hope? You won't blight the trees and flowers with a glance?"

"Do you believe in the evil eye?" he asked.

"Why not? I think you are dangerous. I wish I had brought an amulet. But we are on our guard, Mr. Brydon. Do not attempt to take Miss Wynne into a corner, and mesmerise her into signing away her property. I assure you we won't allow it."

"What will you do?" he said, and, half smiling, he looked at her.

Miss Hillier's thoughts flashed from the question to Brydon's eyes. They were his only beauty, for he was not a handsome man. He was slightly below the average height, he had a sallow skin, very ordinary features, and a thin moustache that scarcely shaded his upper lip. But for his eyes he would have been insignificant. They however were full of expression, and their depths of transparent grey were deepened and darkened by the black lashes that bordered them. "Eyes like agates," Miss Hillier said afterwards, "really too beautiful for a man of business."

"What would we do?" she repeated after a momentary pause. "Well, really, I hardly know. Part you by main force, I suppose."

"But anyhow Miss Wynne and I must settle it at last, you know?"

She made a little affirmative sign. "Yes, and I tremble for the result. It is always the same. When it comes to be a question between mean little houses and a dear old garden, the garden goes, swallowed up in hateful bricks and mortar. If I had any influence with Miss Wynne——"

"I hope to heaven you haven't!" Brydon ejaculated anxiously.

"I would entreat her to be firm. She has made one mistake already."

"What is that?"

"She should never have admitted you within the gates of her stronghold. I saw you looking round as if you were taking possession. If I were Miss Wynne, Mr. Brydon, I should shut myself up, and refuse to communicate with you."

"Wouldn't you even answer a letter?"

"No!" said Miss Hillier sternly. "I would not. I would run no risks. If an answer were absolutely necessary, I would send a little message by that nice, talkative Mr. Eddington. But I would not write, and as for an interview—never!"

Brydon was flattered, and laughed. It had displeased him that his cherished scheme should be made the subject of jesting talk, but a shy man naturally likes to be told that a woman finds him formidable.

"I don't know how I should manage—I'm afraid you would be too clever for me," he said. "I should have to try and make my way in in disguise."

"What, as the milk or the washing, or to look at the gas-meter? But seriously, Mr. Brydon, do you really mean that you would have the heart to destroy all this?"

He looked round deliberately and calmly. He had forgotten his shyness in the interest of the question. His glance took in all, the house half-buried in roses, vine and passion-flower, the fine turf of the lawn, the masses of leafage—syringa, myrtle, lilac, laurestinus and bay, the sweet old-fashioned flowers, the bushes of lavender and rosemary, the great trees, limes with their innumerable bees, poplars quivering lightly in the sun, tulip, juniper, chestnut, mulberry, medlar, and, close by where he stood, two great cedars, sweeping low with dusky horizontal boughs. Against their soft dimness Miss Hillier's slender, yellow-draped figure, fair dishevelled hair and refined face, came out like a picture, a little faded and pale, yet with a certain

charm. Brydon's travelling glance ended by meeting the eyes that watched him, eyes tired and circled with faint shadows, yet intense with questioning interest.

"Well," he said, slowly, "I'm very glad you should enjoy this to-day. It is very pretty, prettier than I thought. I don't at all want to spoil it now, but I should like to see the ground clear this autumn, ready to begin work the first thing in the spring."

"Never another spring for all this?" Miss Hillier demanded tragically, indicating the surroundings with a movement of hand and wrist in a wrinkled, tan-coloured glove.

"I'm very sorry," the young man replied. "But if the cheap houses are urgently needed——"

"Oh, that sounds like a prospectus! If you mean it as a speculation, Mr. Brydon, I dare say it may be a good one—I'm not questioning that."

"A speculation—" he began, but instantly checked himself. "Well, I should like it to pay," he said, "but one gives a fancy price for a bit of ground like this. There's no chance of making a fortune out of it—worse luck! Still, I hope it will pay—I haven't much opinion of things that don't."

"I would rather not have the money you get for this desecration!"

"It won't be much."

"You will do it for a little?"

"Yes. If you could see the cottages beyond that wall!"

"So very bad?" in a voice of languid softness.

"So hopelessly bad and over-crowded. I wish Miss Wynne would have that gate set open into the lane! Is the key in it, I wonder! Come and see."

She drew back. "No, no! There's a time for everything, Mr. Brydon. Not now."

"Yes, the time for that kind of thing mostly is 'not now.' I ought to have known. Well, you must take my word for it that if you saw those cottages you would wish me success in my speculation."

"Indeed I should do nothing of the kind. Can't you put your cottages somewhere else?"

"There is nowhere else. See how we are built in."

"And for that very reason I would fight to the last for this bit—the only remnant of sweetness and beauty left to you. Did you ever think what a source of health and joy an old garden is among these crowded alleys? And how full of poetry! Paradise within a stone's throw of the squalid ugliness of a town like this!"

"Can't look into Paradise, you know," said Brydon.

"What then? Is the knowledge of hidden beauty nothing? It seems to me that one might breathe the flower-scented air"—the young man's lips twitched in a curious little spasm—"and dream by the wall which conceals and yet suggests it—dreams more precious than the dull realities of life. Why, all one's ideals would be there!"

(Brydon privately wondered what Miss Hillier's ideals would be if she had been brought up in Garden Lane instead of Kensington. While he was thinking about it, however, he found that she had gone on, and he was compelled to follow.)

"Think for one moment what half a dozen old gardens—not enclosures in the middle of squares of stucco-fronted houses—and not old grave-yards laid out with shrubs and tablets, but real old gardens—gardens that people had loved and gardened in, gardens with memories, would be in London now! Don't their very names haunt you? Don't you feel a pang of regret when you drive by them in a cab?—those ghosts of gardens, forgotten long ago but for their names painted up at the corners of dirty unwholesome little streets! I dare say they said houses were urgently needed—but it is the old garden that is needed now!"

Brydon was certain that Miss Hillier was talking nonsense, but he wished she wouldn't, for the nonsense perplexed him. Did women argue like that about a simple matter of business? If so, Eddington might do the talking, for he'd be hanged if he would, and he stood with downcast eyes, twisting his straggling little moustache, and looking perfectly insignificant.

"I suppose that is what you will do," said Miss Hillier. "You will cut down these trees, make the place hideously bare, and call it 'The Cedars'?"

"Let me only build my houses and you may call them what you like."

She laughed a little. "Take care! Well, I suppose you will get your own way. Perhaps you will live to regret it."

"If you would only go and—and *smell* those cottages—only once!" said the young man, growing desperate. "You wouldn't doubt then that I ought to have my own way in this!"

"Not if they were absolute pigsties!"

"They are."

"Then make them better if you can. But never sacrifice the priceless inheritance

of the future to the comfort of a passing generation."

Brydon was dumb, silenced, not by the argument—he had not had time to consider it—but by the turn of the sentence. He could not be expected to talk like that.

"You are not to be moved—you have no pity on all this loveliness?" Miss Hillier continued after a pause. "Does not the very rustling of the leaves plead for mercy? Listen—listen!"

This was obviously poetry and nonsense, and Brydon broke roughly through the faint whispers far overhead. "I keep my pity for those who can feel."

"And do you think that trees and flowers cannot feel? But they do—I am sure they do," she said, gazing at him with mournful intensity. "Ah, how I wish that I could be the guardian of a spot like this! What a sweet atmosphere of gratitude to live in!" Here she seemed to wave a little towards an approaching figure. "I was just envying you, Miss Wynne."

("Here's another of them!" said Brydon to himself.)

"Envying—me?" Mary Wynne repeated, with a little questioning pause between the words.

"Yes—envying you your power to resist Mr. Brydon. I can only tell him how I would resist him if the ground were mine."

Brydon, in his talk with the lawyer, had called Miss Wynne a fine lady, and certainly she was finely dressed that afternoon. But as Miss Hillier spoke she suddenly looked at him with eyes timid as a child's, a liquid, shy, appealing glance. However fine she might be she was very unlike the young lady from Philborough Terrace.

"It's a pretty garden, isn't it?" was her offer of an original contribution to the conversation. "You have been here before?"

"Never," said Brydon, laconically.

Miss Hillier looked questioningly from one to the other as if measuring their respective force, and calculating chances.

"Never?" Miss Wynne exclaimed. "Oh, then you don't know how pretty it is! I mean that the plants and things only look to you what they are at this minute——"

"Pretty enough," he said.

"Yes. But if you had seen them all budding and blossoming! That great old thorn over there—it looks just like any other thorn, but it's a double one. I suppose it isn't right to like double flowers," she said, half glancing at the pensive yellow-draped bystander, who smiled.

"Like what you like—I do." Brydon threw this in defiantly.

"Well, just for once," Miss Wynne continued. "I don't want all the hawthorns like it, but it was very pretty this spring. It was covered with blossoms like the tiniest, tiniest roses, white, you know, almost greenish white—you might have made nosegays of them for fairies as tall as your finger."

"Pretty," said the young mill-owner again. "I'm sure I don't want to depreciate your garden, Miss Wynne. Those are not my tactics."

There was a soft rustling of trailing folds on the fine dry grass while he spoke. The principals in the coming contest were left for the moment face to face and alone.

III.

A TRUCE.

There was a brief silence. Then Miss Wynne said, "Wouldn't you like just to walk round and look at the place?"

He assented, and the pair moved slowly, side by side, along a mossy gravel path. Eddington, where he stood on the lawn, followed them with his eyes, and smiled. "They had better fight it out," said Miss Hillier, sweeping softly towards him.

"So I think," the old gentleman replied.

"I have done my best," she continued.

"On which side?"

"Can you ask? My best to persuade Mr. Brydon to relinquish this wicked scheme of his."

"Ah—I see—your worst for my client. No matter, Brydon is as obstinate as—as fifty mules."

"So I haven't done any harm?" said Miss Hillier, smiling goodhumouredly.

"Not a bit," said Eddington, "and I don't suppose I have done any good."

"You really take that Vandal's part? You can't!"

"Miss Wynne will never get such another offer. If the garden were yours I should certainly advise you to accept it. You would—wouldn't you?"

"Never! How can you think it?"

"You wouldn't?" said Eddington. "I'm delighted to hear it. You would give up all the world—give up Kensington, to settle down among us all and take care of these cedars!"

The sun was shining on the great shadowy trees and on the transitory, faintly-tinted little figure on the grass below. It was strange to think that those dusky giants were so sorely in need of protection.

Meanwhile the arbiters of their fate had paused in their walk, and were looking up, where beyond a screen of blossoming limes rose the high, unbroken wall of a large building. From behind it came a measured sound, dull yet distinct, like the heavy throbbing of great pulses. Brydon's looms were at work.

"It seems strange," said Miss Wynne, facing the eyeless surface, "that you should be so near, and yet never have come into the garden till to-day."

"I don't see it. My place is on the other side of the wall."

"But that's what I mean. A wall seems such a little thing to part two places so completely."

"Does it?" said Brydon shortly. "I fancy it's mostly like that. Only children cry for the moon—for things obviously out of reach. We older and wiser folk waste our lives on the wrong side of the thinnest possible partition."

"It would be something, though," said Mary Wynne in a meditative voice, "to be sure that—that it was only on the other side of a thin partition."

"It," he repeated, and his isolation of the word gave it an emphasis which sent a faint flush to his companion's cheek. "'It' is the ideal, I suppose. Well, I don't know where yours may be——"

"I'm sure I can't tell you—I don't know that I've got one. But I know where yours is."

"Well, I suppose you do."

She faced him suddenly with a beseeching glance. "Oh, Mr. Brydon, is it any good telling you how *sorry* I am that I can't break down your wall for you?"

"It's very kind of you to say so."

"Don't!" she entreated.

"Well, if you can't, you know," said Brydon, "why—you can't."

"But it isn't like that—I can't, and yet of course I *could*."

"Oh yes, under some other circumstances. Well, I don't see why you should worry yourself about it. You have a perfect right to say 'won't'—why not end the matter so?"

"Have I a right to say I won't? Do you think I have?"

"A legal right, anyhow."

She moved slowly onward. He kept near her in a hesitating fashion, through the flickering leaf-shadows which dappled the light folds of her gown. She walked languidly, droopingly, as if she were burdened. They were close to the southern wall of her domain, and her eyes strayed to a small entrance overhung with clematis and honeysuckle, and approached through a little arch, about which a climbing rose was delicately tangled. Brydon swerved towards it and she stood still. The key was in the lock, he turned it, opened the door, and she saw an oblong picture of Garden Lane in a frame of flower and leaf.

A dirty child started up from the threshold, dragging a dirty baby. The baby, which had but just learned to walk, was swung off its rickety little legs, and fell on its face into the hot dust of the roadway, where already lay an old boot, a dead kitten, some shreds of paper and a battered tin. Being dragged up and shaken it looked little the worse, and hardly any dirtier. Its guardian sister, clutching it absent-mindedly, halted at a little distance, where she showed a face of a common type, and a sore eye, partially obscured by a filthy strip of rag. The other eye, dilating with wonder, stared past Miss Wynne at the distant figures of the gentlefolks, seen, lightly active in the sunlit greenness of the garden, intent upon a flying ball. A girl cried out—a lad, all white arms and legs, sprang to strike.

Brydon closed the door and locked it.

Miss Wynne's gaze passed from the doorway to Brydon's face. "I thought you were going out," she said, as he approached, swinging the key on his finger.

"Oh, no!" he answered. "I only wanted to look at my side of the wall for a moment. No, I wasn't going to beat a retreat like that."

"Why did you shut the gate so quickly? Did you see that poor child? How she stared!"

"Naturally," said Brydon. "But I didn't know you would enjoy being stared at."

"It seemed so cruel to shut her out. Oh, how cruel I am!"

Her companion said nothing.

"How I wish there was some other ground that you could take, Mr. Brydon! Something that would do for your cottages. *Isn't* there? Are you sure?"

Brydon turned his dark-lashed eyes full upon her, and bit his lip. The maddening, innocent folly of the question took his breath away for a moment, and when he recovered it his self-control came too. It was fortunate, for he had never felt so great a need of an oath, something brief, sudden, brutal, like a

discharge of dynamite. To ask a man who had been brooding over his scheme, night and day, for months, whether by any chance he had ever thought of it at all—it was too much! First he longed to swear, then he would have liked to laugh, but he only said quietly, "If there had been, my cottages would be built."

She answered with a sigh. "Of course they would. It was foolish to ask, I suppose; but I wished so much that there might be!"

"I'm sorry too," said the young man. "But if you were to look at a plan, you'd see in a minute. There's the Baptist chapel runs right into me on the other side, and the corner bit is the public-house—'Hand and Flower,' don't you know? Here's the road," and he began to trace imaginary lines with the key on the palm of his hand. "Then there's Burgoyne's brewery at the back of me—you can see a bit of the roof over there," nodding towards it. "Well, of course, I could build some cottages somewhere else—on the nearest bit I could get, though I doubt it wouldn't be very near, this neighbourhood is so crowded. Still it might be better than nothing. But it isn't only the cottages, it's the mill. I want to enlarge it, to improve it. It isn't well built—there isn't room enough in it—it isn't properly ventilated. In a word, it's old-fashioned. I'm sure it isn't wholesome; I do what I can, but nothing can be done worth doing without more space."

Brydon had made what was, for him, a remarkably long speech, and his tone throughout had been patiently explanatory and even gentle. That brief gust of irritation had passed and left no trace. Miss Wynne was perplexing, but he *did* believe her to be sincere, and sincerity atoned for much. He wished he hadn't to deal with a woman—women were not practical, but that was not Miss Wynne's fault. He recognised her claim to elaborate explanations and a certain amount of humouring. Business, in a case like this, must be polite, must wear light gloves and a flower in its button-hole.

And at any rate Miss Wynne had listened to him. She had noted every syllable that fell from his lips, and when he paused she looked almost too serious. The young man felt that the time was ill-chosen, that he had said too much. A face like that, with dejection and appeal in every delicate line, was not fit wear for a tennis party. "I forgot," he exclaimed with a short uneasy laugh, "Eddington said I wasn't to try to drive a bargain to-day."

"Do you always do what Mr. Eddington tells you?"

"No. He's not my adviser, you see."

"He's very much on your side, Mr. Brydon. I should think you might say what you pleased, he talks enough himself. He tells me I shall never have such another offer for the garden."

"I doubt if you will."

"No—it's splendid—it's munificent, I'm dazzled when I think of it! Only what I wanted was not to have any offer at all! As it is my greatest comfort is that I'm refusing a small fortune—I'm not seeking my own profit, no one can say that!"

"I'm glad you think so much of my offer," said the young man, "for I can't make it any bigger. Such as it is it's my last word—I can't do anything more in the dazzling line."

"I don't *want* any more. I'd rather not."

"Oh well, that's all right. I fancy it takes a woman to feel like that. Most of us would always rather have some more—*I* would, I know."

"I don't want to make a profit out of it. You are offering me too much already."

"Well, I'll beat you down if you'll give me a chance," said Brydon; "but I can't go any higher. Sooner than that I'd move the whole concern. I've had the offer of some land three miles off, at Holly Hill."

Her eyes lighted up with radiant hope, her face was transfigured. "Oh, why don't you do that? I was out that way yesterday—it was lovely! Such open breezy slopes, such gorse, such a wide clear sky! Mr. Brydon, it would be *life* to your poor people. Oh, how happy I should be! Fancy that wretched little girl out in the fresh air at Holly Hill—and the baby—it would be ten times better—a thousand times better than anything you could do here. Oh, why don't you do it? It would be perfect. Out in the open, away from all these crowding roofs and houses—*do* it, Mr. Brydon! Oh, you must!"

She seemed to rise with the eager rapture of her voice. He stared, he listened with parted lips, and then with his answer they both came down to earth again.

"Several things against it, Miss Wynne. It would be an experiment, and a hazardous one. You don't know how these poor people cling to the neighbourhood they have known. I suspect a good many would stay on here and starve, sooner than go to Holly Hill. It would break up families too—there are girls working for me, and their brothers have got places as errand boys and the like in

the town. And they would be a couple of miles from church or school. That isn't all, either. It would require a greater outlay than I could manage at present; it might be the best in the end, but I should have to wait—years. I have my mother to think of, she lives at Brighton, she depends on me; I can run risks for myself, but not for her. I can't tell how long it might be before I should dare to move in the matter, and all that time these miserable children would be growing up—crowds of 'em—in their filth and wretchedness. Why I might die first! Oh, no! I've thought it all out; I only told you that you might understand why I set that limit to the price I was prepared to offer; if you asked more Holly Hill would be better."

He had effectually quenched the brightness of her glance. "I should never ask *more!* I have told you already, it is too much."

"I know. But your friends—"

"I have none."

"Only yourself to consider in the matter, then?"

"I suppose so." The swift colour flew to her cheek. "Yes, only myself."

"So much the better," said Brydon absently. She looked at him quickly and questioningly, and brought back his wandering thoughts. He evidently felt that he must explain himself. "It narrows the discussion, don't you know?—brings it within manageable limits." Then he considered for a moment. "I don't mean that *you* are manageable, Miss Wynne," he concluded, and having explained away his explanation, was silent.

"I think I ought to go back," Miss Wynne replied. "Don't you play tennis?"

He shook his head. "I've kept you too long. And I've been talking business again!"

"I don't know why you shouldn't."

"It seems as if I couldn't talk anything else."

"Well, that's what is expected of you," said Miss Wynne. "Everybody was sure you would talk about your cottages. They wouldn't interrupt, they are all so interested."

Brydon looked sideways at the tennis players, drawing down his brows. "I'm not expected to talk about anything else—well, it's satisfactory to know that. Am I supposed to have finished now, do you think? If so, as you say, we had better go back."

"No, stop a minute." She had caught the sense of his words, but not the displeased tone. Her face was quickening with a new thought. "Mr. Brydon, I have an idea! Why shouldn't you make some windows in your wall? Wouldn't that make it better for your people—a little better, at any rate? Wouldn't it be brighter and more cheerful? Why don't you?"

"But I've no right," said Brydon.

"But if I say you may?"

"Nonsense—you are not going to say anything of the kind. How should you like to be overlooked by rows and rows of windows?"

She flinched a little, but reiterated her, "You may if you like."

"But I don't like! I won't do it. Even if you never regretted it for yourself, you'll want to sell or let the place some day, and then you'd find out the inconvenience of it fast enough. You shouldn't say things like that without consulting Eddington."

"Indeed? I fancied I might say what I pleased."

"No," said the young man, "you'd keep your word. Well, it doesn't matter this time. It's very kind of you, Miss Wynne, but really it would do you much more harm than it would do me good. It's not so very noble of me to say 'No.' I don't care for half and half concessions." He looked her straight in the face, their eyes were about on a level—his were lucid and resolute. "All or nothing, Miss Wynne."

Hers dropped, escaping him. Her lips parted as if she were about to speak, but no sound came. "All — or — nothing," Brydon repeated.

She found her voice then, but it was hardly above a whisper. "I'm sorry—sorry, but it must be nothing. I can't help it."

"Don't say it like that!" he exclaimed. "I didn't mean to pain you. Look here, I'll tell you how it shall be. We'll leave it till the beginning of the year. You sha'n't be bothered any more, no one shall mention it to you, but my offer shall hold good till then; and if you change your mind and like to say 'Yes,' you can, any minute. And if not—why, your silence shall be your final answer when the new year comes—it will do as well as anything else, and it will make it easy for you. Is it a bargain?"

She was grateful for the respite. "Yes," she said. They walked across the grass to the rest of the party, only pausing once while she gathered a bit of heliotrope, which seemed to require careful selection. Brydon fancied she was gaining time to recover her

usual calmness. She offered him the flower with a smile.

While he was putting it in his coat he murmured something about thinking he must be off now.

"So soon?" said his hostess, as they came up to a group near the tennis-players. Eddington turned round and looked at them.

"Oh, my prophetic soul!" Miss Hillier exclaimed, in a voice which seemed thinner and clearer than those about her, and struck a distinct note among them all. "The battle is over, and lost! Look at Mr. Brydon—he has begun to pick the flowers, and he has taken possession of the key."

All eyes converged on the young mill-owner, who looked down at the key which he was absently holding, and remembered that he had taken it out of the lock of the little gate. He crimsoned, like an angry bashful boy, with vexation at the trivial blunder, and at the widening smile which encircled him. "It isn't so at all," he began, just as the white-flannelled young squire broke in with his easy laugh—

"Going to lock us all out and begin to cut down the trees, eh, Brydon? Like old Gladstone, eh? No time like the present, is there?"

Brydon fastened on the one point in the circle at which he could strike. "Nothing of the kind," he said, perversely exulting in his own defeat, since it enabled him to contradict the smiling young man. "Miss Wynne has sent me about my business—haven't you, Miss Wynne?"

She blushed. "Oh, not like that!" she cried.

"But you have—and the proof of it is that I'm going, as I told you just now, didn't I? I can't think how I can have been so stupid as to bring the key away, but, if you'll allow me, I'll go out by that little door—it's nearer for me."

"Don't you let him take the key, Miss Wynne," said the young squire. "Don't you trust him. Give it to Miss Hillier—she'll see him out at the little door, and double lock it after him, won't you, Miss Hillier?"

"Do I look like a turnkey?" said that young lady languidly. "Really, Mr. Haldane, I wasn't brought up to the profession. And I'm sure Mr. Brydon is an honourable enemy——"

"Oh, you're too trustful! Ladies always are."

"I wonder at it," Miss Hillier replied. "Are you really going, Mr. Brydon? Good-bye, then, and you'll let me wish you all success in cottage building — somewhere else!"

"Thank you," said Brydon.

"You'll be sure to find some other place for your little cheap houses—won't he, Miss Wynne, if he only looks? Oh, I don't mean to be rude to them—they'll be charming little houses, I dare say, and I shall be quite interested in hearing about them now I know they are not to be here. There *must* be plenty of room, without spoiling this sweet old place. *Good*-bye."

Brydon listened, looking straight at her with an air of dumb resignation. He shook hands with Miss Wynne, then turned to Eddington. "I'll walk to the gate with you," said the old lawyer, and the pair went off together, taking the most direct way to the little door, by a great clump of Portugal laurel, quivering and shining in the sun. Eddington walked in his erect, old gentlemanly fashion, but Brydon slouched carelessly and moodily, and seemed to swerve a little from his companion as they went, with their shadows falling far across the shaven turf.

He hurried out of the garden, never turning his head and consequently was unaware of the curiously intent gaze with which Miss Wynne followed him. In fact it was lost on every one but Miss Hillier, who was thinking that her young hostess would make a charming picture. She went further, and thought of a young artist friend at Kensington who would be the very man to paint it. "Just the kind of thing to suit him, I *wish* he were here! Against a bit of that old, mellow brick wall—how well she would come out! And the sentiment of the thing, too—exactly what he would enjoy—it's a thousand pities he isn't here. *A Guardian Genius*—oh, I see it all! A line or two of description to explain it, and it's just what the public would understand and like. He might do something with the idea, perhaps, but that's not like seeing the real thing. Only, isn't the guardian genius a little too sad? Can she be repenting as she looks after Mr. Brydon? No doubt it would be a fine thing to sell her house and grounds for about double what she gave for them—one could do so much with the money—and yet I didn't think she was that kind of girl. But this certainly does look like repentance."

Acting on this suspicion, Miss Hillier went up to her hostess with warm congratulations. "I am so glad—so very glad," she said. "It would have been desecration. I'm so glad you felt it so too—so thankful it was in your hands."

"I don't know," said Miss Wynne vaguely. The gate opened into Garden Lane and a figure vanished through it. Eddington came strolling back alone, looking at the flower beds.

Miss Hillier could not repress an exclamation. "What a relief! He is gone."

"Yes. I only hope it is right. You think it is, don't you?"

"Right?" cried Miss Hillier rapturously. "Your defence of the garden? Right! It is much more than right—it is Noble—it is Perfectly Beautiful!"

"I should like to know that it was right, too," said Miss Wynne simply.

"But it *is* right—it *must* be! There can be no doubt of it!" The other turned her gentle eyes on the Kensington young lady's face. "I hope so," she said.

The old lawyer came up and the talk ended, but Miss Hillier thought it over, and as she drove away with her friends through the midsummer evening she leaned forward and spoke impressively. "Jessie, mind you write and tell me about the garden, when it is all settled, you know."

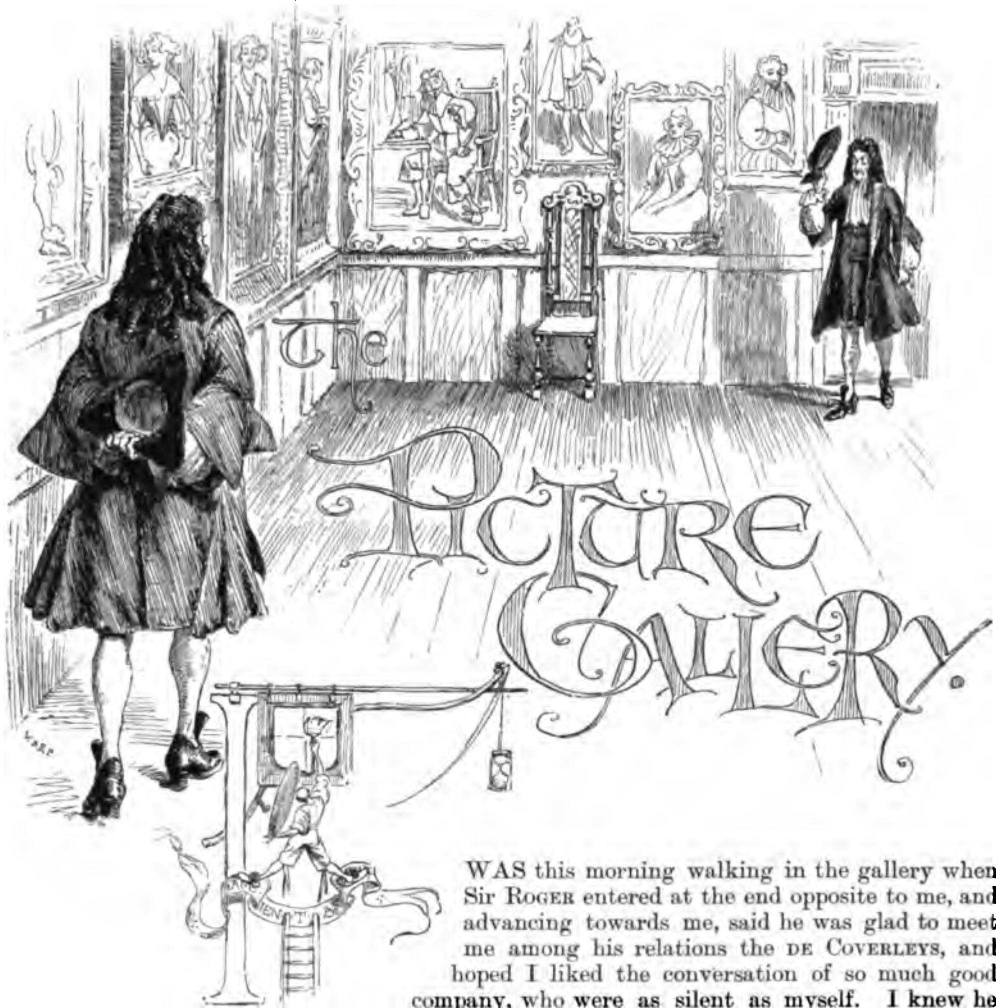
Jessie's brother, one of the tennis playing youths, spoke up instantly. "Oh, but that's all over—didn't you hear? He's not going to have it—she won't sell. *I* would—I'd stand out for the very last farthing, but then I would. I wouldn't be fool enough to lose a chance like that!"

"Wouldn't you, Owen?" said the thin superior voice. "Well, I don't think Miss Wynne will be fool enough, either. I fancy Mr. Brydon will get what he wants—soon. What a lovely moon!"

"Do you really?" Jessie exclaimed. "I thought she was quite determined. What makes you think that?"

"I don't know, but I do think it. Only write to me when she sells it—I should like to know." The carriage rolled smoothly on between the hedgerows, and Miss Hillier sat thinking. "It's not the money," she said to herself, "it's a case of conscience, but that's just as fatal. He'll surely get in." She seemed to see Miss Wynne's conscience working silently, inexorably, as waters work in the dead of night, filtering through tiny unseen channels, widening their narrow ways, sapping the heavy dyke, flowing, streaming, rushing with resistless force, till daylight comes, defences fall and all lies open. "A guardian genius has no ***business*** to have a conscience!" thought Miss Hillier, "though to be sure the idea for a picture is just as good. I really must tell Mr. Wargrave. Only, if she feels like that, why doesn't she let Mr. Brydon have his cottages at once?"

(*To be Continued.*)



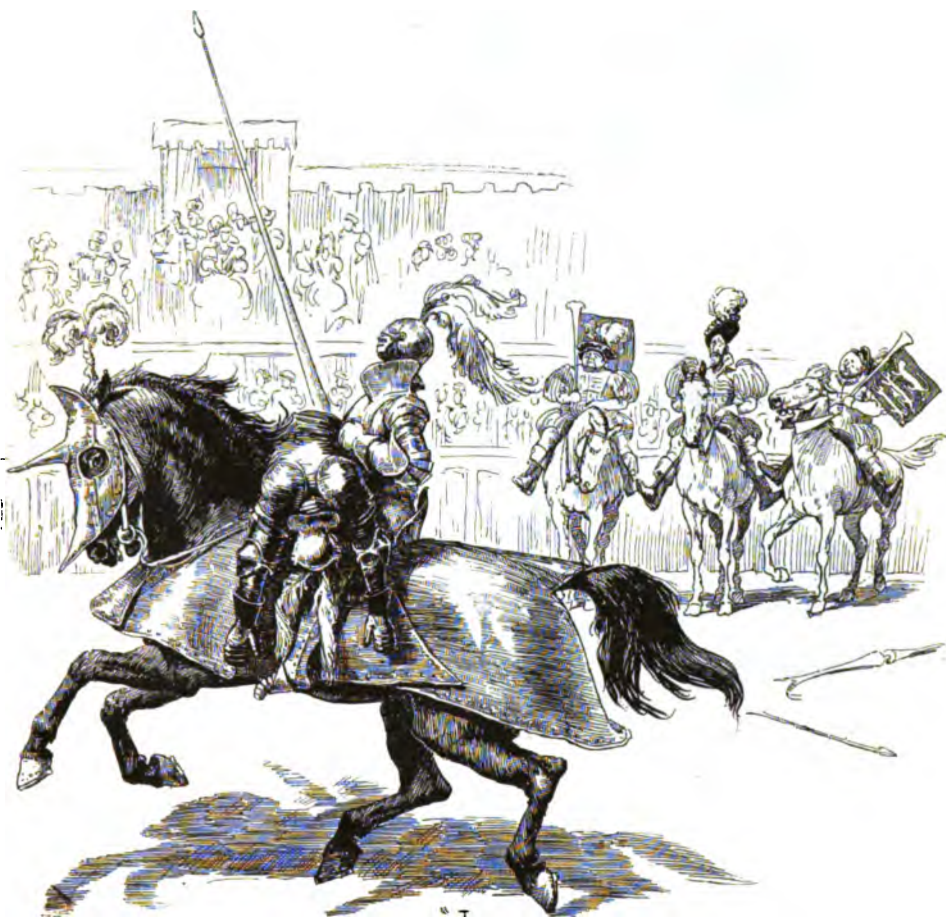
I WAS this morning walking in the gallery when Sir ROGER entered at the end opposite to me, and advancing towards me, said he was glad to meet me among his relations the DE COVERLEYS, and hoped I liked the conversation of so much good company, who were as silent as myself. I knew he alluded to the pictures, and as he is a gentleman who does not a little value himself upon his ancient descent, I expected he would give me some account of them. We were now arrived at the upper-end of the gallery, when the Knight faced towards one of the pictures, and as we stood before it, he entered into the matter, after his blunt way of saying things, as they occur to his imagination, without regular introduction, or care to preserve the appearance of chain of thought.

"It is, said he, worth while to consider the force of dress; and how the persons of one age differ from those of another, merely by that only. One may observe also, that the general fashion of one age has been followed by one particular set of people in another, and by them preserved from one generation to another. Thus the vast jetting coat and small bonnet, which was the habit in *Harry* the Seventh's time is kept on in the yeomen of the guard; not without a good and politick view, because they look a foot taller, and a foot and an half broader: Besides that the cap leaves the face expanded, and consequently

A YEOMAN OF THE GUARD.
From a Drawing by HUGH THOMSON.

more terrible, and fitter to stand at the entrances of palaces.

"This predecessor of ours, you see, is dressed after this manner, and his cheeks would be no larger than mine, were he in a hat as I am. He was the last man that of the lists, than expose his enemy; however, it appeared he knew how to make use of a victory, and with a gentle trot he marched up to a gallery where their mistress sat (for they were rivals) and let him down with laudable courtesy and pardonable in-



SIR ROGER'S ANCESTOR AT THE TOURNAMENT.
From a Drawing by HUGH THOMSON.

won a prize in the tilt-yard (which is now a common street before *Whitehall*). You see the broken lance that lies there by his right foot; he shivered that lance of his adversary all to pieces; and bearing himself, look you, Sir, in this manner, at the same time he came within the target of the gentleman who rode against him, and taking him with incredible force before him on the pommel of his saddle, he in that manner rid the turnament over, with an air that shewed he did it rather to perform the rule solence. I don't know but it might be exactly where the coffee-house is now.

"You are to know this my ancestor was not only of a military genius, but fit also for the arts of peace, for he played on the bass-viol as well as any gentleman at court; you see where his viol hangs by his basket-hilt sword. The action at the tilt yard you may be sure won the fair lady, who was a maid of honour, and the greatest beauty of her time; here she stands the next picture. You see, Sir, my great great great grand-

A RUNAWAY MATCH.
From a Drawing by HUGH THOMSON.

mother has on the new-fashion'd petticoat, except that the modern is gathered at the waist; my grandmother appears as if she stood in a large drum, whereas the ladies now walk as if they were in a go-cart. For all this lady was bred at court, she became an excellent country-wife, she brought ten children, and when I shew you the library, you shall see in her own hand (allowing for the difference of the language) the best receipt in *England* both for an hasty-pudding and a white-pot.

"If you please to fall back a little, because 'tis necessary to look at the three next pictures at one view; these are three sisters. She on the right hand, who is so very beautiful, died a maid; the next to her, still handsomer, had the same fate, against her will; this homely thing in the middle had both their portions added to her own, and was stolen by a neighbouring gentleman, a man of stratagem and resolution, for he poisoned three mastiffs to come to her, and knocked down two deer-stealers in carrying her off. Misfortunes happen in all families: The theft of this romp and so much money, was no great matter to our estate. But the next heir that possessed it was this soft gentleman, whom you see there: Observe the small buttons, the little boots, the laces, the slashes about his clothes, and above all the posture he is drawn in (which to be sure was his own choosing); you see he sits with one hand on a desk writing and looking as it were another way, like an easy writer, or a sonneteer: He was one of those that had too much wit to know how to live in the world; he was a man of no justice, but great

good manners; he ruined every body that had any thing to do with him, but never said a rude thing in his life; the most indolent person in the world, he would sign a deed that passed away half his estate with his gloves on, but would not put on his hat before a lady if it were to save his country. He is said to be the first that made love by squeezing the hand. He left the estate with ten thousand pounds debt upon it, but how-

SIR ROGER'S ANCESTOR INVENTS A NEW MODE OF MAKING LOVE.
From a Drawing by HUGH THOMSON.

ever by all hands I have been informed that he was every way the finest gentleman in the world. That debt lay heavy on our house for one generation, but it was retrieved by a gift from that honest man you see there, a citizen of our name, but nothing at all akin to us. I know Sir ANDREW FREEPORT had said behind my back, that this man was descended from one of the ten children of the maid of honour I shewed you above; but it was never made out. We winked at the thing indeed, because money was wanting at that time."

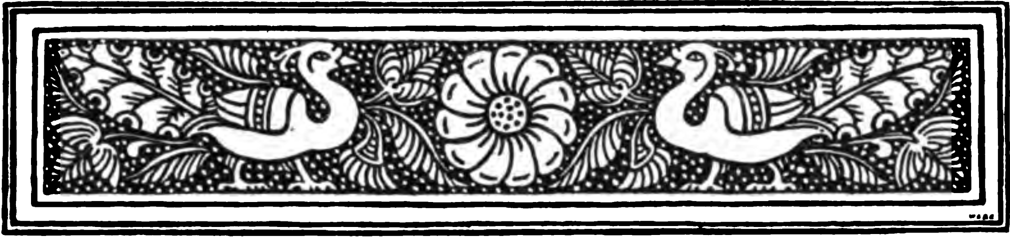
Here I saw my friend a little embarrassed, and turned my face to the next portraiture.

Sir ROGER went on with his account of the gallery in the following manner. "This man (pointing to him I looked at) I take to be the honour of our house, Sir HUMPHREY DE COVERLEY; he was in his dealings as punctual as a tradesman, and as generous as a gentleman. He would have thought himself as much undone by breaking his word, as if it were to be followed by bankruptcy. He served his country as knight of this shire to his dying day. He found it no easy matter to maintain an integrity in his words and actions, even in things that regarded the offices which were incumbent upon him, in the care of his own affairs and relations of life, and therefore dreaded (though he had great talents) to go into employments of

state, where he must be exposed to the snares of ambition. Innocence of life and great ability were the distinguishing parts of his character; the latter, he had often observed, had led to the destruction of the former, and used frequently to lament that great and good had not the same signification. He was an excellent husbandman, but had resolv'd not to exceed such a degree of wealth; all above it he bestowed in secret bounties many years after the sum he aimed at for his own use was attained. Yet he did not slacken his industry, but to a decent old age spent the life and fortune which was superfluous to himself, in the service of his friends and neighbours."

Here we were called to dinner, and Sir ROGER ended the discourse of this gentleman by telling me, as we followed the servant, that this his ancestor was a brave man, and narrowly escaped being killed in the civil wars; "For, said he, he was sent out of the field upon a private message, the day before the battle of *Worcester*." The whim of narrowly escaping by having been within a day of danger, with other matters abovementioned, mixed with good sense, left me at a loss whether I was more delighted with my friend's wisdom or simplicity.

A NARROW ESCAPE.
From a Drawing by HUGH THOMSON.



OSTRICH FARMING IN THE CAPE COLONY.

PERSON travelling through the Cape, if asked to describe the kind of country he had seen, would probably divide it into three classes: first, the strip of sand-flats tufted with bushes bordering the coast, called in Cape-Dutch the duine-veldt; second, the grassy plains lying between and at the foot of the mountain ranges which intersect the colony, called the grass-veldt; third, the vast barren stretches of waterless desert clothed only with brown scrub and striated with dry river beds, known as the karroo. If our traveller was of an inquiring turn of mind, he would probably learn that ostriches ran wild (and are actually now seen) in the duine-veldt and the karroo, but never in the grass-veldt, where the pasture is sour, and where the noble bird who loves a wide range of open country is cooped up between mountains. But in spite of the latter fact, which is as true now as it was before taming ostriches was ever contemplated, he would find that every farmer, however sour his pastures and confined his grazing-grounds, was beginning to divert all his ready capital and intelligence to the production of feathers, simply because no other branch of farming brings in as large or as speedy a return.

Eight years ago, prime white feathers were fetching 60*l*. per pound, a pair of good breeding birds as much as 300*l*., chickens a day old 5*l*. each. Many farmers were deriving an income of 500*l*. to 600*l*. per annum from a pair of breeding-birds. Clerks invested all their hard-earned savings in a pair of ostriches, gave them to some trustworthy farmer on half-shares to look after, and drew therefrom an easy income far larger than the salary they were toiling for. The new industry gave an almost incalculable impetus to a better system of farming, to the fencing of irrigable lands, and to the construction of reservoirs where water could be stored up for droughts extending over a period of two or even, in rare instances, three years. Land rose to fabulous prices, and farmers contented themselves with sowing only enough corn for their own use, covering every available patch that could be brought under irrigation with the new fodder-plant, lucerne.

It happened about this time that the Standard Bank of South Africa was pushing an uphill business in the teeth of Africander prejudice, and it was wise enough to see that nothing would gain favour so readily among the rising generation of farmers as the fostering by every means at its disposal of an industry that looked as easy as it was golden.

Ostrich-farming had also this to recommend it, that it did not, like every other branch of farming in the Cape, depend upon Kimberley for its prosperity. Young Africanders were shrewd enough to see that when the price of corn, maize, oats, wine, or tobacco, hardly paid the cost of cultivation, the production of feathers was remunerative beyond measure. Superficial observers coming from Britain with cut and dried notions as regards scientific farming were only too ready to cry ruin upon a land where thousands of pounds were spent upon imported butter and milk, and where meat was twice as dear as in any other of the colonies. Moralists even were not wanting to swell the chorus of condemnation in anathematising a young and growing country whose serious energies were entirely devoted to the adornment of ladies' hats. The only answer to shallow criticism of this order was, and is still, in spite of an almost unparalleled depreciation of prices, which is the necessary result of over-production, that no branch of

farming is better adapted to the greater portion of the country or yields larger returns. Feathers have now reached their nadir at 8*l.* per pound for prime whites, but ostriches have also suffered a corresponding decline, and are now sufficiently cheap to enable small capitalists, with even two or three hundred pounds at their disposal, to realise cent. per cent. per annum on their outlay. If fashion continues to have the good taste to place ostrich-feathers in the front rank as articles of adornment, there is no reason why the karroo should not become one large ostrich farm, following the law of nature in the survival of the fittest.

Let me now endeavour to put before English readers a clear sketch of ostrich farming as conducted in the most fertile of the three classes into which we have supposed our traveller to have divided Cape soils, viz., the karroo. Behind the farm runs a range of mountains trending across the colony. Before us stretches an open flat, brown, parched and barren, covered with the curious bushes that look so grotesque to an English eye, such as the prickly pear, cactus, euphorbia, and spek-boom. It is hard to realise that this is the most fertile soil in the colony. It is a light-red mould, getting stiffer and more clayey as one nears the mountains. The farm is some three thousand acres in extent, surrounded partly by a wire fence, partly by dry stone walls heaped up by itinerant Kafirs. The whole of this enclosure is called a camp, and contains some two hundred ostriches. The birds are never removed from the camp except when they have to be plucked, or in the event of severe drought when the veldt, or pasture, is utterly burnt up. In the former case they are driven by a herd into a kraal, or cattle fold, where they have no room to turn round. The most approved way of removing the feathers is by cutting them off short with a knife and leaving the stumps to drop out. This system, which is called nipping, is not generally practised, as it involves waiting a month longer for the proceeds than plucking. Birds can be plucked, like a goose, every seven months, but nipped every eight months. It will be readily understood that nipping has also the advantage of being a painless process, and it is found that nipped birds continue to yield better feathers than those that are plucked. In nine cases out of ten, the pluck is sold beforehand to itinerant feather buyers, who are chiefly of the Jewish persuasion, and who buy the feathers at a fixed value per bird. They in their turn send their purchase to Port Elizabeth, or sell to local merchants who ship to London. On a fair average it takes three birds to yield a pound of prime white feathers, which are only taken from the wings. The tails yield also white feathers of an inferior quality. The rest of the pluck is made up by black feathers in the male birds, and by drabs in the female. The ostrich chicken, which is plucked at the age of ten months, yields short feathers of a very inferior quality, erroneously termed spadonas. The third pluck of a bird is generally esteemed the best. Birds continue to be plucked up to the age of six years, when they usually evince a disposition to breed. It is not wise to pluck breeding-birds more than once a year, and this operation must never be undertaken in the winter. It will be easy to perceive that birds, whose habit it is to lay four or five times a year, will naturally suffer and refuse to sit when deprived of their warm covering in rainy or cold weather. A good pair of breeding-birds plucked judiciously will yield from fifty to eighty chickens in the year.

It is generally believed that an ostrich will eat anything. This will, however, prove to be a very unsafe doctrine for one who wishes to farm successfully. Young birds require very careful treatment. Like turkey-chicks they thrive best on a mixed diet of chopped green food, grain in any form being too hard for digestion. Full grown birds flourish if allowed to roam over a large tract of veldt, which in ordinary seasons contains a varied assortment of saline bushes unsurpassed by any artificial grasses. Confinement of any but breeding-birds in small fields for more than a few hours in the day causes, probably, more losses than disease, droughts, and damp combined. With a deficiency of brain singular in an animal so large they are subject to sudden scares, and when excited rush with a perfect recklessness of any obstacles in their path as fatal to themselves as it is detrimental to their owners. Mr. Robertson of George showed me a sod-wall, a foot in breadth, through which a flock of birds had rushed with the speed of a hurricane, fortunately without injury to themselves. The breaches in the wall were as complete as if they had been cut through by a cannon-ball. Another farmer in the Cango District, whose farm lay adjacent to the high road, lost as many as thirty full-grown birds within three months, by reason of their taking fright and rushing blindly into a wire fence. Even in large enclosures, covering miles of country, wire is seldom, if ever, used alone as a fencing material, spars or

branches of thorn being passed through the wires, so that the bird may catch sight of it at a distance. For the same reason the housing of birds in any but securely closed buildings is especially to be discouraged. The best ostrich-farmers, however, are of opinion that birds ought to be allowed a wide expanse of veldt where they can find shelter under bushes even in the severest weather.

In long-continued droughts, such as prevailed during the last two years throughout the eastern province of the colony, birds must be allowed to run morning and evening in a field of lucerne. Where farmers have not had some standing green crop to fall back upon they have either been compelled, as in the case of Mr. Distin of Tafelberg, to sacrifice their sheep to keep their ostriches alive, or to feed them with grain. An acquaintance of mine twice saved his birds by allowing them to run for an hour every morning in his vineyard, which they cleared of every vestige of green as effectually as a swarm of locusts. Failing some artificial support, the weaker birds will die off at once, while many of the stronger will succumb to the cold that follows the first heavy shower of rain. A long spell of drought is also thought to predispose birds to that fatal epidemic, the *frotte-maag*, or stomach-rot, for which there is no cure. This disease is said to be a species of typhoid-fever, and is highly infectious.

On a careful survey the lazy system of ostrich-farming, which is practised by some of the largest landowners in the Cape, in enclosing an immense tract of karroo veldt and allowing three or four hundred birds to run there from one year's end to another, is to be deprecated. The advantages claimed for this system are that birds are healthier and that feathers are finer, while the expenses of looking after them are reduced to a minimum. But not only is there a greater loss from drought or disease, but the increase of the flock is diminished by nine-tenths. This will be better understood by English readers when I tell them that in a large enclosure where there are, we will say, ten pairs of breeding-birds, all the hens are in the habit of laying on one spot, but only one hen will sit, so that out of one hundred and fifty fertile eggs fifteen only are hatched.

On the other hand, no encouragement ought to be given to the opposite system, such as is practised largely in the Cango and Langekloof valleys, of cooping up other than breeding-birds in meadows or fields of lucerne. Not only do the birds lose health, and accidents caused by scare become frequent, but in rainy or cold weather they have no dry sheltered place to lie down upon, such as their native veldt affords them.

A judicious combination of the two systems is the *ne plus ultra* of successful ostrich-farming. This is impossible, however, without irrigation, as lucerne will not grow from December until March without being watered at least once a fortnight. All over the karroo, if it receives a sufficiency of water, lucerne can be cut four times a year. One of the wealthiest farmers in the western province, who is also a member of the Cape legislature, informed me that dried lucerne could be restored to almost its original freshness by immersing it for a few hours in water. The same gentleman, with the rugged consistency of a thorough-paced Africander, opposed silos on the ground that nothing good could emanate from the British Isles.

Breeding-birds it is absolutely necessary to confine, owing to the savage disposition of the male. They are usually hedged off, in pairs, in fields of three or four acres. In the winter months a few handfuls of maize given every morning improve the condition of birds and add to their laying powers. Limestone and crushed bones must also be furnished in small quantities. Great care must be taken not to allow dogs near the breeding-paddock, especially when the birds are sitting. Both male and female take their turn regularly on the eggs, and the approach of a human being or any of the smaller animals is enough to disturb them. The female bird evinces her desire to breed by a constant fluttering of the wings. Any loud noise, such as the explosion of a gun near the nest, will kill the chickens in the egg. The Dutch are opposed to the use of incubators, on the ground that birds hatched in them will not breed. In cases where there are too many eggs for the bird to cover, it is best to place those that are in excess under turkeys, but great care must be taken to turn them regularly every day. A turkey-hen will not cover more than two ostrich eggs.

In addition to the *frotte-maag* (stomach-rot), ostriches are subject to worms. A slight dose of male fern is the best known remedy. Turpentine is also largely used by the Dutch. In travelling through the country birds will be frequently found suffering from temporary blindness occasioned by the fine hair-like thorns on the prickly pear having entered the eye. Their voracity, also, is often curiously illustrated in their struggles to swallow a large quince or apple.

It is difficult to predict the future of

ostrich-farming. Hitherto the high price of feathers and the number of hands through which they have to pass has made them procurable only by the wealthy, who are subject to the caprices of fashion. A reduction in prices might place them within the reach of those who cannot afford to lay aside an article of adornment so easily. But whether they are destined to be entirely superseded, or whether their production becomes unremunerative through over-competition, a candid observer, who has watched closely the agricultural history of the Cape during the last eight years, cannot fail to acknowledge that the profitable tendance of ostriches has stimulated a stupid and faint-hearted people to a wiser and more beneficial system of farming.

NEWMAN HOPE.

REQUIESCANT.

ALL night the land in darkness slept,
All night the sleepless sea
Along the beaches moaned and wept,
And called aloud on me.
Now all about the wakening land
The white foam lies upon the sand.

I saw across the glimmering dark
The white foam rise and fall;
I saw a drifting phantom bark,
I heard the sailors call:
Then sheer upon my straining sight
Fell down the curtain of the night.

What ship was on the midnight deep?
What voices on the air?
Did wandering spirits call and weep
In darkness and despair?
Did ever living seaman hail
The land with such a hopeless wail?

The flush of dawn is in the sky,
The dawn-breeze on the sea,
The lark is singing sweet and high
A wingèd melody:
Here on the sand, among the foam,
The tired sailors have come home.

Their eyes that stare, so wide, so wide,
See not the blessèd light;
For all the streams of death divide
The morning from the night:
Weary with tossing on her breast
The sea at last has given them rest.

D. J. ROBERTSON.

STUDY OF A HEAD.

Engraved by W. Biscombe Gardner, *from a Drawing by* C. Perugini.

The English Illustrated Magazine.

AUGUST, 1886.

MY FRIEND JIM.

CHAPTER XIII.

EVERYBODY expected that the loss of his grandson would be poor old Lord Staines's death blow. He himself was of that opinion and at first refused to leave his bed, saying that he had now nothing to live for. But perhaps, upon further thought, he may have remembered that he had still certain matters to attend to before quitting a troublesome world, or perhaps he may have been too old and worn out to die of grief. At any rate, he did not die, nor did his health appear to suffer, although I believe he was never seen to smile again after Sunning's little coffin was laid in the family vault at Staines Court.

Lady Bracknell did not appear at the funeral. It was believed—or at all events it was stated—that she felt unable to face so cruel an ordeal; but the truth, as I afterwards heard upon excellent authority, was that she was afraid to venture within reach of her husband, who had ordered her away from him immediately after the boy's death, assuring her that he was not master of himself and that she would do well to keep out of his sight for some time to come. So she took him at his word and fled down to the country, to the house of I forget what friend, who undertook to comfort her in her affliction. Bracknell remained in London, and, as I was told, continued to go to his club every day, to gamble heavily and to drink hard.

