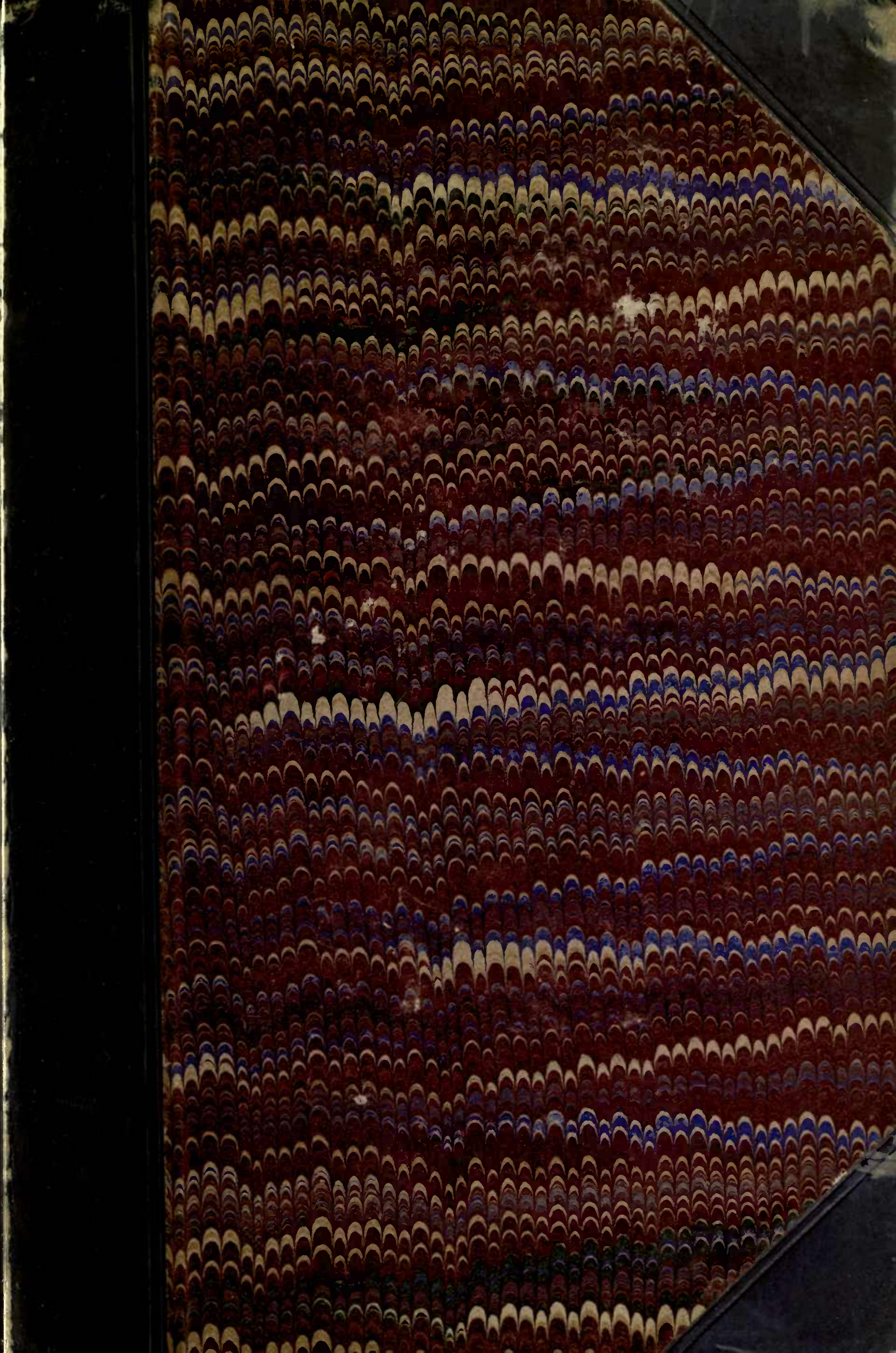

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RICHARD CLAY AND SONS,
LONDON AND BUNGAY

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MACMILLAN'S MAGAZINE.

NOVEMBER, 1886.

THE WOODLANDERS.

BY THOMAS HARDY.

CHAPTER XXVI.

WINTERBORNE's house had been pulled down. On this account his face had been seen but fitfully in Hintock; and he would probably have disappeared from the place altogether but for his slight business connection with Melbury, on whose premises Giles kept his cider-making apparatus now that he had no place of his own to stow it in. Coming here one evening on his way to a hut beyond the wood, where he now slept, he noticed that the familiar brown-thatched pinion of his paternal roof had vanished from its site, and that the walls were levelled. In present circumstances he had a feeling for the spot that might have been called morbid, and when he had supped in the hut aforesaid he made use of the spare hour before bedtime to return to Little Hintock in the twilight, and ramble over the patch of ground on which he had first seen the day.

He repeated this evening visit on several like occasions. Even in the gloom he could trace where the different rooms had stood; could mark the shape of the kitchen chimney-corner in which he had roasted apples and potatoes in his boyhood, cast his bullets, and burnt his initials on articles that did and did not belong to him. The apple trees still remained to show where the garden had been, the oldest of them even now retaining the crippled slant to north-east given them by the great November gale of 1824 which carried a brig bodily over the Chesil Bank. They were at present bent to still greater obliquity by the heaviness of their produce. Apples bobbed against his head, and in the grass beneath he crunched scores of them as he walked. There was nobody to gather them now.

It was on the evening under notice that, half sitting, half leaning against one of these inclined trunks, Winterborne had become lost in his thoughts as usual, till one little star after another had taken up a position in the piece of sky which now confronted him where his walls and chimneys had formerly raised their outlines. The house had jutted awkwardly into the road, and the opening caused by its absence was very distinct.

In the silence the trot of horses and the spin of carriage-wheels became audible; the vehicle soon shaped itself against the blank sky, bearing down upon him with the bend in the lane which here occurred, and of which the house had been the cause. He could discern the figure of a woman high up on the driving-seat of a phaeton, a groom being just visible behind. Presently there was a slight scrape, then a scream. Winterborne went across to the spot, and found the phaeton half overturned, its driver sitting on the heap of rubbish which

had once been his dwelling, and the man seizing the horses' heads. The equipage was Mrs. Charmond's, and the unseated charioteer that lady herself.

To his inquiry if she were hurt she made some incoherent reply to the effect that she did not know. The damage in other respects was little or none; the phaeton was righted, Mrs. Charmond placed in it, and the reins given to the servant. It appeared that she had been deceived by the removal of the house, imagining the gap caused by the demolition to be the opening of the road, so that she turned in upon the ruins instead of at the bend a few yards further on.

"Drive home—drive home!" cried the lady impatiently; and they started on their way. They had not however gone many paces when, the air being still, Winterborne heard her say, "Stop; tell that man to call the doctor—Mr. Fitzpiers—and send him on to the House. I find I am hurt more seriously than I thought."

Winterborne took the message from the groom and proceeded to the doctor's at once. Having delivered it he stepped back into the darkness, and waited till he had seen Fitzpiers leave the door. He stood for a few minutes looking at the window which, by its light, revealed the room where Grace was sitting; and went away under the gloomy trees.

Fitzpiers duly arrived at Hintock House, whose doors he now saw open for the first time. Contrary to his expectation there was visible no sign of that confusion or alarm which a serious accident to the mistress of the abode would have occasioned. He was shown into a room at the top of the staircase, cosily and femininely draped, where by the light of the shaded lamp he saw a woman of full round figure reclining upon a couch in such a position as not to disturb a pile of magnificent hair on the crown of her head. A deep purple dressing-gown formed an admirable foil to the peculiarly rich brown of her hair-plaits; her left arm, which was naked nearly up to the shoulder, was thrown upwards, and between the fingers of her right hand she held a cigarette, while she idly breathed from her plump lips a thin stream of smoke towards the ceiling.

The doctor's first feeling was a sense of his exaggerated prevision in having brought appliances for a serious case; the next, something more curious. While the scene and the moment were new to him and unanticipated, the sentiment and essence of the moment were indescribably familiar. What could be the cause of it? Probably a dream.

Mrs. Charmond did not move more than to raise her eyes to him, and he came and stood by her. She glanced up at his face across her brows and forehead, and then he observed a blush creep slowly over her decidedly handsome cheeks. Her eyes, which had lingered upon him with an inquiring conscious expression, were hastily withdrawn, and she mechanically applied the cigarette again to her lips.

For a moment he forgot his errand, till suddenly arousing himself he addressed her, formally condoled with her, and made the usual professional inquiries about what had happened to her, and where she was hurt.

"That's what I want you to tell me," she murmured in tones of indefinable reserve. "I quite believe in you, for I know you are very accomplished, because you study so hard."

"I'll do my best to justify your good opinion," said the young man bowing. "And none the less that I am happy to find the accident has not been serious."

"I am very much shaken," she said.

"Oh yes," he replied; and completed his examination, which convinced him that there was really nothing the matter with her, and more than ever puzzled him as to why he had been summoned, since she did not appear to be a timid woman. "You must rest

a while; and I'll send something," he said.

"Oh, I forgot," she returned. "Look here." And she showed him a little scrape on her arm—the full round arm that was exposed. "Put some court-plaster on that, please."

He obeyed. "And now, doctor," she said, "before you go I want to put a question to you. Sit round there in front of me, on that low chair, and bring the candles, or one, to the little table. Do you smoke? Yes? That's right—I am learning. Take one of these; and here's a light." She threw a match-box across.

Fitzpiers caught it, and having lit up regarded her from his new position which, with the shifting of the candles, for the first time afforded him a full view of her face. "How many years have passed since first we met?" she resumed, in a voice which she vainly endeavoured to maintain at its former pitch of composure, and eying him with daring bashfulness.

"*We* met, do you say?"

She nodded. "I saw you recently at an hotel in London, when you were passing through, I suppose, with your bride, and I recognised you as one I had met in my girlhood. Do you remember, when you were studying at Heidelberg, an English family that was staying there, who used to walk—"

"And the young lady who wore a long tail of rare-coloured hair—ah, I see it before my eyes!—who lost her gloves on the Great Terrace—who was going back in the dusk to find them—to whom I said 'I'll go for them,' and who answered, 'Oh, they are not worth coming all the way up again for.' I *do* remember, and how very long we stayed talking there! I went next morning whilst the dew was on the grass: there they lay—the little fingers sticking out damp and thin. I see them now! I picked them up, and then . . . ."

"Well?"

"I kissed them," he rejoined rather shamefacedly.

"But you had hardly ever seen me except in the dusk?"

"Never mind. I was young then, and I kissed them. I wondered how I could make the most of my *trouvaille*, and decided that I would call at your hotel with them that afternoon. It rained, and I waited till next day. I called, and you were gone."

"Yes," answered she with dry melancholy. "My mother, knowing my face was my only fortune, said she had no wish for such a chit as me to go falling in love with an impecunious student, and spirited me away to Baden. As it is all over and past I'll tell you one thing; I should have sent you a line had I known your name. That name I never knew till my maid said as you passed up the hotel stairs a month ago, 'There's Dr. Fitzpiers.'"

"Good heaven," said Fitzpiers musingly. "How the time comes back to me! The evening, the morning, the dew, the spot. When I found that you really were gone it was as if a cold iron had been passed down my back. I went up to where you had stood when I last saw you—I flung myself on the grass, and—being not much more than a boy—my eyes were literally blinded with tears. Nameless, unknown to me as you were, I couldn't forget your voice."

"For how long?"

"Oh—ever so long. Days and days."

"Days and days! *Only* days and days? Oh the heart of a man! Days and days!"

"But, my dear madam, I had not known you more than a day or two. It was not a full blown love—it was the merest bud—red, fresh, vivid, but small. It was a colossal passion in embryo. It never matured."

"So much the better perhaps."

"Perhaps. But see how powerless is the human will against predestination. We were prevented meeting; we have met. One feature of the case remains the same amid many changes. While you have grown rich, I am still poor. Better than that, you have (judging by

your last remark) outgrown the foolish impulsive passions of your early girlhood. I have not outgrown mine."

"I beg your pardon," said she with vibrations of strong feeling in her words. "I have been placed in a position which hinders such outgrowings. Besides, I don't believe that the genuine subjects of emotion do outgrow them; I believe that the older such people get the worse they are. Possibly at ninety or a hundred they may feel they are cured; but a mere threescore and ten won't do it—at least for me."

He gazed at her in undisguised admiration. Here was a soul of souls!

"Mrs. Charmond, you speak truly," he exclaimed. "But you speak sadly as well. Why is that?"

"I always am sad when I come here," she said, dropping to a low tone with a sense of having been too demonstrative.

"Then may I inquire why you came?"

"A man brought me. Women are always carried about like corks upon the waves of masculine desires . . . I hope I have not alarmed you; but Hintock has the curious effect of bottling up the emotions till one can no longer hold them; I am often obliged to fly away and discharge my sentiments somewhere, or I should die outright."

"There is very good society in the county for those who have the privilege of entering it."

"Perhaps so. But the misery of remote country life is that your neighbours have no toleration for difference of opinion and habit. My neighbours think I am an atheist, except those who think I am a Roman Catholic; and when I speak disrespectfully of the weather or the crops they think I am a blasphemer."

She broke into a low musical laugh at the idea.

"You don't wish me to stay any longer?" he inquired, when he found that she remained musing.

"No—I think not."

"Then tell me that I am to be gone."

"Why? Cannot you go without?"

"I may consult my own feelings only, if left to myself."

"Well if you do, what then? Do you suppose you'll be in my way?"

"I feared it might be so."

"Then fear no more. But good-night. Come to-morrow and see if I am going on right. This renewal of acquaintance touches me. I have already a friendship for you."

"If it depends upon myself it shall last for ever."

"My best hopes that it may. Good-bye."

Fitzpiers went down the stairs absolutely unable to decide whether she had sent for him in the natural alarm which might have followed her mishap, or with the single view of making herself known to him as she had done, for which the capsize had afforded excellent opportunity. Outside the house he mused over the spot under the light of the stars. It seemed very strange that he should have come there more than once when its inhabitant was absent, and observed the house with a nameless interest; that he should have assumed offhand before he knew Grace that it was here she lived; that, in short, at sundry times and seasons the individuality of Hintock House should have forced itself upon him as appertaining to some existence with which he was concerned.

The intersection of his temporal orbit with Mrs. Charmond's for a day or two in the past had created a sentimental interest in her at the time, but it had been so evanescent that in the ordinary onward roll of affairs he would scarce ever have recalled it again. To find her here, however, in these somewhat romantic circumstances, magnified that bygone and transitory tenderness to indescribable proportions.

On entering Little Hintock he found himself regarding it in a new way—from the Hintock House point of view rather than from his own and

the Melburys'. The household had all gone to bed. As he went up stairs he heard the snore of the timber-merchant from his quarter of the building, and turned into the passage communicating with his own rooms in a strange access of sadness. A light was burning for him in the chamber; but Grace, though in bed, was not asleep. In a moment her sympathetic voice came from behind the curtains.

"Edgar, is she very seriously hurt?"

Fitzpiers had so entirely lost sight of Mrs. Charmond as a patient that he was not on the instant ready with a reply.

"Oh, no," he said. "There are no bones broken, but she is shaken. I am going again to-morrow."

Another inquiry or two, and Grace said—

"Did she ask for me?"

"Well—I think she did—I don't quite remember; but I am under the impression that she spoke of you."

"Cannot you recollect at all what she said?"

"I cannot, just this minute."

"At any rate she did not talk much about me?" said Grace with disappointment.

"Oh, no."

"But you did, perhaps," she added, innocently fishing for a compliment.

"Oh, yes—you may depend upon that!" replied he warmly, though scarcely thinking of what he was saying, so vividly was there present to his mind the personality of Mrs. Charmond.

CHAPTER XXVII.

The doctor's professional visit to Hintock House was promptly repeated the next day and the next. He always found Mrs. Charmond reclining on a sofa, and behaving generally as became a patient who was in no great hurry to lose that title. On each occasion he looked gravely at the little scratch on her arm, as if it had been a serious wound.

He had also, to his further satisfaction, found a slight scar on her temple, and it was very convenient to put a piece of black plaster on this conspicuous part of her person in preference to gold-beater's skin, so that it might catch the eyes of the servants, and make his presence appear decidedly necessary, in case there should be any doubt of the fact.

"Oh—you hurt me!" she exclaimed one day.

He was pealing off the bit of plaster on her arm, under which the scrape had turned the colour of an unripe blackberry previous to vanishing altogether. "Wait a moment, then—I'll damp it," said Fitzpiers. He put his lips to the place and kept them there till the plaster came off easily. "It was at your request I put it on," said he.

"I know it," she replied. "Is that blue vein still in my temple that used to show there? The scar must be just upon it. If the cut had been a little deeper it would have spilt my hot blood indeed!" Fitzpiers examined so closely that his breath touched her tenderly, at which their eyes rose to an encounter—hers showing themselves as deep and mysterious as interstellar space. She turned her face away suddenly. "Ah! none of that! none of that—I cannot coquet with you!" she cried. "Don't suppose I consent to for one moment. Our poor, brief, youthful hour of love-making was too long ago to bear continuing now. It is as well that we should understand each other on that point before we go further."

"Coquet! Nor I with you. As it was when I found the historic gloves, so it is now. I might have been and may be foolish; but I am no trifler. I naturally cannot forget that little space in which I flitted across the field of your vision in those days of the past, and the recollection opens up all sorts of imaginings."

"Suppose my mother had not taken me away?" she murmured, her dreamy eyes resting on the swaying tip of a distant tree.

"I should have seen you again."

"And then?"

"Then the fire would have burnt higher and higher. What would have immediately followed I know not; but sorrow and sickness of heart at last."

"Why?"

"Well—that's the end of all love, according to Nature's law. I can give no other reason."

"Oh, don't speak like that," she exclaimed. "Since we are only picturing the possibilities of that time, don't for pity's sake spoil the picture." Her voice sank almost to a whisper as she added, with an incipient pout upon her full lips, "Let me think at least that if you had really loved me at all seriously, you would have loved me for ever and ever!"

"You are right—think it with all your heart," said he. "It is a pleasant thought, and costs nothing."

She weighed that remark in silence a while. "Did you ever hear anything of me from then till now?" she inquired.

"Not a word."

"So much the better. I had to fight the battle of life as well as you. I may tell you about it some day. But don't ever ask me to do it, and particularly do not press me to tell you now."

Thus the two or three days that they had spent in tender acquaintance on the romantic slopes above the Neckar were stretched out in retrospect to the length and importance of years; made to form a canvas for infinite fancies, idle dreams, luxurious melancholies, and pretty, alluring assertions which could neither be proved nor disproved. Grace was never mentioned between them, but a rumour of his proposed domestic changes somehow reached Mrs. Charmond's ears.

"Doctor, you are going away," she exclaimed, confronting him with accusatory reproach in her large dark eyes no less than in her cooing voice. "Oh yes, you are," she went on, springing to her feet with an air which might almost have been called passionate. "It is no use denying it! You have bought a practice at Budmouth. I don't blame you. Nobody can live at Hintock—least of all a professional man who wants to keep abreast of recent discovery. And there is nobody here to induce such a one to stay for other reasons. That's right, that's right—go away!"

"But no, I have not actually bought the practice as yet, though I am indeed in treaty for it. And, my dear friend, if I continue to feel about the business as I feel at this moment—perhaps I may conclude never to go at all."

"But you hate Hintock, and everybody and everything in it that you don't mean to take away with you?"

Fitzpiers contradicted this idea in his most vibratory tones, and she lapsed into the frivolous archness under which she hid passions of no mean strength—strange, smouldering, erratic passions, kept down like a stifled conflagration, but bursting out now here, now there—the only certain element in their direction being its unexpectedness. If one word could have expressed her it would have been Inconsequence. She was a woman of perversities, delighting in piquant contrasts. She liked mystery, in her life, in her love, in her history. To be fair to her, there was nothing in these which she had any great reason to be ashamed of, and many things of which she might have been proud; but her past had never been fathomed by the honest minds of Hintock, and she rarely volunteered her experiences. As for her capricious nature the people on her estates grew accustomed to it, and with that marvellous subtlety of contrivance in steering round odd tempers that is found in sons of the soil and dependents generally, they managed to get along under her government rather better than they would have done beneath a more equable rule.

Now, with regard to the doctor's notion of leaving Hintock, he had advanced further towards completing the purchase of the Budmouth surgeon's goodwill than he had admitted to

Mrs. Charmond. The whole matter hung upon what he might do in the ensuing twenty-four hours. The evening after leaving her he went out into the lane, and walked and pondered between the high hedges, now greenish-white with wild clematis—here called "old-man's-beard" from its aspect later in the year.

The letter of acceptance was to be written that night, after which his departure from Hintock would be irrevocable. But could he go away, remembering what had just passed? The trees, the hills, the leaves, the grass—each had been endowed and quickened with a subtle charm since he had discovered the person and history and, above all, the mood of their owner. There was every temporal reason for leaving: it would be entering again into a world which he had only quitted in a passion for isolation, induced by a fit of Achillean moodiness after an imagined slight. His wife herself saw the awkwardness of their position here, and cheerfully welcomed the purposed change, towards which every step had been taken but the last. But could he find it in his heart—as he found it clearly enough in his conscience—to go away?

He drew a troubled breath, and went indoors. Here he rapidly penned a letter, wherein he withdrew, once for all, from the treaty for the Budmouth practice. As the postman had already left Little Hintock for that night he sent one of Melbury's men to intercept a mail-cart on another turnpike-road, and so got the letter off.

The man returned, met Fitzpiers in the lane, and told him the thing was done. Fitzpiers went back to his house musing. Why had he carried out this impulse—taken such wild trouble to effect a probable injury to his own and his young wife's prospects? His motive was fantastic, glowing, shapeless as the fiery scenery about the western sky. Mrs. Charmond could overtly be nothing more to him than a patient now, and to his wife, at the outside, a patron. In the unattached bachelor days of his first sojourn here how highly proper an emotional reason for lingering on would have appeared to troublesome dubiousness. Matrimonial ambition is such an honourable thing.

"My father has told me that you have sent off one of the men with a late letter to Budmouth," cried Grace, coming out vivaciously to meet him under the declining light of the sky, wherein hung, solitary, the folding star. "I said at once that you had finally agreed to pay the premium they ask, and that the tedious question had been settled. When do we go, Edgar?"

"I have changed my mind," said he. "They want too much—seven hundred and fifty is too large a sum,—and in short I have declined to go further. We must wait for another opportunity. I fear I am not a good business-man." He spoke the last words with a momentary faltering at the great foolishness of his act; and as he looked in her fair and honourable face his heart reproached him for what he had done.

Her manner that evening showed her disappointment. Personally she liked the home of her childhood much, and she was not ambitious. But her husband had seemed so dissatisfied with the circumstances hereabout since their marriage that she had sincerely hoped to go for his sake.

It was two or three days before he visited Mrs. Charmond again. The morning had been windy, and little showers had sowed themselves like grain against the walls and window-panes of the Hintock cottages. He went on foot across the wilder recesses of the park, where slimy streams of fresh moisture, exuding from decayed holes caused by old amputations, ran down the bark of the oaks and elms, the rind below being coated with a lichenous wash as green as emerald. They were stout-trunked trees, that never rocked their stems in the fiercest gale, responding to it entirely by crook-

ing their limbs. Wrinkled like an old crone's face, and antlered with dead branches that rose above the foliage of their summits, they were nevertheless still green—though yellow had invaded the leaves of other trees.

She was in a little boudoir or writing-room on the first floor, and Fitzpiers was much surprised to find that the window-curtains were closed and a red-shaded lamp and candles burning, though out-of-doors it was broad daylight. Moreover a large fire was burning in the grate, though it was not cold.

