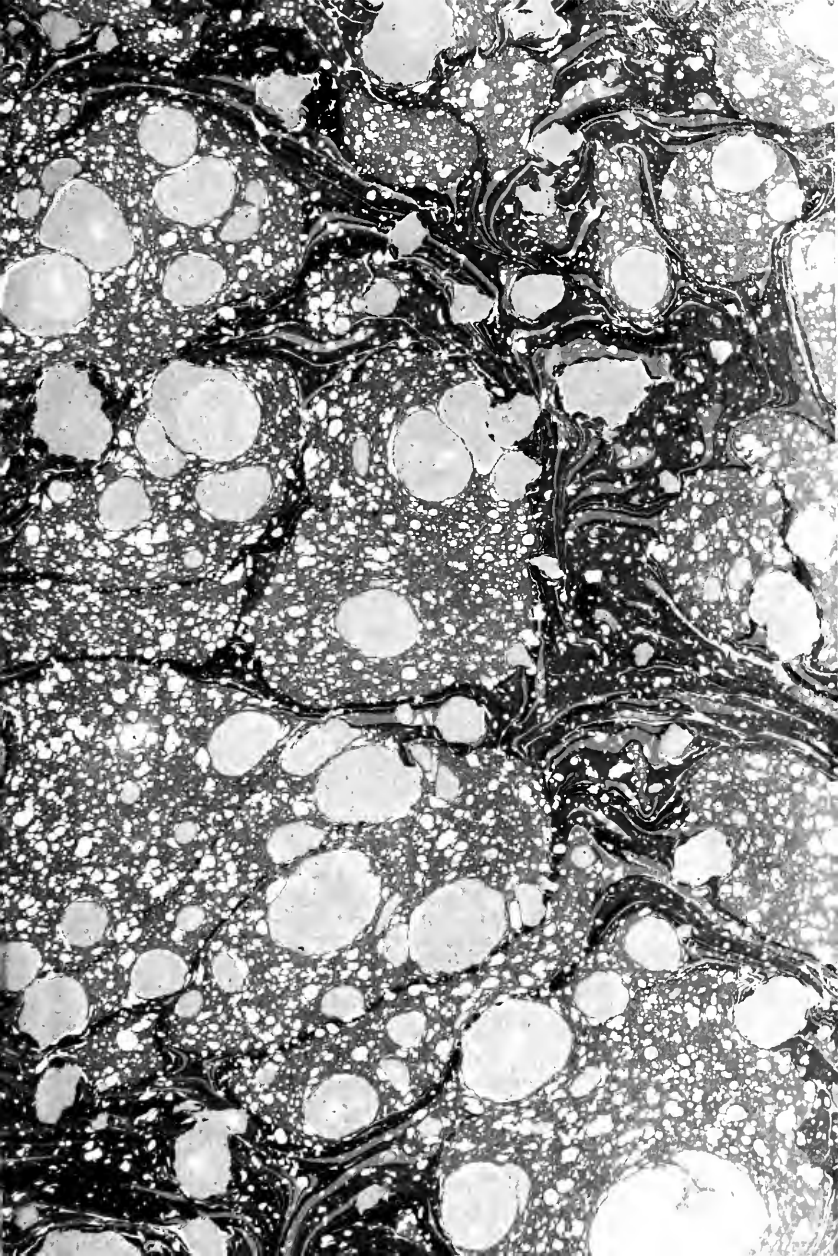


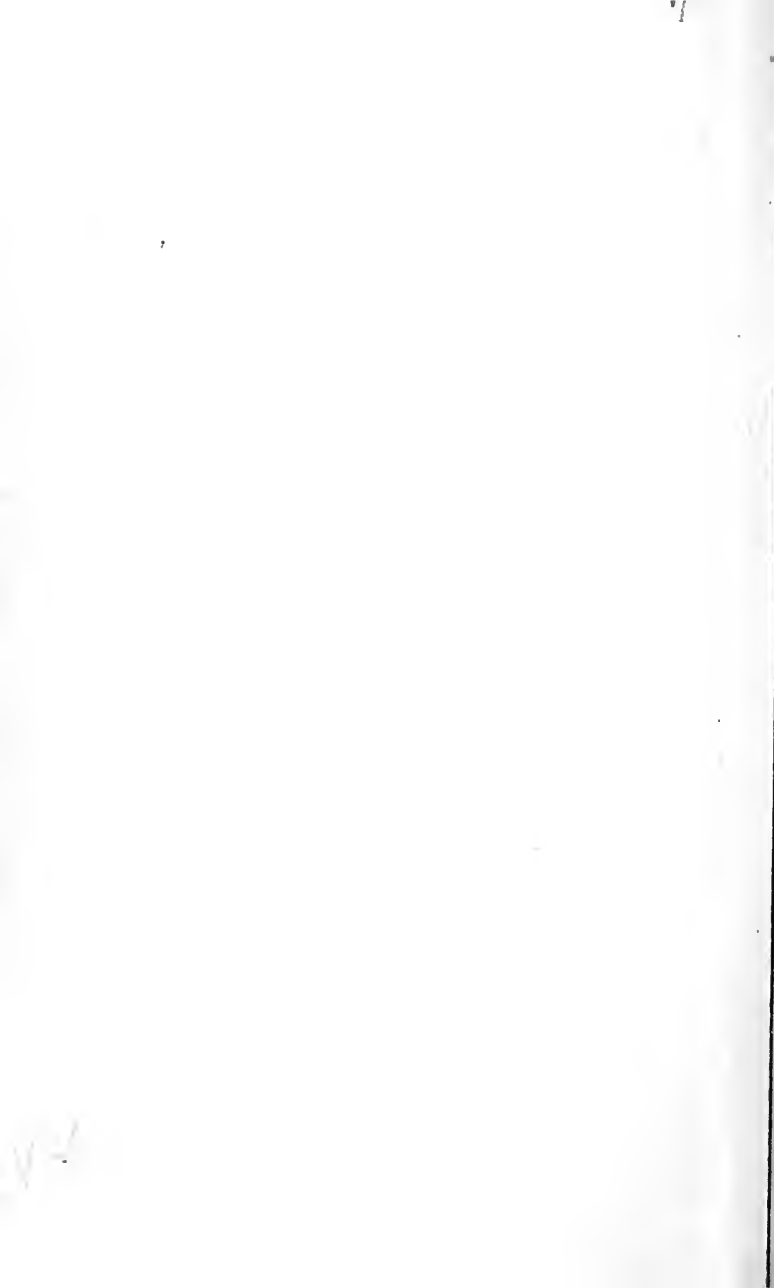
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John Maestry

The visit of John Maestry to Ammadah

JOHN MANESTY,

THE LIVERPOOL MERCHANT.

BY

THE LATE WILLIAM MAGINN, LL.D.

WITH

Illustrations by George Cruikshank.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

JOHN MORTIMER, ADELAIDE STREET,
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1844.



Per 12-5-4

1431

TO

J. G. LOCKHART, ESQ.

THE OLD AND CONSTANT

FRIEND OF HER LATE HUSBAND,

THIS WORK IS DEDICATED,

BY

ELLEN R. MAGINN.

LONDON,—16th August, 1844.

549653
ENGLISH



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JOHN MANESTY.

CHAPTER I.

LIVERPOOL AS IT WAS AND IS—THE HERO INTRODUCED—MERCHANT LIFE EIGHTY YEARS SINCE.

“THE Mersey,” says Camden, “spreading and presently contracting its stream from Warrington, falls into the ocean with a wide channel very convenient for trade, where opens to view Litherpole, (commonly called Lirpool, from the water extending like a pool, according to the common

opinion,) where is the most convenient and most frequented passage to Ireland; a town more famous for its beauty and populousness than for its antiquity."

What Camden's ideas of populousness might have been it is hard to say; but if in his time he considered Litherpole, or Lirpool, famous on that account, his reverence for its fame would be at present increased a hundred fold. We have an engraved view of "the West Prospect of Liverpoole," taken somewhere about a hundred years after the date of his *Britannia*,—in 1680; and in the scanty and scattered collection of insignificant houses, apparently intersected but by one regular street, containing within its enclosure fields and plantations of trees, and bounded by a stream

on which seem to float half-a-dozen vessels, all of the smallest tonnage, most of them mere barks, we could hardly recognise the swelling city adorned with majestic edifices, traversed by magnificent and crowded streets, and on its river side flanked by gigantic docks of almost Titanic masonry.

The flourishing state of Liverpool is not by any means remarkable for antiquity. It dates from about the beginning of the last century; and however it may shock the fine feelings of the existing race of the men philosophizing by the side of the Mersey, its prosperity had beyond question its origin in the slave-trade, of which Liverpool, having filched that commerce from Bristol, became the great emporium. We shall not fatigue our readers with statistical details,

which, if they seek, they may find in many a bulky volume of parliamentary reports; nor weary them by discussing the merits or demerits of a question now set at rest for ever. The labours of disinterested philanthropists, and of philanthropists whom the most exalted charity can hardly admit to be disinterested, have removed the stain of tolerating slavery from the code of British law. We have at all events got rid of the *word*; whether we have got rid of the *thing*, may be a matter not worth discussing. Be it sufficient to say that the slave-trade crammed Liverpool with wealth; and that wealth, by its natural operation, raised Liverpool into importance.

George Frederick Cooke, in one of those wild and unaccountable sallies into which

nothing but genius, even in drunkenness, can burst, while performing the part of Richard the Third, in the Williamson-square Theatre of Liverpool, amid a hissing and hooting, well earned for having been so overcome by the poetry of Shakspeare, or the punch of the Angel, as to tumble about the stage, obtained attention by crying, with his wondrous voice, " Silence, and hear me!" The call was instantly obeyed. Moulding his features into his most terrific scowl, he looked on the astonished audience, and the indignant representative of the last of the Plantagenets thus shouted forth:—

“ It is hard enough to submit to the degradation of such a profession as that in which I appear; but it is the lowest depth of disgrace to be compelled to play the

buffoon for the amusement of a set of wretches, every stone of whose streets, every brick of whose houses, every block of whose docks, is grouted and cemented together by the blood and marrow of the sold and murdered African."

The audience, by their indignation or their silence, gave at least a qualified assent to the truth of this unceremonious remonstrance; and the attention which was refused by the merchants of Sydney-lane, or Goree Dock, to the tame eloquence of a Wilberforce, or the sober preachings of a Clarkson, was aroused with feelings of shame by the fierce denunciation of a tipsy actor. Men are still alive who actually traded in slavery on the coast of Africa; and many will remember the days when the

watchword, "Liberty and the slave-trade," floated proudly upon the election-banners of General Tarleton. Why should we not remember it? It was only in 1807; and that to young people like us counts not much more than if it were yesterday.

Cooke's savage taunt was of course nothing more, as well may be believed, than a ferocious exaggeration; but it is undeniable that many honourable and upright men were engaged in this man-traffic, the propriety of which they never doubted; and that few of the most unexceptionable merchants in Liverpool, though closing their eyes to what was called "the horrors of the middle passage," refused to accept the profits which it returned. We have now nothing further to add in the way of

introduction to our story, except that this peculiar trade having had its main encouragement in this country by the Assiento contract, and its main discouragement by what John Wesley called the Grand Revival of Religion, our story fixes itself in the middle time between both—viz., in 1760.

Just only is it to remark, that many persons in Liverpool conscientiously protested against this traffic—especially Quakers, and the more austere dissenters. Just, also, is it to add, that a general suspicion prevailed that those same Quakers were deeply engaged in the business. This they declared to be a calumny, and were believed, as people wished to believe. But of the mercantile world, some, without making any noisy professions, conscientiously abstained

from having anything to do with the capture and sale of their fellow-creatures; and among them was the famous house of Hibblethwaite, Manesty, and Co., of Pool-lane, Liverpool. This firm, at the time we write of, was represented by a single individual, Mr. John Manesty.

Mr. Manesty was about three or four and forty years of age when our narrative commences. His countenance was cold and calculating—seldom, if ever, relaxing into a smile, and almost as seldom darkening into a frown. In stature, he, like one of Crabbe's heroes—

“ Grave Jonas' kindred, Sibyl kindred's sire,
Was six feet high, and look'd six inches higher;”

and his massive head, somewhat (contrary

to custom, he wore no peruke) touched with gray, and rapidly inclining to be bald, was firmly set on a pair of ample shoulders. His dress, which never varied, was of snuff-brown broadcloth, a wide-skirted coat, a deep-flapped waistcoat, and a close-fitting pair of breeches, not reaching much beyond the knee, where they were secured by a pair of small silver buckles. These garments were all of the same colour and material, and for more than twenty years he had not allowed any change in their fashion, which, though an object of scorn in the eyes of the beaux and macaronies of the middle of the last century, was comfortable and commodious. No ruffles graced his wrists; no tie or solitaire decorated his stiff cravat, rolled closely round his mus-

cular throat; no ornament whatever was worn on any part of his person; but all, from his well-brushed, broad-brimmed hat, to his woollen stockings of iron gray—and his shoes, blackened with whatever art, before the appearance of Day and Martin in the world of Japan, could command, and kept tightly close by a pair of the darkest buckles—was scrupulously clean, stainless, and without speck. Such, too, was his repute among his brother merchants; and when, at Exchange hours, he made his way, slowly and steadily pacing among the commercial crowd, with his gold-headed cane, which he carried more as an emblem of his caste, than for any purpose of supporting his brawny hand or strong-set limbs, he seemed, in more senses than one, a pillar of 'Change.

Of his partners, the elder Hibblethwaite had died some years before, and his son, who formed the "Co.," preferred cock-fighting, badger-drawing, bull-baiting, and other refined Lancastrian amusements—most of which we have bequeathed as legacies on the other side of the Atlantic—to the dull routine of the desk and counter. With great pleasure, therefore, he sold his interest in the firm to his graver partner, who, as usual in contracts between such parties, was no loser in the transaction. We by no means intend to insinuate that anything passed which was inconsistent with mercantile honour, for the purchaser was not more eager to get than the seller to get rid of the concern on any terms whatever. If the money passed was less than

what Manesty would have disbursed to a more sagacious or less hasty customer, it was far more than Dick Hibblethwaite required on the moment for the purposes of squandering.

Those who now visit the Liverpool Exchange, in Castle-street, and look upon the spruce and airy second-hand dandies, who dispose of millions of money—at least, of bills—in the jauntiest style possible; or see them, at all hours of the day, sipping claret, swilling grog, or guttling down bitter beer, according as the goddess Laverna is propitious to her votaries; or who meet them in the hundreds of coffee-rooms, bar-parlours, or taps, so profusely planted all over their borough, flirting with pretty Miss Eliza, betting at Jem Ward's, making

their books at Radley's, or "tossing" at Jack Langan's, must needs be reminded that these gentlemen no more resemble their methodical sires of old, than does the *maintenon cutlet* or the *ressole des rognons de bœuf* represent the haunch of mutton or the lordly sirloin. In one art they certainly far surpass their fathers—what that art is, we leave to Dale-street on one side of the ocean, and to Wall-street upon the other, to disclose. Be that as it may, among the most methodical men, of this most methodical time, none could be more methodical than the burly merchant whom we have just introduced to our readers.

John Manesty was, as we have said, some three or four and forty years of age, twenty of which he had passed in indefati-

gable and unceasing commercial industry in his native town. The Exchange clock itself could not have been more punctual and unvarying in its movements than he. Six o'clock every morning of winter or summer found him seated upon the high stool of his inner office, turning over his books of business with a scrutinizing eye, preparatory to the labours of the day. Eight o'clock every evening saw him as invariably occupied, upon the same stool, over the same books, which had recorded the results of those now finished labours. Few incidents marked the interval between those hours.

Writing letters occupied Manesty's time until eight o'clock, when he sate down to a hearty breakfast of northern cheer, to which his temperate habits and robust frame

enabled him to do ample justice. The multifarious occupations of commerce engaged him until dinner, which, contrary to the general habit of the Liverpool merchants—whose custom it was, then, even more than now, to dine in taverns—was served at home, and he shared a plain but solid repast with a single companion. A tankard of ale, and sometimes a glass of port, was its only accompaniment; and dinner concluded, he went upon 'Change, to transact affairs with his brother merchants.

Great was the deference which John Manesty there met; and for a couple of hours, bills, bonds, obligations, bargains, freights, insurances, speculations, contracts, shipments, ladings, entries, consignments, and a host of other words familiar to mer-

cantile ear in a great emporium of trade and shipping, were despatched by him with the rapidity acquired by long practice, and a decision which is the sure attendant upon a heavy purse. His dealings were upright, his engagements punctually observed; and though in doing business with others who were not so punctual or so solvent as himself, he had no scruple to enforce his claims in such manner as the law allows and the court awards, yet the very greatness of his transactions precluded him from being, in general, mixed up with needy or embarrassed parties, and his wealth often allowed him to display the semblance, and perhaps the reality, of generous and kindly dealing towards the fallen or broken adventurer in trade.

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At five, tea, followed by an hour's indulgence in smoking, (his only luxury, and conscientious scruples occasionally reproached him for indulging in this slave-raised weed,) brought the merchant again to his books; a bread and cheese supper, sometimes relieved by a glass of hot rum and water, followed, and ten o'clock consigned him to his bed, thence to rise at six o'clock the next morning and repeat the labours of the bygone day.

Such was the sober and unvarying life of Manesty, and many more besides of his contemporaries.

CHAPTER II.

WHO THE WOLSTERHOLMES WERE, AND WHO WAS
THEIR SUCCESSOR AT WOLSTERHOLME CASTLE.

FROM Manesty's business, as we have already stated, African traffic was wholly excluded; he had taken a very decided part in protesting against the slave trade, then principally opposed by the dissenters, which threw him much into their company; and though not departing from the church of England, in which he was reared, he

seldom attended its services, preferring, instead, to frequent the chapel of the Rev. Mr. Zachariah Hickathrift, called by his admirers Zealous Zachariah, and by all whom they would consider the ungodly, Old Cuff-the-Cushion, both titles being derived from the energy with which he enforced the extreme doctrines of Calvinism. The house had, indeed, formerly been somewhat connected with the West Indies, but that branch of the business had been entrusted to the elder Hibblethwaite. Manesty never liked it; and, on the old man's death, this dislike was still further increased by reports of the proceedings of the younger gentleman, while on a visit to Port Royal, proceedings which, in the opinions of his grave partner, were by no means calculated

to reflect credit on the character of the firm. This was, indeed, one of the principal causes of the dissolution of partnership, after which event Manesty gave up the West Indian and African connexion altogether.

When it was pressed upon the merchant that there were other things besides slaves to be traded in—as palm oil, or gold dust—upon the Gambia, he used sternly to reply—

“ No—no, it is best not to touch the thing at all! Have I no consideration for the souls of my sailors, whom I should, by despatching them thither on any mission whatever, expose to the contamination of being the associates of murderers, pirates, and manstealers?”

In all other branches of commerce Ma-

nesty zealously engaged, and so monotonous was his life, that for more than twenty years he was never known to have left Liverpool for a further distance than Manchester, a journey then performed with ease and expedition in six hours, except some twice or thrice on short business expeditions to London, and once a year, when he paid a visit to an estate which, much to the astonishment of his commercial friends, he had purchased in one of the wildest parts of Yorkshire.

Wolsterholme manor was seated amid the rugged and then almost inaccessible moorlands on the Lancastrian border. Before the union of the kingdoms it could boast of a castle, the inmates of which were continually occupied either in border war-

fare against the Scotch, or in the civil contentions of the Plantagenets. The castle gradually made way for a strong castellated house, which had the honour of having kept off Sir Arthur Haslerigge in the war of Charles and his Parliament: that in its turn was in more peaceful times succeeded by a modern mansion, built in the quaint fashion of the days of Anne; and the waste moorland was made to blossom with the rose in a curious garden, ornamented with the innumerable devices, which the perverse ingenuity of the queer gardeners who flourished at the commencement of the last century was fond of puzzling forth.

But that house, at the time of our story, was almost in ruins. The lands, never carefully cultivated, had nearly ceased to

be cultivated altogether, and now afforded but scanty pasturage for a few straggling sheep; the garden alone retained some semblance of its pristine pomp. The house supplied a dwelling-place, such as it was, for a poor old man, who had been undergardener, many years bygone, in the days of the last Wolsterholme, and by his zeal, exerted to the utmost of his power, the winding walks were kept in order; the evergreens clipped and trimmed into their original shapes of heraldic griffins—the armorial bearings of the family; the fruit of bush or tree preserved from totally perishing; the flower-knots still disposed in their whimsical mazes; the green border of the long fish-pond—fish-pond, indeed, no more! for the fish had long vanished—

cleaned and cleared—the rose was reared, the weed uprooted—all with as much care as if the eyes of its former masters rested upon the scene.

But there they rested not. With a fatality common to many of our ancient families, the Wolsterholmes had always adopted the losing side: their manors were confiscated by the Yorkists, and but partially restored by Henry VII. In the days of his successor, their attachment to the Romish faith lost them all their influence in court or county, and many a broad acre beside, in the mad insurrection known in history by the name of the Rising of the North. When the deluded followers of the standard of the Five Wounds of Christ hoped that,

“ If their enterprize had sped,
Change far and wide the land had seen—
A resurrection from the dead,
A spring-tide of immortal green,”

but were mercilessly taught to see their mistake by Sir George Beaumont, the Wolsterholmes took an active part, and suffered, some in person, all in estate; and lastly, in the Parliamentary war, they as Cavaliers were made to groan heavily under fines and sequestrations, for which, when the days of royalty returned with Charles II., it was but sorry recompence, on their presentation at court, that they were profusely complimented, heartily shaken by the hand, heavily laden with promises, laughed at as country pests by the courtiers, and if

remembered at all, remembered only as bores by the king.

These being the annals of their house, it is no wonder that the Revolution found them in possession of a sadly dwindled estate, which possessed few temptations for the spoiler; but untaught by experience, they still clung with constant fidelity to that White Rose which had been so fatal to their fortunes. The cowardice of James was, however, kinder to his followers than the courage of his father had been; for his precipitate flight afforded his partisans no opportunity for an English insurrection, and the followers of William had no pretext for dealing as liberally in confiscations on the eastern as they did on the western side of St. George's Channel. Wolsterholme

Castle, as it was still called, was thus saved to its owners, who would infallibly have followed the standard of James, if he had raised one; and it became the theatre of many a political intrigue, with which appellation the "honest men" thought proper to dignify their drinking bouts.