The uses of adversity are doubtless sweet to some people; but there are others to whom adversity is neither sweet nor useful, and Bracknell belonged to the latter category. His was essentially a fighting nature, and so long as he had anybody or anything to fight against, his blood was likely to be kept in a tolerably healthy state; but he was not a man who could be benefited by defeat or disaster. Passionate, headstrong, and spoilt by the continuous prosperity of his youth, he resented the various misfortunes of his more mature years as so many affronts directed at him by Heaven, and when this crowning calamity descended upon him, avenged himself by going over to the devil. I don't mean to say that he put the case before himself in those terms; but I believe they express pretty accurately what his feeling was. I called upon him several times, but he was always out; and one day when I chanced upon him in the street, he told me roughly that I need not trouble to look him up again.

"Kindly meant, I've no doubt," he said; "but I should be very much obliged to my friends if they wouldn't be so—&c., &c.—officious. When I want to be condoled with I'll let them know."

After that, I could only leave him to himself. Even if he had been willing to listen to me, I should have been puzzled to discover any plausible form of consolation; and certainly I should not have hit upon that selected by my mother, who, in the overflowing kindness of her heart, wrote him a long letter, in which she reminded him that, among other blessings, he still possessed his wife. I believe she was afterwards a little ashamed of having taken this bold step, and would never have let me know of it, had she been able to resist showing me Bracknell's reply, which was brief and pithy:—

"DEAR MRS. MAYNARD,—I told your son the other day that I didn't want to be condoled with; and I don't. But I must say

that I hardly expected to be congratulated. Lady Bracknell is not with me just now, or she would, I am sure, desire me to thank you for speaking of her as a blessing. It is probably the first time in her life that she has been called by that name, and I should think it would be the last.

"Sincerely yours,
"BRACKNELL."

My mother shook her head at this. "He ought not to speak so of his wife," she said. And when I brought forward certain excuses on Bracknell's behalf (I would not shock her by mentioning all those that might have been mentioned, nor would she have believed in them if I had) she only shook her head the more, telling me that I had no realising sense of the sacredness of marriage.

Whether I deserved that rebuke or not is of small consequence; but I might fairly have retorted that my dear mother, for her part, was a little too sublimely indifferent to the worldly side of that contract, and that by her present conduct she was in danger, not only of making two people more unhappy than there was any occasion for, but of getting herself into serious trouble as well. However, I doubt whether anything that I could have said would have prevented her from asking Lady Mildred to come in to tea every other day, and then casually getting Jim to meet her. She had made up her mind that this couple ought to be married, and even that it was the will of Heaven that they should be married. It would have been too much to expect that the will of Heaven should be set aside to please Lord Staines or Mr. Beauchamp; the latter of whom, as my mother pointed out, might have proposed long ago, if he had chosen, but had preferred to go off to Norway and catch salmon.

And so, during that summer, our house was made the scene of what, to a commonplace person like myself, wore very much the appearance of clandestine love-making. I don't know what Jim and Lady Mildred talked about while they wandered up and down our lawn together. They did not honour me with their confidence; and indeed I was sorry to observe a decided inclination on their part, as well as on that of my mother, to send me to Coventry. Did they think, I wonder, that I should betray them to Lord Staines? They ought to have known me better; but I am more or less accustomed to being misjudged by those who ought to know me better; and I may add that I have never been deterred by that circumstance from doing to them as I would be done by.

That this is no vain boast will be seen from the tone which I took up when Lord Staines's suspicions were at length aroused, and when he sent for me to pour them into my ear. It was on a fine autumn day that, in obedience to his summons, I walked up to Staines Court and was shown into the library, where he now sat from morning to night, and where, in spite of the warmth of the weather, a fire was burning. He looked very feeble and broken, bending forward in his chair and holding up a thin, trembling hand to the blaze.

"Maynard," he said, "I want you, like a good fellow, to speak a word of warning to your friend Leigh. I would rather not speak myself, because, as you know, he has been caused trouble and disappointment by our family already, and I should be sorry to seem unfriendly to him. So will you just tell him as kindly as you can that it won't do? I see more than perhaps you young folks suppose, and of course you know what I allude to. It won't do, my dear Maynard. I am sorry for it; but it won't do."

"Lord Staines," I answered boldly, "I am not going to undertake any such commission. I can quite understand your anxiety to keep the Beauchamp property in the family, and if you can get the persons principally concerned to do as you wish, I dare say it will be in some respects a good thing; but I don't choose to be a party to any scheme of that kind. My point of view is not the same as yours. What may become of the Beauchamp property is nothing to me; whereas it is a good deal to me that Jim Leigh should have what he wishes for. I believe that Lady Mildred and he are attached to each other, and, that being so, I hope they will stand up for themselves and marry."

I fully expected that this audacious harangue would call forth an explosion of wrath; but my expectations were not fulfilled. Lord Staines only sighed wearily and said: "God knows I care little enough for money or lands now! My time is almost up, and I suppose Bracknell will be the last of our name. Against Leigh I haven't a word to say; only, as I told you before, it won't do. Mildred must marry Beauchamp. I am under obligations to him which can't be discharged in any other way; and he will be a kind husband to her. We won't argue the point, if you please."

"He will not be a husband of her choosing," I made so bold as to observe, despite this prohibition.

"You don't know what you are talking about," returned the old man fretfully. "The thing must be, and there's no use in discussing it. If you don't see your way to speaking to your friend, I must speak to Mildred, that's all."

I said nothing about this conversation to those whom it concerned, and whether Lord Staines carried out his intention of remonstrating with Lady Mildred or not I cannot tell. Very likely he did not, for I fancy that he shrank from distressing her, and he may have thought it needless to take active steps before Beauchamp's return from Norway.

No news with regard to that event reached my ears, and it was not until late in the autumn that I was made aware of its having taken place, by encountering Beauchamp himself at a country house in the north of England, where I had been invited to spend a few days. It struck me that our meeting was not a source of unalloyed satisfaction to him. There was even a sort of shamefacedness in his demeanour which I could not at first account for, but which explained itself at dinner-time, when Lord and Lady Bracknell made their appearance among several other guests who had arrived late in the afternoon, and when her ladyship exchanged meaning glances with my young friend, after according him a conventionally polite greeting.

The Bracknell *ménage*, which for a time had been threatened with disruption, had been set agoing once more (by the kindly intervention of friends, as I was informed), and was, to all appearance, being conducted upon much the same principles as heretofore. At all events, Bracknell seemed to look with absolute indifference upon the renewal of the flirtation which he had once professed himself determined to check. The past few months had worked a very perceptible change in him. He had grown stouter; his complexion had become pasty and his eyelids heavy, and a few grey hairs had appeared about his temples. His manners, too, had distinctly deteriorated. He was bored, and did not attempt to disguise the fact; moreover, he displayed a contradictious and quarrelsome tendency which evidently caused some anxiety to our hostess.

As for Lady Bracknell, she was brilliant and radiant. Her black dress and jet ornaments threw up the dazzling whiteness of her skin; she looked as if she had not a care in the world; and if, as I suspect, the other ladies were whispering to each other what a heartless wretch the woman was, I can only say that in my humble opinion they had a very good right to do so.

Probably neither their remarks nor my opinion were matters of much moment to her. She was a cold-hearted and calculating woman, but she was capable, no doubt, of enjoying herself after her own fashion, and few things can be more pleasant than to indulge in your favourite pastime, while making it subserve a definite, practical end. This, for the time being, appeared to be Lady Bracknell's enviable lot. The subjugation of Beauchamp was complete. He remained by her side the whole evening through; he scarcely took his eyes off her for a moment; and it may be assumed that he had no idea of the sorry spectacle that he presented to lookers-on. Some of these were very severe in their strictures upon him and upon his companion. More than one lady openly declared that she would not have Lady Bracknell in her house; but I knew very well (and so, I doubt not, did her ladyship) that they would ask her to their houses, and furthermore, that they would ask Beauchamp to meet her. I have often wondered why ladies to whom scandals are abhorrent should act in this way; and such is my simplicity that I am wondering still, in spite of many keys to the puzzle which have been offered to me. But that it is their habit so to do will hardly be denied.

Hilda, then, without any fear of being ostracised, gave free play to her peculiar talents and spent a delightful evening. It would have been amusing and instructive to watch her, if one had not detested her so cordially. She had a second string to her bow, in the shape of a certain Comte de Vieuzac, a French *attaché*, whom I had met several times in Wilton Place. De Vieuzac was one of those semi-Anglicised Gauls who get their clothes made in London, whose talk is of horses and shooting, and who discuss sport with a solemnity far exceeding that of their models. Being young, by no means bad-looking, and full of that confidence in the irresistible nature of his charms which is the very last thing that his countrymen can bring themselves to part with, he most likely flattered himself that he had made a conquest of Lady Bracknell, and it was easy to see that he found Beauchamp a good deal in the way. That Beauchamp reciprocated his sentiments with interest was not less obvious; and while one of the young men assumed an aggravatingly supercilious mien and the other scowled savagely, Hilda, arbitress of the contest, sat between them, dis-

playing her white teeth and gently swaying a black ostrich-feather fan.

In nearly all human situations tragedy and comedy are blended, so that *Jean-qui-pleure* and *Jean-qui-rit* may comment upon them with equal complacency and an equal half-measure of truth. Sometimes one feels disposed to take the side of the laughing, sometimes that of the weeping philosopher. In the exhibition to which Lady Bracknell was so kindly treating us I suppose the comic element may be said to have predominated, and perhaps that was why I was unable to see anything funny in it. Somehow or other, the sight of that smiling, contented, selfish woman, playing off her admirers one against the other, infuriated me. I could not get the memory of poor little Sunning out of my head while I watched her; it seemed to me that of all forms of depravity the most odious is that which obliterates the natural, animal instinct of maternal love. And my soul being stirred within me by the spectacle of the power possessed and exercised by that woman, who, if she had had her deserts, would have been picking oakum in Millbank Penitentiary, I could at last contain myself no longer, but, rising from my sequestered corner, crossed the room, with the intent to do a truly silly thing.

I made straight for the sofa on which Bracknell was sitting apart, with his hands in his pockets, and asked him whether he didn't want to smoke.

"Of course I do," he growled. "Why the dickens don't these people go to bed?"

"We will give them the slip," said I; for I was bent upon having a few words in private with him. "Now is our time, while nobody is looking."

So I got him away to the smoking-room, and, as soon as we had lighted our cigars, plunged, head first, into the middle of my subject. "Bracknell," said I, "do you or do you not intend Beauchamp to marry your sister?"

I have mentioned already that Bracknell's manners had deteriorated. He frowned heavily and asked me what the devil that was to me.

"I will tell you," I answered. "You must admit, I think, that you haven't behaved very well to Jim Leigh—"

"Good Lord!" interrupted Bracknell, "are you going back to that old story again? Why, man, I made him an apology when he reappeared in London last summer! What more would you have? I can assure you that I repent from the bottom of my heart of having deprived him of Miss Hilda Turner."

"I don't doubt it," I replied; "I only meant to remind you that you owe him a good turn. I can't go into particulars, because we shall have the other men in here presently, but the long and the short of it is that Lady Mildred and he are in love with each other."

"Oh, indeed!" said Bracknell. "Well—really I don't care."

"Does that mean," I inquired, "that you won't oppose their marriage?"

"It means," answered he, "that I shall not bother myself about the matter, one way or the other. Jim had better fight it out with the governor."

I ought, I suppose, to have been contented with that. I had not behaved with my usual circumspection in introducing the subject at all, and I had received an assurance which, so far as it went, should have been entirely satisfactory to me. But, being so exasperated with Hilda, and being also curious to learn how far Hilda's absolute lack of principle was shared by her husband, I must needs proceed to remark:

"You once told Lady Bracknell in my presence that you would not permit her to entice Beauchamp away from your sister. You have changed your mind as to that, it appears."

Bracknell rose slowly from his chair, advanced to that in which I was seated, and placed a heavy hand on each of my shoulders, looking straight into my eyes. "Maynard," said he, "you aren't a bad sort of fellow, taking you all round; but you're just as cheeky now as you used to be at Eton, and I may as well tell you at once that I'm not in the humour to put up with cheek. Do you remember my giving you a licking once in Keate's Lane?"

"No," I replied, "I do not. I remember your hitting me, and I remember kicking you on the shins, and I remember old Jim Leigh coming between us."

"Well," said Bracknell, "I dare say it was no bad thing for you that Jim Leigh happened to be handy. I didn't want to thrash you then and I don't want to thrash you now; but if you take upon yourself to interfere with my private affairs a second time, by the Lord, I'll knock your head off your shoulders!"

This threat, which was embellished by certain expressions which I prefer not to transcribe, caused me to reflect. I do not suppose that Bracknell could have knocked my head off my shoulders, but it is quite possible that he might have managed to give me a black eye; and really I cannot afford

to be seen going about with a black eye. Therefore I resolved to abstain from further provocation; and at this opportune moment our interview was interrupted by the entrance of our host, accompanied by a large detachment of his guests.

CHAPTER XIV.

I HAVE read in books and I have repeatedly heard it stated in conversation that the right time for a literary man to do his work is early in the morning; that the brain, refreshed by sleep, is then at its clearest, and that ideas flow from it with delightful rapidity while the dew is still upon the grass. The theory has a plausible sound, and may, for aught I know, be found to work satisfactorily by those who possess brains of a superior order; but my own brain, which is but a poor piece of mechanism at best and requires a good deal of humouring, is utterly intractable during the first few hours of the day, and the only results that I have ever obtained from attempting to set it in motion against its will have been a bad headache and a worse temper. I am therefore obliged to perform the greater part of my daily task after other people have retired to bed; and the consequence is that I generally eat my breakfast some time after other people have finished theirs. This habit of mine is not without advantages of which I am especially sensible when staying in a country house; for to be obliged to make polite conversation at 9.30 A.M. is only a shade less painful than to compose an article at the same hour. There are, I am aware, houses in which one is punished for appearing late at the breakfast-table by being made to partake of cold tea and the repulsive remains of dishes upon which one's predecessors have been feasting; but nobody, it may be hoped, is absolutely compelled to visit at such houses.

On the day following that of which I spoke in the last chapter I descended from my room when the clocks were striking half-past ten, with a comfortable certainty that I should find something hot awaiting me in the dining-room. What I certainly did not expect to find there was Lady Bracknell, attended by her brace of devoted admirers. There, however, they were, all three of them, and I perceived at once that Hilda had resumed the game of the previous evening. It was a game of which, as I knew, she never wearied. She had the appearance of being well satisfied with it now; which was more than could be said for either of the other players.

"After all," she was remarking, as I entered, "I can't see why we should give ourselves airs because we ride and shoot better than most other nations. That is something, of course; but there are so many other ways in which the French, for instance, are our superiors. They are a great deal more amusing to talk to, and they are more artistic, and they write better novels. Mr. Maynard, aren't French novels much better than ours?"

I said I must decline to deliver judgment upon that point; it was a matter of taste.

"Well, but," broke in Beauchamp, who was looking decidedly cross, "I never denied it. I'm sure I don't know whether their novels are better than ours, and, to tell you the truth, I don't much care either. All I said was that they are not a sporting people."

"There is more variety of sport in France than in England," said de Vieuzac boldly. "We have, for example, the wolf and the wild boar"—

"And you gallop after 'em in green and gold coats, with horns twisted round and round your bodies," interrupted Beauchamp, not over courteously.

"You have perhaps derived your ideas of French sport from the pictures in *Punch*," observed de Vieuzac, without losing his temper. "They are funny, those pictures, they are very funny; but I do not think that the artists have drawn them from life."

"I have been in France," returned the other doggedly, "and I've seen a lot of *chasseurs*, as you call them, shooting cock-sparrows on Sunday afternoons."

De Vieuzac shrugged his shoulders. "You will come to it, my good friend," said he. "What would you have? We are a little in advance of you; we made our revolution a hundred years ago. When your game-laws are abolished, when your great estates are broken up, when your country squires can no more live upon their rents—then you will see what you will see. For the rest, the persons who, as you say, shoot sparrows on Sundays are not of the rank who would shoot partridges if they were Englishmen; and you must not ask of a man that he should be a good game-shot when he has never the occasion to shoot at game."

"At any rate," observed Hilda, rising and bestowing a gracious smile upon the speaker, "we all know that M. de Vieuzac can shoot

as well as anybody. And isn't it time for you to go out shooting now?"

Beauchamp held the door open for her. "We are to have a ride this afternoon, are we not?" I heard him ask eagerly.

"Of course we are," she answered. "Didn't you promise to take me out?" And then, turning to the other, "M. de Vieuzac, I am going to be very selfish and make you join us. You will have to tear yourself away from the partridges and be in time for luncheon."

The Frenchman raised his eyebrows slightly and bowed, murmuring something about Lady Bracknell's wishes being law. Possibly he thought that a ride in company with his rival would not be very good fun.

As for Beauchamp, he did not attempt to conceal his disgust. "Perhaps you will ride with me some other day. If I'm not wanted I'd just as soon shoot this afternoon," he was beginning; but the closing of the door deprived me of the remainder of his sentence, as well as of Hilda's reply. However, it was pretty certain that he would do what she ordered him, whether he liked it or not.

After I was left alone, I spent some five minutes of my valuable time in wondering why Lady Bracknell had asked de Vieuzac to spoil poor Beauchamp's afternoon. Were I a lady of great personal attractions, I should, I dare say, enjoy having several admirers; but I should certainly prefer to take them one at a time. That a second may be found useful as a means of stimulating the ardour of the first I can understand; but the object of keeping them together after that result has been fully obtained is not so easy to discover. Sometimes I have an uncomfortable fear that my tutor was right in the opinion which he expressed about me long ago, and that I am not quite as clever as I think myself. I ought undoubtedly to have guessed what her ladyship was up to, and my only comfort is in the reflection that if I failed to do so, it was because my estimate of human nature is pitched too high.

I did not go out shooting with Bracknell and the others that morning, nor was I able to put in an appearance at the luncheon hour. I had to finish an admirable essay upon Proportional Representation for the *Eclectic Review*, and, getting my arguments into a knot towards the last pages (which, I am sorry to say, is no uncommon experience of mine when composing admirable essays), I was chained to my desk until the afternoon was far advanced, struggling to reconcile certain irreconcilable statements to which I had committed myself, and which I was unwilling to retract. Having at length made up my mind to throw one of these overboard for the sake of harmony, I wound up my task and sallied forth to take the air.

The house in which I was staying stood in the midst of one of those wild, undulating parks which are more frequent in the northern than in the southern counties and which look like a survival of the England of three hundred years ago. It was very beautiful in its way, under the grey, autumnal sky, with shafts of pale sunlight falling upon the gnarled oaks and the withered bracken, and upon patches of gorse and heather here and there. I had walked some distance across it and was wondering whether de Vieuzac's unpleasant prophecy would ever be fulfilled—whether the land upon which I was standing would ever be parcelled out among peasant proprietors, and whether, in that case, the peasant proprietors would not find out that they had made an uncommonly bad bargain, when the thud of approaching hoofs interrupted my musings, and presently Lady Bracknell, riding between her two cavaliers, hove in sight.

They were pleased to draw rein on recognising me, and Hilda said they had had a delightful ride; which assertion was received with emphatic silence by her companions. In all probability some bickering had taken place during the course of it; for the two men were looking daggers at each other, and it struck me that de Vieuzac was not quite as cool as he had been earlier in the day. A short distance ahead of us was an inclosure, surrounded by a high fence of posts and rails, like a large cattle-pen. It may have been intended to serve that purpose, or possibly, at certain seasons of the year, to confine the red-deer, of which there was a herd in the park.

"There," said de Vieuzac, pointing to it with his whip, and looking at Beauchamp, "would be a pretty leap. You could take it, perhaps?—you who hesitate at nothing."

"Oh, do, Mr. Beauchamp!" exclaimed Hilda, enthusiastically.

"My dear Lady Bracknell," I remonstrated, "what are you thinking of? The thing is absolutely impossible."

I am not sure that it was impossible; I am an indifferent judge of matters of that kind, and I have read wonderful accounts of the high jumps accomplished by Australian horses. But I should certainly be very sorry either to attempt such a feat myself, or to see any friend of mine attempt it. Hilda did not seem to have heard me.

"Oh, do try!" she repeated. "I know you would get over all right."

Beauchamp's reply was highly creditable to his good sense and self-control. "I might get over," he said. "Whether I could get out again is another question. But, anyhow, I couldn't think of risking it with another man's horse."

De Vieuzac smiled; and Beauchamp turned upon him at once. "What's that you say?" he asked sharply.

"I assure you," answered the Frenchman, with exaggerated politeness, "that I did not utter one word."

"You were thinking something, though."

"Oh, for that, yes. I was thinking something, I admit. I was thinking that sometimes it is very convenient to be riding a friend's horse."

The words amounted to a studied insult, and would unquestionably have been so accepted in de Vieuzac's own country. In France speeches of that kind are permissible, their consequences being, of course, well understood; but neither in France nor elsewhere is it customary to offer such direct provocation in the presence of a lady, and Beauchamp went up several degrees in my esteem when he answered quietly: "We'll discuss the question afterwards, if you like. We may as well ride on now."

Hilda suddenly broke into a short laugh, touched her horse with the whip and galloped away. The two men followed her. I confess that I hurried back to the house as fast as my legs would carry me. I dislike and deprecate quarrels above everything; still, if quarrels must needs take place, why should I not be there to see? After de Vieuzac's inexcusable conduct, I felt that it would be a real satisfaction to me to see him knocked down, and I thought that if I made great haste, I might just manage to arrive in time. As it turned out, I reached the front door with several minutes to spare. From the flight of steps which led up to it I could descry the riders, who, perhaps, had made a *détour*, approaching at a foot's pace, and presently I had the honour of assisting Lady Bracknell to dismount.

She stood for a moment, tapping her foot with her riding-whip, and looking with an odd, satirical expression at the rivals. "*Au revoir*," she said, nodding to them; "I am going to lie down till dinner-time." Then she made a scarcely perceptible sign with her hand to Beauchamp, who ran up the steps after her and accompanied her into the house.

De Vieuzac and I remained where we were. I suppose we both knew that Beauchamp would be out again directly. And indeed the horses had hardly been led away to the stables before he emerged and made straight for us.

"M. de Vieuzac," said he, "you hinted just now that I was a coward. May I ask whether that was what you meant?"

The Frenchman straightened his back, brought his heels together, twirled his moustache, and replied: "You are at liberty, sir, to place any construction upon my words that may suit your pleasure."

"In good English, I suppose that means that you want to fight. If you had been an Englishman, I should have hit you straight between the eyes, and it would have done you a lot of good; but as you're a foreigner, I'm afraid we can't settle it that way."

"The method," observed de Vieuzac sweetly, "seems a little barbarous. For me, I confess that I have not learnt to box; but with the sword or the pistol I shall be charmed to hold myself at your disposition. You do not, perhaps, use those weapons?"

"Oh, don't we though!" returned Beauchamp, with a short laugh. "I shall be happy to prove the contrary to you when and where you please; only of course it can't be in this country. If it's the same thing to you, I should prefer to stay out my time here; but next week I will meet you at Ostend or any other place you choose to name."

The Frenchman bowed. "It is usual," said he, "to leave all details to be arranged by the seconds in these affairs. Will you then be so kind as to mention two gentlemen whose names and addresses I may give to the friends whom I shall ask to represent me?"

Beauchamp rubbed the back of his head. "I don't want this talked about all over the place, you know," he said. "Maynard, you've heard it all; perhaps you'll be good enough to act for me—and find some other fellow who can hold his tongue. And look here," he added, turning to de Vieuzac; "we had better pretend to be friends for the next few days. Don't you think so?"

"Sir," replied the Frenchman magnificently, "I shall withdraw. I should be desolated to be the occasion of embarrassment, and I will leave for London to-morrow."

With that, he took off his hat, bowing low. Beauchamp stared, looked rather inclined to laugh, then nodded and turned back into the house. And so this sanguinary encounter was agreed upon.

CHAPTER XV.

As a matter of theory, it has always seemed to me that the *duello* is, upon the whole, the best means that can be devised of wiping out a mortal affront or injury. It would, no doubt, be intolerable that one should be called upon to stand up and be shot at because some bully or other had purposely trodden upon one's toe; and we are accustomed to hear that it was in order to put a stop to such highly unpleasant liabilities that duelling was suppressed in England. Nevertheless, it is not easy to say what ought to be done to a man who calls you a coward to your face. To take no notice is hardly within the capacity of the meekest of mortals; to appeal for protection to the law is no salve for wounded honour; and so there seems to be nothing for it but a scrimmage with fists or walking-sticks. Now I must say that every affray of that kind which has taken place in my time (and there have been several such) has been supremely ridiculous and undignified: therefore, pacific though my own nature is, and much as I should hate to see the sword-point of an adversary quivering within an inch of my nose, I am inclined to think that the duel ought to have been retained as an ultimate resort. Such being my sentiments, and Beauchamp having been most unequivocally and grievously insulted by de Vieuzac, I could not but applaud the course taken by the former. However, it is one thing to approve of a given quarrel in the abstract and quite another to allow oneself to be mixed up in it, to see one's name mentioned and one's private character discussed in all the newspapers, and even perhaps to be haled before the authorities and cast into prison. Deep, then, would have been my consternation when my young friend so coolly nominated me as his second, if I had thought that there was any probability of my actually figuring in that capacity; and the genial alacrity with which I accepted the greatness thrust upon me was, I allow, due solely to the circumstance that I had not the remotest intention of permitting a hostile meeting to occur.

The line of conduct which I adopted, with a view to avert bloodshed, was simple, and, as I flattered myself, likely to prove effectual. I slipped away from the dinner-table, that evening, a little before the other men, and, hurrying into the drawing-room, seated myself beside Lady Bracknell, who was reclining in an easy-chair apart and was doubtless waiting for one or other of her victims to join her.

"Allow me," said I, (for I was resolved not to spare her), "to congratulate you upon your energy and determination. If you could have persuaded Beauchamp to break his neck at that fence this afternoon, it would have been very nice. You would have been an immensely rich woman at this moment, and probably nobody, except my unworthy self, would have suspected you of being a murderess, in addition to your other claims to notoriety. But the wretched creature wouldn't jump, and so you had to fall back upon your original plan of inducing that Frenchman to challenge him and kill him. I am sorry to disappoint you; but that plan of yours will have to be abandoned. You must try to cook Beauchamp's goose in what the cookery books call 'another way.'"

Hilda burst into scornful laughter. "What in the world are you talking about?" she asked. "Have you lost your senses?"

"Not at all," I replied; "I retain possession of them and place a modest reliance upon their evidence. But surely yours were not quite as acute as usual when you cast yourself for the part of Lucrezia Borgia. Tragedy, believe me, is not your forte, and as often as you attempt it you will break down. Don't you see that if this rather diabolical plot of yours had succeeded, you would never have been able to show your face in any decent society again? Do you really imagine that there would have been the slightest doubt in anybody's mind as to who had instigated the duel between two men whom you have been openly endeavouring to set by the ears ever since your arrival here? The best thing that you can do now is to get your fire-eating Frenchman to make an apology, which you will instruct Beauchamp to accept."

Hilda's face was not ordinarily an expressive one; but as she turned it towards me now, there swept across it a look of such vindictive malice that I inwardly recanted my criticism upon her tragic capabilities. However, she soon subdued that passing emotion and laughed again. "I don't in the least understand you," she declared; "I know nothing of any duel, and how can I help it if a couple of foolish young men choose to quarrel? It appears to me that you have been drinking too much wine, and I should be much obliged if you would go away for the present."

"With pleasure," I replied, rising. "Do you absolutely refuse, then, to be a peacemaker?"

"I refuse," she answered, somewhat defiantly, "to be dictated to by you. I don't

believe what you say, and I shall not make myself ridiculous by trying to smooth down a quarrel which most likely exists only in your imagination."

That was all that I obtained from her; but in truth I had not expected more; and in addressing such very plain-spoken remarks to her I had been actuated rather by curiosity as to how she would take them than by any hope that they would divert her from her purpose. The person whom I did hope to influence was de Vieuzac. Him I waylaid an hour later, as he was entering the smoking-room, and drew him away into the billiard-room, which adjoined that apartment, and which, fortunately, was untenanted.

"M. de Vieuzac," I began, "it is quite out of the question that you should fight young Beauchamp, and I think you will admit as much when I have given you my reasons for saying so."

He interrupted me with suave courtesy, observing that the subject was no longer one which he could properly discuss. Any remarks which I might have to make must be addressed to his friends the Comte de Something and the Marquis de Something-else, who would not fail to call upon me in due course.

I replied that it would be needless to give his friends that trouble. "Of course," I continued, "you will not pretend that the ostensible cause of your quarrel is the real one."

"The cause of quarrel," returned he, "is of perfect simplicity. I have used words which I decline to withdraw and by which Mr. Beauchamp conceives himself to be wounded. And permit me once more, sir, to tell you that this conversation is most irregular."

"I dare say it is," I rejoined, "but you had better listen to me, all the same. The lady who is at the bottom of all this ——"

"Mr. Maynard," interrupted de Vieuzac, "it is impossible that I should listen to you. You scandalise me—positively you scandalise me! What! you speak of a lady!—you would perhaps in another moment go so far as to mention her by name! It is unheard of! I must beg of you, sir, to excuse me." And he made for the door.

"Very well," said I, "have it your own way, then, if you are determined to bring about an explosion. Since you insist upon it, your friends shall talk the affair over with me and with Lord Bracknell, who will be my coadjutor."

De Vieuzac paused upon the threshold and pulled his moustache. "Lord Bracknell!" he ejaculated. "Is that Mr. Beauchamp's choice, may I ask?"

"Oh, no; it is my choice. You heard him give me leave to select a colleague, and such is the selection that I propose to make."

This brought the Frenchman to his bearings. He returned slowly and consented, under protest, to hear me. "What is it that you have to say?" he inquired.

"Why, simply this," I replied. Mr. Beauchamp, as you are probably not aware, is the present holder of very large estates, which, in the event of his dying without issue, would pass to his cousin, Lord Bracknell. Consequently, if he were to die suddenly within a short time, a certain lady whose name we won't mention would be snatched from the brink of bankruptcy and raised to a position of great wealth. Now, suppose that, by a misadventure which I am sure you would be the first to deplore, but which you might not be able to avert, you were to kill that young man. What do you think would be said of you and of the unnamed lady? Or suppose, without going so far as that, that you only wounded him. Is it not certain that everybody would declare that you had done your best to kill him? To me, at any rate, it is very evident that the insult which you offered him to-day was a mere pretext, and that you had deliberately made up your mind to fasten a quarrel upon him."

The Frenchman's countenance, while I was speaking, exhibited various phases of emotion; but now he blazed forth with sudden fury and sprang at me like a wild-cat. "Sir," he hissed out, "do you dare to accuse me of being an assassin?"

"Certainly not," I replied, drawing back a few paces as a precautionary measure, "but I think you are in some danger of incurring that accusation from others." Then, as he eyed me in a suspicious manner and appeared to be hesitating, I continued: "Allow me, as an insular barbarian, to speak the truth to you without phrases. The fact is that you have been made a cat's-paw of by the most thoroughly unscrupulous woman of my acquaintance. I venture to think that it would be more consistent with your honour and dignity to apologise to Beauchamp, whom you can't really believe to be a coward, than to fight him for the sake of Lady Bracknell, whom I have known all my life and who, I can assure you, is not worth a drop of honest blood. In any case, depend upon it that we shall not allow our man to go out with you. Lord Bracknell would not dare to sanction such a meeting, even if he were—what I am

convinced that he is not—as infamous a wretch as his wife."

"*Taisez-vous donc!*" whispered de Vieuzac hurriedly.

But his caution came too late. In my anxiety to bring conviction home to the mind of my interlocutor, I had not noticed the entrance of a third person, and now, when I looked round and saw Bracknell standing close to my elbow, I perceived that the cat was out of the bag.

"You don't mince matters, Maynard," Bracknell observed. "After that very frank expression of opinion, I dare say you won't object to my asking what you are talking about."

"Our conversation was strictly confidential," broke in de Vieuzac, with some eagerness. "Neither Mr. Maynard nor I have the right to repeat it."

Bracknell glanced at him for a moment, as a big dog glances at a little one, and then turned to me again. "Come," he said, "I am waiting to hear in what respect I am less infamous than my wife."

It seemed best to answer him. "M. de Vieuzac and Beauchamp have fallen out," I replied, "and unfortunately the difference has ended in a challenge, you and I being nominated as Beauchamp's seconds. When you came in, I was trying to point out that, as you are heir-presumptive to Beauchamp's estates, you could not let him risk his life in such a way."

"I should have thought," remarked Bracknell coolly, "that a man from whom one has expectations would have been the man of all others whom one would like to see risking his life."

"I doubt," I replied, "whether you would like it—under the circumstances."

"Oh, the circumstances, eh? And pray, what are they?"

"It is needless to speak of them," cried de Vieuzac, before I could answer. "Mr. Maynard has convinced me that I have been in the wrong, and I shall hasten to offer my excuses to Mr. Beauchamp. I have only to add that if you consider yourself in any way aggrieved by me, my lord, I shall hold myself entirely at your disposition."

"You seem to be spoiling for a fight," remarked Bracknell. "I don't know that I have any grievance against you; but I'll do my best to indulge you by discovering one."

The Frenchman bowed, pirouetted round on his heels and left the room.

"Now, Harry," said Bracknell, "perhaps you'll explain yourself. Of course I can guess what those two idiots quarrelled about, but it seems to me that 'infamous wretch' is pretty strong language for a cautious fellow like you to use. Between you and me, what did you mean by it?"

Perhaps I was hardly justified in telling him; but at the moment I really did not see for whose sake I was bound to be reticent. To my mind there was nothing very extraordinary in such a woman as Hilda wishing to get Beauchamp out of the way and step into his shoes. It has always seemed to me that murderers are only regarded with greater abhorrence and punished more severely than other criminals because we all have such a strong dislike to the idea of being murdered, and that the man who slanders or cheats me is morally just about as culpable as the man who knocks me on the head. Therefore, when I had related the events of the day to Bracknell, I was a good deal astonished at the effect produced upon him by my narrative. He strode up and down the room, muttering furious imprecations and working himself up into such a state of blind rage that I determined not to let him out of my sight until he should have become calmer. If Lady Bracknell had made her appearance just then, I don't know what catastrophe might not have happened.

But the storm soon spent itself. Presently he came and sat down beside me, saying quietly, "That Frenchman behaved rather well, I think."

"Well, yes," I agreed, "I think he did. He is a gentleman and he will hold his tongue; but I suspect that you won't see him at your house any more."

"Hardly! For the matter of that, I sha'n't have a house much longer. I'm utterly smashed, and I suppose every stick in my possession will be sold up. Her ladyship will be a pleasant sort of companion to face grinding poverty with, won't she? I expect she'll go back to her father, though. After all that has happened, I don't see that I am bound to go on living with her. Well, what are you making grimaces at? You think it's a case of the pot calling the kettle black, perhaps? I'm black enough, goodness knows! but you yourself said just now that you didn't believe I had sunk to her depth of infamy. I allowed her to have her own way with regard to Beauchamp, which, if you like, was not pretty behaviour; but she represented to me that the young fool was mad about her, that he would never marry Mildred, and that, for poor little Sunning's sake, it would be a thousand pities to let that huge fortune slip between our fingers. She didn't put it quite so coarsely as that;

she can express herself in a very pleasant and convincing sort of way when she chooses, and I dare say I wasn't unwilling to be convinced." Bracknell paused for a moment and sighed. "You remember what I said to you the day my poor little man died," he went on presently. "I haven't been able to endure the sight of her since then, and I haven't cared two straws how she amused herself or what her plots and plans might be. It was all one to me. But I never suspected her of anything so fiendish as compassing a friend's death in order to get hold of his money. No, by Jove! I never suspected her of that. I shall tell Beauchamp about it."

"I think you had better not," I said.

"I shall, though," he returned; "it's the least I can do. If that doesn't cure him, nothing will; and I owe it to him to do my best to cure him. I shouldn't be surprised if he went off and married Mildred after all."

"It would be a fitting conclusion to this highly creditable business," I could not help remarking. "Shall you urge Lady Mildred to accept him now?"

"No," answered Bracknell shortly, "I am not going to urge anybody to do anything; they may muddle it out among them. As for me, about the best thing I could do would be to put a bullet into my head. I'm sick of all this!"

Thereupon he got up and strode away, leaving me not altogether dissatisfied with my evening's work. "There will at least be no duel now," thought I to myself. "Hilda's machinations have ended in a complete fiasco; and, unless I am very much mistaken, she is about to pass through the most uncomfortable quarter of an hour of her ill-spent life."

(*To be continued.*)

IN LEICESTER FIELDS.

Sir Isaac Newton alighting at Leicester House.

From a Drawing by HUGH THOMSON.

THAT these sketches are of Old rather than of New London is probably sufficient justification for the title given to this paper. But there is another and a better reason: the interest of the locality lies more in the past than in the present. Not even Baron Grant's glorified inclosure, with its busts and fountain, has been able to regenerate the Leicester Square that most of us remember, with its dubious back streets, its *entourage* of seedy *cafés* and *restaurants*, its ambiguous print and curiosity shops, its forlornly oriental Alhambra, whose dingy splendours have long since scaled and peeled in London's *imber edax*. If we forcibly call to mind anything in connection with the spot, it is a certain central statue, long the mock of the irreverent—a statue of the first George, which had come of old, gilded and magnificent, from "Timon's Villa" at Canons, to fall at last upon evil days and evil tongues, to be rudely spotted with sacrilegious paint, to be crowned with a fool's cap, and finally, to present itself to the spectator in the generally disgraced and dilapidated condition in which, some ten or eleven years ago, it was portrayed upon the walls of the Academy. But if, travelling rapidly backwards, past the Panopticon and Burford's Panorama, past Wyld's Globe and Miss Linwood's needle-work, we enter the eighteenth century, we are in the Leicester Fields of Reynolds and Hogarth, of Newton and John Hunter—the Leicester Fields of Sir George Savile and Frederick of Wales, of Colbert and Prince Eugene. It is of this Leicester Fields that we propose to speak. Leicester Square and its history may be left to the chroniclers of the future.

In Agas's map of 1592, the ground to the north of Charing Cross between Prince's Street and Whitcomb Street (then called Hedge Lane), is open pasture or lammas-land, occupied by a pair of pedestrians, a woman laying out clothes, and two beasts of burden, one of which is apparently deformed. The only buildings to be seen are the King's Mews, clustering together for company at the back of the Cross. In Faithorne's map of sixty years later the ground has become more populated. To the east of St. Martin's Lane it is thickly covered with buildings; to the west also, a fringe of houses is springing up; while on the open ground above referred to are two lordly mansions. One, on the site of the present Newport Street, is Newport House, the town residence of Blount, Earl of Newport; the other, which stands on the ground now traversed by Leicester Place, is Leicester House. Its gardens extended over Lisle Street, as far back as Gerard Street, and its boundary wall on the north was the wall of the old Military Garden where Prince Henry of Wales exercised his troops, and made the welkin ring with alarms, excursions, and points of war.

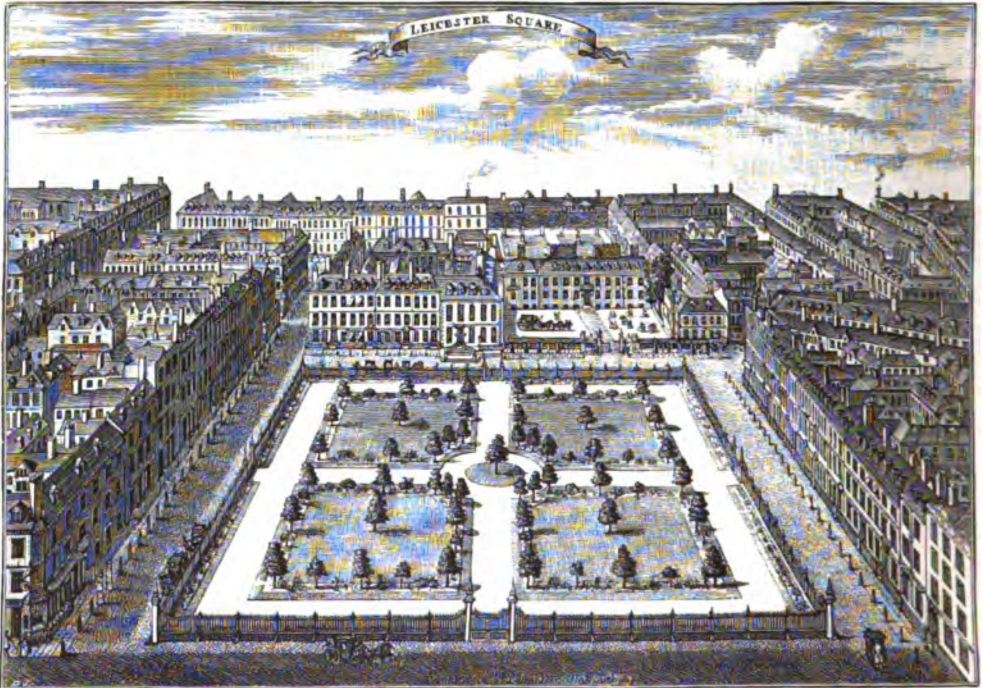
Leicester House was built about 1632-6 by Sidney, Earl of Leicester, the father of Algernon Sidney, and of the Dorothy who figures in literature as Waller's Sacharissa. The spot, known more precisely as Swan Close, was given to him by Charles I.; and from the overseer's books of St. Martin's in the Fields, he seems, in addition to the lammas for Swan Close, to have paid "lamas" for the land adjoining the military wall, and the "field before his house," *i.e.*, Leicester Fields. These probably extended as far as the present Orange Street, so that the grounds of the old mansion may be regarded as bounded by the Mews on the south, and the Military Garden on the north. Few memories cling about it during Lord Leicester's life-time. When not engaged on embassies and the like, he was absent at his other and more famous mansion of Penshurst, and Leicester House was "To Let." One of its earliest illustrious tenants was the widowed Queen of Bohemia, who, already smitten with her last illness, died there in 1662. Another, a few years later, was Colbert, the French ambassador; and Pepys records how he was to have taken part in a deputation from the Royal Society to Lord Leicester's distinguished lessee; but, being detained by a merry-making at his friend Batelier's, arrived too late, and was fain to console himself by escorting his wife to inspect his new coach, so that "she is out of herself for joy almost."

Pepys, it will be seen, did not actually enter Leicester House, at all events upon this occasion. His brother diarist was more fortunate. Going to take leave of Lady Sunderland, whose husband was ambassador to Paris, grave Mr. Evelyn was entertained by her ladyship with the feats of Richardson the fire-eater, who in those days enjoyed a vogue sufficient to justify the record of his prowess in the *Journal des Scavans*. "He devour'd brimston on glowing coales before us," says Evelyn, "chewing and swallowing them; he mealted a beere-glasse, and eate it quite up; then taking a live coale on his tongue, he put on it a raw oyster, the coale was blown on with bellows till it flam'd and sparkl'd in his mouth, and so remained till the oyster gaped and was quite boil'd; then he mealted pitch and wax with sulphur, which he drank down as it flamed; I saw it flaming in his mouth a good while; he also tooke up a thick piece of yron, such as laundresses use to put in their smoothing-boxes, when it was fiery hot, held it betweene his teeth, then in his hand, and threw it about like a stone, but this he observ'd he car'd not to hold very long; then he stood on a small pot, and bending his body, tooke a glowing yron with his mouth from betweene his feete, without touching the pot or ground with his hands; with diver other prodigious feates."

Lord Leicester died in 1677, and many tenants afterwards occupied the mansion in the Fields. At the beginning of Anne's reign, it was the home of the German ambassador, who lived in it far into the reign of the first George. Something of its appearance at this date may be gathered from the old drawing, a copy of which is here given. It stands in the north-east corner of the inclosure, and forms three sides of the quadrangle, a row of stalls or sheds extending to right and left of the entrance gate. Behind, the bird's-eye view shows us a coach-and-six in the court-yard; behind again is the garden extending northward, and stiffly decorated with shrubs and statues. Here, in 1712, came Prince Eugene, upon his fruitless mission to prevent the Peace of Utrecht, but nevertheless to be fêted and lionised in a way which the shy warrior failed to fully appreciate. His admirers mobbed him on all occasions. "I could not see Prince Eugene at Court to-day," writes Swift to Stella, "the crowd was so great. The Whigs contrive to have a crowd about him, and employ the rabble to give the word when he sets out from any place." "I hope and believe," he says elsewhere, "he comes too late to do the Whigs any good." At first Swift seems to have been prepossessed by the Prince's appearance. "He is not ill-looking, but well enough, and a good shape." Later he changes his opinion. "I saw Prince Eugene to-day at court, very plain. He is plaguy yellow and literally ugly besides." This of course, was not the language of Eugene's panegyrists. To Steele, with his quick enthusiasm and military instincts, the great captain, who surprised Cremona, and forced the trenches of Turin, comes surrounded with an aura of hyperbole. "He who beholds him," he says in *Spectator* No. 340, "will easily expect from him anything that is to be imagined or executed by the Wit or Force of Man. The Prince is of that Stature which makes a Man most easily become all Parts of Exercise; has Height to be graceful on occasions of State and Ceremony, and no less adapted for Agility and Dispatch: his aspect is erect and composed; his Eye lively and thoughtful, yet rather vigilant than sparkling: his Action and Address, the most easy imaginable, and his Behaviour in an assembly peculiarly graceful

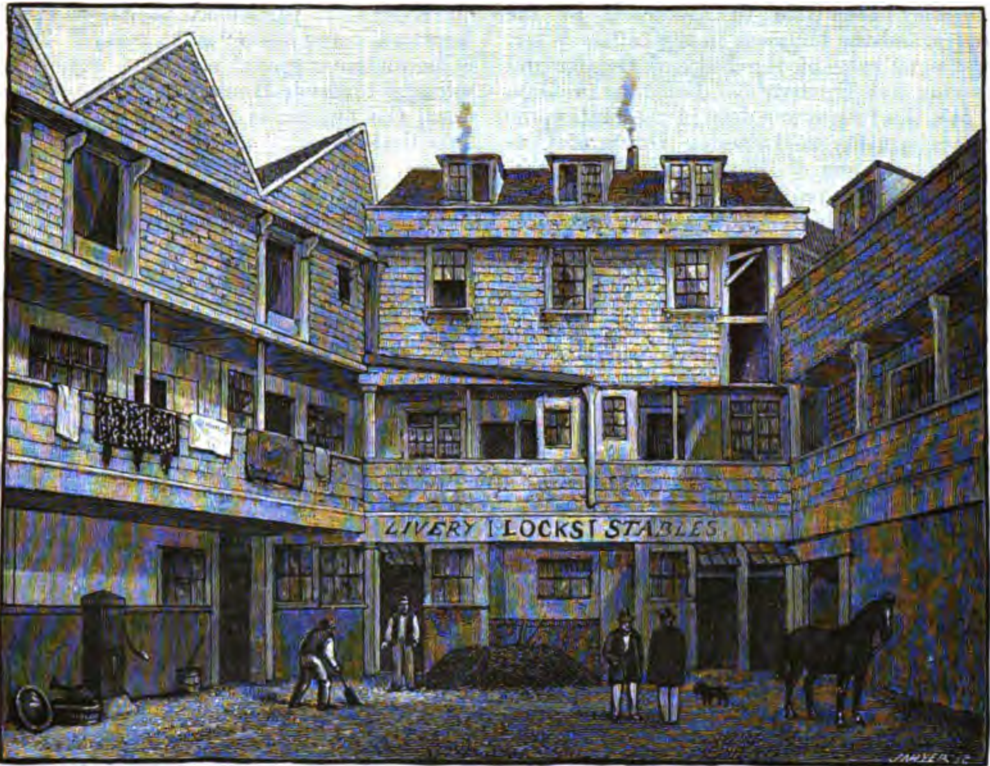
in a certain Art of mixing insensibly with the rest, and becoming one of the Company instead of receiving the Courtship of it. The Shape of his Person, and Composure of his Limbs, are remarkably exact and beautiful." Burnet, as staunch a Whig as Steele, and as inveterate in his opposition to the Peace, writes (more moderately) to the same effect. "I had the honour to be admitted at several times to much discourse with him; his character is so universally known, that I will say nothing of him, but from what appeared to myself. He has a most unaffected modesty, and does scarcely bear the acknowledgment that all the world pay him. He descends to an easy equality with them with whom he converses, and seems to assume nothing to himself, while he reasons with others. He was treated with great respect by both parties; but he put a distinguished respect on the Duke of Marlborough with whom he passed most of his time. The Queen used him civilly, but not with the distinction that was due to his high merit; nor did he gain much ground with the ministers."

Eugene's stay at Leicester House was short. He arrived on January 5, and returned to Holland on March 14, carrying nothing with him but the diamond-hilted sword, worth £5,000, which had been given him by Her Gracious Majesty Queen Anne. After this Leicester House continued to be occupied by the German ambassador. Then, about 1717, being again to let, it was bought for £6,000 by George Augustus, Prince of Wales, who had quarrelled with his father; and a residence of the Princes of Wales it continued to be for some forty years.



LEICESTER SQUARE IN 1751.
From a Print in the British Museum.

This was, perhaps, the gayest time in the old house's history. From the precision and decorum of St. James's, people flocked eagerly to the drawing-rooms and receptions at Leicester House, where the fiddles were always going. "Balls, assemblies, and masquerades have taken the place of dull formal visiting," writes my Lord Chesterfield, "and the women are more agreeable triflers than they were designed. Puns are extremely in vogue, and the license very great. The variation of three or four letters in a word breaks no squares, inasmuch that an indifferent punster may make a very good figure in the best companies."



THE NAG'S HEAD YARD.
From a Water-colour Drawing in the British Museum.

He was one of the most brilliant luminaries of that brilliant gathering, the witty and unscrupulous Stanhope, delighting the prince and princess by his mimickry and his caustic raillery. Another of the notabilities was the eccentric Duchess of Buckingham, who passed for the daughter of James II. by the Countess of Dorchester, and always sat in a darkened chamber in the deepest mourning on the anniversary of King Charles's execution. Thus she was found on one occasion by John, Lord Hervey, surrounded by servants in sables, in a dim room hung with black, and lighted only by wax candles. But the most interesting figures of the prince's court are the maids of honour—charming, good-humoured Mary Bellenden, dashing Mary Lepel, and reckless and volatile Sophia Howe. Pope and Gay wrote them verses, these laughing beauties, and they are often under Walpole's pen. Mary Bellenden, "soft and fair as down," married a Colonel Campbell, and became a happy wife; "youth's youngest daughter, sweet Lepel," became the wife of John, Lord Hervey, whose portrait by Pope as Sporus exhausts the arts of malignity; while poor Miss Howe fell in love, but did not marry at all, and died of a broken heart.

When, in 1727, George II. passed from Leicester House to the throne of England, another Prince of Wales succeeded him, though not immediately, and maintained the traditions of an opposition court. This was Frederick, Prince of Wales. Bubb Dodington, afterwards Lord Melcombe, was the Chesterfield of this new *régime;* and Miss Chudleigh and Lady Middlesex its Bellenden and Lepel. Political intrigue alternated with gambling and theatricals. One of the *habitués* was the dancing master Desnoyers, whom Hogarth ridiculed; and French comedians made holiday. "The town," says Mr. Tom Taylor, to whose delightfully gossipping book on Leicester Square we hereby acknowledge our obligations, "was at this time full of gaiety—masquerades, ridottos, Ranelagh in full swing, and the prince a prominent figure at all, for he loved all sorts of diversion from the gipsies at Norwood, the conjurors and fortune-tellers in the bye-streets about Leicester Fields, and the bull-baits at

Hockley in-the Hole to Amorevoli at the opera, and the Faussans in the ballet. When the news came of the Duke of Cumberland having lost the battle of Fontenoy in May, 1745, the Prince was deep in preparation for a performance at Leicester House of Congreve's masque of *The Judgment of Paris*, in which he played Paris. He wrote a French song for the part, addressed to the three rival goddesses, acted by Lady Catherine Hanmer, Lady Fauconberg, and Lady Middlesex, the *dame régnante* of the time. It is in the high Regency vein :—

"Venez, mes chères Déesses,
Venez, calmer mon chagrin ;
Aidez mes, belles Princesses,
A le noyer dans le vin.
Poussons cette douce ivresse
Jusqu'au milieu de la nuit,
Et n'écoutons que la tendresse
D'un charmant vis-à-vis.

"Que m'importe que l'Europe
Ait un ou plusieurs tyrans ?
Prions seulement Calliope
Qu'elle inspire nos vers, nos chants :
Laissons Mars et toute sa gloire ;
Livrons-nous tous à l'Amour ;
Que Bacchus nous donne à boire.
A ces deux faisons la cour !"

There came an end to these light-hearted junketings in 1751 when the prince died, almost suddenly, from the breaking of an abscess in his side, caused, it is said, by the blow of a cricket ball. The princess and her children continued to reside in Leicester Fields until 1766. Meanwhile, to an accompaniment of trumpets and kettledrums, the old house witnessed the proclamation of George III., and the marriage, in its great drawing-room, of the Princess Augusta to the hereditary Prince of Brunswick, one of the most popular heroes ever huzzaed to by an English mob. "The latest incident connected with royalty in Leicester Fields," says Mr. Taylor, "is the death on December 29, 1765, at Savile House of Prince Frederick William, youngest brother of the king, a youth of amiability and promise, at the age of sixteen."