"What does it all mean?" he asked.

She sat in an easy chair, her face being turned away. "Oh," she murmured, "it is because the world is so dreary outside. Sorrow and bitterness in the sky, and floods of agonised tears beating against the panes. I lay awake last night, and I could hear the scrape of snails creeping up the window glass; it was so sad! My eyes were so heavy this morning that I could have wept my life away. I cannot bear you to see my face; I keep it away from you purposely. Oh! why were we given hungry hearts and wild desires if we have to live in a world like this? Why should Death alone lend what Life is compelled to borrow—rest? Answer that, Dr. Fitzpiers."

"You must eat of a second tree of knowledge before *you* can do it, Felice Charmond."

"Then, when my emotions have exhausted themselves, I become full of fears, till I think I shall die for very fear. The terrible insistencies of society—how severe they are, and cold, and inexorable—ghastly towards those who are made of wax and not of stone. Oh, I am afraid of them; a stab for this error, and a stab for that—correctives and regulations framed that society may tend to perfection—an end which I don't care for in the least. Yet for this all I do care for has to be stunted and starved."

Fitzpiers had seated himself near her. "What sets you in this mournful mood?" he asked gently. In reality he thought that it was the result of a loss of tone from staying indoors so much, but he did not say so.

"My reflections. Doctor you must not come here any more. They begin to think it a farce already. I say you must come no more. There—don't be angry with me;" and she jumped up, pressed his hand and looked anxiously at him. "It is necessary. It is best for both you and me."

"But," said Fitzpiers, gloomily, "what have we done?"

"Done—we have done nothing. Perhaps we have thought the more. However, it is all vexation. I am going away to Middleton Abbey, near Shottsford, where a relative of my late husband lives, who is confined to her bed. The engagement was made in London, and I can't get out of it. Perhaps it is for the best that I go there till all this is past. When are you going to enter on your new practice, and leave Hintock behind for ever, with your pretty wife on your arm?"

"I have refused the opportunity. I love this place too well to depart."

"You *have?*" she said, regarding him with wild uncertainty. "Why do you ruin yourself in that way? Great heaven, what have I done!"

"Nothing. Besides you are going away."

"Oh yes; but only to Middleton Abbey for a month or two. Yet perhaps I shall gain strength there—particularly strength of mind—I require it. And when I come back I shall be a new woman; and you can come and see me safely then, and bring your wife with you, and we'll be friends—she and I. Oh, how this shutting up of one's self does lead to indulgence in idle sentiments. I shall not wish you to give your attendance to me after to-day. But I am glad that you are not going away—if your remaining does not injure your prospects at all."

As soon as he had left the room the mild friendliness she had pre-

served in her tone at parting, the playful sadness with which she had conversed with him, equally departed from her. She became as heavy as lead—just as she had been before he arrived. Her whole being seemed to dissolve in a sad powerlessness to do anything, and the sense of it made her lips tremulous and her closed eyes wet. His footsteps again startled her, and she turned round.

"I return for a moment to tell you that the evening is going to be fine. The sun is shining; so do open your curtains and put out those lights. Shall I do it for you?"

"Please—if you don't mind."

He drew back the window-curtains, whereupon the red glow of the lamp and the two candle-flames became almost invisible under the flood of late autumn sunlight that poured in. "Shall I come round to you?" he asked, her back being towards him.

"No," she replied.

"Why not?"

"Because I am crying, and I don't want to see you."

He stood a moment irresolute, and regretted that he had killed the rosy passionate lamplight by opening the curtains and letting in garish day.

"Then I am going," he said.

"Very well," she answered, stretching one hand round to him, and patting her eyes with a handkerchief held in the other.

"Shall I write a line to you at——?"

"No, no." A gentle reasonableness came into her tone as she added, "It must not be, you know. It won't do."

"Very well. Good-bye." The next moment he was gone.

In the evening with listless adroitness she encouraged the maid who dressed her for dinner to speak of Dr. Fitzpiers's marriage.

"Mrs. Fitzpiers was once supposed to favour Mr. Winterborne," said the young woman.

"And why didn't she marry him?" said Mrs. Charmond.

"Because you see, ma'am, he lost his houses."

"Lost his houses? How came he to do that?"

"The houses were held on lives, and the lives dropped, and your agent wouldn't renew them, though it is said that Mr. Winterborne had a very good claim. That's as I've heard it, ma'am, and it was through it that the match was broke off."

Being just then distracted by a dozen emotions, Mrs. Charmond sank into a mood of dismal self-reproach. "In refusing that poor man his reasonable request," she said to herself, "I fore-doomed my rejuvenated girlhood's romance. Who would have thought such a business matter could have nettled my own heart like this! Now for a winter of regrets and agonies and useless wishes, till I forget him in the spring. Oh! I am glad I am going away."

She left her chamber, and went down to dine with a sigh. On the stairs she stood opposite the large window for a moment, and looked out upon the lawn. It was not yet quite dark. Half-way up the steep green slope confronting her stood old Timothy Tangs, who was shortening his way homeward by clambering here where there was no road, and in opposition to express orders that no path was to be made there. Tangs had momentarily stopped to take a pinch of snuff; but observing Mrs. Charmond gazing at him he hastened to get over the top out of hail. His precipitancy made him miss his footing, and he rolled like a barrel to the bottom, his snuff-box rolling in front of him.

Her indefinite idle impossible passion for Fitzpiers; her constitutional cloud of misery, the sorrowful drops that still hung upon her eyelashes, all made way for the impulse started by the spectacle. She burst into an immoderate fit of laughter; her very gloom of the previous hour seeming to render it the more uncontrollable. It had not died out of her when she reached the dining-room; and even here, before the servants,

her shoulders suddenly shook as the scene returned upon her; and the tears of her risibility mingled with the remnants of those engendered by her grief.

She resolved to be sad no more. She drank two glasses of champagne, and a little more still after those; and amused herself in the evening with singing little amatory songs.

"I must do something for that poor man Winterborne, however," she said.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

A WEEK had passed, and Mrs. Charmond had left Hintock House. Middleton Abbey, the place of her sojourn, was about twenty miles distant by road, eighteen by bridle-paths and footways.

Grace observed, for the first time, that her husband was restless, that at moments he even was disposed to avoid her. The scrupulous civility of mere acquaintanceship crept into his manner; yet, when sitting at meals, he seemed hardly to hear her remarks. Her little doings interested him no longer, whilst towards her father his bearing was not far from supercilious. It was plain that his mind was entirely outside her life, whereabouts outside it she could not tell; in some region of science possibly, or of psychological literature. But her hope that he was again immersing himself in those lucubrations which before her marriage had made his light a landmark in Hintock, was founded simply on the slender fact that he often sat up late.

One evening she discovered him leaning over a gate on Rub-Down Hill, the gate at which Winterborne had once been standing, and which opened on the brink of a declivity, slanting down directly into Blackmore Vale, or the Vale of White Hart, extending beneath the eye at this point to a distance of many miles. His attention was fixed on the landscape far away, and Grace's approach was so noiseless that he did not hear her. When she came close she could see his lips moving unconsciously, as to some impassioned visionary theme.

She spoke, and Fitzpiers started. "What are you looking at?" she asked.

"Oh! I was contemplating our old place of Buckbury, in my idle way," he said.

It had seemed to her that he was looking much to the right of that cradle and tomb of his ancestral dignity; but she made no further observation, and taking his arm walked home beside him almost in silence. She did not know that Middleton Abbey lay in the direction of his gaze. "Are you going to have out Darling this afternoon?" she asked presently. Darling, the light-grey mare which Winterborne had bought for Grace, Fitzpiers now constantly used, the animal having turned out a wonderful bargain in combining a perfect docility with an almost human intelligence; moreover, she was not too young. Fitzpiers was unfamiliar with horses, and he valued these qualities.

"Yes," he replied, "but not to drive. I am riding her. I practise crossing a horse as often as I can now, for I find that I can take much shorter cuts on horseback."

He had, in fact, taken these riding exercises for about a week, only since Mrs. Charmond's absence; his universal practice hitherto having been to drive.

Some few days later, Fitzpiers started on the back of this horse to see a patient in the aforesaid Vale. It was about five o'clock in the evening when he went away, and at bed-time he had not reached home. There was nothing very singular in this, though she was not aware that he had any patient more than five or six miles distant in that direction. The clock had struck one before Fitzpiers entered the house, and he came to his room softly, as if anxious not to disturb her.

The next morning she was stirring considerably earlier than he.

In the yard there was a conversation going on about the mare; the man who attended to the horses, Darling included, insisted that the latter was "hag-rid"; for when he had arrived at the stable that morning, she was in such a state as no horse could be in by honest riding. It was true that the doctor had stabled her himself when he got home, so that she was not looked after as she would have been if the speaker had groomed and fed her; but that did not account for the appearance she presented, if Mr. Fitzpiers's journey had been only where he had stated. The phenomenal exhaustion of Darling, as thus related, was sufficient to develop a whole series of tales about equestrian witches and demons, the narration of which occupied a considerable time.

Grace returned indoors. In passing through the outer room she picked up her husband's overcoat which he had carelessly flung down across a chair. A turnpike ticket fell out of the breast-pocket, and she saw that it had been issued at Middleton Gate. He had therefore visited Middleton the previous night, a distance of at least five-and-thirty miles on horseback, there and back.

During the day she made some inquiries, and learnt for the first time that Mrs. Charmond was staying at Middleton Abbey. She could not resist an inference—strange as that inference was.

A few days later he prepared to start again, at the same time and in the same direction. She knew that the state of the cottager who lived that way was a mere pretext; she was quite sure he was going to Mrs. Charmond. Grace was amazed at the mildness of the anger which the suspicion engendered in her. She was but little excited, and her jealousy was languid even to death. It told tales of the nature of her affection for him. In truth, her ante-nuptial regard for Fitzpiers had been rather of the quality of awe towards a superior being than of tender solicitude for a lover. It had been based upon mystery and strangeness—the mystery of his past, of his knowledge, of his professional skill, of his beliefs. When this structure of ideals was demolished by the intimacy of common life, and she found him as merely human as the Hintock people themselves, a new foundation was in demand for an enduring and staunch affection—a sympathetic inter-dependence, wherein mutual weaknesses are made the grounds of a defensive alliance. Fitzpiers had furnished none of that single-minded confidence and truth out of which alone such a second union could spring; hence it was with a controllable emotion that she now watched the mare brought round.

"I'll walk with you to the hill if you are not in a great hurry," she said, rather loth, after all, to let him go.

"Do; there's plenty of time," replied her husband. Accordingly he led along the horse, and walked beside her, impatient enough nevertheless. Thus they proceeded to the turnpike road, and ascended Rub-Down Hill to the gate he had been leaning over when she surprised him ten days before. This was the end of her excursion. Fitzpiers bade her adieu with affection, even with tenderness, and she observed that he looked weary-eyed.

"Why do you go to-night?" she said. "You have been called up two nights in succession already."

"I must go," he answered, almost gloomily. "Don't wait up for me." With these words he mounted his horse, passed through the gate which Grace held open for him, and ambled down the steep bridle-track to the valley.

She closed the gate and watched his descent, and then his journey onward. His way was east, the evening sun which stood behind her back beaming full upon him as soon as he got out from the shade of the hill. Notwithstand-

ing this untoward proceeding she was determined to be loyal if he proved true; and the determination to love one's best will carry a heart a long way towards making that best an ever-growing thing. The conspicuous coat of the active though blanching mare made horse and rider easy objects for the vision. Though Darling had been chosen with such pains by Winterborne for Grace, she had never ridden the sleek creature; but her husband had found the animal exceedingly convenient, particularly now that he had taken to the saddle, plenty of staying power being left in Darling yet. Fitzpiers, like others of his character, while despising Melbury and his station, did not at all disdain to spend Melbury's money, or appropriate to his own use the horse which belonged to Melbury's daughter.

And so the infatuated young surgeon went along through the gorgeous autumn landscape of White Hart Vale, surrounded by orchards lustrous with the reds of apple-crops, berries, and foliage, the whole intensified by the gilding of the declining sun. The earth this year had been prodigally bountiful, and now was the supreme moment of her bounty. In the poorest spots the hedges were bowed with haws and blackberries; acorns cracked underfoot, and the burst husks of chestnuts lay exposing their auburn contents as if arranged by anxious sellers in a fruit-market. In all this proud show some kernels were unsound as her own situation, and she wondered if there were one world in the universe where the fruit had no worm, and marriage no sorrow.

Her Tannhäuser still moved on, his plodding steed rendering him distinctly visible yet. Could she have heard Fitzpiers's voice at that moment she would have found it murmuring,

> "—Towards the lode-star of my one desire
> I flitted, even as a dizzy moth in the owlet light."

But he was a silent spectacle to her now. Soon he rose out of the valley, and skirted a high plateau of the chalk formation on his right, which rested abruptly upon the fruity district of deep loam, the character and herbage of the two formations being so distinct that the calcareous upland appeared but as a deposit of a few years' antiquity upon the level vale. He kept along the edge of this high, uninclosed country, and the sky behind him being deep violet she could still see white Darling in relief upon it—a mere speck now—a Wouvermans eccentricity reduced to microscopic dimensions. Upon this high ground he gradually disappeared.

Thus she had beheld the pet animal purchased for her own use, in pure love of her, by one who had always been true, impressed to convey her husband away from her to the side of a new-found idol. While she was musing on the vicissitudes of horses and wives, she discerned shapes moving up the valley towards her, quite near at hand, though till now hidden by the hedges. Surely they were Giles Winterborne, with his two horses and cider-apparatus, conducted by Robert Creedle. Up, upward they crept, a stray beam of the sun alighting every now and then like a star on the blades of the pomace-shovels, which had been converted to steel mirrors by the action of the malic acid. She opened the gate when he came close, and the panting horses rested as they achieved the ascent.

"How do you do, Giles?" said she, under a sudden impulse to be familiar with him.

He replied with much more reserve. "You are going for a walk, Mrs. Fitzpiers?" he added. "It is pleasant just now."

"No, I am returning," said she.

The vehicles passed through, the gate slammed, and Winterborne walked by her side in the rear of the apple-mill.

He looked and smelt like Autumn's very brother, his face being sunburnt to wheat-colour, his eyes blue as cornflowers, his sleeves and leggings dyed

with fruit stains, his hands clammy with the sweet juice of apples, his hat sprinkled with pips, and everywhere about him that atmosphere of cider which at its first return each season has such an indescribable fascination for those who have been born and bred among the orchards. Her heart rose from its late sadness like a released spring; her senses revelled in the sudden lapse back to nature unadorned. The consciousness of having to be genteel because of her husband's profession, the veneer of artificiality which she had acquired at the fashionable schools, were thrown off, and she became the crude country girl of her latent earliest instincts.

Nature was bountiful, she thought. No sooner had she been starved off by Edgar Fitzpiers than another being, impersonating bare and undiluted manliness, had arisen out of the earth ready to hand. This was an excursion of the imagination which she did not encourage, and she said suddenly, to disguise the confused regard which had followed her thoughts, "Did you meet my husband?"

Winterborne, with some hesitation: "Yes."

"Where did you meet him?"

"At Calfhay Cross. I come from Middleton Abbey; I have been making there for the last week."

"Haven't they a mill of their own?"

"Yes, but it's out of repair."

"I think—I heard that Mrs. Charmond had gone there to stay?"

"Yes, I have seen her at the windows once or twice."

Grace waited an interval before she went on, "Did Mr. Fitzpiers take the way to Middleton?"

"Yes . . . I met him on Darling." As she did not reply, he added with a gentler inflection, "You know why the mare was called that?"

"Oh yes—of course," she answered quickly.

They had risen so far over the crest of the hill that the whole west sky was revealed. Between the broken clouds they could see far into the recesses of heaven, the eye journeying on under a species of golden arcades, and past fiery obstructions, fancied cairns, logan-stones, stalactites and stalagmite of topaz. Deeper than this their gaze passed thin flakes of incandescence, till it plunged into a bottomless medium of soft green fire.

Her abandonment to the luscious time after her sense of ill-usage, her revolt for the nonce against social law, her passionate desire for primitive life, may have showed in her face. Winterborne was looking at her, his eyes lingering on a flower that she wore in her bosom. Almost with the abstraction of a somnambulist he stretched out his hand and gently caressed the flower.

She drew back. "What are you doing, Giles Winterborne!" she exclaimed, with a look of severe surprise. The evident absence of all premeditation from the act, however, speedily led her to think that it was not necessary to stand upon her dignity here and now. "You must bear in mind, Giles," she said kindly, "that we are not as we were; and some people might have said that what you did was taking a liberty."

It was more than she need have told him; his action of forgetfulness had made him so angry with himself that he flushed through his tan. "I don't know what I am coming to!" he exclaimed savagely. "Ah—I was not once like this!" Tears of vexation were in his eyes.

"No, now—it was nothing. I was too reproachful."

"It would not have occurred to me if I had not seen something like it done elsewhere—at Middleton lately," he said thoughtfully after a while.

"By whom?"

"Don't ask it."

She scanned him narrowly. "I know quite well enough," she returned indifferently. "It was by my husband, and the woman was Mrs. Charmond. Association of ideas reminded you when you saw me. . . . Giles—tell me all you know about that—please do,

Giles! But no—I won't hear it. Let the subject cease. And as you are my friend say nothing to my father."

They reached a place where their ways divided. Winterborne continued along the highway which kept outside the copse, and Grace opened a gate that entered it.

CHAPTER XXIX.

SHE walked up the soft grassy ride, screened on either hand by nut-bushes just now heavy with clusters of twos and threes and fours. A little way on the track she pursued was crossed by a similar one at right angles. Here Grace stopped; some few yards up the transverse ride the buxom Suke Damson was visible—her gown tucked up high through her pocket hole, and no bonnet on her head—in the act of pulling down boughs from which she was gathering and eating nuts with great rapidity, her lover Tim Tangs standing near her engaged in the same pleasant meal.

Crack, crack, went Suke's jaws every second or two. By an automatic chain of thought Grace's mind reverted to the tooth-drawing scene described by her husband; and for the first time she wondered if that narrative were really true, Susan's jaws being so obviously sound and strong. Grace turned up towards the nut-gatherers, and conquered her reluctance to speak to the girl, who was a little in advance of Tim. "Good evening, Susan," she said.

"Good evening, Miss Melbury," (crack).

"Mrs. Fitzpiers."

"Oh yes, ma'am—Mrs. Fitzpiers," said Suke with a peculiar curtsey.

Grace, not to be daunted, continued, "Take care of your teeth, Suke. That accounts for the toothache."

"I don't know what an ache is, either in tooth, ear, or head, thank the Lord," (crack).

"Nor the loss of one, either?"

"See for yourself, ma'am." She parted her red lips, and exhibited the whole double row, full up and unimpaired.

"You have never had one drawn?"

"Never."

"So much the better for your stomach," said Mrs. Fitzpiers in an altered voice. And turning away quickly she went on.

As her husband's character thus shaped itself under the touch of time, Grace was almost startled to find how little she suffered from that jealous excitement which is conventionally attributed to all wives in such circumstances. But though possessed by none of the feline wildness which it was her moral duty to experience, she did not fail to know that she had made a frightful mistake in her marriage. Acquiescence in her father's wishes had been degradation to herself. People are not given premonitions for nothing; she should have obeyed her impulse on that early morning and steadfastly refused her hand.

Oh, that plausible tale which her then betrothed had told her about Suke—the dramatic account of her entreaties to him to draw the aching enemy, and the fine artistic touch he had given to the story by explaining that it was a lovely molar without a flaw!

She traced the remainder of the woodland track dazed by the complications of her position. If his protestations to her before their marriage could be believed, her husband had felt affection of some sort for herself and this woman simultaneously; and was now again spreading the same emotion over Mrs. Charmond and herself conjointly, his manner being still kind and fond at times. But surely, rather than that, he must have played the hypocrite towards her in each case with elaborate completeness; and the thought of this sickened her, for it involved the conjecture that if he had not loved her his only motive for making her his wife must have been her little fortune. Yet here Grace made a mistake, for the love of men like Fitzpiers is unquestionably of

such quality as to bear division and transference. He had indeed once declared, though not to her, that on one occasion he had noticed himself to be possessed by five distinct infatuations at the same time. Therein his differed from the highest affection as the lower orders of the animal world differ from advanced organisms, partition causing not death but a multiplied existence. He had loved her sincerely, and had by no means ceased to love her now. But such double and treble-barrelled hearts were naturally beyond her conception.

Of poor Suke Damson Grace thought no more. She had had her day.

"If he does not love me I will not love him!" said Grace proudly. And though these were mere words, it was a somewhat formidable thing for Fitzpiers that her heart was approximating to a state in which it might be possible to carry them out. That very absence of hot jealousy which made his courses so easy, and on which, indeed, he congratulated himself, meant, unknown to either wife or husband, more mischief than the inconvenient watchfulness of a jaundiced eye.

Her sleep that night was nervous. The wing allotted to her and her husband had never seemed so lonely. At last she got up, put on her dressing-gown, and went down stairs. Her father, who slept lightly, heard her descend, and came to the stair-head.

"Is that you, Grace? What's the matter?" he said.

"Nothing more than that I am restless. Edgar is detained by a case at Owlscombe in White Hart Vale."

"But, how's that? I saw the woman's husband at Great Hintock just afore bed-time; and she was going on well, and the doctor gone then."

"Then he's detained somewhere else," said Grace. "Never mind me; he will soon be home. I expect him about one."

She went back to her room, and dozed and woke several times. One o'clock had been the hour of his return on the last occasion; but it had passed now by a long way, and still Fitzpiers did not come. Just before dawn she heard the men stirring in the yard; and the flashes of their lanterns spread every now and then through her window-blind. She remembered that her father had told her not to be disturbed if she noticed them, as they would be rising early to send off four loads of hurdles to a distant sheep-fair. Peeping out she saw them bustling about, the hollow-turner among the rest; he was loading his wares—wooden-bowls, dishes, spigots, spoons, cheese-vats, funnels and so on—upon one of her father's waggons, who carried them to the fair for him every year out of neighbourly kindness.

The scene and the occasion would have enlivened her but that her husband was still absent; though it was now five o'clock. She could hardly suppose him, whatever his infatuation, to have prolonged to a later hour than ten an ostensibly professional call on Mrs. Charmond at Middleton; and he could have ridden home in two hours and a half. What then had become of him? That he had been out the greater part of the two preceding nights added to her uneasiness.

She dressed herself, descended, and went out, the weird twilight of advancing day chilling the rays from the lanterns, and making the men's faces wan. As soon as Melbury saw her he came round, showing his alarm.

"Edgar is not come," she said. "And I have reason to know that he's not attending anybody. He has had no rest for two nights before this. I was going to the top of the hill to look for him."

"I'll come with you," said Melbury.

She begged him not to hinder himself; but he insisted, for he saw a peculiar and rigid gloom in her face over and above her uneasiness, and did not like the look of it. Telling the men he would be with them again soon he walked beside her into the turn-

pike-road, and partly up the hill whence she had watched Fitzpiers the night before across the Great White Hart or Blackmore Valley. They halted beneath a half-dead oak, hollow, and disfigured with white tumours, its roots spreading out like claws grasping the ground. A chilly wind circled round them, upon whose currents the seeds of a neighbouring lime-tree, supported parachute-wise by the wing attached, flew out of the boughs downward like fledglings from their nest. The vale was wrapped in a dim atmosphere of unnaturalness, and the east was like a livid curtain edged with pink. There was no sign nor sound of Fitzpiers.

"It is no use standing here," said her father. "He may come home fifty ways . . . why, look here—here be Darling's tracks—turned homeward and nearly blown dry and hard! He must have come in hours ago without your seeing him."