In 1715, the Sir Thomas of that day was "out" with the Earl of Mar, and, obliged to fly to France, he died at St. Germain, in sad poverty. The relics of this once great property, now reduced to little more than this barren waste, were finally dissipated by his son, also a Sir Thomas, who, with the hereditary wisdom of the family, threw down the last stake of the Wolsterholmes, and lost it in the cause of Charles Edward. He, like his father, was

obliged to fly to the Continent; and entering the French service, had the good fortune of being shot dead, before absolute penury, which had been long staring him in the face, had actually come down upon him like an armed man. His only sister, either impatient at increasing a burden already too weighty to be borne, or else, as a few persons conjectured, yielding to the solicitations of some unprincipled admirer, had disappeared, none knew whither.

Sir Thomas's younger brother, who, amid the loud remonstrances of his kindred, had adopted the Hanoverian side of the question, obtained a commission in Ligonier's troop, and perished, in some obscure skirmish in the American plantations, a few years before Sir Thomas's death. And the

land knew their place no more. Their honours were attainted, their manor seized by the crown. The memory of the family was still cherished by the peasantry, to whom they had always been kind, but there was, for many reasons, an evident reluctance to speak of the old people, and they were gradually forgotten as years rolled away.

On the flight of the last baronet, some five-and-twenty years before this story begins, the crown agents parcelled the estate—which, though small in value, was spacious in acres—into many petty holdings, principally among the tenants of the late possessors; but as no bidder appeared for the manor-house, it was suffered to fall into decay. Some years afterwards, Manesty

had occasion to proceed towards that part of the country, and, on learning these circumstances, he evinced a most unusual anxiety to become the purchaser of the house. The bargain was easily concluded; he left the poor gardener as he found him, in possession, and afforded him a pittance sufficient for his wants and services.

After this, he gradually purchased the several portions of the estate at prices which made his confidential book-keeper start. He put the miserable dwellings of his tenants into repair, and shewed himself as easy and careless in his new character of a landlord as he was strict and precise in his old one of a merchant; but as for the manor-house itself, he would not permit the slightest alteration or repair, beyond what

was absolutely necessary to keep it from tumbling about the ears of its old occupant.

This ruinous dwelling he visited once a-year,—always alone,—and took possession of the only habitable apartment in the house, one communicating by a glass door with the garden. What was the motive or object of this visit no one could tell. He pretended, indeed, that he went to do business with his tenantry; but this was no more than a pretence, for there was no business to do. The trifling returns of rent which he might bring back were not of the slightest importance to a man of his wealth, and could well have been left to the care of the humblest clerk in his office, without diverting from far weightier transactions the time and attention of the master.

As nobody suspected Solid John—the name which his acquaintances bestowed on him behind his back—of sentiment or romance; as in religion and politics he and his had been always opposed to the Wolsterholmes; as the only link which connected the names of the families was one that could give rise to no other than angry or painful feelings; and most especially as the speculation, as it would be called in Liverpool, did not yield him anything like one per cent. for his money, the curious in these matters, puzzled with guessing, and knowing that Manesty, like the apparition in Macbeth, was one that would not be questioned, were obliged to content themselves with giving to Wolsterholme Castle the nickname of John Manesty's Folly.

Of late, however, it was put to some use, for its garden was made to supply bouquets and love-knots, and other floral tributes, which, to the great astonishment of his grave neighbours, were suddenly seen to bloom in the sills and bowpots of the darksome and dingy windows of Pool Lane, where for many a long year no other leaves had been heard to rustle but those of the cash-book and the ledger.

CHAPTER III.

THE MODERN CYMON AND IPHIGENIA.

OUR readers, we suppose, will take it for granted that these roses and lilies, and other triumphs of the flower-bed, bloomed not especially for Mr. John Manesty; on the contrary, they were there very much against his will. They were culled by younger hands for younger eyes; and many a mystery did they contain, intelligible but to two people—for which said mysteries

Mr. John Manesty had very little sympathy.

In our description of the staid and monotonous life of the merchant, it may be remembered, we mentioned that he shared his dinner with a solitary companion, and the flowers were for him. That companion was his nephew, Mr. Hugh Manesty. Mr. Hugh Manesty was between two or three and twenty, a well-grown and a well-knit youth, of whose personal appearance any uncle, who regarded such things, might justly feel proud.

His story may be told in few words. We have said, the only link which could be supposed to connect the Manestys with the Wolsterholmes was a painful one; and that link was the parentage of Mr. Hugh

Manesty. Cornet Wolsterholme, while quartered at Liverpool, had been attracted by the demure beauty of Miss Hannah Manesty, whom he saw by mere accident. How the fair devotee discovered that she was loved by the gay cornet is a question which our readers had better ask their wives and sweethearts; here it is sufficient to say that it was discovered. And when Wilford Wolsterholme shortly afterwards departed with his regiment for America, he was clandestinely accompanied by a lady who was his wife, and no longer Miss Manesty.

Great was the indignation of that serious household! It was supposed that the event hastened her mother's death; it certainly sent John, her brother, across the Atlantic, by his father's command, to seek the fugi-

tive lady, to compel Wolsterholme to marry her,—if that ceremony had not been performed,—and, married or unmarried, to endeavour to bring her back.

John Manesty's absence extended to two years, and he returned, not with his sister, but his sister's infant. Her husband had been killed, and she—to use the pathetic words of Scripture—“had bowed herself down and travailed, for her pains came upon her.” The Ichabod of the house of Wolsterholme was brought safely to Liverpool by John Manesty, and his father's death shortly after put the young merchant in the place of a father to his sister's child.

He carefully fulfilled the duty, according to his own views. The boy went not to Oxford or to Cambridge—seats of dissipa-

tion or Jacobitism, false doctrine, or scientific atheism; he was not taught the absurd vanities of dead languages, which profit nothing in any commerce now known in the world; the follies of the current literature he was taught to despise; but for worldly learning, all that Cocker at least could impart, was duly implanted in the mind of the boy. Araby the blest, Italy the fair, never produced, in the eyes of his uncle, anything so worthy of wonder and of love as the numerals of the one and the double entry of the other.

Hugh's spiritual learning was confined to the expositions of the Bible by Mr. Cuff-the-Cushion, to which he had the good taste—not to use a higher word—as he advanced in years, to prefer the Bible itself.

He possessed none of the lighter accomplishments: dancing, drawing, music, were all abominations in the eyes of his uncle. The cock-fighting and bear-baiting propensities of the then junior partner of the house were by himself looked upon with disgust; and Hibblethwaite, who with those odd fancies which it is so hard to explain, really liked the modest and quiet youth, after in vain endeavouring to initiate him in his favourite pursuits, was obliged finally, with a very hearty oath of regret, to give him up as a milksop.

Hugh, nevertheless, was not destitute of some of the graces that become his age,—for he knew the gallant though sad history of his paternal family,—and to the almost instinctive passion of a north-country man

for horses, he added the not usual elegance of preferring a knowledge of the use of the rapier to that of the more locally fashionable weapon, the single-stick. His uncle grimly smiled at this choice of amusement, but spoke not. Blood, thought he, will out. Hunting was proscribed not more by the rigid principles of the sectarians, with whom he chiefly communed, than by the stronger reluctance of the gentry of the palatinate to permit any trader to follow the hounds with them. For other sports of the field his opportunities had been few, and religion and natural refinement kept him from the alehouse and the cockpit.

In short, after Hugh came towards manhood, deprived by taste and by feeling from the vulgar enjoyments of the ordinary mer-

cantile population, by shyness and prejudice from the pursuits and delights of men of liberal breeding, and by his commercial position and suspected creed from the society of the Lancastrian aristocracy, the young man dwelt almost alone. His uncle's business occupied most of the hours of his week-days; his Sundays were devoted to the tabernacle; and there many a Jemima, a Kesia, and a Kerem-happuch suffered their sweet eyes demurely to stray from the hymn-book, to catch a glance of the handsome countenance of the heir of the wealth of Solid John Manesty.

We should have said, that when the child was brought to England, its grandfather insisted that it should bear his own name, and not that of the hated Wolster

holme. But the soft glances of the godly sisterhood were thrown away in vain. Hugh Manesty heeded them not. Some touch, perhaps, of the old aristocratic blood hardened his heart against the disputatious daughters of dissent, and he shrank from their tea-drinkings as decidedly as from the ale-drinkings of Dick Hibblethwaite.

What once was a matter of taste had of late become a matter of feeling. A change had come over the spirit of his dream; and without further preface, he had met with Mary Stanley. We leave to Burke, or Lodge, or Debrett, the task of assigning her station in the noble house of Derby, to which she belonged. We require no herald or genealogist to decide that she was an eminently beautiful and graceful girl. Hugh

Manesty met her while on a visit of business to Sir Hildebrand, her father's mansion; for Sir Hildebrand being longer in pedigree than in purse, had contrived, in spite of his contempt of mercantile pursuits, to be on the wrong side of the books of the elder Manesty. The baronet was glad to afford all the hospitalities in his power to the representative of the house, and he gilded over the degradation by reflecting that his guest was not in reality a money-lender, but the actual representative of one of the oldest families of the north, and not very distantly connected with himself.

Whether the story of Cymon and Iphigenia be literally true, may be left to the commentators on Boccaccio, Chaucer, and Dryden; but that it is morally true, no one

who has looked upon the progress of youth can doubt—and Mary Stanley was Iphigenia to Hugh Manesty. The loutishness of the countinghouse-clerk, far more disgusting than the hobnailed clown, was dispelled; a feeling that there was something better worth reading than the “Whole Duty of Man,” or the “Ready Reckoner,” soon arose in his mind. A charm was discovered in poetry before unsuspected; and even the books, deeply revered as they were before, assumed a new form of reverence. The Bible was no longer a mine of texts for controversy, but a volume of beauty, poetry, and love; and in the “Pilgrim’s Progress” he could afford to forget, while reading that wondrous allegory, all remembrance of the persecutions of the perverse cobbler.

Hugh, moreover, was now connected with the gentry of the country, and partook of their amusements; but he felt the want of accomplishments and education, and sedulously applied himself to obtain both. Originally endowed with talents of no common order, and urged to perseverance by the unsparing goad of unceasing love, his progress was far beyond what we find in schools and colleges; and a lapse of two years before our narrative begins had sufficed to make Mr. Hugh Manesty what he had always been in heart and soul, a true and finished gentleman.

He clung, however, to the desk; habitual reverence of his uncle, who possessed that which Kent says he saw in the face of Lear—"command,"—made him fear to disclose

a secret to one from whom he knew it would meet neither sympathy nor respect.

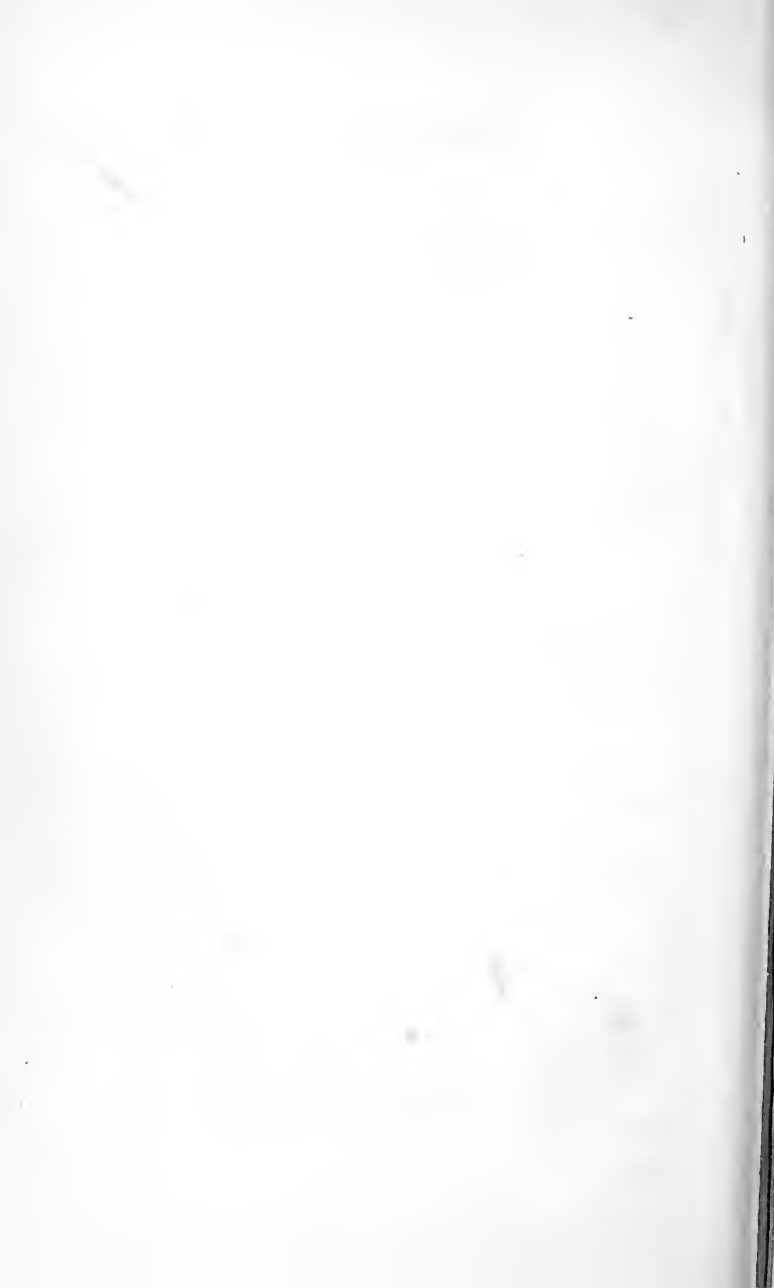
No two men could be more different than Sir Hildebrand and his uncle. The baronet hated the merchant, because he was a merchant, because he was of humble origin in the county, because he was a Whig, because he was a dissenter, and, worse than all, because he was rich, and his creditor. The merchant, as far as his time allowed him, hated the baronet, because he was an aristocrat, because he was a Tory, because he was a high-churchman, because he was an embarrassed man, and his debtor. A marriage would have been spurned by both sides as totally disproportioned, if it had been suspected; but on the part of Sir Hildebrand, he no more dreamt that his

daughter would bestow a thought upon a man engaged in trade, than she would upon the groom that rubbed down her horse; and John Manesty never having entered Eagle-mont, Sir Hildebrand's seat, had no opportunity of observing the conduct of the young people to each other.

He therefore contented himself with remonstrating against the visits of his nephew to Sir Hildebrand, and the striking and visible alteration in that youth's bearing. At first, he was inclined rigidly to forbid the connexion altogether; but when he observed the pain that it gave, and reflected on the constant attention, kindly manners, and willing obedience of the handsome youth before him, he gave a gruff consent. Perhaps at heart he felt no real objection

that the heir of his fortunes should be taken up as a companion by the aristocracy of his native county.

Thus the matter remained; and young Manesty and Mary Stanley continued to hope on in secret, scarce knowing whether they loved or not.



CHAPTER IV.

A POINT OF CONSCIENCE—MAY AN ANTI-SLAVERY
ADVOCATE HOLD SLAVES?—THE ASSEMBLY OF
THE GIFTED—THE POINT DECIDED.

THIS affair gave John Manesty no small trouble; but a greater was in store for him. The carelessness of young Hibblethwaite so managed—or rather mismanaged—the West Indian business, to which we have alluded, that it fell into great disorder; one of the consequences of which was, that the only

means of liquidation for a very considerable sum of money, was the foreclosing of a mortgage, and the taking possession of a large plantation by the firm of Manesty. But this was a most puzzling predicament: on the one part, the sum was too large to be conveniently dispensed with; on the other, the conscientious scruples of the anti-slavery advocate opposed his employment of slave-labour, or enjoyment of its produce.

“ Even humanly speaking,” thought he, “ how can I remonstrate with my brother merchants, if I myself deal in slavery as well as they?”

But that thought he soon rejected. “ Pooh—pooh!” he said, “ what matters it what other men think, if I can reconcile my conduct to myself! The real question

is, Can I conscientiously take possession of Brooklyn Royal? I own that I feel doubts and scruples; self-interest is a pleader hard to resist, and I can hardly afford to do without it. I shall consult others competent to decide in this case of conscience. I know that if I went upon 'Change, I should be universally laughed at, and told, with many an oath, that I was a fool. If I advise with the zealous abolitionists, why, they are so much pledged to their side of the question, that I can already anticipate their answer; and as none of them have West India estates to sacrifice, they would the more liberally counsel the sacrifice of mine. I doubt whether many of them would, in like circumstances, put their theories into practice. Consult the vicar---

ish! If it were a matter of fox-hunting, or a pipe of Port, I might then indeed consult Dr. Molyneux; besides, did not he preach a sermon the other day (Heaven knows who wrote it!) to prove that the blacks were the descendants of Ham, the son of Canaan; and that any attempt to emancipate them was flying in the face of Scripture, by taking off the curse pronounced by Noah upon his irreverent son—for which sermon the corporation voted him a service of plate. No; I will leave it to the ministers of the independent churches. If they say Yes, I will take this unfortunate Bahama property; if No—I will not!”

A solemn invitation to a great tea-drinking of the most gifted men for twenty

miles round was the result of these reflections. Thither came godly Mr. Goggleton, of the Sandemanians, of Shawsbrow; sainted Mr. Muggins, of the Swedenborgians, of Sawny Pope's Alley; the pious Zachariah Hickathrift, or Cuff-the-Cushion, already mentioned; the discreet Sanders Mac Nab, of the Scottish congregation by Goree Dock; Ebenezer Rowbotham, of Hale, called by his enemies Roaring Row, from the energy of his declamation, of no particular church; Samuel Broad, by the same class denoted Sleek Sammy, of the society of Friends, perversely called Quakers, testifying in Bolton; Jehosaphat Jobson, (his real name was Roger, but for euphony he had altered it to Jehosaphat,) of the Ranters of Oldham; the great Quintin Quantock, the Boanerges

of the Baptists of Bullock Smithy, and many others equally revered.

“Great,” as the Psalmist says, “was the company of preachers:” vast the demolition of muffins, crumpets, and sandwiches; illimitable the kilderkins of tea that were swallowed; and if the grace before the meal was short, its brevity was amply recompensed by the length of that which followed.

Besides these reverend men, there were none present but John Manesty himself, and his nephew. Hugh’s visits to the Stanleys had not increased his veneration for the holy assemblage by which he was surrounded; and as the business of the evening was about to commence, he rose to go away.

“I am of no use here,” said he, addressing his uncle; “you know my opinion already

—I am too young and too inexperienced to presume to offer a dogmatic judgment upon that which divides many just and honourable men, and my mercantile education teaches me to appreciate the value of the property which is coming under discussion. I shall only say now, sir, what I have said to you before, that if the case were mine, and that I had any doubt about it, I should have nothing to do with what might make it appear that I was not acting like a gentleman. I am not saying—far from it indeed—that your holding Brooklyn Royal is inconsistent with that character, but I think it might be safely left to your own judgment to decide whether it is or not.”

He left the room, and a groan burst from the congregation.

Manesty was evidently displeased. "A gentleman!—he has had that word in his mouth too much of late; I know where he picked it up, and must look to it. And yet"—some thought here appeared to be passing through the mind of Manesty to which he did not choose to give utterance, but he broke off by saying—"no matter."

"I do not like the word," said godly Mr. Goggleton, of Shawsbrow. "I never thought much of gentlemen,"—a class of persons with which, it must be admitted, the respectable divine, who had picked up his theological attainments while travelling as a tinman, held very little association.

"Of a verity," said Samuel Broad, who was a miller of Farnworth, "of a verity, it savours not of Christian humility to use

these words of pride. It shews that the bran of the old Adam hath not been blotted out, and the leaven of carnal self-seeking still keeps rising."

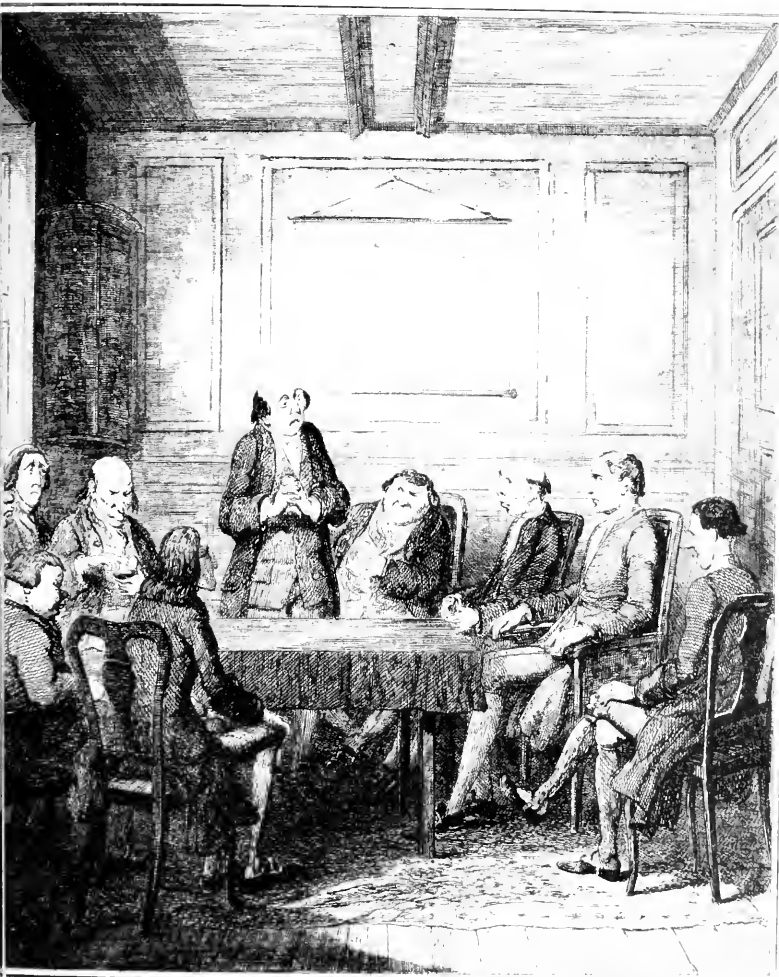
"For my part," said an Irish divine, who had been upon a visit to Mr. Muggins, at Liverpool, on a mission of a twofold spiritual nature, partly partaking of theology, but still more concerning the establishment of a trade in whisky, about that time beginning to be profitable,—“for my part,” said he, “I don’t like one bit o’ the word, and I niver did, and I wondher how them as pride thimsilves upon their birth and quality, should give thimsilves sich a name as gintlemin, as I have raison for knowing the biggest blackguards in the world (I mane the attorneys) call thimsilves

gintlemin, &c. &c., and cause had I to know it at the time when I lived at the back of the Poddle, when I used to be pestered with impertinent letters from them."