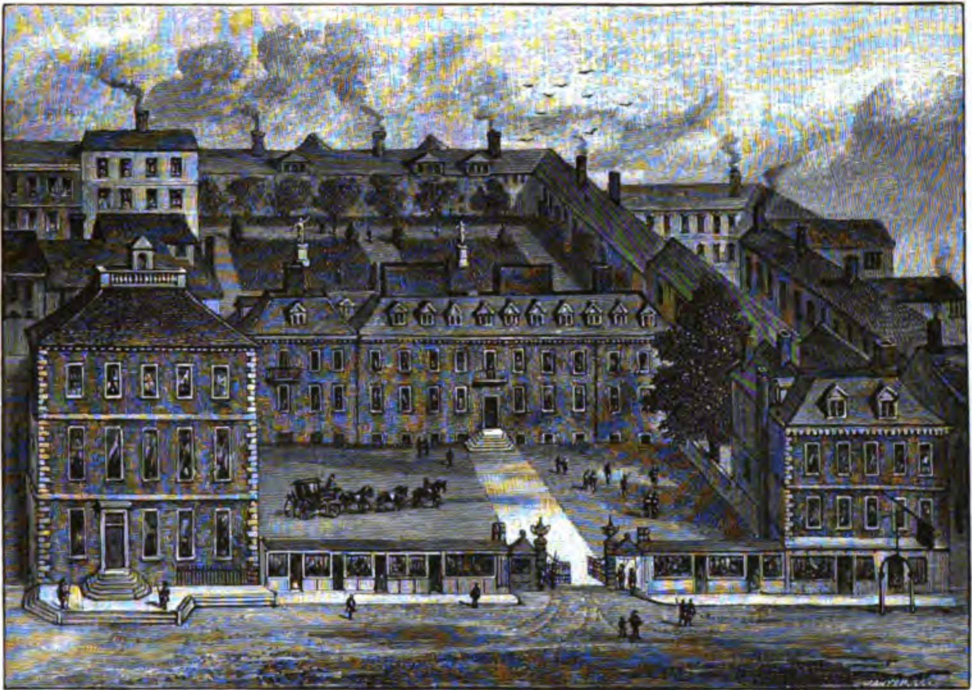
The Savile House of the above quotation stood next to Leicester House on the west. Savile House, too, was not without its memories. It was here that Peter the Great had boozed with his pot companion, the Marquis of Carmarthen, who occupied it in 1698, when the Czar made his famous visit to this country. More than one English house bore tokens of the rough usage of the imperial savage and his suite, the decorous dwelling of Evelyn in particular, at Sayes Court, Deptford, being made "right nasty." There is, however, no special record of any wrong wrought to Savile House beyond the spilling down the autocratic throat of an "intolerable deal of sack" and brandy spiced with pepper. In January, 1718, it was taken by the Prince of Wales, and when, a little later, Leicester House was vacated by Lord Gower, a communication was established between the two buildings, the smaller being used for the royal children. It belonged originally to the Aylsbury family, and came through them to the Saviles, one of whom was the Sir George Savile who is by some supposed to have sat for Goldsmith's Mr. Burchell. Sir George was its tenant in the riots of '80, when, as Dickens has not failed to remember in *Barnaby Rudge*, it was gutted by the mob because he had brought in the Catholic Bill. With its later use, as the home of Miss Linwood's needlework, which belongs to the present century, this paper has nothing to do.

We are moreover straying from Leicester House. Deserted by royalty, it passed into the hands of Sir Ashton Lever, who in 1771, being then plain Mr., transferred to it the miscellaneous collection which he had christened the "Holophusikon," a name which did not escape the gibes of the professional jester. His *omnium gatherum* of natural objects and savage costumes was nevertheless a remarkable one, still more remarkable when regarded as the work of one man. It filled sixteen of the rooms at Leicester House, besides overflowing on the staircases, and included nearly all the curiosities which Cook brought home from his voyages. Its possessor had been persuaded that his treasures, which, in their first home near Manchester had enjoyed great local popularity, would be equally successful in London. The result did not justify the expectation, and poor Sir Ashton was ultimately obliged to apply to Parliament for leave to dispose of it *en bloc* by lottery. He estimated his outlay at £50,000, and 36,000 tickets were issued at a guinea, only 8,000 of which were taken up. This lottery was drawn in 1786, and the winner was a Mr. Parkinson, who removed his prize to the Rotunda near Blackfriars Bridge, changing its name to the Museum Leverianum. But it was doomed to misfortune, and early in the present century was dispersed under the hammer. A few years after the collection had passed to the Surrey side of the water, Leicester House itself disappeared, being pulled down in 1790. Lisle Street was

continued across its gardens, and a little later still, Leicester Place traversed its site, running parallel to Leicester Street, which had existed long previously, being described in 1720 "as ordinarily built and inhabited, except the west side towards the Fields, where there is a very good house."

These two streets, like the Square itself, directly preserve the memory of the "pouting place of princes." But there are other traces of it in the nomenclature of the neighbourhood which had grown up around it. One of the family names survive in Sidney Alley, and another in Lisle Street. Bear Street again suggests the Leicester crest of a bear and ragged staff, while Green Street, according to Cunningham, derives its title from the colour of the Leicester Mews, which stood to the south of the Square. The Square itself seems to have been first enclosed in 1738. Ten years later came from Canons, Lord Burlington's Edgware Villa, that famous central statue of George I., which Londoners so well remember. At the time of its erection it was richly gilt, and was one of the popular sights of the metropolis. Timbs says it was executed for the duke by Buchard; but Taylor seems to imply that it came from the studio of Van Ost, then a fashionable statuary. The horse was modelled after that of Le Sœur at Charing Cross.

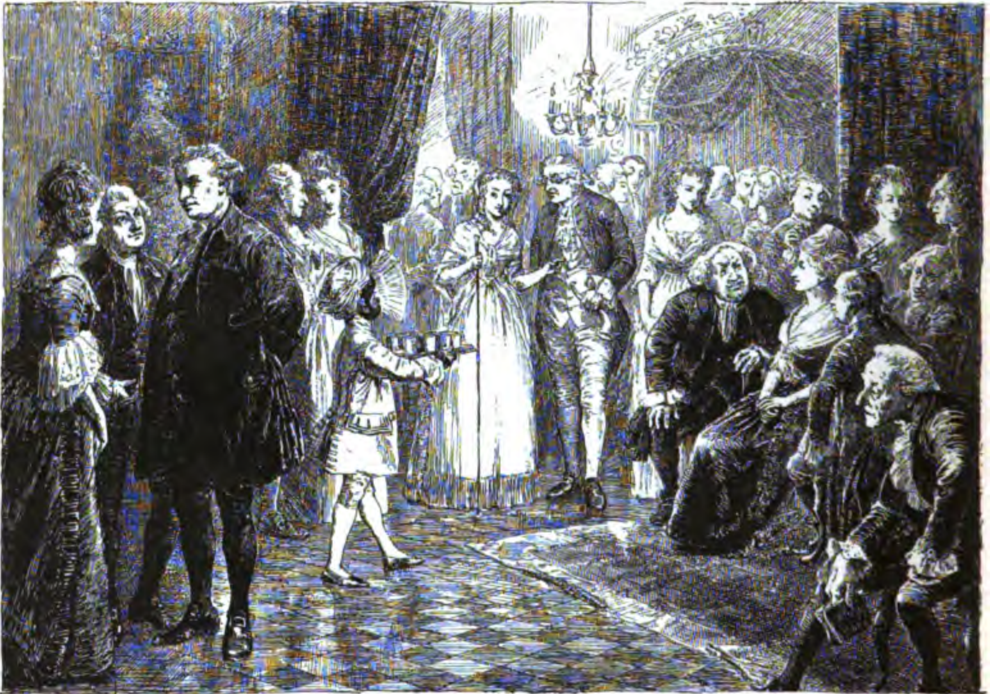
Considering its long popularity as a royal residence, Leicester Fields does not seem to have been particularly rich in illustrious inhabitants. Dibdin the song-writer, once lived in Leicester Place, where he built a little theatre;[1] and Woollett, of whose velvety engravings Mr. Louis Fagan has recently prepared so exhaustive a catalogue, had his home in Green Street (No. 11), from the leads of which, so runs the story, he was accustomed to fire a cannon whenever he had finished a plate. Opie lodged in Orange Street, where also was born of humble parents, into a life of many changing fortunes, that strange Holcroft of the *Road to Ruin*. In St. Martin's Street, next the independent chapel on the east side, lived Sir Isaac Newton from



LEICESTER HOUSE.
From a Water-colour Drawing in the British Museum.

[1] Mr. Taylor says that Dibdin's theatre was nearly on the site of "The Feathers," Hogarth's house of call. But if Leicester Place did not exist until 1796, and then occupied ground which had been occupied six years before by Leicester House, it is difficult to connect Hogarth with any tavern in it, as he died in 1764.

1710 until 1725, two years before his death at Kensington. He was an old man, nursed by his pretty niece, Catherine Barton, when he dwelt in the Fields, and there are few traditions to connect him with it beyond his acquaintance with the Princess Caroline at Leicester House. But in default of actual memories fiction has not been idle, and a Frenchman who once occupied the house improvised an observatory upon the roof and exhibited it as Newton's workroom, much to the edification of the *gobe-mouches*. After Sir Isaac the most illustrious tenant was Dr. Charles Burney, author of the *History of Music* and father of Fanny Burney. Indeed, it was in this very building, that a girl of seventeen—no, ungallant Mr. Croker discovered her to have been a young lady of maturer years—wrote that fortunate *Evelina* which captivated both Burke and Johnson. There were panelled rooms and a painted staircase in the Newton-Burney house of yore; and if it were really here that the little person, whom Mrs. Piozzi nicknamed in her graver moments the "Lady Louisa of Leicester Square," once "danced ·d the mulberry tree,"[1] with delight at her success in letters, there must also have been a garden. Now there is nothing visible but a dingy "tenement," with dusty upper windows, which bear the legend "To Let," and a ground floor that is used for a day-school. A circular tablet marks it as the former home of the author of the *Principia*.



AN EVENING AT SIR JOSHUA'S.
From a Drawing by HUGH THOMSON.

Turning out of St. Martin's Street to the right another tablet is discernible in the angle of the Fields, upon the comparatively new red brick *façade* of another school, known as Archbishop Tenison's. Here, at one of the many signs of the "Golden Head" lived William Hogarth. The golden head in his case was carved by himself out of pieces of cork glued together, and represented Van Dyck. This, says Nichols, was succeeded by a head in plaster, and this again, when Nichols wrote, had been replaced by a bust of Newton. The door with its ornament is shown in more than one eighteenth century print, and it is no great stretch of imagination to suppose that the artist may sometimes have lounged on the threshold, much as Mr. Thomson has here depicted him. No doubt, too, quaint characters like the marine bearward of the "Election Prints," often straggled through

Leicester Fields to the delectation of the artist, and the furious excitement of the vigilant "Trump." About the interior of the house very little seems to be known. But, as it was rated to the poor in 1733 at £60, it must have been fairly roomy. In the after days when it formed part of the Sablonière Hotel, before the hotel made way for the existing school, there were traditions of a studio, probably not more authentic than those of Sir Isaac's observatory. Not long after Hogarth first took the house, the Square was railed round, and he is said to have been often seen walking in the inclosure, wrapped in his red "rocklow," or roquelaure. His stables, when he set up the fine coach which Catton decorated for him with the famous Cyprian crest, were in Nag's Head Yard, Orange Street. He had, of course, a country box at Chiswick; but he was *chez lui* in Leicester Fields. His friends were about him. Kind old Captain Coram had lodgings somewhere near; Pine, the "Friar Pine" of Calais Gate, was in St. Martin's Lane; beyond that, in Covent Garden and its neighbourhood, were George Lambert, the scene painter, Saunders Welch, Richard Wilson, Fielding, and a host of intimates. It was in Leicester Fields that Hogarth died. He had come there from Chiswick in October, 1764, cheerful, but very weak. "Receiving an agreeable letter from the *American* Dr. *Franklin*," says Nichols, "[he] drew up a rough draught of an answer to it; but going to bed, he was seized with a vomiting, upon which he

HOGARTH IN HIS STUDY.
From a Drawing by HUGH THOMSON.

rung his bell with such violence that he broke it, and expired about two hours afterwards in the arms of Mrs. *Mary Lewis*, who was called up on his being taken suddenly ill." He was buried in Chiswick churchyard, where some years later, a monument was erected to his memory, with a well-known epitaph by Garrick. Chiswick church has recently been restored, and Hogarth's grave has lost something of its old-world air in consequence, but it is still worthy of a pilgrimage, especially as his house, which is dilapidated enough to suit the most inveterate praiser of antiquity, lies only a stone's throw further in the road to the Duke's Avenue. After Hogarth's death his widow continued to keep up the "Golden Head," and Mary Lewis sold prints there. Livesay, the engraver, was one of Widow Hogarth's lodgers in 1781-2, and the Scotch painter Runciman was another. If the house had any further notable occupants they have been forgotten.

Mrs. Hogarth died in 1789. Six years before her death she had a neighbour in the Fields, who, in his way, was as illustrious as Hogarth or Reynolds. This was John Hunter, who, in 1783, became the tenant of No. 28, next door, and at once began extending it backwards towards Castle Street, to receive his famous anatomical museum. Hogarth had then been dead for nearly twenty years; and it is unlikely that the painter knew much of the young surgeon who was subsequently to become so celebrated; but he probably knew his brother, William Hunter of Covent Garden, who attended Fielding in 1753. William Hunter was just dead when John came to Leicester Fields. He lived there ten years in the height of his activity and fame, and it was during this period that Reynolds painted the portrait of him, sitting at a table in a reverie, which was engraved by William Sharp. He survived Sir Joshua but one year.

The house of Reynolds was at the opposite side of the Square, at No. 47, now Puttick and Simpson's auction rooms. He occupied it from 1760 to 1792. We are accustomed to think of Hogarth and Reynolds as contemporaries. But Reynolds was in the pride of his prime when he came to Leicester Fields, while Hogarth was a broken and middle-aged man, whose greatest work was done. Apart from this there could not have been much sympathy between them. Hogarth, whose own efforts as a portrait painter were little appreciated in his lifetime, must have chafed at the carriages which blocked up the doorway of his more fortunate brother; and Reynolds, courtly, amiable though he was, capable of indulgence even to such a raw caricaturist as Bunbury, could find for his illustrious rival, when he came to deliver his famous Fourteenth Discourse, no warmer praise than that of "successful attention to the ridicule of life." These things, alas! are the commonplaces of literature and art. It is pleasanter to think of No. 47 filled with those well-known figures of whom we read in Boswell and Madame D'Arblay—with Burke and Johnson, and Goldsmith and Gibbon and Garrick;—with graceful Angelica, and majestic Siddons, and azure-stockinged Montagu;—with pretty Nelly O'Brien, and charming Mrs. Abingdon;—with all the crowd of soldiers, sailors, lawyers, literati, who by turns filled the sitter's chair in the painting room, and were ushered out or in by the silver-laced footmen. Then there were those wonderful disorderly dinners, where the guests were so good, and the feast so indifferent; where there was always wit and learning, and seldom enough of knives and forks; where it was an honour to have talked and listened, and no one remembered to have dined. Last comes that pathetic picture of Sir Joshua, when his sight had failed him, wandering sadly in the inclosure with his green shade over his eyes, and peering wistfully and vainly for the lost canary that was wont to perch upon his finger.

When Reynolds died in 1792, Burke wrote his eulogy in the very house where his body lay. "The MS.," says Mr. Taylor, "is blotted with its writer's tears." Those royal periods in which the great orator spoke of his lost friend are too familiar to quote. But after Sir Joshua the interest seems to fade out of the Fields, and one willingly draws one's pen through the few remaining names that are written in its chronicles.

AUSTIN DOBSON.

THE DEATH OF PROCRIS.
Engraved by O. SCHLADITZ, *from a Drawing by* H. RYLAND.

THE DEATH OF PROCRIS.

POOR jealous Procris in the Cretan wood,
  Slain by the very hand of love at last!
This way was best! the cordial bath of blood,
      The long love-sickness past.

The brown fauns gather round with piteous cries;
  They mourn her beauty, know not of her woe;
They find no Eos graven on those eyes
      Whence tears no longer flow.

Her griefs, her frailties from the flowery turf
  Exhaled, are like the dews of yesterday;
The grim ship hurrying through the Phocian surf,
      The exile on her way,

The cruel goddess, and the two-fold test,
  The breaking heart of hate, the poisoned hours,—
All these have faded out in utter rest
      Among the Cretan flowers.

Ah! wrap her body in its fluttering lawns!
  'Tis Cephalus' own shaft that hath made cease
The passion of her breast; hush, foolish fauns,
      Hush! for her end was peace.

EDMUND GOSSE.

MÈRE SUZANNE.

CHAPTER I.

MIDWAY between the Norman seaport Havre, and the city of Paris, there stands, on the very edge of the river Seine, the quaintest little town in the Pays de Caux. Its gabled half-timbered houses are grouped round a grand old Gothic church just where two green valleys meet, and send a little river trickling through the pebble-paved streets, to lose itself in the Seine. This little stream is called St. Gertrude, and before it reaches the street it meanders pleasantly across the *marais,* as some willow-fringed fields are called. The willow trees plainly love the little river, for they grow on both sides of it, and bend down caressingly till their grey green leaves make reflections therein, along with the yellow sedges, and the purple loosestrife and paler agrimony, which assert themselves in patches of colour against the bank. All these pictures showed vividly on either side of the little stream half an hour ago, but now the sun has sunk behind the trees on the western side of the *marais,* and grass and leaves and reflections have put on a sombre robe of olive before they go to sleep.

The *marais* lies higher than the town—yet it is lower than the road which leads past it to the gabled half-timbered houses beside the Seine.

A young fellow, seventeen years old or so, sunburned and blue-eyed, with the Saxon-looking face so often seen in the Norman peasant, turns aside from this road as he reaches a by-path, and goes down to a plank bridge across the little stream. The light is now so dim that the cottage near the big willow tree in the corner of the *marais* can hardly be made out, but the figure of a woman standing in front of the cottage doorway can be seen a good way off; the lilac cotton jacket above her dark skirt and her snowy linen cap are very distinct against the dim blurred background of cottage and willow trees. The woman's nose and chin, always near together—for she has lost her teeth—are now closer than ever, she is smiling such a fond welcome to her boy.

"Come, come," she says, blithely, "you must want your supper badly, Auguste."

She bustles forward and tries to take from him the bundle he carries on his shoulder, while he kisses both her withered cheeks.

But Auguste does not smile back in the old face so near his own, and he says "No, no," almost sternly, as he holds the bundle away from her.

His mother — they call her La Mère Suzanne in the little town by the Seine—turns meekly away and goes back into the cottage, but her head is bent, and she has left off smiling. She knows, by help of that sympathy which exists between a loving mother and her child, that something ails Auguste, and a dread which she cannot put away seems to clasp her heart like an iron band.

The sight of her sick husband crouching over the fire recalls her wits.

"Yes, yes, my man," she says, cheerfully, "here is our Auguste come back, and right

hungry too, you may be sure. It is a long walk from Yvetôt you know, Jules."

Auguste has not followed her in; his footsteps sound slow and heavy, he loiters outside a minute or two, then goes round to the outhouse.

"What ails the lad?" his father says; "he says nothing—and I that have not seen him these two days."

Jules Didier turns round a pale sallow face, almost covered by a grizzled beard that sorely needs the barber. His eyes are dark and haggard, his face has suffering plainly marked on it, one arm, too, is missing; but as he rises and stands erect he is a tall man, a thorough contrast to his little, stooping, blue-eyed wife, who looks like a ball as she bends over the fire to fill a brown bowl with soup out of the pot on the hot hearth.

Her son comes in just as she sets the steaming bowl on the table. A long roll reaches half across the unbleached homespun tablecloth; a small pitcher of cider, and a gaudy red and blue plate full of huge white radishes are placed on either side.

Auguste goes up to his father; he kisses both cheeks, and then merely saying, "You have supped," he seats himself, and eats his soup in silence.

The father groans as he sits down again, for his joints are old and stiff with rheumatism. Auguste's silence does not seem to him out of the usual course of things, and when one is troubled with one's own ailments one is sometimes less sensitive about the joys and sorrows of others.

La Mère Suzanne has such a busy time of it that she can never find a moment to think about herself in. Her Jules, her Auguste, and those three dear dead sons who fell at Magenta and Solferino occupy all her thoughts—the poor mother often wonders where her dear boys' graves are; if there were but a chance of finding them out, she sometimes thinks she would like to make a pilgrimage to Italy, although Monsieur le Curé says Italy is a long way off—farther even than Paris.

Her thoughts just now are full of Auguste. She stands out of his sight, and yet she is watching him. She has been every moment expecting to hear his merry laugh, and to see his bright face turn towards her with that look of invitation to share his mirth, so dear to a mother's heart.

He has finished his soup now, but he only crumbles the bit of bread which is put beside his plate. Then he sighs, and his head sinks on his breast.

His mother does not speak, but unconsciously she sighs, too, and her lips quiver. Something has happened to Auguste, that is plain enough; but she will not worry her good, loving boy, he shall take his own time. "When the trouble gets too heavy to bear," she says meekly to herself, "my Auguste will come and tell it to his mother." It costs her a struggle to keep down her longing to comfort him. She wants to put her arm round his neck and to ask him to tell her his sorrow; but this might vex him —"who can tell?" she says, bravely. The struggle has brought hot tears to her eyes, and she goes quickly away to the outhouse and dries them there on her apron.

While she stands at the door and looks out over the cabbage plot a smile comes over her face. Something is creeping about in the gloom, and now a long-haired bushy-tailed grey cat emerges from behind a row of globe-shaped cabbages with leaves curling outwards like a rose. "Mousseline, Mousse, Mousse, what are you doing?" Suzanne laughs merrily as the cat comes close, and lays at her feet a large yellow frog which he has caught among the cabbages, and which by his purring and the arching of his back and tail he intimates is vermin not to be tolerated on the premises.

La Mère Suzanne stoops down and pats Mousseline, and the cat rubs itself against her.

"Good Mousseline," she says, "good cat! Come in and see Auguste."

She stops outside. All within is silent, and when she opens the door she sees that Auguste's face is hidden by his hands, as he rests his elbows on the table. His father, roused at last by the unusual silence, is looking round at his son.

To him, however, Auguste's attitude speaks only of fatigue, and Jules's idea is that the lad will get a nap if he is left in peace.

But as Suzanne looks at her boy the pain at her heart comes back. She closes the door, and Auguste lifts his head. His dreary craving gaze draws her to him in a moment.

Outside the door she has been saying "He must be left alone—yes, yes, the poor boy must not be questioned," and now, without her will, she finds her arms round his neck, his head is on her shoulder, and his tears are falling on the front of her gown.

"There, there, my jewel, my well-beloved;" she rocks his head in her arms, pressing it against her bosom as if he were an infant. She does not question him.

Love, that best of teachers, has given to poor, old, ignorant Suzanne the key which unlocks an overburdened heart. She is so emptied of self that she is a part of Auguste, and the poor fellow's heart eases itself without effort into this sympathy which does not even offer itself because it is already his.

"Mother," he says softly, so that his words shall not reach his father, "it has come at last—that which we have dreaded." He feels a shiver in the arms round his neck, he feels, too, that her breath is drawn more deeply, and he tries to smile bravely, though he does not look at her face. "Yes, mother, I am no longer Auguste Didier, I am No. 317. I am drawn for the Army of the North."

He felt surprised, wounded even, when he saw that her first thought was for his father. She looked round, and held her breath a moment, and then she turned to her boy, her poor face so pale and changed, that instinctively he tightened his hold lest she should fall down in a faint.

She kissed Auguste's forehead, and then drawing herself away she went up to the invalid.

"Jules, my man," she said, cheerfully, "you are very tired; the day has been hot and weary. Shall not Auguste help you to bed? he too is tired and wants rest."

Jules Didier looked wistfully over his shoulder.

"I have not heard any news yet," he said with some discontent. "Come, Auguste, let us hear what fun was going in the market to-day. Is Rouen as full of travellers as usual, or have the Prussians frightened them away? Ah! those Prussians, they are rough customers—eh, my lad? Why, mother, what ails you?"

She had been taken unawares; as he uttered those careless words about the Prussians, there rose up before her a battle-field, with her boy, her darling Auguste, fighting hand to hand with dark fierce-looking men, whom she knew must be German soldiers.

She gave a sudden sharp cry, and flinging her apron over her head she reeled back against the table.

Auguste's arm was round her in an instant, and he placed her in the chair in which he had been sitting. But he did not stoop to kiss her. The young fellow knew that he must play the man if he would not break the hearts of these two who so fondly loved him. At that moment his mother's tenderness was a danger which he must avoid.

So he walked up and down the stone-floored room—up and down three times, his head bent on his breast, and his hands behind his back.

But his father had no eyes for him. It was new to Jules that his wife should ail anything, and a vague terror came that she was, perhaps, dying. Death and Suzanne! The two ideas had never before come to him hand in hand. He rose up pale and trembling, and going over to where she sat he put his one arm round her and patted her bent shoulder.

"What is it?" he said, in a hurried, alarmed way. "What have you done to yourself—tell me, Suzanne? What has happened?"

The last words sounded fretful, for indeed to Jules, who was so often a sufferer, and who had grown accustomed to consider himself helpless, it seemed impossible that any one so cheerful and active as his uncomplaining wife should be ailing except by her own fault.

She looked up at him with scared pathetic eyes. She did not mean any reproach, she only longed dimly for something which she felt he could not give her.

"Kiss me, Jules," she said, and then, as his rough chin rubbed her forehead, she sank back feebly, as if in those few minutes she had grown older.

Auguste had stood still when his father spoke. He was young, but he knew what his mother wanted, and in that moment he realised what the loss of him would be to her. He loved his father dearly, but he did not see why he should be spared the grief that had come upon them all.

"I will tell you, father," he said, hoarsely, "and then you can help mother to bear it. I knew it was coming, but I did not know it would come so soon. Our soldiers have been beaten, they want all the men they can get, and if a fellow is strong there is no escape. I am drawn for the conscription, and I have to march on Monday."

His father stood still, his fingers clutched nervously at the front of his blouse; he looked sicklier than ever.

"It cannot be," he said. "Monsieur le Maire said to me, 'Auguste will be exempted; your years of military service—your lost arm, the poor lads in Italy;'" his voice grew husky as he glanced at his wife's bent head. "Monsieur le Maire has said that all these things must preserve us our last child, and—and—I told him what a good child he was."

His eyes shone with tears as they met his son's.

Auguste only shook his head for answer.

Jules went on with sudden unusual energy.

"There is a mistake. Yes, yes, you will see. I go to-morrow to Monsieur le Maire, and then to Rouen; they will not take you from us when they have heard me—they could not. Yes, yes."

He rubbed his hands; his facile nature had already persuaded itself that what he wished to be must of a certainty happen.

Auguste went up to his mother, and hugged her closely to him. Something told him that was the best comfort she could have that he could give. Then he said tenderly: "It is late: we had better all go to bed, mother."

CHAPTER II.

A MONTH has gone by; or, as they have seemed to Suzanne, thirty long days have passed since the morning her boy marched away with his fellow-recruits. A few words from Monsieur le Maire had convinced Jules that there was no hope of a release, and then he went back to his customary helplessness, varied, it is true, by unusual diatribes against a government which, he said, sucked the blood of her children.

Auguste had left the *marais* overnight; he said it was better in all ways that the old people should not go with him to Rouen. He told his mother that it would be hard for her to say her last Good-bye among strangers, and it might make him weak before his comrades; then, too, he had added lovingly: "It will be so hard for you, little mother, to go back to the home alone."

And as she stood and saw him disappear in the darkness, which hid the tears she could not keep back, she said, "His last thought was for me."

She had tried since then to keep cheerful, and at the end of the first fortnight there had come to her a great reward for her courage—a letter from Auguste. In it he told her he was well, and that so far as he could be happy away from home he liked his new life; he liked some of his comrades, too; the officers were kind to him; one of them even employed him to do little personal services. "Dear mother," the letter went on, "Monsieur le Capitaine says I am willing and handy; truly, if I am, it is to you I owe these qualities."

It would be hard to say how many times La Mère Suzanne had read that letter—first aloud to Jules, and then over and over to herself out in the garden-plot, where an old grey-green pump stood under the shade of a walnut-tree. She had less to do in Auguste's absence and her thoughts were busier. She often wondered if he got time to mend his stockings as she sat on the edge of the stone trough beside the pump, reading and re-reading the precious letter; then she put it carefully in her pocket and went on knitting at the set of new stockings which she hoped he would come back before long and claim; for, indeed, Monsieur Haulard the tailor, and Clopin the gossiping seedsman in the little town yonder, had greatly cheered Jules only last Saturday by telling him the Emperor would soon drive the Prussians out of the country, and that then the newly-raised troops would be disbanded and the soldiers would return to their homes.

"The country has lost money enough," Monsieur Haulard said; "it will not want to pay soldiers whom it needs no longer." So very few neighbours found their way to the *marais* to see the lonely couple, that the tailor's and seedsman's wisdom had not been contradicted.

In one field in the *marais* the grass had grown high again, for it was September. There had been a good deal of rain, and as the breeze swept over the after crop the green looked intense against the grey of the willow-trees. It was a warm afternoon, and Mère Suzanne had gone to the front door to cool her hot face. She had been bending over the hearth while she stirred the *pot-au-feu*. She thought the tall grass looked so cool and refreshing. What a cheering sight it would be to Auguste, who was, perhaps, at that very moment marching along a hot, dusty road!

She sighed, and then she looked towards the bridge, for she heard the click of the little gate which led into the *marais*. Some one was coming down the stony path to the bridge—some one who was short, square, and red-faced. This personage walked with a certain air of possession, and no wonder, for he was Doctor Maubeuge, the owner of the cottage and of the field in which it stood; and not only was he the best doctor that could be found between Rouen and Havre, but he was also a most accomplished antiquary, a member of more than one learned society, and an authority against whose decision there could be no appeal, either in the matter of a Roman coin or a prehistoric monolith. Suzanne ran quickly indoors.

"It is the doctor, Jules." She looked round, and seeing that all was neat and in its place she went to the door to receive the

visitor. He nodded to her, but it seemed as if, instead of hastening forward, he slackened his pace. Suzanne put her hand up over her eyes, and thought how grave he looked as he came slowly towards her.

"Good-day, Mère Suzanne," he said; "and how is the good man, eh? No worse than usual?" He smiled as he said this.

"Come in, Monsieur le Docteur, you are welcome." She stood aside to let him pass. "Monsieur will find my man much as he left him, except that Jules is wearying for another letter from the dear boy."

The doctor went quickly by her into the square, low room.

"Keep your seat, my good Jules. But you need not keep so near the hot hearth. What will you do when winter comes if you broil yourself this way in autumn?"

The doctor seated himself with his back to the window at some distance from the hearth, but Suzanne remained standing near the table. She felt troubled, for a strange idea had come to her. It seemed as if the doctor had something to tell, and she felt she was bound to stand to hear it, just as she had stood to hear Auguste tell his fatal news more than a month ago.

"Is there fresh news, monsieur, to-day from the army?"

It was Jules who broke the silence. The same question was on Suzanne's lips, but she could not speak—the certainty that there was bad news kept her dumb and motionless.

The doctor shook his square grizzled head before he answered.

"Yes, my friend, there is fresh news, and, I grieve to say, it is bad news. Our troops have been badly beaten; the Emperor and half the army are prisoners, and there has been great loss of life in the battle."

"Holy Virgin!" Jules said, and he bent his head till it nearly touched his knees.

"Monsieur"—the doctor started at the sound of Suzanne's voice, it was so feeble—"tell me—tell us—you have brought news of our boy!"

Monsieur Maubeuge met her imploring eyes and he turned away; he had to take a large pinch of snuff—too large a one, seemingly, for soon after he had to wipe his eyes with his handkerchief. Then he nodded kindly at Suzanne.

"Sit down, my good mother," he said; "you cannot think so well standing, and I have to tell you something which requires thinking over. Well, then," he went on when she had seated herself, "I received a letter just now from a friend of mine, an army surgeon who is at present at Bouillon; some of the wounded have been transported to the castle there from Sedan, and my friend sends a message from Auguste Didier, of Caudebec, who is among them."

He paused. Jules moved restlessly. "*Mon Dieu,*" he murmured, "it is too hard—the last and the best of all."

But Mère Suzanne neither spoke nor moved. The doctor thought she grew paler, but she seemed to be listening for her boy's message.

"It is very sad for you, my friends," the doctor said, "but I need not tell you it is the fortune of war. It must comfort you to know that your boy is in good hands. Dr. Godefroi is one of the cleverest surgeons in the army. Auguste sends his love, and that he has a kind doctor and nurse. He has, I am sorry to say, received a bayonet wound in the thigh. Now you must tell me what I am to write to him."

Suzanne unclasped her hands, and raised her head; she seemed just awakened from sleep.

"How far off is Bouillon, monsieur?" she said.

"How far off?" The doctor put his hand to his chin and looked down at the floor. "Well, my good Suzanne, it is about one hundred miles from Soissons to Bouillon, but from this place to Soissons it must be more than one hundred and fifty. Truly it is a long way—yet, as you see, the post travels the distance in a few hours. Ah! modern progress is marvellous."

Suzanne sat counting her fingers.

"Monsieur," she said, timidly, "if I went part of the way by rail, and walked the rest, do you think I could reach Bouillon in five days?"

"Walk?" The doctor looked at her anxiously; he thought the shock must have touched her brain. "Why, Suzanne Didier, you never walked far in your life. I have heard you say that Villequier was quite a long way off, and yet the distance from my house to Villequier is just two miles. Walk, indeed. You would fall down on the high road before you reached Rouen."

"But, monsieur," she said earnestly, "is it not possible that our boy may not recover, and that he is wanting me?"

The doctor shrugged his shoulders. It was easy to see that her words disturbed him, and also that he was resolved not to be shaken from his opinion.

"What use could you be to him? you know nothing about wounds; and although the poor lad's is an honourable wound—for it is plain that he came to close quarters instead of running away as so many of the cowards

did—yet a thrust from a bayonet is an ugly disaster, and only the most skilful treatment can be of service."

Suzanne's eyes brightened with eagerness, and a red flush rose on each cheek.

"Monsieur is right—I am too ignorant to help my boy. Thank God that he is in good hands. But, monsieur, the sight of his old mother will cheer him. It is necessary for me to go."

She kept her voice steady, but tears rolled over her furrowed cheeks, and the doctor turned his head aside and looked out of the window.

"*Diable*," he muttered, "what am I to say to her?—and yet she must not go to Bouillon."

Suzanne stood patiently awaiting his answer.

At last he said: "My good woman, how can you go? You have no money to spare, and it costs a good many francs to get so far as Sedan, and beyond that you have the diligence journey to Bouillon; and even then how will you find your son."

At this she raised her head, for it had sunk on her breast while he spoke. Her eyes were glazed with tears, but there was a hopeful tone in her voice. She had been thinking all this while, and what she had to do lay clearly before her.

"Monsieur will say I am obstinate; perhaps I am, but I cannot help it. Even if I tried to stay here my feet would carry me to Auguste. There is a little money put by; it was for him—well then, monsieur, I will use it for him; and if monsieur will be so good, if he will give me a letter to this Doctor Godefroi, there's no fear but I shall get to my Auguste."

The doctor turned round and looked at her curiously.

"Women are strange creatures," he was thinking; "I never knew this one had a will of her own till now."

"You are foolish as well as obstinate." He stopped and looked at Suzanne, but he saw that his words did not move her. "I suppose you mean to go whether I approve or not?"

She glanced at Jules, but his face was hidden by his large bony hands. Monsieur Maubeuge guessed her meaning, and he led the way into the passage. She shut the door after her, and looked pleadingly into the doctor's frowning face.

"Monsieur, I cannot go if Jules is not willing, but I expect he will bid me start at once. He so loves the boy, and he cannot go himself—he is too stiff and lame, as monsieur knows." She waited, but no answer came. "Well then, monsieur, it seems to me that I can get to Yvetôt in time for the evening train to Rouen. Monsieur Clopin will take me in his cart if I ask him, and my cousin at Rouen will let me sleep at her house to-night; so if monsieur will be so good, I would call presently for the letter to Monsieur Godefroi."

The doctor whistled. "I could not have planned it out more quickly," he thought; "women are certainly nimble-witted. Well, well," he said, "I will write the letter; but it is possible Jules will not let you go. I hope he won't."

She bent down and kissed his hand. "Pardon me, monsieur, I am grateful, but I must go; it seems to me that my boy keeps asking for his mother, and that already I ought to be on the road. May I come at six o'clock, Monsieur le Docteur?"

He stared at her. "I suppose so," he said, doggedly; then as he turned away he muttered, "Poor dear soul! The most absurd proposal I ever heard; but there is no use in going against instinct—we all know that."

CHAPTER III.

The sun shines down hotly on the round stones that pave the irregular streets of Sedan, and as the flies cluster and buzz round the horses of the diligence these tormented creatures toss their heads and switch their tails and stamp impatiently on the burning stones. They stand on the side of the Place near the booking office, ready to start, but there is none of the gay bustle round the vehicle that one so often sees in a foreign town. The driver leans against a door post, examining the end of his whip, and the conductor looks dejected as he stares down the street. The town is silent, there are few inhabitants to be seen, and these go about their business in as hushed a manner as if they had just come back from a funeral. The town-folk are usually light-hearted enough, and at another time both driver and conductor would have been plagued with witticisms about one thing or another; but to-day is different. No one can for a moment forget that up yonder, only a few hundred yards away, is the stretch of fields covered with mounds, and only a few days ago red with the blood of dead and dying Frenchmen.

And besides this, some miles away, in the gloomy old castle frowning over the Semois

—once the dark stronghold of the Dukes of Bouillon and the Prince Bishops of Liège—are lying hundreds of prisoners, many of them suffering tortures from the wounds received in the bloody battle. Yes, there are hundreds of them up there! When the diligence comes back this evening there will be many inquiries about these sufferers in the hospital in the castle of Bouillon.

To-day there are only two passengers for the diligence—English tourists—one of whom is curious to see the room in the little inn at Bouillon where the French Emperor slept after he had yielded himself a prisoner. This traveller is a small, fair, dapper man, so intent on the journey before him that he has become impatient of the delay in starting.

"Come, come," he calls out to the driver, "how much longer are you going to wait? It will get hotter instead of cooler, my friend."

The driver opens first one eye and then the other widely.

"Do not trouble yourself, monsieur, we shall not start for ten minutes or so; but if monsieur likes to walk on, he will find that the road is shaded by trees, when he has passed the battle-field."

"I will go on." The dapper little man in grey suit and hat steps briskly out and puts up his sun-umbrella. He is very anxious to examine the battle-field, and he pulls out a smart red note-book from the breast of his coat, that he may have it ready to record his impressions therein.

The other traveller is older and less carefully dressed; he does not follow his companion.

"Are you coming?" calls back the tourist with the note-book.

"No," says the other. "I would rather go out of my way to avoid a battle-field."

"You don't say so! I think it most interesting. Well, you'll overtake me on the hill."

As the inquiring tourist passes up the stony street a small bent figure appears on the lower side of the Place. The driver and conductor both look round at the stooping woman; they consider that she is possibly a passenger. She is dressed in a rusty black gown and jacket; her white peasant cap shows plainly under a shapeless bonnet.

"Good morning, mother," says the conductor; then, as she limps slowly along, he adds: "You are lame. Are you going to ride, by chance?"

Poor old Suzanne curtseys. "Monsieur," she says humbly, "will you have the kindness to tell me how far it is to Bouillon? Is it a long walk?"

She raises her tired blue eyes to his face.

The man whistles. "Too far to walk," he says—"over nineteen kilometres. Our diligence does the distance in two hours and a half, though the way is steep."

Mère Suzanne sighs. She has walked a good deal in these four days, but she has also paid many francs in railway journeys; it seems to her that Auguste may need the rest of her little store. Her back aches terribly, and her feet are lamed by the hot stony roads—and yet she is not quite spent. Surely, if she tries, she can walk some of these nineteen kilometres.

"How much is the fare to Bouillon, monsieur?" She sees that this is really an omnibus—there is no *coupé* in front, nor are there any outside seats—it is perhaps less expensive to ride in than a diligence is.

"Two francs," he says carelessly. "It is too little to ask, for the road is steep, and the horses do not like such hills in hot weather. "Will you get in, mother?"

Suzanne shakes her head. "Two francs!" she says, and then she smiles. "Monsieur, I thank you, but I have not so much to spare. I will walk on towards Bouillon."

The man watches her limp up the stony street.

"The poor old creature has a husband or a son in the hospital," he says. "Joseph, you might have taken her along for nothing."

"*Diable*, and why not?" Joseph answers. "Why did you not say so? What is the use of you if you cannot give me the benefit of your ideas?"

The conductor is silent, and the horses stamp so impatiently on the stones that they shake the vehicle and the passenger who sits inside it.

Meantime Mère Suzanne toils up the stony street. The town is not a large one, and she soon comes out on to a road; there are no stones here, on each side are hedges broken away in places, leaving gaps. Suzanne toils on, she looks neither right nor left, her heart does not beat any quicker, and yet, all unconsciously, she is passing by the very place where her Auguste was pierced by a Prussian bayonet.

A little way further trees on each side of the road afford welcome shade. Suzanne gives a start, for leaning against one of these trees is the tourist.

She looks at him.

"Sir," she says meekly, "can you be kind enough to tell me if the road goes on straight to Bouillon, and how much farther off is the château?"

The traveller takes out his pocket-hand-

kerchief, spreads it on the ground, and seats himself.

"Sit down, my good woman," he says; "you must want a rest if you have climbed that hill—the road is simply abominable." He smiles approvingly as she seats herself at a respectful distance. "Those poor Frenchmen," he goes on, "must have suffered horribly as they were jolted up and down hill to Bouillon."

While he looks to see if the diligence is coming he whistles a cheerful tune; this poorly-clad old woman does not interest him or attract his notice, or he would see that she has been trembling since his last words, and that tears have gathered in her faded blue eyes.

"Can monsieur tell me," her voice is very faint and sad, "whether the battle was fought on this side of Sedan?"

He turns to look at her. "Did you not know? What a pity you did not overtake me lower down! Dear me, I could have explained it to you. I have been walking over the field—a battle-field is extremely interesting to an Englishman—and I saw plenty of buttons and scraps of that kind still left about. Well," he says eagerly, "if you look as you go down you will surely pick up something; you can easily get into the field by one of the gaps in the hedge, you know."

Something in her fixed gaze makes him uneasy; he begins to wonder if she is in her right mind, but it is such a relief to have some one to speak to that he cannot keep silence.

"What are you going to Bouillon for?" he asks.

Suzanne has edged herself further away from him, she does not wish to speak again, but it is not in her nature to be rude.

"I am going to the hospital, monsieur. I have a son there."

"Dear me," he says briskly, "that is extremely interesting." He takes out his red book and makes a note therein. "Do you think you can take me into the ward as a friend, my good woman?"

Suzanne feels troubled when she sees that the stranger is writing down her words, but her anger rises as she listens to his proposal. "You are not my friend, monsieur;" she rises up and makes him a low curtsey. "I am a poor woman, and I cannot be of use to you."

It is a relief to her to hear the tinkle of the horses' bells as the diligence comes slowly up hill. She watches it climb like a black and yellow snail; the tourist gets inside when it stops, and then the driver calls out to Suzanne.

"Come, get up, my mother," he says, "if you can squeeze in beside me you shall ride free to Bouillon."

She raises her withered thankful face. "Ah, monsieur, may God bless you, I can never thank you enough, but when my lad is strong again he will help me to thank you."

The driver bends forward and helps her up carefully; then he cracks his sounding whip, the bells give forth a merry tinkle, and the omnibus rattles on along the uneven, jolting road.

"You are going to your son?" says the driver.

Suzanne's heart seems to flow out with her words; this genial rough-looking Walloon does not repel her as the tourist did.

"Yes, monsieur, I am going to my Auguste; my husband is lame, he cannot travel, and monsieur sees that our Auguste is all we have—he is our last and he is wounded. We have others—oh yes, monsieur, there are three, but they lie at Magenta and at Solferino."

The coachman swears roundly.

"I hope France has seen the last of an empire, mother. These two Napoleons and their empires have wasted blood that it will take more than a generation to replace."

Suzanne bends her head and sighs; in her heart she agrees; she detests war, but her husband and all her sons have been soldiers, and she cannot join in blame of their calling.

Presently the diligence reaches the top of a steep hill. The road descends abruptly, and in the valley below is the river Semois circling like a silver coil round a wooded promontory on which show the white houses of the town of Bouillon. The rocky neck of this promontory rises abruptly from the valley at the foot of the road, and on it is the dark frowning castle of Bouillon. Beyond are high hills with table land atop, gold and emerald just now, as corn and turnip fields glow in the sunshine.

Mère Suzanne catches at the driver's arm; between joy and excitement she can scarcely speak.

"Is that—is that the hospital, monsieur?" She points up to the towering fortress across the valley.

"Well, my mother, the hospital is within there—they will tell you, I fancy. Our coach stops at the little inn below"—he points downwards—"for our yard lies across the bridge. You see," he adds, "the town lies on both sides of the river, but you must get out on this side."

"It is not far," she says as she looks

from the place to which he points up to the gloomy fortress.

He shrugs his shoulders.

"You will find it a long climb, my mother, the entrance is on the other side. *Gare—gare!*" he shouts as a timber cart, drawn by two cream-coloured oxen with large soft eyes, comes slowly up hill, the boy in charge lying so sound asleep on the long tree trunks chained to the frail picturesque cart, that even the cracking of the driver's whip fails to rouse him.

"Yes, my mother," he says, when, this danger past, they stop in the front of the little vine-clad inn beside the Semois, "I think it will take you a good hour to climb up to the Château de Bouillon."

CHAPTER IV.

Half way up the ascent Mère Suzanne stopped and she looked behind her. Below lay the quaint and ancient town with the silver river in its midst, flowing on to the right between wooded banks, a charming picture of repose; to the left the stream took so swift a curve as it circled the promontory that it was soon lost to sight.

She could no longer see the castle, for she was directly below it, but as she turned to pursue the upward stony road, she came in sight of the cemetery, which lay behind the shoulder of the hill on the further side of the promontory. It was below her and out of her way, and yet Suzanne felt strongly moved to visit it. It had often soothed her to think that pious hands, all unknown to her, had perhaps laid wreaths on those far-off graves in Italy; and now she too might say a prayer for some poor fellows who had perhaps died of their wounds in the hospital of Bouillon. But no, this must be afterwards—she could not lose a moment in seeking her boy.

Some more toilsome climbing, and then she reached a platform covered with trees in front of the entrance. A sentinel stood grimly before his box. He was young, and he shook his head when Suzanne spoke to him, but he looked compassionate, although he could not understand what she said. Suzanne pulled the doctor's letter out of her pocket, and showed it. The young soldier shook his head again—then, when he had thought a few minutes and had looked carefully at the tired woman, he pointed through the gloomy archway.

Suzanne thanked him, and she passed through the dark portal green with age and damp. Seen through the archway the courtyard had looked nearer, but she found before she reached it, that she had to pass over a drawbridge with awful chasms on either side, and then through another portal. The gloom of the grass-grown neglected-looking court surrounded by the grim walls of the castle was horrible, and she saw as she passed through the passages that water trickled down the walls, and that liverwort and ferns had niched themselves wherever they could. The tired woman shuddered. She had only thought of her boy in a hospital; was he, perhaps, a prisoner in these stern-looking dungeons within the keep?

The door to which she had been directed stood open. She was relieved to see a woman standing just within.

"Ah! good day, my mother," said the woman in French, and Suzanne's spirits revived when she heard her native tongue and saw a friendly Walloon face. "You, perhaps, want the hospital—but it is not this way."

"Yes, yes, madame, it is the hospital I want." Suzanne nearly cried for joy. "I was afraid this was it." She looked up at the black stronghold, which seemed to be a part of the dark rock on which it stood.

"You must come with me," the woman said; "you wish perhaps to see one of our patients. Poor fellows! they do not many of them get visitors—their friends live far away."

Suzanne had felt exhausted while she climbed the hill, but at these words her strength came back. She was close to her son then—in a few minutes she should see him! A lump rose in her throat, for she knew he must be altered—terribly changed by all the suffering he had gone through. Now that she had seen for herself what the journey was from Sedan to Bouillon, she could guess how trying it must have been for these poor wounded soldiers.

"Ah, the poor fellows, they have enough to suffer, but they are well cared for now," the woman went on, talking fast over her shoulder. "Oh, yes, there are some nursing sisters, and my sister Hubertine; I too help when there is no chance of a visitor to see the château. You do not care to see the dungeons, I fancy. Ah! but they are a sight to see, and there are besides the *oubliettes*, and a well so deep that it goes down to the Semois."

She threw back her head as she made this announcement; she was proud of these awful dungeons hewn out of the dark rock. Mère

Suzanne scarcely heard her; they had just come out of a long passage into a larger court, and her eyes were fixed on a range of far more modern buildings than the original château. A group of three gentlemen stood outside the entrance doorway, and one of these was putting something down in a book. Then he nodded to the others and passed quickly out of sight.

"You must speak to one of them, they are both doctors," her conductor said to Suzanne, and then bidding her good-bye the friendly woman went back to her post.

But the doctors were talking together so earnestly that they did not observe the small bent figure that stood meekly watching them.

At first it seemed to Suzanne as if she could not wait—as if she must go forward and push aside the man who blocked the doorway, and then find her way to the bedside of her boy; but Suzanne had long ago given up her will. She was so accustomed to look for guidance that there was little danger she would act rebelliously. While the doctors talked she began to pray, and by the time they broke up their conference she had remembered that she must not murmur against the will of the loving Father, who had brought her thus far safely on her way.

One of the doctors went back into the hospital, and then the other saw Mère Suzanne.

"What is your business, my good woman?" He spoke quickly, but not unkindly.

Suzanne made a low curtsey. "I am your servant, sir," and she handed him the letter addressed to Doctor Godefroi.

He looked at it, then he gave it back to her.

"This is not for me, it is for Dr. Godefroi. He was ill yesterday and he went down into the town, but he may be back to-day. Do you want to see one of his cases?"

"If monsieur pleases." She tried to smile, but her lips trembled too much. "Monsieur will perhaps be so very kind as to tell me where I shall find my boy. He is Auguste Didier from Caudebec, monsieur, and he has been wounded in the battle with a bayonet."

There was a half smile on the doctor's lips.

"My good woman," he said, kindly, "I am afraid you must wait till my colleague returns. We only know our poor fellows by their number in the hospital wards. But you look tired, you must not stand here; come in and rest till Dr. Godefroi comes back. We shall know before long—some one has gone down to fetch him."

Poor Suzanne's head bent still lower; she followed the doctor into a bare room, where a tall woman in a black gown and a white apron stood measuring bits of linen and then folding them on a white table.

The woman looked up as the doctor came in.

"Will you let this person wait here, Hubertine?" he said. "She wants to see Dr. Godefroi, and I fancy he will come before long."

Hubertine looked at Suzanne, and then she pulled forward one of the wooden chairs.

"Will you sit down, madame?" she said; "you must have found the way up so steep."

Suzanne sat down while the nurse went on with her work. The poor mother's lips moved; she longed to ask for her boy, but a great dread possessed her. Now that she was so close to him fear was stronger than hope. At last love triumphed; she got up and stood beside the nurse, looking yet more bent and feeble beside the tall, strong figure.

"Madame," she said, timidly, "can you tell me how it fares with a lad called Auguste Didier? He is my son, or I would not trouble you. He is in the care of Doctor Godefroi."

The tall woman turned such a look of compassion on her, and then Suzanne saw that she had only one eye.

"My friend," said Hubertine, "we do not know the names of our patients, there are so many, and the nurses are so few that we have to go quickly from one bed to another. Even now I am wanted and I must leave you."

"You are, perhaps, going to my Auguste!" Suzanne had unconsciously clasped her hands, and the nurse, well accustomed to read unspoken words, gave her a sad, tender smile.

"Even then I could not take you with me—only the doctor can pass you in; but, indeed, you are mistaken. I do not nurse any of Dr. Godefroi's patients; Sister Françoise is with them. *Allez*," she patted Suzanne's shoulder, "you must hope for the best; your son has the cleverest doctor and the best nurse in the hospital. Sit and rest yourself."

With a nod and a kindly smile she went away with her bandages, and once more Suzanne was left alone.

But now she was less sad; perhaps not more hopeful, but light had come into her troubled soul. It was very comforting to learn that Auguste had been cared for by a sweet-faced Sister of Charity. Suzanne had met several of them in her long, wearisome journey, and she had told herself they had angels' faces.

"And I, what could any one so ignorant have done for him?" but at this thought tears would come streaming over her withered cheeks, till at last she sank down on her knees and prayed earnestly for calm.

She was still praying, so much in earnest that she did not hear the door open.

Suzanne rose up and she saw before her a strange pale face, but she felt sure it was the face of Monsieur Godefroi. He was passing through the room, but she held out the letter before he could reach the opposite door.

"Monsieur, I think you are Doctor Godefroi, and you will take me to see my boy."

She was not timid now; suspense had made her resolute. If the doctor left her she might lose her chance of speech with him.

He gave her a quick look.

"I have not been through my wards yet;" but he opened the letter. He read it, and then he looked keenly at Suzanne; his bright deep-set eyes shone in his pale worn face.

"Come along, my good woman," and he led the way through the door opposite into a ward that opened from the passage. On each side was a row of beds filled with wounded, suffering soldiers. Some were lying still as death itself, others writhed and moaned with anguish.

Mère Suzanne followed the doctor, glancing shyly at each face as she passed. But she saw only grey-haired sufferers here, till she reached the end of the room, and then she spied out a poor young black-eyed fellow tossing about in such fevered anguish that she slipped up beside him and straightened the bed-clothes and smoothed his pillow, and gave him a drink of the water that stood near him.

"Mother!" the poor lad said, "oh, mother, I cannot bear it!"