"He has not done that," said she.

They went back hastily. On entering their own gates they perceived that the men had left the waggons, and were standing round the door of the stable which had been appropriated to the doctor's use. "Is there anything the matter?" cried Grace.

"Oh, no, ma'am. All's well that ends well," said old Timothy Tangs. "I've heard of such things before—amongst workfolk, though not amongst your gentlepeople—that's true."

They entered the stable, and saw the pale shape of Darling standing in the middle of her stall, with Fitzpiers on her back, sound asleep. Darling was munching hay as well as she could with the bit in her mouth, and the reins, which had fallen from Fitzpiers's hand, hung upon her neck.

Grace went and touched his hand; shook it, before she could arouse him. He moved, started, opened his eyes, and exclaimed, "Ah, Felice! . . . Oh, it's Grace. I could not see in the gloom. What—am I in the saddle!"

"Yes," said she. "How do you come here?"

He collected his thoughts, and in a few minutes stammered: "I was riding along homeward through the Vale, very, very sleepy, having been up so much of late. When I came opposite Holywell spring the mare turned her head that way as if she wanted to drink. I let her go in, and she drank; I thought she would never finish. While she was drinking the clock of Owlscombe Church struck twelve. I distinctly remember counting the strokes. From that moment I positively recollect nothing till I saw you here by my side."

"The name! If it had been any other horse he'd have had a broken neck!" murmured Melbury.

"'Tis wonderful, sure, how a quiet hoss will bring a man home at such times!" said John Upjohn. "And, what's more wonderful than keeping your seat in a deep slumbering sleep. I've knowed men drowze off walking home from randies where the mead and other liquors have gone round well, and keep walking for more than a mile on end without waking. Well, doctor, I don't care who the man is, 'tis a mercy you wasn't a drownded, or a splintered, or a hanged up to a tree like Absalom—also a handsome gentleman like yerself, as the prophets say."

"True," murmured old Timothy piously, "from the sole of his boots to the crown of his hat there was no blemish in him!"

"Or leastwise you might ha' been a-wownded into tatters a'most, and no brother-tradesman to jine your few limbs together within seven mile!"

Whilst this grim address was proceeding Fitzpiers had dismounted, and taking Grace's arm walked stiffly indoors with her. Melbury stood staring at the horse which, in addition to being very weary, was spattered with mud. There was no mud to speak of about the Hintocks just now—only in the clammy hollows of the Vale beyond Owlscombe, the stiff soil of which retained moisture for weeks after the uplands were dry. Whilst they were

rubbing down the mare Melbury's mind coupled with the foreign quality of the mud the name he had heard unconsciously muttered by the surgeon when Grace took his hand—" Felice." Who was Felice? Why, Mrs. Charmond; and she, as he knew, was staying at Middleton.

Melbury had indeed pounced upon the image that filled Fitzpiers's half-awakened soul—wherein there had been a picture of a recent interview on a lawn with a capriciously-passionate woman, who had begged him not to come again in tones whose modulations incited him to disobey. " What are you doing here? Why do you pursue me? Another belongs to you. If they were to see you they would seize you as a thief! " And she had turbulently admitted to his wringing questions that her visit to Middleton had been undertaken less because of the invalid relative than in shamefaced fear of her own weakness if she remained near his home. A triumph then it was to Fitzpiers, poor and hampered as he had become, to recognise his real conquest of this beauty, delayed so many years. His was the selfish passion of Congreve's Millamant, to whom love's supreme delight lay in seeing " that heart which others bleed for, bleed for me."

When the horse had been attended to Melbury stood uneasily here and there about his premises; he was rudely disturbed in the comfortable views which had lately possessed him on his domestic concerns. It is true that he had for some days discerned that Grace more and more sought his company, preferred supervising his kitchen and bake-house with her stepmother to occupying herself with the lighter details of her own apartments. She seemed no longer able to find in her own hearth an adequate focus for her life, and hence, like a weak queen-bee after leading off to an independent home, had hovered again into the parent hive. But he had not construed these and other incidents of the kind till now.

Something was wrong in the dovecote. A ghastly sense beset him that he alone would be responsible for whatever unhappiness should be brought upon her for whom he almost solely lived; whom to retain under his roof he had faced the numerous inconveniences involved in giving up the best part of his house to Fitzpiers. There was no room for doubt that, had he allowed events to take their natural course, she would have accepted Winterborne, and realised his old dream of restitution to that young man's family.

That Fitzpiers could allow himself to look for a moment on any other creature than Grace filled Melbury with grief and astonishment. In the pure and simple life he had led it had scarcela occurred to him that after marriage y man might be faithless. That he could sweep to the heights of Mrs. Charmond's position, lift the veil of Isis, so to speak, would have amazed Melbury by its audacity if he had not suspected encouragement from that quarter. What could he and his simple Grace do to countervail the passions of such as those two sophisticated beings—versed in the world's ways, armed with every apparatus for victory? In such an encounter the homely timber-dealer felt as inferior as a savage with his bow and arrows before the precise weapons of modern warfare.

Grace came out of the house as the morning drew on. The village was silent, most of the folk having gone to the fair. Fitzpiers had retired to bed, and was sleeping off his fatigue. She went to the stable and looked at poor Darling: in all probability Giles Winterborne, by obtaining for her a horse of such intelligence and docility, had been the means of saving her husband's life. She paused over the strange thought; and then there appeared her father behind her. She saw that he knew things were not as they ought to be, from the troubled dulness of his eye, and from his face, different points of which had independent

motions, twitchings, and tremblings, unknown to himself, and involuntary.

"He was detained, I suppose, last night?" said Melbury.

"Oh, yes; a bad case in the Vale," she replied calmly.

"Nevertheless he should have stayed at home."

"But he couldn't, father."

Her father turned away. He could hardly bear to see his whilom truthful girl brought to the humiliation of having to talk like that.

That night carking care sat beside Melbury's pillow, and his stiff limbs tossed at its presence. "I can't lie here any longer," he muttered; striking a light he wandered about the room. "What have I done, what have I done for her?" he said to his wife who had anxiously awakened. "I had long planned that she should marry the son of the man I wanted to make amends to; do ye mind how I told you all about it, Lucy, the night before she came home? Ah! but I was not content with doing right, I wanted to do more!"

"Don't raft yourself without good need, George," she replied. "I won't quite believe that things are so much amiss. I won't believe that Mrs. Charmond has encouraged him. Even supposing she has encouraged a great many, she can have no motive to do it now. What so likely as that she is not yet quite well, and doesn't care to let another doctor come near her?"

He did not heed. "Grace used to be so busy every day, with fixing a curtain here and driving a tin-tack there; but she cares for no employment now!"

"Do you know anything of Mrs. Charmond's past history? Perhaps that would throw some light upon things. Before she came here as the wife of old Charmond four or five years ago, not a soul seems to have heard aught of her. Why not make inquiries? And then do ye wait and see more; there'll be plenty of opportunity. Time enough to cry when you know 'tis a crying matter; 'tis bad to meet troubles half-way."

There was some good sense in the notion of seeing further. Melbury resolved to inquire and wait, hoping still, but oppressed between whiles with much fear.

(*To be continued.*)

ALLAN RAMSAY.

Two hundred years ago, in October, 1686, Allan Ramsay was born in the upland village of Leadhills; and one hundred years ago last July, the first edition of Burns's poems made its appearance in the weaving-town of Kilmarnock. For the greater part of the century prior to the latter event Ramsay was universally regarded as the national poet of Scotland, and 'The Gentle Shepherd' was believed to be the most consummate flower of Scottish poetical genius; for just a century since, and in virtue of that latter event, his name and fame have suffered more or less partial eclipse. He has not been forgotten,—his reputation was too firmly rooted in the popular heart for that; but he has been undeservedly neglected; his poetical power has been growing more and more traditional, and is now, we fear, very largely taken on trust. His name, we have said, has not been forgotten—it is, indeed, a household word throughout the Scottish Lowlands. There, and more especially in the rural parts of that district, they talk familiarly, in the Scottish manner, of Allan; "that's ane o' Allan's sangs" they will say. But if they speak of Allan Cunningham, who was also in his way successful in touching the national heart, they never fail to give him his full name. Ramsay has a prescriptive right to the simple and unsupported *prenomen*. Sometimes they vary the expression by prefixing honest; "honest Allan!" they will say in the excess of a proud familiarity with his name. And then they will most likely follow up the words by a quotation, said to be from Burns, which probably reveals the origin of the adjective:

> "Yes! there is ane—a Scottish callan;
> There's ane—come forrit, honest Allan!
> Thou needna jouk behint the hallan,
> A chiel sae clever;
> The teeth o' time may gnaw Tantallan,
> But thou's for ever!"

Yet it may well be doubted whether they appreciate at its proper value the epithet which they repeat so glibly. Ramsay was not unduly bold; but bashfulness was no feature of his disposition, and he was the last person of the men of his day to be found "jouking behint the hallan."[1] If Burns did not write the lines, and it is only Burns's brother Gilbert who denies the authorship, somebody else of Burns's day did, who saw and lamented the neglect into which Ramsay was falling as the brighter orb of Burns's genius rose on the literary horizon. If Burns did write them, a supposition to which we decidedly incline, they are in his mouth a singularly graceful acknowledgment of the excellence of his first and best model and master, and at the same time express or imply a sentiment which is quite in harmony with the frequent and just confessions of his indebtedness to Ramsay. Ramsay's name marks an epoch in the history of Scottish poetry. Before him were "the Makkaris," who reached their lofty culmination in William Dunbar, and who may be said to have terminated in some obscurity in the Sempills. The era of modern Scottish poetry began with Ramsay. His is the style, the treatment of a subject, the language, which, with modifications and developments of a perfectly natural and organic growth, Fergusson, and Burns, and Scott (in those of his novels which describe purely Scottish character), and all the many minor writers of distinctively Scottish literature, Hogg being the most notable exception, have since adopted and used. But though he began a new era, he was not altogether independent of the old. He links on, at the outstart of his literary career, to the middle Sempill, whose humorous elegy on the death of

[1] *I.e.* Ducking behind the door.

the Piper of Kilbarchan was the standard of his imitation, as it had previously been that of his contemporary and correspondent, Hamilton of Gilbertfield. Not less sympathetic was his sense of humour with the comic vein of the royal poet, James the First, as exemplified in 'Christ's Kirk on the Green,' and his two cantos of continuation to that famous poem are an acknowledgment of the inspiration which he drew from the ancient "Makkaris." He was, however, essentially original. Cowper was not more original, excepting only in the matter of language. The poets of Scotland have from time to time employed a conventional and artificial phraseology; but no age, and scarcely a writer in the long line of their history, has been quite deficient in the use of a vigorous vernacular, sufficient to bring them into living touch with the men of their generation. Ramsay's originality did not, therefore, chiefly show itself in his adoption of the current and conversational speech of his day. It is, however, to be noticed that by the voluminousness of his poems and their immense popularity, continued without a break for three generations, he may be said to have fixed the standard of modern Scotch, by blending his mother-tongue with antique expressions of the past, and proving the capability of the mixture for large and varied poetical representation. "Thy bonnie auld words gar (make) me smile," was part of a complimentary epistle addressed to Ramsay by a contemporary, himself an adept in the use of Scotch and considerably older than the person whom he was addressing. The fact would seem to be, that modern Scotch is very much what Ramsay made it; and we question if there are many expressions in the rural Scotch of to-day, with all Burns's cultivation of the language, which Ramsay, if he were living now, would not readily recognise.

But it is not in the humour of his delineations that Ramsay is really most original. The humour, though in one sense it was his own, that is, unaffectedly sincere and genuine as a personal possession, was, notwithstanding, what one might almost call a national property, in which such of the elder poets as Dunbar and Lyndsay, and such of their successors as Fergusson and Burns, could claim at least an equal share. Yet it may well be allowed that he deepened and widened the national sense of humour by the use which he made of his own share, and turned it with greater emphasis and effect upon the follies and minor immoralities of social life than any had ever done before him. He set the example of humorous portraiture and address to Burns; and even in that dangerous, though legitimate, field for satirical humour, which since Lyndsay's time has been the exclusive walk of Burns, namely, religious bigotry and hypocrisy, he was meditating entrance and onslaught at the age of seventy—too late an age! Hear his own words:—

"I have it even in my poo'er
The very Kirk itself to scour,
An' that ye'll say 's a brag richt bauld!
But did not Lyndsay this of auld?
Wha gave the scarlet harlot strokes
Sneller[1] than all the pelts of Knox."

Ramsay's originality lies much in the unromantic and yet fascinating realism of his natural descriptions, He brings no lime-light effects to bear upon his scenery; neither does he present us with mere photographic copies. It is Nature, her naked self, but never presented except when in perfect harmony with the lyrical mood to which she is accessory, or the dramatic situation to which she is subordinated. It is very much the nature to which Cowper introduces us, allowance being made for difference of locality—healthy, every-day, commonplace nature; only, we think, more vividly, more completely and harmoniously presented. A brief quotation or two will in a general way exemplify what we mean. "This

[1] Keener.

sunny morning," says the Gentle Shepherd,

> "This sunny morning, Roger, cheers my blood,
> And puts all Nature in a jovial mood.
> How heartsome is't to see the rising plants,
> And hear the birds chirm owre their pleasing rants!"

The description of Habbie's How (Hollow) is another case in point—

> "Gae farer up the burn to Habbie's How
> Where a' the sweets of Spring and Simmer grow.
> Between twa birks, out o'er a little linn,
> The water fa's and maks a singand din;
> A pool breast-deep, beneath as clear as glass,
> Kisses with easy whirls the bordering grass;
> We'll end our washing while the morning's cool,
> And, when the day grows het, we'll to the pool,
> There wash oursels—'tis healthfu' now in May,
> And sweetly cauler on sae warm a day."

It is, however, in his delineation of human nature that Ramsay is most genuine; but he is less so in his earlier and somewhat exaggerated descriptions of low life, than in his later and cheerfully serious representations of commonplace rural character. The pastoral drama of 'The Gentle Shepherd' is not only a masterpiece, but an original creation. There was nothing like it, nothing to suggest it, in all the antecedent literature of Scotland. It is to this day the poem that most successfully represents Scottish rural life. The 'Farmer's Ingle' of Fergusson and Burns's 'Cotter's Saturday Night' are kindred poems, similar in subject, and approached with the same serious spirit. But the form is different; they are narrative poems, each descriptive of a common phase of rustic life within doors. None the less are they pendents to 'The Gentle Shepherd'; for 'The Gentle Shepherd' is less a rustic drama in which the interest depends on the plot, than a rustic idyll, the form of which happens to be dramatic, with the interest dependent on the author's views of rustic human life. It is to the credit of Ramsay that, living in close and actual contact with the artificial school of poets of whom Pope and Gay were the representatives of his acquaintance, and rather welcoming than seeking to withdraw himself from their influence, he had yet within himself an instinct of true poetic feeling and a power of true poetic art, sufficient to lift him above their blandishments, and to anticipate by half a century that return to nature which in England was inaugurated by Cowper and finally consummated by Wordsworth.

Nor should it ever be forgotten that Ramsay was, in fact, the first in point of time of Scottish song-writers. He may be called the inventor of that species of song which is regarded as distinctively Scottish. Burns's songs have in much more abundant measure the true lyrical quality, the inspiration and the utterance, but they are of identically the same species as Ramsay's. To the green and but half-opened buds of Ramsay they offer the contrast of the full-blown blossoms of June, gorgeous with dyes and breathing a paradise of fragrance, but they are yet the development of those buds, grown on the same stem and drawing nourishment from the same soil. Much was to be expected from a country which had already given the rich promise of 'Polwarth on the Green,' 'Lochaber no more,' 'The last time I came o'er the Muir,' and a really charming love-song beginning somewhat coldly with the question, "Now wat ye wha I met yestreen?" They were the genuine forerunners of 'Bonnie Jean,' 'The gloomy Night is gath'ring fast,' and even of 'Highland Mary.'

There are some authors, and even authors of note, of whose private life it may be said, without any necessary implication of a stain upon their character, that the less one knows of it the better. They seem to have lived two individual and separate lives, the one social (or it may have been unsocial) and the other literary, between

which there was no vital bond of union. You will search the one in vain for key or commentary to the other. This was not so with Ramsay. His domestic life was in everyday contact with his literary life, supplying it with theme, feeling, illustration, and language. His literary life, in short, was, as far as it went, the expression of his domestic life; it was even more autobiographical than that of Burns. His, therefore, is a case where some acquaintance with the man is of service to a due appreciation of the poet.

It was fortunate for the development of his poetical faculty that his early years were spent without a break in the isolation and comparative solitude of upland rural life. Here he was, in the absence of other and less healthy attractions, in a sense compelled to make familiar acquaintance with the realism of Nature and the ways of the pastoral world. What he then learned he could never afterwards forget; and there can be little doubt that it was upon his recollection of the scenes and characters of his native district that he drew in the composition of 'The Gentle Shepherd.' His education was sufficiently liberal to include the Latin Grammar, and to enable the young student to make out the meaning of Horace, and even catch an occasional glimpse of the beauty of his style. In middle age he revived those early studies, and gave as the result some half-dozen versions of Horace in Lowland Scotch, which retain the sentiment and reproduce much of the pithy expression of the original.

> "Then fling on coals, and ripe the ribs,[1]
> And beek[2] the house baith but and ben;
> And mutchkin stoup[3] it hads but dribs,
> Then let's get in the tappit hen."[4]

This is really an admirable paraphrase, as a glance at the text will show:

> Dissolve frigus, ligna super foco
> Large reponens, atque benignius
> Deprome quadrimum Sabina,
> O Thaliarche, merum diota.

And not less happily turned are the lines:

> Nec dulces amores
> Sperne, puer, neque tu choreas,
> Donec virenti canities abest
> Morosa.

> "Be sure ye dinna quat the grip
> Of ilka joy when ye are young,
> Before auld age your vitals nip
> And lay ye twafald o'er a rung."[5]

Ramsay was kept at school till he was fifteen, and received what one may call, for a boy of his place in life, an excellent education. For this advantage he was indebted to his step-father, a Mr. Crichton, who seems to have owned a small piece of ground, upon which he lived and maintained a large family, in the neighbourhood of Leadhills. Ramsay's mother had been early left a widow; and, as the commencement of his life in the country was marked by his father's death, so the conclusion of it was probably determined by the death of his mother. At the age of fifteen, some time in the first year of last century, Allan Ramsay, an orphan, friendless and penniless, and dependent upon his own exertions for his livelihood, looked out upon the world in which he was yet to be both famous and wealthy, from the window of a wig-maker's shop in Edinburgh.

Ramsay was well connected, at least on his father's side. He claimed kindred with the Chief of the Ramsays, Ramsay of Dalhousie, and, as Goldsmith puts it, "had his claims allowed" by the Earl. There is little doubt that there were influential members of his grandfather's family in Edinburgh when he first went to live there; but as he remained throughout the whole course of his life independent of any of them, it is unnecessary to trace his connection with people to whom he owed so little. But it is necessary to correct one or two popular errors

[1] Stir the fire. [2] Warm.
[3] A small measure. [4] Large measure.

[5] A staff for old age.

concerning his first business. In the first place Ramsay was not a barber. It is very probable that in the early part of the eighteenth century the tonsorial art was a branch of surgery; but this at least is certain, that it had no connection as a craft with the calling of a wig-maker. Nor was Ramsay's life-long occupation as a burgess of Edinburgh that to which he had served an apprenticeship. It is true that he was a wig-maker when he began to be famous, but from the time of his established reputation as a new Scottish poet, that is some time between 1720 and 1726, he gradually took up the trade of a bookseller, and wig-making went to the wall. He was a bookseller, and a most enterprising one, for considerably over a quarter of a century; it was as a bookseller and book-lender he made a fortune; and it is with the trade of a dealer in books we should properly associate his name. Though he thus left wig-making, he was too sensible a man to despise it, or any other lawful occupation. He speaks jocularly of being a "thatcher of skulls," and—referring to his double business of wig-making and bookselling, which he carried on for a few years simultaneously—he describes himself as thatching the outside and lining the inside of "many a douce and witty pash (head)." In one of his rhyming epistles, indeed, he declares he was "bred but howe (humbly) enough to a mean trade." But he was in easy circumstances when he thus wrote retrospectively, and his correspondent was no less exalted a personage than the Secretary of the Admiralty, whose views of wig-making were no doubt as Ramsay sympathetically described them. His reasons for abandoning the occupation to which he was bred for the calling of a bookseller were perfectly satisfactory; he found the latter to be more congenial to his tastes, more lucrative, and less laborious. Wig-making, however, procured him the double advantage of a wife and patronage. His first patrons were naturally his customers, necessarily men of professional or at least genteel rank; and his wife, Christian, was the daughter of one of them, a legal practitioner in the town, of the name of Ross.

His marriage with this lady, who was considerably his superior in social rank, was the beginning of a long and happy union. It was celebrated during the New Year festivities of 1712. From that year good fortune, with scarcely one interval of absence, waited on his footsteps. It was about that time he first began to write verses in emulation of Hamilton, and it was in that same year he was admitted into a very select social coterie of twelve, self-styled the Easy Club, and numbering among its members a university professor, a doctor in large practice, and the well-known scholar and printer, Thomas Ruddiman. His connection with this club was of the utmost importance in drawing out and directing his poetical talent. He became its laureate, entertained its gatherings with his compositions, profited by its criticisms, and acquired something of its professional culture. It was for the Easy Club he wrote his humorous descriptions of low life, such as the elegy on the death of Maggie Johnston, a suburban ale-wife well known to all Edinburgh. This was really his first poem, his earlier pieces being merely the essays of an apprentice learning the art of literary expression. It was much applauded, and encouraged him to renewed efforts which were still more successful. The companion elegy on the death of Lucky Wood, the cleanly ale-wife of the Canongate, and his additions to the ancient poem of 'Christ's Kirk on the Green,' mark his highest achievements as a humorist in the department of low life. His situations in these compositions are intensely comical, and the language that depicts them is correspondingly blunt and broad. Coarse, indeed, they are, but their coarseness is neither morbid nor prurient. It is the natural

healthy coarseness of Chaucer. Hogarth found in Ramsay a brother artist, and in token of his delight at the discovery, dedicated to him the twelve plates of his illustrations of 'Hudibras.' But after his thirty-sixth year most of this coarseness disappears, and the result is a style of composition not less effective and much more refined, and more distinctly on the side of virtue. Ramsay however, it should be noticed, claimed in his earlier compositions the credit of a moralist, and attributed to the spiritual purblindness of his critics their failure to perceive the satire of his representations.