Many other observations to the same effect would no doubt have followed, but that Manesty cut the discussion respecting gentlemen short, from a wish perhaps not to speak ill of the absent. In few words he formally propounded his conscientious scruples, and for some minutes there was silence in the assembly, each waiting for the other to begin.

It was first broken by Roaring Row.

"As I said," bawled he, "in my sermon to the few believers in the benighted town of Hale, witnessing before the door of that Vanity Fair, which is called the Child of



George Cruikshank

The Assembly of the Gifted



Hale, the inmates whereof are delivered over to perdition for their wicked laws and abandoned customs, I said unto them who steal the carcasses of men"—(we pause to remark, that Roaring Row was by trade a butcher)—“and vend them in the shambles as if they were babes,—are they not all brethren? are they not all flesh and blood? It is true they are black; but I have yet to learn that the colour makes any difference in the cattle. Is there not a murrain in the land, by reason of this trade? Is there not a rot in the sheep-fold of England? Touch not it, John Manesty,—touch it not, pious John—touch not the accursed thing! It will be a canker in thy substance. The gain that thou wilt make of it will be loss unto thy soul's estate; nay, I have known

it to be ruin unto the body's estate. Do we not know that the prosperous slaveholder, Simon Shackelford, has been reduced to bankruptcy, almost beggary, by the wrath of heaven,"—and by accepting accommodation bills upon New York, thought Manesty; but he did not interrupt the sonorous eloquence of Roaring Row.

We, however, must interrupt it, lest by continuing in this strain we should be suspected of attempting to cast ridicule upon a righteous cause. It was advocated, no doubt, very often in a similar strain and style with that which we have here attributed to the bawling butcher, and supported also by men who may not uncharitably be suspected of hypocrisy; but we must not forget that the abolition of this truly in-

human traffic was urged by men of the most commanding talent and eloquence, the most undoubted sincerity, and the most untiring zeal.

In substance the debate took this turn— all condemned the system, in general, but justified it in this particular case; but none, except Mac Nab, who spoke of the expediency of not refusing the gifts of Providence, and the Irishman who, in a whisper, was rash enough to venture upon so dangerous a word as “humbug,” for which he was duly rebuked by the assembly, offered any distinct arguments to justify the anomaly of a saint being a slave-holder.

At last, after a debate which lasted more than an hour, during which he had been wholly silent, up rose Quintin Quantock—

the Boanerges of Bullock Smithy. He spoke in a slow, solemn, sonorous voice, with clasped hands, and eyes continually uplifted to heaven, and the strong patois of his native Lancashire rung musically in the ears of his auditory as these words issued from his goodly frame:—

“ This brethren, is a grave question; on one side are the earthly good, on the other the heavenly hopes of a brother dear unto us all. I shall divide my observations upon it into seventeen heads. First—Is making slaves a sin? Secondly—Is trading in slaves a sin? Thirdly—Is buying slaves a sin? Fourthly—Is holding slaves a sin? I shall take these four together. First, as to making slaves: that clearly is a sin; for as godly Zachariah Hickathrift, whom I

rejoice to see here present, well remarked in his sermon, which he hath since printed and distributed among the churches——”

Here old Cuff-the-cushion, who had been asleep for the last quarter of an hour, woke up, and said, “I have six copies of it in my pocket, and the price is only sixpence the single copy; but any quantity may be had for distribution at the Richard Baxter’s Head, in Whitechapel, at two guineas the hundred.”

“Let him send two hundred to-morrow,” said John Manesty.—“Proceed, Quintin.”

“As the godly Zachariah said,” continued Quintin, evidently piqued at the unexpected slice of luck he had procured for his rival divine—“in his sermon, which does not appear to have had the sale which it

merited,—to prove making slaves a sin is wasting words, and upon that head, therefore, I shall dilate no further. Secondly, if making slaves be a sin, assuredly trading in them must be a sin also; for slaves would not be made unless they were intended to be traded in. For what does a man make anything for, but to trade in it?”

“That’s a very judicious observation,” said Mac Nab, taking a pinch of snuff.

“Very much so,” agreed the Rev. Phelim O’Fogarty.

“In the third place,” went on the orator of Bullock Smithy, “if trading in slaves be a sin, buying them must certainly be so; for who would trade if there was nobody to buy? If, then, making, trading

in, and buying slaves be sinful, the question we have next to discuss is, whether holding them be sinful; and this can be conveniently divided into about fifteen heads—all of which I shall proceed to discuss. Before, however, going into a minute consideration of the subject, I shall pay a short attention to the matter immediately before us. Slaves are—the sin be on the head of those that made them so,—but as they are, they must live—how live? By being fed on the fruits of the earth, or in the manner of all mankind. Whence comes the food? From their own labour: true; but if no field for that labour be supplied them, starvation ensues. Set them free to work, and there is no field. What, then, shall we say? Are they to be made free, to

starve? God forbid! The law is bad, but it is the law; change the law, and things will be otherwise. Meanwhile the African is indeed injured, not having food to eat."

Here broke a sigh of sympathy from the bowels of mercy of sleek Samuel Broad. This last stroke of the pathetic deeply affected him and many other of the preachers, who were reminded, by a savoury smell that permeated the apartment, that they were, in probability, kept from something more substantial by this the first of the fifteen divisions of the question of which Quintin Quantock was now hot in pursuit.

"As I heard Mr. Clarkson say," continued Quintin, "the injured African cries to us, 'Am I not a man and a brother?' so, I say, would not the African slave, in

the unfed situation which I have endeavoured to describe, say, ‘Am not I a man with an appetite?’” (Here followed what, in the French newspaper reports, is called a sensation.) “Retain, therefore, thy slaves, John Manesty!—John Manesty, thy slaves retain!” (and he smote the table as he said it.) “Take them, as Philemon was told to take Onesimus. John Manesty, take thy slaves! not as servants, but above servants—as brethren beloved! The only part which is to be discussed is that which has been urged with so much ability by that gifted man, the righteous Rowbotham, which is, ‘Touch not the accursed thing!’ and to this I shall devote a few preliminary observations, previous to entering on the first of the fifteen divisions of my fourth great

head. Nobody knows better than that great pillar of light, that it was Achan, the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, who took of the accursed thing,—and what was it? a goodly Babylonish garment, two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold of fifty shekels. And, you will ask, is not the taking of a man worse than the taking of a man's garment? Is not the life of a man worth more than those shekels of silver and gold, which, at the present time, would be about——”

“ A hundred and twenty-five pounds,” said Manesty, somewhat impatiently. “ Proceed!”

“ I have seen six men, and good weight, too, sould for just that money!” murmured the Rev. Phelim O'Fogarty.

“ I say,” continued Quintin, raising his voice, “ that man is worth more than man’s garment—man’s life more than shekels of the tested silver and gold. But it was not for the taking the garment that Achan, the son of Carmi, perished,—a garment for which, perhaps, our friend, Muggins, here would not give three and sixpence, at his shop in Whitechapel”—[this playful allusion to the profession of the reverend divine, who kept an old-clothes shop, in his temporal moments, excited, as it was intended to do, a general smile]—“ but for the silver and the gold; for it was said (Joshua, chap. vi., v. 19,) ‘ All the silver and gold and vessels of brass and iron are consecrated to the Lord; they shall come into the treasury of the Lord.’ By the sin of Achan,

part of them were prevented from coming there—*that* is the accursed thing, and such is the doctrine of all the churches. Now, righteous Rowbotham,” (and here the words of the Rev. speaker fell from his lips like oil and honey, his voice was subdued, and his half-shut eyes resting with holy fervour and friendship on the glowing nose of the righteous Rowbotham,) “are the slaves in the hands of John Manesty, in this sense—in the true sense of the text, taken with the context—are they the accursed thing?—are they kept away from the treasury of the Lord? No. Is the gold and the silver procured by their labours to be deducted from that treasury? No. Is there no difference between Tom Tobin, who, like the railing Rabshakeh, abused me, even me! in

the market-place of Stockport, last Tuesday, when with vile tongue, he called me an ancient hypocrite——”

“ Yes,” whispered Muggins, who had not enjoyed the joke at his shop, “ he called him an old humbug.”

“ Tom Tobin, who would waste his ill-gotten wealth in ways of evil, and John Manesty, who will devote it to good purposes—who will found chapels, of various denominations—who will send out zealous missionaries, clothed and fed and paid, for the promotion of religion, and will sweeten the churches from the sugar-cane of his bounty. Shall not, then, John Manesty hold these slaves, and hold them for the church and its chosen vessels? Yea, I say

unto thee, righteous Rowbotham—even unto thee—he shall!”

The eloquence of this appeal, especially of its latter part, seemed to produce entire conviction in the minds of his auditory, and even the disapproving voice of Roaring Row was lulled to the gentle cooing of a sucking dove. The Reverend Phelim O’Fogarty drew closer to the host, and was heard to whisper that he had been in the islands, and found the climate to agree with him. Though the reverend man did not deem it necessary at that particular moment to mention that his experience of the West Indies was derived from a smuggling visit, he having run a cargo of returns for Connell, Driscoll, Sullivan, and Co., of Glengariffe, which, in due course of time,

was safely stranded on the hospitable beach of Dingle-I-Couch.

“Is that,” said Manesty, interrupting the preacher, “is that your sincere opinion?”

“It is,” said Quintin Quantock, with solemn emphasis, “mine in all sincerity and good faith.”

“May I, then,” asked Manesty, again turning to the assembled preachers, and speaking slowly and solemnly, “may I retain the plantation of Brooklyn Royal, and the slaves thereon, holding them as slaves, and using their labour for my profit, without hurt to my conscience, and sin to my soul?”

A loud and unanimous consent, in which the voice of the righteous rang forth pre-

eminently sonorous, was the instantaneous reply. Manesty gave one grim smile. What passed in his mind we shall not say, but after a moment's pause, he said in a firm and decided tone, "In God's name, then, do I accept the charge." And the preachers devoutly responded Amen!

"I will now," resumed Quantock, "proceed to the second part of the fifteenth section of my fourth head. In the first place, then——"

At this moment the hall clock struck eight, and Rebecca, punctual to the moment, according to the custom of the household, announced that supper was ready.

"In the first place," continued Quantock, heedless of the interruption——

"I think," said Manesty, rising, "my

reverend friend, you may defer the conclusion of this discourse until after supper."

"I only wish," said Quintin, "to press one point. In the first place, then——"

"Pardon me, my dear sir," said Manesty, laying his hand weightily on the preacher's shoulders, "supper may be spoiled by waiting, but no delay can injure the force of your arguments, or the eloquence with which they are enforced."

This remark was received with hearty approbation by the auditory, particularly by Broad, who, in spite of his professional quietude, had for the last half hour exhibited unequivocal marks of impatience. The preacher yielded to the compliment, or to the savoury flavour which was making its way into the room, and the supper

passed off in the way of all suppers; but of the remainder of the discourse of Quintin Quantock no man hath heard up to the present hour.

Manesty had obtained his point; the fiercest of the abolitionists had declared in favour of his holding the estate. He sent them away rejoicing, each with a sum to be distributed in charity amongst their several congregations; and if it be surmised, according to an ancient proverb, that charity began at home, let not the reader imagine that there was anything peculiar in this case, such being the custom long practised in many a church, of many an age, in many a country. As for Quintin Quantock, the faithful of Bullock Smithy! —alas! for the march of refinement, we

seek for that honoured name in modern maps to no purpose! It has vanished; the good old designation, combined of the beef that supported the hearts of the men of England in battle, and of her forges whence came the never-conquered arms which they wielded, has been blotted out, and in its place, with sorrowing heart, we find the mincing title of Rosedale—fit but for albums, where the only forgery is of autographs, or suburban cottages, into which the smell of beef rarely penetrates. Justice requires us to state, that despite the effeminacy of the name, no change has taken place in the manners of the inhabitants, which are still worthy of Bullock Smithy.

When the congregation, we say, of the Reverend Quintin Quantock, beheld their

beloved Boanerges clad in a new and goodly suit of glossy black, and mounted on a stout gelding of undeniable action, well capable of bearing its capacious rider, they would, if they had known whence came the raiment and the steed, have learnt that it is not always imprudent or unprofitable to give advice in conformity with the predetermined resolution of a wealthy patron.

CHAPTER V.

THE LETTER AND THE MYSTERY—JOHN MANESTY
DEPARTS FOR THE WEST-INDIES—A CONFERENCE
BETWEEN THE NEPHEW AND THE CLERK.

As usual, quietness reigned in the apparently immovable household of Pool-lane. The uncle pursued the unvarying tenour of his way. The nephew's suit with Mary Stanley appeared to have made no other progress than that of a more frequent dispatch of bouquets from Wolsterholme. I am sorry that I cannot afford my fair

readers a more earnest love tale; but I beg them to consider that it is ruled in all the books that the course of true love never doth run smooth, and that the most matter-of-fact writers of anything pretending to romance will not be able to find material for their trade, unless there be something to ruffle the waters on which the bark of the story is wafted. In this case there was nothing. "I loved her and I was beloved," might have been the motto of their ring; but having said that, all is said. What they hoped, it would be hard to tell; but there is always in such case an angel in prospect, who, down swooping from the sky, is at some time, not fixed by the authorities, to set everything to rights.

It seemed, in fact, as if nothing could

have disturbed the repose of that tranquil establishment. Fortune had decreed otherwise. One morning, when the London letters were delivered, amongst them came a missive, uncouth of form, and all but hieroglyphical of superscription. Manesty hastily opened it; and after the most hurried glance at its contents, flung it down again upon the table.

“Dead!” said he—“dead!—what a fool!”

“Of whom are you speaking, uncle?” asked Hugh, astonished at such unusual emotion. “Who is dead?”

“Dead!” said the uncle. “Yes, he is dead”—as he read the letter again, dwelling upon every character as if it deserved the perusal of a life. “It is no——, it is nobody,

nephew, of whom you know anything. We all must die. Let us hope that he died in the Lord. He was an old friend of mine."

He left his unfinished breakfast, and remained shut up in his private closet for more than three hours alone. When he emerged upon 'Change, nobody could have discerned any alteration in his manner, or conjectured that anything had occurred to derange him. The eye of his nephew had, however, perceived that something had broken in upon the calm current of his usual equanimity, and he referred in the first place to the books, to find if they contained the name of any correspondent whose death might affect the firm or grieve his uncle. He found none.

Foiled in this quest, he went to consult

Robin Shuckleborough, who, for more than thirty years, had been head clerk of the house, and who knew all the secrets of the establishment, and most of those of them who belonged to it.

“ Master Hugh,” said Robin, “ I knew your uncle before you were born, and he is not a man who likes his affairs to be pried into. But I do think that there is something in that estate of Wolsterholme that I could never fathom the bottom of. However, it is no business of mine; and mark you, Master Hugh, let it be no business of yours. I suppose somebody is dead of the Wolsterholmes, and that is the news he heard. He hated them mortally, and was raging enough about it, quiet as he looks now; but that was all before your time,

Mr. Hugh. I recollect your grandfather, in whose mouth you would not think butter would melt—he was so mild and easy—mad as a baited bull at Preston Cross, when Miss Hannah—don't be angry, Mr. Hugh—went over to Wolsterholme House. She was a pretty girl, then, and, indeed, she was not much more than a girl to the end of her life, poor lady; and your uncle was sent after her, and farther beyond than Yorkshire, for your grandfather sent him to follow her to the plantations, to bring her back—but what was the use? The young people were determined on the match, and they had it. A troubled man was your uncle when he brought you back, and nobody beside—and he took to business. Hard and stern has he stuck to it ever

since. We know, Mr. Hugh, who was that pet sister, and there is no use of saying who is that pet sister's son."

"My mother's life and death," said Hugh, hastily, "were, I believe, unfortunate—but of that I do not wish to speak. Whose death do you think has thus so visibly disturbed my uncle?"

"In plain truth, then," said Robin, "I know not. No name is in the books, the instant hanging of the owner of which could for a moment disconcert us. But passing from the dead, is no one alive who plays some discomposing part over the mind of some younger person connected with the firm?"

Hugh was two-and-twenty, and at two-and-twenty people will blush. So Hugh did.

“ Never mind,” said the old man, “ it is all safe with me; but I could guess something when Dick-o’Joe’s-o’Sammy’s-o’Jock’s was sent special upon Spanker, down to Runcorn, with a large bundle of the latest fiddlededees of ladies’ rattletraps hot from London; and when Jem o’Jenny’s was packed off at a rate to break his neck on the governor’s own white-legged nag to Wolsterholme, to ride fifty miles, and bring back some rubbishing roses, better than which could have been bought in St. John’s market for half-a-dozen pence; and when——”

“ Nonsense !” said Hugh, half angry, half smiling—“ nonsense, Robin—you are an old fool !”

“ At all events,” said Robin, “ I am not

a young one. And when," continued he, taking up the thread of his interrupted discourse—"and when the plum-coloured satin suit, which came down from Joseph Fletchings and Co., of Lombard-street, London, consigned, not to our house, but to that of a common carrier in Lime-street, Joe Buggins, and a notorious rogue he is, to say nothing of the one-and-two-pence extra it cost, which would have been saved if sent in the regular way to Pool-lane, besides the risk of the goods; and I thought——"

"And I thought," said Hugh, laughing, "that you need not have made any inquiries about it. But what can have so manifestly annoyed my uncle?" muttered he, as he returned to his desk.

A few hours sufficed to explain. On the next morning, contrary to the established custom, he was summoned before breakfast into his uncle's presence. Some vague and indefinite thoughts that this summons might be in some hostile way connected with Mary Stanley, filled him with dread, which was most agreeably dispelled when he found that his uncle's business related to Brooklyn Royal.

“ This West India property,” said Manesty, “ thrown upon me by chance, and accepted sorely against my will, has involved me, every hour since I was connected with it, in fresh and fresh annoyance. Here, I find, that my unlucky partner has so managed matters, that nothing but utter ruin is to follow, unless I

go in person to remedy the fruits of his absurd and unbusinesslike arrangements. Speaking to him, even if he would give himself the trouble of attending to me, is useless, as he is scarcely ever sober. Every one with whom he has dealt appears to be a bankrupt or a swindler. You know how his accounts stand in our books; and things are even worse with him than, for his worthy father's sake, I have let you know: what they are, then, in the islands, you may guess. There is, in short, no chance but my personal appearance and exertions to set this crooked matter straight. It is more annoying than you may conjecture. Here am I, Hugh, for one-and-twenty years living in Liverpool, and never during that time one-and-twenty days at a stretch absent

from it, and I confess that the idea of a West Indian voyage is anything but comfortable. I must do it, however, or look upon this unfortunate estate as lost. I start to-morrow evening for London."

"To-morrow, uncle!" said Hugh—"so soon?"

"Yes," replied Manesty, "to-morrow. I am afraid it may interfere with a certain fishing excursion; but that may wait. Now," added he, with great seriousness of manner, which an attempt at a smile had for a moment interrupted—"now, Hugh, my dear nephew, I can confide everything to your zeal, talent, and integrity. You will find full instructions in my letter-book, and you may implicitly rely on Robert Shuckleborough, who knows intimately all

the mechanical parts of our business. There are some private papers of mine, should anything unforeseen occur"—(he dwelt upon these words with peculiar emphasis, and, after a short pause, repeated them)—“should anything unforeseen occur, which will be found in my old oak cabinet in the garden-room at Wolsterholme. I shall go over there before I depart for London, arrange the papers in order, and leave with you the key.”

“Is not this, uncle, a sudden call?”

“A call, my nephew,” replied Manesty, “for a longer journey may be made upon us more suddenly. Would that I could as readily and easily prepare for that journey as for this!”

A silence followed on the part of both—it was broken by the uncle.

“ Hugh,” said he, “ on your personal honour and mercantile abilities I can surely depend. From one besetting sin of our north country youth I know you will wholly refrain, and I hope that disgrace of any kind will never be mixed up with your name. I am not at heart as harsh as I seem to the world. I shall not, I trust, be unreasonable in your eyes. Let me, then, only say this—I am sure that every lady with whom you are acquainted is worthy of honour and respect, but there is no need of haste in selecting any among them as a partner for life. I shall be some months absent; you will give me your word as—what you called yourself a few days ago—a gentleman, that nothing of that kind is decided in my absence.”

The young man gave the expected assent with a tear in his eye, but with more softness in his heart towards his rugged kinsman than he had ever felt before. The preparations for departure were made in the same business like style as everything else, and when, in about ten days afterwards, the bonny Jane bent her bows from Gravesend, on her way towards Kingston, she bore upon her deck the unexpected freight of the portly form of Solid John Manesty.

“ So he *has* gone!” said Robin Shuckleborough. “ Manesty and Co. has sailed for Antigua—Manesty and Co. walking no more about Liverpool with his broad-brimmed hat, and snuff-coloured breeches! I was at 'Change to-day, and it looked

quite lonesome without Manesty and Co. At the stand, by the corner of the old window, where Manesty and Co. stood, nobody went up. I should not wonder if somebody went down. I mention no names, but many a bill is displaced when John Manesty's desk is shut. God grant that he has got safe to London—it is a dangerous journey—and got safely out of it, too—for it is a perilous place! It was the spoiling of Dick Hibblethwaite. Mr. Hugh, ten years ago, he was as good and as mild as yourself, and now what is he? Broken down to nothing. You would not take his bill at seven and a half;—to think of that, of a bill with the name of Richard Hibblethwaite written across it coming to that!”

“ I don't think,” said Hugh, “ that my uncle is under any danger, from the temptations of London or the perils of the way.”

“ Nor I,” said the clerk; “ but this I do know, that when the cat's away, the mice will play—and that, as I see your plum-coloured coat on your back, and your bay mare at the door, the sooner you are off the better, and I'll make up the books.”

The youthful merchant bit his lip, and, with a slight chagrin, seemed determined to convince Robin that he was mistaken in his suspicions, by returning to the desk and resuming his occupations. But the impatience of his stamping horse, the brightness of the sun—the—the something else beside, altered his determination; and to prevent the interposition of another change of mind,

he bounded hastily upon his steed, and in a few minutes lost sight of Liverpool, on his galloping journey towards the Dēe.