But the doctor was opening a door at the end, and Suzanne had to follow him.

This was a larger, cooler ward, with a large window at the further end.

A Sister was bending over the bed nearest this window; the bed facing it was empty, and Suzanne seemed to breathe more freely in this isolated corner.

"Well, Sister Françoise," said the doctor, "and how are we all this morning? How is No. 10?" He bent over the bed, and then he looked up at the Sister; they exchanged glances, and the doctor spoke in a low voice. Suzanne could not utter a word; her heart beat so loudly that she seemed to hear it in the silence, for the men here lay quietly as if asleep.

"This is his mother." The doctor did not look round at Suzanne, but he moved aside to let the Sister pass him. She took Suzanne's trembling hands and held them firmly clasped.

"Poor dear mother!" she said, as she smiled down tenderly into Suzanne's faded eyes.

It seemed to Suzanne as if she had known it all before. Through these weary days it had been coming nearer, nearer, hour by hour; and when the Sister said, "He will know you, you shall speak to him, the doctor is telling him you are here," the poor mother felt that this was joy unlooked for. She knew then that her fear had gone even beyond this farewell greeting.

The Sister drew her gently forward, and then went with the doctor to another bedside, while his mother bent over the pale changed face of her son. His sunny hair had all been cut away, but his eyes were raised with a sweet fond smile to hers as she stooped to kiss him. Her hot tears roused him as they fell on his face.

"Dear—little mother!" Auguste's strong young voice was now only a whisper, she could not hear it if she were farther away, "so good—to come—so far! You make me so happy—Mother," he lingered out the word, and then his eyes closed, and a look of sweet peace came on the poor suffering face. . . .

Suzanne thought heaven must already have begun for her darling. She knelt down beside him.

Presently he opened his eyes again, but he did not speak, and then a wonderful peace settled on Auguste's face. He looked like a sleeping child.

* * * * *

Suzanne was still kneeling beside him, when the Sister touched her shoulder.

"Come away, mother," she said, in a tender voice, "your child has gone to rest."

KATHARINE S. MACQUOID.

OLD CHESTER

From a Drawing by H. Railton.

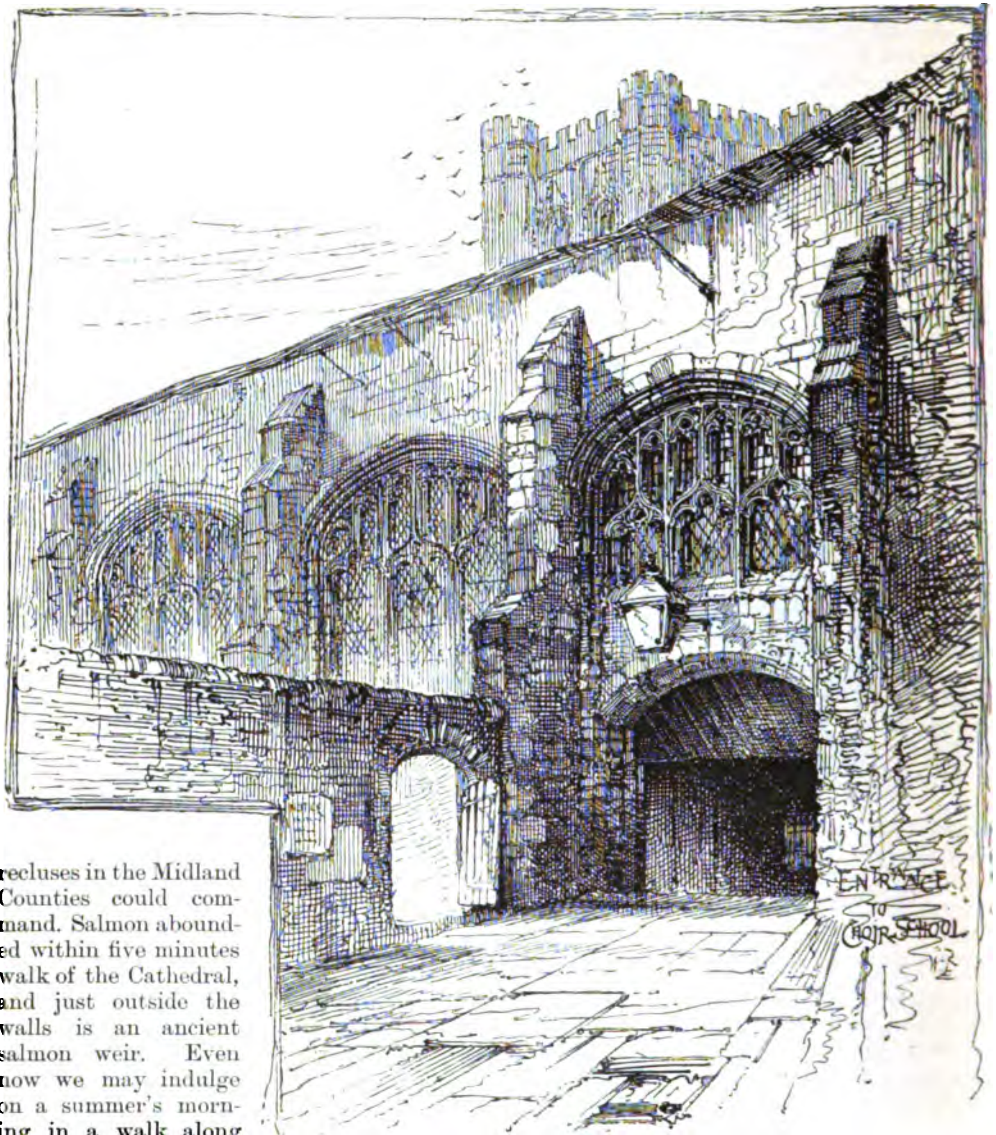
There is no city in England that can equal Chester for interest and curiosity. It is not indeed a happy hunting-ground for artists, as there are few picturesque combinations of buildings, and the Cathedral lies low. The stately minsters of Norwich and York and Lincoln soar above the roofs and gables of the cities and form a hundred picturesque groups with the buildings below them.

There is another drawback to the proper appreciation of the ancient city. There are many Hanoverian fronts that conceal panelled rooms and quaint chimney-pieces and ceilings, which the stranger never suspects. Below the present level of the streets, also, there are many monastic remains, and far below these lies buried a Roman city. This was strikingly illustrated not long ago when excavations were made for re-erecting a house in Whitefriars Street; some four feet below the surface of the soil the workmen came upon many encaustic tiles, and the remains apparently of an abbot's or prior's parlour; this belonged to the Carmelites, or White Friars, whose buildings have long disappeared. And below this, at about four feet, were Roman remains of great beauty—an atrium and massive columns.

But the features which distinguish Chester from all other cities are the walls, and the rows. The walls are quite complete, and form a very pleasant promenade of about one mile and three-quarters. They follow the line of the old Roman walls, and there are many remains of Roman work, at the Northgate there is a long Roman cornice built over massive masonry which is in a very complete state.

But the rows are the chief glory of Chester, and these have no parallel in any other city. The entrance to the Choir School, which is shown on the next page, is of comparatively recent construction. The Deanery faces the front of the school, and one of the Chester Deans had a passage made through it in order to shorten his approach (which it did only by a very few yards) as he left the Deanery preceded by the verger with the ancient mace.

It was the desire of the late Dean Howson to do away with this passage and restore the room to its former dimensions. This was the ancient refectory, and there is a stone pulpit dating back to the thirteenth century, where a monk read aloud some homily or chapter to prevent the brethren from dwelling too much on the delights of the table. These in Chester must have been of a very superior quality and compared favourably with such fare as the



From a Drawing by H. RAILTON.

recluses in the Midland Counties could command. Salmon abounded within five minutes walk of the Cathedral, and just outside the walls is an ancient salmon weir. Even now we may indulge on a summer's morning in a walk along the walls and seeing a couple of men with a boat securing a goodly harvest of these fish. I have sometimes seen as many as six fish taken in half an hour, which, as they weighed from ten to fourteen pounds each and were worth at least a shilling a pound, must have been very profitable work.

Game also abounded in the woods of Cheshire, which were among the most extensive, and the best stocked of any forests in England; indeed, red and fallow deer could be found within a mile of the city gates.

This refectory was afterwards used as the King's School, but a new building has recently been erected in its place.

The total length of the noble room of which three bays are shown here, was ninety feet, and the width was thirty-four. It was the wish of Dean Howson to extend it to its former dimensions as the walls are still standing and strong, and to let it be converted into a public library.

If when we leave the cathedral we proceed down Northgate Street we shall arrive at what is called the Cross, or the place where

From a Drawing by H. Railton.

the four principal streets in the city meet each other. Here the high cross used to stand and all proclamations were read.

If we turn to the right we shall find ourselves in Watergate Street, where the third sketch admirably shows an ancient gabled house that clearly belongs to the early part of Elizabeth's reign. Of this dwelling I have never been able to obtain any history, but it must have belonged to some very noble residence. The part shown can be little more than the great hall, and though it is cut up into rooms with boarded partitions we can trace the grand ceiling with its pendants. There is a great fireplace in this hall which reaches to the springing of the roof, but it is boarded up, and I have never been able to get a sight of it; the

From a Drawing by H. RAILTON.

tenant refuses permission and has never seen it himself. It is believed, however, to be very fine indeed. Here we may be said to come to the very middle of this quaint city: a narrow passage runs by this house and leads to a quaint old mansion now unoccupied, and it is not too much to say hardly known, except by tradition, to the inhabitants of Chester. It is a most tenantable place, and might be rented for a nominal sum by any one who was not very particular about an approach to his residence. There is an immense stained glass window in the hall that has been filled from some of the ecclesiastical buildings, and in an upper room there is a chimney piece that is intensely

interesting, not only to an antiquary, but to a naturalist. The monks of Falaise had a branch of their body in Chester, and they imported fig plants which grew and prospered amazingly, indeed, so much as to have confirmed a supposition that some few hundred years ago the climate of England was warmer than it now is. Still, however, in some old farm gardens that were on the estates of the monasteries in Cheshire there are remains of fig trees that yet flourish, and perhaps have become acclimatised. In the chimney-piece already alluded to there are two birds with their beaks deep in green figs, and often I have tried to find a solution to this (for this quaint residence was at one time occupied by the writer), but when I saw a beccafico the mystery was solved. These two birds are good representations of the beccaficoes, or fig-peckers, and almost a conclusive proof that this supreme delicacy arrived at fig time in Chester, and doubtless contributed to the bill of fare of the Benedictine monks of St. Werburgh. The fig still is cultivated in Sussex, and there these birds are common visitants in the fig season. There are hawking scenes, and many quaint panels in other parts of the same house, and close by, as these lines are written, an excavation has brought to light some interesting Roman architecture.

Lower down in the street, and within three minutes of the race-course, that has caused so many pangs of sorrow, is Bishop Lloyd's house.

This has also been excellently shown by the artist, and the interior is almost as little known as the secluded residence just described. But there is a noble dining-room in it, richly ornamented, and quite fit in splendour and size for any magnate in the kingdom to entertain his guests in. The panels in the fronts of this house are, to say the least, very quaint, indeed it is Christian charity itself to include one of them in the adjective.

The next illustration is of a Chester row, where the system of rows may be seen in its perfection. It is the carved row under Bishop Lloyd's house, and this will convey as good an idea of a Chester row as can be given by pencil.

The origin of the rows is not only involved in obscurity, but in all human probability will continue so to the end of the chapter. All theories are hopelessly wide of probability, and we may just refer to the two which have gained the greatest number of adherents.

One supposition is that they were constructed as a defence against any sudden attack of the Welsh horsemen when they had forced the gates of the city; but against this theory we may say that in other towns, such as Shrewsbury, which was much more exposed to the Welsh frontier, we should have had some similar arrangement, whereas there is nothing at all resembling it anywhere. Then there were the walls and gates which the Welsh never forced through, besides which the "mountain squires," as Pistol calls them, had no cavalry.

Equally wide of the mark is the supposition that claims a Roman origin—for other cities and towns where Roman traces are left behind would surely have afforded some parallel instance of architecture; and then again, though Stukely in his *Itinerary* in 1724 says, "The rows or piazzas are singular through the whole town, giving shelter to the foot-people. I fancied it a remain of Roman porticoes," he should have added that they bear no resemblance to anything of the kind we know of in ancient Rome. The original form of the rows may yet be seen in Bridge Street. They were low galleries supported by heavy oak beams, on which the overhanging gables of the houses rested and projected far over the footwalk; a few of these are left, but as a general rule when an alteration is made the row is made much higher, and light columns are substituted for the heavy oak standards. The heavy wooden rows would hardly point to a Roman type. And then indeed if we remember that the Romans were succeeded by barbarians of whom we know little or nothing—though we call them Picts and Scots—and these demolished the Roman city to make way in later years for Ecclesiastical buildings, which in their grace and beauty covered Chester when Gothic architecture was in its glory, we shall be further than ever from accepting the Roman theory. Not long ago, the fourteenth century encaustic tiling which overlay the Roman atrium, to which allusion has been made, was covered up, and the rows in no instance can date back to the fourteenth century, though it is not at all improbable that there may have been some indication of them then, though there is nothing at all to substantiate such a theory even as that. But as for any Roman remains we have, or even know of, accounting for the rows, these had been in ruins for a thousand years before any row we know of was built.

> "Antiquity appears to have begun
> Long after thy primæval race was run."

There is indeed one theory that commends itself as the one that has the fewest objections, though it is a very homely one, and that is—that the construction of the rows is the result of accident. We cannot find any actual remains that date farther back than the beginning of the fifteenth century, and in a securely walled city it is evident that the rows made the very most of the space for commercial purposes; besides this they afforded the best protection from summer heats and winter snows and rains, and as an American who saw them for the first time said, "They are the best forms for a county-town that have ever been devised by the skill of man." We may then, at any rate, get clear of our difficulty concerning the origin by admitting that the designers chose the best models that could be found, and the excellence of their plans recommended itself to successive builders; for if a model county town had now to be laid out, the system on which Chester is built would be incomparably the best. There are some magnificent rooms in Bishop Lloyd's house, now put to humble purposes.

CHESTER ROW UNDER BISHOP LLOYD'S.
From a Drawing by H. Railton.

After passing Bishop Lloyd's we come to the "Yacht Inn," a fine gabled hostelrie opposite to the great quadrangle where the cheese fairs are held every month. There it was that Dean Swift stayed on his road to Dublin, and he invited the dignitaries of the Cathedral to have supper with him, but they declined, so he wrote with a diamond ring on a pane of glass in the window :—

> "Mouldy without—rotten within,
> The church and its clergy are all near akin,"

and this inscription remained for many years.

Between the "Yacht Inn" and Bishop Lloyd's house is a very beautiful example of black and white architecture, called the "Custom House Inn," the exterior of which seems not to have been altered or "restored," and opposite this is a fine old mansion connected with which there is a story so

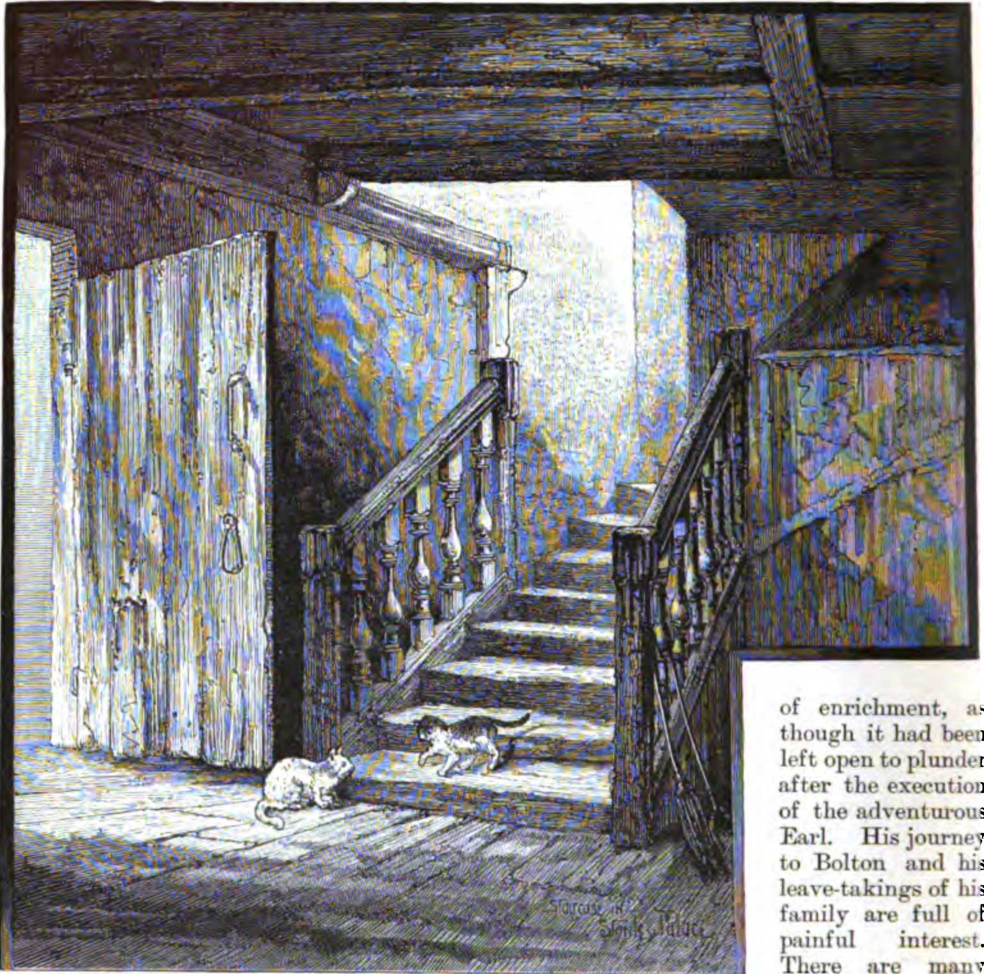
dramatic, that it would require no embellishing to convert it into a sensational three volume novel.

At one time Chester, like other county towns, contained the town houses of the principal county families, who retired here for the "season." London was a pilgrimage to reach, and even to the end of the last century, the society was exclusiveness itself. Merchants and bankers were hardly admitted, even slave-owners, who were considered perhaps to follow the most respectable branch of business, could only with difficulty gain admittance. Into the middle of this exclusive region, Mr. Joshua Horton, a gentleman from London, was freely admitted with his family. He occupied the house spoken of, and rented a county seat called Cotton Hook four miles from Chester for three lives.

From a Drawing by H. Railton.

His hospitalities were great, and indeed it became quite a privilege to have the *entrée* of his mansion, though he was courtesy itself to all comers. There were many surmises as to who the stranger might be, but his prompt payments and affluence, and his distinguished bearing pointed him out to be some one superior, and surmise even went so far as to say that he belonged to the ill-starred family of Stuart; and his money came from France.

His next door neighbour was Alderman Mainwaring, the head of a great Cheshire family, and at the time about to be alluded to, the city was full of the aristocracy of the county. The Egertons, and Leighs, and Wilbrahams, and Cholmondleys, and many others, had houses there, and these were occupied by the families. One night in the early part of the year 1700, there had been the usual festivities, and torchmen, and sedan-chairmen were conveying the revellers home, when a curious light was seen in Mr. Horton's house. A cry of fire was raised, and the volunteers to help were astonished to find the door barricaded; and they heard people moving inside. An entrance was forced, and there was a great scramble to escape; every one did except Mr. Horton, who turned out to be the chief of a desperate gang of coiners. The crucibles were there full of metal, and one which had upset caused the conflagration. Dies and everything were found. On the 8th of April, 1700, Chief-Justice Jekyll opened a special assize in Chester to try this late addition to the ranks of the county aristocrats. He was, of course, found guilty and condemned to death. Some legal points were however raised in his behalf, and these were referred to London; and taking advantage of the delay he seems to have managed to make his peace with the sheriff who doubtless had often enjoyed his hospitality,—for his career extended over some three or four years,—and he made his escape, for which the sheriff was heavily fined. This worthy must have made friends when he had the opportunity, for he lived and died in obscurity, and was never called on to expiate his crimes.



From a Drawing by H. Railton.

The house where his operations were carried on was altered, if not almost rebuilt, shortly after his trial and until recently was used as the "Judges' Lodgings" for Chester

In Watergate Street also is the celebrated Stanley Palace, where Lord Derby, who was concerned in the rising to restore the worthless representative of the Stuarts in 1655, spent his last night before he was taken to Bolton for execution. There is some beautiful work about the front, but it is unhappily falling into decay for want of due care.

The staircase of the Stanley Palace is very unequal to the exterior, and one almost wonders to see it in connection with such a fine piece of architecture, but the whole house, of which only a portion can be left, is completely denuded of every kind of enrichment, as though it had been left open to plunder after the execution of the adventurous Earl. His journey to Bolton and his leave-takings of his family are full of painful interest. There are many incidents of it recorded in Chester that are not generally published, and one only regrets and wonders that so noble a man should have suffered himself to be so very far misled.

Before leaving Watergate Street we must narrate one other circumstance which has a lurid interest, since the attempts that have been comparatively recently made to destroy property in England by means of dynamite. If we revert to the picture of the row under Bishop Lloyd's house, we shall notice some road-ways on the right-hand side that lead up to alleys, all of which are inhabited. The first one is called "Puppet-show Entry," from an appalling accident which happened there in 1772, on the 5th of November of all days in the year.

A large room was taken for a "puppet-show" entertainment, some sort of marion-

ette performance, and this was filled with spectators, when suddenly there was an awful explosion that woke up the city. For in a grocery store below the show a barrel that contained 800 pounds of gunpowder blew up, and 106 persons were fearfully damaged. Of these 23, including the showman, were killed on the spot, 53 were conveyed to the hospital, many of these succumbed, and 30 more were quartered in the city. There is one singular circumstance about this explosion, all the force was upwards, and though of course the whole of the floors, and the roof were utterly demolished, the walls were uninjured, and though, indeed, we may see how ancient the stacks of chimneys are; there was not a single one disturbed.

The next illustration takes us to Bridge Street, which in strict parlance should be called Southgate Street, as it leads us to the south gate of the ancient city, but the circumstance of its being the road to the bridge which spanned the Dee overcame its more obvious appellation. There are many fine remains here, and the shops are in numbers of instances built over splendidly groined and arched crypts, of which no history is preserved; some of these at the upper end of the street are connected with similar ones in Watergate Street. They are not exposed to view, but may be seen in most cases by a request being made to the shopkeeper under whose premises they are.

At the top of Bridge Street on the left-hand side is a fine old gabled house, on the front of which some very good carved work was recently exposed that had been covered up with plaster, and it is in excellent preservation. Unhappily the city fathers are moving for the demolition of this ancient pile, to *widen* the street, though indeed it has never been encumbered with too much traffic since it was a street. A little lower down on the same side is all that remains of the old "Blue Posts" inn, about which there is another legend of undoubted authenticity, though it takes us farther back than either of the others, but documents are yet extant that attest to its accuracy.

From a Drawing by H. RAILTON.

In 1558—the last year of the reign of Queen Mary—Dr. Henry Cole the Dean of

St. Paul's was sent to Chester on a special commission from the Queen to prosecute the heretics of Ireland who were beginning to increase alarmingly. This hostelrie was then kept by a Mrs. Mottershead, a singular name that yet survives in the street. The Mayor of Chester called at the inn to pay his respects to the Dean, and Mrs. Mottershead overheard the Dean say exultingly that he carried that which would "lash all the heretics in Ireland," and then he took out a leather box and showed it exultingly to his worship. Now the landlady had a brother in Dublin, and anxious for his safety she took occasion during the night to abstract the commission from the leather box, and substitute a pack of cards tied together by a thread, with the knave of clubs uppermost. On his arrival at Dublin he presented his box to the Lord Deputy and the Privy Council, who were surprised to find such an authority, and at once dismissed him. He returned to London to retrieve his loss, but on his arrival he learned that his Royal Mistress was dead, and Elizabeth granted Mrs. Mottershead a pension of forty pounds a year for the part she had taken in the transaction, a sum that would at least represent £500 of our money. The building which is called the "Falcon Inn" is directly opposite to the hostelrie where the adventure narrated occurred. Since the etching was made, which gives an excellent idea of the place as it stood, the Duke of Westminster, to whom it belongs, commissioned the late Mr. Smith to repair and alter the building. He removed the plaster and discovered a front that had for years been hidden, and the building is so superior to anything that had been supposed, that it might be regarded now as the best "black and white" in Chester. So far as style gives any indication of age, it probably belongs to the reign of Henry VIII., though the stone archway points to a still earlier date. There is no record of it left or anything to show what its original use was, but it probably was the residence of some comfortable burgess, and afterwards converted into the "Falstaff Inn."

Above this was the celebrated old Lamb Row which Cuitt has left one or two etchings of. It must have been one of the most picturesque buildings in England, or one might almost say in Europe at the time of its collapse. This building was not large, but the galleries and gables and hanging roofs must have stood almost alone for quaintness.

The *Chester Guide* says, "The age of this row is pretty clearly determined by the inscription on a stone in the building that was discovered after the fall, $16\text{–}\frac{\text{H}}{\text{R.H.}}\text{–}55$. Such a stone was indeed found, and perhaps yet exists. But it is clearly inaccurate to suppose that any date on any stone that may indeed have filled any capacity is to be taken as a voucher for the age of the building, yet this date is constantly quoted as the one when this remarkable structure was erected.

The real date of the building would be about two centuries earlier, and as the "Falcon" in Cuitt's remarkable etching has in a less pronounced form the same features, we may conclude that the latter, which certainly dates to Henry VIII., is the more recent building. Old Lamb Row fell down without notice early in the present century, but nobody was hurt, indeed it is recorded that a very old woman who was smoking a pipe by a kitchen fire miraculously escaped. In the etching of Cuitt the old quatrefoil panels in the "Falcon," which have been only so very recently discovered, are shown as they appear at present. There was another inn called the "Falcon" in Northgate, which was the scene of several singular episodes.

About the year 1720 a man came from London and lodged here, he had a very large sum of money with him which he had robbed from a bank, where he was employed as a clerk. And one night he heard the constables come up stairs and try to enter his room, this of course was fastened inside, and he found time to make away with his plunder by throwing it out of the window into the yard. He was taken to London, but nothing could be proved against him, so he was acquitted, though he was afterwards arrested for some other offence, and executed.

One Mr. Jarvis had a small loom and a yard adjoining the "Falcon," and up to that time he was never in affluent circumstances, but he appropriated the money, and laid it out to such advantage that he was soon able to purchase a large estate at Mollington, a beautiful country-place three miles from Chester, and here he built himself a fine house. He became mayor of the city, when this office was considered to confer great honour, and was even pricked for the higher honour of the shrievalty of the county, but he died before the appointment was confirmed.

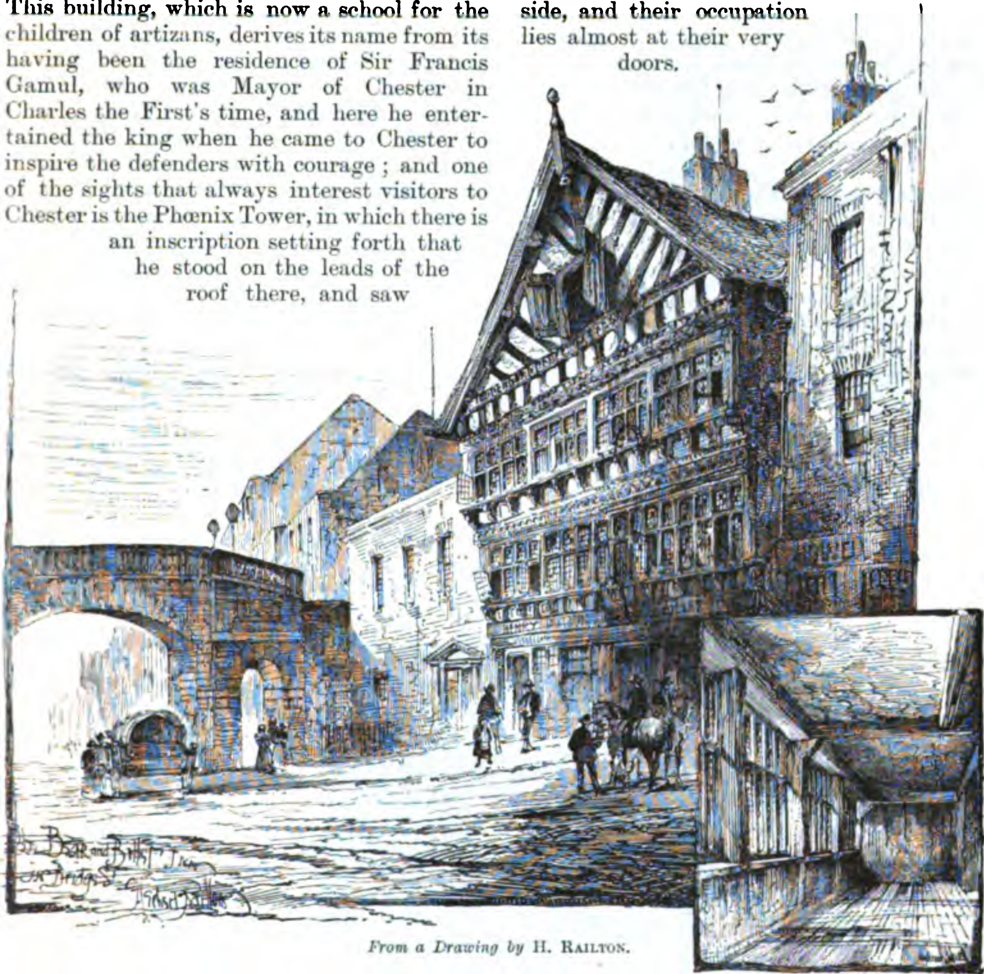
Below the Falcon are remains of many black and white houses, and some very fine old mansions that were formerly the abodes of the aristocracy of Cheshire.

There is a beautiful example of early Elizabethan architecture at the corner of Castle Street, a street so called from its leading to Chester Castle. This house is called the

King's Head, and the exterior is in very perfect condition. The gable forms the heading of the present chapter. All remains of antiquity would appear to have been removed, as there is said to be nothing of interest inside.

Lower down the street on the same side is what is called Gamul House, a very unsightly pile, but there is some fine work inside it. This building, which is now a school for the children of artizans, derives its name from its having been the residence of Sir Francis Gamul, who was Mayor of Chester in Charles the First's time, and here he entertained the king when he came to Chester to inspire the defenders with courage; and one of the sights that always interest visitors to Chester is the Phœnix Tower, in which there is an inscription setting forth that he stood on the leads of the roof there, and saw his cavaliers routed by the soldiers of Cromwell. Lower down the same side of the street is the very interesting inn called the "Bear and Billet." This was the first house that travellers to Chester came to in coaching times. The front as will be seen is very fine indeed, one mass in fact of enrichment and glass. This adjoins the ancient bridge, and the celebrated Dee mills. All this part of the city must at one time have revelled in beauty. The old watch tower and gate are preserved in more or less meritorious etchings of the period, but whatever these may be worth, they at least leave us enough to show that all the surroundings of old Chester bridge were incomparably beautiful.

Just below the bridge and almost adjoining it is the celebrated King's Pool just below the ancient bridge that has spanned the river for centuries. Handbridge the abode of the fishermen lies on the other side, and their occupation lies almost at their very doors.



From a Drawing by H. Railton.

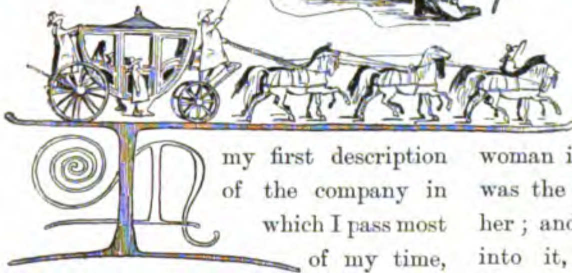
There is in an old book of Chester that lies before me a curious statement of the plenty of salmon in old times. "In that useful article, salmon, no market in the kingdom did, some years ago, excel it, indeed such was the profusion of this valuable fish, that masters were often restricted by a clause of indenture from giving it more than twice a week to their apprentices!" A note of exclamation follows the statement, as indeed it may, for even if salmon were more nauseous than it is—and there are many to whom the

fish is extremely distasteful—the fancies of the apprentices were not in those days sufficiently important to be humoured. But it is singular that a similar legend attaches to every salmon river in the country, and to some that, like the Mersey, have not seen a salmon for many generations. Every one has heard of them, but though indentures and copies of indentures can be found of great antiquity, there is not a single instance of such a clause being preserved, and one fears it must be consigned to the legendary cures effected by touching for king's evil, or the divining rod of the miners, for discovering the whereabouts of metals.

Since writing the above, I was induced to go and see if any trace of the "Blue Posts" where Mrs. Mottershead so successfully played the "card trick" upon the unsuspecting Dean of St. Paul's was left. The memory still lingers about the spot, and it is now occupied by a boot and shoe shop. On making inquiry I was told that though the front was not a hundred years old, the ancient house lay behind it. And this is another instance of the ignorance of Chester men who are supposed to be well informed concerning the antique treasures of their ancient city.

The proprietor of the shop at once took me up stairs and showed me a magnificent room with a quaintly panelled ceiling, which he said had from time out of mind been called the "card-room," and then he told me the history of the commissioner and the pack of cards, differing in no material respects from the narration above. Tradition has, he said, for centuries pointed to this as being the actual room where Mrs. Mottershead saved the Irish heretics, and secured her own competence. There is nothing whatever in the red-brick front to the shop that would indicate such ancient treasure, and it is passed thousands of times by those who would be deeply interested in it, but have no knowledge of its existence.

ALFRED RIMMER.



In my first description of the company in which I pass most of my time, it may be remembered that I mentioned a great affliction which my friend Sir ROGER had met with in his youth; which was no less than a disappointment in love. It happened this evening that we fell into a very pleasing walk at a distance from his house: As soon as we came into it, "It is," quoth the good old man, looking round him with a smile, "very hard, that any part of my land should be settled upon one who has used me so ill as the perverse widow did; and yet I am sure I could not see a sprig of any bough of this whole walk of trees, but I should reflect upon her and her severity. She has certainly the finest hand of any woman in the world. You are to know this was the place wherein I used to muse upon her; and by that custom I can never come into it, but the same tender sentiments revive in my mind, as if I had actually walked with that beautiful creature under these shades. I have been fool enough to carve her name on the bark of several of these trees; so unhappy is the condition of men in love, to attempt the removing of their passions by the methods which serve only to imprint it deeper. She has certainly the finest hand of any woman in the world."

Here followed a profound silence; and I was not displeased to observe my friend

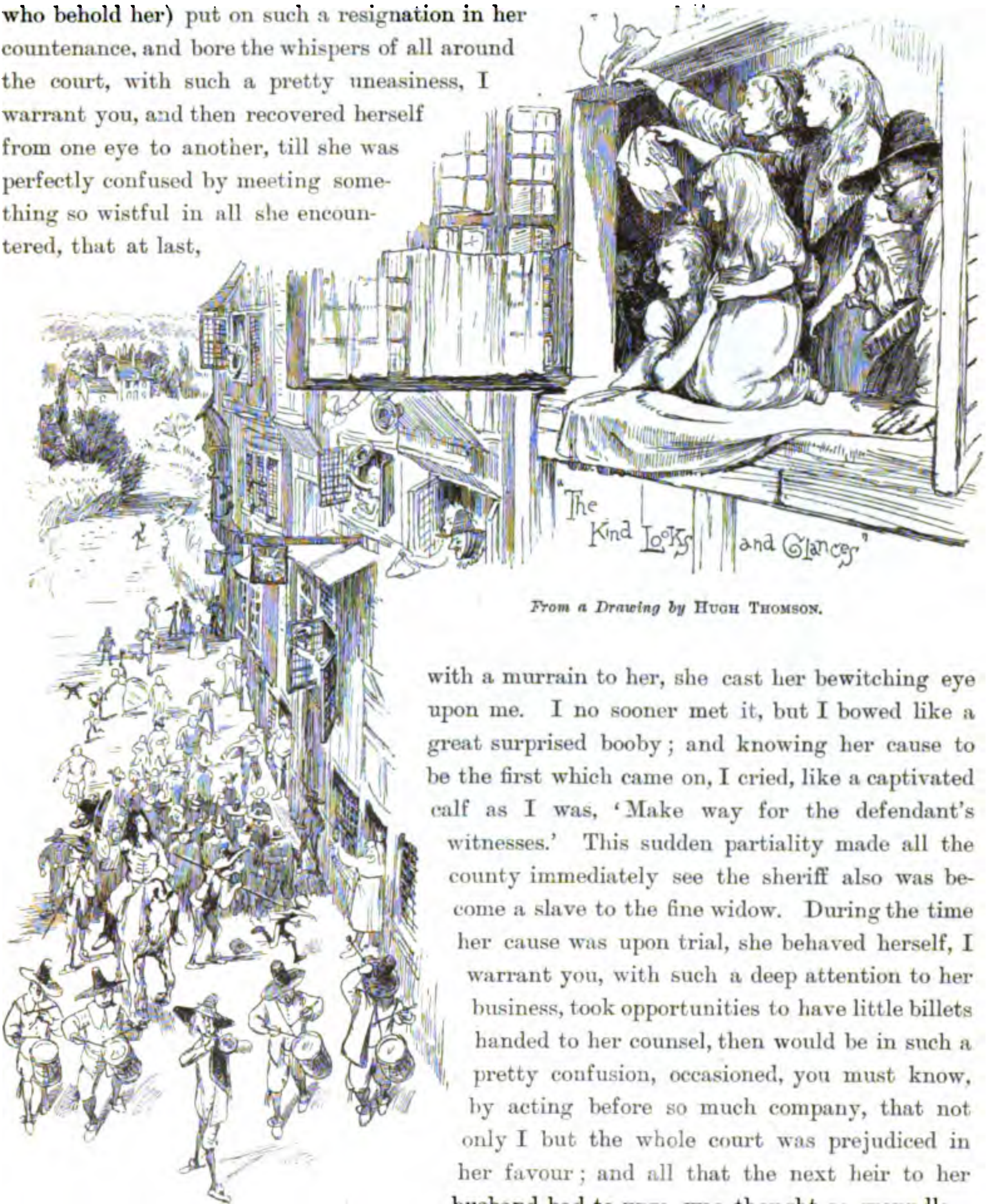
falling so naturally into a discourse, which I had ever before taken notice he industriously avoided. After a very long pause he entered upon an account of this great circumstance in his life, with an air which I thought raised my idea of him above what I had ever had before; and gave me the picture of that the methods of hospitality and good neighbourhood, for the sake of my fame; and in country sports and recreations, for the sake of my health. In my twenty-third year I was obliged to serve as sheriff of the county; and in my servants, officers and whole equipage, indulged the pleasure of a young

From a Drawing by HUGH THOMSON.

chearful mind of his, before it received that stroke which has ever since affected his words and actions. But he went on as follows.

"I came to my estate in my twenty-second year, and resolved to follow the steps of the most worthy of my ancestors who have inhabited this spot of earth before me, in all man (who did not think ill of his own person) in taking that public occasion of shewing my figure and behaviour to advantage. You may easily imagine to yourself what appearance I made, who am pretty tall, rid well, and was very well dressed, at the head of a whole county, with musick before me, a feather in

my hat, and my horse well bitted. I can assure you I was not a little pleased with the kind looks and glances I had from all the balconies and windows as I rode to the hall where the assizes were held. But when I came there, a beautiful creature in a widow's habit sat in court, to hear the event of a cause concerning her dower. This commanding creature (who was born for the destruction of all who behold her) put on such a resignation in her countenance, and bore the whispers of all around the court, with such a pretty uneasiness, I warrant you, and then recovered herself from one eye to another, till she was perfectly confused by meeting something so wistful in all she encountered, that at last,



From a Drawing by Hugh Thomson.

with a murrain to her, she cast her bewitching eye upon me. I no sooner met it, but I bowed like a great surprised booby; and knowing her cause to be the first which came on, I cried, like a captivated calf as I was, 'Make way for the defendant's witnesses.' This sudden partiality made all the county immediately see the sheriff also was become a slave to the fine widow. During the time her cause was upon trial, she behaved herself, I warrant you, with such a deep attention to her business, took opportunities to have little billets handed to her counsel, then would be in such a pretty confusion, occasioned, you must know, by acting before so much company, that not only I but the whole court was prejudiced in her favour; and all that the next heir to her husband had to urge, was thought so groundless and frivolous, that when it came to her counsel to reply, there was not half so much said as every one besides in the court thought he could have urged to her advantage. You must understand, Sir, this perverse woman is one of those unaccountable creatures, that secretly rejoice in the admiration of men,

but indulge themselves in no farther consequences. Hence it is that she has ever had a train of admirers, and she removes from her slaves in town to those in the country, according to the seasons of the year. She is a reading lady, and far gone in the pleasures of friendship: She is always accompanied by a confident, who is witness to her daily protestations against our sex, and consequently a bar to her first steps towards love, upon the strength of her own maxims and declarations.

"However, I must needs say this accomplished mistress of mine has distinguished me above the rest, and has been known to declare Sir ROGER DE COVERLEY was the tamest and most humane of all the brutes in the country. I was told she said so, by one who thought he rallied me; but upon the strength of this slender encouragement of being thought least detestable, I made new liveries, new-pair'd my coach horses, sent them all to town to be bitted, and taught to throw their legs well, and move all together, before I pretended to cross the country, and wait upon her. As soon as I thought my retinue suitable to the character of my fortune and youth, I set out from hence to make my addresses. The particular skill of this lady has ever been to inflame your wishes, and yet command respect. To make her mistress of this art, she has a greater share of knowledge, wit, and good sense, than is usual even among men of merit. Then she is beautiful beyond the race of women. If you won't let her go on with a certain artifice with her eyes, and the skill of beauty, she will arm herself with her real charms, and strike you with admiration instead of desire. It is certain that if you were to behold the whole woman, there is that dignity in her aspect, that composure in her motion, that complacency in her manner, that if her form makes you hope, her merit

From a Drawing by HUGH THOMSON.

makes you fear. But then again, she is such a desperate scholar, that no country-gentleman can approach her without being a jest. As I was going to tell you, when I came to her house I was admitted to her presence with great civility; at the same time she placed herself to be first seen by me in such an attitude, as I think you call the posture of a picture, that she discovered new charms, and I at last came towards her my sentiments on these important particulars. Her confident sat by her, and upon my being in the last confusion and silence, this malicious aid of hers turning to her says, 'I am very glad to observe Sir Roger pauses upon this subject, and seems resolved to deliver all his sentiments upon the matter when he pleases to speak.' They both kept their countenances, and after I had sat half an hour meditating how to behave before such

From a Drawing by Hugh Thomson.

with such an awe as made me speechless. This she no sooner observed but she made her advantage of it, and began a discourse to me concerning love and honour, as they both are followed by pretenders, and the real votaries to them. When she discussed these points in a discourse, which I verily believe was as learned as the best philosopher in *Europe* could possibly make, she asked me whether she was so happy as to fall in with profound casuists, I rose up and took my leave. Chance has since that time thrown me very often in her way, and she as often has directed a discourse to me which I do not understand. This barbarity has kept me ever at a distance from the most beautiful object my eyes ever beheld. It is thus also she deals with all mankind, and you must make love to her, as you would conquer the sphinx, by posing her. But were she like

other women, and that there were any talking to her, how constant must the pleasure of that man be, who could converse with the creature— But, after all, you may be sure her heart is fixed on some one or other; and yet I have been credibly inform'd; but who can believe half that is said? After she had done speaking to me, she put her hand has certainly the finest hand of any woman in the world. I can assure you, Sir, were you to behold her, you would be in the same condition; for as her speech is musick, her form is angelick. But I find I grow irregular while I am talking of her; but indeed it would be stupidity to be unconcerned at such perfection. Oh the excellent creature!

"Has directed a Discourse to me which I do not understand."

From a Drawing by HUGH THOMSON.

to her bosom and adjusted her tucker. Then she cast her eyes a little down, upon my beholding her too earnestly. They say she sings excellently; her voice in her ordinary speech has something in it inexpressibly sweet. You must know I dined with her at a publick table the day after I first saw her, and she helped me to some tansy in the eye of all the gentlemen in the country. She she is as inimitable to all women. as she is inaccessible to all men."

I found my friend begin to rave, and insensibly led him towards the house, that we might be joined by some other company; and am convinced that the widow is the secret cause of all that inconsistency which appears in some parts of my friend's discourse; tho' he has so much command of

himself as not directly to mention her, yet according to that of *Martial*, which one knows not how to render into *English*, *Dum tacet hanc loquitur*. I shall end this paper with that whole epigram, which represents with much humour my honest friend's condition.

Quicquid agit Rufus, nihil est, nisi Nævia Rufo,
Si gaudet, si flet, si tacet, hanc loquitur:
Cœnat, propinat, poscet, negat, annuit, una est
Nævia; si non sit Nævia, mutus erit.
Scriberet hesterná patri cùm luce salutem,
Nævia lux, inquit, Nævia numen, ave.
Epig. 69, l. 1.

Let *Rufus* weep, rejoice, stand, sit, or walk,
Still he can nothing but of *Nævia* talk;
Let him eat, drink, ask questions, or dispute,
Still he must speak of *Nævia*, or be mute.
He writ to his father, ending with this line,
I am, my lovely *Nævia*, ever thine.

"I AM, MY LOVELY NÆVIA, EVER THINE."
From a Drawing by HUGH THOMSON.

A GARDEN OF MEMORIES.

IV.

WHY NOT?

HY does she not let Mr. Brydon have his cottages at once? It was the very question the young man asked himself as he sat that evening in his little room at the factory. As he bent over his desk, propping his forehead on one hand while with the other he pencilled figures on a loose sheet of paper, he looked like the incarnation of intense research, though he was really musing as idly as Miss Hillier herself. Why would not Miss Wynne part with her garden?

Her distress had been evident. A memory of her gentle dejected face floated between his eyes and the paper, so faint that he went on scribbling his figures right through it, and yet it seemed somehow to cling to him. Never once had she attempted to explain her refusal. "Oh, how cruel I am!" she had said, as she looked out at the poor little wretch in the lane, and Brydon believed in the sincerity of the cry. But she had not uttered a word to justify, or even to extenuate her cruelty. She had spoken as if it were inevitable—"It must be; I can't help it"—while expressly avowing that there was nothing below the surface which was a legal hindrance to the sale. "I can't," she had said, "and yet of course I *could*." He put all these speeches of hers together in his mind and considered them. "I wonder what her reason is, for she must have a reason. I know she has, because she won't give me any. If she hadn't one she would have invented half a dozen."

He looked at the paper on which he had been scribbling. He had absently written down the sum which he proposed to give Miss Wynne, and then had multiplied it, and multiplied that again till it swelled to a fabulous amount. "And I suppose she'd tell me that *that* wouldn't buy it!" he said to himself. "Should I believe her?"

He turned sideways to his table, flung his legs over the arm of his chair, and proceeded to light his pipe. The window of his room looked into Garden Lane. The blind was drawn down but the sash was raised for air, and a man staggered along in the roadway below, howling a song. "Hezekiah Barnes, if I'm not mistaken, home from the 'Hand and Flower.'" The discordant yell was suddenly interrupted by a torrent of shrill abuse. "Just so," said Brydon, half aloud. "Betsy Barnes it is. There's no mistaking *her!* Ah, he's going in—head foremost, I should think. And now I suppose Hezekiah junior, and Ada, and Minnie, and Fred, and the little ones, are all waking up to have their minds improved, and perhaps to join in the fray. Well, *I* can't help it."

He smoked on, staring fixedly at the wall. It was coarsely papered with a representation of large blocks of granite. The paper was discoloured and torn in one corner where the damp had come in, and the contrast between its shabby flimsiness and the stately solidity which it mocked was grotesque. The flaring gas had blackened the ceiling and grimed the whole room. Thomas Brydon gazed at his granite, got up, laid his hand upon it,

leant his shoulder against it. He had never taken much heed of it before; he had left the dirty little office as he found it when he became master. It had been good enough for his uncle, it was good enough for him. And the wall had been the boundary of his dominion. But now he felt it merely an obstacle; he braced himself as if he would have conquered it by sheer might of muscle, as if he would have thrust himself through, where, at arm's length—he had never realised before how literally the object of his desire was at arm's length—the full moon was shining on the blossoming limes. The slender boughs were swaying softly in the fresh night air, which smelt of their sweetness; they touched the brick-work with light leaf sprays, and delicate moving shadows, while on the other side he faced his torn and faded wall-paper, and felt himself as hopelessly shut out as by squared blocks of adamant. "*What* is there in the garden that she can't part with?" he mused. "It isn't as if she had known it long. By Jove, it's like the old rhyme—

"'Mary, Mary, quite contrary,
What does your garden grow?'"

The conceit pleased him, and in a whimsical way seemed to put him on better terms with his neighbour. Henceforth she was something more than "Miss Wynne" to him, she was the "Mary, Mary," whose "contrariness" was an acknowledged fact since the days of his childhood. Evidently she was only fulfilling her destiny.

She sat alone that night on the cushioned window-seat of her parlour, wrapped in a soft white shawl, and resting her arm on the sill. Behind her the lamp burned steadily, a yellow globe, and the little moths came hurrying in from the shadows of the trees.

The garden was blossoming for her with all its memories, but after all how few and small they were! She had been about half a year with the Macleans, and out of those six months there had been nearly three weeks of sweet remembrance. Eighteen days—no more—during which Philip had idled about those mossy walks, reading, smoking, dreaming, and sometimes, with a finger in his book, studying the glimpses of blue through the sweeping cedar boughs, or the little plants that grew in the crevices of the buttressed wall. Not so much as eighteen hours—not eighteen half-hours out of those days, in which Philip had talked, in his gentle, rather melancholy fashion—generally choosing the most interesting of all subjects—himself. Mary had never listened to a young man's confidences before, and she accepted them as an appeal, a trust reposed in her which claimed her gratitude and loyalty. His hopes, his fears, his plans, his wrongs, as he let them fall from his half-smiling lips, were gathered into a tender little heart and cherished there. She remembered the very spot where he stood, looking round, and said that he should never forget the place. "I shall think of it wherever I may go. I should like to come back years hence, perhaps, and find it just the same, only mellowed and ripened with the sun of a few more seasons—the passion-flower grown higher about the study window, the wistaria a little further along the west wall, just enough to show it had been living while I was gone. It is the sweetest old garden I ever saw. It is like a convent garden. I feel as if there were something sacred about it. I like the roofs and houses all round, and this one spot, sheltered and green and blossoming. I shall dream of it when I am—heaven knows where I shall be! Perhaps in some suburban street with half-a-dozen geraniums on the window sill. More likely in some big dreary new country, which is only proud of its so many square miles, and hasn't such a thing as an old wall. The flowers will all be new acquaintances there—how homesick I shall be! How I shall dream of the sweet-smelling bushes here—myrtle, and bay, and rosemary, and lavender! I think I should like to be buried here when I die—laid in the soft black earth to come up in spring in homely old-fashioned flowers. Would you set sweet Basil over me, I wonder? But I want to come back here alive first, just to feel the quiet sunny welcome of the place, to smell the earth and leaves and flowers, and hear the bees. What nonsense all this is! I dare say the garden will be sold and spoilt long before I come back to it!"

"Oh, if I could save it for you!" thought Mary, and ached with an impotent longing to give him his fancy.

He had gone away soon afterwards, leaving the memory of words and glances, which might mean all or nothing, and little more substantial except a list of books scribbled on the fly-leaf of an old letter, and an outline, on a page torn from his little sketch-book, of the house where his earliest childhood had been spent. "The old fir-tree was just here," he had said, explaining some boyish exploit, and had dinted in its scarred and writhen stem and broken boughs with a few vigorous pencil strokes.

Mary was the possessor of these treasures, both literary and artistic, and also of some information concerning Philip's career. She knew that his father and mother were both dead, and that an uncle of his mother's had brought him up in a kindly, slovenly fashion, permitting him to do very much as he pleased, and rather ignoring than sanctioning his desire to be an artist. The old gentleman hated scenes, and arguments, and decisions, and let matters drift, from unwillingness to act. Of late however matters had not been going so smoothly. Mr. Frere had put some money into a mine which appeared to be of extraordinary depth. Nothing came out of it, and nobody could get to the bottom of the thing. "Perhaps it hasn't any bottom to it," said Philip, idly crushing the leaves of the walnut-tree under which he stood. "How sweet these leaves are! Anyhow he has dropped his money out of reach, and he is out of temper with me in consequence. He knows very well that I'm guiltless of silver-mining, but he must find fault with some one, so he says I ought to get to work. And it appears that what I call work he calls idling. Well, it is *not* very remunerative at present, and perhaps the old boy can't manage to keep me at it. We had almost a quarrel—more shame for me, for he's a good old fellow!—and then it was settled that I should come here for a bit, to these cousins of his, while he went to town—I suppose to try to look into this blessed mine a little. *Que diable allait-il faire dans cette galère?* So here am I stranded. I've an elder brother in New Zealand who wants me to go out there. I suppose he thinks he should enjoy my society, or perhaps he fancies I should be ornamental, for I'm sure I shouldn't be the least good to him. He'd be horribly disappointed if I did go out; he hasn't seen me since I was ten or eleven, when I was always at his heels, worshipping him because he could smoke, and knew a lot of card tricks, and had a gun. He used to encourage me in all sorts of mischief, and it seems to me he was always turning me upside down. I liked it immensely, you know, but how does it strike you as a basis for lifelong companionship? I have my doubts even as to my brother, and I'm certain I should loathe the life. Well, then, I've got an uncle, I forget where *he* is, it's out in America, I know—something beginning with a C. Could it be Colorado, I wonder? I suppose he'd want me to help kill beetles. Why couldn't my relations settle in some decent kind of place? An uncle in Italy, now, one might be glad of an uncle in Italy, but what can one do with one in Colorado or Chicago, or wherever it is?" Philip fairly groaned in his despair. "Well, I shall be there or in New Zealand before the year is out—there's no help for it!"