The members of the Easy Club were suspected of sympathy with Jacobitism, and the suspicion becoming warm, the club broke up in some alarm. Ramsay steered pretty clear of politics, but there is good ground for believing that his political leanings were towards the exiled Stuarts. The famous Countess of Eglinton, who accepted the dedication of 'The Gentle Shepherd,' was no politically indiscriminate patroness of literature; and there can be no doubt that community of political sentiment would be a recommendation, if not a requisite, to the friendship of Pope, Gay, and Arbuthnot—a friendship which Ramsay enjoyed. On the dissolution of the club, which occurred shortly after the fiasco of "The Fifteen," Ramsay resolved on an appeal to the public for confirmation of his claim to rank as a poet. He went about the matter with characteristic prudence. Specimens of his poetry were printed on broad sheets and circulated about the town by street-vendors, for the purpose of testing or stimulating the popular taste. The plan succeeded so well that it became a practice of the citizens' wives to send out for "Allan Ramsay's last piece," and discuss it with their afternoon tea. He next opened a subscription list for purchasers' names, and finally a handsome quarto of four hundred pages made its appearance from the press of his friend Ruddiman, and was speedily taken up. An analysis of the subscription list shows, to the credit of the Scottish nobility, that about one-seventh of his patrons were of aristocratic birth. It is pleasant to find Pope's name in the list. The result of the publication was to extend his fame, and to improve his fortunes by about four hundred guineas. At the same time it determined him to a literary career, and from the moment of that determination wig-making languished, and the more leisurely occupation of bookselling filled his vacant hours. A period of great industry followed. Scarcely a year passed for the next decade but he was before the public with one or more offerings of original or editorial work. His editorial work was the collection of selected songs, both Scottish and English, into 'The Tea-Table Miscellany,' and a series of Scottish poems, purporting to have been "wrote by the ingenious, before 1600," brought together into 'The Evergreen.' These collections contained compositions of his own, which were either too free morally or too dangerous politically to be owned amongst his authorised productions. Of these anonymous poems the best is, undoubtedly, 'The Vision,' which may, indeed, be regarded as Ramsay's most ambitious effort, and certainly reveals an unusual sweep and power of imagination. In creative work he ventured unfortunately into fields foreign alike to his genius and his art; he took to imitating Pope, and produced some very laborious essays in English verse, and a few sad but unsorrowful elegies. His true sphere and talent lay in the use of the Scottish language upon themes of national interest. Of this he was well aware; but he could not altogether resist the temptation to enter the lists with his English contemporaries and encounter them with their own weapons. His English verses, of which he wrote far too many, may show his culture, but they give no indication of his genius.

The quarto of which we have spoken appeared in 1721. Seven years later he published a companion quarto con-

taining the pieces written in the interval, and then he rested from poetical labours. The period of his literary activity altogether extended over twenty years, of which the first five were the years of his apprenticeship. He gave over when he ceased to write with facility,—when, as he said, he found his muse beginning to be "dour and dorty."[1] He had, however, used the pen too long and too assiduously to be able entirely to forego the luxury of its use, and an occasional epistle in verse towards the end of his life showed that if he composed with more effort he also composed with more pith.

The second quarto established Ramsay's fame. It contained the composition which gave him the most satisfaction, and which best illustrates the true character of his genius, the charming pastoral drama of 'The Gentle Shepherd.' It became instantly popular, and so excited the envy of enemies who had hitherto identified him with the school of art which delights to minister to immorality, that they absurdly refused him the authorship. The germ of the play will be found in two detached pastoral poems in the first quarto, where they seem to have attracted little attention. Ramsay ran them together as the first and second scenes of a drama which beautifully and naturally evolves the story they half suggest. No more pleasing and effective moral agency than this dramatic pastoral, the Bible alone excepted, ever entered the cottages of the Scottish peasantry. Its morality is of the best type; it is the morality of common-sense, practicable, honest, and cheerful.

From his forty-fifth year onwards till his death at the age of seventy-two, in 1758, Ramsay occupied himself chiefly with the enjoyment of his literary fame and the society or welfare of his children, and with the extension of his business as a burgess of Edinburgh. His bookseller's shop in High Street looked out upon the busiest, as it was the most fashionable and central, part of Edinburgh. It became a kind of lounge for the literary and professional men of the town. Here Gay used to waste the summer forenoons in congenial gossip with Ramsay, and find amusement in the motley crowds that thronged around the old Market Cross under the windows. It was here, too, that Ramsay instituted the Circulating Library, which, while it brought him in a substantial addition to his annual gains, introduced into Edinburgh the newest books published in London, and created and fostered a taste for reading, especially among the young, that was afterwards to bear good fruit in Scotland. There can be no doubt that the literary rivalry which sprang up between London and Edinburgh during the latter half of last century, a rivalry which Johnson lived to see and which Horace Walpole recognised, was in no small degree owing to the enterprise of Ramsay and the introduction of the Circulating Library. A feature of his library was the number of books of dramatic literature which it contained, and which were largely in demand by the younger part of the population. The cry was raised that Ramsay was polluting the morals of the city youth. He was unmoved by the cry, and continued to persevere in his plans for the enlightenment of the public. At this time there was not a single place of public amusement in Edinburgh except the Assembly, as it was called, which met for the recreation of dancing in the dreary fashion so picturesquely described for us by Oliver Goldsmith. There was no theatre. Ramsay resolved to erect a theatre at his own expense, and regulate the management of it so as to make its entertainments at once popular and elevating. At great cost the building was put up, and preparations were made for the opening day. The prices were already advertised. Nothing remained but that the house should be licensed. At the last moment, by a majority of the civic rulers, license was refused; the magistracy, who had the licensing power, had been

[1] Loth and sulky.

influenced by the clergy of the city; they were not likely soon to change their views upon dramatic representations, and Ramsay was almost ruined. The ruin that threatened him awoke manifestations of wild delight among those who are known in Scotland as the Unco Guid, and those others who had long been jealous of the success that had attended all his past enterprises. They preached at him, they lampooned him, they held him up as a fearful example of divine judgment. They published the Dying Words of Allan Ramsay, they set up A Looking-glass for Allan Ramsay. He tried to find redress by an appeal to the law. The lawyers told him that he had been damaged, but not injured—and with the nice legal distinction he was obliged to be satisfied. Finally he applied himself to his legitimate business, and in an incredibly short time retrieved his loss by the theatre, and amassed besides what seems to have been a very comfortable independency. Some considerable time before he retired fairly from business, he had built a queer octagonal villa on the Castle Hill, commanding an extensive view northwards of every variety of Scottish scenery, and here he comfortably closed a long, happy, and useful career. In his seventieth year he had written to the Laird of Pennycuik, one of his intimate friends :

> "I plan to be
> From shackling trade and danger free,
> That I may, loose from care and strife,
> With calmness view the edge of life,
> And when a full ripe age shall crave,
> Slide easily into my grave."

His last days were as he had wished. They found him as free from care and strife as it has ever fallen to the lot of men in similar circumstances to be. His children, a son and two daughters, were everything that he could desire. The son, whom at much expense he had bred as an artist, was rising into fame, and, possessed as he was of much of his father's talent and disposition, was already showing those artistic and social qualities which were presently to secure for him the honour of portrait-painter and prime favourite at the court of George the Third. He was equally free from strife. He had enemies, but they were none of his making ; they were either the fault of the age, or the envious growth of his good fortune. He was both generous enough and wise enough to leave them alone. Satirist, of course, he was, but his satire was of that genial and even gentle kind, that aims at institutions rather than individuals, at manners rather than men, and is content with simple exposure. Ramsay, either as a poet or a man, needs no great critic to interpret him for us. His life, and his writings, which afford the best commentary on his life, are open to all who have eyes to see. But if we must find a critic of authority with whom our own opinion shall agree, we shall hardly find a better than Walter Scott, who brought the essential quality of the man into a single word when he called him "the joyous RAMSAY."

J. LOGIE ROBERTSON.

AN ALEXANDRIAN AGE.

"There is," wrote Lord Tennyson not long ago to an enterprising gentleman (of American extraction) who had addressed him on the question—so dear to some critics, so delicate to all poets—the great and still-vexed question of plagiarism, "there is, I fear, a prosaic set growing up among us, editors of booklets, bookworms, index-hunters, or men of great memories and no imagination," and so forth. There was more in the indictment, but this is the gist of it for us just at present.

Other persons, less distinguished than Lord Tennyson, have found words for the same thought before him; and who does not remember how himself, when but plain Will Waterproof, one winter's evening many a long year ago was moved, by the relish of a vintage

> "—whose father-grape grew fat
> in Lusitanian summers,"

to grow somewhat maudlin-moral over the evil an age of little books was like to work on the vast heart of the poet? Only the other day Mr. Goldwin Smith asked in these pages if the noticeable stagnation in our literature and art might not be something more than the mere accidental meeting of the man and the moment, might not rather be a sign that the world had passed for ever out of its poetic youth into a maturity of science?

Perhaps for the mere fact that the present is a time of small creative activity in literature we need not be so greatly alarmed, but rather, indeed, hug ourselves in anticipation — we happy few, who still dare shut our ears to the honey-sweet voice of Mr. Herbert Spencer, and will not accept all poetry as mere sensual caterwauling. If we consider, it was so before either of those splendid poetic outbursts that England has known. It was so before Marlowe built his mighty line to make ready the way for Shakespeare; it was so before Burns and Cowper struck the first notes of that great jubilee of song of whose dying strains even our own times have caught some fitful echoes. And now that a generation has arisen which can buy nineteen editions of 'The Epic of Hades,' remembering what was in store for the children of the men who thought the author of 'The Triumphs of Temper' a great poet, we may take heart of grace and hope that the end cannot be far off, and that even our old ears may yet be destined to catch the first notes of another Shelley carolling like his own sky-lark in the dawn of a new golden age.

But our present purpose is not to dip into the future—an enchanting pastime for the poet, but for us poor dwellers in this work-day world of prose, who cannot stay our hungry stomachs with such stuff as dreams are made of, an unsubstantial toil—our purpose, we say, is not with the future but the present. Let us try to accept the present and all its works, not grudgingly nor querulously, but, like honest Dogberry, giving God thanks and making no boast of it.

There is no doubt of our activity in the production of printed matter. Whatever the quality be, the quantity at least is Gargantuan. Some unknown sin has dipped us all in ink. There is, we believe, a statute of the realm which compels every publisher to send a copy of every book he publishes to the libraries of the British Museum and of the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge. But unless a second Omar comes ere long to our help, surely the world itself will not

contain the books that shall be written. Sometimes one is tempted half to wish that one of our myriad-minded Governments would ordain another statute to check this inky torrent, or that the famous invention of Johann Fust could by some law of nature or device of man be wholly lost for a time. Could the brains and the types lie fallow for a generation or two it were no bad thing perhaps for the soil. But these wishes are idle. We must accept the present and all its works, and let the future do with them as it will: let our children's children, if it please them,

> "gather as their own
> The harvest that the dead have sown,
> The dead forgotten and unknown."

It is not easy to hit upon the precise note of any age, so as to fix and catalogue it for future use; and very far indeed from easy to do so for this many-sided age. Even Carlyle, who was fond of this cataloguing work, and in his roaring rough-shod way not unskilful at it, would be hard put to it here. The Age of Shams would hardly serve, for that title would be as applicable to a score or more of the ages that have gone before, and to all probably that shall come after. There is more reason in another suggestion we have somewhere seen—the Age of Whitewash, to mark the more than Christian charity with which ruffians of every grade of ruffianism, from an emperor to a mere poet, have been scrubbed down and reproduced more golden and glittering than the Chryselephantine Zeus. But this again would carry us too far from our present purpose, which holds not of the domain of ethics but rather of the domain of æsthetics. So we have chosen the Alexandrian Age for our title. It is not, let us make haste to acknowledge, one of our own coining—a point, no doubt, in its favour; its significance, if any need an explanation, can very easily be explained.

After the final victory of Philip of Macedon at Chæronea, the Greece that had been was no more. She was dead, politically and intellectually; politically she was dependent on Philip, intellectually she was dependent on the memories of her past greatness. The eastern conquests of Philip's triumphant son, his early death and the consequent disruption of his empire into the three kingdoms of Macedonia, Asia, and Egypt, had spread the Greek language and the Greek civilisation everywhere. But the free Greek life that had made that language what it was, and inspired that literature, was dead. This civilisation, which is properly called Hellenism, as Professor Jebb tells us, produced a literature no longer spontaneous and creative, but derived from that already existing. Greek Literature, in short, had now become, in the Professor's words, a polite industry in which success was to be achieved by obeying and inventing critical canons; and, as a natural and inevitable consequence, it had become the prey of mannerism and affectation.

This period of Greek literature is commonly known as the Alexandrian Age, from the fact that in the years when this Hellenism, such as it was, was at its prime, the great Egyptian city of Alexandria was the intellectual centre of the world, and its rulers, the Ptolemies, the great patrons of all of art and literature that the world had then to show. "The place," wrote Charles Kingsley of it as it was many centuries even after the era of the Ptolemies, when it had become a mere province of Rome, herself fast hastening to her fall, "the place seemed fragrant with all the riches of Greek thought and song, since the days when Ptolemy Philadelphus walked there with Euclid and Theocritus, Callimachus, and Lycophron."[1]

To inquire into the causes which have brought our literature to its present pass, if haply they may be found to have any affinity to those which worked on the literature of Greece, would be interesting, but not

[1] 'Hypatia.'

to our purpose. Who was our Philip of Macedon? Who is our Alexander? When is the great division of Empire to be? Great questions!—but happily not ours to answer. Enough for us that the literary tendencies of the age (which Mr. Swinburne, who has, as every one knows, a neat hand at an epithet, has also marked as a "ghastly, thin-faced time") are distinctly Alexandrian. Literature has become an industry, more or less polite; mannerism and affectation have — one can hardly say, indeed, begun to invade it; the temptation is rather to say, have taken entire possession of it.

Probably if any champion of the age were to think it worth his while to protest against such a charge, he would select for the particular point of his defence the great improvement in style that our literature shows everywhere, even in its most trifling and ephemeral work, the work of its daily newspapers, for instance. The sense for style, it will be said, has immensely grown of late years. Such a charge as that De Quincey brought against our fathers no one could bring against their sons. He, indeed, maintained that there never had been at any time in England a sufficient practical respect for the arts of composition, and that at the time he particularly censured this disrespect had increased to a most painful extent. "If you could look anywhere," he declared,

"with a right to expect continual illustrations of what is good in the manifold qualities of style, it should reasonably be among our professional authors; but, as a body, they are distinguished by the most absolute carelessness in this respect. Whether in the choice of words or idioms, or in the construction of their sentences, it is not possible to conceive the principle of lazy indifference carried to a more revolting extremity. Proof lies before you, spread out upon every page, that no excuse of awkwardness, or of inelegance, or of unrhythmical cadence, is so rated in the tariff of faults as to balance in the writer's estimate the trouble of remoulding a clause, of interpolating a phrase, or even of striking the pen through a superfluous word." [1]

[1] See an essay on Style in volume xi. of De Quincey's collected works.

Now all this, it will be triumphantly affirmed, has been changed; of this contempt, at least, our literature has been completely purged. The recognition of the fact that something more goes to the making of good English prose than the random outpouring on paper of the first words that present themselves as sufficient to convey the writer's thought; that prose has, in fact, certain inevitable laws of its own no less than poetry; that, like poetry, it must combine something of the quality of architecture with something of the quality of music; that the words must, as it were, be built up with the necessary balance and proportion, and that the cadence of a well-adjusted sentence should be as clear and convincing as the measures of verse—the recognition of these indisputable truths has become, we shall be told, a much more general possession than it was but a very few years ago. And this sense shows itself not only actively in our production, but in our judgments also. The general taste has greatly improved. We are more capable of testing and deciding for ourselves than we were. We are no longer affected with false glitter, and bow down before false idols; we have tumbled many a Dagon over the threshold, and torn the veil from many an impostor. But is this really so?

Among the many epigrams foisted upon the late Master of Trinity was one supposed to have been coined on a voluminous writer of the present day, of whom an ardent (female) admirer had just asserted that he had "so much taste." "He has," was the answer, "and all of it bad." There can be no doubt that there is a great deal of "style" in our current literature—it has, that is to say, a very distinctive form and manner of its own; but that this style is the very best possible, or even very good, is perhaps not quite so certain.

Some time last year Mr. Louis Stevenson wrote a short essay on the technical elements of style in liter-

ature.[1] Mr. Stevenson has himself a very pretty talent that way, and one was naturally glad to learn his idea of an art in which he had shown himself to be no mean proficient. And certainly Mr. Stevenson provided one with a very entertaining piece of reading; except in one passage where he became rather too technical for simple intelligences, and, finding the ordinary tongue apparently too limited for his purpose, had recourse to some mystic combinations of letters which might have had something to do with algebra, but had certainly nothing to do with literature. But entertaining as the paper was, it really explained nothing but the one fact—patent to every one with the slightest capacity for appreciating the beauties of style—that there was nothing capable of explanation. And the singular part of the performance was that Mr. Stevenson was himself frankly conscious of the inutility of it all. "The amateur," he said, "will always grudgingly receive details of a method which can be stated, but can never wholly be explained." And again: "Each phrase of each sentence, like an air or a recitative in music, should be so artfully compounded out of long and short, out of accented and unaccented, as to gratify the sensual ear. And of this the ear is the sole judge. It is impossible to lay down laws. Even in our accentual and rhythmic language no analysis can find the secret of the beauty of a verse; how much less, then, of these phrases, such as prose is built of, which obey no law but to be lawless and yet to please." Precisely: the quality of style cannot be analysed or defined; it must be spiritually discerned.

It is assuredly no part of our purpose to attempt to succeed where Mr Stevenson has failed. And, indeed, though it is indisputable that a good style in writing, as in all other artistic work, can only be learned by the study of good models (though nature will, of course, make the time of apprenticeship pass easier and quicker to some than others), yet to endeavour to teach the art of writing as David Ramsay might have taught his lads to take a watch to pieces and put it together again, strikes us as about as hopeless a task as Izaak Walton owned it was "to make a man that was none to be an angler by a book." But a little time might be passed, not unpleasantly to those who may be in the mood, in considering how far our present practice is in accord with what would have been once called the universal laws of prose composition, where, if at all, it runs counter to them, and from what causes.

There is a passage in Coleridge's 'Table Talk,' as reported by his nephew, which contains perhaps as concise and sound a definition of good prose as it would be possible to construct; and as he proceeded, according to his custom, to amplify and illustrate the definition, we cannot do better than give the passage in the great talker's own words:

"The definition of good prose is—proper words in their proper places; of good verse—the most proper words in their proper places. The propriety is in either case relative. The words in prose ought to express the intended meaning, and no more; if they attract attention to themselves, it is, in general, a fault. In the very best styles, as Southey's, you read page after page, understanding the author perfectly, without once taking notice of the medium of communication; it is as if he had been speaking to you all the while. But in verse you must do more; there the words, the *media*, must be beautiful, and ought to attract your notice—yet not so much and so perpetually as to destroy the unity which ought to result from the whole poem. This is the general rule; but, of course, subject to some modifications, according to the different kinds of prose or verse. Some prose may approach towards verse, as oratory, and therefore a more studied exhibition of the *media* may be proper; and some verse may border more on mere narrative, and there the style should be simpler."

As marking a distinction the definitions are not perhaps worth much, and the desire to be antithetical and

[1] 'The Contemporary Review,' April, 1885.

epigrammatic has, as will sometimes happen even with the cleverest, been gratified, in the case of the definition of verse, rather at the expense of better things. But it would be hard to frame a simpler and more conclusive definition of good prose than this, *proper words in their proper places.* At that no one surely will cavil, especially when he takes the qualifying clause, *the propriety is in either case relative;* that is so obviously rich in possibilities, and capable of being expanded to suit almost every whim. But when we get a little farther, when we find that the quality of good prose is that it should not attract notice to itself, that the reader's attention should not be diverted from the author's meaning to his mode of expression—then we come at once on debateable ground. For surely this is the very point at issue between the "young light-hearted masters" of the modern prose and the homely veterans of the old school. Has it not been roundly declared that the vital fact for an author to consider now is not what he has to say, but how he is to say it? Small wonder surely that a writer who starts with this theory should be very precise indeed in his words.

De Quincey thought that our native disregard for the graces of style had its origin in the native manliness of our character, "in the sincerity and directness of the British taste, in the principle of *esse quam videri*, which might be taken as the key to much in our manner, much in the philosophy of our lives." Far be it from us to assert the converse of this theory, but it is certain that manliness is not just at this moment the capital distinction of our literature either in prose or verse. With the latter we will not now concern ourselves. There is plenty of it, to be sure, of a kind; but even at its best the poetry of the Victorian era has always had, among its manifold gifts and graces, a tendency to disregard two at least out of the three canon laws of Milton, simplicity and passion. And now, what is there to say but that

"the best are silent now,"

or at the most strike here and there a solitary note in which gratitude tries hard to catch some echo of the earlier strain? But it is with our prose work that we have just now to do, and that no one can well maintain to be, whatever else it be, pre-eminently robust, sincere, and direct—in a word, pre-eminently manly. In the general bulk of our original work this quality of manliness is certainly not conspicuous; in our criticism it is, one might say, entirely wanting; and in our more serious work, historical, philosophical, and the like, the general tendency is to a minute, dissecting, curious mood, more given to pulling down than to building up. And this tendency is inevitably reflected in the style. The modern style is, indeed, the modern man.

Lord Tennyson, as we have seen, complains that the new generations have no imagination but much memory. For the imagination, well; but for the memory, one is tempted to ask what is it they remember? Surely they cannot remember the work of the great masters of our English Prose? If we take all the great writers of our country, from the time when prose had really won a kingdom of its own, from the time, that is to say, of Dryden, to the present, we shall find that the quality common to all of them is straightforwardness. Each one of them knew well what he wanted to say, and said it in the clearest and directest manner possible to him. They had, many of them, faults of their own, but no one of them is ever wilfully obscure; in no one of them is there a single passage it is necessary to read twice to take the meaning; in no one of them is a word tortured for the sake of effect into a usage for which it was never made. And with the writers whose place is truly among the poets,

or with those whose fame supports a divided duty, writers like Gray, Cowper, Byron, Scott, Wordsworth—how sound and pure is their prose, how clear, unaffected, and straightforward. Even with men such as Keats and Shelley, from whom one might have looked for something ethereal, fantastic, something not quite of this world, when they came down to earth to write plain prose, their language is as simple and to the purpose as though they had never written a line of poetry in their lives. Shelley told his friend Gisborne that it were as wise to go to a gin-shop for a leg of mutton as to expect anything human or earthly from him; but in his prose this certainly was not so. And except those last ones, written when he was weak and unstrung in the grasp of a mortal disease, and so cruelly made public a few years ago, the excellent common sense, manliness, and clear perception of things conspicuous in Keats's letters are perhaps, considering his age and circumstances, even more astonishing than his marvellous poetical gifts. Yet none can say our great prose-writers wanted a style. No man ever wrote prose more surely in the grand manner than Bolingbroke; for purity, sweetness, and simplicity what writer has ever matched Goldsmith? Take again the men of a later day, take Southey, Hallam, Arnold, Thirlwall, Macaulay; whatever their faults may be, no one can charge them with obscurity or affectation.

The old order has changed indeed. The essence of a good prose style now seems to be to coin new words, or, if the genius of the writer be not equal to that, to drag out of the lumber-rooms of the past words long thrown away and forgotten; to twist familiar words to unfamiliar uses, or out of some seeming harmless combination of homely syllables to weave some fantastic phrase that shall put them all to shame—as who should trick out some good honest son of the Victorian soil in the tawdry tarnished splendours of the Carolan court. The latest and certainly one of the most amazing instances of this sleight of pen that we have met with may be found in a little book professing to be a biography of Ben Jonson, wherein the writer, wishing to say that the jolly tavern life of those times provoked men to drink more than was good for them, concealed the vulgar truth by observing that *the tavern had the defect of its quality.* It is but fair, however, to say that this is a particular case; it is not every one, it is perhaps not any one but the master, who can conjure with that wand.

This form of writing is, of course, in itself no new thing. No age has lacked its Euphuists. But in the old time it was but a modish affectation practised for sheer idleness, as a man might spend a summer day in excogitating a new pattern for his sword-knot or cravat. That was then the humour of it, and as such it was recognised and laughed at. But to-day it seems to be the very end and aim of our young ambitions, the very form and pressure of the time; not laughed at, though perchance grieved for by the judicious few, but rather courted and toiled after, as men might toil after virtue. The diagnosis of the disease is somewhat complicated. In part, no doubt, it comes from that overweening desire for notoriety which disfigures so much of our modern art, and is perhaps at once the most pitiful and the most ridiculous quality of the time. The uncouth buffooneries which seem to pass with some simple souls for the consummation of fine acting have, it may here be remarked, their origin in the same insane craving; and so also have those impudent experiments on the folly of the age in which certain young painters are encouraged to indulge. For this desire flatters itself with the pretence of originality, and with Pharisaic complaisancy takes pride that it is not as others are. Both De Quincey and Hazlitt marked this disease as not uncommon in their day.