“ Well,” said the head clerk, “ I think I may shut up shop, too. The old bird is flown after merchandise, which is one species of roguery—the young bird is hawking after love, which is another species of roguery. There is no roguery in my going to smoke a pipe with old Will Hicklethorp: he and I have smoked together for more than five-and-thirty years, and neither of us can recollect that either he or I was in love. I wish, after all, that Solid John was back again. I am too old for young masters, though Hugh is a good and kind lad indeed. But,” continued he, “ he will never be able to handle the firm like our present com-

mander. He's the man, Will, for doing business; and sorely will Liverpool miss him the day he goes."

These last sentences were addressed to his old friend Hicklethorp, who, having a great talent for silence, made no reply or observation in return. Robin Shuckleborough having duly hummed the following lines—

“ Tobacco is an Indian weed,
Springs up at morn, cut down at eve—
Think of this when you smoke tobacco,”—

toddled off from his strong-smelling room of revelry in Juvenal-street, to dream over the events, the whiffs, and the glasses of the day in his residence, located in one of those queer quarters which have since been metamorphosed into the name of Toxteth Park.

CHAPTER VI.

A DISSERTATION ON COCKING—WITH A COCK-FIGHT
UNDER PECULIAR CIRCUMSTANCES—LANCASHIRE
GENTLEMEN AT FEAST AND TOURNEY.

“ The mains are fought and past,
And the pit is empty now;
Some cocks have crow'd their last,
And some more proudly crow !
In the shock
Of the world, the same we see,
Where'er our wand'rings be—
So here's a health to thee,
Jolly cock !”

SUCH were the sounds that rang from the
Bird and Baby of Preston, at about noon
of a fine July day, some eighty years ago.

Loud was the chorus, and boisterous the laughing which attended this somewhat quaint expression of cocking morality. The company to whom it was sung, filled bar, parlour, tap, outhouse, gallery, porch,—all the house in fact,—for it was a meeting assembled to determine the last great Preston match of North Lancashire against South. All the cockers of the north were there; at six in the morning the cocks were in the pit; and by eleven, all was decided. Undoubted pluck had been shewn in byes and mains on the part of the cocks, and much money had changed hands on the part of their backers.

We might easily occupy the time of our readers by detailing the conversation during the eventful moment of the contest, but it

would afford very little variety beyond the usual growling of losers and exultation of winners, whatever the game may be, both expressed in the most intelligible and emphatic language, blended with admiration of the gameness or contempt of the dunghillhood displayed by the various black lackles and ginger piles "engaged in feathery fight," and mixed up with comments on the ability, dexterity, and honesty, or the want of those qualifications, displayed by feeders and setters, delivered in a style which was more distinguished for candour than politeness.

Milton declines entering on the details of the wars of the Heptarchy, on the ground that they are no better worth describing than the skirmishes of kites and crows.

Fortified by so great an authority, we too decline chronicling the skirmishes of other pugnacious fowl, trained to war by the sturdy and unsaxonized descendants of the Offas and Pendas in their ancient realm under the dynasty of Hanover. Be it observed, that we are not pronouncing a magisterial opinion in disparagement of this venerable diversion.

“ If the rust of time can hallow any sport, that which we are now entering on (cocking) is in full possession of this precious bedeckment. It is indeed so old, that we hardly know from whence to derive its origin. Asia has, however, the credit of first fostering it; and it seems to have been cultivated by the natives among their earliest games. The first records of China

note it: in Persia it was early encouraged, in conjunction with hawking and quail-fighting; nor was it to be wondered, that as man became belligerent, he would, in order to extend his conquests, commence his education by observing the offensive and the defensive operations of animals, thereby the better to regulate his own.

“ When Themistocles was engaged in warfare with the Persians, he was struck with admiration at the bravery and perseverance displayed in the battle between the cocks of that people, which was such as to occasion him to exclaim to his admiring army: ‘ Behold, these do not fight for their household gods—for the monuments of their ancestors—not for glory—not for liberty, nor for the safety of their children, but

only because the one will not give way unto the other.' This so encouraged the Grecians, that they fought *gallantly*," [Johnson did not suspect how etymologically precise was the word on which he stumbled,] "and obtained the victory over the Persians, upon which cock-fighting was by a particular law ordained to be annually practised by the Athenians. The inhabitants of Delos were great lovers of the sport; and Tanagra, a city of Bœotia, the island of Rhodes, Chalcis in Eubœa, and the country of Media, were famous for their generous and magnanimous race of chickens, and it does appear that they had some peculiar method of preparing the birds for battle. Cock-fighting was an institution partly political in Athens, and was continued there for the

purpose of improving the seeds of valour in the minds of their youths; but it was afterwards perverted and abused, both there and in other parts of Greece, to a common pastime and amusement, without any moral, political, or religious intention, as it is now followed and practised amongst us."

We must not pass off all this learning upon our readers as our own; we have taken it from Johnson's Sporting Dictionary—a grand repertory of everything that a sportsman can desire—or rather, if we must deal upon the square, at second-hand from Delabarre Blaine's Encyclopædia of Rural Sports, one of the most beautiful, exact, copious, and interesting books in the language. Let, then, the admirers of cocking shelter themselves under the authority of

Themistocles, whose panegyric on the wars of cocks might, with much propriety, be transferred to the wars of nations, who seldom engage in them for any real advantage to themselves, “but only because one will not give way to the other,”—of the Medes and the Persians, the Delians and Tanagrians, and the various dwellers in the several isles and cities, empires and continents, above recounted. They may console themselves, also, with the countenance of Henry the Eighth and James the First, of good Queen Bess (against whom “no true sportsman at least will let a dog bark”) and Roger Ascham, and others enumerated in the Encyclopædia; and we can, moreover, relieve them from the apprehension entertained by Mr. Blaine, that their “moral,

political, and religious" order has fallen under the grave displeasure of the author of "Don Juan." "It has been supposed," says Mr. Blaine, "from the often quoted words of Lord Byron—

‘ It has a strange quick jar upon the ear,
That cocking——’

that he disapproved of this sport, and that, with his accustomed causticity, he therefore disparaged it." The cocking here mentioned is of a very different kind: it is a cocking where an unfeathered biped is principal, not backer; and where the leaden bullet, not the silver spur, is set to work. To acquire a taste for this amusement, Lord Byron informs us that the ear must become "more Irish and less nice;" and, if

all tales be true, his lordship's organs of hearing never acquired such a portion of Hibernianism or nicety, as not to feel a most particular reluctance to be brought within earshot of that "strange quick jar."

Returning from our digression, we have only to record that, the battle being over, the genial spirit of Lancashire prevailed, and winners and losers sat down together, the one, to enjoy their triumph; the others, to console their defeat, over a most substantial dinner served at eleven o'clock. Start not, good reader, in the reign of the fair Victoria; for as the regular dinner-time in the country was, in those days, twelve o'clock, an hour's anticipation was nothing more serious than the necessity of an early visit to the opera, which compels

you to dine at six instead of seven. The company was mixed—groom sate with noble, squire with knight—for gaming of all kinds speedily levels distinctions; but it contained a large proportion of the aristocratic.

Preceding governments had looked upon meetings, under any pretence, of the northern gentry, with dislike and apprehension; but when fear of the Pretender had vanished, this feeling began to pass away. Still, however, if anything of a political kind was suspected, their assemblages were discountenanced; and the only *réunions* on which they ventured were those connected with the sports of the field; and even these were considered by the more zealous partisans of the house of Hanover, to be well worthy of vigilant attention, as being nothing more

than pretexts for bringing together the yet unshaken traitors, waiting their time for the triumph of Jacobitism.

Such was not the case in the cocking-match with which we are now engaged; if any Jacobites were present, they confined their manifestation of feeling amid their own select sets to the mysterious toast-drinking, and the significant nods, shrugs, and winks, which formed the main support accorded to the "cause" by its partisans from the day that Charles Edward fled from Culloden, to its final extinction by a natural death, symptoms of the rapid approach of which were strongly visible about the time of our story.

The singer of the song, whom we have unceremoniously interrupted, was Sir Theo-

bald Chillingworth, of Chillingworth in the Wold, a baronet of an ancient Catholic family, who, like many of his creed, had recently taken the oaths to George III.; a step which deeply grieved and much scandalized his former friends, but was excused by Sir Theobald on the ground of expediency. He took the oaths, he said, to put his estates out of jeopardy; and in order, we presume, to shew how prudent was his regard for the preservation of his property, he instantly went upon the turf.

The time had passed when his manors ran any danger from the state or the law; it is needless to say that the reverse was the case among his new associates. In short, he got rid of some fifty thousand pounds in the first three years; but he still

kept up his stud, maintaining, with many a round oath, that as his grandfather had left him so many slow old aunts to provide for, he thought it only fair to keep some fast young horses for himself. By pursuing this course, he quickly reduced a property of fifteen thousand a-year to something like fifteen hundred; but as the annuitant old ladies died off faster than he expected, he was now, in the tenth year of his turfism, still able to keep afloat.

He had that morning lost, what was called a cool hundred, upon cocks which he had declared to be invincible, especially as he had been let into the secret. If he could have heard the laughing conversation of the breeders on whom he depended, and who were then drinking in the porch, which

proved, amid many knowing winks, that the birds had been sold to him for the express purpose of losing this match, by trainers, who had indeed let himself and his friends into the secret, but unfortunately—on the wrong side!

“It is to be regretted,” says Mr. Blaine, “that even in this sport, as it was formerly in race-horse training, all was conducted under a veil of mystery, so it yet remains with the feeding and training of cocks to fight. . . . Each feeder, trainer, and setter, has his secrets, but whether they be ‘secrets worth knowing’ is not quite so clear.”

The makers of cock-matches have their mystery, indeed; it, however, does not lie in the feeding and training department,

being only a branch of that great mystical science, which long rendered the pit and the ring arenas of theft and swindling, and has at last marked them down as nuisances to be abated, and which is at present at work to produce the same catastrophe for the turf.

Perhaps this cool hundred, to say nothing of the half-gallon of beer he had swallowed in the course of the morning, may account for the sentimentality of his song, which, however, in spite of its "pale cast of thought," was delivered by Sir Theobald in a voice that drowned the Babel-like clamour of dissertation upon handling, feeding, physicking, sweating, sparring, weighing, cutting out, training, trimming, bagging, spurring, setting, and so forth, ringing noisily through the parlour.

“ The mains are fought and past,
 And the pit is empty now;
Some cocks have crow'd their last,
 And some more proudly crow!
 In the shock
Of the world, the same we see,
Where'er our wanderings be—
So here's a health to thee,
 Jolly cock!

“ When once we're stricken down,
 And the spur is in the throat,
We're surely overerown
 By the world's insulting note,
 Fierce in mock!
However game we be,
In our days of strength and glee—
So here's a health to thee,
 Jolly cock!

“ Then, when eyes and feathers right,
 And spurs are sharp and prime,

In condition for the fight,
And sure to come to time
As a clock,
Let us crow out fresh and free,
And not think of what may be—
So here's a health to thee,
Jolly cock!"

"I'll be shot," said he, as he concluded, "if I don't give up cocking! It's no fun to be done as I have been this morning."

"Give up cocking!" said a tall, thin, pale-faced young fellow, with somewhat of a small, soft voice, sounding more of London than of Lancashire—"never, Toby my boy! Once booked, booked for life! Didn't you know the last Earl of Bardolph? he is now about seventeen years dead——"

“That was in the year when I fought Broughton,” interrupted a gentleman, whose name, we regret to say, we cannot collect from any tradition or record of the time, but who was known among his companions by the cognomen of “Broken-nosed Bob.” The accident which gave him claim to the appellation occurred in a pugilistic turn-up with the celebrated Broughton, the bruiser—so were gentlemen of his profession then called—for which he gave Broughton the sum of five guineas, a ruffled shirt, and a gold-laced hat—receiving, in exchange, a dislocation of the shoulder, a sorely damaged nose, and what was, perhaps, a full recompence for all, an opportunity of telling, or attempting to tell, the story for the remainder of his life.

“ Well,” continued Lord Randy, not heeding the interruption—“ the old buck was my grand-uncle, and the family were duly stricken in grief at his departure. We all took leave of him in due form; for my part, I went through the ceremony with great pleasure, having no more pleasing reminiscence of my grim-looking relation, than his occasional bamboozing me with a long cane, with which he used to walk, if I ever crossed his path in the garden.”

“ I say, my lord,” said a gentleman, whose leading propensities may be guessed, by his being known in his own set as Swipey Sam—“ I say, my lord,” said he, stirring a bowl of punch which he had just brewed—“ I say, my lord, didn’t he leave you the Oxendale property?”

“ He did, Sam,” replied Lord Randy; “ the Lord rest his soul for it! as Sir Toby would say; and it has gone the gentlemanly road of all property—over the table at White’s! I mortgaged it to my father, and I call that a right good hedge!”

There followed a roar of laughter, at the expense of the Earl of Silverstick, the stiff father of the loose Lord Randy, who, wishing to keep the family estates together, saw no better method than purchasing, through an agent, all the maternal property inherited by his son, as fast as Randy got rid of it. It is perfectly unnecessary to say that as the earl took care to entail each estate as he purchased it, the agent and the young lord perfectly understood each other.

“ However,” continued Lord Randy, “ the

old fellow was heartily liked by all his servants and dependents.”

“ Here’s his health !” said Sam.

“ And Joe, the groom—who, by the bye, is the very man that keeps this house, and was then a younker—asked and obtained permission to see the old earl, as he lay upon his dying bed. The scene was, no doubt, pathetic in the extreme. Joe considered my uncle, in the language of the stable, as the way of getting on the road he was about to go. My uncle, who, of course, had reared Joe from his childhood, gave him the best advice to continue in the career in which he had been trained—the results of which you may see in Joe’s nose, at this minute.”

“ He is not a bad fellow, though he has

done me out of a dozen pieces this morning, —here's his health!" said Sam.

"Isn't this all true, Joe," said Lord Randy to the landlord, who had just entered with a fresh cargo of fluids.

"Ay, my lord," said Joe; "I think I see the old earl now, lying upon the damask bed, with the rich green curtains hanging over him, and your lordship's mother's family arms worked in gold over the bed-head, and a table by his side, with a prayer-book, a posset-cup, the Racing Calendar, and a tankard of ale, though, poor old fellow, (saving your lordship's presence,)" —and here Joe snivelled, and wiped away a tear,—“he couldn't drink it.”

“A bad case,” remarked Sam; “I could

almost cry myself. *Non fuit qualis*"—and he took a glass of punch.

"And his poor old face, God bless it! worn down like the edge of a hatchet, and his eye half-awake, half-asleep, and his long grey hair tossed over the pillow, for he was too much of a man to wear a nightcap; and says he—

" 'Who's there?'

" I says, 'I, my lord—it is I,' says I.

" 'And who the devil are you?' said he; for he had always a pleasant way of speaking.

" 'It is Joe, the groom,' said I, 'my lord.'

" So he woke up a bit, and he said, 'Joe,' says he, 'I am booked; bet any odds against me, and you are sure. Every race must have an end, Joe.'

“ And he strove to drink out of the tankard, but could not lift it. My heart bleeds to think of it this moment. So there were three or four nurse-tenders, and valy-di-shams, and other such low raggabrash about the room, for he had taken leave, as you know, my lord, of his relations, and would let none of them come any more near him; he turned these cattle out at once with a word, and away the lazy vermin went.

“ ‘ Now, Joe,’ says he, ‘ this is a dead beat, and there’s an end: I’m past the post.’

“ So I looked astonished like, and did not know what to say. ‘ But,’ says I, ‘ don’t give up, my lord; there’s a great deal in second wind. You may be in for the cup yet. I wish I could do aught for your lordship.’

“ So the old lord he once more brightened up, and says he to me, ‘ Joe,’ says he, ‘ could you smuggle a few cocks into this room, without the knowledge of Lady Silverstick?’—that’s your lordship’s mother, his niece.

“ ‘ Couldn’t I,’ says I.

“ So I slipped down, and brought ’em up in a couple of bags, by the backstairs—your lordship knows them well—they were the beautifullest cocks you ever seed, Sir Toby;—and I brought ’em into the room, as dark as night—nobody twigged me.

“ So his lordship strove to rise in his bed. ‘ It is no go, Joe,’ says he; ‘ but prop me up with the pillows, and parade the poultry.’

“ Well, it would warm the heart of a

Christian, to see the poor old lord how glad he was when he saw the cocks—Wasn't they prime! I believe you, they were, for I had picked the best out for his lordship.

“ ‘ Joe,’ says he, ‘ cocking is nothing without betting. Put your hand under my pillow, and you will find the twenty-five guineas that is meant for the doctor—have you any money, Joe?’

“ ‘ I have fivepence-ha'penny, in ha'pence, my lord,’ says I.

“ ‘ Quite enough,’ says his lordship. ‘ Now, Joe, I back the ginger-pill’ (and a good judge of a cock he was, almost as good as yourself, Sir Theobald) ‘ against any cock in the bag; my guinea always against your halfpenny.’

“ So to it we went; one match he won,

one match I won—one match I lost, one match he lost; and what with one bet and another, his lordship got my fivepence-ha'penny out of me."

"That was a cross, Joe," said Lord Randy.

"Honour bright, my lord, it was not," replied Joe, quickly; "for I was reared by my lord, himself, and I could not, when I once was in it, and the cocks did their work. So, when his last cock was crowing over mine, says he, 'Joe, you're done—cleared out!' and he took a fit of laughing—poor old master! it was the last laugh he had in this world! His jaw began to drop, and I got frightened, and I called in the valy-di-shams. Lord love you! how they stared when they saw the cocks dead,

and the old lord dying. They ran up to him, but he took no notice of them, but beckoned as well as he could for me; he took my coppers with his left hand, and scraped them into his bed from the table—as why shouldn't he? for they was fairly won—and shoved over the green silk purse, with his five-and-twenty guineas in it, to me. The guineas, my lord, are long since gone; but the purse hangs on the wall opposite my bed-head, that I may see it when I wake every morning. I would not give that old purse for the best breed of cocks in Lancashire, and that's the best breed in the world."

"You are a trump, Joe," said Sam, visibly affected;—"here's your health!"

"And then he cast his eye upon the

cocks, and the bird he had last backed gave one great, loud crow, and the old man's head sunk on the pillow, and he died."

"A noble end for your ancestor, Lord Randy," said Sir Theobald, half sneeringly. "How does your lordship intend to die—dice-box in hand, I suppose?"

"The less we talk of people's ends in this company, Toby, the better," replied Lord Randy; "an accident happened to a friend of yours in Carlisle, some sixteen years ago."

"I thought, my lord," said Sir Toby, angrily, "that subject was forbidden amongst us. My father suffered but the fate of many gallant men, in a cause which I would call wrong, or, at least, misguided."

“ I know well what your father would call you,” said Lord Randy, “ and that is, ‘ a Hanover Rat.’ ”

“ What my father would call me,” said Sir Theobald, “ I know not, but I do know there is no man here that would dare call me so.”

“ Pooh, pooh!” interrupted Sam—

“ ‘ Natis in usum lætitiæ scyphis,
Pugnare thraecum est.’ ”

Which some thirty years after the date of this quarrel was thus translated by Professor Porson :—

“ ‘ Pistols and balls for six!—What sport!
How different from, ‘ Fresh lights and port!’ ”

“ Toss off your glasses,” continued Sam.

“ Here, I give you a toast. Here’s ‘ the King!’ ”

“ By all means,” said Randy; “ I was at his coronation. Here’s ‘ the King!’ but not your King, Toby!”

“ If you say that again, Lord Randy,” said Sir Theobald, in high dudgeon, “ I’ll knock you down!”

“ That puts me in mind,” said Broken-nosed Bob, “ of the day I fought Broughton, when——”

“ Do you say so?” said Lord Randy. “ Are you quite in earnest?”

“ Quite!” returned Sir Theobald.

“ Then,” said Lord Randy, rising, glass in hand, but still in an attitude of defence, “ just for the sake of seeing how you will set about doing that, Toby, my friend, I





George Cruikshank

Dick Gibblethwaite interrupting the fight between Lord Randy
and Sir Theobald Chillingworth

give 'the King, and not your King,' Sir Theobald Chillingworth!"

Down went the contents of the glass, and, in a moment after, down went the viscount. Sir Theobald was as good as his word.

Though his lordship's appearance, compared with that of the heavy Lancashire squires about him, was what, if they had known the word, they would call effeminate, he was up in an instant, and ready for the contest. The delight of the polished company was intense.

"A ring, a ring!" shouted Sam; "and here's the health of the best man!"

"On the day that I fought Broughton," said Broken-nosed Bob, pushing into the circle; but the rest of his remark was

lost, for hits were rapidly interchanged, and in the rally, Sir Theobald went down.

“Come,” said he, on getting up again, “as we are in for it, let us settle how we are to fight. In the good old manner of Lancashire, or the new-fangled fashion which has come from London?”

“Any way you like,” replied Lord Randy.

“Up and down,” said Sir Theobald, “rough and tumble, in-lock and out-lock, cross-buttock and——”

“Any way you like, I say, and do your damn'dest, I am ready for you.”

Such were the manners of the sporting classes of Lancashire, of all ranks, within the memory of man. The viscount or the baronet, in London or in Paris, would, without reluctance, have drawn the small-

sword, or cocked the pistol to avenge a blow; in their own native shire, they considered it more manly to clench the dispute by the arms which nature gave them; and the public opinion of the circle by which they were surrounded, infinitely awarded the preference to the direct personal conflict, as the surest test of proving which was the better *man*. It is no part of our province to decide whether the pistol or the fist is the more rational instrument to assert a claim to the title of *gentleman*.

The combatants went to work in earnest. We confess ourselves incompetent to describe, in proper scientific phraseology, this pugilistic encounter throughout its further progress, or detail the incidents which gave such unfeigned delight to the spectators;

still more do we regret that we cannot express that delight in the ancient dialect used by the gentlemen themselves. But we know enough of the *lingua Lancastriensis* to render us scrupulous of attempting an imitation, which we are conscious would be a failure. It is a good, solid, dialective variation of the Anglo-Saxon, which should not be spoiled by the mimicry of an intruder. Hear it in Oldham or Ashton-under-Lyne, the chief and yet uncivilized capitals of this fast-shrinking tongue; or read it in the works of honest Joe Collier, who has, under the name of Tim Bobbin, imperishably recorded the adventures of Tummas and the kindness of Meary. In not more, but less vernacular English, we shall proceed to tell our tale.