A day or two later he had received a rather enigmatical letter from old Mr. Frere which brought his visit to a close. Mary remembered that morning, her hand had not forgotten his clasp, she could recall his good-bye, his backward glance, his lifted hat. Old Teddy Maclean smiled at his going as he had smiled at his coming, and Miss Mary Ann put on a dingier cap, and said she had never been so late finishing the spring cleaning, and they would wash the china in the drawing-room that very afternoon. Nothing more was said about their late visitor, till one morning old Teddy came down to breakfast chuckling over the discovery that Mr. Frere had made use of them to keep the young fellow out of the way while he went to London to get married. The losses through the silver mine had been exaggerated, they had served as a convenient pretext for urging Philip to betake himself to New Zealand or America. The new Mrs. Frere was a widow with a limited income—"been after Frere for years," said Maclean.

"He's an old fool," said Miss Mary Ann, peering into the teapot.

"Well, Master Philip must turn out now," said Teddy. "The happy pair won't want him hanging about the place."

"And a good thing too! The *folly* of taking a lad like that to bring up! I told Robert Frere my opinion of it years ago. 'You should have left him to his own people,' I said. 'Nobody but a born idiot would have saddled himself with the boy.' He hadn't a word to answer back; he stood smiling and looking just as silly as he always did. But now I'll be bound he's sorry enough he didn't ask my advice before he took him in."

"Well, perhaps," old Maclean replied. "But after all the young fellow has been company for him, company, you know."

"Company! That's all you think of—company! I'm not so fond of it, and if I do want company I like people who can pay their way. If not, they ought to make themselves useful—that's *my* opinion—and be glad to do it. I've no patience with your Philip, dawdling round the place with a pipe and a paint box—"

"It was a cigarette mostly," said Teddy.

"Well, that's worse. More expensive, and people who can't pay for what they want shouldn't *be* expensive. He'll have to

come to his senses now. Company, indeed! *I* thought him very poor company. If you've done your breakfast, Mary, you might as well run up and get out those curtains ready for me to look over as soon as I've spoken to cook."

That was the last that Mary heard of Philip. She watched for his name, but it was never mentioned; she made herself a willing slave to Miss Mary Ann in the hope of staying on in the old house where he might some day return, but it was all in vain. The old lady never kept a companion for more than half a year. She thought them moderately satisfactory for two months, she endured them for two more, and then quarrelled with them till they left. Poor Mary's time came, she was driven out of the garden, and thenceforward there was no chance of further tidings, only a blackness and silence which seemed to grow a shade heavier when some one said that old Teddy was dead, and that his sister had gone home to Norfolk.

Yet it seemed to Mary that the hardest time to bear had been the few weeks between the day when she found herself mistress of what to her was considerable wealth, and the day when the purchase of the house and garden was completed. She had been forced to hide her feelings, Philip had never said or done anything which would entitle her to avow them. With a woman's submission to the laws of propriety she had smiled, and appeared indifferent, and acquiesced in the lawyer's delays, though all the while her heart was throbbing in terror lest some one else should arrive upon the scene determined to buy the property. She could not sleep at night; she nearly fell ill from sheer anxiety. Why—why did Mr. Eddington make such a fuss about title and price, when every moment was a hideous risk? She sat looking at him while he explained the progress of the negotiations, but she could have danced with impatience and agony on the floor of his office. Some one else would step in and get the place—some man who could manage for himself—and she would be homeless all her life! "Yes, I see," she said meekly, "of course you understand these matters and I don't. It isn't settled yet, then? No, of course not. Oh, I see, I'm sure it is quite right;" and she smiled and looked down, and clenched a little hidden hand, as if she would have driven her nails into the flesh. "Oh, you idiot—you idiot! Why don't you pay and have done with it?"

And Eddington—poor soul—thought she was extremely well-satisfied with his management of affairs, as indeed he was himself. He made a capital bargain for her. Old Brydon was content with his factory as it was, and young Thomas Brydon, who might perhaps have influenced him, was away somewhere in the north. The owner was anxious to sell, and nobody wanted the old house and garden except Miss Wynne. Luckily for her, nobody knew how much she wanted them, and Eddington, by his delays and his coolness, effected a considerable abatement in the price demanded.

Since a change of name had been the condition attached to her legacy, the garden seemed to Mary the one link between the present and the past. Mary Medland existed no longer, but Philip could find his way, if he would, to the bench under the acacia, where the milk-white blossoms dropped on the shaven lawn. There, recovering from her terrible anxiety, she waited for him. Through every change of season, through every hour of the day, the old house was ready for his return. The world widened as she thought of him. Had he gone to New Zealand? to America? Was there not even a continent of which she might think certainly that it held Philip?

Rivers and mountains seemed to conspire against that innocent love. Desolate leagues of forest and plain, desolate leagues of heaving sea, haunted her imagination with maddening persistency as she lay awake in her bed. How was she ever to find him again—how was she even to think of him in those immense spaces? They were terrible from their loneliness, but there were times when she was heartsick with an oppressive consciousness of the swarming atoms of human life roaming aimlessly over the vast globe, as sparks quicken, and run, and die in tinder. So many hundreds, and thousands, and millions, and tens of millions of men, and among them—Philip. So many kindling and fading sparks, and among them the one wandering point of light which held all possibilities of brightness and warmth for her. On stormy nights the beating of the rain on her window pane told her with dreary iteration of the cold inhospitality of the heavens. The vagrant winds rushed by with wild half human cries, as if they had caught the prayers and messages of countless parted souls, and were blending and rending them in cruel sport, and sweeping them away into the outer darkness of forgetfulness. And when morning came, after one of these troubled nights, the very sun was apt to show a mocking glance, as if he knew but

would not tell, whether day after day he looked on Philip, or on Philip's grave.

Philip's grave! Mary was young enough to turn to that sad thought, and dwell upon it with passionate despair, but too young to really believe in its possibility. Philip must come back, would come back, and would find her waiting. She read the books he had recommended, she tended the flowers he had noticed, she lived patiently within her walled garden. One day, it was a Tuesday and a working day, she noticed that the great pulses of the factory were still, and some one said that it was on account of Mr. Brydon's funeral. She remembered Mr. Brydon, a little shuffling, blinking, grey-haired man, who sat not far from her at church. Dead! She sauntered idly to and fro, looking up at the wall, blank and blind behind a tracery of leafless boughs. She was interested in death, but not in Mr. Brydon.

It was one of those days in February which are an earnest of spring, like the passing glimpse of a face beloved, quickening memory and hope. The borders were dotted with clusters of snowdrops, the ground was broken here and there where strong green leaves of daffodils were pushing upward, the winter violets had a purple bloom upon them, and in a sunny corner a mezereum held out its leafless flowering twigs. Mary paced the gravel path, drawing deep breaths of the soft air, and feeling the life of spring in her veins. It seemed to her afterwards that it was the last peaceful day she was ever to have there.

That one day the looms were still; and Thomas Brydon, in his suit of newest black, with crape on his hat, sat in the mourning-coach, stood by the grave's edge, with the slow clanging of the bell in his ears, and did the melancholy honours of a well-spread table at his suburban house. His insignificance and pallor were shadowed by the funeral blackness; he spoke little, but went through his duties with the utmost decorum, carving for his guests, taking wine with his uncle's old friends, and listening to their anecdotes of the dead man. The company dispersed, unanimous on two points, that the sherry was good—old Brydon's sherry always was—and that the young fellow wasn't going to set the Thames on fire.

But the next morning he was at the factory in a shabby coat, with his hands thrust deeply into his pockets, glancing here and there with brilliant eyes, and showing an unexpected familiarity with every detail of the business. Before the day was out he appeared in Eddington's office, inquiring whether Miss Wynne would be willing to sell her house and garden. He was prepared to offer her a liberal price.

Eddington communicated with his client, and wrote a negative answer. Miss Wynne did not wish to part with her property.

Brydon apparently acquiesced, but he began to make a stir in the town about the disgraceful condition of Garden Lane, and three courts that led out of it. Some six or seven cottages were his own property. These were by no means the worst, take them altogether they were perhaps the best, and yet, as he honestly owned, they were bad enough. He wrote a letter to the local paper, pointing out the hideous overcrowding which was a shame to a civilised place. Miss Wynne read the letter, heard some of the talk that ensued, and felt her brick wall no better than the flimsiest veil between herself and the appalling indecency of the lane. She seemed to see through it, and felt sick with horror in the shadow of her cedars. Even when she lay down at night in the cool purity of her wide dim room, where rustling leaf-sprays garlanded her windows, she could not sleep for thinking of those foul little dens to which fathers and brothers came stumbling from the public houses. A breath of uncleanness tainted her very dreams.

And she could do nothing—she had not an inch of property beyond her garden wall. If only some one else would do something, and let her subscribe!

Brydon reappeared in Mr. Eddington's office. They had met pretty often in the interval, and the young man was more conversational. He spoke of the interest which had been excited by his letter to the *Brent-hill Guardian*. "But it's very little good," he said. "Plenty of talk, but something must be done."

"Something ought to be done," Eddington admitted.

The mill-owner got up and stood on the rug. "Do you know what I've come for?" he said, looking down.

"Well, I can guess," Mr. Eddington replied.

"I must have that garden. I want to build some decent houses. I can't take 'No' for an answer."

The other smiled doubtfully.

"Look here!" Brydon exclaimed, sitting down on a corner of the office-table. "I'm going to tell you exactly how the matter stands."

He did so at length, and yet with an amazing directness and simplicity. When

he had explained his position he named the precise sum he offered for the garden. "It is more than it is worth, but I am prepared to give it, under the circumstances. Infernally unlucky for me that Miss Wynne has got hold of it—pity the people who left her the money didn't live a little longer! But that can't be helped, and I must just give a fancy price since I can't buy it at a fair one. Beyond this I can't go—you must see that for yourself."

"I see," said the other, and to himself he added, "I should think you couldn't!" The young man's frankness and liberality startled him.

"Then you will speak to Miss Wynne about it?"

"Certainly—certainly."

Thomas Brydon looked straight at him. After a moment's silence, "Shall you advise her to accept it?" he said.

"Yes. Yes, I shall advise her to accept it."

"That's all right then." And the young fellow got off the corner of the table, and looked about for his hat.

"I'm not so sure," said Eddington, but the discouraging words were accompanied by an encouraging smile. For Mr. Eddington *was* tolerably sure. Miss Wynne had always behaved as if she considered him an oracle. "She's a sensible young woman," he said to himself, as he went off to tell her of Thomas Brydon's offer, and to explain to her, in his best paternal manner, that she had better say "Yes."

But the foolish young woman said "No." She did not want any offers—did not want to part with her house. She was very much distressed, but she said more than once that it was impossible—impossible. Would he please tell Mr. Brydon? She hoped there was some other piece of ground which would do as well for the cottages he wanted to build.

"He doesn't think there is—luckily," said the lawyer.

Brydon was indignant, incredulous, bewildered. In the first shock of his disappointment he took the whole town into his confidence, almost as completely as he had taken Mr. Eddington, and without meaning any harm he set everybody talking about Mary Wynne. The unlucky girl felt as if she were living under a microscope. She did not blame Brydon for his thoughtlessness. It did not even occur to her sweet submissive soul that he might have screened her had he tried; she accepted this uncomfortable publicity as the natural result of her own obstinacy, and lived resignedly in a Babel of argument. Some people thought she was right. Most people were sure she was wrong. Everybody knew better than she did. The vicar, and a good many ladies of his congregation, felt that a young woman ought to take advice, and ought not to stand in the way of a public improvement, and an increase of fortune evidently intended by Providence. Young Haldane and one or two more rejoiced in the rebuff to Brydon's over-confidence. Other young fellows thought Mary a fool for not taking advantage of the mill-owner's hobby. One and all had something to say about it.

Mary herself minded nothing, not even the good advice, so much as the humorous commendation of some elderly gentlemen, who professed to find her an amazingly clever woman of business. They would ask her, with intense appreciation of their own wit, to suggest investments for their superfluous cash. "Miss Wynne knows a good thing when she sees it," they would say, "but there's no getting anything out of her, she's so uncommon close." "Quite right too," another would chime in; "she wouldn't have done so well for herself if she'd chattered to you. She knew better, didn't you, Miss Wynne?" And one perhaps would add, in more serious kindliness, "Never you mind them, my dear, you can't do better than stick to Eddington. He knows what he's about—he'll get you a good price. You are quite right not to be in a hurry. Ladies so often are, and it's a great mistake."

Mary was glad when Mr. Eddington proposed to bring Brydon to her little tennis-party. It was like coming face to face with the enemy after a series of rumours and alarms. If only she could muster up courage to tell him plainly that his persistent offers were useless, that she never could accept them! If only she could say this once for all, and then bar the door against him, and against the thought of Garden Lane!

Well, he had been and he had gone, and what had come of it? Nothing but a promise that she should not be molested for the remainder of the year, a promise which was only a continual silent proffer of his terms, from which she could not escape for a moment, look which way she would. Nothing else, unless it were a keener sense of the shame, and squalor, and obscure misery that surrounded her. It seemed to her that night that she was actually hemmed in by a rising tide of hate and nameless sin, that it was seething and swelling in the lanes about her house, that it was only by a strenuous effort of her will that she maintained the barriers

which guarded her, as if she were thrusting with her weak woman's hands against a yielding door, and fearing to see evil faces rising above the wall. She drew back from the window, scared by the freaks of her overwrought imagination. If Philip would but come quickly, quickly, to relieve her of her guardianship!

V.

OF DRAINAGE.

EDDINGTON received the notice of the compact between Brydon and Miss Wynne with good-humoured contempt. "It's not to be mentioned to her again," said the young man, with the authoritative manner which he usually reserved for the factory. "Not a word more about it."

The lawyer laughed. "As you please," he said, "but you would do better to talk it over."

"Talk it over!" cried Brydon. "Haven't we talked it over?"

"Yes. Take my advice and do it again."

"What's the use? We've talked it to death. I've no more to say, and she's sick of the whole concern."

"So much the better for you," Eddington replied astutely. "You are throwing away your best chance."

Brydon considered the question from this point of view. "*I don't think so,*" he said slowly. "And if I am I can't help it. I can't set to work to worry a woman out of her determination. Let her be."

"Well," said Eddington, "you think you know best, so there's no more to be said."

"That's it, exactly," Brydon agreed, and nodded a farewell.

Perhaps all the town was sick of the subject too. It was curious to note how utterly it was dropped as the summer went on, as if it had been finally settled at the tennis-party that the mill-owner was worsted. Miss Wynne could go where she pleased and hardly hear a remark. Even Eddington's enforced silence became natural, so soon did he cease to trouble himself about the business. It was a failure, and he put it aside, having other things to think of.

Brydon talked no more about cottages. He took his rents for such of the unwholesome tenements as belonged to him, and went backwards and forwards through Garden Lane with an indifference which appeared to be complete. Once, about three weeks after the tennis-party, he saw Miss Wynne, who had just stepped out of her garden, a little in advance of him. She had a nosegay in her hand, and was herself a delicate and flower-like presence in the unsavoury little thoroughfare. Brydon slackened his pace, but she looked back, recognised him, bowed, blushed, and then, as if moved by a sudden impulse gave the flowers to an old woman standing near, and fled.

The mill-owner came lounging up, nodded to old Mrs. Humphreys, and stopped short. Mrs. Humphreys was examining her acquisition rather doubtfully, clutching the stems in one unclean hand, while with the other she hitched her cap on one side and scratched her head. She was not an agreeable old lady to look at, dirt seemed to be not an accident but an essential part of her, and the black net cap was in the last stage of discolouration and decay. If it had fallen off, it is questionable whether, even in Garden Lane, anybody but Mrs. Humphreys would have cared to pick it up. It would have found its right place in the gutter, but at present it was exalted on Mrs. Humphreys's head, and looked decidedly drunk.

Brydon considered the old woman's dingy wrinkles, the red-rimmed eyes, the streaks of grey hair on her forehead, the half-fastened gown, and the pale sweet petals of the roses. "You've got some pretty flowers there," he said.

"Pretty enough," Mrs. Humphreys replied. "*She* give 'em me," nodding in the direction of Mary Wynne's flight. "They're well enough for gentlefolks."

"Well, they're sweet for all of us, aren't they?"

"I dare say." She thrust her nose among the tea-scented blossoms. "They're well enough, but give me a bit of old man—that's what I like; or a bunch of walls." Brydon wondered whether there was any touch of sentiment in these preferences. Could it be possible that Mrs. Humphreys long ago had put bits of southern-wood in her prayer-book, or in the buttonhole of a Sunday swain? It might be, but he found the idea hideous.

There was another disparaging sniff at the roses. "She might have give me a copper or two—just a copper or two to get a little tea——"

"Gin," Brydon corrected.

Apparently the old lady did not catch the word. She paused, looking at him, but he did not repeat it. "Lor!" she went on,

"tea's a wonderful comfort, but *flowers* ain't no good. I can't go sellin' 'em, like those brazen-faced little hussies who run about the streets with 'em, not near as good as these, and won't take an answer. God bless you for a kind gentleman, sir, you've a feelin' 'art, you 'ave, and the Lord grant you may never know what it is to want a shillin'!"

Brydon scowled as he took the roses. "A pore woman's blessin' 'll never hurt you," Mrs. Humphreys called after him as he walked away looking at his prize. He had hated to see the delicate freshly-blown things in foul hands, but he had come too late, they were degraded, they sickened him, they smelt of Mrs. Humphreys. And after all, Miss Wynne had meant to leave them in Garden Lane. "Here! take them!" he said, and flung them to some of the dirty little children who were screaming at each other in the gutter.

He never attempted to see or speak to Miss Wynne, choosing to consider the merest greeting from him as part of the molestation which he had promised should cease. But on Sundays, after duly looking into the crown of his hat, his first glance was always towards her pew, a swift, penetrating, furtive glance. When it was withdrawn he felt that her eyes were upon him, and he tingled with the knowledge. Was it with a sense of battle? It might be, for it was strange how intense the consciousness of the silent question between them had become. Now that it was pent in their two hearts they seemed to be drawn together by the very obstinacy of their antagonism, like men who clutch each other in a death struggle. Sunday after Sunday she studied Brydon's resolute air of indifference, and felt the purpose that lay below. Sunday after Sunday he noted a difference in her. Presently people began to say that Miss Wynne was not looking well, perhaps she wanted a change. Her face was smaller and whiter, the sweet mouth a little tremulous. To Brydon it seemed that she was failing in some mysterious way, and yet not yielding, as if some third person had come into their duel and upheld her weakness. Brydon grew fierce in his determination to overcome this invisible opponent. He, as it were, divined Philip, and measured himself against him, thrusting the woman aside. She meanwhile was haunted day and night by spectres from Garden Lane, till she fancied that all the air was poisoned by the breath of their foul sties.

It was September and the days were shortening, and the hint of coming changes was on the heavily-leaved trees. Brydon waylaid Eddington one day, shook hands abstractedly, and in the middle of commonplaces about the weather put a point-blank question: "Isn't Miss Wynne going to the seaside or somewhere this autumn?"

"Really," said the lawyer, "I haven't the least idea."

"Well, I wish she would—in fact I wish you'd speak to her about it."

Eddington arched his brows, and looked at his neat nails. "My good fellow," he said, "Miss Wynne is of age. I'm her lawyer, but I'm not her guardian. Her arrangements are no business of mine, and I was under the impression that they were no business of yours."

"Well—they are. Look here, some of the drains in the lane must be opened; it ought to have been done before, but they've been waiting as long as possible on account of the heat. It seems, however, that matters have come to a crisis, and they'll begin on Wednesday."

"Thanks for the hint. I'll give your delightful property a wide berth."

"You'd better," grinned Brydon. "It might be sweeter than it is at the best of times, when we let sleeping smells lie, but when we stir 'em up —— ! Well, you'll just mention the matter to Miss Wynne; she'd better go away for a few days. Don't want to give her a fever, you know."

"I'll speak to her—yes. What's to-day—Saturday? Yes, I'll look in this evening."

Miss Wynne was grateful, but she took the warning pensively. "Is Mr. Brydon going away?" she inquired.

"He—oh no! He'll be sure to be about."

"Ah, yes, I suppose so. And what will become of the poor people in the cottages!"

"Oh, well, you know, I don't fancy they'll think much about it. A little worse than usual, that's all they'll notice—accustomed to it, you see. And I'm afraid they can't all arrange to go out visiting. But it won't be for long."

"I see. Thank you so much for coming to tell me, Mr. Eddington." Then, with innocent artfulness, Miss Wynne slid into the discussion of some local topic peculiarly interesting to the lawyer, and dismissed him without any definite answer. He did not notice this, and even if he had, he would hardly have pressed for one; she was duly warned, and of course would take all necessary precautions. But when he reached his own gate he was aware of a red spark wandering to and fro in the mild September dusk; Brydon was smoking his evening cigar in

the shadow of his friend's laburnums and limes, and impatiently awaiting his return.

"Is it all right?" he demanded. "Did you see her?"

"Yes, I saw her—yes, of course it's all right. I told her it mightn't be very pleasant in her garden for the next ten days or so, nor very healthy, and she'd better go away for a little change."

"Yes! And she said she would?"

"Oh, of course she will. I say, Brydon, did you hear about the squabble there was at the Mechanics' Institute to-day? Disgraceful, isn't it? I wish we had you on the committee——"

"No, but did she *say* she would go?"

His companion stared at the dimly seen face and paused, bewildered. "Say it? I don't know that she said it in so many words."

"What did she say?"

Eddington, yielding to the other's absurd persistence, threw a backward light over his memory of the interview. "Asked if you were going away too—and what would be done with all the people in the lane—and then, what did we talk of——?"

Brydon interrupted him. "She won't go."

"Oh yes, surely she will. Why on earth not?"

"I tell you she won't," the young man repeated. "Because she knows we want her to, very likely;" and he murmured "'Quite contrary,'" with a harsh little laugh.

"Very well," said Eddington cheerfully. "She knows all about it now. Let her stay at home if she won't go."

"You haven't half done it; you should have told her she *must*."

"And have her laugh in my face! No, thank you, I've had enough of this business. I've known a good many obstinate and impracticable young people—a good many—" Eddington smiled reflectively, "but you and Miss Wynne beat all. Very likely she won't go—I dare say you are right. You neither of you know what is good for you, or, if you do, you act as if you didn't. Miss Wynne won't listen to advice, and you *will* advise her and *won't* speak to her. Very good, only find another messenger."

Brydon threw the end of his cigar away. "As you please," he said, after a pause, in a hesitating voice. "I suppose I can't do any more, I don't see that I can. It was only because I heard somebody say Miss Wynne wasn't looking well—thought she wanted change. Well, you know, anybody like that—a little below par, you know—might be just ready to take typhoid fever, don't you think? I don't fancy the drains will hurt *me*, I shall go home to sleep, too—and I don't think they'll hurt old Mrs. Humphreys. She *may* find out there's an extra smell, and she'll think the whole business very unnecessary. So will they all, and they'll all go round the corner to the 'Hand and Flower' rather more than usual. But I thought there was just a possibility that Miss Wynne——" He stopped short and made no attempt to finish the sentence, though there was a brief silence.

"Confound you!" said Eddington. "Well, this once more, then. I'll write Miss Wynne a line."

An astounding idea had just crossed his mind. Was it possible that Brydon took an interest in Mary Wynne apart from her possession of the coveted plot of ground? Something in his voice suggested it, and yet, could it be? It might smooth all difficulties if it were so, but Eddington almost laughed aloud at the idea of a courtship carried on by means of the Garden Lane drains and the family lawyer. Surely true love never ran so strange a course before! "Yes, I'll write a line," he repeated.

It was a neat little note in his legal hand. After due apologies for troubling her a second time he ventured to urge her not to expose herself to any danger. "I am much older than you," he wrote, "and I hope the fact may be my excuse for offering my advice. It would be kind of you if you would console me for having lived all these additional years by pretending to believe that they have gifted me with a little wisdom, as well as rheumatism and other troubles. I am not disposed to exaggerate the risk you would run by staying at home for the next few days. I think, myself, that though real it would be small, but, however small it may be, it is certainly useless, and Mr. Brydon—who perhaps fancies himself somewhat responsible—is very uneasy about it. Pray give us the satisfaction of feeling that you are out of harm's way.

"I believe I once heard you talk of Salthaven. I have a cousin staying there now who thinks it a charming place, bracing and very healthy. If you cared to go there, and she could be of any service in securing rooms, or making any arrangements, I know she would be delighted."

Eddington sent his letter by a messenger early on Sunday morning, and Miss Wynne read it and re-read it as she sat at breakfast. The appeal distressed her. It made a refusal to leave Brenthill seem like an act of wilful folly, and yet she was conscious of a strong reluctance to yield. She had a feeling,

foolish but very feminine, that if by her determination to keep the garden she doomed the inhabitants of the lane to continue in their filth and squalor, she ought at least to share their perils. If any one were to take typhoid fever Miss Wynne felt it a point of honour to sicken with it too, if possible. September that year happened to be sultry, heavy-aired, and rainless, and the suggestion of Salthaven breezes, blowing over the crisp waves, and the wide, wet sands, came with inviting freshness to her thoughts. But there could be no sea-air for Mrs. Humphreys and the rest.

For a more personal reason Miss Wynne was loth to go. It seemed to her that if once she suffered herself to be thrust out of her fortress she might never return to it. It was a fancy, no doubt, but she was languid and over-wrought and her brain was ripe for fancies. Or Philip would come while she was away and not find her—would be shut out of his garden! No, she would not go.

She went to church with a dreary sense of weakness upon her, but she plucked up courage enough to meet Brydon's eyes defiantly, after which interchange of glances both he and she were preternaturally intent upon their books, and unconscious of each other. But when the service was over, and the congregation rustled slowly down the aisles, Miss Wynne, though she gazed straight before her, with partially lowered eyelids, felt that Brydon was at her elbow, moving with her step by step in the crowd. As they passed out of the porch into the open air and sunshine he spoke.

"How d'ye do, Miss Wynne? Fine day, isn't it?"

"Oh, how d'ye do? Yes, very fine, but I thought early this morning it looked as if we might be going to have some rain."

"I shouldn't be sorry," said Brydon, "though I suppose the holiday-makers wouldn't care for it. Going anywhere this autumn?"

"N--no, I think not," Miss Wynne replied, putting up her sunshade, but she must have looked at him out of the corner of her eye, for she was aware that his cool indifference suddenly broke up like ice in spring. The reflection of the red-lined parasol glowed on her delicate skin.

"No?" he said. "How's that?"

"Oh, I don't know. I like home best. It isn't as if one lived in London, you know; I don't feel as if I wanted any change."

"That's nonsense. You know you ought to go."

She inspected the carved handle of her parasol, and the slim light-coloured kid fingers which clasped it, but said nothing.

"You know you ought," he reiterated.

She still was silent, pressing her lips together.

"And, upon my honour," Brydon continued in a low voice, "I believe you won't go because I have urged it! The other time, when you said you had a good reason for refusing me—about the garden, you know—I didn't doubt you. I am sure you have. But what reason have you now? None. I have asked it—that is all—and you will not do it *because* I have asked it?"

She turned her face towards him in the red shadow of her slanted parasol. "Yes," she said, "you are right." He had meant what he said, and yet this strange avowal startled him to speechlessness, though a curious wave of expression passed over the clearness of his grey eyes.

"I *dare* not do it," she said after a moment. "Do not ask me again."

"Why *dare* not?"

"If once I yield," she hesitated, "I feel that it will be the beginning of the end."

"I don't see why. Things will be just the same when you come back. Do you expect to find me throwing up earthworks all over your lawn?"

She smiled faintly.

"Very well," said Brydon, still in the same low voice. "*You must go*, so tell me what you want me to say or do. What will satisfy you?"

His lips, his eyes were on a level with hers, and their speech had a singular directness. "No—no," she whispered, drawing back a step. "You need not say anything. I will go."

"Ah, here is Eddington," murmured the young man.

Mr. Eddington was the vicar's churchwarden. He stepped out of the porch, carrying a miraculously thin umbrella, and having an indescribable air of Sunday about him. He shook hands with Miss Wynne. "I hope you had my note?"

She had regained enough of her gentle calm to answer with a smile. "Thank you so much. I think I will go to Salthaven; I was just saying so to Mr. Brydon."

"There!" said the old gentleman, "I knew you would. But this stupid fellow had taken it into his head you wouldn't."

"You know Miss Wynne better, you see," Brydon replied.

"Yes. But upon my word, Miss Wynne, I was obliged to trouble you a second time,

for he was getting desperate. I don't know what he might not have done between this and Wednesday. We might have had him setting the place on fire—burning you out of house and home, and rescuing you in the dead of night, just to get rid of you—eh, Brydon?"

"I'm glad you rescued me from that," said Mary. "Your note was better."

Brydon coloured, looking angrily at the smiling churchwarden. "I'll say good-bye," he exclaimed with some abruptness, and took his leave accordingly.

"He doesn't like being laughed at," said Eddington glancing after him. "But upon my word it was almost true—he was so determined you should go, and yet so persuaded you wouldn't. I can't think what made him take such a notion into his head; I told him he was wrong. But he's amazingly obstinate. Now can my cousin do anything for you at Salthaven?"

Mary Wynne was never quite sure what she had authorised Miss Eddington to do on her behalf. She agreed to everything the lawyer proposed, and she perfectly remembered that he talked about the Salthaven hotel, and said either that it was extremely bad or extremely good. Apparently she was listening to him as she stood at the pavement's edge, in her light summer dress, a slight, dainty figure with the sunny rose-colour lighting her pale cheeks, but in reality she was absorbed in a curiously intense perception of the idea which Eddington had laughingly suggested a few moments earlier. The blue sky, the birds flying overhead, the church porch, the stones on which she stood, the stream of well-dressed people, even the neat elderly gentleman who faced her, were less real to her than the vision and sound of a moonless night, gusty and black, a sudden bewildering terror, an uproar of horror in the labyrinth of lanes, a crackling sound, a gathering clamour, a burst of roaring flame, and then through the murky heat and crashing noise, Brydon's face, Brydon's eyes, Brydon's outstretched hands. She shivered helplessly as she stood, looking up at Mr. Eddington, but seeing all her dream of Philip, all her happy garden fancies, drifting away across a broad glare of fire in heavy clouds of smoke. The fancy was absurd of course, and yet there was something in it which grasped and held her as if it were true. "I'm sure that will be very nice," she said with a sweet smile. "I shall be so much obliged to Miss Eddington." But when she went home she looked musingly at the old house.

(*To be continued.*)

A FISHERMAN OF HELGOLAND.

Engraved by O. LACOUR, *from a Drawing by* HAMILTON MACALLUM.

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MY FRIEND JIM.

CHAPTER XVI.

MURDER, the proverb tells us, will out; and although of course we do not know how many murders have remained undiscovered, appearances seem to lend support to the theory. In like manner, I have always observed that anything in the shape of a scandal is sure to become public property, however much it may be to the interest of those concerned in it to keep their own counsel; and a very comforting thought this should be to the numerous persons who love a choice bit of scandal above everything. That de Vieuzac and Beauchamp had had a mortal quarrel; that they had been within an ace of slitting one another's weasands in the good old-fashioned style; that they had only been pacified by the joint exertions of Lord Bracknell and the reader's humble servant; and that a scene of the most distressing and dramatic nature had taken place subsequently between Lady Bracknell and her incensed husband—these things were known all over the house before I left my bedroom the next morning; and when I made my appearance I found my fellow guests upon the tip-toe of joyous excitement and curiosity. If they gained no further information from me, it was not for want of asking for it; nor, I imagine, would the appeased rivals have escaped cross-examination, had not those gentlemen wisely sought safety in flight. They must have journeyed up to London by the early express together; and I should much have liked to hear what they conversed about by the way, but had no opportunity of making inquiries as to that until the whole subject had ceased to interest me.

However, that I may not seem to exalt myself unduly by affecting a superiority to the weaknesses of my neighbours, I will confess that I was most anxious to obtain some account of the lecture which Bracknell had doubtless administered to his wife; because I thought it likely that this had been expressed in fine, forcible English, such as one is always glad to listen to in these days of roundabout phrases and involved construction. My hostess, looking rather hard at me, informed me that the Bracknells were leaving that morning; so that I was obliged to bolt my breakfast in a terrible hurry. For, after all the trouble that I had taken in the matter, I should have been truly vexed had I been denied the satisfaction of seeing her ladyship's face before she departed.

As it fell out, I was privileged not only to see her face but to hear her voice; and I don't know when I have enjoyed anything more than the interview of ten minutes or so which she was pleased to accord to me in the conservatory, where I discovered her. A deeply discomfited woman was she that day, and bitter were the reproaches with which she assailed me.

"This has been your doing from first to last!" she exclaimed. "All the misery and disgrace that may come of it will lie at your door."

And when I replied that I accepted the whole responsibility and gloried in it, she fairly lost her temper—a thing that was not usual with her—declaring that that only showed what an empty-headed, conceited idiot I was. "You think yourself so wise that you must needs have a finger in every one's business. I should very much like

know whom you flatter yourself that you have benefited this time! Not your friend, Jim Leigh, at all events; for, mark my words, Mr. Beauchamp will go straight off and propose to Mildred now. I need not tell you that she will accept him. For all her demure airs, she knows the value of a large income as well as anybody. As for me, you have certainly done me an ill turn, if that is any satisfaction to you—which I suppose it is. For the last five or six years I have shown you every possible civility; I have had you to dinner again and again when you bored me to death, and I have introduced you into lots of good houses which you know very well that you would never have entered but for me. Naturally, therefore, you hate me. Why you should hate Bracknell I don't know; but you have very effectually ruined him. Alfred Beauchamp's marriage means bankruptcy to him—neither more nor less than that."

She must have been very angry to use such candour. "You admit then, dear Lady Bracknell," I observed, "that your purpose was to improve the family prospects by getting Alfred Beauchamp killed out of the way."

"I admit no such thing," she returned, "and I defy you to produce one atom of proof that I wanted him to fight M. de Vieuzac. I will admit that I flirted with him. If that shocks you, you are welcome to be shocked. It didn't shock Bracknell, who knew quite well what I was doing, and why I did it. That much he couldn't deny last night, in spite of all his raving and storming."

"Did he rave and storm?" I inquired with interest.

"Yes, he did. He said such abominable things to me that I have very great doubts as to whether I can continue to live with him."

"You will wait, I presume," said I, "until you see whether there is a chance of his having anything to live upon."

Why this remark should have exasperated her I cannot tell: possibly because it expressed nothing more than the simple truth. At all events, she turned upon me quite furiously. "You think it is safe to insult me, do you?" she cried. "You will find yourself mistaken. I have a very good memory, and I am not likely to forget what I owe you. The day will come when you will be sorry for having meddled with me."

That day may come; but it has not come yet, and I am still unrepentant. I believe I am one of the very few people who can boast of having put Lady Bracknell into a passion.

She and her husband drove down to the station together, but, as I understood, parted there, her ladyship making for another country house, to which she had been invited, while Bracknell went up to London. Thither I also betook myself on the following day; and there, shortly afterwards, I received a letter from my mother, in which I was begged to run down and see her.

"I am feeling uneasy about our friends at Staines-court," she wrote, "and should be very glad to have a little talk with you. The young man Beauchamp has arrived. I fear, but am not sure, that he has come for the purpose of renewing his *most unwelcome* attentions."

How this bad behaviour of the young man Beauchamp was to be checked by my advent upon the scene did not appear; but of course I hastened to obey my mother's summons, and on reaching my journey's end, whom should I find waiting for me upon the platform but Jim Leigh. He said he had heard that I was expected by that train, and had thought he would come down and meet me, which was highly flattering.

"I've got the dog-cart here," he added, "so that I can drop you at your house if you like; but don't you think a walk would do you good, after being shut up in that stuffy railway-carriage? The cart can take your traps on for you."

It was not exactly pleasant weather for walking, the roads and lanes being deep in mud, and a gusty wind having been blowing all day from the north-west, with occasional showers of cold rain, which seemed likely to be succeeded by snow; but as it was evident that Jim had a great deal to say to me, I would not baulk him of his purpose.

"You know," he began, as soon as we had set out, "what I told you in London last summer about Lady Mildred."

"Yes," I answered. "If I remember rightly you were disturbed in mind about her matrimonial prospects and your object was to induce Beauchamp to espouse her."

"My dear Harry," returned Jim gravely, "circumstances alter cases. I don't know whether that ever was exactly what you could call my object, but anyhow it isn't my object now. I thought at that time that she really cared for Beauchamp."

"I perceive," said I, "what the circumstances are which have altered the case, and I heartily congratulate both you and Lady Mildred. There will be a row, of course; but you must try not to mind a row."

Jim sighed deeply. "It isn't so simple as

all that, you know," he said. "I believe I have told you already that Mildred is an angel—a positive saint upon earth!"

"I think I remember your mentioning it," I replied. "What then? Is it characteristic of saints and angels to marry men whom they don't love and throw over those to whom they are attached?"

"Why, of course it is," returned Jim, with a shade of impatience. "Given certain conditions, that is precisely what a saint or an angel would do."

"I cannot," I observed, "pretend to your familiarity with the ways of those celestial beings, but to a mere earthly intelligence like mine it does appear——"

"Now, Harry," interrupted Jim, "don't go on in that way. It isn't the least bit funny, and it's no help to a fellow. Just allow me to speak for a few minutes and I'll tell you how matters stand."

Having thus ruthlessly snubbed me and reduced me to silence, he proceeded (though, I must say, not very lucidly), to redeem his promise. The upshot of what he had to say was that he had been unable to refrain from avowing his love to Lady Mildred and that, to his unutterable joy, he had discovered that his love was returned. She had, however, declared most positively that she considered herself bound in honour to carry out her father's wishes, should it be in her power to do so, and I gathered that the only thing which had hitherto kept this luckless pair from breaking their hearts was a comforting conviction that, after all, this would not be in her power. Even Lord Staines—who, in accordance with the intention which he had expressed to me, had remonstrated firmly but kindly with his daughter—had acknowledged that there is no known method of marrying a man who won't ask you to marry him. "And I really believe," added Jim, "that if Beauchamp had distinctly refused to come forward, he wouldn't have had any serious objection to me."

"In other words, if he can't get £40,000 a year, he will be graciously pleased to put up with a sixth of that sum," I observed.

"Well, it isn't only a question of income; there's the debt that I told you about. However, Beauchamp *has* come forward at last, and I confess to you frankly, Harry, that I'm at my wits' end. I don't see my way at all."

"Has Beauchamp proposed?" I inquired.

"Not yet; but he may do it any day. In fact, it is quite certain that he has come here in order to do it. He wrote to Lady Mildred, offering himself for a week, which he would hardly have done unless he had meant business. From what he has let fall, I suspect that he has had a quarrel with Lady Bracknell and has decided to cut himself off from her. Old Staines is as pleased as Punch, he looks upon the thing as settled. Harry, what the deuce am I to do?"

"Don't you think," I suggested, "that, under all the circumstances, Lady Mildred might be your best adviser?"

But he shook his head despondently. "She has made up her mind," he answered; "she has no doubt at all as to what her duty is; she is ready to sacrifice herself for the sake of her family. But am I to stand quietly looking on while this sacrifice is carried out? That's the question."

It was not altogether easy to answer him. The situation was one which has repeated itself often enough in history and legend. Iphigenia got out of her awkward predicament, as we know, in a manner more or less satisfactory to all parties concerned, but where, in this case, were we to look for the *deus ex machinâ* who should fulfil the father's vow and sever the daughter's chains by one happy stroke?

"Obviously," I said at length, "either the family or Lady Mildred must be sacrificed; and, all things considered, I think the family ought to go to the wall."

"But she won't consent to that," answered Jim ruefully.

"Exactly so; and therefore I don't see what course is open to you, except to stand and look on. Have you thought of any alternative plan?"

"None," he replied disconsolately. "I was in hopes that you, who are so much sharper than I am, might be able to suggest something."

I was gratified by the compliment, but conscious of my inability to show myself worthy of it. Certainly I could have devised several excellent schemes, but in order to work them it would have been essential to obtain Lady Mildred's acquiescence. What was to be done, so long as the victim obstinately refused to raise her head from the block? However, not to discourage my unfortunate friend more than was necessary, I promised him that I would think the dilemma over very carefully; and, either because drowning men will clutch at straws or because he really had a misplaced confidence in my abilities, this assurance seemed to comfort him a good deal.

At my own gate, where we found his dog-cart waiting, he bade me good-bye. "I shall look you up to-morrow afternoon, old chap,"

said he. "By that time, I'll be bound to say, you'll have hit upon some idea." In which over-sanguine anticipation he drove away.

And now it was that my dear mother showed the spirited stuff of which she is made. Not a word would she listen to of my sober representations as to the danger of intermeddling with our neighbour's affairs, and when I was shabby enough to quote her against herself, reminding her that these things were ordered for us and that all was doubtless for the best, though we, with our limited intelligence, might not be able to see it, she became quite angry.

"Another time," said she, "I will show you the folly and wickedness of such talk. For the present, it is enough to say that I will not have my poor Mildred married to a man whom she detests in payment of anybody's debts."

"I don't think she detests him," I answered, "but let that pass. How are you going to prevent her from being handed over to him?"

Thereupon, to my utter amazement, she coolly informed me that she intended to go up to Staines-court and beard the new Agamemnon in his den. As she had not been outside the limits of our own garden for a matter of twenty years, and as the only conveyance that we possess is a two-wheeled pony-cart, it may be imagined how this proposition took my breath away.

"Lord Staines," she went on, with a smile, "is too feeble to leave the house. The mountain will not come to Mahomet, so Mahomet must go to the mountain. I shall write and ask him to send a carriage for me, and you must hoist me into it somehow."

This proposed borrowing of the enemy's transport in order to reach the battle-field was a stroke of humour which I appreciated, but I could not, of course, sanction it. It was not, however, until I had assured my mother that she should only leave the house over my prostrate body that she yielded, with a very bad grace, saying: "So be it, then; but please to understand, Henry, that I see my duty plainly marked out for me and that I shall not be deterred from doing it. You must bring this Mr. Beauchamp to call upon me."

When my mother addresses me as "Henry," it means that she is in no mood to be trifled with. Accordingly I walked up to Staines-court the next morning, asked for Beauchamp, told him what a pleasure it was to meet him again (a pleasure in which he did not appear to participate), and mentioned that my mother, who lived hard by, was most anxious to make his acquaintance. He was a polite young man and, though evidently much surprised by this sudden development of friendliness on my part, he made no difficulty about returning home with me.

My mother received him in that bright little up stairs sitting-room where so much of her life has been spent, and about which there always clings a faint, old-fashioned smell of *pot-pourri*. She is a very beautiful and refined-looking old lady, and it is my belief that she is perfectly aware of the fact. I noticed that she was wearing a little of the treasured Mechlin lace which belonged to her great-grandmother, and as soon as she opened her lips I perceived that she had put on her very best manner, which, like the lace, is only assumed upon occasions of importance.

She made me place a chair for Beauchamp beside her sofa and smiled graciously upon him over the top of a large fan, which she swayed gently to and fro while she spoke. "It is very good of you, sir," she began, "to visit a bed-ridden old woman whose conversation can have few attractions for you. Indeed, I should not have ventured to put you to so much inconvenience, had I not had a special motive for doing so."

I suppose Beauchamp had never heard anything like this before in all his days. He was quite unaccustomed to being called "sir" and condescended to, and it evidently flustered him.

"Oh, but really, you know, Mrs. Maynard —upon my word—delighted, I'm sure!" said he, with all the graceful eloquence of the age.

"You are so kind," resumed my mother suavely, "as to say so, but I must not flatter myself that your presence here is due to any other cause than to the courtesy which, as I have always understood, is natural to you."

She went on in this strain for some little time, gradually working up to her point, and anything funnier in its way than the contrast which she presented to her bewildered interlocutor I have seldom witnessed. At length she shut up her fan with a snap, exclaiming, more in sorrow than in anger:

"And can what I hear be true, Mr. Beauchamp? Can it be that you, a gentleman and a man of honour, are not only forcing your attentions upon a lady to whom they are distasteful, but that you have actually made her acceptance of your hand the subject of a pecuniary bargain with her father?"

He assured her earnestly that it was not true: she had been misinformed. Nothing would induce him to force his attentions upon anybody who—who—in short, who didn't want them. "And as for a bargain, there really never was any bargain at all—at least, not in the way that you mean—there wasn't indeed! I'm sure I shall be only too happy to oblige you, Mrs. Maynard, if you'll tell me what you wish me to do, and if you won't be—excuse me!—quite so *awfully* polite about it."

Thus adjured, my mother consented to unbend and make her meaning plain. Without mentioning Jim's name, she gave it to be understood that Lady Mildred's affections were engaged; after which, she discreetly insinuated that although, under such circumstances, Mr. Beauchamp must feel that it would be out of the question to take advantage of her filial submissiveness, yet, in some ways, too abrupt a withdrawal on his part was to be deprecated.

"Lord Staines," said she, "is an old man and in broken health. From what the doctor tells me, I fear that he may not be with us much longer, and we should all wish to spare him, if possible, the shock of a sudden disappointment."

"I see," broke in Beauchamp, with a knowing nod. "After what you've told me, I wouldn't for the world marry poor little Mildred. In fact, to tell the truth, I never was very keen about it. And we'll manage to humbug the old boy as long as he lives."

My mother drew herself up and looked severe. "You surprise me, Mr. Beauchamp," she said. "Surely you do not suppose that I am advising a course of deception!"

Here I judged it opportune to put in my oar. "Nobody," quoth I, from the background, "could suppose anything so unwarrantable. You will not be called upon to use deception, my dear Beauchamp, only a little diplomacy, a little tact."

"Harry," said my mother, "I am quite ashamed of being so troublesome, but *would* you mind going down stairs and seeing whether my knitting is in the library? If it is not there, it may perhaps be on one of the chairs in the drawing-room. Or possibly it may have become entangled in Sarah's skirts, as it sometimes does, and been swept down into the kitchen. At any rate, I feel sure that it must be somewhere."

If there is one thing for which I am more remarkable than for my humility I suppose it is my obedience. I was absent for exactly five-and-twenty minutes, and when I came back to say that the knitting was nowhere to be found, I was not at all surprised to find my mother tranquilly occupied with it, nor was there any need to inform me that the two conspirators had arrived at a perfect mutual understanding.

Upon the morality of the compact thus entered into I made no comment at the time, and forbear from making any now; but I will say for my mother that she had the grace to feel thoroughly ashamed of herself, as was shown by the shortness of her manner during the rest of the day and by the vindictive determination with which she insisted upon reading a long sermon to me and the servants that evening after prayers, although it was the middle of the week.

CHAPTER XVII.

If I were asked to mention the man of my acquaintance whom I consider the least fitted, by nature and by habit, to impose upon a child of average acuteness, I should unhesitatingly name Jim Leigh. Yet such is the power of love, and so prone are the best of us to listen to casuistical arguments, that he embarked upon the career of duplicity suggested to him by his friends with a readiness, not to say a zest, of which he ought certainly to have been incapable. That he and Lady Mildred and Beauchamp were actuated by the best of good motives in behaving as they did I don't deny; but, as a more or less impartial looker-on, I felt my sympathies veering round, while I watched them, to the side of the unsuspecting old man who was so completely taken in by their manœuvres. Lord Staines, I believe, looked upon his daughter's engagement as being to all intents and purposes an accomplished fact. He saw that she walked or rode every day with her supposed lover; he did not know that as soon as they were out of sight of the house they were joined by Jim, and that Beauchamp then promptly hurried away to smoke a cigar with me, thereby interfering considerably with my daily labours. He seemed to be satisfied that all would now go well; but in truth the apathy which had fallen upon him after his grandson's death was hardly to be stirred by any event, great or small.

One event, for which he, and indeed all London, must have been fully prepared, took place at this time and created no little excitement in the neighbourhood; for we do not

study the "society" journals much in our parts, nor does the gossip of the clubs reach us. I say that the financial collapse of the Bracknell establishment can have surprised no one who had lived in or near the fashionable world during the foregoing year or so; yet, if her statement was to be believed, it fell with all the cruelty of an unexpected blow, upon the person who, one would have thought, should have been best aware of its imminence. Late one evening, Hilda, bringing with her a stupendous pile of baggage, arrived at Staines-court to cast herself, somewhat dramatically, upon the protection of the head of the house. I happened to be dining there and witnessed her entry upon the scene, which was of a nature to melt the hardest heart. In a voice broken by emotion she told her lamentable tale. She had—so she assured us—no longer a home; perhaps even she had no longer a husband; for to Bracknell's whereabouts she was unable to obtain any clue. On her return to Wilton Place, after paying a round of visits, she had found the minions of the law in possession and her personal property seized. "They have taken everything—everything!" she cried. "Even my Bible and Prayer-book are in their hands!"

At this an unfeeling member of her small audience had the bad manners to laugh; but she treated his interruption with the contempt that it deserved, and went on to enlarge upon the pitiable plight in which she found herself. She had nothing left but the clothes she stood up in—those and a few others which she had taken with her to the country. Not a word of warning, not a single direction or suggestion had been vouchsafed to her. After being neglected for years, she was finally abandoned! "And now," she concluded, in a tragic tone, "what am I to do?"

"I should think," answered Lord Staines, rather peevishly, "that you had better go and wash your face and hands and then have some dinner."

The advice was more practical than sympathetic; but such as it was, she acted upon it. She may have had some fear that her father-in-law would recommend her to go straight to the Rectory (which was certainly what I should have done in his place), and no doubt she preferred remaining where she was to seeking that refuge.

Staines-court is a large house; but one of its temporary inmates decided without delay that it was not large enough to contain him and Lady Bracknell at the same time. "I shall be off the first thing to-morrow morning," Beauchamp informed me in confidence, after he had beat a precipitate retreat from the drawing-room, taking me with him. "Called away on urgent business, don't you know? That woman has brass enough for anything, but I'll be hanged if I can trust myself to speak to her."

Beauchamp, who, as I have already mentioned, had latterly favoured me with a good deal of his company, had in the course of our conversations, taken occasion to express his opinion of Lady Bracknell in the most unequivocal terms. There is no iconoclast so ruthless as an ex-devotee; and indeed it must be very unpleasant to discover that a woman whom you have been disposed to worship has not only made a fool of you, but done her best to rob and murder you into the bargain.

So Beauchamp took wing; and whether Lady Bracknell was annoyed or relieved by his flight I cannot venture to say. She was in some respects so sharp and in others so oddly insensible that, for aught I know, she may still have flattered herself that she might be able to lure him back into her net. Be that as it may, it was hardly to be expected that her ladyship's humour should be of the best at such a time, and from the assiduity of her attentions to her father-in-law, as well as from the extreme amiability which she displayed towards Lady Mildred, I felt pretty sure that her heart was full of cursing and bitterness. Also, although, upon the whole, she was civil enough to me, she favoured me with a look every now and then, which I understood to mean, "Wait a little longer, my friend. I haven't forgotten your fussy interference with my schemes, and I mean to be even with you yet."

Now, so far as I myself was concerned, I accepted these silent and smiling threats with a good deal of equanimity, for I really did not see how it was in her power to do me any harm; but of course it was open to her to inflict vicarious trouble upon me, while at the same time serving Lady Mildred, whom she hated, an ill-turn, and the stone which she ultimately picked up, wherewith to slay this brace of birds, was one which lay, so to speak, at her feet. It would have been very unlike her to overlook it; nor was I at all surprised when Jim sought me out, one day, and informed me with a very long face, that his machinations had been denounced to Lord Staines.

"It was Lady Bracknell's doing," he said. "It seems that she went to the old man and told him that she could not bear to see him hoodwinked, that she felt it her duty to open

his eyes—and all that. So she opened his eyes. But I don't think," added Jim, pensively, looking down at the ground and then glancing quickly up at me for a moment—"I don't think that her sense of duty had much to say to the matter."

"I will venture," I remarked, "to go along with you as far as that; I don't think her sense of duty had much to say to it. But perhaps that is of no great consequence. What has been the result of this timely intervention of hers?"

"Oh," answered Jim, with a slight shrug of his shoulders, "the result has been that I have been turned out of the house. I couldn't expect anything else, could I? What annoys me is to think that I have deserved it. Lord Staines really behaved uncommonly well. He sent for me at once and told me that I had been accused by Lady Bracknell of systematically deceiving both him and Beauchamp. He said he thought I ought to know what she asserted, though he himself didn't believe her and was sure that neither Mildred nor I would take advantage of Beauchamp's absence in the way she described. Well, of course she hadn't got it quite right; still, when he put it in that way, I had to tell him the truth. I never felt so small in my life, and I couldn't get him to understand why Beauchamp should have assumed a false character. The end of it was that he sent for Mildred. It was very hard upon her, poor dear; but she came out of it splendidly. I must say that Mildred is——"

"Oh, yes; I know—an angel," I interrupted, rather rudely. "I don't doubt it; only, if I were in your place, I think I should prefer her being a woman. Filial affection is all very fine, but it seems to me that, having made up her mind to marry you, she ought to say so."

"But, my dear fellow, that's exactly what she did," returned Jim. "There was no persuading poor old Staines that Beauchamp wasn't in earnest, and he wanted her to promise that she would give me up. That she refused to do, so then he said he was very sorry, but that, under the circumstances, he must forbid me his house. I couldn't complain of that. I said I was very sorry too, which was true enough. I shouldn't have minded so much if he had flown into a rage; but he was quite quiet all the time, and I'm afraid he was a good deal hurt, poor old chap! Mildred says he is getting fidgety about Bracknell too. They haven't heard a word from him, and the lawyers wrote the other day to say that he had put his affairs into their hands and that he spoke of leaving England. I wonder where he is and what he is going to do!"