Says the former, in that essay already quoted:

"Amongst the myriads who are prompted to authorship by the coarse love of reputation, or by the nobler craving for sympathy, there will always be thousands seeking distinction through novelties of diction. Hopeless of any audience through mere weight of matter, they will turn for their last resource to such tricks of innovation as they can bring to bear upon language. What care they for purity or simplicity of diction, if at any cost of either they can win a special attention to themselves?"

And Hazlitt lashes the same sort of pretenders yet more fiercely, as his custom was:

"They cannot get beyond the daubings of fancy, the varnish of sentiment. Objects are not linked to feelings, words to things, but images revolve in splendid mockery, words represent themselves in their strange rhapsodies. The categories of such a mind are pride and ignorance—pride in outside show, to which they sacrifice everything, and ignorance of the true worth and hidden structure both of words and things. With a sovereign contempt for what is familiar and natural, they are the slaves of vulgar affectation—of a routine of high-flown phrases. Scorning to imitate realities, they are unable to invent anything, to strike out one original idea. They are not copyists of nature, it is true; but they are the poorest of all plagiarists, the plagiarists of words. All is far-fetched, dear-bought, artificial, oriental in subject and allusion; all is mechanical, conventional, vapid, formal, pedantic in style and execution. They startle and confound the understanding of the reader by the remoteness and obscurity of their illustrations; they soothe the ear by the monotony of the same everlasting round of circuitous metaphors. They are the *mock-school* in poetry and prose. They flounder about between fustian in expression and bathos in sentiment. They tantalize the fancy, but never reach the head nor touch the heart." [1]

If this were all, if the craving for notoriety were the only cause at work, then it were small matter. The disease would carry its remedy with it, for it would inevitably come to pass that distinction would have at last to be found in a return to the old idiomatic English of our fathers. But there is a deeper evil at work. It is painfully clear that with many writers, who have no need to go about so insanely to achieve distinction, the disease comes simply from a failure of ideas. The late Lord Houghton (who, among his other titles to our regard, was a merry man) is reported to have excused himself when rebuked by Carlyle for writing poetry by the plea that he found it so useful for concealing the commonplace. This fantastic jargon is mighty useful for the same work. One notes this especially in a certain sort of novels, wherein page after page of the most curious language is spent in describing the mode of a lady's dress or the grace with which she sips her tea. Not in this way did the great story-tellers write. Turn to the greatest of them all, turn to Sir Walter Scott: there, in those incomparable romances, one truly finds what Coleridge has marked as the essence of good prose—"You read page after page, understanding the author perfectly without once taking notice of the medium of communication." The brisk movement of the story, the reality of the scenes, the variety of the characters and the true dramatic instinct (though a play Sir Walter could not write) with which they are made to reveal and explain themselves, the humour and the pathos, all the grand healthy humanity of the man and his work—page after page one turns in delighted unconsciousness of the means whereby all these wonders are wrought; nor is it till all is over, and the whole effect is before you, clear and vivid as though you had yourself been an actor in the scenes, that you realise how great a master of his art must he be who can thus with a stroke of his pen call back the long vanished past, and bid the dead bones live. And even those who are conspicuous for their sense of style, Thackeray, for instance, and Hawthorne, wrote not in this way; their native language was always good enough for them; they always write "like a man of God's making." But it is perhaps in our current criticism that these Armados are more undis-

[1] 'Essays on Men and Manners:'—On Familiar Style.

guisedly rampant; for here the ideas, where they are anything more than sheer fantasy or the tritest commonplaces, being almost invariably taken from the men whom the critics have set themselves to supersede, it is imperatively necessary to disguise them in arabesques of the most bewildering pattern. We have no hesitation in saying, though we incur thereby the terrific curse of Philistinism, that we would far sooner put in a young reader's hand the criticisms of such men as Hallam, Jeffrey, and Macaulay, than of all the criticasters who have sneered at them since. With the former he would be sure, at least, of two good things—good sense and good English; and, after reading an article in the current number of the 'Quarterly Review,' we may add that his young ideas would certainly not be harassed by the astounding confusion, to say the least of it, which seems to mark the present system of teaching English Literature in the University of Cambridge.

There is a third cause which may possibly co-operate with the two already named, and that is, indolence. It may sound paradoxical to reproach a generation, at whose astounding fertility of production we have but just been wondering, with indolence; yet so it is. If we consider their work we shall see that beyond the mere physical exertion of driving the pen over the paper the proportion of labour involved in it is very small. Consider, for example, the sort of novels which one of their most industrious fabricators has assured us is the only sort tolerable now. What intellectual toil can have gone to their making? They tell no story, they evolve no plot; action they have none; their characters are not new, nor their incidents, if they have any. So far as they are anything at all beyond so many pounds avoirdupois of printed matter, they are literal transcripts of the commonplace transactions and chatter of the every-day life around us. Now, though the disciples and admirers of the famous school of Realism may stare at our audacity, we make bold to affirm that there is nothing in the world easier than this sort of writing. There is no man, nor woman neither, who resolves to set down precisely all that he or she may see or hear in four and twenty hours, say, of waking life, but shall turn you out your realistic novel, as the Grand Lama of Thibet will turn you out your prayers, by the yard. Such work needs not invention, nor imagination, nor fancy. The only quality of the artist it calls for is the sense of proportion, the faculty of selection; and that, anybody who has once experimented on this school of fiction will know well it rarely, if ever, gets. A writer, content to produce this sort of stuff, may write, as Theseus sits, for ever; and according as his taste leads him to Mayfair or to Seven Dials for his copying-ground, so will his literature be a polite industry, or the reverse. What matter that "he draweth out the thread of his verbosity finer than the staple of his argument," if only the verbosity be of the right texture? But then, it may be asked, some labour surely is needed to master this new tongue; it cannot come, like reading and writing, by nature? It is the easiest trick in the world, that the veriest tyro shall master in "the posteriors of a day, which the rude multitude call the afternoon." Let us take Hazlitt again, and hear how it is to be done:

"It is as easy to write a gaudy style without ideas, as it is to spread a pallet of showy colours, or to smear in a flaunting transparency. . . . The florid style is the reverse of the familiar. The last is employed as an unvarnished medium to convey ideas; the first is resorted to as a spangled veil to conceal the want of them. When there is nothing to be set down but words, it costs little to have them fine. Look through the dictionary, and cull out a *florilegium*, rival the *tulippomania*. *Rouge* high enough, and never mind the natural complexion. The vulgar, who are not in the secret, will admire the look of preternatural health and vigour; and the fashionable, who regard only appearances, will be delighted with the imposition. Keep to your sounding generalities, your tinkling phrases, and all will be well. Swell out an

unmeaning truism to a perfect tympany of style. A thought, a distinction is the rock on which all this brittle cargo of verbiage splits at once. Such writers have merely *verbal* imaginations, that retain nothing but words. . . . Their most ordinary speech is never short of an hyperbole, splendid, imposing, vague, incomprehensible, magniloquent, a cento of sounding commonplaces."

Some few years ago we were sitting with a friend in a theatre, watching one of those dreary travesties of French essays in adultery which then constituted the most popular form of English drama. "It is curious," observed our friend, "that now, while everybody is crying out for an original play, nobody has conceived the idea of representing a husband and wife faithful to and contented with each other." It is surely curious that now, while everybody is straining every nerve to be original, nobody has conceived the idea of writing English. Let it be granted that, as we have surmised, nobody now has very much, if anything, to say; at least, there would be something new in proclaiming this fact in what was once our native tongue. Moreover, the practice might lead to broader and still happier issues: for if our professors of the polite industry of literature could see their works translated into plain English, it might give them pause. And a little pause would be just now so very beneficial to all parties.

THE PROTECTORATE OF PORCOLONGU.

Who does not know the island of Porcolongu, and the group to which it gives its name—loveliest cluster of islets with which the hand of Nature has sprinkled the sunny bosom of the South Pacific? Its name has long been familiar to every Board-school boy in the kingdom; and so keenly has the present rage for annexation stimulated the study of geography in the official world, that there are few of the more punctually arriving clerks in the Foreign Office who cannot make shift to find it on a good map before it is time to go out for lunch. No island even in that favoured region is more blest. Its climate is delicious, its people contented, its king convivial. The demands of the Australian labour-market do not expose it to more than an occasional visit from vessels engaged in the coolie-traffic—whose crews, moreover, rarely use their revolvers nowadays, except in cases of very obstinate resistance. Porcolongu rejoices in a European Prime Minister, declared by travellers who have enjoyed his hospitality to possess the best (for surely the strongest is the best) head in the southern hemisphere; and it is the diocesan seat of a most zealous colonial bishop, always courteously ready to offer ghostly counsel to any member of his flock who can make it convenient to call upon him at the Athenæum between two and four.

It was not to be supposed that a spot so rich in natural and acquired advantages would long remain unnoticed by any of the Great Powers of Europe. As lying in the high road to nowhere, its position eminently fitted it for use as a coaling-station by vessels plying on that route, and was at the same time calculated to impress every European Power with the necessity of annexing the group as a mere measure of self-protection against the aggressive designs of its neighbours. Accordingly, in the year 188– it suddenly occurred to two Continental States that they had subjects in Porcolongu whose interests had been too long neglected; and they proceeded to establish consulates there without further delay. Diplomacy has earned so bad a name for its method of treating facts that it should in common justice be here recorded that this was no mere pretext on the part of the two Continental States in question. There were three Frenchmen, one of them an escaped convict from New Caledonia, and two Germans, both fugitives from military service, resident on the island; so that Mr. Quillitt, the ambitious and discontented British Consul who had been for some years protecting the five British subjects in Porcolongu, could only report to his Government that this movement on the part of France and Germany "appeared" to him "suspicious,"—adding that, though there was a "marked disparity between the French, and still more between the German interests requiring protection and those of Great Britain, he was not prepared to express an absolute conviction that the attitude of the two Powers indicated any designs of territorial acquisition on the part of either."

Mr. Quillitt's, however, was not the only bosom in which suspicion was aroused. The arrival of the French and German Consuls awoke uneasiness also in that part of The O'Mara Molloy's person which he was wont to describe, at the same time striking it, as "me har'rt"; for its owner was shrewdly sensible that if Porcolongu were to pass into the hands of any

European Power, the occupation of The O'Mara, like that of The O'Thello, would be gone for ever. Now this enterprising and ingenious Irishman was growing old, and knew it. Though descended, like a working majority of his fellow-countrymen, from the ancient kings of Ireland, there were reasons (not unconnected with pecuniary liabilities) which made him unwilling to return to the land over which his ancestors had once ruled; and his various sojourns in different parts of the world had done more for the enlargement of his mind than of his means. He had on two occasions succeeded in acquiring a moderate fortune (on paper) by services rendered to the successful candidate (who ultimately became by the vigorous employment of paid canvassers in military uniform the sole competitor) for the Presidency of a South American Republic; but his gains had in each case, through an imprudent delay of more than a fortnight in realising them, been swept away by a counter-revolution. Chance had brought him to Porcolongu; great gifts, both of administration and of trade rum, had commended him to the notice of its king; and the impulsive gratitude of the monarch had soon afterwards pressed the post of Prime Minister on the accomplished stranger who had been the first to bring him under the civilising influences of "poker." The opportunities of the post had enabled The O'Mara Molloy to lay by a certain provision for his old age, but one by no means sufficient, as he felt, to maintain the state becoming his royal extraction. and the prospect of finding himself turned adrift at an early date by the representative of some annexing or protecting European Power gave him considerable anxiety. Clearly it was necessary for him to make hay while the sun shone.

A day or two after the lineal descendant of Brian Boroihme had come to this conclusion, a knock at the door aroused Mr. Quillitt from his afternoon siesta in the little shanty which was dignified by the name of the British Consulate.

"Come in," cried the British Consul drowsily. "Oh! it's you, Molloy, is it?" Mr. Quillitt never recognised the Prime Minister's chieftainship of his sept, in familiar intercourse. "Why, what the devil is the matter?" he continued, his attention arrested by the look of portentous gravity on the Premier's face.

"Matter is it?" said The O'M. M., shutting the door behind him with a mysterious air. "It's the divil and all the matter, me boy; as ye'll say hwhan I tell ye."

"Well, speak out, man! what is it?" inquired Mr. Quillitt with impatience, and apparently quite forgetful of the fact that he was addressing the First Minister of the Crown. "Have you dropped an ace out of your sleeve, or has the King joined the Blue Ribbon Army?"

"Misther Quillutt, sorr!" replied his visitor with much dignity, "your jokes are unbecoming, and my business is serious—anny way for you and your Government. And let me say, sorr, that since 'tis little enough that The O'Mara Molloy owes to the oppressors of me counthry, the kindness I'm doing yourself personally by this visit should be the more appreciated."

"I beg your Excellency's pardon," said the Consul with mock gravity, which, however, soon became real on hearing his companion's next sentence.

"'Twould be bad for you in Downing Street, I imagine, Mr. Quillutt," said the illustrious Irishman, "if the French were to annex Porcolongu, and you had heard divil a word about it until after the thricolor had been hoisted."

"Eh? what? annex it?" exclaimed Quillitt much alarmed. "What makes you think they are going to——"

"Never mind what makes me think ut," said the statesman loftily. "A Proime Minister, sorr, is not at liberty to revale the sources of his information. Enough that I have been made acquaintud through a trusty eegent

with M. de Chauvin's insthructions, and I'm informed that in the course of a few weeks unless—*unless*, mind—something occurs to prevent ut, the whole group will pass under the French flag."

"Good God!" ejaculated the Consul, convinced by the solemnity of the Minister's manner. "But something *must* be done, the thing *must* be prevented."

"You're right, me boy," said his visitor, with a smile of satisfaction at the impression which he had made, and which he saw might by judicious management be indefinitely increased.

After about half an hour's conversation his Excellency took his departure, leaving Mr. Quillitt in a state of considerable perturbation. His confidence in The O'Mara Molloy's judgment, or even in his veracity, was not boundless; but in the present case the Prime Minister's statement derived only too much credibility from the circumstances. The establishment of the French and German consulates in Porcolongu had struck Mr. Quillitt from the first as suspicious. What could France and Germany want with a Consul to protect their three French and two German subjects on the island? It was not as though, like England, they had five citizens to look after, and a sixth (or, if twins, a sixth and seventh) expected. Decidedly this step on the part of these Powers portended something; and it might be as well to be on one's guard. Some bold precautionary stroke was necessary; and after long rumination Mr. Quillitt devised and determined on it. Next morning, accordingly, he attired himself in his consular uniform (a compliment which he always paid the Prime Minister whenever he was about to make him any questionable proposal) and went round to The O'Mara Molloy's official residence at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

His Excellency was sitting under his veranda in his shirt-sleeves, smoking his after-breakfast cigar, with a cooling, but not too cooling, drink before him. Noticing his visitor's attire, he proposed, with the native courtesy of his race, to array himself in the cocked hat "bequaithed to me uncle by a mar'rshal of France," which, not of course unaccompanied by other though less imposing articles of apparel, constituted his official costume.

Mr. Quillitt begged him not to trouble himself. "I have called, your Excellency," he said, with much solemnity of manner, "to resume, if I may be permitted to do so, our conversation of yesterday with reference to the designs of France upon his Majesty's possessions."

The O'Mara Molloy bowed with a dignity equal to that of the Consul, but remained silent.

"So grave do I consider the situation, as disclosed to me in your Excellency's statement, that I propose taking immediate steps—diplomatic of course," he added, after a momentary pause, and in a tone of meaning, which, however, produced no responsive sign upon his companion's face, "with a view to the protection of the British interests which would be endangered by a French annexation of the group. The most judicious course of procedure would be, I think, to endeavour to negotiate a treaty of alliance with his Majesty, King Afseesova, whereby, in consideration of his Majesty's agreeing to recognise a British Protectorate over his dominions, the British Government would on their part guarantee an undisturbed sovereignty over them to him and his heirs for ever. May I count on your Excellency's good offices in bringing about such an arrangement?"

"Ye may, sorr," said The O'Mara Molloy, after a few moments of statesmanlike reflection. "But it's impossible to pledge meself that me efforts will be successful."

"I will address a despatch to your Excellency," said Mr. Quillitt, with a smile flickering at the corner of his mouth, "pointing out to you what I deem to be the commanding reasons which should determine you in the

interests both of your native and your adopted country to conclude the Convention which I suggest."

"Will your argyments be addressed to his Majesty, or to me personally?" inquired The O'M. M., with a twinkle in his eye.

"To you personally," said the British Consul, the smile taking firmer possession of his lips. And producing a fat pocket-book from his pocket, he proceeded: "Inclosure A, in despatch No. So-and-so, will contain this powerful appeal to your Excellency's fine sense of political expediency." With which words he waved gently before the eyes of his companion a small oblong slip of paper bearing the brief but pregnant legend, "I.O.U. 500*l*. The O'Mara Molloy."

The blood of another line of sovereigns (less than five hundred perhaps, but still a considerable number) flushed up into the cheeks of the Prime Minister, and lent a deeper purple to his kingly nose.

"Never!" he exclaimed with indignant emphasis, as soon as the power of speech returned. "Never! Divil a treaty do ye get from me, Mr. Quillutt, on such terms as those!"

"But, my dear fellow—"

"Not another word, sorr! I'm astonished that a representative of the British Crown should insult a British subject by asking um to traffic in his debts of honour."

Mr. Quillitt was abashed. It had occurred to him that the most economical way of securing the Minister's good offices would be to forgive him a debt he had contracted to the Consul in the vicissitudes of *écarté*. But he had not taken sufficient account of the sensitive pride which animates the breasts of those Irishmen whose ancestors were summoned to rule by the acclamations of their countrymen on the Hill of Tara. Nor perhaps had he appraised with sufficient exactitude the pecuniary value of the Prime Minister's "paper" in the modest estimation of its signatory.

There was nothing for it, Mr. Quillitt perceived, but to offer his Excellency something down, and the Consul at last resolved after further reflection to "go a monkey" (as he expressed it) out of his own pocket. If the *coup* came off, he might look to be reimbursed out of the secret service money; if it failed — well, he could still trust, he thought, to his superior force at *écarté* to compel the Prime Minister to disgorge some, if not the whole, of his gains. He accordingly lost no time in arranging the matter by the despatch of a cheque for the amount above specified, and sat down to draft an artfully worded communication to the Foreign Office, informing that department that he had "just received through his Excellency General The O'Mara Molloy, the able and distinguished Minister of his Majesty the King of Porcolongu, information which left no room for doubt that the French Government were meditating the almost immediate annexation of the group"; that "his Majesty had, at any rate, instructed his Prime Minister to say that he viewed the present position of affairs with extreme apprehension, and to sound the representative of her Britannic Majesty at Porcolongu as to the willingness of the British Government to conclude a Treaty of Alliance and Protectorate with King Afseesova, whereby to secure his independence against the threatened attack." Mr. Quillitt went on to add that, "in the undeniably grave and urgent circumstances of the case he had not felt himself warranted in rejecting definitively and on his own authority the overtures thus made to him; and had accordingly informed his Excellency the Prime Minister that, subject of course to the approval of her Majesty's Government, and on the distinct understanding that they were to be in no way bound by his action, he was willing to consider the draft of such a treaty, and to take all the preliminary steps required to put him in a position to sign it on receiving the due official authority to do so."

It need hardly be said that before despatching this telegram (and indeed before sending The O'Mara Molloy that oblong slip of argumentative paper which had finally convinced the Prime Minister of the necessity of a British Protectorate of Porcolongu) Mr. Quillitt had taken the precaution of stipulating for an actual and immediate execution of the treaty on his Majesty's side. The instrument lay before him duly signed, as he was putting the final touches to his telegram. It contained only three clauses, but was conceived in perfectly clear and satisfactory terms.

"Had you much difficulty in obtaining his Majesty's signature?" inquired Quillitt of the Prime Minister, eying the subscription with a somewhat doubting air.

"Divil a ha'p'orth!" was the ready reply. "Hwhy would there be anny? Ye just prop um up a bit and hold uz hand."

"The Royal sign-manual seems a little less bold and firm than I should have expected from a man of his Majesty's character," said the Consul still doubtful.

"Bedad! it's furrum enough for a man in his Majesty's condition," said the Minister, with a twinkle.

"Did your audience last so long, then?" asked Mr. Quillitt.

"As long as the matayrials," was the reply. "We didn't leave a dhrop in the bottle."

"H'm," said the Consul, still inspecting the signature; "the right-hand stroke is good enough, but the left-hand one's very jumpy: barely intersects the other at all, in fact. However, I've seen worse—on a ballot-paper: and your counter-signature binds *you*, in any case."

Mr. Quillitt's telegram was despatched accordingly, and he waited with considerable confidence for an approving reply from Lord St. Jingo. Unfortunately, however, it was some weeks since the last mail had brought news from England, and Lord St. Jingo, instead of guiding the foreign policy of the country from Downing Street, was at that moment enjoying the sweets of newly-recovered liberty at his country-house. A change of Ministry had occurred since Mr. Quillitt's last advices, and Lord Shivers of Shakerley had succeeded to his rival's place. A week did not elapse before the Consul received an agitated telegram in the following words: "Suspend negotiations at once. Despatch follows"; and with the arrival of the mail a few hours later, bringing word of the political events which had taken place, the whole mystery was explained. Mr. Quillitt at once divined that his counsels of *haute politique* had been rejected with something like dismay by the new Foreign Secretary, and began to apprehend a wigging for himself. In the despatch from Downing Street which reached him a few weeks later he found ample justification for his fears.

"I am directed to inform you," wrote the Permanent Secretary, "that her Majesty's Government, while fully sensible of the zeal by which you have been animated, and the promptitude with which you have acted, are unable to approve of the course which you have pursued. You will take an early opportunity of seeking another interview with his Excellency the Prime Minister of Porcolongu, and will inform him that her Majesty's Government do not share the apprehensions which have been expressed by him on behalf of his Sovereign, and that they regard the step recommended by him as altogether premature. Her Majesty's Government continue to receive assurances of the most friendly character from the Government of the French Republic, and they see no reason to believe that that Government entertains any designs of territorial acquisition in the Pacific. I am to add that though her Majesty's Government do not question the excellence of the motives which induced you to give provisional countenance to the proposal of a Protectorate, they cannot acquit you of a grave error of

judgment in taking that course; and, with a view to prevent the recurrence of any similar misunderstanding, I am to request that, before entertaining any future proposal which may be made to you by or on behalf of his Majesty the King of Porcolongu you will submit it to her Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and await his instructions."

Having completed the perusal of this most disagreeable communication, Mr. Quillitt uttered a sentence which, without being actually a prayer, was not unlike one in point of grammatical construction. He posted off at once to the Prime Minister and flung down the despatch before him without a word. The O'Mara Molloy read it through with an unmoved countenance, folded it up, and returned it to his visitor.

"I congratulate ye, Mr. Quillutt," was all he said.

"Congratulate me! What do you mean? On what?"

"On the tranquillitee of your conscience, sorr," replied the Prime Minister, with much dignity. "It must be a great satisfaction to ye to reflect that, however blind your Government, you, at least, have done your duty to your counthry."

"Oh ah! yes, of course,—and all that," said Mr. Quillitt, though with but chastened enthusiasm. "But I say, Molloy—you know—that five hundred—eh? Don't you think—wouldn't it be fairer—especially considering—eh? What do you say?"