“ Goodness me ! ” said Joe, the landlord, rushing in—“ here’s a to-do. My lord! my lord!—Sir Toby! Sir Toby!—Mr. Robert!—Sam!—everybody! Is this a thing—no, no ! ”

“ No interruption, Joe, ” said Broken-nosed Bob, who was holding the bottle for Sir Theobald; “ on the day I fought Broughton, I would not have—— ”

“ Good God! My lord! Sir Theobald!—Sir Theobald! my lord! Will nobody part? I wish I could see the face of Gallows Dick ! ”

“ Wished in good time, Joe ! ” said a smart young fellow, in top-boots, round frock, and laced cocked-hat, who came riding into the yard upon a bright chesnut mare, small in her proportions, but evi-

dently of first-rate blood, bone, and sinew. “Wished in good time, Joe! for here’s the man whom you invoke by that complimentary title. What’s the row? What! Tickletohy, my baronet—what! my long viscount, is this the way you settle your bets with one another at the Bird and Baby? Will you, lout, take the mare?—softly, there—softly, Jessy! Now then, gentlemen!” and he jumped into the ring.

Both combatants, on seeing the well-known slight and agile figure of this half-jockey, half-gentleman, made a pause, taking advantage of which, he proceeded to rattle out—

“A bowl of punch and a couple of buckets of water! Work has been done I see—let it be enough for the day. What’s the fight

about—a wench, a horse, or a main of cocks?”

“ They are fighting about their grand-fathers,” said Sam; “ *genus et proavos et quod non fecimus ipsi*. Had not we better, Dick, adjourn to the tap, and look after *quod facere possumus?*”

“ Randy, Randy!—Toby, Toby! stuff—stuff! My good fellows, mere nonsense; listen to me. My lord, your father is on the road; I spanked by the old gentleman about twelve miles off, at ——, an hour ago; and as he was tooling it at the rate of five miles an hour, it will not be long before he is up. So wash the filthy witness from thy face, as I heard Garrick say last week in some play or other. And, Sir Toby, the high sheriff told me that Grab,

the bun-bailiff, would be after you at this cocking match to-day, which was one of the reasons why Sir Launcelot himself did not wish to come; and you know if you are once pinned now, it's all up with the bets on the Leger."

Something in the eloquence of this light-weight orator seemed to touch the parties. After a few sulky seconds,—for neither had hit sparingly,—the bowl having made its appearance, the mist cleared away, and the conversation resumed its usual hearty and clamorous tone.

"A song, Dick Hibblethwaite;" said Sam, who had by tacit consent assumed the presidency of the board. "Here's your health, Dick; I've known you now for many a day, and I never heard of your refusing

a glass, or being backward in a stave. Sing anything you like—*indoctum sed dulce bibenti.*”

“ May I die of thirst,” said the gentleman thus called upon, “ if I sing a song or answer a health unless I am properly proposed in a speech”—a resolution highly approved of by the company, and, with unanimous vociferation, Sam was instantly proclaimed public orator.

Samuel Orton was second son of Sir Samuel Orton, of Ortonfells, who, after the preliminary passages of education, had entered a gentleman commoner of Pembroke College, Oxford, and there proceeding through those mysterious avenues that lead to the seven sciences, emerged, in due course of time, a master of arts. He had

taken some honours in his progress, and had imbibed a considerable quantity of learning, and a still more considerable quantity of punch. His collegiate date was about the time that Gibbon says the monks of Maudlin were immersed in Tory politics and ale, and when Gray gives somewhat the same account of their Whig rivals of Peterhouse. In both these exciting stimulants, as dealt forth on the banks of the Isis, did Sam deeply dip; and if he never wrote the "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," nor the "Elegy in a Country Churchyard," yet many a decline and fall had it been his lot to experience in his proper person, and many a maudlin tear had he shed over departed flagons in a country pothouse.

Sam, in short, had been destined for the fat living of Everton-cum-Toffy; but as the incumbent, whose succession had been purchased when he was seventy, had most unreasonably persisted in living on beyond ninety, Sam, though somewhat past thirty, had not as yet taken orders. He had, therefore, nothing to do but to cool his everlasting thirst with whatever fluid (except water) was at hand; and being of one of the best families in the palatinate, with sufficient money in his pockets to pay his way, endowed with perfect good nature, and gifted with the faculty of decided compliance with the frailties and foibles of every individual whom he chanced to meet, it was no wonder that he became a general favourite among the careless and the gay. He once

had been a tolerably good scholar, and "the scent of the roses would hang round him still;" for, even in the midst of his tipsiness, bits and scraps of classicality tumbling forth would still denote the *artium magister*.

"Men of Athens," said he, rising, with punch-ladle in hand, which he waved like a sceptre over the Lancashire squirearchy, "first, I invoke the gods and goddesses all and sundry; next, do I pray you to hear me patiently concerning this Hibblethwaitides, a native of the island of Liverpool. Born was he of parents who bestowed not upon him the gifts of the Muses, but those of Plutus, a nobler deity."

"Far nobler!" said Lord Randy.

"I drink your health, my lord," said Sam, suiting the action to the word.

“Forests and woods and chases they had none to give — battlements of stone none were his — tracts of moorland to him fell not any — and he therefore,” said Sam, taking another glass, and looking round slyly on the company — “he therefore never lost them. Member of an ancient commercial firm, Hibblethwaite Richard, as they put it in the directory first, and then, partner of the house of Hibblethwaite, Manesty, and Co., cut the concern, leaving to the middle member the disgust and disgrace of inquiring into the price of corn and cotton! from which time, he, no longer Hibblethwaite Richard, but Dick Hibblethwaite, or Gallows Dick, hath joined us, and become a gentleman. One blemish, however, not to laud him as a faultless character, which the

world never saw, my lords and gentlemen, he retained; the habit of paying bills, and looking generally in vain for payment in others—I therefore have great pleasure in announcing to him that he has lost this morning fifty-four pounds to my friend, Broken-nosed Bob, and of drinking his very good health. Richard Hibblethwaite, Sir, this respectable company drinks your very good health—*Potaturi te salutant!*”

“Potaturi te salutant!”

This is a fine old saying.

A dinner 20 of the 17th of Jan.
By a man who was in the potato
of the 17th of Jan.

CHAPTER VII.

A DISSERTATION ON SLAVERY—THE END OF
THE REVEL.

“YES, Sam,” said young Hibblethwaite, for he it was, the junior partner of the house, whom we have mentioned in a prior chapter, “I am very much obliged to you for the compliment—I don’t think that betting is worse thievery than merchandise. I have lost fifty-four guineas, have I? rather a bad morning’s speculation. How-

ever, that's all right. Well, it may be very pleasant, but I am sorry I did not stick to old Manesty, after all. You, my bucks, have here, in the course of the last couple of years, done me out of perhaps five or six thousand pounds. Much good may it do you! But that cool, calculating, canting, slate-faced fellow, did me out of fifteen thousand pounds in a single morning. He gave me twenty-four thousand for a business that was well worth sixty thousand; and that twenty-four thousand pounds——”

“Has,” said Sir Theobald, “in due proportion been properly laid out in taking care of us.”

“Well,” said Dick, “I grudge it not; have it among you, boys; but I do grudge

a sixpence to Manesty. I am told he is going to the West Indies, and I wish to God, Dick Hoskins may have him by the back of the neck; he'll shake the money and the methodist out of him."

"Dick Hoskins?" said Sir Theobald, "and who is Dick Hoskins?"

"Not to know him," replied Hibblethwaite, "'argues yourself unknown,' as the 'Paradise Lost' man used to say, when old Soap-the-Suds taught me that rubbish, in what he used to call his academy in Seacombe—not know Dick Hoskins?"

"I plead guilty," said Lord Randy, "to the same ignorance. Who is your friend?"

"My friend!" said Dick. "He is no particular friend of mine; he is the friend of all mankind. He is a slave-snapper on

the coast of Guinea, and some people in the West Indies—where the weather is warm, and they use hot language—call him a pirate. Am I to make a speech?”

“No, no!” said Sam. “You make a bad speech, but sing a good song. Here’s your health!”

“Well, then, here goes!” said Dick Hibblethwaite. Throwing his eyes up to the ceiling, and tapping the time on his boot with his riding-whip, he sang one of the old songs of the day.

“Well sung, Dick,” said Broken-nosed Bob, “and a right good tune. The day I fought Broughton——”

“You mean the day, Bob,” said the songster, “on which you paid Broughton five pounds for bestowing on you a well-

deserved thrashing; but if anybody wants to know what sort of fellow Dick Hoskins is, I can tell, for I met him to the leeward of the Keys of the Bahamas, six years ago, and a jolly day we had of it. Not to talk nonsense, boys, we all knew what he was. He was, and he is, a pirate—a robber on the sea—Lord Randy, just as you gentlemen of the Chocolate House, are on land.”

“Pass the personality,” whispered Randy, “and go on, Dick.”

“I think,” continued Hibblethwaite, “he is a first-rate manufacturer in his way. He doesn’t snap slaves, not he; my old partner could not at all accuse him of that. No; he waits lying quiet about Cape, in order to avenge the injured Africans, by seizing the vessels in which their captors have confined them.”

“He is a gentleman,” said Sam. “Here’s his health!”

“And having clutched the inhuman villains, he treats them with the tender mercies of making them walk the plank.”

“I say, Dick,” said Sir Roger Saddleworth, a huge squire, with thick eyebrows, red ears, and a mouth always open, “what do you mean by walking the plank?”

“A pleasant operation,” replied Dick, “something between murder and suicide. They run out a plank, about eight feet long, from the ship’s side, taking the larboard for luck, and a man is made to walk up to the end of it, standing over the sea. Then he is left to his freedom of will, for just one minute, at the end of which, if he choose, he may drop and take his chance of

the sharks; or, if not, two men-at-arms, standing at the other end of the plank, fire at him, and bring him down, and no mistake."

"And which," inquired Sir Robert, "is the choice usually made?"

"In nine cases out of ten, I understand," replied Dick, "the man drops in the sea. He hopes for escape, however remote the chances, and clings to the hope, until the shark snaps him asunder, or the gurgling waves keep him down. The pirates always prefer their customers dropping in the sea, as they think thereby the sin of murder is taken off their tender consciences."

"A sneaking end, after all," said Lord Randy. "For my part, I'd stand at the

end of the plank, and let them fire, if for no other reason but that of bidding them go to hell!"

"Taking the message there yourself, my lord," said Sir Theobald. "But what sort of fellow is this Dick Hoskins?"

"Why, nothing particular; not much taller than myself—a good-humoured, dare-devil, hard-drinking sort of fellow, with a foxy head, and an eye that would see from here to York Castle."

"*Di omen avertant,*" muttered Sam, half asleep. "Hadn't we better call for another bowl of punch; and pray, Gallows Dick, don't talk of York Castle, for our debts will bring us there soon enough, if nothing else does."

"When Dick Hoskins," continued Hibble-

thwaite, "gathers a sufficient quantity of blacks, or, as they call them in the business, the 'cattle,' he makes for the Mississippi, where he is sure of a market."

"Why not at the plantations, and sell them openly in Virginia at once?" said Sir Toby. "An uncle of mine has an estate on the banks of the Potowmac, on which he holds twelve hundred slaves of his own, and he buys and sells them without reservation."

"Because," said Dick, "there are persons in the colonies called judges and juries, who make a nice distinction between piracy and slaving; and as they would bring Dick's profession under the former character, it is probable they would suspend his labours, by suspending himself! But the

Georgia and the Carolina people are not so particular. As for hunting a vessel there, you may as well hunt a mouse upon Salisbury plain; the Bayons, as they call them, are scattered through the sea in hundreds, and it would take the British navy to follow a vessel. So Dick brings his goods there, and sells them to the planters on both sides of the river; and as the colonics are new, and hands wanted, he need never look long for a market."

"It must be a queer sight," said Sir Roger Saddleworth, "to see men sold at a market. How do they go?"

"By weight," said Dick; "I have weighed a good many of them."

"How do you sell?" asked Sir Roger.

"Just as you sell a beast in York Mar-

ket. The fair way is to say at once, 'Round and sound, a dollar a pound.'"

"How much is that, Dick?" said Lord Randy.

"About three guineas a stone," was the reply. "Thirty to thirty-five pounds an average man."

"A capital price," said Sir Theobald. "Let us sell Sam, he is asleep; or as Dick is growing prosy in his stories, let us enliven the day by putting up our relations. Here goes for Lord Silverstick!"

"You wont get much for him, if bought by the pound," said Lord Randy, smiling; "he's too thin. I know his weight well, for I've pinched him tight pretty often; but, by the bye, if you could catch him just now, and sell him with his coach and

six, and his little attorney, and the bag of guineas he has got under the cushion, you would not make such a bad bargain."

"You don't mean that," said Hibblethwaite, with some vivacity.

"I do mean it," said Lord Randy. "I know that he has at least a couple of thousand guineas with him, divided into those nice little bags, labelled with the charming inscription of—'£200' peeping out of their corners."

"I certainly," said Sir Theobald, "would like to settle a few accounts I owe Master Shark."

"And I," said Sam, "would like to settle some accounts I owe many other people. Here's bad luck to them—the dunning villains!"

The inferior portion of the company had, by this time—it had now reached three o'clock—thinned gradually away, overcome by beef, beer, and tobacco; and the parlour guests were almost alone. They too had, under the same influences, decreased to a small number, consisting principally of the gentlemen already introduced to the reader. Broken-nosed Bob was smoking his pipe in silence, ruminating, in all probability, on the day he had fought Broughton;—Sam had fallen asleep with his glass in hand, empty, however;—Lord Randy, all life and spirits, seemed as if he was just beginning to spend the evening;—Sir Roger Saddleworth, on the contrary, considerably muddled with all he had swallowed and smoked, looked, from having turned his peruke the

wrong way, as if he were about to close it;—Sir Theobald, upon whom no potation could by any possibility take effect, ready for anything;—and Dick Hibblethwaite, who appeared to have had a long ride, and was rather jaded; but he revived at the last words of Lord Randy, and with something like vivacity said—

“What is he going to do with all that money, and that lawyer, Randy? I hope it is for you, as that will pay me part of the eight hundred that are over due.”

“I don’t think it will come to me,” returned Lord Randy. “Dick, you have not yet forgotten the vulgarity of your commercial education. The money is for use; it is to complete the purchase of Park Holme, which I have directed to be put up, ten days

hence. He thinks I don't know who is to be purchaser, as if I and old Lanty Latitat, as we call him, had no communication on such subjects. This week's work, one with another, including this morning, has cost me more than half a thousand guineas, and that, you know, must be met."

"It is a pity," said Dick, "that so much money as that should be rolling along the road, with so very little care taken of it."

"That's the opinion of your friend, Dick Hoskins," said Sir Theobald. "Faith! your ancestors or my own, Sir Roger, would have had very little scruple in easing our friend's father of the responsibility of such a charge, and taking it into their own keeping in a strong castle."

"Ah, the good old times!" said Dick.

“But they rob nowhere now, except further up towards London, on the road, and in the ways of business; in these parts, at the Exchange of Liverpool, and all other exchanges that ever I was upon. But, seriously, I should like some of that money, Lord Randy, as I am very short, and I have lost fifty-four yellow-boys, to pay here,—pay one of the hundreds to-morrow?”

“Pay it yourself, to-night, out of the money that is in the coach, before it comes to me,” said Lord Randy; “for that’s your only chance of getting any of it. How far off did you leave the earl?”

“I should say, by his style of travelling—five miles an hour, and stopping at every inn—he must now be about three-quarters of an hour off.”

“Horse and away, then, my boys!” said Lord Randy; “you can’t do any harm by frightening an old fellow. I’ll ride the other way, for I can’t be in it myself, as he was my mother’s husband, whatever relation he may be to me.”

His lordship then went to the window, and throwing it up, said—

“Armstrong, my horse!” then turning round to Sir Robert Saddleworth and Sir Theobald, added, with a laugh—“Gentlemen, don’t disgrace your ancestors! and Dick, as a matter of business, I shall expect one of the bills back to-morrow, cancelled. Broken-nosed Bob, for due value of myself, Samuel the Thirsty, and other persecuted Christians, to your care I entrust little Snap, the attorney; give him what you

bought of Broughton, and remember the glorious day you fought the Bruiser!"

"On that day——" said Bob.

"No matter now," cried Lord Randy; "my horse is at the door. Dick, pay the bill." And thus saying, the volatile nobleman emerged from the apartment, and in a moment afterwards, the clattering of his horse's hoofs were heard upon the Northern Road.

CHAPTER VIII.

A DISCIPLE OF CHESTERFIELD—A HIGHWAY
ROBBERY IN THE GOOD OLD DAYS.

THE stately horses of the stately carriage of the stately Lord Silverstick were moving at a stately pace towards the good town of Preston. Preston itself, proud as it is called, could not have been prouder than the equipage that was moving towards it. The coach was heavy, square-cornered at the top, and conical at the bottom, hung upon

some indescribable frame for tormenting horses, harnessed heavily, and driven by a coachman, of whom a three-cornered hat, and a red nose, were the chief characteristics. The party inside consisted of a small, dapper, elegantly thin, and carefully-dressed elderly gentleman, Lord Silverstick, and his lordship's companion, a still smaller man, with a very weasel-expression of face, whose name was Snap, and whose business that of an attorney; he was his lordship's man of all work. There was a strong perfume of musk in the coach, and his lordship held in his hand a volume bound in blue paper, which, we believe, was Dodsley's last miscellany.

“As my Lord Bishop of Gloucester says,” remarked Lord Silverstick, “in his truly sagacious and erudite notes upon Shaks-

peare, 'The art of a critic, in some sort, transcends the genius of a poet.' So I, Mr. Snap, in my last conversation with my elegant friend Lord Chesterfield, remarked that *goût*, or as you, unacquainted with the language of the refined world, might call it, taste, shews itself at present far superior to the false and barbarous notions of a Homer, or a Shakspeare. The best judges——"

Snap, who, for the last fifteen miles, not understanding a word of the subject, had thought it better to be silent, now saw at last a chance, and chimed in,—"Lord Mansfield, my lord, and——"

"Ah, I know what you are going to observe," said the earl, smiling, "as Mr. Pope has it—

" 'How sweet an Ovid was in Murray lost.'"

But it was not of those judges I was speaking, Mr. Snap, but of critical judges, whose opinion it is that the *Henriade* of Monsieur De Voltaire, which commences with—

“ ‘ Je chant ce heros qui règne sur la France ;’

but it is needless to go on quoting a poem which must be engraven on the memory of every man of taste. I have just come from Leasowes, where I left the amiable Mr. Shenstone. He has put many beautiful things on his grounds——”

“ Three mortgages, to my knowledge,” said Snap.

“ I did not mean,” said the earl, smiling benignly, “ to allude to those temporary incumbrances, which are the fate of all men of genius ; but how beautiful are his inscrip-

tions! Dr. Hurd—he is the author of an Essay on Mutation, and between you and me—but do not mention it, Snap—is marked for a speedy bishopric, as a small recompence for his talents in orthodoxy—had some connexion in ornamenting these vistas with their characteristic inscriptions. Do you remember the epitaph on Miss Dolman?”

“I do,” said Snap, “perfectly well; but forget it at this present moment.”

“It is beautiful,” said his lordship; “Lord Chesterfield pronounced it sublime. I wrote it—Mr. Shenstone he had it printed—and I assure you it is much admired.

“‘*Heu quanto minus est cum aliis versari quam
tui meminisse.*’”

“Yes,” said Snap, “it is fine Latin. I

am pretty sure the passage is quoted in Coke upon Lyttleton."

His lordship looked with compassion upon his man of business. "It is not," said he, "in that celebrated legal work. As I was saying, the Earl of Chesterfield, who is the most elegant man in London, much admires Leasowes. Taste, my dear sir—taste is everything."

"Of course, my lord," said Snap, "I have not the honour of knowing the distinguished nobleman of whom your lordship is speaking; but I have heard that he is, in some respects, a dissipated character."

"My dear sir," said the earl, throwing a compassionate look on his companion, "you must make allowances for the different ranks

of life; as the bard of Avon ruggedly expresses it—

“ ‘ That in the captain’s but a choleric word,
Which in the soldier is flat blasphemy ;’

so refined gallantry must not be confounded with low intrigue, or the amour of a nobleman with the debauchery of a cobbler. A degree of refinement is now spreading itself through all ranks of life; and the fopperies of what is called religion, seem to be pretty well understood among those ranks that have a right to think. ‘If,’ as my friend Lord Chesterfield observes, ‘a gentleman brings superior skill or experience to bear upon basset or whist, such methods, whatever the vulgar may think of appropriating to himself the purses of the less

skilful in the less venturous, will not, by any man trained in the proper seminaries of elegance and refinement, be confounded with the vulgar——’”

“Stand and deliver!” said a sharp voice, accompanied by the music of a muzzle of a pistol, dashing through the pane of the window glass; and a smart and active figure galloping up on a light sorrel nag was visible to the startled gaze of the elegant earl and his companion, now quite awakened.

The dull fall of a postillion knocked off the leaders; the sudden jerk of the horses quickly pulled up; the rush of four or five horses to the door; the instantaneous flight of the attendants, sufficiently indicated that the Earl of Silverstick was now in the hands of the Philistines. Snap curled himself up

in an agony of terror; but to do his lordship justice, he did not lose his politeness, and scarcely his elegant self-possession, even for a moment. The door was now thrust open by a tall, stout fellow, who, without another word, seized Snap by the back of the neck, and dragged him out of the carriage, shaking him by the neck and throwing him on the ground, as you may see a Newfoundland dog serve a cat.

“You cursed lawyer,” said he, “I only wish the twelve judges, chancellor and all, were here with you;” with which indignant speech he flung Snap out into the centre of the road.

Lord Silverstick, somewhat alarmed at the fate of his companion, but still with perfect self-possession, drew his sword, but

an effectual pass was parried, or rather put by, by the riding whip of another brawny ruffian, and the light weapon taken instantly out of his hand. His lordship looked very pale, but still smiled; and endeavoured, though somewhat bunglingly, to turn off a fine sentence on the surprising company by which he was so suddenly surrounded.