Hardly were the words out of his mouth when the door of my study, where we were sitting, was flung open, and in walked Bracknell himself. He marched straight up to Jim, laid a hand on each of his shoulders, and said: "Well, you dear, solemn old Jim, so you're going to have your own way at last, are you? About time too! I saw Beauchamp in town yesterday, and he told me that it was all right between you and Mildred. I'm heartily glad of it."

It was the voice of the Bracknell of our school days that spoke, and indeed when I looked at him it seemed to me that his eyes, too, had recovered something of their old boyish light. "Give me a cigar, Maynard," said he, seating himself astride upon a chair, "and we'll have a jolly hour together, we three, it's quite on the cards that we may never spend another hour together; for I'm off to the Soudan to fight those black beggars, who seem able to give a pretty good account of themselves. We haven't always been quite as good friends as we once were, but that has been my fault, and as I'm going away now, perhaps you'll forgive and forget, eh, Jim?"

Jim silently stretched out his big brown hand, which the other took; and then I produced my best cigars and rang for brandy and soda. But Bracknell declined that refreshment.

"No drink, thanks," said he, with a laugh. "I've given up drink and cards and everything else that ought to be given up, and I'm going to be a good boy for the future."

He was in wonderfully high spirits. He told us how he had discharged all his debts of honour (which may have had something to do with his inability to discharge the others); how, by working his interest in high quarters, he had managed to get appointed to some queer corps—whether it was the mounted infantry or the dismounted cavalry or the camel-marines I can't recollect—and how he was looking forward to a noble fight; "which, after all, when you come to think of it, is the very best use that a hulking brute like me can put himself to." But about his wife he said never a word; nor did either Jim or I care to bring forward her name, the former merely mentioning that he had been forbidden to show himself at Staines Court, without specifying the origin of this decree of banishment.

"Oh, that'll be all right," Bracknell said airily; "the governor will come round if

you give him time. Now that the pen has gone through Beauchamp's name, there's nothing but you in the race, that I can see."

But he did not seem disposed to dwell upon the subject, nor indeed upon any other that was connected with the present or the future. It was about old Eton days that he wanted to talk, and very soon Jim and he were chuckling over the memory of many a bygone escapade, as if they had been schoolboys together once more. At last Bracknell glanced at his watch and pitched away the end of his cigar.

"Ah, well!" he said, "it has been very jolly seeing you fellows again; but my time's up now and I must go and say good-bye to the governor and Mildred. I shall have to get back to London this evening, so as to make an early start to-morrow. You might walk up with me, Jim. Oh, no, by the way, you can't, though. But come down to the station at five o'clock and see the last of me, like a good chap, will you?"

Jim promised that he would be there, and presently Bracknell took my arm and walked me off towards Staines-court. I accompanied him very willingly, because I was rather curious, I confess, to see what would happen if he encountered Hilda; and, as luck would have it, when we were within a few yards of the house that ill-used lady, in a neat walking costume, came tripping down the steps.

She nodded to Bracknell, without any manifestation of surprise. "Oh," said she, "you have turned up at last. Have you come down to stay?"

"No," answered Bracknell shortly, "I have come down to say good-bye to my father. I'm leaving for the Soudan to-morrow."

"Really? How spirited of you! When will you be back, do you suppose?"

"I'm sure I don't know; never, perhaps. Don't let me keep you standing in the cold."

Hilda smiled and shrugged her shoulders. "I am not much accustomed to being left out in the cold," she remarked. "Nobody has ever yet succeeded in treating me in that way, and I doubt whether you will succeed. I shall stay at Staines-court until you return."

"Shall you?" said Bracknell; "I should think you would find that rather dull work. However, you know best what suits you. Good-bye."

"Good-bye," returned Hilda. "Take care of yourself."

She nodded again as she turned away; and so they parted, without so much as shaking hands.

This short dialogue had the effect of sobering my companion, whose face was grave enough when he rang the bell and asked for Lord Staines. I waited for him in the drawing-room while he went to bid farewell to his father and sister, and a long time I had to wait before he reappeared, looking a little flushed and agitated.

"Come on," he said hurriedly, "we haven't much more than time to catch the train." And when we were out in the park he drew a long breath. "Well, I'm glad that's over!" he exclaimed. "Poor, dear old boy! I shall never see him again, you know; and, dash it all! I wish I had been a better son to him. Not much use saying that now, eh? But I do wish it, all the same."

I made some stupid conventional speech, to which Bracknell replied, "Oh, he's breaking up fast, anybody can see that, and he knows it himself. Besides, it's rather more likely than not that I shall leave my bones in Egypt; and between you and me, Maynard, I sha'n't much mind if I do. I've been pretty well sick of life for some time past, and if I could make a fresh start— However, I can't make a fresh start; and as for living with my wife again, I'd sooner go into penal servitude. Upon my word, I think she's the most infernally wicked woman I ever came across!—and I've seen a fairish number of women who are commonly called wicked."

It was neither my business nor my inclination to take up the cudgels on Hilda's behalf, but I said, "You won't make her any better by deserting her, will you?"

"Nor any worse," returned Bracknell. "She'll be glad enough to get rid of me, you may be sure, and she won't have much to complain of; for when I come into the property, if I ever do come into it, she shall have the lion's share of my income. I must pay off Beauchamp too, somehow or other. I say, Maynard, do you believe in Providence? Of course you do, though; you're the sort of respectable fellow who would; and your mother brought you up well. I sometimes think Providence may have taken poor little Sunning away for very good reasons. He wouldn't have had your advantages, you see."

Then he suddenly changed the subject and talked about the Egyptian campaign until we reached the station, where we found Jim waiting for us.

The train dashed in immediately afterwards, so that our leave-taking was a brief one. I remember that Bracknell's last words were: "Good-bye, old Jim; don't forget me if I get knocked on the head out there."

CHAPTER XVIII.

I HAD dinner up stairs with my mother that evening. She does not, as a rule, approve of this arrangement, which, she says, gets the servants into slovenly habits; but she will countenance and even encourage it when she is anxious to obtain some information from me, because she knows that I am never so amiable and garrulous as when I am seated before a comfortable fire, with a glass of very fair claret at my elbow, and the digestive process going on satisfactorily. She wanted, of course, to hear all about Bracknell's visit, and was immensely interested in my account of it—more especially in that speech of his which seemed to imply belief in an overruling Providence. Upon this somewhat shaky foundation she soon built up a theory to the effect that Bracknell was a man of deep, albeit unobtrusive, religious convictions, and, warming with her theme (for indeed there is nothing that she delights in more than in trying to make people out better than they are), had just propounded an amazing and, as I believe, utterly unorthodox application of the dogma of justification by faith, when our aged factotum came in to say that Mr. Leigh was at the door in his dog cart, and wished to speak to me.

I ran down stairs, feeling sure that some misfortune had happened, and my fears were confirmed when I stepped out into the windy night and Jim, stooping down over the gleaming lamps of the dog cart, said: "I want you to come up to the station with me, Harry, there's been an accident to the express."

He had heard no particulars, only that a collision had occurred down the line and that a great many lives were believed to have been lost. "I couldn't go to sleep, not knowing whether Bracknell was alive or dead," he said. "Besides, he may be badly hurt, and there's nobody with him."

I agreed that anything was better than suspense, and having sent a message to my mother to the effect that I was going home with Mr. Leigh and might not be back before morning, got into the dog cart; though I had some doubt as to whether we should be able to proceed to the scene of the catastrophe.

However, when we reached the railway, it seemed that there would be no difficulty on that score. Lord Staines was a great man in our part of the world, and Jim himself enjoys a certain consideration; so that the station-master, on hearing our errand, at once placed an engine at our disposition. It had been a very bad accident, he told us; but he had heard that there was but four killed outright, and didn't see no reason to fear as his lordship was one of them.

I hardly know why both Jim and I should have formed an opposite opinion. We did not communicate it to each other—indeed we scarcely spoke a word during the half-hour or so that we spent rushing through the darkness in the teeth of the south-easterly gale which had risen since nightfall—but afterwards we compared notes and found that neither of us had had any hope from the first. Perhaps, so far as one of us was concerned, hope would not have been quite the right word to use. A little sooner or a little later death must come to us all; and the future, as poor Bracknell himself had said a few hours before, had had but few bright possibilities to offer him. Yet, when among those four silent, stiffened bodies we recognised the one of which we were in search, I own that my philosophy broke down, and that I was just as sorry as if there had been no mitigating circumstances connected with this swift blotting out of a life which was still young and vigorous. One thinks of the mitigating circumstances afterwards: at the time, a sudden death always seems something strange and horrible, like a murder; although probably most of us, if we could choose, would rather be killed at a blow than die by inches.

Jim took the loss of his friend terribly to heart. He had always loved the man, always admired him and wanted to believe in him, even when faith must have been a little difficult, and it was long before he recovered from the shock of that fatal night. To the present day he cannot bear any allusion to it; nor, I must confess, is it a subject upon which I myself care to dwell. Our first duty, of course, was to break the news at Staines-court; and how we accomplished this I can scarcely remember. The one thing that stands out clearly in my recollection is Hilda's look of horror when she was told in what manner her husband had met his death.

"I can't see him!" she cried. "Are they bringing him here? I won't look at anything shocking!"

It seemed to me amazing that at such a moment the woman's first thought should have been to spare herself; but perhaps, after all, it would have been more amazing if her first thought had been anything else.

Lord Staines was in bed when we reached

the house. It was thought best that I should at once tell him what could not long be concealed, and he listened to me with very little apparent emotion. He asked me whether I thought Bracknell's death had been a painful one; and when I replied—as, happily, I was able to do—that it must have been instantaneous, he muttered, "Well, well!" and lay back on his pillows, looking straight before him with sunken, weary eyes.

"So there is an end and a finish of us," he said presently; "maybe it's best so. It seems odd that Bracknell and Sunning should both go before me; but I don't suppose I shall have much longer to wait now. When my poor boy and I parted this afternoon, we knew that it was for the last time, and I'm glad he came to see me—I'm very glad he came to see me. He was in great glee at the prospect of a fight—he has always been like that from a boy. We Henleys may have our faults, but I don't think we have ever been accused of wanting pluck. Bracknell will make himself heard of out there, you'll see. I was a little vexed with him at first for going off and leaving me, but he gave me reasons, and I believe he was right. I wish he didn't hate writing letters so much! The newspapers will tell us all about him, though."

In this way the old man wandered on, until Lady Mildred came softly into the room and made me a sign to leave him. I doubt whether he ever fully realised what Bracknell's fate had been. During the next few days he talked a great deal about his son, sometimes speaking of him as still alive, sometimes as having been killed in Egypt; but he did not seem able to fix his mind upon any subject for more than a few minutes at a time and often failed to recognise those about him. One duty, fortunately, recurred to his memory, and his performance of it was, I believe, an immense comfort to two simple-minded and conscientious people.

"My poor boy," he said, when he had caused Jim Leigh to be summoned and had made him take Lady Mildred's hand, "told me that I might consent to your marriage without loss of honour. I had thought differently, but Bracknell assured me that some one—the other man——"

"Mr. Beauchamp?" suggested Lady Mildred gently, when her father came to a long pause.

"Beauchamp, yes—Beauchamp, it seems, withdraws. There is money owing to Beauchamp, and I can't attend to business now; but you will see that he is repaid. Bracknell explained it all to me, but I have forgotten. He promised that the money should be paid, though."

"It shall be paid, papa," said Lady Mildred.

"Thank you, my dear. You have been a good daughter and you will be a good wife. I wish you all happiness."

These were the last intelligible words that he said. He lingered on for some days after this, but soon sank into a state of semi-consciousness, in which at last he passed quietly away. My mother says that he did his duty according to his lights and will be judged by that standard; and perhaps it may be allowed that in this instance she does not push charity beyond all reasonable limits.

His titles died with him, except that of the barony of Bracknell, which is of ancient creation and which has passed to his daughter. By her also have been inherited his estates, which, although still heavily encumbered, will doubtless recover themselves in time under their present judicious management.

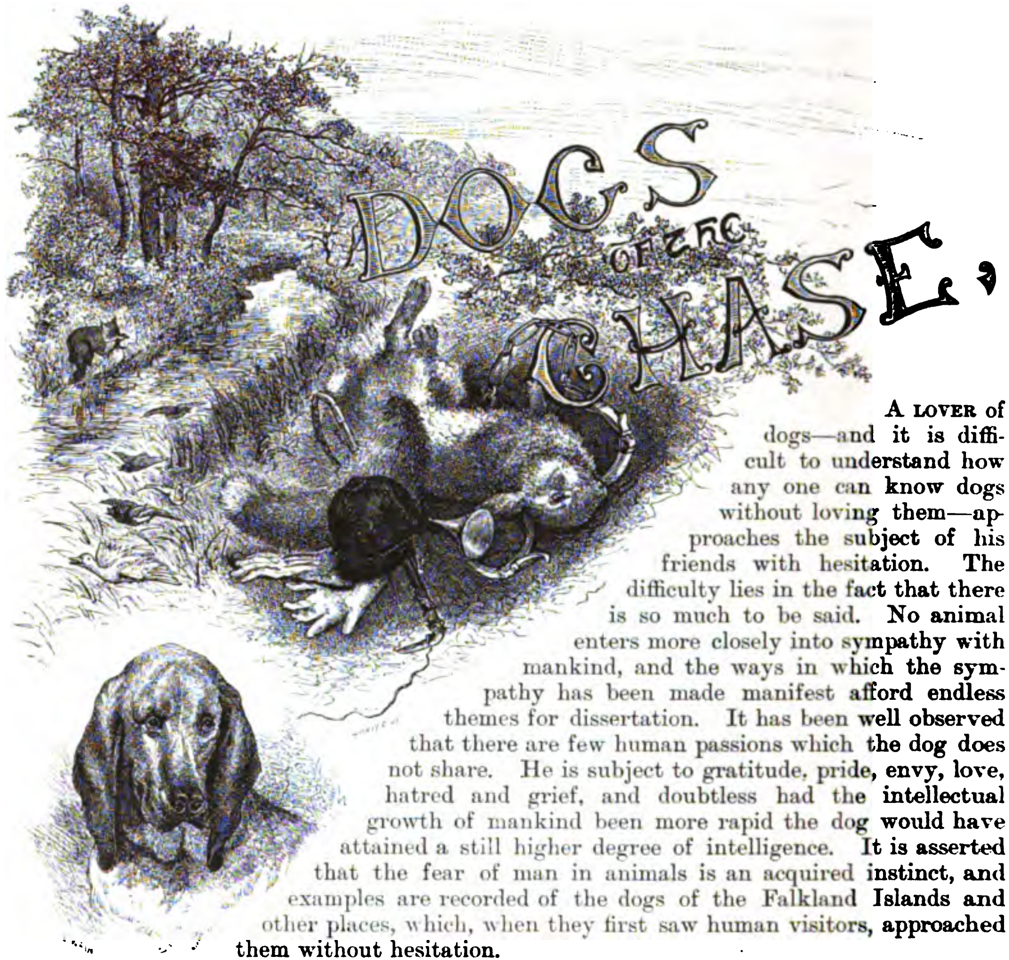
Jim's marriage was a very quiet affair, the bride being in deep mourning at the time for her father and brother; but Lady Petworth, who came down to take charge of the orphan after Lord Staines's death, considered it undesirable that the ceremony should be too long postponed; so good Mr. Turner tied the knot, and the young couple have been living at Elmhurst ever since in a seclusion which I dare say is agreeable to both of them, but of which the county does not altogether approve. Jim tells me that the debt of honour bequeathed to his wife has already been paid off and that he hopes in the course of a few years to be able to move to Staines-court, which is at present shut up. In the meantime he is very well satisfied with his own less pretentious abode; and indeed, if a man were to be condemned to live in the country from year's end to year's end, I don't know that he could find any pleasanter place to live in than Elmhurst, while I am persuaded that he would search in vain for a fellow-exile more amiable and charming than Lady Bracknell.

The other Lady Bracknell—the countess of that name—has quite recently decided to put an end to all confusion of identity between her sister-in-law and herself by changing her condition. During the first few months of her widowhood she resided with her father—a touching spectacle to the neighbourhood, as she drove about, with lowered eyelids, in her weeds. Whether after a time she became bored with the respectful sympathy of

the neighbourhood or whether she found herself better off than she had anticipated I do not know; but she moved somewhat suddenly to London, set up house there, discarded crape in favour of pale grey and began to dispense a hospitality of which many people were found ready to avail themselves. Rumour has it that, on recovering her freedom, she made a desperate bid for the Beauchamp property and that the fortunate owner thereof met her advances by requesting her in so many words to omit him from the list of her acquaintances; but I do not believe this story. Hilda has experience enough to be aware that flirting with a married woman and espousing her after she has become a widow are two very different things, and it is not likely that so clear-sighted an observer would have wasted time and energy upon a forlorn hope. As a matter of fact, she has done far better for herself than she would have done by marrying Beauchamp; for she is about to be led to the altar by the eldest son of a duke, and I hear that the bridegroom's relatives have received her with marked cordiality. Her career, so far as it has gone, may serve as a warning to impulsive young men and as an encouragement to the daughters of the clergy.

W. E. NORRIS.

THE END.



DOGS OF THE CHASE.

A LOVER of dogs—and it is difficult to understand how any one can know dogs without loving them—approaches the subject of his friends with hesitation. The difficulty lies in the fact that there is so much to be said. No animal enters more closely into sympathy with mankind, and the ways in which the sympathy has been made manifest afford endless themes for dissertation. It has been well observed that there are few human passions which the dog does not share. He is subject to gratitude, pride, envy, love, hatred and grief, and doubtless had the intellectual growth of mankind been more rapid the dog would have attained a still higher degree of intelligence. It is asserted that the fear of man in animals is an acquired instinct, and examples are recorded of the dogs of the Falkland Islands and other places, which, when they first saw human visitors, approached them without hesitation.

How considerable the subject is will be seen when it is remarked that some years ago a learned physiologist traced 189 distinct varieties of the canine race; but it is only with a few members of the great dog family that we have here to deal.

To whatever extent man may be mentally superior to animals, it is unquestionable that in the exercise of certain senses animals are immeasurably superior to man. Humanity has the sense of smell more or less strongly developed; some people have very keen and delicate noses; but whereas it is probable that no man's olfactory nerves are equal to those of the dog that is dullest in this respect—putting aside, of course, animals that may for some reason be accidentally defective in the power of smelling—hounds, to which the faculty of scent is chiefly given, possess it to an extent which humanity cannot realise. The noses of dogs and the eyes of birds are acute in their operations to a degree at which man can only marvel.

The purpose of the present article is to glance at some varieties of hound—for as "hounds" all dogs that hunt in packs, pursuing their prey by the sense of smell, are

distinguished. This is imperative. To speak of a staghound, a foxhound, a harrier, or a beagle as a "dog," unless it be specially desired to mark his sex, is to betray ignorance which the initiated scorn. The hound is not a dog, his "stern" is not a "tail," nor is his utterance a bark, though he throws his tongue, speaks in various ways, and indeed practises singing amongst his vocal performances; especially in bright summer weather, when hounds are in their kennels, their chorus rises and falls in a way which it is hardly a straining of fact to call harmonious.

Between hounds that are now utilised for the chase of the stag, the fox, and the hare, a very strong family resemblance exists. That they are all sprung from a common stock is obvious, the difference between them being only in size, which is a matter of breeding, and in habit, a matter of education and, to some degree, perhaps, of inherited instinct. A foxhound puppy will run fox by the light of nature, but until he is taught better he will also have a disposition to run hare, which he should not do; that is the business of his first cousin.

OBSOLETE DOGS OF THE CHASE.
From a Drawing by L. WAIN.

It was when in slow pursuit that Theseus described his hounds as

"matched in mouth like bells,
Each under each, a cry more tunable
Was never holloa'd to, nor cheered with horn."

No doubt these hounds—or those from which the hounds of Theseus were drawn—sang in their kennel, for Hippolyta also bears witness to their musical cry,

"I never heard
So musical a discord, such sweet thunder."

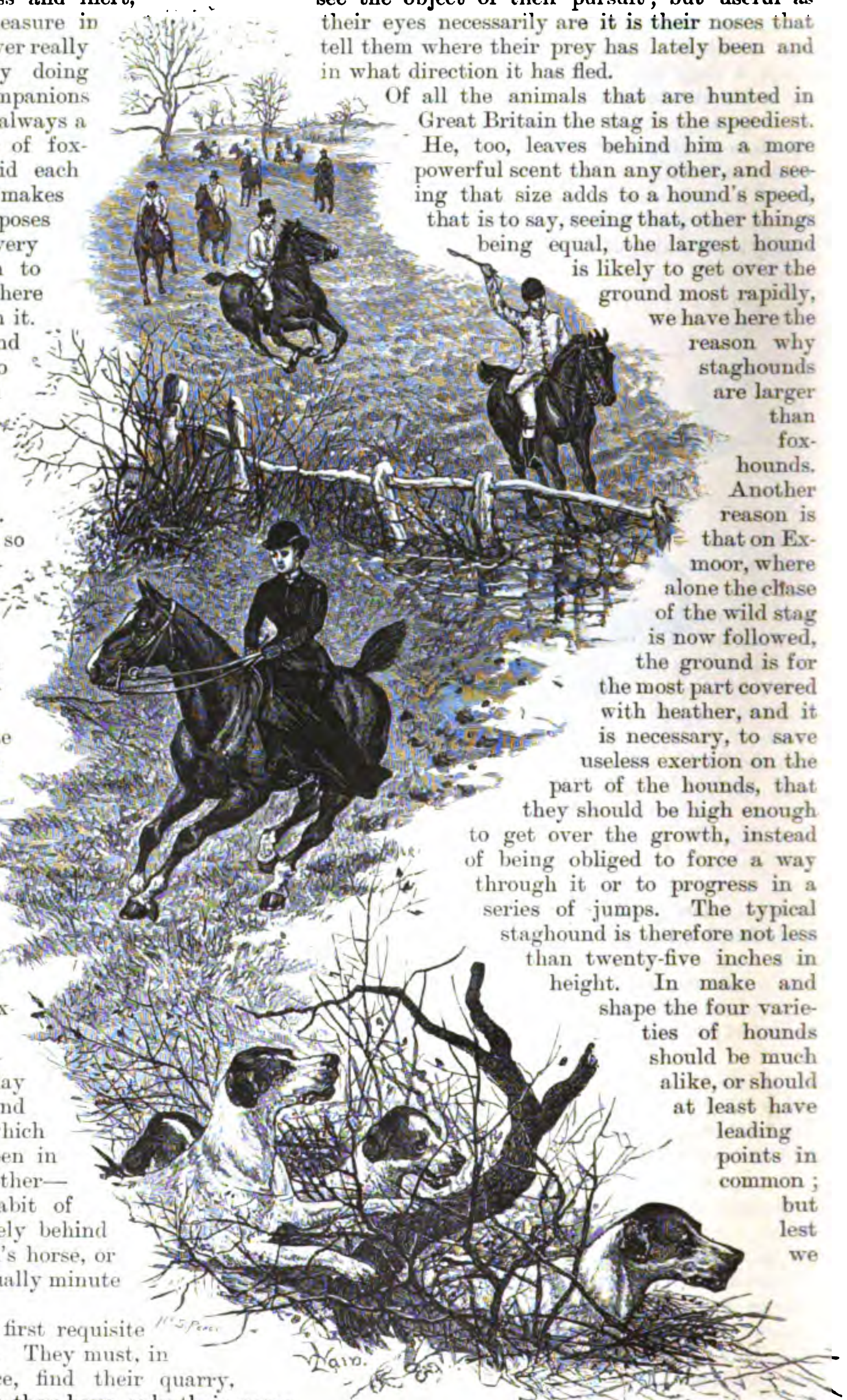
On this head, too, may be mentioned Addison's humorous description of Sir Roger de Coverley's stop-hounds, when the knight returned the excellent bass which had been given him, he wanting only a counter tenor—nor must the reader suppose that this is mere extravagance.

Experts differ as to the origin of dogs. Some believe they sprang from the wolf, others maintain that the jackal is the parent stock, while an aboriginal dog is said to have been found in later Tertiary deposits. Coming to more recent times disputes as to the origin of hounds not unnaturally follow. That they are all descended—the four that are under immediate discussion, staghound, foxhound, harrier and beagle—from the animal that is called "the old Southern hound" is generally recognised; a further question is whether this old Southern hound was or was not identical with the bloodhound, or Talbot, or, as it was often called, the St. Hubert. The best judges seem to agree that the old Southern hound was not the Talbot, and they base their belief on the differences of habit which the two varieties display in the field. Foxhounds work in concert. They certainly exhibit very different degrees of

earnestness in the chase: some are ardent in the extreme, others careless and inert, taking no pleasure in their task, never really hunting, only doing as their companions do; but it is always a characteristic of fox-hounds to aid each other. If one makes what he supposes to be a discovery the rest rush to see whether there is anything in it. The bloodhound will not do this. He will accept no suggestions, but stolidly work out his own problem. This has been so generally observed that whereas some hounds delight in working together and others refuse to do so, the result points strongly to distinct breeds, for the hereditary principle is wonderfully marked in hounds. A fox-hound puppy will often inherit and display little tricks and peculiarities which have been seen in his sire or mother—such as a habit of following closely behind the huntsman's horse, or something equally minute and curious.

Nose is the first requisite in all hounds. They must, in the first place, find their quarry, and to do this they have only their noses to depend on. Later in a chase it may happen that hounds "run to view," that is, that they see the object of their pursuit; but useful as their eyes necessarily are it is their noses that tell them where their prey has lately been and in what direction it has fled.

Of all the animals that are hunted in Great Britain the stag is the speediest. He, too, leaves behind him a more powerful scent than any other, and seeing that size adds to a hound's speed, that is to say, seeing that, other things being equal, the largest hound is likely to get over the ground most rapidly, we have here the reason why staghounds are larger than fox-hounds. Another reason is that on Exmoor, where alone the chase of the wild stag is now followed, the ground is for the most part covered with heather, and it is necessary, to save useless exertion on the part of the hounds, that they should be high enough to get over the growth, instead of being obliged to force a way through it or to progress in a series of jumps. The typical staghound is therefore not less than twenty-five inches in height. In make and shape the four varieties of hounds should be much alike, or should at least have leading points in common; but lest we



STAGHOUNDS.
From a Drawing by L. WAIN.

HARRIERS.
From a Drawing by L. Wain.

should here become too technical for the average reader, we will merely remark that clean well-sloped shoulders, straight legs, feet like a cat, and muscular back and loins are leading essentials. The Exmoor pack is in a great measure supported by drafts of over-sized foxhounds from various kennels, for though tastes differ as to the best height for a foxhound, few masters would desire twenty-five-inch hounds; this is some inch and a half above the most popular size for dogs, and the "ladies" are an inch or more lower than their lords.

The harrier is a step further down. Not a few packs of harriers nowadays hunt hare, fox, and even deer indiscriminately, and though good sport is no doubt often shown by such packs, they are going beyond the bounds of the legitimate. Severe penalties are inflicted on the foxhound that runs hare, but what can be expected of a creature which is sometimes a staghound, sometimes a foxhound, and only occasionally a harrier? The foxhound—a dwarf—is found as low as twenty inches, and of dwarf foxhounds many packs of harriers are composed, but if he is to stick to his last, eighteen or nineteen inches is a very good maximum height for a harrier. "Dwarf foxhounds have too much dash, and when the hare begins to double and execute her manifold manœuvres, they keep over-running the scent," a master of harriers writes, and seventeen or eighteen inches is, in the opinion of this judge, the best standard. Some harriers run as low as, or lower than, fifteen inches, and up to this height beagles extend, descending to as low as ten inches. Into the sub-divisions of the beagle we need not go. The little fellows are able to pick out a cold scent with wonderful success.

The question of scent is one which sportsmen are never weary of discussing, and one in which, moreover, even those who have no sporting tastes may well feel interest and curiosity. Scent is an exhalation from the animal pursued, and by following it hounds find their quarry. So much is certain, but what may be called the vagaries of scent are unaccountable. No man can say whether under given atmospheric conditions scent will be good or bad; at least, having said, and said with much confidence, the man is very likely to be often completely wrong. Over the dewy meadows, with a southerly wind and a cloudy sky, and not sufficient sun to dispel the moisture on the grass, scent might be expected and is very often found; but

with all these apparent advantages, it is frequently not perceptible to the noses of the pack, though the recent presence of deer, fox, or hare is beyond doubt; on the other hand, under what would seem to be the most unfavourable conditions, scent is not seldom powerful.

Some scent lingers in the animal's foot-prints, or foot-tracks, but this would scarcely assist hounds at all times, because there are occasions when the quarry's feet are clogged with soil—when the ground is said to "carry" —and scent would not here be left. There are, moreover, many proofs that very often it is not the actual path of the fox or other hunted animal that hounds follow. When a fox has been seen to run down one side of a hedgerow, hounds will sometimes run, evidently in full possession of the scent, down the *other* side of the fence, and some distance from it. When they do this it is on the "down wind" side of the fence, through which the scent is wafted towards them, and in such cases it can, of course, only be the body-scent which they acknowledge. Hounds will often tear along in the teeth of a gale of wind, especially when they get away on good terms with their quarry and are running with the scent "breast high," as it is called, but a sharp turn puts them at a disadvantage if the air passes from them towards the hunted animal. On a still "muggy" day hounds generally stick to the exact line of their fox, the reason being that there is no wind to disturb or distribute the scent.

FOXHOUNDS.
From a Drawing by L. WAIN.

A still more striking circumstance is that hounds will swim broad and rapidly-flowing streams in obvious enjoyment of the scent, though the water through which the fox passed must have long gone by. This common experience is fully confirmed by the author of the chapter on *The Fox* in the hunting volume of the Badminton Library. The writer says, after some speculation as to the nature of scent:—

"This much is certain—that hounds will, on really good scenting days, carry as good a head, and run as unerringly fifty yards down wind of the line, as they can when following

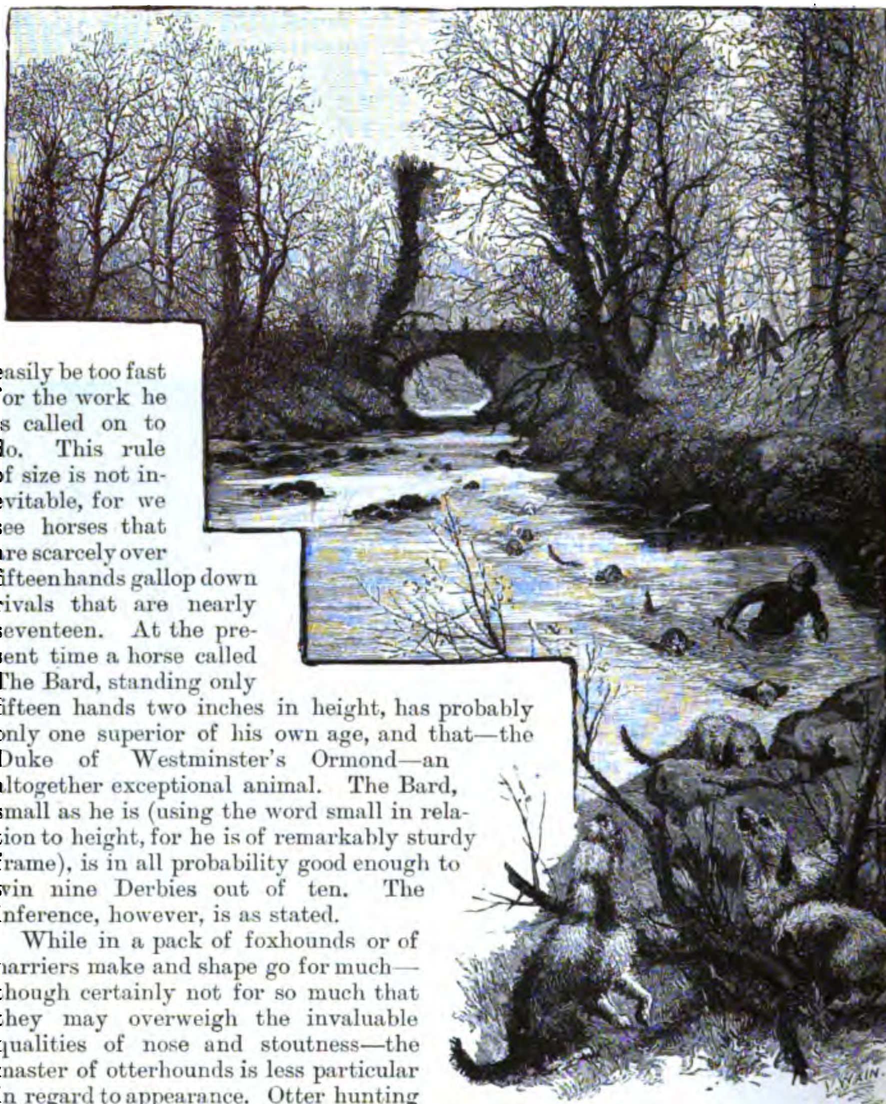
in the actual track, showing that scent can be diffused over a very considerable space of ground; and instances there are—rare, but well authenticated—where hounds have been laid on to a spot where the fox has been *seen* to pass, and have failed to show even an indication of feathering, yet on being brought back to the same place after an interval of five or ten minutes, have taken up the line and gone away at score, though it was absolutely impossible that a fresh taint could have been left; thus making it appear that scent may be *held in suspense*, or rise for a short period above the reach of hounds' olfactories, and then settle down again."

BEAGLES.
From a Drawing by L. WAIN.

The subject is far too intricate to be discussed at length, though some reference to it is unavoidable in an article which deals with hounds.

The speed of the foxhound was tested some years ago in a match run on the Beacon course at Newmarket between the hounds of Mr. Barry and Mr. Meynell, on which occasion the former gentleman's Bluecap ran the four miles in a few seconds over eight minutes. It is on record—and the chronicler was a M.F.H.—that Colonel Thornton's Meekin ran the same distance in seven minutes and half a second.

In his well-known book, *The Noble Science*, the late Mr. Delmé Radcliffe observes, in commenting on the foxhound's speed: "As to pace, it has been proved beyond dispute that the winner of the Derby would not be fast enough to run with hounds at their utmost speed. The great match over the Beacon course at Newmarket between foxhounds and race-horses in training for the purpose is fresh in the memory of many. The horses had not a chance with the hounds." This is surprising, but it need hardly be said that Mr. Delmé Radcliffe wrote with knowledge of his subject. The size of the hounds that were put to these tests is not given—doubtless they were somewhat smaller than staghounds; and the inference is that the staghound would be speedier still, while the harrier, being smaller, would not have quite so much pace, and indeed a harrier may



easily be too fast for the work he is called on to do. This rule of size is not inevitable, for we see horses that are scarcely over fifteen hands gallop down rivals that are nearly seventeen. At the present time a horse called The Bard, standing only fifteen hands two inches in height, has probably only one superior of his own age, and that—the Duke of Westminster's Ormond—an altogether exceptional animal. The Bard, small as he is (using the word small in relation to height, for he is of remarkably sturdy frame), is in all probability good enough to win nine Derbies out of ten. The inference, however, is as stated.

While in a pack of foxhounds or of harriers make and shape go for much—though certainly not for so much that they may overweigh the invaluable qualities of nose and stoutness—the master of otterhounds is less particular in regard to appearance. Otter hunting is a rougher sport than the chase of the fox. There is no question, when a man is after otter, of neat boots, well-fitting breeches with little bows symmetrically adjusted just above the top, "pink" or at the least double-seamed black coat, "hunting" neck-cloth and high hat. The otter hunter must be ready to jump into the water at any moment; he is an amphibious sportsman. And though a good game-looking hound always has his value wherever his lot may be cast, something of the roughness of the biped hunter is reflected in the pack. The presence of a rough-haired dog with foxhounds would shock the sensitive nerves of the purist, but among rough-coated otterhounds a foxhound is by no means out of place, and such an one often does even better service than his shaggy companions if, that is to say, he can be induced to care for otter hunting.

OTTER HOUNDS.
From a Drawing by L. WAIN.

Most writers on the otter deplore the scarcity of the creature, and sorrowfully anticipate the approaching day when he will be extinct. But otters are much more numerous than is generally supposed, only that they are hard to find, and perhaps not always the best means are taken to effect their discovery. The otter is the cunningest, keenest, and most wasteful of

BASSETT HOUNDS.

***From a Drawing by* L. WAIN.**

poachers, and having the depths of rivers with other underground passages and drains to aid his escape, is far harder to find than is the fox. To many otter-hounds the scent of the otter does not seem to have that fascination which a whiff of the fox exercises on his pursuers; otter is probably an acquired taste, but when once a hound acknowledges it he will show untiring resolution.

The bassett is a recent introduction from France, and has proved himself to be a hound with exceptional qualities, though he is so very slow that he is never likely to become generally popular. It is a curious sight to see the long bodies of a pack of bassetts undulating, as it were, over the ridges of a ploughed field, and obstacles are occasionally found over which they have to be carefully lifted by their friends—an operation which provokes a smile when contrasted with the ardour and dash with which a pack of foxhounds crash through their fences. A fine pack of bassetts was some time since owned and hunted by Lord Onslow of Clandon Park, Surrey, now Master of the Ripley and Knaphill Harriers. After giving up the practice of hunting with bassetts his lordship occasionally took one of these hounds out with a pack of beagles, and informs us that the animal's ability to run a cold scent was very remarkable—for this gift and the bassett's beautiful deep voice are his peculiar points. Frequently the beagles would check after a spurt, in which the slow-travelling bassett would be left behind. He would come plodding along at his own pace, and rarely, or never, failed to hit off the line.

In this country the dachshund is not known in connection with sport. Unlike the bassett, which in shape he to some extent resembles, the dachshund has a sharp unmusical note. He has also a very hard mouth. If by chance fur or feather comes between his teeth it is usually mangled before he can be induced to let go his hold. The dachshund's friends might reply to this charge that it is not his business to retrieve, and the contention is just.

Though nominally coming within the title of this article, the greyhound cannot properly be included, as he does not run by scent, but by sight, and it is questionable whether the name is not a corruption of "gaze-hound"; nor can pointers, setters, or retrievers be discussed, for though their work is done by nose they are not hounds. The deer-hound, again, does not hunt in packs, and, indeed, it is an unfortunate circumstance that this noble animal is rarely seen in the present day. A tracker is essential for the deer-stalker, as stags are often wounded, and will carry a bullet for many miles; but it is by no means unusual in Scotland to find a collie employed to do what used to be the duty of deer-hounds, or, rather, one of their duties, for no doubt in former days many deer were taken by coursing, and, indeed, in one or two places this method of capture was until lately still practised. Several pairs of deer-hounds were employed in this sport—if sport it can possibly be called, for the sole aim and object of deer-coursing was to get venison. One pair was slipped at the stag when found; the others were posted along the line it was thought probable that he would take, and they joined in when the quarry approached them. To procure venison, it may be urged, is also the aim and object of the stalker, and this is no doubt true; but there are joys in the progress of his labours, from the moment when he sights the deer to the moment—probably some hours afterwards—when he levels his rifle, pulls the trigger, and sees that his toils have not been in vain nor his woodcraft at fault; for the "royal," to obtain which he has made careful calculations, has run some miles and tediously and painfully crawled many long hundreds of yards, has fallen to him.

Of hounds proper, to return to the subject, there were last season in England and Scotland between 160 and 170 packs of stag- and foxhounds, and over 100 packs of recognised harriers, not including what may be called private packs which kill the poor hares—we have not much sympathy for the method of slaying, by means of harriers, the little creature that has such tremendous odds against him—on their masters' estates.

Each one of these packs, besides the healthful sport it provides, involves the expenditure of a very large sum of money in manifold ways. It is impossible to say where the list ends of those who draw benefit directly or indirectly from a pack of hounds, seeing that there must be included those who breed and sell horses; those who grow and supply forage; makers of saddlery and stable necessaries; those who provide entertainment for the horses' owners and equipment for riders; grooms, stable boys and servants generally—to trace what may be called the pecuniary influence of a pack of hounds, would be in fact an unending task; and it all arises from the simple circumstance that the hound is gifted with a keen nose!

ALFRED E. T. WATSON.

HAIR-DRESSING IN THE LAST CENTURY.
From a Drawing by HUGH THOMSON.

FASHIONS IN HAIR.

FEW of us are blessed with a mouth that pleases us, a satisfactory nose, eyes we would not wish to change; discontent avails us little, for we must live our lives through with the features Nature has given us.

But let our hair be never so straight and colourless, it is in our power to twist it into what shape we will, to alter its very hue; we can even bodily exchange our locks for those of another. And in all times, the control which we have over this, our one natural ornament, has been duly appreciated; we have curled it, crimped it, dyed it, stuffed it, larded it, and built it up in all manner of shapes: the inventive genius of the hairdresser having at times equalled, if not surpassed, that of the pastrycook, both in ingenuity of form, and in the complete disguise of ingredients.

Prized, and tenderly cared for, there have been times when the hair was almost held sacred; when to neglect it was a sign of self-abnegation or of terrible sorrow; when to cut it off was a mark of servitude. Thus, among the ancient Egyptians, a head of hair placed at the shrine of some deity was considered no slight offering; and the shaving of the head formed part of certain religious rites among both Egyptians and Phœnicians.

Later, among the Franks, when long hair was a mark of royalty and men swore by their locks as they now swear by their honour, to cut a man's hair was to degrade him. Debtors unable to discharge their debts declared themselves the slaves of their creditors by presenting to them a pair of shears, for all bondmen wore their heads shaved; and indeed, the tonsure of priests is merely a sign that they are the serfs of Heaven. The custom of accounting equal to a godfather the person who first cut a child's hair is a curious instance of the exaggerated regard for hair which prevailed among the early Franks; still more curious, perhaps, was a certain form of salutation which consisted of plucking out a hair and presenting it to the

person one wished to honour. Still, such an important and significant position has not always been held by the covering of our heads; the attention paid to it in most times has been the mere outcome of vanity—a legitimate desire to cultivate it, beautify it, show it to advantage, and generally improve upon nature: hence hair-dyes, abnormal erections, and wigs.

It is colour and not form that first strikes the uncultivated eye; and man appears to have dyed his hair before he dressed it in any way. That the Britons did so, we know from Propertius, who, writing to Cynthia, blames her for flaunting forth a head bright with unnatural splendour, in imitation of the dyed Britons. We also know that the Gauls dyed their hair a brilliant red, with a

EXAMPLE OF "BOSS" HEAD-DRESS. LATE THIRTEENTH CENTURY.
From Harleian MS.

compound of beech-cinders and goat's fat. The secret of this preparation they left to the Franks, who established a factory at Mattium (now Wiesbaden), whence they exported large quantities of the dye to Rome; for the Roman ladies, after the German wars had become very partial to what they chose to call honey-coloured and amber hair.

At one time black hair was all the rage. Pliny has handed down to us some curious receipts for hair dyes. One, particularly loathsome, consists of a quantity of leeches and vinegar allowed to ferment for sixty days in a leaden vessel; this preparation had to be applied to the head in the full sunshine, and so great was its strength, that the person using it had to hold oil in her mouth during the operation, lest her teeth also should turn black!

These injurious compounds, together with the crisping and curling then so much in vogue, ruined many a fine head of hair. Ovid gives us a sad picture of a young lady who finally became bald, and then had to send to Germany for "the hair of slaves." The fair hair of the Franks had indeed become a most lucrative article of trade; and it is easy to understand that false hair must have been very extensively used by the Roman ladies under the Empire, when we examine, in contemporary sculptures, the monuments of curls, tier above tier, and the countless plaits, with which they were pleased to adorn their heads.

So many and so various were the fashions, that Ovid says it would have been easier to count the acorns on a wide-spread oak, the wild beasts of the Alps, or the bees of Hybla, than the infinite number of head-dresses that came out every day. Indeed, sculptors sometimes provided the busts of their fair sitters with movable head-dresses, that the very representations of these worldly ladies might keep pace with the fashions. Two such busts are in existence; the one, of Julia Semiamara, mother of Heliogabalus, is at Berlin; the other, of Lucilla, at the Capitol. The fall of the Roman Empire put an end to these excesses; but Roman luxury lingered some while among the Gallo-Romans, and we are told that false hair, dyeing, and gold-powder, greatly excited the indignation of the clergy, who at one time actually threatened with excommunication all such as curled their hair by artificial means.

The head-dresses of the Franks were excessively simple, but somewhat eccentric. Sidonius Apollinaris, who lived among them in the fifth century, says that it was fashionable for the men of his day to tie their long hair together above the forehead, and to let the ends flow down their backs like a horse's tail. They were also accustomed sometimes to cut short the hair at the back of their heads, and to tie the remainder into a knob on the forehead. This fashion reappeared among the Normans in the eleventh century; but with them the front hair was only a few inches long, and stuck up like the crest of a bird. Illustrations of this are to be seen in the Bayeux tapestry.

All superstitious regard for long tresses appears to have died out with the Merovingians in the seventh century, after which hair was for some while kept short, the length varying, at different periods by two or three inches, until in the eleventh century long hair, very much curled, was once more sported by the French nobles. The Normans, who,

before the conquest, had worn short hair, appear to have been so much struck by the flowing ringlets of the Saxons, that

EXAMPLE OF "BOSS" HEAD-DRESS. FOURTEENTH CENTURY.

they at once adopted the fashion of the conquered race, and kept to it for many years: effectually resisting the anger of the

BEATRICE, COUNTESS OF ARUNDEL. D. 1439.

clergy, who in vain anathematised curling-tongs, added locks, and womanish fillets.

Up to this time, the hair of women, both in England and France, had but seldom been allowed to show itself, being usually hidden under a *couvre-chef.* When uncovered, it was worn very long, in two tails reaching down to the knees, sometimes plaited, sometimes twisted and enveloped in cases of silk. This fashion lasted until the end of the twelfth century, when the tails were untwisted, and the hair let loose on the shoulders. It was not even then allowed complete liberty, however, being either covered by a transparent veil, or confined in a net; and the veil thickened, shrouding the head more and more, until it assumed the shape of the wimple and gorget; while the simple

ALIANOR, LADY STAFFORD. EARLY FIFTEENTH CENTURY.
From a Monument in Bromsgrove Church, Worcestershire.

open-work net became, in the course of time, a thick, padded caul. And then, farewell simplicity!

It is true that unmarried women, and queens at their coronation, still wore their hair loose; that in France, at the close of the thirteenth century, there are several instances of a simple and becoming head-dress of plaits of flowing hair surmounted by a chaplet of flowers; that no fault is to be found with the coils over the ears, as worn in the days of Edward III. But these instances are entirely lost to sight, beside such enormities as the bosses, and the many

varieties of the *hennin* which characterize the costume of the Middle Ages.

It is a noteworthy fact that Englishwomen appear to have been the most extravagant in these outrageous fashions; in France, the *hennin* never outgrew the limits of reason as it did here; and while in Germany it was but little worn, it does not appear at all in Italy or Spain.

The bosses first came into fashion at the close of the thirteenth century. These protuberances were caused by the wimple being tightly drawn over a thick coil of hair placed on either ear. Contemporary writers delighted in satirising these excrescences, which they likened to horns; sometimes, they even drew comparisons between the wearers of the bosses and a certain personage to whom horns are peculiar. Of course, ladies of fashion made these bosses as large as possible, by means either of padding or of false hair, which strikes one as unnecessary luxury, since this head-dress allowed no hair whatever to appear, save one casual small mesh on the forehead.

ELIZABETH OF YORK. D. 1503.
From a Picture in the National Portrait Gallery.

ANNE BOLEYN. D. 1536.
From a Picture in the National Portrait Gallery.

False hair was, anyway, much used in the Middle Ages. The share allotted to each by nature was not considered sufficient, even for the comparatively simple head-dress (already referred to) of plaits coiled over the ears and laid against the cheeks. A contemporary writer, Giles d'Orléans, complains bitterly of the amount of false hair worn by the women of his day. He recoils with disgust from the thought of wearing the hair of dead people, "who are now perhaps groaning in hell!"

And they dyed their hair too, these mediæval ladies, sometimes black, but most often yellow. They adored yellow hair. The heroes of their romances were nearly all provided with crisp curls of gold, while the heads of villains and traitors were usually of a fiery red. They somehow connected red hair with wickedness, and such unfortunate creatures as were afflicted with locks of that hue took great pains to hide their deformity.

The bosses must not be confounded with the horned head-dress proper, the *hennin*, which came into fashion towards the end of the fourteenth century, and which was ungainly and absurd beyond description. There seems to have been no limit to its size, nor to the extravagance of its ornamentation. It assumed many different forms, the most notable being a pair of horns, a heart, a crescent, or a steeple. It is perhaps with the last variety that the name of the *hennin* is principally associated.

One cannot help admiring to a certain extent the architects who devised these monuments, but still more does one wonder at the martyrs to fashion who balanced them on their heads. To carry, with becoming

EXAMPLES OF ROMAN HAIR-DRESSING.
From a Drawing by L. Alma-Tadema, R.A.

grace, a mass of padding and heavy ornament run up to the height of a foot and more, and weighed down by long streamers, or stretching out like branches on either side of the head, can have been no easy matter. Besides, these erections were either made so high that the wearer had to stoop on entering a doorway, or so broad that she had to edge in

QUEEN ELIZABETH. D. 1603.
From a Print in the British Museum.

sideways like a crab. This outrageous head-dress flourished in its different forms for nearly a century, the subject of endless satire and condemnation. Some zealous churchmen, we are told, preached a crusade against it, promising ten days' indulgence to any little dirty boy who chose to hoot the wearers of the *hennin*, and pull down the abomination in the open street. But it survived this and many other attacks, and finally died a natural death late in the fifteenth century. It is a marvel that it lived so long. Not only was it ugly and uncomfortable in itself, but it gave rise to another ugly and uncomfortable fashion—the cultivation of a high, broad, and smooth forehead. If a lady had the misfortune to possess a wrinkled forehead, she caused the skin to be tightly stretched over her head, and secured under the stiff band of her head-dress. If she possessed a low or narrow forehead, she enlarged it by plucking out her hair with tweezers. Never indeed was hair so ignominiously treated as in the days of the *hennin*. The wearers of those stiff jewelled head-cases might as well have been bald!

It was left for the men to do justice to their head-covering. From the middle of the twelfth century to the end of the fourteenth, they generally wore curls reaching to the shoulder. This was fashionable both in England and France. The curls twisted away from the face, and the hair on the forehead was either cut short or rolled back.

For some while, at the end of the fourteenth century, it was fashionable for young men to wear the hair rolled all round the head, and bound by a jewelled circlet. But there came a time of war; long hair was in the way under a helmet, and therefore during the greater part of the fifteenth century it was almost universally cropped short. The well-known bushes of hair hanging on either side of the face, and almost hiding the eyes, come next in order, when the Wars of the Roses were at an end, and lasted until

QUEEN HENRIETTA MARIA. D. 1669.

Henry VIII. arbitrarily ordered his courtiers to poll their heads. This fashion of close-cropping, which lasted through the two following reigns, originated at the French court. It was occasioned by a slight wound on the head, which obliged Francis I. to cut off all his hair, and of course every one else followed suit.

The women had already taken to dressing their hair in the plainest way. They parted

it in the middle, brushed it smooth to the head, and plaited it somehow behind. But the various hoods and caps then generally worn hid the back of the head entirely.

These sober head-gear suited the taste of Mary well enough, but they did not satisfy her successor. The vanity of Queen Elizabeth, her love of finery, brought about a conspicuous increase of luxury in dress. That the head should have been rigged out in proportion to the body is only natural, and it is not surprising that a queen, whose wardrobe at the time of her death contained three thousand dresses, should also have left behind her a few hundred tufts of false hair.

Far from being neglected, hair was indeed made much of in the days of Good Queen Bess. The erections which then graced the ladies' heads were not made of cardboard and gold-cloth and embroidery, but of hair underpropped with wires and padding. Sometimes the wearer's own hair was used, eked out by a certain number of sprays of curls and beautiful "inventions" in the form of leaves, etc.; but sometimes the whole head-dress was artificial, and ready to be fixed on at a moment's notice. Jewellery, feathers, trinkets of gold and silver, and even trumpery glass ornaments were used in great profusion to adorn the Elizabethan heads. One can imagine how these "childish gewgaws" must have caught in the ruffs!

But there were more simple head-dresses than the above. Every one is familiar with the heart-shaped cap of Mary, Queen of Scots, which showed the hair on either side of the forehead in a puff of curls, or tightly crimped. A contemporary writer tells us that the young Englishwomen went mostly bare-headed, "the hair pleasantly plaited and brought back from the head;" but that many "*because of the cold* wear head-dresses of foreign hair."

This seems rather a strange motive for wearing a wig, or periwig, as it was then called. It is doubtful whether the Elizabethan periwig was an entire head of artificial hair, or merely a single lock. The term was probably applied to either. Anyway, both were largely used, and the demand for artificial locks became so great that, towards the close of the century, it was considered unsafe for children to wander about unprotected, as they were frequently stolen for the sake of their hair. Queen Elizabeth's extravagant use of false hair has already been referred to; her rival, Mary, Queen of Scots, also paid great attention to head-dress. One of her waiting-gentlewomen was reputed as "the best busker of a woman's head to be seen in any country;" and we know that the unfortunate queen actually wore a periwig on the scaffold, and that "her borrowed auburn locks" fell off when her head was held aloft by the executioner.

JOHN LOCKE. D. 1704.
From a Picture in the National Portrait Gallery.