But The O'Mara Molloy had said nothing. He was gazing out into the distance with a far-away look in his eyes, as though striving to descry the Hill of Tara through the haze of the centuries.

"Explain yourself, Mr. Quillutt," he said, after rousing himself with difficulty from his stately reverie.

"Well there is not much to explain," said the Consul, nettled into plain speaking. "That five hundred you got was, of course, conditional on the execution of the treaty."

"No doubt, sorr," was the Minister's reply. "And that is why you insisted on his Majesty's executing it."

"His Majesty! Yes! But what I mean is that the treaty was to be executed on our side too."

"Then, hwhat the divil hinders ye from executing it?" said The O'Mara Molloy, rising from his chair with an air of sternness which indicated that the audience was closed. "Ye're thrifling with me, Mr. Quillutt, and bedad, sorr, there is no man living who shall thrifle with The O'Mara Molloy without ruun' ut."

The British Consul was not wanting in resolution, and, thoroughly understanding his man, he would have taken his chance of "ruun' ut" if he had thought the moment a favourable one for a quarrel. But he was forced to admit to himself that after all there was something to be said for the Prime Minister's interpretation of their bargain, and, moreover, he did not yet feel sure that the draft treaty might not pay for itself after all. Mr. Quillitt, it is scarcely necessary to say, had not relied wholly on so doubtful an informant for intelligence as to the designs of France. He had prosecuted inquiries in other quarters, notably of the German Consul, Herr Wolkenkopf, a simple-minded, easily-handled Teuton, an ardent naturalist with apparently no thought or ambition connected with anything besides his hobby. The Machiavellian Mr. Quillitt had early conceived the idea of playing off one of these two foreign officials against the other, and as they consorted a good deal together, he immediately made it his business to pump the Herr for any information which he might have gathered in the confidence of social intercourse as to the diplomatic or other designs of Monsieur. And when he found, as he immediately did, that the attitude of M. de Chauvin, and the mysterious hints let fall by him from time to time, had aroused suspicion even in the unsuspecting heart of Herr Wolkenkopf himself (or so at least that artless child of nature averred),

why, Mr. Quillitt concluded not unreasonably that The O'Mara Molloy's warnings had confirmation enough. The French Government, he argued, must pretty soon open the eyes of Downing Street to their real intentions, and unless then they were very prompt in executing them, the draft Treaty of Protectorate, now safe in Mr. Quillitt's desk, would rapidly rise in value in the estimation of a panic-striken English Foreign Office. All which considerations combined to reconcile Mr. Quillitt to "lying out of his monkey" for a time (as he described it in a phrase which may be commended to foreign professors of the English language), and determined him on playing a waiting game.

The waiting game, however, turned out to be a very long one; and the French Government appeared to be in no hurry to perform the expected ophthalmic operation upon Downing Street. Weeks passed, and the island of Porcolongu remained unannexed to the territories of the French Republic. M. de Chauvin made no sign, and the reluctant mind of Mr. Quillitt submitted itself gradually to the uncomfortable conviction that he had been "sold." The scion of Irish kings had bamboozled him, he began to fear, by a mere cock-and-bull story of French designs, and had left him five hundred pounds the poorer for having believed it. He said nothing either to The O'Mara Molloy or to any one else; but the imposture of which he had been made the victim was never out of his mind, and he spent many a sleepless night in revolving innumerable schemes of retaliation, or at the very least of reimbursement. It was some consolation to reflect that the luck had gone against him of late at *écarté*, and that, as he had taken the precaution of not paying his recent losses to the Prime Minister, he was now considerably in the latter's debt.

One night, about four months after the costly negotiation into which he had been so rashly induced to enter, Mr. Quillitt and the Prime Minister sat battling together at *écarté* in the Consul's den. Her Britannic Majesty's representative had had emphatically a bad time. The luck had run for hours without an interruption in favour of the high-born Irishman, and that in such an overwhelming tide of good fortune that his opponent's undoubtedly superior skill had been utterly powerless to make head against it. The Consul's debt had doubled and trebled since they sat down, and when at a little after midnight he threw aside the cards in disgust, he found that his losses were close upon 300*l*. Mr. Quillitt made the addition with some difficulty, for he had been drinking hard—latterly and in the excitement of loss, a good deal too hard to allow him the full command of his faculties. At the same time, and by a confusion between subject and object which is very common among a certain class of the intoxicated, he was confidently persuaded that the more liquor he consumed the more helpless became the drunkenness of his companion.

"Molloy," said Mr. Quillitt, after eying the Prime Minister for a few minutes with an air of pity for his deplorable condition, "would you like me to pay you what I owe you?"

His creditor signified, with a courteous shrug, that though he was in no violent hurry he would not refuse to receive payment if it were offered him.

The Consul rose from his chair, walked with a somewhat unsteady step to his *escritoire*, which he unlocked and opened with a still more unsteady hand, and, returning to the table with the Treaty of Alliance and Protectorate, "I have here, your Excellency," he said, his liquid consonants giving almost an Italian sound to his pronunciation of the last word, "a security of the value of 500*l*., which I shall be happy to tender you in payment of my debt. Not a word!" he continued quickly, and with a deprecatory wave of his hand, on seeing that The O'Mara Molloy was about to

interrupt him. "Not a word! I am aware that the value is greater by two-fifths than the amount of my debt; but I waive the difference, sir, I waive the difference. Do you accept my offer?"

Surprise is not an emotion which, as a rule, depicts itself with facility on the countenance of a man who has consumed a bottle and a half of trade rum; but it was plainly visible on the face of Mr. Quillitt when the Prime Minister of Porcolongu for all answer produced a little sheaf of the Consul's I.O.U.'s, and, tossing them to him across the table, deliberately folded up the draft treaty and put it in his pocket.

"Good Heavens!" muttered Mr. Quillitt to himself, half sobered by his astonishment. "He is more drunk than I imagined. Ought I to take such an advantage of him?"

Promptitude of decision in difficult circumstances is second nature to a diplomatist, and the Consul instantaneously decided that he ought. He had sufficient command of himself to make the dignified bow of a man who is conscious of conferring a favour but is too generous to grudge it.

The Prime Minister finished his glass and took his leave, and in a few minutes his host, after carefully removing all his clothing with the exception of one boot, retired meditatively to rest.

On awaking, his head (save that it ached consumedly) contained no record of the previous night's proceedings. A glance, however, at his open desk, and at his I.O.U.'s lying on the table, struck dully on one of the slack chords of his memory, and he slowly raised himself to a sitting posture in bed, the better to review the situation. Yes: there was no doubt of it. He had re-sold the useless treaty to its author—useless even if the French designs on Porcolongu were not pure inventions of his, because Downing Street had so peremptorily rejected it—and had extinguished a debt of three hundred pounds by the transaction. Decidedly the illustrious Irishman must have been very far gone in liquor. Indeed, now that Mr. Quillitt set to work to recall his speech and manner, it occurred to him that seldom in the whole course of his life had he seen a man more hopelessly intoxicated. His diplomatic conscience assured him that he had done right in taking advantage of the Prime Minister's unguarded condition of mind in order to rid himself of his bad bargain. He accordingly went about his not very onerous official duties that day as composedly as Socrates on the morning after the Symposium, and it was not till nearly nightfall that the blow fell. The western waters were glowing in all the glory of a Pacific sunset, when a telegram was placed in the Consul's hands, but only to fall helplessly from them the moment its contents were read: "Renew negotiations instantly Treaty Alliance Protectorate Porcolongu. Assure King sympathy support British Government. Despatch follows."

The Pacific Ocean swam before Mr. Quillitt's agitated eyes. He put his hand to his brow, and leaned against the wattled wall of Government House for support. What did it—what could it mean?

He had not long to wait for the explanation. Early next morning he received a private despatch from a somewhat highly-placed friend in the Foreign Office in these terms: "Liberals out on Conservative amendment four acres cow. St. Jingo back again. Congratulate you."

St. Jingo back again! All was clear, and Mr. Quillitt was ready to tear the few remaining locks from his head in disgust at his own impatient folly. There was but one thing to be done. The treaty must be re-purchased from The O'Mara Molloy if it cost the Consul all the savings of his official life to do it. But caution (diplomatic caution) was necessary. It would never do to allow the astute Polynesian statesman to suspect that his friend had any very important

object to gain in attempting to repossess himself of the draft treaty.

"I have it," said Mr. Quillitt to himself after a few moments' cogitation. "I will pretend that it was I who was drunk, and that I only handed him over the treaty in a tipsy freak, which I understood him to be merely humouring—as a sober man—ha! ha!—will occasionally do with an intoxicated companion. Yes, it would certainly be better to pretend that I took too much that night." And full of this profound project of dissimulation he betook himself to the Prime Minister's shanty.

"Molloy," he said, with his most diplomatic assumption of carelessness, "do you know I am afraid I rather exceeded the bounds of moderation the other night, when you made such an example of me at *écarté*."

"Not a bit, me boy, not a bit," replied the Prime Minister cheerfully. "I never saw ye play a better game. Luck was against ye, that was all."

"Oh! as to the game,—that may be," said Mr. Quillitt, still outwardly indifferent, though his anxiety deepened apace at the line which his companion was taking; "I can play *écarté* well enough, however far gone I am. What I am thinking of is not how I played but how I paid. It was a foolish trick of me to square accounts with you by handing back that treaty."

"A foolish thrick ye call it," said his Excellency calmly. "And hwhy, pray?"

"Well—er—er—well, my dear fellow—for a diplomatist—you know—eh?—to part with a document like that—a public document—it would be thought rather—eh?"

"Bedad, sorr, I should have supposed it would have been thought a divilish deal more foolish thrick for a Prime Minister to buy back such a documint," said the other, looking at the Consul through half-closed eyes; "a threaty which your Government declines to execute."

"Exactly, precisely," exclaimed Mr. Quillitt, catching eagerly at the new pretext thus offered to him. "I never supposed you were serious in accepting it from me. I thought you were merely humouring a friend who had had a drop too much. I couldn't think of holding you to so absurd a bargain; so I have brought you back my I.O.U.'s," producing them from his pocket, "and if you've got the treaty handy we'll swop at once."

"Misther Quillutt," said his Excellency, drawing himself up with his stateliest air, "I don't understand ye. I'm perfectly sathisfied with me bargin, and mean to abide by ut."

"What!" exclaimed the Consul, with increasing agitation. "You can't be serious — impossible. The whole thing was a joke. You couldn't have meant to have let me off a debt of nearly three hundred pounds for the recovery of a worthless——"

"Worthless!" cried the Irishman, bursting into a laugh. "Then hwhy the divil d'ye want ut back?"

Mr. Quillitt made no answer. Obviously there was none which he could make without declining upon the pitiable diplomatic expedient of telling the truth.

"Molloy," he said, after a few moments of discomfited pause, "you're too many for me, at diplomacy as well as at *écarté*. Look here, I'll make a clean breast of it," and he put his last official telegram into the Prime Minister's hand. "You see now," he continued eagerly, "why I want that treaty back again. It's a matter of life and death to my official future to recover and execute it on behalf of the British Government. And I'm sure, as an old friend, Molloy, you'll not stand in my way; even if," he added, with a keen glance at his companion, "even if you have at the moment some other political combination in your head."

Mr. Quillitt stopped for a moment to see whether this last remark of his would elicit any disclaimer. But, none coming, he resumed his solicitations with increased anxiety.

"See here, my dear fellow, here are my I.O.U.'s. Take them back again. No, no! You must! I insist!" exclaimed the Consul, as he almost forced them into the Prime Minister's palm. "And if a cheque for another two or even three hundred is necessary to arrange the business, it shall be forthcoming. But I *must* get that treaty back again, and execute it on behalf of my Government at once."

But still his Excellency made no sign. He was plunged in reflection so profound that Mr. Quillitt had time to get out his cheque-book in great agitation, and to insinuate between the statesman's fingers a cheque for a substantial sum before he roused himself from his reverie.

"Misther Quillutt," he then said, at the same time absently folding up the slip of paper which had been pressed upon him; "Misther Quillutt, I will do what I can for ye. But it's impossible for the treaty to be executed to-day."

"Impossible! Why?"

"I must consult hus Majesty."

"Consult a rum-cask! Come, come, my dear Molloy. We are augurs of long enough standing to permit ourselves a ——"

"Enough, sorr!" interrupted the Minister, with dignity. "It's absolutely necessary to lay the matter before his Majesty. Come again to-morrow."

"But why not submit it to him to-day? The Palace is only a step from here," said the Consul, glancing through the window of the Minister's study at its sun-baked walls.

"His Majesty," said The O'Mara Molloy, "is not yet in a condition to grant me an audience. Herr Wolkenkopf attended at the Palace the day before yesterday to show the King a sample of some remarkably fine old Schnapps which he had just received from a relation at Amsterdam, and his Majesty, I understand, does not intend to resume official or ceremonial duties until to-morrow."

To this, of course, there was nothing to be said, and Mr. Quillitt accordingly took his leave, in some disquietude of mind. Some hundred yards from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs he happened to turn round and look back—just in time to see a figure disappearing rapidly through its open door.

It was impossible to mistake those elegant proportions—M. de Chauvin!

A dark suspicion shot through the Consul's breast, and passing downwards like a charge of electricity rooted his feet to the earth. Could *this* be the explanation of the Minister's having so readily bought back the treaty? Could it be that he had another purchaser for it in his business-like eye? Was it possible that the hereditary enemy of the Saxon was about to strike a blow (for a consideration) at the secular oppressors of his race, and that, in plain prose, The O'Mara Molloy had been squared by the French?

Painfully revolving these agitating questions in his mind, Mr. Quillitt walked slowly homeward, to pass the most unquiet night that ever beat out its lagging hours in a sleepless brain. At noon next day he betook himself, in full official costume, to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, but only to find to his intense anxiety and even alarm that the Prime Minister was not to be seen. He had set off early in the morning, his private secretary said, by his Majesty's special command, to visit one of the distant islands of the group.

Mr. Quillitt now began to feel more and more convinced that he and probably Porcolongu were being sold. Having satisfied himself, however, that the private secretary had told him the truth, and that his Excellency had really departed on the alleged journey, he was fain to seek such reassurance as he could gather from the reflection that, unless the mischief was done already—a thought at which the spinal column of the Consul, from the cerebellum downwards, underwent the sensation commonly produced by the cold-water jet of the shampooer—no negotiation with M. de Chauvin could

take place till the Prime Minister's return.

A day passed; two, three, a week, and no Prime Minister. But instead thereof, another cipher telegram from Downing Street, which brought out a light dew of perspiration on Mr. Quillitt's brow. Thus it ran: "News received French ironclad left Noumea destined probably Porcolongu. Inform Foreign Office immediately whether treaty concluded." In desperation, Mr. Quillitt telegraphed back: "Negotiations still pending. Hope conclude treaty this week." This done, it occurred to him, as the only step he could take in The O'Mara Molloy's absence, that he might pay a visit to Herr Wolkenkopf, and after ascertaining whether he with his usually excellent information had heard anything of this reported French movement, endeavour to enlist his support in resisting the piratical policy of M. de Chauvin's Government.

He found the German Consul with his microscope before him, and his note-books around him, calmly arranging his specimens.

"Wolkenkopf, my good soul," said Quillitt, in that kindly but slightly patronising tone in which he was in the habit of addressing the dreamy *savant;* "what do you say to this report just transmitted to me from my Government?" And he read out the alarming telegram.

"What say I, mine friend?" said the Herr, looking placidly at him. "But what then should I say? You know better as I whether your Government true-speaks or not."

"Nonsense, Wolkenkopf; don't trifle with me. People can only be sure of speaking the truth when they know the truth, and our Government never knows anything. *You* know that."

"Do you not say we know everything in Berlin, dear Herr Consul?" said the German, beaming with mild satire through his spectacles. "And many people who know not everything know so much as you last said."

"Have you heard anything of this naval movement of the French from the sources of information from which you heard of their political designs? You still have access to those sources, I suppose?" asked Mr. Quillitt, sharply, for he was gradually getting to suspect everybody.

"Yes—well," replied Herr Wolkenkopf. "Through them, mine friend, I hear nothing. I believe not, so I may my own information trust, that any French ironclad is coming here at all."

"Ha!" exclaimed the British Consul, greatly relieved. "I am right glad to hear you say so; I hoped myself that the danger was not quite so imminent as that. But still, I think there *is* danger of a French annexation, don't you, Wolkenkopf? You won't undertake to say that my Government may lay aside its anxieties on that point, altogether? Eh?"

"No, dear Herr," said the man of science, carefully focusing a specimen while he applied his eye to the tube of his microscope. "No, dear Herr, I would not—go—quite—so far as that. I would not so—undertake to limit—"—here followed a rather long pause, during which the brass screw of the focusing gear revolved now forward now backward, through minute and ever-lessening arcs, between the naturalist's finger and thumb—"to limit"—and here he looked up with a sigh of relief at the successful conclusion of the delicate operation he had been engaged in—"the enterprising instincts of *la gr-r-r-rande nation.*"

"Herr Wolkenkopf," said Mr. Quillitt gravely, "you are well aware that I share your suspicions. I am convinced that the Government of the French Republic entertain designs upon the independence of this group, which, unless a firm front is offered to them by the representatives of other European Powers, will very shortly be realised. May I—may I count upon your support in my endeavour to counteract them?"

Herr Wolkenkopf rose from his

chair, replaced his spectacles, which had been temporarily removed for microscopic purposes, on his nose, and gazing through them with a look of the greatest candour and benevolence that the human countenance is capable of expressing, replied, "Dear and respected colleague, I have always confided in your discretion, nor know I any reason why I should now conceal from you that the instructions I have from my Government received direct me to resist any French designs on the independence of Porcolongu by every means in my power. I think I may assure you, dear Herr, that these islands will not be allowed, if it is any way possible for my Government to prevent it, to pass under the flag of the French Republic."

Mr. Quillitt was too delighted to reply in words. He could only grasp his German colleague's hand by way of answer; and he took his leave in a state of as high complacency as we may suppose to have suffused the mind of Sir William Temple after successfully negotiating the Triple Alliance.

Another day came and went without bringing home the truant Minister. On the evening, however, of the second day, Mr. Quillitt, whose house commanded a view of the landing-stage, and who accordingly seldom took his eyes from it, saw The O'Mara Molloy disembark from the Government yacht, which, in his capacity of First Lord of the Admiralty, he had placed at his own service as First Lord of the Treasury of Porcolongu, and walk with rapid steps to his official residence.

"Good," muttered Mr. Quillitt to himself. "To-morrow, my friend, I bring you and your Royal master to book."

A couple of hours later another telegram reached him from the Foreign Office, thus conceived: "News despatch French ironclad confirmed. If treaty concluded communicate it French Consul, adding British Government cannot indifference view attack independence allied Sovereign."

"H'm," said the British Consul reflectively. "I'll conclude the treaty, if possible, the first thing to-morrow morning, and make my representations to De Chauvin immediately afterwards. If I don't succeed in concluding the treaty—if that Irish rascal, or the fuddled savage whom he serves and sells, is playing me false—well, I'll associate myself with Wolkenkopf, and we'll make a joint representation to the Frenchman."

Mr. Quillitt passed a quieter night than he had had for some time past, and rose betimes in excellent spirits. His bedroom window looked out on the bay, and as he gazed across its sunlit waters upon the lustrous expanse of ocean beyond, he felt a thrill of patriotic pride at the thought that it should have fallen to his lot to plant the British flag on a new point of vantage in that golden world. In the midst of these inspiring reflections Mr. Quillitt's eye fell upon a distant object in the offing. He started violently, and the hair-brush fell from his hand. Its place was instantly filled by a powerful binocular, which the Consul hastily brought to bear on the approaching vessel. Yes, there was no mistaking its squat and swarthy hull, its ungainly and forbidding lines. It was a powerful ironclad steaming rapidly towards the bay.

Mr. Quillitt was dressed in a twinkling, and half-way to the Prime Minister's house before he was five minutes older. As he skirted the little curve of shining sand which had to be traversed to reach it, two figures caught his eye—one that of M. de Chauvin striding rapidly in the direction of the Palace, the other that of Herr Wolkenkopf, in quite unofficial costume, a palm-leaf hat on his head and satchel at his side, dredging away as tranquilly as though there were no such things as international rivalries in the world.

Hurried as he was, the British Consul halted for a moment at the naturalist's elbow. "Look," he said, thrusting the binocular into the other's

hand, and pointing towards the ironclad.

Herr Wolkenkopf calmly inspected the approaching vessel, and returned the glass to its owner with the single monosyllable "Zo!"

"You will support me, Wolkenkopf," said Mr. Quillitt, pale but firm, "in protesting against this act of piracy on the part of France."

"Mine friend," replied the German quietly, "I promise you I will protest against anything of the kind But where go you, dear Herr? To the Minister's? He is not to house. He is at the Palace with M. de Chauvin."

"At the Palace with M. de Chauvin! Then there is not a moment to be lost. Follow me, Wolkenkopf."

And hurrying across the court-yard, Mr. Quillitt sprang up the broad bamboo staircase three steps at a time, and dashed unceremoniously into the audience-chamber.

It was as he expected. M. de Chauvin and The O'Mara Molloy were seated at a table with an official-looking document, which the Consul recognised at a glance, before them. A treaty! with the royal sign-manual ("A week old, no doubt," thought Quillitt bitterly) at its foot, the Prime Minister's counter-signature opposite, and the ink still wet with which the Frenchman had just executed it.

"What means this inthrusion, sorr?" said the Prime Minister, rising with dignity from his chair.

"You infernal swin—but stay, my first business is with you, M. de Chauvin. Ah! here is Wolkenkopf. In the name, Monsieur, of our respective Governments we protest against the act of piracy which——" He waved his hand towards the window, all eyes following it, but stopped dead in the tracks of his remonstrance. For the ironclad had hove to about a quarter of a mile from the shore. Up flew her colours to the peak, and loud exclamations in English, French, and Irish broke simultaneously from three of the persons in the room.

It was the German flag!

The three ejaculators turned fiercely on their silent companion. Herr Wolkenkopf slowly drew a document from his pocket, and opened it before their eyes. All recognised at once the bold but simple signature "× Afseesova II., his mark." But the treaty was not countersigned by the Prime Minister.

"The King, sorr," exclaimed the descendant of kings, "has been guilty of a gross braych of the Consthitution. Your threaty is not worth the paper ut's written on!"

"No?" said the Herr placidly. "But *that*," pointing through the window at the surly visitor in the bay. "That is worth much paper, and many writings. Not true?"

The Prime Minister and the British Consul owned to themselves that it was true. M. de Chauvin audibly attested his consciousness of its truth by execrating "the name of a cabbage."

"But," cried Mr. Quillitt, gradually recovering his senses, "how did you—? when did he——?"

"Mine friend," said the German, looking at him with benevolent humour in his mild blue eyes, "I took evening meal with his Majesty yesterday. The schnapps was *schön*, and——"

The O'Mara Molloy sprang forward and roughly plucked aside the curtain of rush matting which divided the audience-chamber from the throne-room. There on his back lay the monarch who, like Diocletian, Charles the Fifth, and other weary royal souls before him, had with his own hand divested himself of the burden of rule. At his side reposed three black bottles of a quaint shape. They were perfectly empty, but the legend on their labels showed that they had contained the finest Schiedam.

H. D. Traill.

NEW LAMPS FOR OLD ONES.

"Stands Scotland where it did?
Alas, poor country!
Almost afraid to know itself."