“Gentlemen, your peculiarity of profession precludes the precision of etiquette. You want my money — it is under this cushion; but for rudeness there is no excuse. Use your victory with moderation. Lord Chesterfield, on the day I met him——”

“That puts me in mind,” said the man who had torn his sword from him, “of the day on which I fought——”

The door on the other side opened quickly—

“My lord, I must trouble you to step out,” said the dashing wight that had first come up, and this invitation was enforced by the click of a pistol-lock. The old earl stepped down rapidly. The money was taken from the cushion in a moment, postillions and coachmen tied together neck and heels on the coach-box, the earl replaced in the carriage with much politeness, and the principal thieves retired to consult, leaving the prisoners under the guard of one of their brotherhood, who had taken scarcely any share in these proceedings, apparently from a peculiar tendency to an oscillatory motion, which displayed itself on his advancing.

Some five or six minutes elapsed before they returned, during which period, in his

most Chesterfieldian phrases, the earl expressed his sense of the extreme unpoliteness of the whole proceeding; adding, however, epigrammatically, that the rudeness of the principle, so far as he was concerned, was alleviated by the politeness of the performers. This remark appeared to touch the mind of the worthy who had been left on guard.

“Have you anything to drink in this coach, old gentleman?” he said.

“I suppose my servants have not neglected to place something of the kind under the seats; but, to my own knowledge, I must confess I am ignorant.”

“What an affected old jackass,” thought the guard; “I never could have been ignorant of anything of the kind; but I may as

well try, and as the servants are tied, I may as well do butler myself." Fumbling about the coach, he soon found what he wanted. "Here's your health, old Silverstick," said he; "don't be down-hearted. Toss off this yourself."

"Permit me to request you will be so kind as to excuse me," said the earl, politely declining the offered draught; "I never touch anything of the kind."

"'Tis that that makes you so white and so thin," said the other. "Drinking's the only cure——"

"Touch not the accursed thing," said a beautifully loud voice at the coach window; "wine is a mocker—strong drink is raging."

And here a violent hiccup broke short the quotation.

Not a word more passed ; but Lord Silverstick's guardian discharged the contents of a pistol at the voice with an aim, which, luckily for the quoter of King Solomon, was very remarkably unsteady. It served, however, to change the interruption from a sermon to a cry for mercy, which, with the effects of the shot, brought the others of the party immediately round the coach. The *custos* of the party jumped out with the discharged pistol in one hand, and the bottle in the other. A single crack of the whip from the more active of the party sent the already frightened interloper flying at the best of his speed.

CHAPTER IX.

VULGAR ROBBERY OBJECTIONABLE—THE AMATEUR
HIGHWAYMAN TRACED — THE PEER DISCOVERS
HIS PLUNDERER.

OUR gentlemen of the road, having decided upon leaving nothing in Lord Silverstick's carriage that was worth carrying away, now hastened off to the "Bird and Baby," to meet Lord Randy, leaving their trusty ally, Dick Hibblethwaite, to watch over the fallen earl and his attendants, and in due season

to liberate them — gratitude to the son prompting this gentlemanly tenderness for the father.

A virtuous deed is rarely unrewarded; and accordingly Dick was duly recompensed, after the lapse of a few minutes, during which he was arranging in his mind the mode and order of emancipation consistent with his own safety, by an elegant dissertation in his lordship's best manner, on the necessity of observing the rules of Chesterfield in every pursuit and relation of life. He lamented the extremely un-Chesterfieldian nature of the *fracas*. The loss of the money, &c.—this he was too polite to express concern for; he only felt pained by the reflection that there had been so gross a deviation from those established rules of

etiquette which even that class of persons vulgarly known as highwaymen could never be pardoned for forgetting.

“Such a redeeming grace is there in the principles of that great master, whom I flatter myself I have the honour to follow,” pursued the earl, “that I am not certain but that a robber sedulously observing them, might so far exalt himself in the estimation of all cultivated minds——”

But here, insensible to the exhortation, Dick, who had liberated the postboys, unceremoniously interrupted Lord Silverstick, by announcing that his lordship was at that instant free to depart, and lecture on politeness in any county in Christendom. With one touch of the spur he was out of sight, leaving the earl to the contemplation of

another breach of etiquette,—which was, the deep sleep which had fallen upon Mr. Snap,—that gentleman having taken advantage of the discovery of a stray half-bottle of brandy, to drink, in one overwhelming draught, confusion to the robbers.

Roused by an intimation from his patron, that to the “Bird and Baby,” as the nearest respectable inn, it had become desirable to proceed, Snap in his turn delivered an harangue, anticipatory, in a very small voice, of the coming thunders of the law, which presently brought the party to the inn-door. Here, a sensation was instantly produced; the landlord’s profound respect for his distinguished guest being succeeded by a shock of horror at hearing the news of the robbery; of which event the ostlers

spread the exciting intelligence so rapidly through the house, that it penetrated like air into the very apartment wherein the *chevaliers d'industrie*, who had just before been joined by the gallant Dick, were festively assembled.

Consternation was the feeling, and departure was the word; but unhappily, Dick (such is the fate of good-nature) was recognised by his voice, while ordering his horse, by one of the ungrateful postillions whom he had stayed behind to liberate. To denounce him as one of the robbers was easy, but to obtain credence in this case difficult. The landlord was ready to swear to the honour of his guest; and Dick was not without many friends just then, ready to render him a similar service. The postboy

was therefore laughed at, and the gay party of horsemen took their departure.

But there was one person left behind—besides the postboy—who silently believed the tale, and admitted the identity. This was no other than that zealous person, whose exhortation to Sam Orton, touching strong drink, had startled the party on the highway, while the latter gentleman was acting as guardian to Lord Silverstick. It was Ebenezer—Ebenezer Rowbotham. The strong suspicion, once lodged in the mind of that moralist, was as good as gold to him—and like gold, not to be lightly flung away. First ascertaining the office held by Snap, and the connexion between him and the plundered nobleman, Ebenezer cautiously intimated the existence of a secret; but as

to the nature of it, indeed, the impatient and manifold questions of the lawyer elicited no explanation.

“Verily,” said the good man, “it is not for a minister of peace to create confusion and anarchy between the brethren on earth.”

A bribe, however, after a little decent delay, did its work, and the information given led to the landlord being summoned into the presence of the earl, his attorney, and his witness. From mine host, the inquirers learnt the character of the company and the events of the morning—involving a mention of Hibblethwaite, and eliciting an inquiry from Rowbotham as to his claim to the appellation of “Gallows Dick.” The reply in the affirmative to this query, was the signal for one of those vehement and

fiery harangues by which the distinguishing designation of the orator, "Ranting Row," had been so deservedly obtained.

Dick's enormities since he impiously quitted the fold of Seal-street and the firm of Manesty being duly celebrated, the host completed his narrative of the movements of his guests; and at its conclusion, he having intimated that the party of roysterers were even then at a neighbouring inn, (a fact which they had confided to him, that he might send Lord Randy after them on his lordship's arrival,) Rowbotham and Snap repaired to the hostelry in question, where by simply secreting themselves near the open window of a room in which a lively conversation was being carried on, they, after a due exercise of patience, in the

easiest and most natural manner in the world, became perfectly convinced that the gentlemen-revellers were the robbers of the earl, and that Lord Randy himself was not wholly unimplicated in an act of plunder, more daring, if not more direct, than earls usually experience at the hands of their affectionate and duteous heirs.

With this news, the respectable pair of listeners returned to the astonished and bewildered Lord Silverstick. That noble earl, however, hearkened to the unpleasant tidings with as much composure, and as conformably to the strict rules of etiquette, as the great Chesterfield himself could possibly have done; and then, by severe admonitions, and much more effective appeals to that sense of interest which was particularly strong in

both his hearers, he prevailed upon them to promise to observe silence touching this discovery, and to suppress all mention of the name of his son, then and for ever, in relation to so rude and vulgar a proceeding as a highway robbery.

Handing a gratuity to the good Ebenezer, he occupied his lawyer in drawing up a deed, which, when completed, gave to Lord Randy the formal and perfectly legal possession (if he should happen to get it) of that said sum of two thousand pounds, which it was pretty clear, would never find its way back into his own.

CHAPTER X.

AN INTERVIEW BETWEEN FATHER AND SON — DE-
BATE ON THE DIVISION OF THE BOOTY—FATAL
DUEL, AND FLIGHT.

By this time, Lord Randy, according to agreement made some hours previous, arrived at the "Bird and Baby;" but instead of the message which his flashy friends, who had flown so judiciously, had left for him in the landlord's keeping, that functionary, obedient to a command of the

earl's, apprised the new comer that a great nobleman was anxious for an interview with his lordship, and the next instant, a valet, not unfamiliar to his eyes, intimated that his father the earl desired his presence up-stairs.

As soon as the young lord recovered his breath, which fairly left him as this announcement entered his ears, he signified, with all the grace he could muster, his prompt compliance; and, ushered into the presence of the dignified author of his being, who received him with a stately coolness, he formally tendered his condolence to the earl on the unfortunate and disgraceful event of which he professed to have just cursorily heard below-stairs, adding a fervent wish that his lordship

would instantly suffer him to depart, that he might endeavour to trace the villains, and bring them to condign punishment.

“The only way,” returned Lord Silverstick, with amiable composure, and a bland smile—“the only way in which you can effectually trace the villains to the bar of justice, without incurring the degradation of a midnight pursuit, to the utter sacrifice of all personal dignity, would be by taking upon yourself the honourable duty of playing ‘king’s evidence’ on the occasion.”

Lord Randy, all things considered, put on a very creditable air of astonishment, touched with a pretty expression of anger at the unheard-of insinuation. He proceeded to descant on the topic of the wrong thus done to him by his revered parent, in

a manner so energetic, and with such a disorderly rapidity of utterance, that his noble father was truly shocked.

“Lord Chesterfield,” said he, quietly, “whose law is the true code of all politeness, never advocated force of expression or hastiness of language. I must beg you, therefore, to desist. I do not mind the denial of your guilt, but your gesticulations and rapid utterance offend me in the last degree.”

Lord Silverstick then explained how the tale of plunder had been overheard, and by whom—and the consequent necessity of the assignment (already effected) of the stolen sum to Lord Randy, to stop the loquacity of the lawyer and the saint.

“I would not,” said the excellent Lord

Silverstick, "have this affair transpire for the world. Apart from the robbery, and the immoral character of the parties, I should be shocked that my Lord Chesterfield should ever hear that you had selected for your companions such ill-mannered persons, the greatest boors in Lancashire."

Poor Randy, clearly convicted, could deny nothing; but listened quietly while the earl went on to explain that the two thousand pounds thus stolen, was a sum intended as the purchase-money of the estate which Lord Randy intended to sell—that he had designed originally, having bought the property, to return it as a present to his son—but that this parental pleasure he must now forego, as his agent was unprepared to meet another demand. His lord-

ship suggested, however, but in much politer phraseology, that Lord Randy should instantly set to work to secure to himself as large a share of the plunder as he possibly could; and then taking leave of his son, as Lord Chesterfield would have parted from his, announced his intention of departing in the morning on a visit which he designed to do himself the pleasure of paying to his cousin Sir Hildebrand Stanley, in Cheshire.

This meeting and parting were agreeable neither to Snap nor Ebenezer. The former, however, was comforted with the promise of a large fee from Lord Randy, on condition of prevailing upon the earl to complete the purchase of the estate according to the first arrangement; and the latter was soothed with the reflection that he was

pretty sure of obtaining a larger reward from Manesty, for his secret affecting Dick Hibblethwaite and his associates, than Lord Silverstick had given him for his silence. He determined, therefore, to sound Manesty on the subject, and with that laudable purpose in view, he started for Liverpool.

Before we can yet escape with the reader into other company, which is awaiting us elsewhere, we are constrained to follow Lord Randy on his prudent mission to secure a share of the booty—a share all the more necessary to console him now that he had discovered the melancholy fact, of which Morality, not yet in full possession of its estate, would do well to take especial notice, that, in assenting to the robbery of his father, he had been in reality the in-

stigator of a robbery committed upon himself.

On repairing to the appointed place of meeting, which he readily found the next morning, he discovered the party reviving after their revel of the night, and was received with a roar of welcome. They described the glorious exploit, and dwelt upon the golden gains with a feeling little below rapture. He applauded their spirit, their courage, their cleverness—vowed that if instead of coming of gentle blood they had all been born to be hanged, the affair could not have been managed better; and concluded by handsomely promising every hero in company the sum of fifty pounds, in token of admiration and esteem. But generous feeling like this is not understood

in all companies, and a scene of extraordinary confusion immediately ensued.

Let it be understood that this disorder arose not in any degree from surprise at his lordship's liberality, or reluctance to share the money which they had received as his agents; but from indignation at the insignificance of the per centage. Many mouths were open, but only one voice came forth. All in a breath asked him what he meant. Sam Orton, moved in an extreme degree by the audacity of the case, felt compelled to call for a tumbler of punch, and drink a speedy downfall to all monopolists. Sir Toby swore, Sir Roger stared, and Dick was quite positive that his friend was merely jesting—or had gone stark mad. In vain did all together represent that his

lordship had been perfectly safe, while they ran all the risk, and that whether they gave him a farthing, or a guinea, or nothing, depended upon their friendship and generosity—although they *had* arranged previously to present him with a round five hundred. This was in vain. Lord Randy reminded them in reply, that if he chose to give evidence, their necks were in jeopardy—informed them of the intended appropriation of the money, produced the deed of assignment, and argued at such length, that the day had drawn to an end ere the quarrel rose to its height. This came in the form of a challenge from Sir Toby.

Sam Orton, seconded by an extra tumbler of punch, acted as the second of the chal-

lenger, and Dick Hibblethwaite as the friend of Lord Randy. Swords were the weapons. They met next morning in an adjoining field, and the combat was long and skilfully sustained, until, at length, Lord Randy, pressed hard himself, but not desirous of such success, terminated all Sir Toby's follies, vices, and vexations, by running him through the heart. The poor baronet's death was instantaneous, but not more quick in coming than the consternation that sprang up among the surviving group.

In those days, duelling did not attract quite so large a share of public attention and anxiety, as in these later times it is apt to do; and a fatal rencounter would often happen without creating any particular sensation beyond the limits of the neighbour-

hood witnessing it, or the family suffering by its sad end. Yet all, nevertheless, agreed that Lord Randy's only safe course consisted in flight, and he himself was of the same opinion. Dick Hibblethwaite slipped his share of the now blood-stained booty into his hand, to meet present emergencies, and hurried him off to Liverpool, there to lie secreted until an opportunity for escape should offer. With the other second he remained upon the spot, to hear the coroner issue his warrant for the apprehension of the guilty absentee, and to put in bail to answer for his own part in the sudden and lamentable tragedy.

CHAPTER XI.

SIR HILDEBRAND'S GUESTS—PROGRESS OF A SILENT
PASSION—A RIVAL STARTS UP—TRUE LOVE'S
GREATEST DIFFICULTY TO HOLD ITS TONGUE—
SOLID JOHN'S RETURN.

YOUNG MANESTY continued, during the absence of his uncle, to be a frequent, indeed a constant guest, of the good old master of Eaglemont; Sir Hildebrand's attachment to him being strengthened by experience of his conduct and observation of his character.

But by one dweller in that noble mansion—so gossips, at least, would say—Hugh was invariably met with a still warmer welcome, though it never was trusted perhaps to words; and all might notice far more accurately that the beautiful Mary Stanley appeared to have no disrelish for the gentle but manly discourse of the youthful visitor. The baronet, little suspecting what other eyes were seeing, or fancying they saw, cultivated the young man's acquaintance; not dreaming, even, that any one connected with trade could ever conceive the idea of an alliance with his lofty house, but feeling pleasure in opportunities of patronising the nephew of one to whom he was under pecuniary obligations.

On one occasion, when he had joined, as

he frequently did in Sir Hildebrand's field sports, Hugh's horse stumbled and threw him. His hurt appeared serious, and he was carried to the hall with sorrow depicted on every countenance. As they bore him in, there was an arrival at the hall-door—a guest of some distinction of presence, who was warmly greeted by the sorrowing master of the mansion, and much less warmly—with marked coldness rather—even amidst the agitation and distress which the accident to Hugh had occasioned—by its youthful mistress.

The new comer, the first ceremonials of greeting over, inquired relative to the invalid; and on learning his name, an expression of anything but pleasure passed over his face. Having ascertained that the young

guest was related to "Solid John," the questions rather pointedly addressed were,—how long they had been acquainted with him, how often he visited, how long he stayed—and the closing remark, conveyed in a quiet and subdued voice, was, an intimation of his surprise that such a person should for a moment have been allowed to remain an inmate at Eaglemont!

The person thus arriving, and exhibiting with so little disguise his unfavourable opinion of Hugh, was Colonel Stanley, a nephew of Sir Hildebrand. Whatever sense of family importance might attach to the race of the Stanleys, was to the very full participated in by the colonel, who inherited besides, an aptitude for not under-rating in any degree his own personal merits. He

had but a slender stock of that suavity which throws such a grace on aristocracy; nor was his character or bearing rendered more amiable by his professional associations, or his pursuits in the gay world, which were of a somewhat bold and dissipated turn even in the first flush of youth—a flush that might now be said to have partially faded.

Colonel Stanley took up his residence at the hall; and if those people who always *will* be talking, imagined symptoms of attachment on the part of Hugh to Mary Stanley, they might have spoken freely, without any influence of the imagination, of the passion with which it was evident she had, in a very short time indeed, inspired the colonel. His attentions to her became marked and constant; and the military

lover had, it was quite clear, the favouring wishes, or at least the quiet approval of Sir Hildebrand himself.

But this was all. The decided coolness with which he had at first been received by the beautiful object of his adoration and his hopes, never warmed upon any occasion into cordiality; and formal politeness was, and promised to be, the only return accorded to his passion.

Hugh Manesty, in the meantime, operated upon, perhaps, as beneficially by the constant inquiries vouchsafed by Mary, as by the measures taken by the surgeon, recovered rapidly, and again made his appearance in the family circle. The necessary introduction to Colonel Stanley took place, and was characterized by extreme restraint and

hauteur on the part of the high-born officer—a manner which Hugh was not slow to observe, though cautious in interpreting.

The cause of the evident dislike with which he was regarded, soon flashed upon his understanding, when Hugh discerned the apparent object of the colonel's visit, and the designs which he cherished with respect to Miss Stanley. Something in Hugh's heart—a feeling not tinged by vanity or presumption in the least—told him that he himself, though he could hardly dare hope to be a dangerous rival, might nevertheless be looked upon as one by the restless and suspicious eyes of Mary's relative and admirer.

It was this discovery, and the surmise which followed it, that determined him to

be totally blind if possible to the cold indifference, or even the marked rudeness, of Colonel Stanley; and without forfeiting his own self-respect, to win the regard of others rather by the exercise of a superior sense, than an impatient and resentful spirit, in his unavoidable intercourse with his friend's guest.

Thus matters stood when Lord Silverstick arrived at Eaglemont, to gild the refined gold of the polite circle assembled there. The incident afforded a diversion for a moment to the antipathy which Colonel Stanley continued to display, and which soon settled with almost equal earnestness upon the earl himself, whose exquisite notions of politeness clashed fatally with his own, and threw into awkward relief his uncourteous and intolerant demeanour.

Lord Silverstick was too sensitive on all such points not to notice this peculiarity in the military member of the Stanley family; and was, for the same reason perhaps, struck with the true politeness and sensible spirit of Hugh Manesty, towards whom he soon evinced a partiality. This, on the other hand, had its influence upon the slighted son of trade, who, seeing the earl's good-breeding and complaisance to all, while they were particularly manifested towards himself, observed at the same time the peculiar foible of the old nobleman, and rather than hurt his feelings by needless contradiction, bent to the humour which he found amusing as well as amiable.

The good understanding between these two opposite persons, to say nothing of the progress which both had very palpably

made in the good graces of the fair creature to whom he was assiduously paying court, stung Colonel Stanley as often as he witnessed proofs of it. It inflamed his feeling of jealousy and aversion to Hugh, and gave to his jeers and taunts, when these could be quite safely hazarded, a sharper point and a more inveterate aim. He affected, where he could, to laugh at the "toadyism" of the young trader, and pityingly remarked that it was natural such a person should pay his court to a Lord Silverstick, with the view of obtaining a securer footing in respectable society.

The object of these insults was quite unable all this time to guess at their extent. What he knew of them he seemed totally indifferent to, choosing, in consistency with

his resolution, to avoid the colonel, and address him but upon compulsion, rather than by an open rupture hasten his departure, and doom himself to take a final farewell of the Stanley family—in other words, of kind, gracious, and enchanting Mary.

While he thus steadily persevered, it was plain that Colonel Stanley was, by his unscrupulous, yet often insidious, attacks on the young man, destroying every hope of improving his suit with Miss Stanley, while her sympathy for Hugh as naturally increased. Yielding to her father's wishes, and caught in the nets which the colonel was incessantly spreading, she was obliged too frequently to have her disagreeable cousin for her companion in her daily rides, Sir Hildebrand insisting upon retaining the

genial company of Hugh, who was rarely permitted to be alone with her for a moment.

Sometimes, however, to escape the colonel, she would propose to accompany the earl in his daily drive; and then it was that she never failed to experience a throb of inward delight, in listening to an elaborate contrast drawn between the un-Chesterfield-like rudeness of her cousin, and the polite manners of her father's young visitor, of whose striking resemblance to somebody or other—(the name, influenced possibly by some instinct or maxim of politeness, the earl never mentioned)—whom he had the honour of knowing in his youth.

More than once he cautioned her, in a grave but delicate manner, against thinking

of a union with Colonel Stanley, assuring her that Sir Hildebrand would never promote such an alliance if he knew it to be contrary to her wishes; and more than once, in trembling but yet earnest maidenly tones, did Miss Stanley assure him that her feelings towards her cousin had singularly little resemblance to those of love. It was for this reason, perhaps, that Lord Silverstick continued to suspect that she secretly favoured the inclinations of the colonel.

The good baronet, in the meantime, grew more in love with the design he had formed—the union of Mary with his nephew; and in one of his morning rambles, brooding upon the thought, with Hugh Manesty for his companion, he suddenly opened up his whole mind upon the subject to that agi-

tated young gentleman himself. Hugh, true to the promise he had made to his uncle at their separation, was silent—though his heart swelled almost to bursting with its precious secret—regarding his own attachment; yet, with parched lips, and in uneasy tones, he ventured to suggest that Miss Stanley, if undesirous of such an alliance, should never be coerced; and with an intimation that her earthly happiness might possibly be destroyed merely to secure her cousin's, excused himself from further converse on so delicate a subject.