HENRIETTA BOYLE, COUNTESS OF ROCHESTER. *Circa* 1682.
From a Print.

Men had but little cause to use false hair, so great was the variety and freedom of their fashions. They might wear their hair as

they chose; in French, Dutch, Italian, or Spanish style; cropped short, flowing like a woman's locks, or reaching to the ears; curled or waved or hanging "like flax upon a distaff"—all ways were accepted.

In the history of seventeenth century head-dress it is the men that figure most conspicuously. Little need be said of the women's hair; the pictures of Vandyke have made us all familiar with the principal female head-dress of the period: a row of thin little curls on the forehead, a tight coil of plaits at the back of the head, and large puffs of frizzy hair on either side of the face. Later, these puffs were superseded by long curls, which increased in profusion, until at last the entire head-dress was often merely composed of ringlets, ornamented by strings of beads or bows of narrow ribbon.

It was a glorious time for curls, the seventeenth century; men and women alike wore them in masses, the cropped heads of the Puritans contrasting strangely with such a wealth of ringlets.

Not until the introduction of the great flowing periwig, however, did men's heads rise to supreme importance; the scanty and but slightly twisted locks worn in the days of Charles I. had been comparatively insignificant.

Many stories are told respecting the origin of the periwig; there is no doubt that it owed its being to the court of Louis XIV.; according to some it was adopted by the courtiers in imitation of the young king's luxuriant locks, but, according to others, it was devised by the Duke of Anjou to hide a deformity. If the former story be the true one, it would appear that Louis returned the compliment paid him by his courtiers, for he finally wore a periwig himself. Yet that was not until he had attained his thirty-fifth year; he was long unwilling to hide his beautiful hair, and it is said that when he at last consented to wear a peruke, he had one made full of holes through which his precious curls might be drawn.

Our Charles II. had conformed to the fashion some ten years before, and the popularity of the periwig in England was very great. They must have been a strange sight, the top-heavy beaux of that day, the Sir Fopling Flutters, with their "Chedreux" periwigs "more exactly curled than a lady's head newly dressed for a ball," lolling in groups on the Mall, in the Mulberry Garden, or in the play-house, while, "stirring the pocket tortoise," they combed their perfumed ringlets with conscious ease.

Those were halcyon days for the wig-makers, who never failed to remind their patrons, at every opportunity, of the unmistakable superiority of false hair. Several instances are on record of "The Death of Absalom" having been adopted as a wig-maker's sign, accompanied by such

SPECIMEN OF HEAD-GEAR ABOUT 1780.
From an old Print.

appropriate verses as the following, found at Troyes:

"Passans, contemplez la douleur
D'Absalom pendu par la nuque;
Il eut évité ce malheur
S'il avait porté perruque."

or the English equivalent:

"O Absalom, O Absalom,
O Absalom my son!
If thou hadst worn a periwig,
Thou hadst not been undone!"

The importation into France of dead and living female hair from all parts of the world was enormous. Colbert at one time threatened to forbid it, alarmed at the unnecessary expenditure, until it was proved that the profit arising from the exportation of manufactured perukes into other countries more than covered the cost of the hair.

Indeed all the varieties of the periwig originated in France; the names of some of the "artists" who created them have even been handed down to posterity. The hideous "Front à la Fontange," a mass of curls standing to a height of four inches above the forehead, was the work of a M. Binette; and many stories are told respecting a certain

man of genius, M. Champagne, who was at one time run after by all the Parisian ladies. He would accept no payment for his services, but had no objection to receiving presents of enormous value from the ladies whose hair he dressed, and whom he treated with the utmost insolence, knowing that they dared not expostulate lest he should revenge himself on their heads.

The use of false hair among women had increased as years went by; already, in the reign of Charles I., it had been considered as mean for ladies to wear their own hair as to don a gown of their own spinning. They did their best to keep pace with the men; sometimes, on horseback at least, wearing the periwig themselves.

MRS. YATES AS "LADY TOWNLEY." D. 1787.

Late in the century they took to wearing bunches of curls set upon wires, which stuck out several inches on either side of the head; these they called "heart-breakers." Another innovation was the Taure, a shapeless mass of tangled curls on the forehead which was supposed to resemble the brow of a bull.

But the most striking head-dress of the period was the Fontange. It has a curious history. One day, when Mlle. de Fontange was riding out with Louis XIV., her curls being blown about by the wind, she tied a garter round her head; the king admired this impromptu head-dress, and next morning, the head of every court beauty was encircled by a ribbon tied in a bow on the forehead. But the Fontange did not stop there; another bow was added, lace, a cap, a streamer, and finally an erection of pleats on a framework of wire. This was the Commode; it grew higher and higher; and when, finally, no woman of fashion could enter a door without stooping, Louis would fain have recalled his admiration of Mlle. de Fontange's garter head-dress. In vain he tried to prohibit the thing; it would be withdrawn for a while, but only to shoot out higher than ever. At last, early in the eighteenth century, two Englishwomen appeared at court one day, wearing the modest lace cap, which, with us, had already superseded the Fontange. The king went into ecstasies over this simple head-gear: "All women of sense," said he, "should dress their heads thus." It is said that the ladies of the court sat up all night cutting down their Commodes; any way, the eyesore had disappeared next morning, and was seen no more.

Like the often-quoted candle that burns brighter when its end draws near, the periwig grew larger than ever early in the eighteenth century, often reaching to the waist. But the reign of curls was over, and the reign of powder had begun. Hair powder had indeed been used before, but not profusely; the powder of the seventeenth century was, moreover, not white, and principally used, perhaps, for its perfume. But about the year 1703 a plain white powder came into fashion, which was used unsparingly for nearly a hundred years.

The periwig did not long enjoy the privilege of being floured; it scarcely outlived the Great Monarch at whose court its glory had arisen. For some while the heavy curls had been tied back in summer because of the heat; then came a time when they were tied back for ever. The periwig was a periwig no longer, but a pig-tail.

The first half of the eighteenth century is conspicuous for the neatness and modesty of its head-dresses; the ladies wore their hair low and simply dressed, adorned in moderation with lace and ribbon; and there was nothing outrageous in the various pig-tails which hung down the gentlemen's backs. But soon after the half century was completed a change took place. Exaggeration, extravagance, discomfort, all that was most unnatural and most unhealthy, returned once more to deck the ladies' heads. The pictures of Reynolds and Gainsborough have proved to us that there existed head-dresses both

becoming and graceful, and probably clean; but the stiff monumental "heads" which tortured our more fashionable great-grandmothers, were neither becoming nor graceful;—nor clean.

FASHIONABLE HEAD-DRESS. *Circa* 1830. *From "The World of Fashion."*

No mediæval beauty, with her skin drawn under a forehead-band, and her plucked brow smarting and sore, ever endured more in the cause of fashion than did the women of a hundred years ago. Unpleasant as the actual dressing of a head must have been, that was the least of its discomforts.

What though the hair, both natural and artificial, had to be worked up by the barber with meal and grease into such a state that one would imagine it was intended for the stuffing of a chair-bottom; and then, when in a good stiff paste, moulded in various shapes and rolled into curls, which were fastened all over a horsehair cushion with hundreds of long pins? What of that? Even when brought up to a height of three feet by the addition of gigantic bows and towering feathers, the thing would have been endurable, for one day. But barbers were expensive; such a head took hours to arrange, and, moreover, none but the barber could demolish the edifice, so firmly was it built. Therefore, a head once dressed, was dressed for three months in the winter; but in summer we are told that after nine weeks "it began to be a little hasardé!" It is not surprising that elegant scratchers of ivory or metal came largely into fashion.

At night the erection had to be well greased, wooden rollers were passed through the curls, the head was tied up in a large bag, and then the wearer was at liberty to sleep—if she could!

Fortunately, no fashion lasts for ever. The French Revolution brought horsehair cushions, wigs, and powder, to a speedy end. Men dared once more to appear unadorned, save by their own locks. Shaven heads, "*à la victime,*" short curls, "*à la Titus,*" abruptly followed those masses of greasy, tow-stuffed, and floured tangle, which had so long disfigured women's heads; in short, both sexes alike once more showed their individual colouring, and left off "starving the poor to beautify their hair."

FASHIONABLE HEAD-DRESS FOR JUNE, 1830. *From "The World of Fashion."*

Slaves to the wig for nearly a century and a half, the men would seem to have learned a lesson, for, as far as the outside of their heads is concerned, they have not outraged nature since.

The women have not done quite so well.

It is true that for the first fifteen years of the present century they dressed their hair reasonably enough. But look at their heads ten years later, and ten years after that! What is to be said in defence of those elaborate top-knots, those bows and trellisses of wired hair, those heavy turbans, those feathers and flower-gardens? The comparatively simple bunches of ringlets which followed cannot well be called beautiful either; and now that the cumbersome chignon is a thing of the past, no one finds it necessary to say a word in its favour.

We seem at present to be living in days when beauty and simplicity are courted in head-dress as well as in other things; but how long will this last? A glance at the history of fashions in hair would seem to prove that women love to be uncomfortable. They may be at their ease now, but doubtless the time is not far off when they will invent another of those masterpieces of discomfort, in the construction of which they have hitherto shown themselves so skilful.

LAURENCE ALMA-TADEMA.

A DYNAMITE FACTORY.

ON a bare, sandy corner of the Ayrshire coast, just opposite the Isle of Arran, and becomingly remote from human habitations, stands the dynamite factory of Ardeer. All who enter here leave certain metallic things behind, including keys, knives, chains, and everything they may have about them made of steel or iron. The place is in charge of five policemen appointed by the county authorities; and it is to these guardians of the public safety that the articles just specified have to be given up. The reason for not allowing them to be brought within the gates of the factory is simple enough. The sharp, sudden contact of hard metal with even a particle of dynamite or of any of the blasting powders prepared at Ardeer would cause an explosion. For like reasons, in some of the houses where "blasting powder" is being mixed and stirred up by hand, the visitor is required to encase his feet in immense slippers, lest the nails in his boots should come into fatal contact with a stray particle of dynamite or some other explosive.

Beginning at the end, we are conducted into a small building where are to be seen specimens of the various explosives ready for use, or at least for transmission and sale. The charges of dynamite, a soft, pasty, coffee-coloured substance (or perhaps its particular shade of brown is more nearly that of terra-cotta), are in the form of rather long cartridges, made as if to suit the calibre of a large-bored rifle. Taking up and exhibiting a roll of the interesting compound, denuded of its paper covering, Mr. McMasters, the director of the works, warned me eagerly against touching it, which I had somehow imagined was expected of me; not that the pressure of a finger would cause it to explode, but because it is the property of dynamite to make those who touch it, until they have grown accustomed to the contact, sick even unto vomiting. The workers in the laboratory where the nitro-glycerine is prepared, are, in like manner, affected by headache until they get used to the acid-laden atmosphere. If the homœopathic theory be true, dynamite might be utilised as a remedy against sea-sickness; for the symptoms produced by touching it with the hand bear the closest resemblance to the nausea caused by the heaving and pitching of a ship.

Dynamite, as manufactured at Ardeer, is also known as "Nobel's patent safety blasting powder;" and just as a "patent safety" hansom cab is the securest of vehicles provided that by a sudden jerk it does not get capsized, or that the horse does not kick the splashboard to pieces, or that he does not fall, with the effect of throwing the traveller forward and possibly through a pane of glass, so Nobel's dynamite is safe if care be taken not to let it fall on steel or iron, not to strike it with steel or iron, not to let it be touched by sparks, and not in warm climates to leave it exposed to the rays of the sun. Much, too, depends upon the purity of the compound, spontaneous explosions sometimes taking place through the presence, in ill-prepared dynamite, of foreign substances. All explosives, with the exception of gunpowder, seem now to be classed, in ordinary parlance, under the general name of "dynamite," though there is no reason for believing that the *dynamitard* or dynamiter confines himself to the use of dynamite specifically so-called. There are upwards of fifty other explosives licensed in England for manufacture or import. These are known, for the most part, by the most barbarous appellations;

derived, like "Lithofracteur," from two different languages, one ancient the other modern; or formed without the least regard to linguistic principles, like "Tonite" (of which the proper form already existed in "detonator"), "Potentite," "Forcite," "Virite," and "Vigorite." These outrageous words are apparently of American origin. So also are some more reasonable and also more significant names for explosives of a particular kind, such as "Rendrock" and "Rackarock." Dynamite, properly so called, is not at this moment the most powerful explosive known; and for many purposes it is being rapidly superseded by a preparation of nitro-glycerine and gun-cotton, which, treated in a particular way, forms a homogeneous substance called "blasting gelatine."

Quitting the storehouse, or rather sample-house, of the factory, I was taken, with some other visitors, to the laboratory where the nitric acid, to be afterwards mixed with glycerine, is made. As we crossed the main avenue leading through the buildings and small wooden constructions distributed here and there about the grounds, I noticed some vessels off the coast which, I found, were used for conveying the dynamite and other explosives to various ports, whence they are sent by carts and waggons to their ultimate destination. The dynamite fleet consists of three steamers and a cutter; and these vessels are absolutely necessary for the trade, the conveyance of dynamite by railway train being forbidden by Act of Parliament. As to the wisdom of the government regulations on the subject opinions are naturally divided; the official view being in direct opposition to the one held by the manufacturers. An eminent Swedish chemist, Mr. Alfred Nobel, inventor of the particular mixture of nitro-glycerine and a certain infusorial earth to which in its combined form the name of dynamite is given, holds that besides being (at least until the invention of blasting gelatine) the most powerful explosive known, it is also the safest. In proof of this he states that a box of dynamite may be thrown to the ground from any height or sustain any degree of shock without explosion, though only a few ounces of dynamite exploded according to art will shatter the heaviest blocks of wrought iron or steel on which ten times as much gunpowder would produce no effect whatever; moreover that nearly five thousand tons of dynamite are used annually in Europe, America, and Australia for blasting purposes without one accident ever having occurred in transit or storage; and finally that dynamite is "much safer than gunpowder under all conditions of transport." As regards railroad transport, eight thousand tons have already been carried by rail on the continent of Europe without a single accident. Accidents from dynamite have occurred in mines, but only, we are assured, "through unwarrantable carelessness." An accident, too, occurred in the Ardeer factory itself, but with such results that its origin could by no possibility be ascertained; the wooden hut in which it took place having been blown to atoms, together with two unhappy girls who were preparing dynamite cartridges within it.

The invention of nitric acid, or "aqua fortis," as it was originally called, is due to the alchemists of the middle ages. No use, however, was made of the discovery until about a hundred years ago. It was found by Stenhouse that the action of nitric acid upon materials of organic origin such as indigo, aloes, &c., produced an acid possessing explosive properties to which the name of "picric acid" was given. Until within the last forty years this acid was prepared in only the smallest quantities; but, made in a simpler manner than formerly, it is now used extensively as a cheap and brilliant yellow dye. One of its salts, picrate of potash, was until lately used in combination with saltpetre or chlorate of potash for explosive purposes. But its unstable, dangerous character rendered it unavailable for ordinary use. It was good enough, however, for the Communards of Paris, who employed it largely in carrying out their diabolical designs. The discovery of nitro-glycerine was made by a young Italian or Spanish chemist named Sobrero, at Paris, in 1846, the year after that in which gun-cotton was discovered. But for many years it was regarded only as a chemical curiosity, its practical value not being recognised until 1863.

Meanwhile gun-cotton (that is to say, cotton fibre or wood fibre subjected to the action of nitric acid), which after its first introduction was thought available for industrial as well as warlike purposes, had been discarded from general use. The absolute necessity for strong confinement in order to develop its full explosive power was one of the principal objections to it; the process of forcing the gun-cotton in a state of rigidity into the holes bored for its reception being attended with great danger.

It has been said that nitro-glycerine (which in combination with certain substances becomes dynamite) after being regarded for some sixteen years as a chemical curiosity began in 1863 to be used for industrial purposes.

It can be made only too easily on a small scale by dropping pure, distilled glycerine into a mixture of very strong nitric and sulphuric acid. Thus prepared nitro-glycerine is a dense, oily fluid of a pale brown colour, and of a sweet, pungent taste. It can scarcely be recommended in large quantities for internal use. But in very small doses—about the hundredth part of a one per cent. solution —it has been found serviceable in the treatment of *angina pectoris*. Taken in larger doses it would produce severe headache and sickness, and moreover (says Mr. Alfred Johnston in a very interesting lecture on the manufacture of this explosive) "bring a blush to the cheek which, like nitrate of amyl, would rival the brightest rouge that ever adorned or transformed a female face." For some years after 1863 nitro-glycerine was manufactured in considerable quantities on the continent of Europe, and used to be packed in forty pound tins and conveyed freely by rail and road for long distances. It was imported even into the city of London and carted along the streets of Liverpool. But this led later on to some terrible accidents; and although they seem all to have been due to gross carelessness, the result proved that nitro-glycerine could not in its actual form remain an article of commerce.

Mr. Nobel had meanwhile discovered by a series of experiments that the readiness of nitro-glycerine to explode was not diminished but was rather increased by its being mixed with inert substances. The result was the invention by this chemist, in the year 1867, of the notorious and much-maligned preparation called dynamite, which, as now manufactured, consists of 75 parts by weight of thoroughly purified nitro-glycerine uniformly mixed with 25 parts of an infusorial earth called kieselguhr, or earth-meal. The fine grey dust known as kieselguhr is the mineral remains of a kind of moss that grows in stagnant waters. Beds of kieselguhr are found in many parts of Germany and also in Aberdeenshire.

Dynamite, like many other things not universally appreciated, has, among those who know it well, passionate admirers; and that not for its power alone but also for its comparative beneficence. Once manufactured and made into cartridges, it is much safer to transport than gunpowder, while after use in a quarry or mine, the vapour it leaves is less dense and less injurious than that of the more familiar explosive. A great improvement is said to have taken place in the health of miners since gunpowder has been replaced for blasting purposes by preparations of nitro-glycerine. In a mine where gunpowder is employed the air has been described as "just like a London fog," whereas in a mine where dynamite was habitually used the atmosphere was clear. As for dynamite accidents, the only astonishing thing, considering the carelessness of workmen not properly guided and watched, is that they do not occur more frequently. Explicit cautions and instructions are issued with every packet of dynamite sold. But these warnings are frequently in vain. Miners will sometimes smoke at their work; and Professor Abel mentions the case of a man who, desiring to tap a barrel containing one hundred pounds of gunpowder, and being unable to find his auger, proceeded to bore a hole in the head of the cask with a red-hot poker. An English gentleman visiting in the western states of America a man who owned large silver mines, was more than alarmed (though he was weak enough not to take action on his well-grounded fear) when he saw his host place some hard, partially-frozen dynamite cartridges on the hob, with the remark that "the heat would soon soften them." In this case no explosion took place until, the cartridges being sufficiently "done," the miner took them outside and employed them properly in blowing up, not human habitations, but a huge mass of rock.

To prepare myself for observing, with something like intelligence, the process of dynamite manufacturing, as carried on at the Ardeer works, I had made a careful study of Mr. Johnston's valuable lecture which, delivered before the members of a small scientific society, has not yet been printed; and on leaving the building where specimens of dynamite in its perfected condition had been shown to us, I understood that of the various laboratories we were about to visit, the first would be the one in which the acids were prepared. Two acids, nitric and sulphuric, are first mixed together in a large iron receptacle, and cooled by means of cold water passed round the tank, and by agitation with compressed air. They are then run into a large leaden apparatus which is kept cool by being surrounded with cold water, and by running cold water through leaden worms that coil round the interior of the apparatus. When the mixed acids have fallen to a sufficiently low temperature, glycerine is injected by means of compressed air; and on entering the acids in the form of a fine spray it becomes immediately "nitrated," as the process is called. The glycerine is in fact acted upon by the acids precisely as ordinary cotton is acted upon in the produc-

tion of gun-cotton. Considerable heat is developed during the process; and a delicate thermometer graduated to tenths of a degree (C) is dipped into the mixture of acids and nitro-glycerine and watched with the greatest care by workmen constantly in attendance. The completion of the operation is made known by the fall of temperature; and the contents are then run off into another leaden tank, where the mixture is allowed to stand for some time. The nitro-glycerine being heavier than the acids, and being insoluble in them, begins now to separate from them and falls to the bottom of the tank in about an hour. It can then be readily drawn off and washed, first in water, and afterwards in an alkaline solution so as to free it from all traces of acid. It is then carefully filtered into another tank, ready for conversion into dynamite.

In the Ardeer works each "charge," as it is called, of nitro-glycerine manufactured in this manner, consists of about 15 cwts., for the production of which 1⅛ tons of nitric acid, 2 tons of sulphuric acid, and 7½ cwts. of glycerine are necessary; and about ten such charges can be prepared daily. The dynamite is made by mixing up the nitro-glycerine with kieselguhr. This process, worked by hand, is continued until the mixture is complete. The product, in the form of a coffee-coloured, doughy, putty-like substance, is made into cartridges by means of an apparatus which may be compared to a sausage-making machine; and in this form carefully packed, carefully shipped, it is carried to the sea-ports nearest the places where it has to be delivered. If sent to a foreign port it can afterwards be forwarded by rail. But in England, as before mentioned, the railways are closed to it.

The sulphuric acid is brought to Ardeer from a branch establishment in large iron vessels. But the nitric acid is made on the premises from sulphuric acid and nitrate of soda, which, in its natural condition, is imported from Peru, where it is found in large beds. One of the large vessels or tanks in which the sulphuric acid is brought to Ardeer was shown to us, resting on a truck in the main avenue. It is made in one piece of solid malleable iron, is shaped like a short, squat sausage, approaching the form of a sphere, and holds eight tons of acid.

The most striking figures in the Ardeer factory are the "danger-men," who, clothed from head to foot in scarlet, occupy certain hills on which stand the buildings of the so-called "danger department." The red, pocketless suits worn by the "danger-men" are not assigned to them from any poetical idea of appropriateness, but simply in order that they may be seen from afar off and that any person appearing in the danger department without belonging to it may be at once recognised through the negative evidence of ordinary clothes. The red suits are made without pockets so that, apart from all injunctions on the subject, the wearers may be unable to carry with them any of the forbidden articles in steel or iron. They suggest, by association, the familar operatic figure of Mephistopheles—though the Mephistopheles of mediæval tradition wore the garb of a monk—and an element of grotesqueness is introduced into the fiery costume by the cap, which is of the Tam o' Shanter pattern. The danger department seems to have been built on hills so as to diminish the effect of a possible, though scarcely probable, explosion. Of course the greatest precautions are taken against any such accident. Tanks of water, with the hose laid on, occupy commanding positions; persons dressed otherwise than in red are, if found among the danger-men, punished with due rigour, while—most important point of all—the danger-men themselves are of trained habits and tried character.

The most dangerous place in the danger department is apparently the one where the nitro-glycerine is prepared. For this operation it is necessary, as before explained, that the acid be heated to a certain temperature; and it is essential, under pain of an explosion, that this temperature be not exceeded. Accordingly each watcher in scarlet has before him a thermometer of which he observes intently the rise and fall. If the acid is getting too hot the cooling apparatus which encircles the tank is made use of by turning a tap; and as long as the Mephistopheles in a Tam o' Shanter cap does not take his eyes from the thermometer all is well. The visitor is specially cautioned against speaking to the man at the thermometer; and when the reason of this warning is explained to him he is tolerably sure to obey it. The danger-man, in his strange fantastic garments, with his earnest gaze, and with the fumes of the acid rising around him reminds one—engaged as he is in the most delicate and dangerous operations—of the old alchemists; some of whom may well be supposed to have unwittingly blown themselves to pieces, the work of destruction being afterwards attributed, not to their carelessness or incompleteness of knowledge, but to the direct intervention of the demon.

A terrible explosion which in past days would doubtless have been explained by the

agency of the devil (determined, when the time for fulfilling some compact with him had arrived, to have his "due") did in fact take place at Ardeer a few years ago; though, thanks to the great precautions observed, the loss of life was very much smaller than it might under other circumstances have been. It will be remembered that when the nitro-glycerine has been mixed with kieselguhr (an operation which is performed by hand—workmen with arms bared to the shoulder stirring up the compound and kneading it until the mixture is thorough and complete) the dynamite, as the new preparation is called, is made up into cartridges, though not before it has been carefully passed through a sieve. The work of cartridge-making is done in little wooden houses or huts which are now separated from one another by huge square massive embankments sufficiently high and sufficiently thick to render it improbable that an explosion in one of the huts would affect the hut nearest to it. Each of these huts, of which there are upwards of thirty, is tenanted by three or four girls whose business it is to make the cartridges by pushing the dynamite through copper tubes—steel and iron being here, as elsewhere, absolutely proscribed. Outside the hut stand two men, called service-watchers, who take the cartridges as they are made from the hands of the girls; and the whole of the working party is superintended by an overlooker. Above the door of each hut are directions as to the maximum of dynamite to be kept there, the temperature to be maintained, and the number of girls, service-watchers, and overlookers to be employed.

Under what circumstances the explosion before referred to took place could never be known—for the same reasons which rendered it impossible to know how certain alchemists and magicians who met with the fate of the celebrated Dr. Faustus did really come to an end. One of the huts was blown to pieces; and with the wooden structure disappeared, literally in fragments, two unhappy girls who had been working in it. Dynamite may be exploded in three recognised ways: by concussion with hard metal, by heat at a certain temperature, or by impurity in the substance. But in this particular case there could obviously be no means of determining which of these three causes had been at work. It is known, however, that from the hut where the explosion took place some burning materials were cast to the adjoining one, which took fire and burned so rapidly that of the two girls working in it only one could make her escape. A panic was naturally enough caused among the girls generally. But with the exception of the two destroyed in the explosion, and of the one in the adjacent hut who was burned to death, none were injured. A government inquiry was of course instituted, and on the recommendation of Colonel Majendie, Inspector of Explosives, the embankments were ordered to be increased in bulk and height.

For some days after the explosion the service of cartridge-making was unpopular among the girls employed in this department, and for about a week none of them returned to work. Then gradually they resumed their occupations; and there has since been nothing to disturb them in the routine of their daily labours. Though employed in work which presents at least the possibility of danger, and which would seem more calculated to affect the imagination and inspire fear than many occupations in factories which can be shown by statistics to be equally perilous, the girls of Ardeer accept ordinary wages; and though there is always a remote chance of their being suddenly annihilated there is meantime a positive certainty that while they work and live they will do so under very favourable conditions. When they have once got over the first effects of direct contact with dynamite they enjoy excellent health, which need not be attributed to the constant proximity of nitro-glycerine, but is evidently due to the purity of the air and the health-giving breezes from the surrounding sea.

It is difficult for an unscientific person, whatever precautions he may take against the probability of error, to write with confidence about the manufacture of explosives. But it is given to many of us to know the difference between a pretty girl and an ugly one; a girl full of health and spirits and one who is sickly and ill-conditioned. The Ardeer girls seemed all in the enjoyment of excellent health, while some few might almost be said to possess the rarer and diviner gift of beauty. Judged by the general voice of their male associates, they are considered of exceptional value as wives; and so eagerly are they sought in marriage that the female establishment at Ardeer is constantly undergoing changes. Apart from all question of health and beauty the habit of making up dynamite cartridges must have a fine effect in developing such admirable domestic virtues as carefulness and precision. One little mistake, and the poor cartridge girl is blown from her wooden hut to the skies.

H. SUTHERLAND EDWARDS.

CAMPANILE OF BADIA A SETTIMO.
From a Drawing by A. D. M'CORMICK.

A SEPTEMBER DAY IN THE VALLEY OF THE ARNO.

LEAVING Florence by the Porta S. Frediano we drove about four miles to the ancient Badia a Settimo, famous in the political as well as the religious annals of Tuscany. The peasants were as busy as bees preparing casks and vats for the vintage, and the universal hammering was quite deafening, mingled with the beating out of the *sagina*, a kind of millet much grown for making brooms, which are sent by shiploads to England and America. Most beautiful are the fields of *sagina*; it grows six or seven feet high, the light green leaves bending gracefully to the breeze and the loose tuft of seed falling like a cascade of chestnut coloured rain from the tops of the tall stems. To English eyes the wealth of grapes appeared incredible, and the colours marvellous. From maple to maple hung long garlands of vines in fantastic shapes, the *Buon Amico*, or "good friend," with large loose bunches of purple-black grapes, the *Trebbiano*, brilliant yellow, with the sunny side stained a deep brown, the *Uva Grassa*, a dull yellow green, and the lovely *Occhio di Pernice*, or "partridge's eye," of a light pink with ruby lines meandering about in every grape, the flavour of which was quite equal to its beauty. The *contadini* were much amused at our admiration and insisted on our tasting the various kinds of grapes. Immense golden pumpkins, melons, water-melons, and scarlet tomatoes were being picked, and on some of the farms the women and children were busily employed in making round cakes of the latter fruit and drying them in the sun for winter consumption. Outside the windows hung branches of the *Acacia horrida* of which the crown of thorns is said to have been made; each long thorn bearing a crop

of skinned figs, the gelatinous, sweet drops of juice oozing out and congealing in the sun's rays. On the low walls surrounding the threshing floors were flat baskets, boards and plates, all covered with split peaches and figs drying in the sun, for the children to eat in winter with their bread.

About half-way we crossed the little torrent Greve over a picturesque old bridge, with a pretty little oratory perched on the top. It was built by Pisan prisoners in the days when every Italian city was at deadly feud with its neighbour.

Turning off the high road to the right, the gate-tower of the Badia a Settimo rose high above the plain, and soon the long, picturesque line of machicolated walls of what is left of the monastery came into sight. In 940 it was a dependency of the powerful Counts of Borgonuovo or Fucecchio; Count Lotario enlarged the Abbey, which was inhabited by the Cluniacense monks, in 1004; his son, Count Gugliemo Bulgaro was a munificent patron, and among other possessions gave them the church of San Salvatore, in the Apennines, with the vast territory of Stale (hospice), as a hermitage for those monks who desired to retire from the world. Stale in after times was raised to a countship, and in the fourteenth century was an apple of discord between Bologna and Florence. Count Gugliemo was a friend of St. John Gualberto, and asked him to reform the monastery of Settimo, where abuses, and evil customs of all sorts had taken root, and until his death, in 1073, the saintly abbot of Vallombrosa reigned supreme, and introduced his own rule. It was here by his order that St. Peter Igneus, in 1068, went through the ordeal of fire, in the presence of an immense concourse of people. The following inscriptions still exist attesting the fact.

> "Igneus hic Petrus medios pertransit ignes,
> Flammarum victor, sed magis haereseos."

> "Hoc in loco, miraculo S. Joannis Gualberti, quidam fuere confutati Haeretici. MLXX."

A considerable portion of the Laurentian codes was executed about this time in the Badia a Settimo, brought by the Medicis afterwards for a large sum, for their library in Florence; the monks were also famous agriculturists and hydraulic engineers.

Emperors and Popes took the abbey under their protection, and in 1236 Gregory IX. gave it to the Cistercians and declared it to be under the immediate protection of the Holy See. The exemplary life of the new inhabitants of the monastery so gained the esteem of the public, that the Signoria of Florence confided to them the administration of the taxes, the maintenance of the city walls and the bridges, the construction of the castles and fortified places in the Florentine district, and finally declared them keepers of the great seal. The large possessions of the abbey served as a guarantee, and the monks were exempt from all taxes to the state; how considerable their revenue must have been is proved by the large sum each abbot paid on investiture to the Court of Rome—1,000 golden florins. Various mills were erected by them on the banks of the Arno, but the weirs and locks interfered with navigation, and caused such serious inundations that in 1385 the Republic of Florence ordered their demolition.

The abbey suffered so much during the siege of Florence in 1529 that Paul IV. permitted the abbot and the greater part of his monks to migrate to the monastery of Cestello, near Porta Pinti, which had belonged to them since 1442. Tradition assigns the campanile, 111 feet high, a model of elegance, to the munificent Count Gugliemo; at the base it is round, about half way up it becomes hexagonal, with small machicolations at the summit, and a pyramidical roof. Vasari, in his life of Niccolò Pisano, attributes this lovely bell-tower to the famous Pisan architect, who was certainly consulted about alterations to the church, and in fact it resembles the well known campanile of San Niccolò at Pisa.

On approaching the Badia a Settimo, the tall gate-tower is most imposing, with its machicolations and the curious large alto-relievo of our Lord and two saints, built in brick and mortar, and evidently of great antiquity. There are still traces of painted angels' heads in the niche containing the figures. Below the feet of Christ is a stone, bearing the lily of Florence, and an illegible inscription; under that again is a marble slab with "Anno Domini MCCXXXVI S. S. Dum. N. Gregorius IX. dedit hoc Monasterium de Septimo Ordin. Cisterc-cum esset liberum et exemptum ab omni regio patronatu, quod in plena libertate a dicto órdine pacifice possidetur."

This tower was connected in old times with the fortress-like walls with which the Republic of Florence surrounded the monastery after the inroads of the Pisans under Giovanni Aguti (Sir John Hawkwood) in 1371. There were three other towers, and a broad walk all round the top of the walls, which were also defended by a moat, and each tower had a drawbridge. How imposing the

Badia must have been in those days before the Arno had deposited over fifteen feet of mud, which conceals so much of the ancient structure! Now the monastery is a private villa, and the cloisters, with their slender columns and beautifully carved capitals, resound to the pitter-patter of children's feet and the joyous laughter of young girls. The refectory of the monks, more than half buried, has been divided into various cellars, and the fine old abbey church with its solemn, antediluvian looking columns is the "Tinaia" where the wine is made; huge vats are ranged round the walls, and the lithe, brown-limbed *contadini* tread the foaming must and sing their gay *stornelli* where the black-robed monks once chanted hymns and psalms. One can judge of the original height of the building by one column which is excavated to its base, and of which there is much less above, than underground.

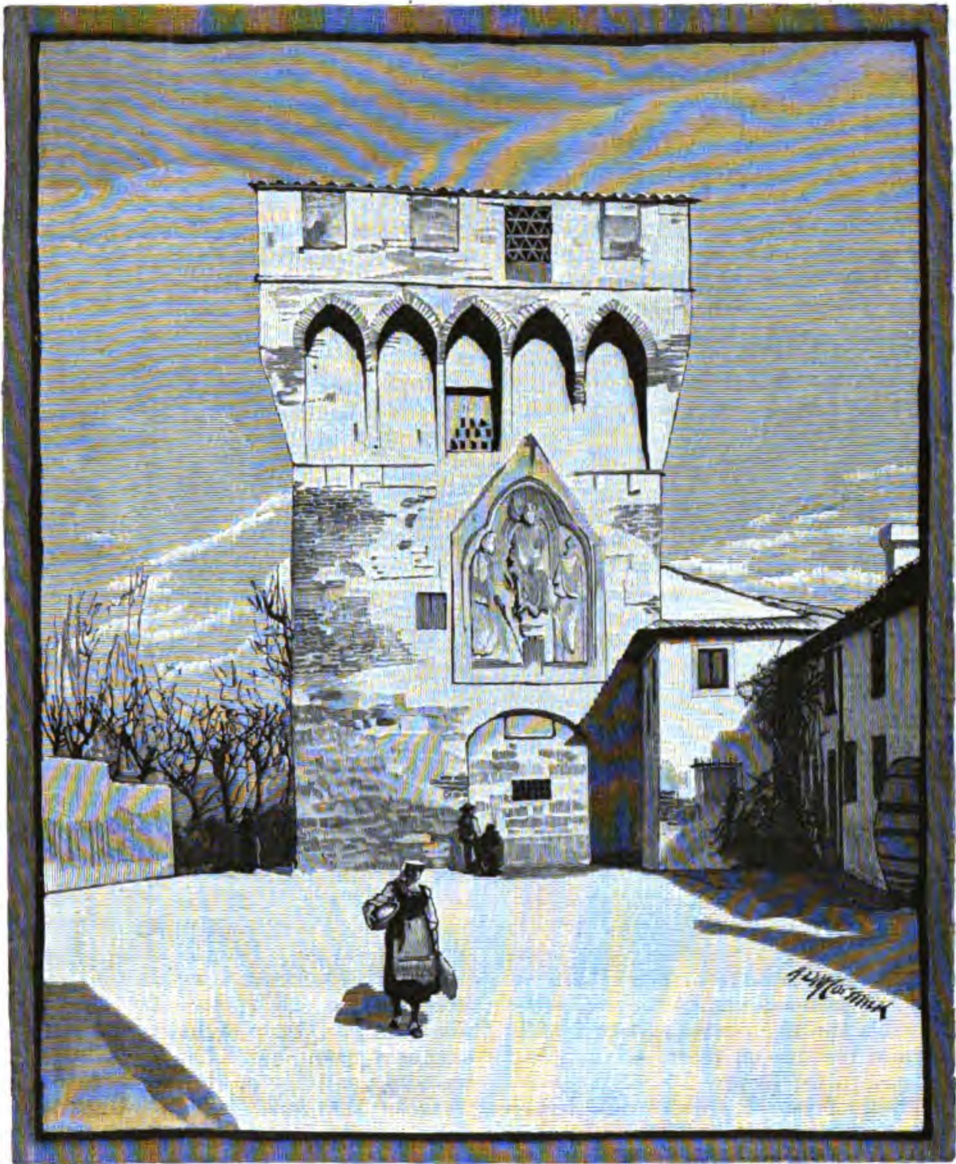
The present church was built at right angles to the ancient edifice and nearer the campanile in the thirteenth century. Round the choir runs a pretty frieze of the school of Luca della Robbia, four winged angels' heads alternating with the kneeling lamb holding a banner, emblem of the guild of wool manufacturers. The high altar is a magnificent specimen of *pietra dura* work, and Giovanni di San Giovanni used his facile brush in 1629 to great effect in the left hand chapel, where is a small marble Ambry (or receptacle for the holy oil), by Desiderio da Settignano, which is a perfect jewel. Above the altar of this chapel, behind painted doors, is kept a large silver casket containing the bones of St. Quentin, whose story was related in a most graphic manner by the priest's nephew, a small boy of about thirteen. He demurred to showing us the reliquary as it entailed fetching two keys and lighting all the candles, but he informed us that St. Quentin was beheaded in Paris a thousand years ago; by a miracle his body was transported to a church on the opposite side of the Arno, which, however, the saint did not like, so the silver chest floated across the river, and in 1187 was brought to the Badia a Settimo and deposited in the centre of the church in front of the high altar. "Ma non ci volle stare, pover uomo" (but he would not remain, poor fellow), continued our informant, "and every morning the monks found him in this chapel, and so here he is, but without his head, for he could not find it when he left Paris; however the box is full of bones," and the boy moved his two arms up and down as though violently shaking in imagination the remains of the poor saint, to make them rattle. As the present church with St. Quentin's chapel dates several hundred years later than the finding of the silver casket, we may be allowed to place a note of interrogation against the powers of migration of the headless saint.

To the right of the high altar is the ancient Spini chapel, which must have been detached from the original church, like the Cappella degli Spagnuoli in Sta. Maria Novella at Florence, and been entered from the cloisters. There are still dim traces of the frescoes by Buffalmacco. Now the chapel is like a cavern, as the deposit of the river has raised the surface of the ground to such a degree that the spring of the arches nearly touches the floor. There is an inscription setting forth that this chapel was built for the soul of Lapi des Spinis, in 1315.

High banks and dykes now keep the Arno in some control, but the tremendous flood of 1844 filled the chapel to the roof with muddy water, and completed the ruin of three or four fine pictures which were in the sacristy, and are now in the Uffizzi gallery at Florence undergoing restoration, if possible. The peasants near by had to take their bullocks and horses up into the bedrooms to save them from drowning; it seems that the poor beasts went up stairs willingly enough, "but all the king's horses and all the king's men" could not get them down again, so that in some instances the oxen had to be slaughtered and carried down piecemeal.

We were informed by the priest that even the present church had been built high above the level of the ground, and was approached by a flight of steps, now deep under the earth, the bases of the pillars which support the *loggia* in front of the church are more than half buried, and some tombs which were let into the walls have disappeared. The cenotaph of the Countess Gasdia, wife of the great Count Gugliemo Bulgaro, with a laudatory inscription, is still to be seen, with an inscription above recording the burial of the Countess Cilla, her daughter-in-law, who died in 1096. It must have been placed in its present position, to the right of the church door, when the ancient abbey was abandoned.

Passing through the village of San Colombano we drove along pretty country lanes, the hedges all glowing with the scarlet berries of the orange thorn, and the trees clothed in vines, towards Lastra a Signa. At one farm they had begun the vintage, men, women, and children were busily occupied, the men on ladders cutting down the *pendice* (two vine canes twisted carefully togethe



BADIA A SETTIMO.
From a Drawing by A. D. M'CORMICK.

in the early spring, with the eyes turned outwards,) the women picking off all the leaves which serve as fodder for the cattle; the finest *pendice* are hung up inside the *loggia*, which almost invariably adorns a Tuscan farmhouse, in order to dry the grapes gradually for colouring and strengthening the wine after the first fermentation. The stately white oxen were chewing the cud, and the red ox-cart with a large vat tied on, and the wooden *bigoncia*, all stained with the red vine juice, looked most Bacchanalian. A handsome young *contadino* came along at a swinging trot with a *bigoncia* poised on one shoulder, in which the purple and yellow grapes were piled high. How Cesare Benozzo, for that he told us was his name, ever managed to carry so inconvenient a thing without intense suffering we could not make out. The contents of the *bigoncia* were emptied with a thud and a splash into the vat, which, when full, wen'

creaking and groaning slowly home to the *tinaia*, where the grapes were transferred to the larger vats after being well crushed.

The medieval machicolated walls and towers, and the old gateways of Lastra a Signa are intact. A fortified castle called Gangalandi was erected in 1226 to defend the road to Pisa (after the destruction of the ancient fortress of Monte Orlando in 1107), which was taken and burnt by the Pisans aided by their English auxiliaries in 1364.

With proverbial astuteness the Florentines contrived some years later to bribe Giovanni Aguti (Sir John Hawkwood) the famous *condottiere*, who left his Pisan masters and entered their service. His portrait, on his war horse, is over the right hand door of the cathedral of Florence, painted by Paolo Uccello in *terra verde*, in 1436. The action of the horse of the "Incliti Militis Domini Joannis Aguti" has given rise to endless discussion among mathematicians and philosophers of the Renaissance, which are amusing enough. He is evidently ambling, so that Paolo Uccello is unjustly called *pictor ineptus* by one of these learned scholars for making the horse raise the two off-legs simultaneously.

Sir John Hawkwood was the most famous of the *condottieri*, or captains of free bands in the fourteenth century; he crossed the Alps in 1361, and his first feat of arms in Italy was to take prisoner the "Green Count" of Savoy, at Ciriè, a small town of Piedmont. He was an Essex yeoman, the born vassal of John de Vere, seventh Earl of Oxford, with whom he seems to have made the campaign in France in 1343. In 1376, Pope Gregory XI. bestowed on him the two castles of Cotignola and Bagnacavallo, near Faeuza, the earliest instance on record of the grant of a sovereign fief by any Italian potentate to an alien. Some of Hawkwood's letters still existing at Mantua bear various signatures, thus: "Johannes Haukutd, Hauchbod, Haubchod, Hauchwod, Hauhcunod, Haucud." The name "Aguto," by which the great *condottiere* is known in Italian history, and which is inscribed on his tomb at Florence, would scarcely have been identified with Hawkwood, if Villani had not recorded that in English it signified "*Falcone in Bosco*" (Hawk in a wood).

Lastra a Signa was rebuilt in 1377 by the Republic of Florence, according to the advice of Sir John Hawkwood, and twenty years later the unfortunate little town was invested and taken by Alberigo, captain of Galeazzo Visconti, Lord of Milan, who was at deadly feud with the Signoria. Again the walls were restored; and in 1529, when the imperialists besieged Florence, Francesco Ferrucci, whose head-quarters were at Empoli, five miles down the river, garrisoned Lastra a Signa with some of his bravest troops. The Prince of Orange sent a strong force of Spaniards with scaling ladders to take the place, who were repulsed with considerable loss; but munitions ran short in the fortress, and while negotiations were going on, 500 more Spanish lances arrived with battering rams, effected an entrance on the south-east side, and cut the gallant defenders to pieces.

There is nothing remarkable in the village, save a picturesque *loggia*, still bearing traces of lavish decoration, which was part of the hospital for pilgrims once existing inside the walls. It has been barbarously maltreated; part is now a theatre, the rest is carpenters' shops. The population is squalid and miserable enough, and it does not bear a good name, they are mostly employed in plaiting, sewing, and ironing straw hats, and the clatter of the hopper used for sorting the straw is incessant. The so-called Leghorn hats are all plaited in the lower Val d'Arno, and before the introduction of the cheap Japanese reed hats the women earned so much that the men did not think it worth while to work, and spent their time in gambling and loitering. Straw hats have diminished so much in price that a woman barely gains threepence a day, unless she is very expert and can do the finest plait with fifteen or more straws, or is clever enough to invent a new pattern.

Skirting the fine walls we turned to the left, opposite the Portone del Baccio, the southern gate-tower of Lastra a Signa, now used as a prison, and followed the old Pisan road, up the valley of Rimaggio, to see the castle of Malmantile, some two and a half miles hence. The monastery of St. Lucia crowns the hill on our right, built where the fortress of Monte Orlando once stood; in the quiet convent garden under the solemn cypresses are still some fragments of the ancient walls of the castle, the last stronghold of the great Counts of Fucecchio in this neighbourhood, destroyed by the Florentines in 1107.

The road to Malmantile following the little stream of Rimaggio, is beautiful; steep hill sides clothed with heather and pines, patches of cyclamen and the autumn crocus, or colchicum, glowing in the sunlight, while last year's leaves of the Christmas roses were yellow, bright brown and almost black, and shaggy goats climbing among the jutting

rocks formed a picture worthy of the brush of Salvator Rosa.

We passed four water-mills and then, perched on a well wooded knoll, with jagged rocks and a tangled undergrowth of honeysuckle, heather and brambles, whose leaves were turning red and purple, stood the farmhouse of St. Antonio, which must in old times have been a fortress, dominating the valley. It is picturesque enough, all corners, angles, and arches, with a grey tower, now the home of numerous pigeons

> "Cooing all their sweet love ditties
> As their white wings flap or fold."

Two mutilated angels in terra-cotta, apparently of the school of Verrocchio, keep watch and ward over the farmhouse in niches on either side of an archway. A pleasant-looking old *contadina* was washing on the *aja* (threshing floor), and asking her about the angels, she told us with some pride that a chapel existed where mass was said once a year for the dead who were buried there.

"It has always been here, at least when I say always, for 1382 years," said she, counting the centuries on her fingers as though they were *centimes*, "and that *is* always, is it not, signora?"

We went in to see the chapel which has been modernised, but on lifting a stained and faded curtain of blue calico which covered the wall behind the altar, we saw a very fine ancient fresco, evidently by a master hand of the early fifteenth century. St. Antonio is seated in the middle with God the Father above, and on either side stand three life-size saints. St. Stephen next the window was particularly beautiful, with a sweet solemn face one was never tired of looking upon. The old woman of course knew nothing of the history of either house or fresco save that it was *roba antica* (old stuff) and that her Padrone had put the curtain because the saints were *schifoso* (dirty); he had intended repainting them, but artists were people without any conscience, or else their colours cost a lot of money; so the blue calico had been bought as a way out of the difficulty. Fortunately the pot of whitewash had not been thought of!

LASTRA A SIGNA.
From a Drawing by A. D. M'CORMICK.

A little higher up the view is lovely. The valley we have just left forms a perfect V, with the grey tower and picturesque arches of St. Antonio rising in the very centre, like

a watch-dog set to guard the pass; further down, the long line of the monastery of St. Lucia is perched on the brow of the hill to the left, and the background is formed by the broad plain of the Arno, bathed in a golden mist, while Monte Morello, at whose foot lies Doccia, the china manufactory of the Ginori family, makes a violet-grey mass in the far distance.

Another hill, and the castle of Malmantile is seen crowning the very summit, and standing out against the blue sky in solitary grandeur. The view thence is extensive and imposing, the barren, rolling hills seem endless as we look over the Val di Pesa, and far off St. Miniato al Tedesco

> "lifts to heaven
> Her diadem of towers."

> "Risiede Malmantile sovra un poggetto:
> E chiunque verso lui volta le ciglia,
> Dice che i fondatori ebber concetto
> Di fabbricar' l'ottava maraviglia.
> L'ampio paese poi, che egli ha soggetto,
> Non si sa (vo' giuocare) a mille miglia:
> Ve l'aria buona, azzurra óltramarina:
> E non vi manca latte di gallina."

"Malmantile is placed on a hillock, and whoso turns his eyes that way will say that the founders were minded to make the eighth wonder of the world. The vast territory subject to the castle is not known (I bet) thousand miles round. There is excellent air and a blue sky, and even the milk of hens is not wanting."

Thus writes Lorenzo Lippi in his *Il Malmantile Racquistato*, the mock-heroic poem, dear to every Tuscan, which has made the old castle celebrated. Few other people would have the patience to wade through 428 pages, full of not only Tuscanisms, but Florentinisms, if I may coin the word. The painter, famous for his wit and power of repartee, used to stay in a villa near by with his friend Alessandro Valori, and employed his leisure hours in writing the poem on Malmantile, which word signifies a worn-out tablecloth; the proper names in the poem are nearly all anagrams, more or less witty, and the allegory seems to point the moral that those who lead a life of feasting and gaiety generally die on a dunghill. The proverb "*Andare a Malmantile*" (going to Malmantile) is used as a gibe against avaricious persons who do not give their friends enough to eat.

From the archives in Florence we learn that on the 5th May, 1424, "The Most Honourable Ten, overseers of the city, and of the districts of Pisa, Pistoja, Volterra, and other places, made a statement to the Signoria of Florence that the castle of Malmantile di Fior di Selva was unfinished and a discredit to the noble Republic, as well as a danger; so on the 16th September of the same year a contract was signed and sealed between the Honourable Ten and Piero di Curradino, and Ambruogio di Lionardo, master masons, before the Florentine notary, Antonio di Puccino di Ser Andrea. The *maestri* undertook to finish the castle with machicolations and towers similar to those of Lastra a Signa, and also to make a deep ditch round the fortress."

There is a tradition that Malmantile was unsuccessfully besieged by the Prince of Orange and his Spaniards, but I can find no confirmation of it.

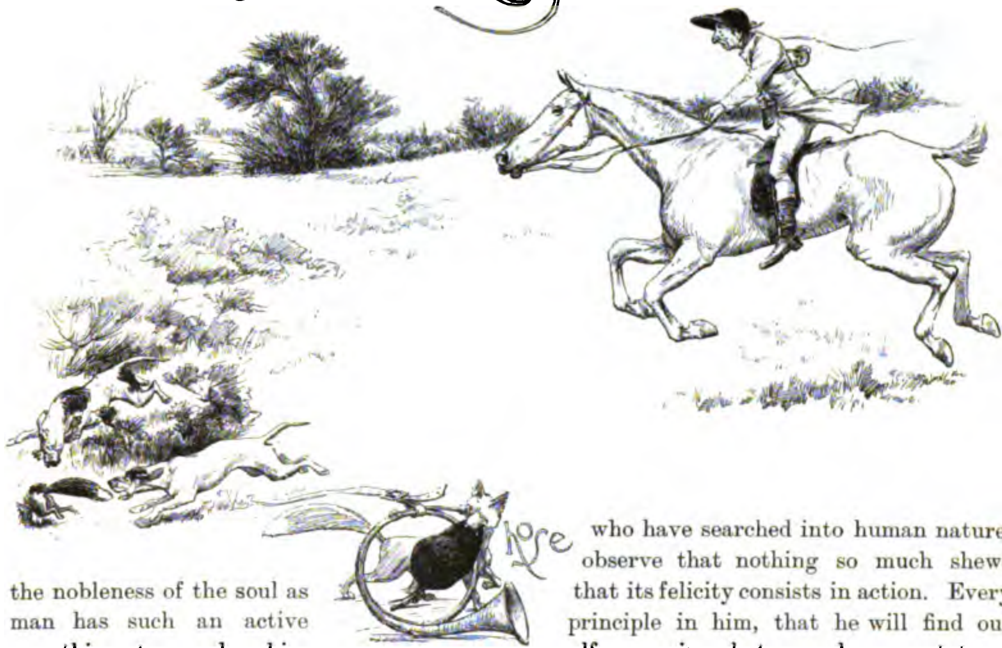
The old castle is in ruins, and wretched hovels, which have sprung up like mushrooms, are tacked on to the walls. The people are miserably poor, but smiling and pleasant; on our admiring the singing of a pretty girl, whose blue cotton frock was better made than those of her companions, her mother said, with evident pride, but with an accent which tried to be disapproving, "Si, e come il cuculo, tutto voce and penne" (Yes, she is like the cuckoo, all voice and feathers), which we thought was apt enough.

The sun was declining and the "*civetta*" (passerine owl) was beginning to utter its melancholy cry, so with a last look at the picturesque old ruin we turned our horses' heads towards the City of Flowers, and drove home.

> "The skies yet blushing with departed light,
> When falling dews with spangles deck the glade,
> And the low sun had lengthen'd every shade."

JANET ROSS.

The Chase.



Those who have searched into human nature, observe that nothing so much shews the nobleness of the soul as that its felicity consists in action. Every man has such an active principle in him, that he will find out something to employ himself upon, in whatever place or state of life he is posted. I have heard of a gentleman who was under close confinement in the *Bastile* seven years; during which time he amused himself in scattering a few small pins about his chamber, gathering them up again, and placing them in different figures on the arm of a great chair. He often told his friends afterwards, that unless he had found out this piece of exercise, he verily believed he should have lost his senses.