To the unreflecting observer, and to the outside world at large, two characteristics, partly social, partly intellectual, seem to belong by virtue of a natural dispensation to an ancient University. To speak of it as the home of culture and enlightenment is to utter a sentiment of doubtful truth: but few doubt that it ought to be Conservative in its instincts, and that its management should be centred in the hands of weighty, grave, and reverend seniors. Oxford, for instance, is represented in Parliament by two admirable Conservatives, and no better mouthpiece, it is presumed, could be found for the solid and dignified interests of the academic world than Sir John Mowbray. Besides, the Chancellor, for whom Oxford invokes blessings in its ceremonial prayers, is the head of the Conservative party in England. And all this appears to be according to the natural fitness of things.

Such a view, however, would hardly commend itself to those who know something of the interior working of the University. It is true that the most recent specimens of youthful College Fellows have betrayed a remarkable tendency towards orthodoxy and Conservatism: but it is no less true that the resident members of Convocation (we do not speak of the non-resident clergy who hold Oxford degrees), can, four times out of five, carry liberal measures, and that the management of the Colleges is vested in men, if not young in years, at all events youthful in their feverish energy, and sometimes destructive ardour. The internal reform of Oxford has proceeded in recent years with unabated vigour: the claims of science have been upheld by men whose own learning has been exclusively classical: and more especially, the whole system of examinations has been subjected to repeated change and reconstruction. As the Egyptian priests said to the Greeks, so may it be said to the Oxford reformers, "Ye are always children." Everywhere there is ferment and vacillation; old tests are sacrificed, and new educational expedients are introduced; no one examination stands where it did, but has adopted new forms; and the most recent edition of the Regulations of the Boards of Studies and Board of Faculties must be strange reading to Oxford men of twenty years ago. It becomes interesting to inquire in what relation the new education stands to the old, and to discover what modern acceptation is to be attached to the ancient designation of an Oxford scholar.

Putting aside Responsions—a sort of entrance examination, in which the only recent change has been the admission of an Oriental language as an equivalent for either Greek or Latin —the Oxford education is divided, roughly speaking, into two halves, the first of which ends with the First Public Examination, or "Moderations," and the second with the Second Public Examination, or "Greats." From the point of view of the old classical education, the first was intended to be a test of scholarship, the second a test of scholarship touched with culture—the last indefinite element being supplied by a study of Philosophy and History. Room has of course to be found for more modern

disciplines. In the course of a year or so there will be an elaborate system by which the First Public Examination will be divided into a series of preliminary schools in which the student of Science, or History, or Law may take up subjects bearing on his final studies without having his attention diverted by alien and perhaps uncongenial disciplines. But to this, as indicative of a general tendency towards Specialisation, we can return presently. The most notable change in recent years has been the so-called reform of Classical Moderations.

Perhaps the reformers were right when they said that the old Honour Moderations was but a school-boy test. Certain it is that undergraduates during the first year and a half of their residence wofully wasted their time, because they were only examined in the books which the best scholars had already studied at their schools. Instead, therefore, of eight prescribed books, the new arrangement consists of four books specially prepared, and a large number of passages set for translation from other authors which constitute what is called in the jargon of the University "unseens." The intention is obvious; it is to test scholarship, not merely hard work, by putting before the candidate Greek and Latin passages which he is to construe by the light of nature, or rather by means of his scholarly instinct. Only one examination has as yet taken place according to the newer model, so that it is perhaps early days to speak of its success or failure. But two remarks may be hazarded. Great faith is obviously put in "unseen translations" as a test of scholarship. Is the test altogether reliable? Perhaps schoolmasters might throw an unpleasant light on the matter if they could be induced to disclose the secrets of their craft, and surrender for a while their habitually pompous attitude as educational hierophants. Doubtless they know their business too well to do anything of the sort or even to whisper the fact (for fact it undoubtedly is) that the power of translating at sight is a knack which to most boys of wit and shrewdness can be taught with the same facility as swimming or racquets. Let us assume that only half of the scholars sent up from schools have learnt this knack, and the value of the "unseen" test becomes seriously impaired. There is another point of view which is perhaps more important. We can understand that first-class men will make the best of the new system and enjoy a course of promiscuous reading in Greek and Latin authors; but what of the second class and the third? Can they be encouraged to study let us say Demosthenes' Private Orations in the faint hope of getting a piece of the Athenian orator to translate? Will not the tendency be towards reading only their four prepared books (instead of the eight which used to be prescribed) and so becoming more idle than ever? In all academic reforms the standard of measurement is fixed too often by the first-class man. Undoubtedly he should be helped by the suggestion of higher aims, but then the first-class man will always get the best out of any system. Meanwhile the seconds and thirds, who after all form the majority, go to the wall to make room for their more fortunate brothers whom Nature has already helped, and whom the University is inclined to help still more.

These, however, let us grant, are but surmises: by getting down to underlying principles we move on surer ground. Let us attempt to sketch the older type of scholar, and set by his side his more modern representative. An Oxford scholar (such as visit their descendants at a College *Gaude*, and make long speeches after dinner) was a man of scholarly instincts and tastes rather than of positive acquisitions. With some authors he probably had little or no acquaintance, but he knew his Virgil and his Horace, his Homer and his Sophocles in such fashion that they had entered into his life. Of science he had none;

of classical Philology, as a science, he had hardly heard. But he had the most marvellous aptitude for quotation, and he had most of his authors off by heart. He believed that Latin and Greek was not only an intellectual but also a social discipline; it helped to make gentlemen. And, in truth, his knowledge, such as it was, had interpenetrated his nature. He could usually write in classical languages with facility; he had a pretty turn for elegiacs and iambics; and above all, he had a delicate and exquisite sensitiveness for all the lights and shadows of classical style, and, aided by much common sense, instinctively felt the meaning of his author. He did not, perhaps, know much, but he made admirable use of what he knew; he had a genius for style, and a keen ear for rhythm. The modern scholar is not run in this mould. He is an Original Researcher. He has enormous erudition, for he believes that scholarship means knowledge, and knowledge only. Is not the German word for scholar, *gelehrte*, the French, *savant?* A scholar is one who burrows in the ancient literature with the instincts of a mole; who adds to his Latin and Greek a knowledge of Sanskrit as an indispensable auxiliary, and does his best to convert Philology into an exact science. He looks for his information to other sources than did his elder prototype. He knows the value of Inscriptions and Monumentary Evidence, and studies manuscripts of foreign libraries. Is anything lost in such a change? Perhaps two things; common sense, and culture. Certainly the ponderous notes which the modern scholar produces on ancient texts are not remarkable for their common sense. They labour under the load of their erudition, and very often darken knowledge without counsel. And culture? Well, in one sense, culture may only mean a faculty for intellectual digestion and a determined acquisitiveness; in another sense, it means much more. It means assimilation, self-adaptation, taste; it is the mental reaction which succeeds the acquisition of new materials; it is the insight, the mastery of one who not only learns, but thinks; it is more than mental, for it becomes almost a moral attribute, and an ingredient in character. If this be lost, is education worth the having?

"Specialisation" is a watchword of the advanced school of educational reform. As applied to a University, it means that all the cleverer undergraduates are to be encouraged to limit and to concentrate, to circumscribe the range of their studies, and isolate some particular discipline to which they propose to devote the industry of a life-time. The fault of the older education—so it is alleged—was its general character, its diffuseness. Like the teaching of the ancient Sophists, it proposed to cover a large amount of ground, and to do it at the expense of thoroughness. Better to know one subject well than to have a superficial acquaintance with a dozen; the *homo unius libri*, the master of one book, is the master of the field. In pursuance of this aim, the reformers have lately been constructing a most elaborate programme, whereby each student is to differentiate himself from the earliest available moment of his residence in the University. Instead of the old Moderations, there are to be a series of special preliminary schools—a school for Law, a school for Modern History, a school for Theology, a reformed school for the final examination in Classics, just as there is already a preliminary school for Science. The details of the scheme, although they assuredly lay themselves open to criticism, are not so important here as the general principle. Every student is to find his particular study, when he has once passed the elementary test of Responsions, and to devote thereto his three years of residence. He will have every help rendered in the pursuance of his aims; he will have first to pass a preliminary test before finally undergoing the ex-

amination which is to give him a degree. Let all praise be given to those ardent devotees of a special field of study who have now found the joy and satisfaction of a congenial pursuit, and who read back their experience when they are thirty into the comparatively immature age of nineteen and twenty. The difficulty is for the youthful student to find his special field. The older specialist has found his, after a general course of learning wherein he has by experience discovered his strength and his weakness —an experience which, however bitter, has put him on a platform whence he can survey the promised land and choose his especial portion. But what experience has the youthful scholar? Is he to be left to mistake his ardent visions for a definite intellectual tendency? Are there no chances of a possible miscalculation of force? Or is it not rather true that it is safest and wisest to have a general culture of faculty first, before the special choice is made? We bewail the sad necessity which so often forces a man in practical life to choose his career at a time when through age and inexperience he has least chance of choosing wisely, and yet in this case where circumstances are favourable, where there exists an intellectual hothouse in which the young plants may be fostered in their intellectual career, we deliberately throw away the advantages of this artificial atmosphere, and compel the young shoots to be grafted on possibly alien stocks. Perhaps specialisation itself may not be an unmixed benefit to the mind; perhaps even it may be a confession of weakness, from which the greatest intellects, as history has so often shown, have been free. But specialisation at twenty lessens the chances which aid a man at thirty.

It is especially in reference to the final Classical School that specialisation seems a perverse tendency. The school, known as Greats, may not be perfect; but it has been highly characteristic. The slow growth of time and circumstance has given this final test a peculiar significance in the annals of Oxford. It is, in simple language, an examination in ancient culture as prophetic of modern. A certain amount of ancient philosophy, a certain amount of ancient history, have been studied partly in themselves, partly in their relations to modern history and philosophy. Vague, general and superficial, the knowledge so accumulated may have been; but it was, at least, a test of mental receptivity and openness to all sorts of influences. And the man who has gone through the test has often been the first to declare how valuable a mental discipline it has proved. He has been given the inestimable benefit of an open mind, not destitute of such graces of culture as the study of ancient civilisation can impart. He is now ready for the battle of life, wherein he has to choose his side. Concentration, no doubt, he now finds to his advantage; but it is because he has had a sort of general training. He has acquired mental flexibility and adaptiveness, and he finds them no small boon. It is matter of common notoriety that the man who has got his first in Greats can get a first in any school he pleases. He has tasted blood, and his intellectual appetite is keen.

Now here the modern cry is for a division into at least three final schools —Classics, Philosophy, and History. There has been enough tinkering, in all conscience, at the final school. But yet the examination has retained these three elements in fusion. Certainly such fusion has promoted the interests of mental culture, but culture is an offensive, and possibly a meaningless, term to the modern reformer. Assuredly some students have a taste for one subject in preference to another; one man does well in History, and another does well in Philosophy. Yet examiners have had no particular difficulty in assigning their classes; if difficulty there has been, it has been mostly in reference to the particular standard to be adopted, and the

dividing lines to be drawn between first class and second, second class and third. Very few men indeed get a first, let us say, in Philosophy, and a third in History. Meanwhile the value of a general study of ancient civilisation has been inestimable, and the habits of mental discipline involved in the preparation for such a test have been found to be most helpful in a future career. It is a great thing to turn a man out well equipped. Let him, after he has gained his degree, choose his line. To make him choose before his degree may make him a narrow, abstract, one-sided pedant.

It is a somewhat significant fact that in the latest authoritative edition of the Examination Statutes, the regulations relating to Science occupy forty-four pages out of one hundred and fifty—nearly one-third of the whole volume. For Science is the type to which all education is to be forced to conform. Perhaps the letters M.Ch. form a novelty for some readers, as indicative of an Oxford degree. It means a Master of Surgery, and the degree can be taken by a Bachelor of Surgery or a Bachelor of Medicine in the twenty-seventh term from matriculation, after passing a special examination in Surgical Operations and Surgical Anatomy. The advance of Science in Oxford in recent years has been extraordinary, both in material resources and mental discipline. Very large sums have been expended on the erection and furnishing of Laboratories, and the handsome building for Physiological study, and the hideous barn for Anthropological collections are the latest architectural achievements in the University. The aim of the Scientist has been two-fold. He desires, in the first place (sharing the aspirations of the advanced school of reformers generally in this respect), to get rid of much of that necessity for residence which was thought so valuable a part of the old Oxford training; and in the second place, he labours without ceasing to enable the scientific student to get through his academic course without learning an ancient language. Some modern substitute—either French or German—is to be found for Latin and Greek, so that a man who intends to take a scientific degree need waste no time over the unprofitable study of the uses of *ἄν* or the meaning of *qui* with the subjunctive. He has not as yet gained his point; but he is not without hopes of ultimate success; and the Scientist is a pushing creature.

Far be it from us to deny the advantages, or even the necessities, of a scientific education, which has now so largely found its way into the curriculum of public schools. The arguments hitherto adopted have not, it is true, been peculiarly dignified, for they have been based chiefly on the example of Cambridge. Cambridge makes it easier for scientific men to pass through its course of training; Cambridge has a larger number of scientific students on its books; therefore, by all means, let Oxford follow. Perhaps this is only brotherly rivalry; perhaps it is an unbecoming mimicry. Yet, after all, despite its efforts, Science in Oxford is not so successfully taught as in the American scientific schools, and the natural deduction to be drawn is not that it ought in consequence to have larger opportunities allowed it in comparison with the classical education, but rather that the Oxford soil is not wholly congenial to this modern growth. If it were not too paradoxical an assertion to make in this modern age, we should feel sometimes tempted to declare that Science can have its Nottingham, its Leeds, its Manchester, its Liverpool, its London, if it will only leave Oxford alone. Is this too illiberal and reactionary? In one sense it is, for scientific teaching has gone hand in hand with that extension of the University teaching throughout England and that system of affiliated colleges, which have formed one of the best and most hopeful signs of modern education. If such an admirable mode of "making our Universities useful"

really involves a large development of Science, we can only resign ourselves to the necessity, and grant our scientific professors the enormous sums which they often so unblushingly demand. Yet an old weather-beaten system of classical culture is so precious a relic of time and scholarly habit, Oxford, "whispering from her towers the last enchantments of the Middle Age," has so powerful a hold on the imagination, that we would fain not see the ancient edifice roughly and discourteously treated. It is not easy to build up a new system, and it is very easy to destroy an old one. Has the University no mission in the present day unless it includes Science in its training? Surely a more important duty than ever, the more imperative need there is for some corrective to modern tendencies. Never, we might say, has there been so great need for the old preaching of modesty and harmony (*ἁρμονία*) and self-cultivation, which in some wonderful way the ancient Classics can impart, as in the days in which Science is always striving and crying, and Practical Utility lifting up its voice in our streets. The old gifts of taste and literary culture would indeed be a boon to some of the modern reformers. There is a story which is very likely apocryphal, but which is, unfortunately, so characteristic that it may be held to be *ben trovato.* When the new Physiological Laboratory was built, the question arose as to the decorative emblems to be placed on its walls. The old Oxford motto, *Dominus Illuminatio Mea*, was deliberately rejected in order that some motto more indicative of modern discipline might be substituted. So curious a want of historic feeling and literary taste is no very lovable sign of the times. The scientists may, we suppose, do what they like with their own, and, if they please, write *Scientia et Vivisectio sua* on their walls. But it makes one wonder whether, in the modern barter of old lamps for new ones, there may disappear along with the ancient vessel the subtle power of evoking the ancient Genius.

W. L. COURTNEY.

THE POETRY OF THE SPANISH PEOPLE.

Even a casual traveller passing through Spain, and more especially Andalusia, cannot fail to notice the strange quavering chant which, with little variation in tune, and constant variation in words, is for ever on the lips of the people. The muleteer driving his team across the Sierra, the cigarette-girl in the factory, the beggar on the street,—all have the same love of singing, and all appear to possess in a greater or less degree the remarkable aptitude of improvising words for their songs.

Although many of the verses thus improvised melt away the moment they fall from the singer's lips, and are forgotten with the occasion that called them forth, there are moments of inspiration in which some singer, more gifted than his fellows, may turn a couplet so aptly rhymed, so witty, or so pathetic, that it impresses itself on the memory of its author, who sings it again and again, till his companions also have learned to sing it; and till, passed from mouth to mouth, it travels so far that all trace of its authorship is forgotten, and it becomes the traditional property of the people. By this process of survival of the fittest a vast literature of popular lyric poetry has been formed—a literature which time changes as rapidly as it does the seashore, daily washing up fresh deposits, and daily washing the old away.

It would be strange if a phenomenon so remarkable as this had passed by unobserved in this age of observation and travel. There have been many attempts during the present century to collect this traditional poetry in Spain; and among those who have turned their attention to the work, are names as eminent in literature as Lafuente, and "Fernan Caballero," that lady who has painted the Spanish peasantry with such art and sympathy in her well-known romances. But it was not till the year 1882 that anything like an exhaustive collection was made, when Don Rodriguez Marin, himself a poet of considerable talent, undertook the task of systematically collecting the whole of this traditional poetry from the lips of the people themselves.

The peculiar characteristic of popular Spanish poetry is that it consists entirely of detached stanzas, each containing in itself a complete poetical sentiment; and although a number of these may be sung in rapid succession without any alteration of tune, they have no bearing on each other, the singer selecting at random such as occur to him at the moment. Those stanzas generally take one of two forms, the couplet, *copla*, or the *seguidilla.* The couplet consists of four octosyllabic lines, the second and fourth of which rhyme. The *seguidilla* is a couplet with other three lines called the *estrevillo* tacked on to the end of it.

Although the couplet is the simplest form of verse, the *seguidilla* is said to be the oldest. According to tradition it was invented in La Mancha in the sixteenth century, and Cervantes alludes to it in 'Don Quixote.' The *seguidillas,* like the old "ballads," were originally meant as accompaniments to dancing, and as such they are still used in Spain. The poetry of the Spanish people is so closely wedded to the national dances, that in order to fully appreciate it, one must see a gala night among the peasantry in some country village where old traditions still remain unpolluted. It is the evening of a wedding-day, or a feast-day perhaps, and a company of merry-makers has assembled in one of those low-roofed rooms whose scanty furniture and walls, bare except for a few prints

cf saints, give it the appearance of being far larger than it actually is. The spectators have seated themselves round the walls; the guitar-player, cigarette in mouth, has taken up a prominent position; and the best voices have been told off to sing the *seguidillas.* It is then that a young man and woman, dressed in the picturesque costume that is so fast disappearing now, step into the centre of the room and take up positions facing each other at a couple of yards distance. The music strikes up, and after a short prelude on the guitar the singing and dancing commence. The dance is free from all violent movements. It consists rather of a graceful swaying of the body and arms than of complicated steps. So small a part do the feet play that the dancers seem scarcely to lift them from the ground, and never quit the spot where they first took up their position except twice in each figure; once in the middle, when by a graceful step they change places; and again towards the end, when they resume their former positions. The time is well marked, and the dancers generally accompany themselves with castanets. The audience also mark time with castanets, or by clapping their hands. At the end of each figure, music, dancing, and castanets come to a sudden stop. For a moment dead silence reigns; and the two dancers, thrown into strikingly graceful postures, remain immovable, as though some magic spell had at once silenced the music and transformed the dancers to marble. A graceful stop, *bien parado,* is the crucial test of a *bolero* dancer, and when successfully accomplished the audience will break into loud applause, and repeated cries of *Olle! Olle!* will greet the performers.

Such is the dance to which those verses are sung as accompaniments. Most of them have for their theme the old story of tender or unrequited love; and if they do not always tell it with depth of feeling, they seldom want some trace of that ready wit which Spaniards even of the humblest class can always command.

Par las cinco ventanas
De mis sentidas
Te entrastes en mi pecho
Sin ser sentido:
  Pero has de advertir
Que sin sin sentir no puedes
Volver á salir.

By my senses' windows five
Thou crept in one day
Ere I knew it, to my heart
Thou hadst found thy way:
  Now 'tis past all doubt
That without my knowing it
Thou shalt not creep out.

Lo mismo que la sombra
Son las mujeres
Huyen del que las sigue,
Al que huye quieren:
  Y de aquí nace
Que queden muchas veces
Sin colocarse.

Like unto a shadow
Women seem to be,
They fly you when you follow,
And follow when you flee:
  And this the reason why
Some that will not settle
Are just left to fly.

Notwithstanding the enthusiastic assurances of Don Preciso, one of the first collectors of *seguidillas,* it is difficult to believe that all those included in his collection are of genuinely popular origin. In lowly society all may indeed have circulated, but there are many whose style betrays a noble birth at least.

Es amor en la ausencia
Como la sombra,
Que cuanto más se aleja,
Mas cuerpo toma:
  La ausencia es aire,
Que apaga el fuego chico
Y aviva el grande.

Absence is the light, and love
The shadow that it throws,
The further from the light we move
The more the shadow grows:
  Absence is the blast that blows,
The feeble flame it quenches;
The strong still fiercer glows.

Pensamiento que vuelas
Mas que las aves,
Llévale ese suspiro
A quien tu sabes:
  Y dile á mi amor
Que tengo su retrato
En mi corazon.

> Thought, that hast wings and can fly
> Swift as a bird through the air,
> Bear on thy bosom this sigh,
> Carry it thou knowest where:
> My lady to tell
> That her image alone
> In my bosom shall dwell.

Moreover the *seguidilla* is difficult to compose. Apart from the multiplication of rhymes, the unity of thought must be maintained up to the very end, otherwise the *estrevillo* in time gets detached and lost. Many of those which are complete in the early collections have been found by later collectors circulating amongst the people without any *estrevillo.* So much is this the case that the bulk of the *seguidillas* at present sung to accompany dancing are really *coplas;* the place of the *estrevillo* being supplied by some movable and more or less meaningless chorus, or by a mere repetition of the last three lines.

The four-lined couplet, or *copla*, is the real vehicle of popular poetry. Its measure is simple, and only the second and fourth lines rhyme—a matter rendered easy both by the richness of the Spanish language, and by the admission of those assonant or vowel rhymes, which characterise the old Spanish romances, and originated in the poetry of the East.

Whenever any incident occurs to break the monotony of his every-day life, the Spaniard will turn a *copla* to commemorate it. Sometimes the incident is trivial enough. "It is impossible to take a walk through Seville at present," says Señor Machado, "without hearing sung at every turn in all the lanes and courts, as well as in the music-halls and dancing saloons, the unedifying jingle of the *corrucos*, a sort of novel sweetmeat of peculiar form and confection, which has produced a perfect literary epidemic in the town."

Political events are always fruitful in couplets. Thus:

> Los zapatos tengo rotos
> De subir á la azotea
> Por ver si veo pasar
> Al valiente Salvochea;

> With climbing to the roof I've worn
> The boots from off my feet,
> To see if brave Salvochea
> Goes passing up the street,

is one of many which contains an allusion to the cantonal movement. If these were collected they would form a faithful chronicle of all the events, political or domestic, serious or trivial, which have at any time impressed themselves on the mind of the people. But such a collection could never be made, for the couplets that are engendered by passing events are destined to oblivion as soon as the excitement occasioned by the event has subsided. In a few exceptional cases they may survive. Señor Marin's collection contains one or two which allude to events that took place in the fifteenth century; but these are so rare, and the events alluded to so memorable, that even they have probably been composed in more recent times.

But if the popular poetry does not afford a record of the political history of the Spanish people, it forms a most valuable page in their social history. Señor Marin has collected his materials among all sorts and conditions of men; not only from the labourers in the olive-yards and the soldiers in the barracks, but even from the lips of the prisoners in their cells. We have thus a complete picture of prison-life from the most important of all aspects—the prisoners' own point of view. Many of the prison couplets are not only interesting as a social study, but of considerable pathos.

> A los doce de la noche,
> Niña, me llevaron preso,
> Y para mayor dolor,
> Me ataron con tu pañuelo.

> They've dragged me to a prison cell.
> At midnight, when they found me,
> I wore thy kerchief, love, and ah!
> It was with it they bound me.