Breaking from the baronet, to spare himself a further trial of his resolution, Hugh encountered Lord Silverstick. Strange to say, that nobleman was in search of him, intent on gratifying his particular dislike

of the brusque manners of the colonel, by engaging his young friend in some fair plot for preventing the match, unless, indeed, which he feared was the case, the lady was already entangled to some extent by her wily cousin. This fear disconcerted poor Manesty more than the hopes of Sir Hildebrand had done; and with less outward observance of the earl's maxims of etiquette than usual, he started off suddenly, determined to seek some early opportunity of touching tenderly on a subject now so openly spoken upon—of introducing it even in Mary's own presence, and to her ear only.

Nor—for true love runs very smoothly sometimes—was such an opportunity long wanting. The light air and tone which he

assumed, when the moment came and the subject was glanced at, could not for a single moment conceal the earnestness of the feeling with which he spoke, and which redeemed every word he uttered from indelicacy or presumption. By Miss Stanley, at least an equal earnestness was openly expressed, without the pretence of concealment—a bright flush upon her brow proclaimed her indignation that any idea of her contemplating such an alliance should have arisen; and the decision of her tone—most musical, but now not most melancholy to the ear of Hugh—sealed, beyond all question, the destiny of her gallant cousin and wooer.

The feeling of delight in Hugh's heart could not but lighten up his face. It flashed

at once into his eyes—and as those of Miss Stanley turned and met their expressive gaze, he felt that he had almost violated a sacred promise; while, so well did she understand that look that she almost fancied his voice had accompanied it, making the same confession.

Yet not a word was spoken; not a hint, not a whisper of what was doubtless throbbing in the hearts of both, passed between them; and Hugh departed for Liverpool, satisfied with the glory and pain of his silence, and caring less than ever for the contempt of the colonel.

His visits to Eaglemont were too welcome to Sir Hildebrand, and of course too delightful to himself, not to be continued at short intervals. At each repetition, he

found the same tokens of untiring passion displayed, the same advantages enjoyed, by the colonel; and, of course, although pretty confident that the enemy was unsuccessful still, he was not wholly free from those fits of superfluous trembling and alarm, those spasms of jealous apprehension, which age after age have formed a portion of the private property of every lover placed in an embarrassing position. One device he gladly availed himself of—one little means of conveying to Mary some explanation of his strange conduct, without breaking a particle of his promise to John Manesty. The grand county ball was just approaching.

“Mind, Hugh,” observed the old baronet, in a bantering vein, to his young friend, Miss Stanley being then and there present,

“there are to be many beauties at this ball, and I advise you to look with both eyes in all directions. Depend on it, with that gallant air and winning speech of yours, a partner may be made prize of, to last you longer than the night.”

If the face of the young lady, who was just then leaning, with the most natural grace in the world, over the back of her father's chair, betrayed, by smile, or blush, or downcast look, any sign of her having heard the remark, Hugh Manesty beheld it not. His eyes were bent in an opposite direction, as, with admirable readiness, he said, after a pause—

“I should not, believe me, have been so long apparently insensible to the charms of the Cheshire damsels, had not my uncle

been cruel enough to make me promise not to be tempted into the solicitation of any lady's hand in marriage for the space of three years. One, only one year of this probationary term has expired. I must even submit for the remainder of the time to be deemed heartless, and insensible to the dazzling beauty of the Lancashire witches—to the exquisite feminine softness of the lovely dames of Cheshire.”

This was uttered rather happily, with a seemingly easy air, which was, nevertheless, extremely hard for the young speaker to assume. He then ventured to add, in a tone rather deepened, and with a glance at Mary, momentary, but not unobservant—

“Although, if my heart could but be read, it might perhaps tell a different—a far different tale.”

There were, on that occasion, no more words, and no more looks; but from the hour, thenceforward, a different, a more assured and consistent idea, took possession of Miss Stanley's mind, and her demeanour to her father's visitor was ever alike—cordial, friendly, but disengaged. A quiet and intelligent confidence, approaching to happiness, took possession of both; and so they continued to meet and to part, until one day when on a visit at the abode wherein his soul always dwelt though he were absent in person, Hugh's parting was a sudden one;—he was summoned to Liverpool to meet his uncle, John Manesty, on his return from Jamaica.



CHAPTER XII.

A SECOND DEPARTURE FOR THE WEST INDIES.

WHEN Manesty, after nearly a year's absence, returned, there was no alteration in his conduct. He arrived on the first of October, as it might be, and on the second, was at desk and 'Change as usual. He had not been as successful as he had wished, in winding up the affairs of Brooklyn Royal, but they wore a better aspect than when he had left Liverpool. He sincerely

wished that he was out of the concern altogether, but he did not see his way clearly as yet. During his absence, the industry and energy of his nephew had done everything that he could desire, and the affairs of the firm were more prosperous than ever. His own expedition, too, had made an amendment in its sorest quarter, and what had been for some years a matter of rare occurrence, or rather of no occurrence, it had yielded some return. He took his place without ceremony among the merchants of Liverpool; and the vacancy occasioned by the absence of "Manesty and Co." upon 'Change, was, to the great delight of Robin Shuckleborough, filled up by the substantial apparition of its representative.

So things waxed and waned; but again a

cloud came over the spirit of Manesty. "This West Indian estate," said he to his nephew, "will make me mad. Here is another troublesome thing, which can be managed by me alone."

"Cannot I go?" asked Hugh, inquiringly.

The uncle paused for a moment, and looked sadly in his face.

"No, dear Hugh, you cannot. The associations which our family, or at least my family, has with the Antilles, are anything but agreeable; and you would there learn much that would grieve you. And without wishing to confound you with that scapegrace Richard Hibblethwaite, I cannot forget that he was sent out there a youth of much promise, and you see what he is. He learned it all in the West Indies. I do not say, my

dear nephew, you would follow so pernicious an example; but I do not wish that the same risk should be run again. I'll go myself, but this shall be the last time. I'll now wash my hands of it altogether."

Hugh was well aware that remonstrance was vain; and perhaps the young merchant was not very seriously disinclined to take upon himself the dignity of so wealthy a house, or to be disencumbered of the watchful eye of his uncle. Again, then, Manesty went, and was again absent for the same space of time. Things had been more prosperous during the last year, in point of money matters; but what seemed to please him most was, that he had now certainly arranged to free himself on fair and conscientious terms of the plantation.

“ I thought,” said he, “ my last visit was to conclude; there must be one more, and then I am free from the nuisance altogether.”

Another year, and the parting visit to Brooklyn was to be paid.

“ There are footpads and mounted highwaymen on the road, dear uncle,” said Hugh, as they were discussing the contingencies of the journey. “ A man was robbed close by Grantham, three weeks ago. Had not you better wait until you can get company to travel on this dreary road from Liverpool to London? Mr. Buckleborough and his brother are about to start with two servants, in three days from this, could not you wait to join them? or, though Aylward’s coach is tedious enough in all con-

science, yet in these dark nights, I think anything is better than riding alone such a wearisome way.”

“Are not the parts of Mentor and Telemachus somewhat reversed in this case?” said the elder Manesty, smiling as much as his features could be persuaded to do. “Fear not for me. I am no longer young; but he would be a highwayman of some enterprise, who would come within reach of this hand, and if he employed other weapons than those which nature gives,—there, too,” he continued, opening a pistol-case, “I am not unprepared to match with the lawless.”

“But it is said that there are gangs on the road, and——”

“And I must use care and precaution to avoid them. That leave to me. If I fall

in their way, I fear me, I should be much more embarrassed by the presence than by the absence of worthy Mr. Buckleborough and his companions of the road."

He mused for awhile. "It is the last time, Hugh—positively the last time—that I make this voyage, which, except that it has been, in a certain sense, advantageous in money matters, was always hateful to me. You have kept—honourably kept, the promise you made to me almost three years ago. Do not speak, Hugh! Perhaps many months will not elapse, when, if I find that what is now floating through your fancy is in reality fixed in your heart, you will find that though I cannot fill up your dreams of romance, I may assist you in turning your just desires and wishes into reality. But you do not

know what is the bar between you and the lady of your regard, of whom it would be mere affectation on my part if I pretended to remain ignorant."

"A bar, uncle!" said Hugh. "A bar!—what bar? There can be no bar!"

"Rest quiet for a few months," replied the uncle; "and if you then wish to marry her on whom your heart is now fixed—— But I am very sleepy, and must start early in the morning. Good night, Hugh; you will find everything ready for your daily business. May God bless you!" he continued, pressing his hands upon the glossy head of his nephew, "and now retire. I write from London."

Hugh imagined that the hands of his uncle, as he gave him the parting benedic-

tion, were hot and feverish, and that something like an approximation to a tear trembled in his stony eye; he made the usual valedictions, and left the room. Something in his uncle's manner told him that the abandonment of this worrying West Indian property, was to be the precursor of his giving up business altogether; that the heir of the baronetage of Wolsterholme might reclaim under Whig auspices the honours that Tory politics had lost; that the riches of Pool-lane might resuscitate the former glories of the manor-house and estate so unaccountably purchased and retained by his uncle; that let but a few months pass, everything would be as his heart could wish; that Mary Stanley——. In thinking of all which, he fell fast asleep, to dream of

what Robin would have called its last item.

His uncle did not go to sleep. "I have much to do," muttered he to himself, "and much to think of. Never again——" He rang a bell, and a servant instantly appeared.

"Bring hot water, and tumblers, Seth," he said, "and pipes, with tobacco from the canisters marked, B.B. 2-1. I believe the rum is in the cupboard—see if it is; and the sugar, and the lemons. They are so. Has the old man come?"

"Near an hour ago," said Seth, fervently, "he hath been testifying to us in the counting-house."

"He is aged," said Manesty, "and requires these comforts; I want them not. Tell him I am alone."

Seth zealously complied, and in a few minutes Aminadab the Ancient sate by the board of John Manesty. The old man—he was near ninety—remained not long; but long did his host muse on what he had said. In the morning, day-dawn saw him on his route for London.



CHAPTER XIII.

THE RETURN—AND THE ACCUSATION.

THREE or four months after his return, Manesty was one Sunday after service seated on the top of the steps leading to his house, and enjoying as much of sun as the structure and atmosphere of Pool-lane permitted to enter into its gloomy recesses, while he calmly smoked his pipe. His solid features rarely permitted any expression of what was passing within to escape; but he seemed to

be in a mood of peculiar calmness. He was completely alone, and few passengers disturbed the silence of the way.

He was drawn from the abstraction of thoughts, whatever they might have been, by the noisy voice of a drunken man. He looked in the direction whence it proceeded, and saw a very tipsy sailor, scarcely able to stand, staggering towards his house, uttering senseless oaths and idle imprecations, as he pursued his unsteady course. This was no more a strange sight in Liverpool, in the opening days of the reign of George the Third, than it is in these of his granddaughter—and Manesty paid it small attention. The sailor, however, made his way up to the steps on which the merchant was sitting, and after looking upon him for a

moment with the lack-lustre and wandering glance of drunkenness, steadied himself by grasping the rails, and exclaimed, with a profusion of oaths, which we decline repeating—

“It is he! I can’t be mistaken; no—not in a hundred years. I say, old chap, tip us your fist.”

“I think,” said Manesty, gravely, “friend, that you might have been employing your Sabbath more graciously.”

“More graciously!” hiccuped forth the drunken sailor; “why, I have employed it as graciously as yourself. I saw you cruising into the preaching shop in Seal-street, and I said, it is he. But I was not sure, so I went in among the humbugs, and there were you with a psalm-singing phiz, rated

high among the ship's company of the crazy craft."

"I think you had better get to bed, friend," said Manesty. "I certainly was in Seal-street, listening to the prayers and sermon of Mr. ——. If you were there, they appear to have had but little effect upon you. At all events, pass quietly on your way; I am not a person easily to be trifled with, and I know you not."

"But I know you," said the drunken sailor; "and——"

"It is very possible," said Manesty. "And if you do, you know me as a man of some authority and command in Liverpool; and if further annoyed, I may find the means of keeping you quiet, until your sense, if you have any, returns. Pass on."

The sailor looked up the lane and down, with all the caution of tipsy cunning. It was perfectly clear. No person was to be seen but themselves.

“Pass on!” said he, “but I will not pass on, until you and I have had a glass together. Command in Liverpool, have you? Ay! devil doubt! You have command wherever you go.”

“You are becoming unbearable,” said Manesty. “I shall call my servant to fetch a constable.”

“Fetch a constable!” said the sailor, bursting into an uncontrollable fit of laughter. “Fetch him, by all means, my old boy. I know the ground where you would not be in such a hurry to send for constables. Zounds! to think that Bob Blazes should be sent to quod by——”

Here again he looked up and down the street, and still they were alone as before.

“Sent to quod,” continued he, in an undertone, “by Dick Hoskins.”

“I find,” said Manesty, quietly, “that I must rid myself of this nuisance. Friend, the only excuse, such as it is, for your gross impertinence, is your drunkenness. Hezekiah,” said he, speaking through the window, “go over to the castle, and tell Steels, the head constable, or any of his people who may be in attendance there, to come to me at once. I want their assistance.”

Hezekiah was soon seen issuing forth upon the errand, and the rage of the sailor seemed to be aroused.

“So Hezekiah is the name of the master-

at-arms now. I remember when it was Bloody Bill—many a long league off. You'll get rid of me, you say; I don't doubt it a bit, commodore. I am not the first who stood in your way you got rid of. But this an't no way to hail a hand as has stuck by you in thick and thin. What, d'ye think I'd peach? I comed in all love and friendship; and you might have walked the quarter-deck among them snuffle-snouted land-pirates, without a word from Bob Blazes. But as you are a-calling for beaks and law-sharks, there's an end. I shake my feet off the dust, as I heard the lubber say to-day, in the hencoop where he was boxed. It an't quite convenient for me this blessed minute to be grabbed for anything nohow, so I'll be off from your plant

in time; but you may be sure that it wont be long before all the Mersey knows that Mr. John Muddlesty the saint, is Mr. Dick Hoskins the pirate."

He made a convulsive rush from the lane, which Manesty shewed no inclination to stop, just in time to escape the return of a couple of constables, with Hezekiah. His master despatched the party to the cellar, simply observing, "that as the annoyance was over, it was of no consequence to pursue its cause." He sate down at dinner at his usual hour, and the incident seemed to have no effect in ruffling his ordinary course of Sunday arrangements.

It had, however, and that a most material one. He was told before his dinner was well concluded, that a brother in the faith,

Ozias Rheinenberger, one of the leading Moravians, wished to speak with him. Robin Shuckleborough, who usually shared his patron's Sunday dinners, rose at the announcement to depart. Hugh was absent elsewhere.

“It is needless, Robin,” said Manesty; “he cannot have anything to say in the way of business on the Sabbath; and in aught else I have no secrets whatever. Bid Mr. Rheinenberger walk up stairs.”

The features of the Moravian were plain, and inexpressive. There was a look of meekness, native or acquired, that won those who believed it honest, and repelled those who were inclined to consider it hypocritical. His lank hair was plastered over his pale brows, and his dress and

general appearance was such as to denote him one careless of the fopperies of the world. He was in a branch of trade which threw him much in the way of Manesty, who had on many occasions been to him of considerable service in promoting or extending his commerce. On the occasion of his present visit he seemed to be sadly depressed in mind.

“Sit down, Ozias,” said the host; “have you dined? There is enough left after the knife and fork of Robin and me to make your dinner.”

“I have dined,” said Ozias, with a sad tone.

“Will you have a glass of wine, then?” asked Manesty. “Something appears to have put you out of spirits. Shuckle-

borough and I were contenting ourselves with ale; but, Robin, take the keys and open that *garde-de-vin*, and——”

“I had rather not take any wine,” said Ozias, in the same melancholy voice; “in short, I have something to say to thee, John, which concerns thy private ear. If our friend——”

“No,” said Manesty, to the departing Robin; “do not stir. On trade I speak not on Sundays;—speak as you will about all else beside.”

Ozias paused, and shuffled upon his chair; but he recovered in a short time.

“The straightforward road is ever the best; those who travel by devious ways are apt to lose the true track. Here is a strange story spreading all through Liverpool——”

He paused again, and his chair was shaken as before.

“Proceed,” said Manesty, quietly.

“Hast thou,” asked Ozias, “seen a strange sailor this morning?”

“I have,” was the reply, “outside this house. He accosted me with some absurd impertinence, dictated by drunkenness—for the man was excessively drunk; and when I sent Hezekiah for a constable, not more to get him out of my way, than to have the incapable fellow taken care of, until he had slept off his liquor, he made a staggering run out of the lane. I did not think it worth while to send in pursuit, and have not heard anything more about him since. It is about an hour and a half ago since he was here. What of him?”

“ Much,” said Ozias, with a sigh. “ He has spread everywhere, far and wide, that he has seen you beyond seas, and that you are identified with——”

“ Dick Hoskins, the pirate,” interrupted Manesty. “ Yes, as well as I could gather from his all but inarticulate gabble, that was his accusation.”



CHAPTER XIV.

SUSPICIONS CREEPING AMONG THE SAINTLY—THE
GREAT MERCHANT CALLED TO ACCOUNT.

“I WISH I came across him,” quoth Robin Shuckleborough, “and I’d lodge such a fellow as that in the stocks. The old punishment of slitting the tongue of vagabonds like that was the best.”

“No, Robin,” said Manesty, “the best way is to let them speak on. But where has he told this story?”

“In general,” replied Ozias Rheinen-

berger, "among the shipping along the quays; but he made his way to Seal-street, where, having contrived to get into the committee-room, he told eight or ten of the membership there met, that he had sailed with thee for four months during the past and current year; that he was close by thee when that scar on thy forehead was given; that he has known thee on and off upon the seas for twenty years; and that, in the African bark, 'Juno,' now for sale or charter, lying at Gravesend, there are fifty people that could say the same."

"And this tale was believed?" said Manesty, with a contemptuous sneer.

"If it was," broke in Robin Shuckleborough, "the elders of Seal-street—begging your pardons, Mr. Manesty and Mr. Rhein-

enberger, I was born and reared church of England, and church of England, if God gives me grace, will I die, so I do not think much of talking my mind out about the dissenters,—I say, if they believe any such a cock-and-bull trumpery as this, they are asses fitter to bray over a thistle in a field, than to preach over a Bible in the pulpit. This is now Sunday, October the 16th, 1764—new style—and it is certainly true, that my honoured master, young Mr. John, as I shall always call him, if he and I live on together till he is threescore and ten, left Gravesend on the 15th of June, 1760, bound for Kingston, on board the ‘Bonny Jane,’ 120 tons register, Moses Mugg, master; arrived in Liverpool, on the 19th of February, 1761, per the ‘Lightning’ coach,

after a three days' rapid journey; sailed from Ilfracombe, by Bristol, on the 2nd of January, 1762, by the American sloop, 'Clipper,' bound for Barbadoes, 95 tons register, Jonadab Sackbag, mate, acting as commander; that——"

"Pr'ythee, Robin," said Manesty, smiling, "spare this minute chronology of my voyages."

"Pardon me, sir," exclaimed the zealous book-keeper, "but I can prove from our books, that you have been absent just eight months in '60, '61, nine months in '62, ten months in '63, '64; and does not our letter-book minutely state to a day, or almost, what you were doing during the time? Dick Hoskins, indeed! I'd have Dick Hoskined him, if he dropped across my path."

“Nay, Robin,” said his master, “do not be so warm. I believe a better answer to this piece of absurd nonsense, will be found in the fact, from the year '39, when I returned from an unhappy errand to the plantations, with poor little Hugh, then about two years old, until the date in 1762, which you remember with an accuracy I cannot rival——”

“It was the 16th of October, between six and seven in the morning——”

“So be it; from the middle of '39, to the close of '62—three-and-twenty years. I was, let me see, absent from Liverpool, once in '43, when I had to go to London, about the bankruptey of ‘Ing, Tring, and Co.,’ where I remained precisely a fortnight; in '46, when the Wolsterholme affairs were going

to perdition; and I went with a vain hope of saving something for my poor sister's boy, and I stayed there then——”

“Eight days and six hours,” supplied Robin, “from the moment we alighted at the ‘Bull,’ in Holborn, to the moment we started from the same. I was with you, sir, if you recollect.”

“I had forgotten it,” replied his master; “again, in ’52, with a deputation from the corporation, on some nonsense now not worth remembering; and, in ’57, on that troublesome business with which you, Ozias, were somewhat connected, you recollect——”

Ozias did not blush—for it would have been impossible that his body could have mustered a sufficiency of blood for such a

phenomenon—but he looked somewhat confused. This visit of '57 was, in fact, connected with some serious embarrassments of his own, and Manesty had rescued him from bankruptcy.

“Manchester, or Bolton, or Rochdale, or some other of our neighbouring marts,” continued Manesty, “are the ordinary limits of my travels; except my visit of a week, for some few years past, to breathe the fresh air at Wolsterholme Place, or whatever else you may have been pleased to call it——”

“Amounting, on a rough calculation, which will, however, be found pretty near the truth,” said Robin, pencil in hand, “to two-and-thirty days in London; say six visits per ann. to the towns about, setting them down at three days each, which is

over the mark—eighteen days a-year, for one-and-twenty years—three hundred and seventy-eight days; fresh air excursions to the Yorkshire border for twelve summers, a week a-piece, seventy-two days; the sum, Mr. Rheinenberger, is four hundred and eighty-four days in all (errors excepted), during twenty-one years, being on an average, twenty-three days per ann., with a slight fraction over; and——”

“Thou needst not continue in thy calculations, friend Robin,” replied Ozias, “all Liverpool will be witness that every hour of John Manesty could be accounted for during the years you mention. And as for the voyages of the last three years——”

“Cannot they be accounted for, too?” said Manesty. “They can as surely be told

hour by hour, as those which have given employment to the arithmetic of Robin. But the thing is too ridiculous. Hoskins has been a pest upon the waters since the year '38—the year before I left America—perhaps longer; not a year has elapsed without our hearing of his depredations; and here have I—to say nothing of my character, or standing—here have I, during all the time, been as it were chained to my desk in Pool-lane, and because business of a kind, in which, as Robin there well knows, I was most reluctant to engage——”

“ I can vouch for it well, sir,” interposed Robin. “ I remember your saying to me, as well as if it was yesterday——”

“ Never mind; because I am miserably against my will dragged across the Atlantic,

there are found men with whom I 'ate of the same bread, and drank of the same cup,' ready to give ear, if not credence, to the hiccuping of a drunken sailor, confounding me, perhaps, from some fancied personal resemblance, with an atrocious pirate, who was committing murders and robberies upon the ocean, while I was sleeping quietly on my pillow, or toiling peacefully over my ledger."