After what has been said, I need not inform my readers that Sir Roger, with whose character I hope they are at present pretty well acquainted, has in his youth gone through the whole course of those rural diversions which the country abounds in; and which seem to be extremely well suited to that laborious industry a man may observe here in a far greater degree than in towns and cities. I have before hinted at some of my friend's exploits: He has in his youthful days taken forty coveys of partridges in a season; and tired many a salmon with a line consisting but of a single hair. The constant thanks and good wishes of the neighbourhood always attended him, on account of his remarkable enmity towards foxes; having destroyed more of those vermin in one year, than it was thought the whole country could have produced. Indeed the Knight does not scruple to own among his most intimate friends, that in order to establish his reputation this way, he

From a Drawing by HUGH THOMSON.

has secretly sent for great numbers of them out of other counties, which he used to turn loose about the country by night, that he might the better signalize himself in their destruction the next day. His hunting horses were the finest and best managed in all these parts: His tenants are still full of the praises of a grey stone-horse that unhappily staked himself several years since, and was buried with great solemnity in the orchard.

Sir ROGER, being at present too old for fox-hunting, to keep himself in action, has disposed of his beagles and got a pack of *Stop-Hounds*. What these want in speed, he endeavours to make amends for by the deepness of their mouths and the variety of their notes, which are suited in such manner to each other, that the whole cry makes up a complete concert. He is so nice in this particular, that a gentleman having made him a present of a very fine hound the other day, the Knight returned it by the servant with a great many expressions of civility; but desired him to tell his master, that the dog he had sent was indeed a most excellent *Bass*, but that at present he only wanted a *Counter-Tenor*. Could I believe my friend had ever read *Shakespeare*, I should certainly conclude he had taken the hint from *Theseus* in *the Midsummer Night's Dream.*

My hounds are bred out of the Spartan *kind,*
So flu'd, so sanded; and their heads are hung
With ears that sweep away the morning dew.
Crook-knee'd and dew-lap'd like Thessalian *bulls,*
Slow in pursuit, but match'd in mouths like bells,
Each under each: A cry more tuneable
Was never hallow'd to, nor chear'd with horn.

Sir ROGER is so keen at this sport, that he has been out almost every day since I came down; and upon the chaplain's offering to lend me his easy pad, I was prevailed on yesterday morning to make one of the company. I was extremely pleased, as we rid along, to observe the general benevolence of all the neighbourhood towards my friend. The farmers' sons thought themselves happy if they could open a gate for the good old Knight as he passed by; which he generally requited with a nod or a smile, and a kind of enquiry after their fathers and uncles.

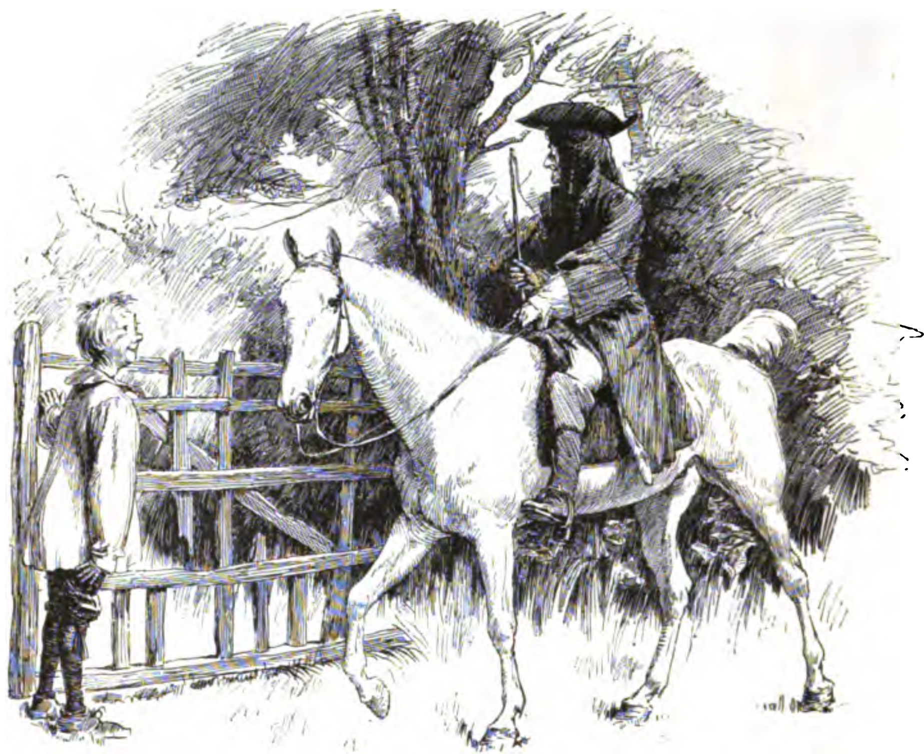
After we had rid about a mile from home, we came upon a large heath, and the sportsmen began to beat. They had done so for some time, when, as I was at a little distance

From a Drawing by HUGH THOMSON.

from the rest of the company, I saw a hare pop out from a small furze-brake almost under my horse's feet. I marked the way she took, which I endeavoured to make the company sensible of by extending my arm; but to no purpose, till Sir ROGER, who knows that none of my extraordinary motions are insignificant, rode up to me, and asked me *if puss was gone that way?* Upon my answering *Yes*, he immediately called in the dogs, and put them upon the scent. As they were going off, I heard one of the country-fellows muttering to his companion, *That 'twas a wonder they had not lost all their sport, for want of the silent gentleman's crying* Stole away.

This, with my aversion to leaping hedges, made me withdraw to a rising ground, from

whence I could have the pleasure of the whole chase, without the fatigue of keeping in with the hounds. The hare immediately threw them above a mile behind her; but I was pleased to find, that instead of running straight forwards, or in hunter's language, *Flying the country*, as I was afraid she might have done, she wheel'd about, and described a sort of circle round the hill where I had taken my station, in such manner as gave me a very distinct view of the sport. I could see her first pass by, and the dogs some time afterwards unravelling the whole track she had made, and following her thro' all her doubles. I was at the same time delighted in observing that deference which the rest of the pack paid to each particular hound, according to the character he had acquired amongst them: If they



—happy if they could open a gate—

From a Drawing by Hugh Thomson.

were at a fault, and an old hound of reputation opened but once, he was immediately followed by the whole cry; while a raw dog or one who was a noted *Liar*, might have yelped his heart out without being taken notice of.

The hare now, after having squatted two or three times, and been put up again as often, came still nearer to the place where she was at first started. The dogs pursued her, and these were followed by the jolly Knight, who rode upon a white gelding, encompassed by his tenants and servants, and chearing his hounds with all the gaiety of five and twenty. One of the sportsmen rode up to me, and told me, that he was sure the chase was almost at an end, because the old dogs, which had hitherto lain behind, now headed

From a Drawing by Hugh Thomson.

the pack. The fellow was in the right. Our hare took a large field just under us, followed by the full cry *in view*. I must confess the brightness of the weather, the chearfulness of every thing around me, the *chiding* of the hounds, which was returned upon us in a double echo from two neighbouring hills, with the hollowing of the sportsmen, and the sounding of the horn, lifted my spirits into a most lively pleasure, which I freely indulged because I was sure it was *innocent*. If I was under any concern, it was on the account of the poor hare, that was now quite spent and almost within the reach of her enemies; when the huntsman getting forward threw down his pole before the dogs. They were now within eight yards of that game which they had been pursuing for almost as many hours; yet on the signal before-mentioned they all made a sudden stand, and tho' they continued opening as much as before, durst not once attempt to pass beyond the pole. At the same time Sir Roger rode forward, and alighting, took up the hare in his arms; which he soon delivered up to one of his servants, with an order, if she could be kept alive, to let her go in his great orchard; where it seems he has several of these prisoners of war, who live together in a very comfortable captivity. I was highly pleased to see the discipline of the pack,

From a Drawing by Hugh Thomson.

and the good-nature of the Knight, who could not find in his heart to murder a creature that had given him so much diversion.

As we were returning home, I remembered that Monsieur *Paschal* in his most excellent discourse on *the misery of man*, tells us, that *all our endeavours after greatness proceed from nothing but a desire of being surrounded by a multitude of persons and affairs that may hinder us from looking into ourselves, which is a view we cannot bear.* He afterwards goes on to shew that our love of sports comes from the same reason, and is particularly severe upon hunting. *What,* says he, *unless it be to drown thought, can make men throw away so much time and pains upon a silly animal, which they might buy cheaper in the market?* The foregoing reflection is certainly just, when a man suffers his whole mind to be drawn into his sports, and altogether loses himself in the woods; but does not affect those who propose a far more laudable end for this exercise, I mean, *The preservation of health, and keeping all the organs of the soul in a condition to execute her orders.* Had that incomparable person, whom I last quoted, been a little more indulgent to himself in this point, the world might probably have enjoyed him much longer; whereas thro' too great an application to his studies in his youth, he contracted that ill habit of body, which, after a tedious sickness, carried him off in the fortieth year of his age; and the whole history we have of his life till that time, is but one continued account of the behaviour of a noble soul struggling under innumerable pains and distempers.

From a Drawing by Hugh Thomson.

For my own part I intend to hunt twice a week during my stay with Sir Roger; and

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shall prescribe the moderate use of this exercise to all my country friends as the best kind of physick for mending a bad constitution, and preserving a good one.

I cannot do this better, than in the following lines out of Mr. *Dryden*.

The first physicians by debauch were made;
Excess began, and sloth sustains the trade.
By chace our long-liv'd fathers earn'd their food;
Toil strung the nerves, and purifi'd the blood;
But we their sons, a pamper'd race of men,
Are dwindled down to threescore years and ten.
Better to hunt in fields for health unbought,
Than fee the Doctor for a nauseous draught.
The wise for cure on exercise depend;
God never made his work for man to mend.

A GARDEN OF MEMORIES.

VI.

SALTHAVEN.

"The grey sea and the long black land."

ARY WYNNE liked Salthaven very well. It was not ambitious, it did not pretend to anything startling in the way of scenery, or other attractions. It described itself in the *Salthaven Advertiser* as "select." That meant that railway did not come within nine miles of it, and that a couple of omnibuses conveyed such visitors as did not hire carriages from Deepwell station.

It was a quiet little place, simple, leisurely, not in the newest fashion. Before it lay its level semicircle of waves and wet sands, behind it a gentle sloping of green meadows, which Salthaven people called hills. There was an esplanade to walk on, and a strip of green, and a jetty. A band came from Deepwell two evenings in the week, and all the Salthaven visitors strolled up and down and listened to it. On these occasions, what with the strains of music and the smell of cigars and trampled grass, the little place felt itself quite dissipated.

Mary Wynne walked up and down with Miss Eddington. The latter was a bright, rather elderly young lady, who enjoyed all the occupations provided for her at Salthaven. She went every morning to a little service in the new little church, and then to the shore, where she bathed from one of the little machines which crawled across the expanse of shining sand. She read quantities of novels from the circulating library, she picked up shells and seaweeds, she did fancy work, and was always brightly ready for a little drive, or a little walk, or above all a little stroll on the esplanade by moonlight. Miss Eddington would have liked a moon always, and she was full of regret that it was waning when Mary came. It had been so perfect on the water. She thought the band delightful, and made little romances to fit the people who passed and repassed to its music and the washing of the waves.

She was livelier than Mary, who would sometimes sit silent for an hour or more, hardly turning a leaf of her book, while she gazed out to sea. Mary had her own romance, and when a far-off sail rose white on the horizon and vanished again she would let her fancy fly—who could tell that Philip might not be looking towards the shore from beneath those snowy wings? Sometimes it was just a low trailing cloud of smoke, that came and went, blotting the silver clearness of sky and sea, but it was all the same—white sail or dull smoke might be bearing Philip on his way, and her heart sank within her when ship after ship passed, outward bound, gliding in distant procession across the shining floor.

Yet even these moments of fanciful sadness were brighter and better than thoughts of Garden Lane, not to be blown away by all the Salthaven breezes. Wholesome it might be to fill one's lungs with pure sea-scented air, but imagination grew sick meanwhile in the odours that steamed from the turning of foul soil under an obstinately rainless sky. There was a little paragraph in the *Brenthill Guardian,* which demanded a large share of those seaside meditations. It was a mere sixpennyworth, by the penny-a-liner's reckoning, but it revealed the fact that there had already been fever a fortnight

or three weeks earlier, in one of the courts. It made Mr. Brydon's anxiety more intelligible.

Well, it was not her fault. Even if she had consented to part with her garden the moment she was asked, he could not have built his new houses by that time. No, it was not actually her fault, but in intention it was. She knew very well that the owners of Garden Lane would do nothing for their property that they could not be compelled to do, that Brydon with his five or six scattered cottages was powerless, and that she had decided that the wretched tenants of the lane should stay where they were. Suppose there should be an outbreak of typhus fever at her gate! Suppose Mr. Brydon took it and died! Suppose the cholera came! "They ought to take me out of my house and hang me!" said Mary to herself.

Oh it was hard—hard! It was the one spot of earth on which her heart was set, the only spot, it seemed to her, where she could live. And Providence had so strangely, so miraculously, given her her secret desire, only for Brydon to come in the name of the poor, and lay hands upon it and claim it as a sacrifice. He never would know the meaning of his demand. He was asking her to sell her love!

And, after all, was she certain that it was the best thing to do, even for those poor wretches in the lane? Ten or fifteen years hence might not Brydon regret that he had not established his colony at Holly Hill? Perhaps he might even move it there, and leave the densely peopled neighbourhood without its one sweet patch of green. Nothing could bring that back, but it would live for a while in the memories of the old folks thereabout, and she perhaps would live with it, as the woman who made her money by selling it for building ground. People just as good as Thomas Brydon would execrate her. If only the property had fallen into better hands, they would say, it might have been saved, and perhaps finally secured for the poor.

But in the meantime there was this fever spectre at her very gates!

Sooner than dwell on the subject in silence she broached it in an airy and general manner in a conversation on the sands. She effaced a capital B which she had drawn with the point of her parasol, and tried to find out what Miss Eddington knew about typhus fever and drains.

Miss Eddington's mind was not singular—that is to say, it ran naturally to the exciting and the terrible. "Oh, have you been reading some of those dreadful horrors in the papers?" she said, and forthwith told of a case she knew, where there was an outbreak of typhus fever in a house, in consequence of defective drainage. "Poor Mr. Morling died, and the eldest boy, a dear little fellow home for his holidays. And poor Mrs. Morling—such a sweet woman—well, she didn't *die*, but she was dreadfully ill, and had to have all her hair cut off, and was left a widow with four little children. Such beautiful hair! You never saw such beautiful hair—I'm not exaggerating, it came down to her knees. She used to say she believed Mr. Morling fell in love with her for that, he had such a passion for beautiful hair. Of course that was nonsense. I'm sure any one might have fallen in love with her without that—or with very little of it," said Miss Eddington, unable apparently to imagine an attachment to the absolutely bald. "But it was *lovely*, and really I hardly knew her when I saw her with it all cut short under a widow's cap."

She stopped doubtfully, perceiving that she ought to have taken a different view of the matter. There was a curious look on Miss Wynne's face. Was it possible that she was anxious about Mr. Brydon's hair? Miss Eddington was not aware of Mr. Brydon's existence, but she saw that something was wrong. "Of course," she said hurriedly, "a great many people don't die of typhus fever—I mean, you know, very few people have it at all—quite a small percentage, isn't it?" She tried to think of one or two encouraging examples, but the people who didn't have typhus fever seemed so vague and uninteresting compared to Mrs. Morling of the golden locks that she was obliged to give them up. "You never had it yourself, had you?" she asked finally. The question seemed not only safe, but likely to throw light on the cause of these inquiries.

Mary said, "Never!" so that it sounded exactly as if she wished she had. But after a moment she remarked in what was meant for a casual way, "They've got it at Brenthill."

"*Oh!*" exclaimed Miss Eddington; "*what* a mercy you are safely out of the way!"

"Is it? I feel rather like a deserter."

"Oh! But—but—" this hesitatingly and respectfully. "Do you mean—would you *nurse*, or anything?"

Mary drooped in bitter consciousness of helplessness. "They wouldn't let me. And I don't believe I should be a bit of good."

"Then you are much better here."

The air of decision was so encouraging that Mary appealed to this oracle for counsel.

"What should you do if people wanted to persuade you to do something you disliked very much, and you were not quite sure whether they were right or not?"

"I shouldn't do what I didn't like unless I were quite sure they were right."

"Not if you were *almost* quite sure—only a few people said they were not, and you wished so much they mightn't be?"

The explanation might have been more lucid, but Miss Eddington listened with great intensity. "Is it very important?" she asked.

"Very. If I ought to do it, it would be very wicked of me if I didn't."

Miss Eddington considered for a moment, and then, "I think you feel you ought!" she announced suddenly. She was not without acuteness.

"No," said Mary, "I almost wish I did. Then it would be settled. But I *don't* feel sure—I can't."

"You can't really tell which is right?"

"No. I'm quite sure I shall reproach myself, whichever I do."

"It's difficult," said the other, knitting her brows. She picked up a little pebble, and threw it in a general fashion towards the ocean. "I should consult somebody to whom I could explain the whole thing; somebody who could speak with authority, you know. Then I should feel I had done my best."

Mary shook her head.

Her companion put on an air of solemnity—she was thinking of a neat little musical curate at the new church. "If you are really in such perplexity," she said, "there is always ——"

"No, no—indeed there isn't; I couldn't!" said Mary, pink as a sea-shell.

Miss Eddington saw that her suggestion was useless. "Well," she concluded, "if I didn't know what was right, and felt so uncomfortable about it, and couldn't ask anybody, I should do what I disliked most. I should feel it was safest."

This view commended itself to the tender feminine conscience, eager to deaden painful doubts with penance. Mary was silent for some time, brooding over the thought, looking straight before her from under half-dropped eyelids. Yes, if she gave up her garden she might surely feel that no selfish motive had decided her conduct. She could never hold up her head before Philip, if they met in later days, because Philip could never know how much she had suffered; but surely she need know no shame in her secret thoughts, where shame is bitterest.

Miss Hillier had wished that her artist friend could paint a picture of Mary Wynne, standing in the walled sweetness of her garden. But his picture might have been better still if he could have seen the poor Guardian Genius as she sat at sundown on those barren sands, leaning forward, with her hands clasped loosely about her knees, and her eyes fixed on the low far-off waves over which the autumnal day was fading. Miss Eddington, respecting her companion's meditations, had strolled a little towards the west, and her darkly-defined figure wandered here and there, poking with a parasol at such wonders of the deep as happened to have been washed ashore by the last tide. Mary had forgotten Miss Eddington; she was gazing fixedly at the renunciation of all her dreams, she was picturing herself homeless and solitary, cast out of Eden into oh, how desolate a world! "I wish I had never been able to buy the garden!" she thought. "But I will give it up—I will give it up—unless anything happens before I leave Salthaven. Nine days more before my three weeks are over—something may happen in nine days." Her fancy roved among possibilities. Mr. Brydon might change his plans. Some one might die, and leave him money enough to start his factory at Holly Hill at once. Or they might find that the cottages in Garden Lane must all be pulled down, and he might buy the whole site, and build tall houses instead of those miserable little hovels. Or might not help come in some other way? She did not turn her head to right or left, and yet, without shaping her thought, she felt that at any moment—now—or now—or now!—Philip might appear, with no sound of steps on the dead sand, walking in the evening light between her eyes and the low rolling tide. Oh, if he did! He should answer Mr. Brydon, and save the garden he loved.

"Don't you think you ought to be going in?" Miss Eddington gently inquired. "I don't know what time you ordered your tea, but I said I'd have mine at half-past six." Mary Wynne rose obediently, and went to her tea, leaving the waves to roll in through the gathering obscurity.

Brydon, meanwhile, took an almost morbid interest in the work that was going on in the lane. Digging revealed horrors—a little modern work, slight, scamped, pretentious, which had completely broken down, and hideous accumulations stored and left in their indescribable blackness. It seemed to Brydon as if men had choked and sickened the kindly earth with filth—could it ever be wholesome and clean again? The labourers

who plied pick and shovel stopped to spit, and to apply foul adjectives to their foul job.

The business went on briskly day by day under the long wall, which was steeped from end to end in the ripe autumn warmth. Above its mellowed bricks red rose shoots took the sun, and flourished lightly in the still air. At night, for the nights were misty and moonless, a red lantern—red as if it glimmered through brooding miasma—tied on crossed bits of wood, announced where danger lay to home-comers from the *Hand and Flower*. Brydon saw the scene under all aspects; apart from any business-like interest in it, it seemed to fascinate him. He would loiter at a little distance, and gaze at the wall with a doubtful expression. He was moody, haggard, irritable. One night as he went slowly homeward from his office, smoking his cigar, he paused in Garden Lane, and uttered a fierce ejaculation under his breath. "By God!" he said. "When it comes to the point, I'm no more to be depended on than the rest!"

Eddington told him he looked ill. The mill-owner answered with an inarticulate sound, conveying scorn, and stood with a hang-dog expression, biting his nails. "You'd better run down to Salthaven, too," said the good-humoured old gentleman. "You're overdoing it—overdoing it. A little sea air would do you all the good in the world—your own prescription, you know."

There was a momentary flash in Brydon's shadowed eyes. "Thanks," he said with a deliberate drawl; "I don't think Salthaven air would agree with me. At any rate I'll be worse—a good deal worse before I try it."

"Very good, only don't hang about that sweet lane of yours too much. Dixon tells me he'd no notion what a state the place was in——"

"It's pretty bad."

"Upon my word," the other smiled, "I think from your point of view you had better have let Miss Wynne stay at home."

"On the chance of killing her off and treating with her executors—there's something in that."

"No, but to let her hear about it. She can't realise it out there in the fresh air."

"You're right," said Brydon. "She can't."

"My cousin says she thinks Miss Wynne looks better, but she strikes her as being very delicate," the other went on. "I hope not—I hope not. She may not be a very wise young woman, but she's a very nice one."

Brydon went away with something to think of. "Very delicate." Yes, very likely. Probably that meant that if she were uprooted she would feel it acutely—perhaps die. Mary Wynne had begun to teach him the meaning of the old garden. He found himself unable to imagine her apart from it; all the beautiful life which had been fostered through many generations within its walls seemed to him to have blossomed in her. He had come to Brenthill with his head too full of schemes for enlarging his business, and benefiting the workers in his factory, to have time to think much about women. Philanthropy, according to Brydon, had to be made to pay, and required to be sharply looked after. He would neither rob others of their wages nor forego his own. He was deaf to all distant cries for help; earthquakes, colliery explosions, Indian famines, fires, could not extract a halfpenny from his pocket; the facts were sad, but they were not in his department, and he was not, as he bluntly said, either big enough or fool enough to undertake the world's work. Given health, he meant to do his own, and it was as much as he could manage. He would never have looked at Mary Wynne if she had not been thrown in his way as an obstacle; he would have paid her the price of her garden, and forgotten everything but her name where it stood in his cheque book. But when she thwarted all his schemes, and left him no more than the daily routine of business to fill his mind, he began to think of her with the absorption with which he would otherwise have thought of plans and builders' estimates. Common justice—Brydon wanted to be just—compelled him to own her legal right to refuse to sell, and to try to discover any honest reason for such refusal, with the possibility of which she might be credited. For weeks he seemed to stand face to face with her, questioning her, judging her, gazing at her, and then all at once he woke to the knowledge that this tender, appealing woman had won her way into his stronghold, that he was fighting with her still, but in his own heart.

How had he thought of women before? Well, he had thought mostly of those who worked in his factory, and he had thought of them with a rough sense of pity and fair play. "Give 'em a chance," he had said scores of times, "let 'em be decently housed, fed, and clothed—yes, and decently taught, and they'll be decent women." And for that he had planned his cottages. It was all right enough and as true as ever, but Brydon was thinking now of something beyond decency. The walled garden had

become to him a part of Mary Wynne's charm—the one explained the other. In destroying it he would destroy possibilities, perhaps blight the flowering of other delicate souls. One might grow a very good sort of woman in his little houses, but not Mary Wynne.

Nor was that all. He had thought much of the clean and well appointed dwellings which he would erect, but when he saw how utterly earth, air, and water could be defiled, he stood aghast. No doubt while he lived he could guard his property, but, if he should die, might not the evil which had befallen Garden Lane come upon his cottages too? Might they not be let and sublet, and swarming families pour in to multiply in their squalor and improvidence where Mary's bushes of myrtle and bay, Mary's great cedars and clustered roses, were rooted now? So to deface what she loved seemed a thing impossible, like laying cruel and violent hands on Mary herself.

Nevertheless, through all these troubled thoughts the man in a blind fashion did feel that he ought to cling to the work which he had undertaken. Before ever he saw Miss Wynne he had pledged himself to old Mrs. Humphreys, and shrill Betsy Barnes, and Ada and Minnie and the rest of the bold, pale-faced girls who worked at the mill. If he deserted them who would take up their cause? And he would not try to persuade himself that Mary Wynne could ever share his philanthropic hopes. Gentle and kindly she would always be, but she would never go down amongst the poor as some women will. She would shrink from their coarse words and ways, from the hideous revelations of brutality and want and wrong, she would be sickened and terrified, her very soul would ache with fruitless compassion. She must live in a walled home, but how sweet that home would be! If it were his—Brydon quivered at the thought—if it were his?

Even so, might not he come out of his paradise to work for his poor in the lane? Why not? And yet in his clear-sighted honesty he said "No" as soon as he had looked the question in the face. Never then would he do anything that could limit Mary's pleasures, or in the smallest degree imperil her future. Wife and children before all the world! There was his mother too, at Brighton—he could never risk life or health or money, when all he was and all he had were needed by these dear ones. No, it was a choice between the garden and Garden Lane.

Was it a choice? It seemed to Brydon that the choice was made for him. How was he to tear this new and strange influence out of his heart? He believed that it would lead him wrong, and yet it was the sweetest and tenderest feeling of which he was capable. "Well," he said at last, knocking the ashes out of his pipe, and sitting down to work at his untidy table, "she is out of reach now, and when she comes back I daresay she will say 'No.'" But though he said it he did not really believe it. The advantage he had already gained had quickened his self-confidence, he looked on Mary as half conquered, and something within him mocked, "She will say 'No' once, but not always. Did she not yield to you and go to Salthaven? Did you not know when she said 'I will go,' that her will was bending before yours and that it needed but a little more to give you your way with the garden? And if she said 'No' to yet a further demand, should you take that word as final?"

Brydon answered these questionings with a laugh, which broke the silence of the room with its brief sound. "Anyhow," he said, leaning forward, pen in hand, "she isn't here now, and I suppose won't be back for a few days. *I* don't see any way out of it, it's true, but perhaps there is one, and if so we'll give it a chance. Only," he added, as if ensuring fair play by warning an adversary, "the first opportunity I get, I shall speak." And, judging from his set lips and brilliant eyes, he would speak forcibly enough.

So the days went by in their unresting procession, the momentous days that were yet so strangely uneventful. Garden Lane resumed its customary aspect, only with a stony strip down the middle of the roadway, where the main excavation had been. Mrs. Humphreys and the rest turned themselves round discontentedly, and settled down into as much of their former dirt as they could find. At Salthaven the autumnal migration of visitors had set in, and though the lodging-house keepers mechanically put up cards in every window, till the place looked as if a shower of remarkably large snow-flakes had fallen all over it, they did not really expect to attract any one by the announcement of "Apartments." It was not likely. The Deepwell band had ceased to come, there were many vacant seats in the little church which had been so crowded in August, and only four or five bathing-machines went crawling after the grey tide. The season was over, Miss Eddington was gone, and Miss Wynne was packing her trunk, and writing "Brenthill" upon her luggage labels.

Nothing had happened, and Mary said to herself that nothing was going to happen.

It drizzled as she went home. She buttoned herself in her waterproof, and sighed at the thought of the grey days that were at hand. Springtime would come again, no doubt, but if she had given up her garden it would hardly be spring to her.

Yet, though she assured herself that all was over, she carried a faint hope on her journey through the drizzling afternoon. In the omnibus, in the booking office, in the train, which as she neared home slid ever and anon out of the foggy dusk into wayside stations where gaslights shone with watery lustre on tarpaulin and mackintosh, in every pause she looked for some one or some thing to interpose at that eleventh hour. Even on the crowded platform at Brenthill a possibility lingered, fading slowly as she drove homeward through the ugly familiar streets, dying as her own door closed behind her, and she was received by a melancholy maid who had face-ache, and who said that nothing had happened, and nobody had called.

The next morning a note was delivered at the factory. "Dear Mr. Brydon," it said, "you told me that afternoon you came to my tennis party that you would say no more about the garden till the new year came, but that the offer you had made for it should hold good till then. I have been thinking the matter over at Salthaven, and I have made up my mind to accept it. I believe it is the right thing to do. I have just written to Mr. Eddington to ask him to call on you about it and settle everything.

"Believe me,

"Yours sincerely,

"Mary Wynne.

"I shall go away from Brenthill as soon as possible, and then you can begin at once. I hope the loss of this summer will not make any great difference." Lower on the page was written hurriedly, "Don't give me too much for it."

Brydon read this letter with a surprise so curiously compounded that he hardly knew whether he were glad or sorry. Glad—yes, of course he must be glad, and yet—by Jove! but he was sorry. He had lost the strange and humiliating delight of sacrificing his noblest ambition to the woman he loved. He had determined to give up the garden with all that it involved for Mary Wynne's sake, and she had forestalled him. She had given it up to him, but not for him. She had done it for conscience' sake, he knew that very well, he could read it in every line of her note. She would not take it back, her conscience would not let her. She was pledged to make the sacrifice, and if he did not build his cottages she would only reproach herself that she had not yielded earlier. He threw the letter on the table, thrust his hands into his pockets, and stood staring at it. The more he looked at it the less he liked it. He had nothing now to give up for her. To give up his sacrifice—that was an absurdity, and yet that was what he found it hard to do.

Why had he sent her away to Salthaven to think it over in solitude, with that delicate remorse of hers? He might have known what would come of it, he might have been sure that she would yield. "And she has yielded," he raged, "but not to me!"

Eddington found him haggard of face and moody in manner that afternoon when he called. He suspected that Brydon, thus suddenly summoned to pay, regretted the extravagance of the offer he had made six months earlier. That however was the young man's business, his own was to keep him to the bargain in his client's interest. Perhaps Brydon really had rather the air of a hunter snared in his own toils, but he offered no opposition to the lawyer's arrangements, only interrupting him once to say, "I suppose Miss Wynne came to this decision entirely of her own free will?"

"Entirely," said the old gentleman with emphasis, and added to himself, "you don't creep out through *that* loophole, my good fellow."

"I thought as much," said Brydon.

VII.

ALL OF ONE MIND.

The news of Brydon's triumph ran rapidly round the circle of Miss Wynne's acquaintances, and re-awakened their flagging interest. "Well!" Jessie Lee exclaimed, "Ethel Hillier made me promise I'd write and tell her when this happened, but I didn't expect to have to do it. I suppose the money was too much for her." That was the general opinion in Brenthill, that the mill-owner's money had proved irresistible. People could no longer call Miss Wynne a fool, but they transferred the charge of folly to the young man who was paying a ridiculous price for her bit of ground.

Eddington came out of the affair with great glory. It was understood that he had opposed the sale till the utmost penny had been wrung out of Thomas Brydon, and then

had persuaded his client to yield. The young folks had been puppets in his hands and he had pulled the strings very skilfully indeed. Brydon ought to have known that he could not be a match for the lawyer. It was really sublime, the way in which Eddington had turned Miss Wynne's sentimental fondness for the garden to profit.

The *Brenthill Guardian* took the matter up in an article headed "APPROACHING DESTRUCTION OF AN INTERESTING RELIC." The young man who wrote it looked up a book about Brenthill, printed many years earlier by a local archæologist, and found the old garden mentioned several times—once when there was a dispute about a boundary, on the settlement of which the wall in Garden Lane was built, and on two or three occasions when bits of the land were sold. He ascertained that the factory which was about to swallow up the last remnant of "this historic pleasure ground" stood on a fragment of it. The house was comparatively modern.

The worst of it was that, historic as this pleasure ground might be, the intelligent young man who called it so could not discover that any one had ever owned it, or spoken of it, or visited it, who was of the smallest interest to mankind. The garden had no tradition beyond that of its blossoming summers. He did not lose courage, however, but went to the Mechanics' Institute, brushed up his history a little, and wrote almost a column more about all the wonderful things that the possessors of the garden might have seen. If they had not seen them they must have heard of them, which did as well. What tidings of bloodshed and terror and revolution, of heroism and crime, of storm and fire and plague, had stirred the air beneath those leafy boughs! And with these memories he mingled little allusions to bygone customs and things, to sedan chairs, coaches, and highwaymen, to country fairs and bull-baitings, to May Day dancing and fashionable assemblies, to hoops and patches and powder, to melodious tinkling of spinets and clavichords. He touched very lightly, the authority not being so readily accessible, on the changes in horticulture, the new and vivid blossoms that had opened under English skies since the old garden was first planted, and when he had thus arrived at the end of his column he felt rather pleased with himself. He thought, hesitatingly, that it was a little in Macaulay's manner. The young lady to whom he was engaged was sure it was—only better.

It answered its purpose, anyhow, for the readers of the *Guardian* got an indistinct impression that there was something monumental about the patch of ground which "our energetic fellow townsman" was about to lay waste. Jessie Lee added a postscript to her letter: "I send you our newspaper which will tell you all about the history of the garden. I never knew it was so old or so interesting, did you? What a pity it is going to be destroyed!" And a committee of ladies, who were planning a bazaar for charitable purposes to be held early in the summer, sprang at the idea of utilising the historic spot. Such a delightful chance of wearing Old English dresses—illustrating all the different periods, you know—and such a sentiment about the whole thing, all the trees and shrubs doomed, and spared just for that last day. Would it not be touching? And one might sell plants and flowers from Ye Olde Gardenne. That would be charmingly pathetic, such a sweet idea, and all clear profit, since everything must be rooted up when the bricklayers began to work. It could not make any real difference to Mr. Brydon, he would only have to put off his building a little, and Garden Lane had gone on as it was so long that there could not be any *hurry* about the new cottages. And when he was told that it was for a charity, and that the ladies of Brenthill asked it as a personal favour, he would not of course refuse. The matter was as good as settled.

Meanwhile the garden, every inch of whose surface was so soon to be laid bare to the gaze of the whole town, had never been so jealously guarded as it was this October. Mary Wynne shut herself up in it, did not go out, even to church, and refused to see visitors. It appeared that she was suffering, at her leisure, from headache.

She was well enough however to loiter round the mossy walks, listening to the cawing of the rooks, and looking at every plant and tree with gentle eyes that filled with tears. Even if there had been no thought of Philip she would have been sad. It was such a short and piteous span of life that yet remained to all around her, and it was she who had decreed that it should end. She felt like a murderess, and yet nobody loved each leaf and flower as she did. "There will never be any more spring," she said under her breath, amid the sad splendour of autumn colouring. "Oh, my poor double thorn, you will never blossom like tiny white roses again!" Her heart ached for the shrubs and plants which were making ready for their winter rest;

she even thought of the bulbs, asleep long since in the black earth at her feet. She fancied something menacing and strange in the gloom of the great unchangeable cedars. She raised her eyes to them, "You are dead," she said, trying to realise the truth she uttered. "Dead—and I have killed you."

Later in the month the leaves had almost all fallen from the lime-trees, and the strong pulses of the looms throbbed behind the bare red wall. Elsewhere in the garden the thinned foliage, out of which all the summer greenness was gone, the delicate twigs etched on the faint blue of the October sky, the chill that crisped the air, the autumn crocuses and purple violets, combined to make a kind of mockery of March, as if a phantom spring had come to bid its haunt farewell.

Mary thought this one morning as she went down the walk by the limes. The shining of the pale sun overhead was pathetic, her soul was heavy with repentance, a thousand regrets were gnawing at her. Oh, why had she ever yielded, and sinned against her love? She did not forget the shameful misery which lay huddled beyond the wall, but she could not recall that vivid sense of it which had prompted her renunciation. Her imagination was blunted.

"And yet," she reminded herself, "it is all there—it is as real and as hideous as it was then. If I could only feel it!" She went to the little door and stood with her hand upon the latch. "Now," she said, "I have only to lift this and I shall see it all. I shall see all the ugly wretchedness I could not bear even to think of at Salthaven——"

She lifted the latch and stood face to face with Philip.

It was as if the whole world had gathered itself into his eyes. It was more than she could bear, it was pain. Her heart seemed to stand still, her sight failed. For a fraction of a second his face went out like a light in darkness.

"You here?" he cried, and at the sound of his voice his face came back. "A thousand pardons—I have startled you! How clumsy of me!"

"No, no." She moved backward a little as he touched her hand in greeting. "Come in."

"May I?" He stepped across the threshold. "You didn't expect to find any one standing staring on the step. Of course you took me for a tramp, or a lunatic."

"No indeed," she protested. "I knew you were—you."

"Yes, when you had time to think about it. Ah! the old garden, just the same as ever." He had closed the gate behind him, and without offering to advance stood gazing round. His lips began to curve and his nostrils to widen a little, in quick appreciation of the subtle autumn odours of earth and fallen leaf. He drank the golden air as if it were delicate wine, and his glancing eyes brightened in recognition of bush and tree. "Yes," he smiled, "as beautiful as ever, isn't it?"

"It was summer when you were here before," she said.

"You like the summer best? Well, perhaps—yet this suits the occasion. You know the old place is going to be turned into building ground?"

His tone spoke volumes, and the white roses of her cheeks bloomed suddenly pink. Evidently he did not know that *she* had sold it. "Yes, of course," she said; "you never heard——"

"That's a lie, 'Liza Barnes!" screeched a childish voice, apparently about six inches from Philip's elbow. "Yer took 'is 'apenny —I see yer do it, and I'll tell yer mother; I will."

He sprang from the door, and then laughed. "Little imp!" he said.

"Come further in, won't you?" said Mary, moving away, and not caring to show her quickened colour. Was this Philip Wargrave, who had filled her whole world for so long? He seemed strangely far away, and a curious sense of loneliness and unreality was stealing over her.

"*May* I?" he asked as he followed. "Are you staying here, then? They told me nobody could get in, and I was wandering round the enchanted ground, devising all manner of expedients to effect an entrance, when you came to the rescue, and I assure you, Miss Medland, you realised my idea of a beneficent fairy."

"Did I? How very nice!" She was growing desperate, and snatched at the chance of explanation he gave her. "But you are behind the time—you don't know that I'm not Miss Medland any longer."

(Oh, what *would* he say when he found that she had sold the garden?)

Wargrave stopped, stared, arched his brows. "*What! married?*" he cried with cheerful readiness. "You don't say so!" A pleasant light of congratulation was dawning in his eyes.

It was all over. The bright indifferent smile was like a flood of sunlight on pale dreams, and Mary woke. "No, no," she

said, with something of his own readiness, "I'm not married, but I've changed my name. I'm Miss Wynne now, not Miss Medland."

"Oh, but this is awfully puzzling, you know. You are not Miss Medland," he uttered the words very slowly; "yes, I think I have mastered that. And you are—Miss Wynne."

"Yes."

Philip suffered his breath to escape in a faint whistle. "You are Miss Wynne—but *you* have sold the garden, then?"

"Yes."

"Well, I suppose everything must have an end. I always thought somebody would build on it one of these days, but—Got a good price for it, I hope?"

"Yes, very good."

"That's well. After all I suppose one may pay too dearly for sentiment—it wouldn't do to sacrifice one's life to a garden, would it? No, I think you are right—I've no doubt it was the best thing to do."

"Only you wouldn't have done it?"

"Oh, I don't say that. I daresay I might if I'd been sufficiently tempted. Besides I don't think it's quite a parallel case; you see I knew the place before the time when I met you here; I stayed with the Macleans a long while ago when I was a lad. I suspect the old garden was more to me than to you —naturally, you know."

Oh heaven! The garden was more to him than to her—"naturally, you know." More to him! when she would have watered it with her heart's blood to keep it fair for his home-coming. And she shivered as she walked by his side, because it seemed to her that the leaf-sprays which he brushed with his slim fingers as he spoke must surely betray her, must burst into some novel and splendid blossom to greet him for whom they and she had waited so long.

"Yes," said Philip, "no doubt you were right." He looked up suddenly, "I'd forgotten that tree—what is it?"

"It's a pear," said Mary.

"A pear-tree—what a height! How do you get the pears? Ah! I suppose one doesn't notice it when the acacia is in leaf. But it's picturesque, isn't it? And how sunny it looks up aloft there with its few yellowing leaves! Yes, as I was saying, I'm sure you've acted for the best."

"I hope so."

"For, after all, it will always be a memory, won't it? And this is a very pleasant ending. But I *was* surprised when the gate flew open and there you were! Though, for that matter I wasn't as much surprised as you were—I'm certain you took me for my own ghost."

"Well," said Mary, "I didn't expect to see you. I thought you were abroad."

"Abroad? What made you think that? No, I'm living in West Kensington—why should I be abroad?"

"I thought you were in New Zealand with your brother."

"Oh no! I've been in Kensington for a year and a half—nearly two years. Who told you I was going to New Zealand? No —did I really? By Jove, what an unconscionable fellow I am! I'm always telling people all my hopes and fears. I don't know why they are so kind, *I* wonder they don't kick me out for a bore. Yes, I did think once, when my uncle married, that I might have to go, but I always felt as if something must turn up. It would have been too absurd—fancy me in New Zealand!"

"Something did turn up then?" said the girl faintly.

"Well, yes. My uncle's marriage wasn't such a calamity after all. His wife took rather a liking to me, I think, (another of the kind people!) and the old gentleman said he'd continue my allowance for a bit. He is always dabbling in stocks and shares, you know, and he made one or two lucky hits just about that time. So there was an end of the New Zealand scheme, and I started on my own account, with a commission to paint my aunt's picture to begin with."

"And you are succeeding?"

"That's too much to say," Philip answered with his pleasant smile. "But I think I may succeed some day—I've good friends, and good hopes. Ah, by the way, Miss Medland—Miss Wynne, I mean (why didn't you keep your old name too? It would have been very nice, Medland-Wynne, and would have given one time to think,) by the way, you might be one of the good friends if you would."

"What do you mean? I couldn't have my portrait taken!" cried Mary, with frightened eyes.

"Oh no!" Wargrave laughed, "I don't tout for orders like that! No, don't apologise, it did sound exactly like it. No, but you might let me make a study of the garden. I came down to see if that were possible, and then heard it was such a dragon-guarded spot——"

"Oh, of course!" said Mary. "Yes, I can do that for you."

"Who knows?" said Philip with a graver smile. "It may be the stepping-stone to

fortune. Do you remember a Miss Hillier who came with some friends of yours in the spring? Well, she took it into her head that I should find the subject for a picture here—a girl's figure with the old garden for a background. *A Guardian Genius* she wanted to call it, but I think I'd rather have it *Eligible Building Ground.* What do you say?"

"Yes, I think perhaps it would be best."

Wargrave nodded. "I think it's an idea," he continued confidentially. "Suppose the garden had fallen into the hands of some one to whom it was a real pain to part with it—some one like Ethel Hillier herself for instance—compelled to give it up, say by loss of fortune—can't you fancy the last pathetic look round the dear old place? Yes, I think she was right."

"Do you know Miss Hillier very well?"

"Pretty well," said the young man. He paused by a rosemary bush, broke off a shoot and looked fixedly at it, smiling and even colouring a little in a very becoming manner. "The fact is I'm engaged to be married. I've been engaged since the spring, and Ethel Hillier and Evelyn—she's a Miss Seymour—are sworn friends. If this thing were a real success——"

"Well, you must make it so," said Mary. "And you must let me congratulate you."

It was speedily arranged that the young man should begin work at once. "There is no time to lose in these October days," he said. "I put up at the 'Horn,' in the High Street, you know, last night. I'll just go and get what I want—it isn't far."

Mary saw him off, gave orders to the maid that he was to be re-admitted on his return, and then went up to her own room and closed the door. She had been quite calm and composed through all the latter part of her talk with Philip, and she was quite calm now. She sat down by her bedside and gazed blankly at the light-coloured wall, on which her shadow was faintly pencilled by the pale sunshine.

It is curious how quickly the great changes come which shape us and all our destinies. It is a moment, not an hour, which turns love to hate, or despair to hope. In a lightning flash the whole aspect of the world is transformed, sun, moon, and stars are new in new heavens, the tides and currents of our lives are all reversed. It was not twenty minutes since Philip had turned to her with shining eyes and ready congratulations. "*What! married?*" The words rang yet in her ears, though, as it seemed, she had lived a lifetime since they were spoken.

She felt sick and strange with a horror of her foolish passion. He had never thought of her, never cared for her, he was "always telling people his hopes and fears," and she had carried these easily uttered, hackneyed confidences of his in her heart, not suspecting that she shared her treasure with Miss Evelyn Seymour, Miss Ethel Hillier, and, most likely, half-a-dozen more. For the sake of such words as these she had suffered in silence, she had fought against her conscience the whole summer through, she had left the people at her gate to fever and misery. Yes, but, thank God, she had yielded before she knew the truth—thank God! thank God! Now she would escape from Brenthill, and the garden would be destroyed, the beautiful, hateful garden. It would drive her mad to live through another round of seasons shut in by its walls. Life had been nothing but a long, malarious dream since first she knew the place, a bewildering, blossoming, suffocating dream, full of idle fancies and memories and cravings. She was overwhelmed with hot shame, she thought she would never draw breath freely till the last tree fell, and the last fibre of root was torn from the soil.

A bell jangled sharply through her reverie. Philip back from the 'Horn' already? She sprang to her feet and went to the glass to make a critical inspection of her colour and expression. As she bent forward to the face which leaned to meet her there came a knocking at the door.

"I suppose that is the gentleman who left just now?" she said without turning her head. "Ask him if he likes to go straight into the garden."

"No, miss, it isn't that gentleman." And the maid presented a card on which was inscribed, "Mr. Thomas Brydon," with a hurriedly written line below, "Pray let me see you for five minutes."

Her champion, her deliverer—what could he have to say to her? Perhaps he had some scheme for facilitating her departure, he might be too impatient to wait till after the sale, which was fixed for the middle of November. "Show Mr. Brydon into the drawing-room," she said as she refastened the little brooch at her throat. It hampered her, she could not breathe.

She found her visitor standing at the window, looking out, a small sharply-cut silhouette against the clear glass. He turned and came forward.

"Thank you for letting me speak to you," he began hurriedly. "They told me you didn't see anybody, but as it was a matter of business—" All at once he broke off and

looked at her. "How are you? Did you like Salthaven?"

"Very much. I'm very well, thank you. Mr. Eddington told me I was brown."

"Brown? You look different. Are you well, really?"

"Quite well, except for a headache or two. I think it feels close here after the sea-breezes. Won't you sit down?" By this time Mary had drawn him away from the window, and the light fell on his face. "*You* don't look very well, Mr. Brydon."

"I'm well enough, only a bit worried," he said shortly. "It's about this business of ours."

"I guessed as much. You want to come in sooner—is that it?"

"Not exactly. The question is about my coming in at all."

Mary gazed at him with parted lips, but did not speak.

"Look here," said Brydon, "I've been thinking things over, and the more I think the less I like this plan of mine. What right have I to turn you out of your home? When I first proposed it I thought it was only a matter of money, but it has never been a matter of money with you. Suppose I fail in my scheme—suppose my factory doesn't answer and my cottages fall into bad hands—then I shall have robbed you of your garden, and all for nothing, for worse than nothing. After all, there must be some risk whichever way I set to work—why shouldn't I take the risk at Holly Hill? It might only be waiting a little, and perhaps it would be best; indeed, I think it might be. And you would be glad, wouldn't you?"

The words were uttered in tones of unwonted softness, but Mary could not answer. O heaven! was this garden to live and flower in spite of her? Was she to be caught and thrust back into it, to dwell for ever with empty mocking memories—the garden living and everything else dead, even the throbbing of the looms silenced behind the long red wall?

"Tell me," said Brydon; "you would be glad?"

"Glad," she repeated in a strangled meaningless voice. "You have changed too, then?"

"Yes, I've changed—time I did, I think. What is the matter?"

"Not you! I never thought you would change!"

"Of course not. I didn't think so myself."

"You told me you would not!" she cried. "I was so sure of you. I thought you cared for those poor people—that you would be true to your plans; I thought that any t —any time—and I put it off, and no have tired you out and it is too late!"

"No, no," Brydon exclaimed, "it i like that—don't you reproach yourself. know what you are thinking of. But i can really manage to do without your gar —why did I ever torment you so about —if you could keep it with a clear c science—" ("If *I* could keep *you* for e close at hand!" he was thinking as stammered over his spoken words.)

"Mr. Brydon, you are giving me more the garden than it is worth," Mary int rupted him with passionate abruptness. " know it—I have known it all the time. don't want so much. Take it, but only gi me half for it. That will be enough—it w indeed. I want you to build your cottag —you must! you must! I will tell M Eddington that it is my doing."

The small young man had started to h feet, and seemed to have grown taller. H faced her, he was furious.

"Thank you, Miss Wynne! So you thin that is at the bottom of it—you think I cam here to try to sneak out of my bargain be cause I didn't like the price, and wasn't ma enough to say so! Well, if you *wanted* t clinch the business you've gone the righ way to work, for I'll have the garden now by God! And you'll take my offer, for the matter has gone too far—unless we both agreed to break it off, and that I won't do!"

"Don't! don't! I can't bear it," said the girl. "I didn't mean that—you must know I didn't. I don't know what I did mean, but not that—I couldn't! You must be more patient with me, please!"

"I'm a brute!" said Brydon instantly. "I beg your pardon."

There was a brief silence. "I don't quite understand," he continued after a moment. "You wish me to take it?"

She answered "Yes," with pale lips that scarcely uttered a sound.

"Then of course I will. And I will do the best I can. Perhaps," he said musingly, "I might use part, a strip by the factory, and another bit, at the lane end, you know. If I had the frontage there—"

"But you must build your cottages," she said again. "I thought of them while I was at Salthaven. I ought to have let you begin in the spring. Why did you never tell me the people in the lane had had fever?"

"It wasn't much. Only two cases and they are all right."

"If they had died it would have been my fault."

"Hardly," said B . "But I knew you were feeling lik when you wrote to me after you cam

"And you wil ," she insisted, colouring with a guilty consciousness of the mixture of motives which he could not divine.

"Yes, I will build. But if I can spare a bit near the house, just two or three elms for a home for your rooks, a bit of turf, and that old buttressed wall with the lilies and the lavender at the foot of it—the wall with the tufts of snapdragon—you would like that? You would like to know that that bit was safe and cared for wherever you were, wouldn't you? And perhaps some day you would come back and see it?"

Mary shook her head. "No," she said, "I thank you a thousand times, but let the garden go; I ought to have given it up before now. I would rather it all went; I would, really. Don't cramp the cottages to save a useless piece of it."

"I know what that means," said Brydon, looking steadily at her.

"And pray what does it mean?" But she herself knew so well what it meant that she could not meet his gaze.

"It means that you will never come back. That you can give up the whole as readily as the half because nothing will ever induce you to set foot in Brenthill when once your garden has been touched. That you will remember it as it is now, and hate the thought——"

"No," cried Mary, moved by a sudden impulse. "I never will come back to the garden or any part of it—never! But if you will take it and carry out your plan—if you will make amends for all my selfishness and folly—" She had risen and faced him with eloquent eyes.

"What will you do?"

"I will come back and see your cottages when they are built."

She was startled at her own words, as if an alien voice had uttered them; she could not think what had prompted her. She could almost have doubted whether she had spoken them had it not been for Mr. Brydon's face.

"I take that as a promise," he said simply. "You will let me know where you are, and you shall hear when they are finished." He was content to say no more, and held out his hand instantly in leave-taking.

Mary accompanied him to the hall, where they found Philip Wargrave, who had just been admitted by the maid. The men looked a little curiously at each other, and she introduced them, not without a touch of wondering pride in her own calmness. "Mr. Wargrave is going to make a sketch of the garden for his next picture," she added in an explanatory tone.

"A little remembrance of a favourite spot, just for a background, you know," said Philip, smiling regretfully. "I've heard of you from Miss Hillier."

Brydon murmured something about "the pleasure of meeting Miss Hillier in the spring."

"You made a deep impression, I assure you," said the young artist. "She took such an interest in the garden. I think myself there is a peculiar charm about the dear old place."

"It *is* very pretty," the mill-owner agreed. "I remember Miss Hillier admired it."

"Yes, and she remembers you—as Adamant! I believe she habitually thinks of you as the Desolator, for she was sure you would get your own way."

"Mr. Brydon came this morning to tell me he could do without the garden," said Mary quietly, in her clear voice.

"*No!*" cried Wargrave. "Oh Miss Medland, you might have spared me this!"

"Spared you what?"

"Oh, why did you tell me? Why didn't you leave me in ignorance till my picture was finished? Why did you upset your arrangements to-day of all days?" He bemoaned himself tragically, and yet with a little laughing self-mockery about his lips. "Here was I, steeped to the very eyes in sentiment; to my finger tips," he stretched out his long slender hands, "I've been steeped in it ever since Ethel Hillier came back; I was aching deliciously with helpless regret for the old garden, I believe my work would have been a masterpiece of pathos—Oh, a masterpiece!—and you and Mr. Brydon have conspired together to ruin it. It will be a sham now, the trees and I posing together in a make-believe farewell. It's cruel! cruel! One doesn't have such fine feelings every day of one's life." And Wargrave threw himself on one of the hall chairs, while Brydon stood and smiled.

"You'd better go and paint the masterpiece. I didn't accept Mr. Brydon's sacrifice—it's all right," said Mary.

"I'll undertake that the trees haven't six weeks to live, if that will do," the Desolator chimed in encouragingly.

"Oh!" said Philip getting up, and looking from one to the other. "Well, you've