This was a burst of unusual length and earnestness from such a speaker, and Ozias made no reply. He had never heard of the French proverb, "*Qui s'excuse, s'accuse,*" but its principle flashed strongly upon his mind. The silence was broken by Manesty.

"And who in Seal-street gave heed to this drunken mariner?"

“None,” said Ozias, “that I know of, gave heed; but none, also, could refuse to give ear. To avoid scandal to us and trouble to you, we got the man away with much difficulty, and placed him in safety at the ‘Blackamoor’s Arms,’ in ——, where he has been staying since last night. He is now in a drunken slumber, from which he will not arouse himself for several hours, and then Habakkuk Habergam——”

“Habakkuk Habergam!” cried Manesty, with evident displeasure, looking significantly at Robin, “what did *he* say?”

“Nothing more,” said Ozias, “than that in the morning it would be well to visit him while he was sober, and so put an end to the noise, or bring the man to condign punishment.”

“Habergam,” said Robin, in deep indignation, “is as black-mouthed a bankrupt hound——”

“Do not indulge in invectives, Robin,” remarked Manesty, mildly, but still looking at his clerk, in a manner not to be misunderstood; “to-morrow morning, turn to his account as early as maybe, and have it adjusted as speedily as possible. A man who is so anxious to institute investigation into the business of other people, where he has no concern, cannot object to inquiries being made into the state of his own, where he has.”

“I can pretty well guess,” said Robin, “how the matter stands, and I’ll cut out work enough for Humbug Habakkuk to occupy him to-morrow, without pimping

after what is saying or doing by the blackguards of the 'Blackamoor's Arms.' Such a thief as that——”

Ozias looked hard at Manesty, who understood the look to signify that he wished them to be alone. It was no great difficulty to get rid of Robin, who left the room in deep dudgeon against the brotherhood of Seal-street, whom he consigned to the spiritual bondage of Satan, and against Habakkuk Habergam in particular, whom he doomed in thought to the temporal bondage of Lancaster Castle. His prayers were more efficacious—at least, more immediately so, in the latter than in the former case—for though we may charitably hope that the congregated independents escaped the fiery fate anticipated by Robin, it is

certain that two days did not elapse before, through his exertions, and those of his attorney, the stronghold of the Dukes of Lancaster contained the corpus of the hapless Habakkuk.

CHAPTER XV.

RELIGIOUS DOUBTS—MANESTY'S CONSCIENTIOUS PER-
PLEXITIES—HE VISITS AMINADAB THE ANCIENT.

OZIAS waited until the noisy slamming of the hall door announced the angry exit of Shuckleborough.

“ I have heard,” he then commenced at once, “ all that thy zealous clerk, and all that thyself hath said; and I am well aware that this tale of the man calling himself Blazes must be wholly untrue; but it is not to be

put down by violence and anger, such as that which Robert threatened and manifested. But I should be unworthy of the friendship which thou hast ever shewn—of the religious union in which we have so long lived—if I did not tell thee that, since thine acceptance of the plantation of Brooklyn Royal, thy brethren in the Lord have been anxious for thy soul's estate."

"I accepted it, as you well know, Ozias, much against my will; and after consulting the most famous lights of religion burning around."

"Thou didst not consult thine own conscience, John, which is a light more precious than that of the seven golden candlesticks burning before the altar."

"Of that," replied Manesty, solemnly,

“you nor any other man can be a judge. You know not, nor will any one know, until the great day of the unveiling of secrets, how my conscience balanced its account.”

“Be it so, then; but this, I know, and all Liverpool knows it, too, that though it has suited thee to describe this West Indian estate as all but bankrupt, thy prosperity hath been of late yearly on the increase, far beyond the bounds of what thine ordinary business could afford any ground for warranting—and that during the last three or four years we know that the transactions in which thou hast engaged must be supported by funds far more ample and extended than any which thy regular trade could have supplied.”

“If those persons,” said Manesty, “who

take the trouble of calculating what ought to be the gains of a man who understands his business, would expend a portion of their time on learning what business really is, we should have fewer entries in the Gazette. I am yet to learn that men who lose money in trade, are qualified to judge of the courses pursued by men who make it."

"It is not exactly by such that the observation was made—but be it so," said the meek Moravian.

"Say it out, then, at once!" was the answer of Manesty to the implied charge. "You think, then, that I am, what this fellow, Blazes, as you call him, has told you, the pirate Hoskins?"

"I think nothing of the kind!" said Ozias; "and I know it to be impossible, but

many of thy friends fear that thou hast, in some underhand manner, which they are loth to trace, lent thyself to traffic with men as wild and as wicked as he, and shared in their ungodly gains. This may not have come to thine ears before, but it hath been long talked of in Liverpool, and especially since thy recent voyages. And here comes this man who swears he saw thee on the West coast of Africa—there known by the name of a bloodthirsty pirate.”

“I can scarcely keep patience,” said Manesty, “to hear this flagrant nonsense. Have you not known this man upon the sea for more than twenty years?”

“I have !” replied Ozias; “and therefore I believe nothing of this part of the story, which I set down as the mere ravings of an

intoxicated fool; but the other suspicion hath been much heightened by his production of a scrap of paper, addressed, as he says, to himself, ordering a long boat to be ready with early tide, and the live stock to be discharged as soon as possible. The paper is very greasy and dirty, smelling strongly of tobacco and spirits; but if the hand-writing be not thine, John Manesty, never did two persons write characters more resembling each other than the writer of that paper and thou."

"It is very possibly mine," said Manesty. "Some order to bring Irish cattle here on shore, which this fellow has picked up."

"It is hardly that," answered the Moravian—"but be it so. The paper is not like that which thou wouldst have used

here. Perhaps its begrimed state may account for that, and be it so; but he says that he has many others—and particularly some dozens of letters and communications which were found on the person of a desperate pirate, named Tristram Fiennes, killed in a drunken fray on the coast of Florida, about four years ago, which are of the same handwriting; and it is the purpose of the select committee of elders to have before them this man, Blazes, to-morrow, and procure from him all that he knows or possesses. It was this that brought me here, for I would not have thee taken at advantage. The idle story of this sailor I cast to the winds. May God have strengthened thee to resist methods of piling up wealth scarcely less contaminating of sin to the

soul than the open violences of those whom the world calls outcast. If thou hast fallen into the pit, may God be a light to thy feet to see thy way out of it—and under all circumstances, whether to support thee, O my brother, under the injury of falsehood and calumny, or the deeper sadness of thine own consciousness of having done what thy soul cannot justify unto thyself, if my aid can be anything of value, remember how strong is thy claim on the gratitude of Ozias Rheinberger.”

He ceased. The tear, mantling in his small grey eye, kindled it into dignity—and a strong emotion lit up all his plain features, inexpressive now no longer. The habitual meekness of his face was exalted into a hallowed look of devout compassion which no

hypocrite could assume. He fixed it for an instant on Manesty—who for some moments had remained profoundly silent, not attending to what was said, as if stricken with a sudden blow—and then rushed from the presence of his unheeding companion, heavy of heart.

Manesty remained in the same position for nearly half-an-hour after the departure of Ozias.

“He’s a kind-hearted fellow, that!” was his first exclamation; “but he suspects that there is some shadow or foundation of truth in this story, impossible as he feels it to be on the whole. Others may come to the same conclusion without the same charitable feelings towards me. Success in any pursuit is enough to raise up hosts of enemies; and

the very testimony I have borne against this trade, in which I am thus accused of participating, will render their venom more rancorous. This must be met—met at once—met like a man. Why cling those fancies to my brain? Am I not, by the world in which I live, and by the world in which it is scarcely suspected that I have lived, looked up to as a man of sound sense, of solid judgment, and firm decision? Is not my opinion daily, hourly, consulted on those matters which come home most to the business and bosoms of men?—and why not decide in a case which so nearly concerns myself? Alas, I know that I have decided, and only desire that my decision should be ratified by the voice of another—that from another man's tongue I may hear loudly

pronounced that counsel which I dare not whisper to myself. It is now two o'clock, and I shall have ample time to return by sunset. Yes—I will go—the ride of itself will be of use in bracing my nerves, and recruiting my jaded spirits.”

In a few minutes, after leaving word with Hezekiah to tell Mr. Hugh that he was suddenly called away, and would not, in all probability, return till night, he was urging his mare onward with hasty pace on the road that led to the marshes of Ulverstone—the journey he had to perform was about thirty miles, and it was completed in two hours and a half.

The summer sun was beginning to decline, when he found himself at the door of a solitary house of small dimensions, situ-

ated by the side of a desolate mere. It was the lonely dwelling of Aminadab the Ancient, and he it was whose counsel Manesty had ridden forth to seek. As he approached, he heard the old man's voice loudly reading the Bible, and expounding its texts, as it would seem by his tone, with angry comment, though, except a very young girl, who was in the kitchen, and out of reach of exhortation, for which, if she had heard, she would not have felt the slightest respect, no one but himself was in the house.

No lock or latch secured its outer door, and Manesty, having tied up his horse, entered without any ceremony. The old man, bent over his Bible, did not perceive his entrance, but continued his fierce dé-

nunciations of the foes of the Lord in a furious commentary on the sixty-eighth Psalm. He had reached the twenty-third verse, when Manesty arrived, and was repeating with intense emphasis—"That thy foot may be dipped in the blood of thine enemies, and the tongue of thy dogs in the same." Something either in tone or text made the new comer start, and he hastily broke off the coming exposition by laying a gentle pressure of his finger on the old man's sleeve.

Aminadab closed his Bible, and immediately rose to greet his visitor.

"Is it thou, John," said he—"thou, John, my son? I expected thee not, but welcome are thy feet upon the mountains, or wherever else my lot may be cast. Thou

lookest jaded and worn. The fare I can offer thee is coarse compared with that which thine own mansion affords—but such as it is, who can be more welcome to share it than thou.”

“ I have no need,” said Manesty, “ of your hospitality, Aminadab, which I have known of old would be cheerfully given—I want thine advice. Not food carnal, but food spiritual, do I lack; and to whom could I come for a goodly supply of things sustaining to the soul with such surety as to thee!”

“ Ninety years and one,” said the old man, “ have passed over this hoary head, and to the sound of flattery mine ears are clogged as with wax. Ask what thou wilt, John, and according to the light vouchsafed

to me will I speak. Speak otherwise I could not, wert thou Balah, the son of Zippor, offering me, by the hands of the princes of Moab, houses of silver and of gold."

Manesty was, however, in no haste to speak — something seemed to choke his utterance. The question which came at last did not seem anything formidable to a practised controversialist. It was one of those questions of dogmatic theology a thousand times asked in ages by-past, and a thousand times to be asked in ages to come.

"Can the elect," said he, "fall from a state of grace?"

He had not long to wait for an answer.

"It is with grief I hear the question

propounded," said Aminadab, "from the lips of one who was all but reared at my feet, as Saul at those of Gamaliel. Thou shouldst have been not a disciple to inquire, but a master in Israel to answer. They cannot."

"Those, then, that were once in a state of grace are ever in a state of grace?"

"For ever."

"And they cannot by any means fall into sin?"

"Never."

"And their salvation is always sure?"

"Always. But why, John Manesty, my son," said the old man, looking somewhat amazed—"why dost thou come to ask me of things which could be answered by babes and sucklings? Are not these the first

plain rudiments of the most ordinary theology? Before the foundations of the world were laid, the names were written in the book of life of those who were chosen to inherit salvation. Not to obtain salvation, but to receive as a gift—to take it as the heritage bequeathed to them by their father, a garnered treasure not won by themselves. How, then, is it that you ask whether they can so sin as to bring upon themselves damnation.”

“ They seem to sin, at least, Aminadab,” said Manesty, doubtingly, though this supralapsarian doctrine was the favourite of his heart, and now sounded agreeably upon his ear.

“ They may so seem,” said the unbending theologian, “ but of what moment is their

seeming? Nay, they *do* sin, if we look upon their actions with the eyes and pronounce upon them with the tongue of the world. But can the acts of man control the decrees of God? Are we to set up the works of the created against the laws of the Creator? What is written is written—it is written by the finger of God. Can the weak and wayward wanderings of frail man blot it out again? Is He in his ways to be guided by the merits or demerits of man? Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being his counsellor hath taught him? To talk calmly, can these newly devised instruments control the steam? Can the spinning-jenny say unto the engine, ‘ My will is not thy will, thy might is less than my might?’ ”

“It is well,” said Manesty; “such I knew was thy doctrine. But still, as we live in the world, while we pass through it, what the word of the world and the law of the world says must be attended to.”

“Of a truth,” said Aminadab, “we are here in carnal vesture, doing carnal things. We must eat, we must drink, we must sleep—things in no respect connected with the business of salvation—and we must proceed onward in our way allotted to be trodden. These are the things which are called indifferent.”

“Of these, good fame, in what people term society, is one?” asked Manesty.

“Surely. The poor things of this poor world we may not care for, but we may not do without, and without repute they are not to be attained.”

“ If, then,” said Manesty——“ I beg your pardon, Aminabad : I shall alter my mind. I declined your proposed refreshment just now, but a faintness has come over me. Have you any wine in the house?”

“ None, my son,” said the old man——“ but I have some bottles of the brandy and some of the ale which thou hast sent me as oil to the flickering lamp of my waning life.”

Manesty chose the ale, which the slipshod girl speedily placed before him. He drank a copious draught.

“ If, then,” he said, wiping a perspiration which had rapidly formed on his forehead——“ if, then, a saint is so stricken in his good fame in the world as to render his usefulness questionable, or perhaps to destroy it

altogether, is it justifiable that he should resist the slanderer with weapons of strength?"

"It is so. It is granted to us to use such weapons to defend our lives, and even when life is not attacked, to wield the spear and draw the sword to maintain the cause of the Lord. In like case, then, when that which may cost us our lives, or that which we hold dearer than our lives—then, too, may we uplift instruments of punishment or vengeance. When Shimei, the son of Gazi, a Benjamite of Bahurim, cursed David with a grievous curse in the day when he went to Mahanaim, did not the man of God lay it upon Solomon as a dying commandment—on him to whom he said, 'Thou art a wise young man, and knowest what thou

oughtest to do'—to bring down his hoary head to the grave with blood? Did not Elisha, as he went from Jericho to Beth-el, call forth two she-bears out of the wood, who tare the two-and-forty children of the city who mocked him by the way? Yea, the whole scripture is full of wrath against the railing tongue which scorns the saints—as to thee, no doubt, John Manesty, is known.”

“Have we, then, warrant,” asked Manesty, “to do as was done in these old days?”

“No days,” said Aminadab, “are old. To us there seems to be time, and year to follow year in the constant rolling of the sun. But He who made the sun hath no measure of time. What he permitted in the days of David—in the days of Elisha—

in the days when Jeremiah changed the name of Pashur, the son of Immer the priest, to Magar-Missabib, making him a terror to himself and all his friends, because he smote the prophet on the cheek—that doth he permit now. This do I speak carnally, as to carnal men. But if I spoke in the language befitting a testifier of the truth, then should I dismiss from my mouth the vain and sinful words of what we were permitted to do. We are not permitted to do anything. What is done is ordained. As well mightest thou think, with thy feeble palm, to stop the waters of the Mersey, when they come raging to and fro down in murky flood, over its swallowing sands, by the boisterous east wind, or by thy will or by thy deed to check the careering wheels

of the cherubim seen by Ezekiel by the river of Chebar. Shall the axe boast of itself against him that heweth therewith? or shall the saw magnify itself against him that shaketh it? As if the rod should shake itself against them that lift it up; or as if the staff should lift itself as if it were no wood."

"The elect, then, unto salvation," said Manesty, with great and earnest solemnity, "who are assailed by the reprobate unto eternal death, may by any means remove those reprobates from the earth without peril."

"Peril of temporal things, if, then, there be peril," said Aminadab, "is to be thought upon with such care as may be—of that the magistrate, who beareth not the sword

in vain, must be the judge. He will see with such blinking lights as the dry bones of the law afford to his blear-eyed vision. But," said the old man, rising and grasping a long staff——

The sun in its most western slope was bestowing its parting beams upon Ulverstone Mere, and the old man so sate in his parlour as to catch the fast diminishing of its declining ray. As he rose it covered him all over with a yellow light, gilding his hoary head, and giving fiercer expression to the eye, which still, when aroused to the joy which controversialists feel when they confute, or fancy they are confuting, antagonists worthy of their skill, gleamed, or rather glittered with fire supplied from the ever-burning furnace within; his figure

became erect, and he leant upon his staff, not as a stay to his feet, but a sceptre to his hand. —

“But,” said he, “as for the decrees of the Lord, there is in them no heeding of the laws of man. They who think they make these laws—they who put them into effect—are but vessels in the hand of the potter—vessels of no more value or power, than those whom they, from the ermined bench, send to the squalid dungeon.”

He struck his staff vigorously on the floor.

“Whatever thou purporest to do, John Manesty, do thou, and that quickly. It was revealed to me in the visions of the night that thou shouldst come, and I was spoken with to say that the work to which thou

wert appointed was wending its way to the end. The doctrine I preach is sure; sure as—nay, far surer—than the granite foundations of the earth. Go thou on thy way rejoicing, and to rejoice.”

He ceased for a while.

“ But I shall never see thee again, John Manesty, — never again in this cobweb world. Go, however, secure of purpose and undoubting of salvation. Go to thy work, but go undoubtingly, for if Samuel was not merely justified, but commanded to hew Agag the Amalekite in pieces before the Lord, in Gilgal, because the bleating of sheep and the lowing of oxen offended the ears of holiness, how much more worthy of being destroyed is the man that bleateth mischief and loweth unrighteousness.”

The brows of the old man were knit with a savage frenzy, and his eyes shot forth a more burning flame.

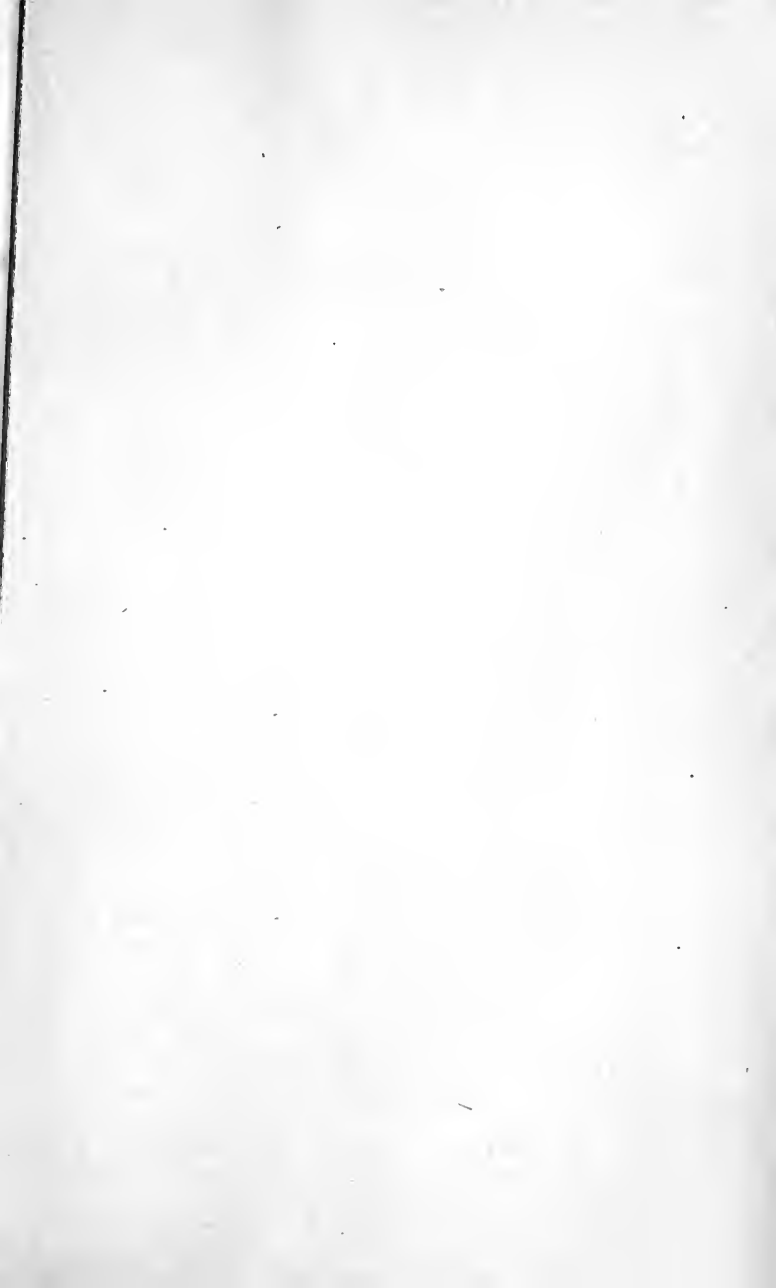
“ Truth fast, is my doctrine—truth fast as truth itself—which is, after all, but an idle word to keep us the further away from him who is truth. The blessing of Jehovah-Jireh be upon thee! Thou hast now heard, my son, the last words which thou ever wilt hear from the lips of him, who, in the days of his vanity, was known as Sir Ranulph de Braburn—for more than two generations testifying as Aminadab Smith, which lengthened years have changed into the title of Aminadab the Ancient. Go and speed.”

He cast his staff aside and grasped the hand of his excited visitor, who fervently

returned the fervent pressure. Other words beside those which had been just spoken were now exchanged. The old man sank into his chair, and Manesty mounted his horse to ride hastily homeward.

END OF VOL. I.





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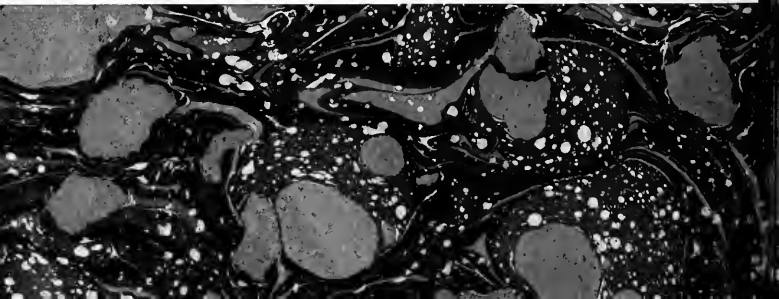


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