The Spanish brigand is now almost if not altogether extinct. Yet it is not so long since Jose Maria, of whose dash and gallantry Prospère Merimée gives so graphic an account, was at once the terror and the admiration of

Spain; and popular poetry continues to bear testimony to the roving boldness and romance of brigand life.

> En montando en mi caballo
> No terreo á ningun valiente:
> Un retaco, dos pistolas,
> Un cuchillo, y venga genta!

> When mounted on my charger
> I fearless ride my way:
> A carabine, two pistols,
> A dirk, and come who may!

More interesting still as a record of old customs are the student's couplets. Modern tendencies, which have altered so much in Spain, have not spared that most Spanish of all institutions —the student-life. The students of to-day have lost all the romance that once marked them out as a race apart. Their quaint old customs have fallen into disuse; their picturesque dresses have been discarded. But although the Salamanca of Gil Blas is now gone, it lived on to within touch of our own times. There are grey-headed Spaniards still who can tell with regret of the good old days when, after the Academical session was over, the students set off in parties to wander from village to village, trusting for a livelihood to nothing but their guitars, their ready wit, and the inexhaustible good nature of their countrymen. The arrival of those merry bands at a village was hailed with delight by both old and young, but by none more than the girls, who, according to the testimony of the couplets that now remain the sole epitaphs of those rollicking days, were bound to have a student for their first love, notwithstanding the suspicion with which such attachments were regarded by their mothers, whose views, if less romantic, were more practical.

> Si el amor del estudiante
> Fuera cosa permanente
> No hubiera nada en el mundo
> Que fuera tan excelente.

> Ah yes, the student's love, my child,
> By none could be surpassed;
> 'Twould be the best in all the world—
> If only it would last.

And, indeed, it is probable that the mothers gauged the sincerity of their daughters' suitors better than the daughters did themselves; for it is hunger, and not love, that is the constant theme of the students' verses. None of them allude to a broken heart, but almost all of them to an empty stomach. Even when a lady on the balcony is being serenaded, the demands of an insatiable appetite insist on forcing themselves in and jeopardising the romance of the situation.

> Señorita del balcon
> Diga le usté á su papa
> Que nos eche medio duro
> Para esta noche cenar.

> Gentle lady on the balcon,
> Pity on our wretched plight.
> Pray throw down but half a dollar
> To buy supper for to-night.

A couplet is essentially the expression of a sentiment. But if it is to be anything more than ephemeral, if it is to survive the moment of its birth and become a traditional possession of the people, it must not only express a sentiment, but a sentiment experienced often and by many. All those of which we have hitherto been speaking are by the nature of their subjects limited to certain classes—prisoners, soldiers, or students. Hence they are few in number; but there are sentiments common to all classes of men, such as love and religion, and we may therefore expect to find these inspiring a large number of couplets. Señor Marin's collection shows this to be the case. Taking the contents of the five volumes of which it consists, and eliminating the riddles and children's rhymes (which, however, occupy but a small space) we find that three out of every four have love for their theme.

For lyric poetry no subject can be better suited than this, and it is in the verses which treat of love that the truest poetry is found. Every possible incident in the course of a love-story has its own couplet. Every phase of the passion, from its dawn-

ing to its final issue, is reflected in a verse. The result is a many-volumed novel—the love-story of a whole nation.

The first awakening of that passion which "leaves father and mother" has seldom been expressed with more simple poetry than this :

> Dos besos tengo en el alma
> Que no se apartan de mí :
> El ultimo de mi madre,
> Y el primero que te dí.

> Deep in my soul two kisses rest,
> Forgot they ne'er shall be :
> The last my mother's lips impressed,
> The first I stole from thee.

Then we have the lover sighing like a furnace :

> Sospiros que de mí salgan.
> Y otros que de tí saldrán
> Si en el camino se encuentran
> Qué de cosas se dirán !

> If all the sighs thy lips now shape
> Could meet upon the way
> With those that from mine own escape,
> What things they'd have to say !

And again we have the ripples in that course that never will run smooth. The hated conscription parts the lovers.

> Soldado soy, qué remedio ?
> Asi lo quiso mi suerte,
> Y no me pesa el fusil,
> Pero sí dejar de verte.

> A soldier's lot I do not dread
> If such my fate's decree,
> 'Tis not my musket weighs me down,
> 'Tis parting, love, from thee.

Or perhaps bodings of infidelity throw their shadows between them.

> Tu eres mi primer amor,
> Tu me enseñaste á querer :
> No me enseñes á olvidar,
> Que no lo quiero aprender.

> My true love first in thee I met,
> Thou taught'st me to adore ;
> Oh, do not teach me to forget,
> I seek no lesson more.

And sometimes the worst fears are realised, and we have the passionate cry of the woman who has been seduced and abandoned, and yet who does not mourn her misery and her shame more than she regrets the loss of him who has wrought it:

> Por tí me olvidé de Dios
> Por tí la gloria perdí,
> Y ahora me voy á quedar
> Sin Dios, sin gloria y sin ti.

> For thee my God I dared to scorn ;
> My fame thou stol'st from me ;
> And now, alas, I'm left to mourn
> My God, my fame, and thee.

A large number of the love couplets fall under the head of what is known as *requiebros,* or compliments (literally "smashes"). In Spain this art of turning a compliment reaches its greatest perfection, strangely enough, not amongst the polished society of the court, but among the humble classes. Female beauty is felt by them to contrast so strongly with their own roughness, that they regard it with a feeling amounting almost to worship. The beautiful Duchess of Devonshire used to say that every compliment paid her was insipid after the dustman's who asked leave to light his pipe at her grace's eyes. Such wit is rarely found in this country in so lowly a quarter ; but the dustman's compliment is a perfect example of a Spanish *requiebro,* such as any beautiful woman passing down the street of a Spanish town would be frequently greeted with. The *requiebros* expressed in poetry and sung in the serenades are therefore not only numerous but often extremely happy.

> Salga el sol, si ha de salir,
> Y si no, que nunca salga ;
> Que para alumbrarme á mi
> La luz de tus ojos basta.

> If the sun care to rise, let him rise,
> And if not, let him ever lie hid ;
> For the light from my lady-love's eyes
> Shines forth as the sun never did.

The whiteness of their mistress's skin has been an endless theme to cultivated poets of all nations, but rarely has it been more prettily sung than here :

> La nieve por tu cara
> Pasó diciendo :
> En donde no haga falta
> No me detengo.

Before thy brow the snow-flakes
Hurry past and say—
"Where we are not needed
Wherefore should we stay?"

Yet, prominent as is the part played by compliment, it must yield to jealousy. This passion inspires upwards of a thousand couplets in the collection we have already referred to. The Spaniard will never consent "to leave a corner in the heart he loves for other's use." He is for ever vowing that he would rather see his mistress dead than possessed by another; and the threat to find a grave for his rival beneath her window is one which unhappily too often goes beyond mere singing.

Love will continue to be the ruling theme of Spanish popular poetry so long as the romantic custom of serenading remains in vogue. This custom, so characteristic of the country, owes its maintenance, if not its origin, to the strictness with which young people of different sexes are kept apart. The Spaniards are in this respect an extremely prudish race, and the common people even more so than the higher grades of society. When a girl in humble life has found a suitor he is not admitted to the house to pay his court. Only on rare occasions, and under due escort, is he allowed to walk with her. But there is one place where he is always permitted to see and talk to her alone—at her window or balcony. Beneath this he is ever to be found standing in the long cool summer evenings, after the day's work is over, talking and singing till the last peal of the evening bells has died away, and the stars have mustered to their watch in the cloudless sky overhead. And then, perhaps, after he has parted with his betrothed and her casement is closed for the night, he will return with a band of his companions and serenade her with his verses to the accompaniment of their guitars, a service which he has to render again as the little band visits in turn the windows of each of their sweethearts.

It is during those serenades that fresh couplets are inspired and the old ones repeated; and since it is as rare to find any one who can write and read among the common people in Spain as it is to find one who cannot do so in England, it is only by repetition that they can be circulated. But repetition and inspiration are dangerous companions. The man who is capable of improvising a song for himself can seldom be trusted to faithfully reproduce one composed by another. Each singer is apt to throw some of his own personality into the repetition, and reproduce not so much the original words as the sentiment they have inspired in him. Hence there is a large number of variants of all the most popular couplets; and the number of versions through which any one has passed may be taken as a fair enough index of its popularity.

If we wished to gauge the poetical talent of any individual singer, we could not find a more certain means of doing so than by observing what variations he made on a song that he repeated, and considering whether his edition was an improvement of the original or the reverse. In the same way we might form some estimate of the poetical talent of the Spanish people, if we could observe what variations they would make on a verse which had found its way in amongst them from some known external source. Such a test can actually be applied; for the composition of *coplas* has been resorted to not unfrequently by cultured poets in recent times, and it sometimes happens, when one of these has been peculiarly happy in catching the spirit of the popular muse, that it finds a place for itself along with the genuine productions of the people. Rarely however can an aristocratic interloper of this sort pass unchallenged. It is likely to contain some feature which is unintelligible, or at any rate would not come naturally to an illiterate composer, and which is sure to be modified as the verse passes

from mouth to mouth. It is remarkable that those alterations are in most cases distinct improvements, and argue a keen sense of that poetical feeling which is born and not made. Thus the following couplet by Señor Aguilera :—

> El dia que tu naciste
> Cayó un pedazo de cielo,
> Cuando mueres y allá subas
> Se tapará el agujero ;

> The day that thou wert born, my love,
> A piece from Heaven dropped,
> And when thou'rt dead and mount again,
> Then will the gap be stopped—

has been found circulating in this altered form :

> El dia que tu naciste
> Cayó un pedazo de cielo,
> Hasta que tu no te mueras
> No se tapa el agujero.

> The day that thou wert born, my love,
> A piece from Heaven dropped,
> And not before thou'rt dead, my love,
> Can yonder gap be stopped.

Although the distinction cannot be well brought out in a translation, if the originals be compared, it can hardly be a matter of dispute that the popular version is an improvement on the original.

Next in interest to the love couplets, though far less numerous, are those of religion. Religion has been so powerful a factor in the formation of Spanish literature in its most brilliant era that one feels curious to see what part it plays in modern popular poetry. But the noble sense of religion which was kept alive by eight centuries of warfare against an infidel invader differs widely from the bigoted superstition which alone seems to have survived the Inquisition. The Spanish people draw their ideas of sacred things mainly from the images which abound in their churches, and are paraded through the streets in Holy Week. Their conceptions are thus more material than spiritual. The Virgin, who is the most prominent figure in their theogony, is worshipped under various personalities, depending on her various functions, such as the Virgin of Peace, or the Virgin of Succour ; or even on some favoured locality, as Ephesus used to be in the case of Diana. So distinct are those different personalities in the popular mind, that in some small villages the Virgin of Succour will have her special adherents who are so jealous of those of the Virgin of Peace, that when the rival processions encounter each other in the street during Holy Week, clubs and knives are not unfrequently resorted to to settle the controversy. The conception of God is correspondingly anthropomorphic. The consequence of this is that His name is mentioned and His personality introduced in an easy and familiar way, which to us appears nothing short of blasphemous, although no blasphemy is intended. "More valiant than God," is a complimentary epithet of the commonest occurrence ; while the invariable formula in which prophecies on the weather are expressed is, that if certain phenomena present themselves, "it will rain even though God tries to prevent it."

The bulk of the religious couplets is made up of the *saetas*, or verses of greeting, sung to the processions as they pass through the streets in Holy Week. Even in a large town like Seville it is rarely that a procession is allowed to file through the densely thronged Plaza de la Constitucion without some voice from amongst the crowd of spectators breaking the silence by chanting a verse in praise of the saint whose image is being borne along. The *saetas* do not express any religious sentiment, and are entitled to be classed as religious only because they allude to holy beings. Generally they consist of pictures in miniature of the Holy Family.

> La Virgen lava la ropa
> San José la está tendiendo
> Santa Ana entretiene al Niño
> Y el agua se va riendo.

> The Virgin is washing the clothes at the brook,
> And Saint Joseph hangs them to dry.
> Saint Ana plays with the Holy Babe,
> And the water flows smiling by.

Lo ha dormido entre sus brazos
Aquella que lo parió
Y su canto era tan dulce
Que pudo dormir á Dios.

Folded in his mother's arms
Lulled to sleep the Baby lay.
Even God could not resist
The sweetness of that lullaby.

It must be admitted that such pictures as these are entirely wanting in religious dignity. They conceive the Virgin and St. Joseph and the Infant Jesus as little different from Spanish peasants, but they paint their conception, such as it is, with no common degree of beauty. The pictures of Murillo, who, if not the greatest Spanish painter, is certainly the most popular, are characterised by the same excellence and the same defect. No one can look upon his Madonnas without being struck by their simple beauty; and yet, after all, they are but beautiful women beautifully painted. The Madonnas of Raphael, on the other hand, are hardly women at all. They are embodiments of religious passion. It would be desecration to regard them with the same sort of admiration that we bestow on those of the Spanish artist.

There are a few couplets which, though they do not specially allude to religious beings, are perhaps more entitled to be called religious than the *saetas*. They express those deep yet vague sentiments of religion that are awakened at times even in the most ignorant peasant when Nature unveils herself to him in all her mysterious grandeur, and, disturbed "with the joy of solemn thoughts," he tries in his own rude way to express the strange feeling that has taken possession of him.

Yo no sé lo que me pasa
No tampoco lo que quiero:
Digo y no sé lo que digo,
Siento y no sé lo que siento.

I wist not what has come o'er me,
I long for I know not what,
I speak, but scarce know that I'm speaking,
I think, but I know not my thought.

Here we recognise that vague mysticism which pervades eastern religion; and indeed all the popular Spanish poetry is marked by features which it holds in common with the poetry of the East. A vein of melancholy runs through it, which is characteristic of over-sensitive natures, and hyperbole is far more common than in the poetry of any western race. In all this we trace a legacy of the Moors; and, indeed, when we consider that the Moorish occupation of Spain covered a period greater than that which has elapsed from the Norman conquest to our own times, and that it has left an indelible impression on the language, the architecture, the manners and customs of the Spanish people, it is but little wonder that it should also have saturated their poetry. Not only has Spanish popular poetry been moulded under the influence of Moorish taste, but had it not been for the Moors, it probably would never have existed. For it is remarkable that the south of Spain, where the Moorish power was first established and where it lingered longest, affords the richest harvest of this poetry. In Morocco, too, at the present day, the Moors evince the same love of singing and power of improvisation that was brought over by their ancestors who fled with Boabdil from the Alhambra; and many of the verses of their popular songs might almost pass for translations of some of the Spanish couplets, pointing unmistakably to a common origin. No one who has travelled in Morocco can fail to be struck with the likeness between the Moorish and Spanish popular singing, not only in the words of the songs themselves, but in the character of the music and the accompaniment. It is only then that one realises to the full the truth of the saying, that "Africa begins at the Pyrenees."

The work which is being done by collectors like Don Rodriguez Marin is work of the highest value. It is for want of such that the most of our old English labour-songs have been

lost. Mr. Carmichael, in his report to the Crofter Commission, tells us how the Scottish Highlanders in bygone times had songs of love, and war, and hunting, and labour with which they accompanied themselves when rowing, shearing, spinning, milking, or grinding at the quern. The spread of education and the effacing hand of progress have wiped out all but the merest traces of them. But in Spain it is different. She is the Rip van Winkle of the European nations. With all her old traditions she has slumbered on through centuries. But for good or for evil the hand of progress is now laid upon her, and she will waken to forget them all as other nations have forgotten them. It is only by recording those couplets now that we can save them from oblivion, and then, unlike the Moor whom Washington Irving found by the fountain in the Alhambra, we shall not have to regret so bitterly the times when "they thought only of love and music and poetry. They made stanzas on every occasion, and set them all to music. He who could make the best verses, and she who had the most tuneful voice, might be sure of favour and preferment. In those days, if any one asked for bread, the reply was, 'Make me a couplet;' and the poorest beggar, if he begged in rhyme, would often be rewarded with a piece of gold."

DREAMS.

NAY! Let them dream their dream of perfect love;
It is the sweetest feeling, the most fair,
This flower-like joy that blooms in the soft air
Of Youth's bright heart, with Hope's blue heaven above.

Breathe naught of disenchantment; do not bring
Misgiving to the bliss of blended souls,
The while Life's brimming river golden rolls
Through primrose-lighted uplands of the Spring.

The blossoms of Eternity lie furled
In the dim kindling buds of dreams that keep
A fluttering pulse within Time's broken sleep;
Dreams are not idle; dreams have saved the world.

And therefore to the many heights afar
Our lowland eyes that yearn and dream we lift,
And to the isle-like mists that round them drift,
And to the moon and to the morning-star.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF DANCING.

The incongruity of this title will doubtless strike many as laughable, or even absurd. To most people dancing and philosophy will probably seem as far asunder as the Poles. As a justification, I might plead that such incongruities are fashionable nowadays; that even "shilling dreadfuls" won't sell without striking titles; and indeed, if I laid claim to any wit, I might call in Isaac Barrow to be my champion, who says that wit consists "in a startling metaphor, in a plausible reconciling of contradictions, or in acute nonsense."

But my case shall rest on no such unsatisfactory basis. No! I entirely deny any incongruity or absurdity in the phrase, philosophy of dancing. On the contrary, I maintain that dancing can be philosophically treated, and that the importance of such treatment can hardly be overrated. Dr. Tanner has proved that man can exist without food. Has it been proved that he can exist without dancing? Our age has seen a philosophy of clothes, and surely men are as much dancing as clothes-wearing animals?

All may not agree with the dancing-master in 'Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme' that the destinies of the nations depend on the science of dancing; all may not acknowledge that the mistakes in the Soudan would not have occurred if the Cabinet had been chosen after the manner of the land of Lilliput; but still, when we remember how Hippoclides, the son of Tisander, lost a kingdom and a wife, by dancing a Greek *can-can* (*ἀπορχήσαό γε μὴν τὸν γάμον*, as Herodotus has it); and how, on the other hand, "daughters of men," meaning ballet-girls, have won kingdoms and husbands by marrying "sons of God," to wit, peers of England; when we think of these things, we cannot but own that in our day dancing does not receive the attention it merits.

In this, as in certain other arts (I use the word in its broadest sense), far from advancing, our age has receded. The history of an art has been likened to the history of a man—his childhood, his manhood, his dotage. The illustration has met with approval. Yet to me there seems no reason, why, on attaining its maturity, an art should begin to fade, to dwindle, to decay. In this year of grace, eighteen hundred and eighty-six, we do not look for originality, but may we not expect the excellence of a ripe maturity? After all, dotage is subjective. In the political world what may seem to some the waverings of a driveller and an idiot, are to others the natural issue of a grand old age.

In dancing, however, our retrogression is certain. In the youth of the world—I do not refer to the Glacial Period, nor yet to the Men of the Cave—in the days of the earlier civilisations of Asia, and later among the peoples of India, of China, of Japan, dancing was a religion. The Greeks, whose civilisation our own with all its boasting has hardly surpassed even materially (it is said that the inscriptions in Antioch talk of the artificial lighting of the streets, and the existence of a Press), acted very differently from us. With them dancing was a necessary part of education; to them a great dancer was a great man; Socrates thought it not unworthy of his philosophy to learn the art in his old age; and

> "The wise Thessalians ever gave
> The name of leader in their country's dance
> To him that had their country's governance."

Yet even among the Greeks we find sure signs of a decadence; Lucian's

dialogue is a defence of dancing, not a panegyric. It is true that he proves dancing to be superior to tragedy, asserts that it is coëval with the world, that Troy was taken, that Zeus was saved, that Ariadne was ruined by a dance.

No more surely is needed to show the importance of my subject to those who, judging from the state of dancing at the present day, deem it a mere amusement. To those who object to it from moral or religious reasons, I say in the words of Lucian: "Come, tell me, my dear sir, with regard to dancing in the ball-room or at the theatre, do you censure it as one who has often seen it, or as one who knows nothing of such sights? You say you deem them disgraceful and to be spat upon. If indeed you have seen them, you have a right to your opinion (such as it is) as well as I; if not, beware, my orthodox friend, lest your censure may seem, in the eyes of worldlings, rash and unreasoning, as coming from one who prates about that of which he knows nothing." Go, my friends, go and be converted like Longfellow's Cardinal.

Let me not be thought to claim to be the first to call attention to the importance of dancing and its culpable neglect among us. Of those who have recognised this, I may mention Noverre and Davies. My sole title to originality lies in my method.

To those who are not very deeply read in the earlier English poets, the existence of a poem entitled 'Orchestra,' by Sir John Davies, one time Chief Justice of Ireland, may be unknown. His 'Nosce Teipsum' is familiar to most students, by name at all events. His less known work, though not mentioned by Hallam, is in many ways most interesting. Written in a peculiar but easy-flowing stanza of seven lines, it illustrates by many ingenious analogies the origin and importance of dancing, establishing its existence and effects, and tracing in it all the motions of Nature.

"For what are Breath, Speech, Echoes, Music, Winds,
But Dancings of the Ayre in Sundry Kinds?"

Noverre displays none of the mysticism which pervades this very ingenious and imaginative poem. His treatment is less ethereal and more practical. He argues that dancing is the one important thing in life; that to be a successful dancer, a man must be everything and know everything; that, in a word, dancing connotes everything. The converse, that to know anything or be anything one must be a dancer, or, to put it in a logical form, "Everything denotes dancing," Noverre does not seem to have recognised.

An exhaustive treatment of so wide a subject as that of dancing will not here be attempted. It will content me to briefly indicate the methods, historical and scientific, by which future seekers after truth must proceed. Those who still believe that there is some historical reality at the bottom of every myth, however altered by tradition or embellished by poetic fancy, will be interested in the different claims to the invention of dancing which appear in different mythologies. It has, by the way, been suggested to me that in this context resuscitation were a better word than invention: for dancing, some hold, was in the world before man, and was carried by our ancestors the apes to a higher elevation than it has ever reached since. The other day, while in a mythological mood hesitating between Greek nymphs and Gothic fairies, balancing the rights of Terpsichore and Fin McCoul, a lucky and providential accident—the discovery of an old book, entitled 'A treatise against Dauncing made Dialoguewise by John Northbroke'—turned my uncertainty into a blissful feeling of relief.

The author, after duly examining all the evidence, thus sums up: "But whatsoever these saye, St. Chrysostom, an ancient father, sayth that it came first from the devill."

This was satisfactory. His Satanic Majesty (it is well in these days to be punctilious about titles) is undoubtedly older than Fin, and most probably older than Terpsichore. For to put it syllogistically:

Medusa lived before Terpsichore;
The Devil was coëval with Medusa;

(As Lamb says:

"The feast being ended, to dancing they went,
To a music that did produce a
Most dissonant sound, while a hellish glee
Was sung in parts by the Furies Three,
And the *Devil* took out *Medusa*.")

∴ The Devil lived (and danced) before Terpsichore.

The only doubtful part of the syllogism is whether the first proposition is true or not. However, I have gone with the consensus of opinion.

After paying due respect to the inventor of dancing, it seemed suitable to investigate the time when and the reasons why. Here again I am indebted to a predecessor who traces "the origin and invention of this dissolute and lascivious exercise to the devils in hell, what time the Israelites, after feasting and gorging themselves with wine, fell to dancing around the molten calf in the desert."

The classification of dances is a much more difficult task. The following is purely tentative: comprehensiveness is perhaps all it can boast of.

There are three classes or kinds of dances. The first class includes all dances in which the dancers are of the same sex, and dance in bands. Mr. Northbroke recognises this class, but seems to restrict it to those solemn exercises through which school-girls stalk—calisthenics, as the prospectuses call them nowadays. In this class, however (which my predecessor puts first, as the most innocent, I, through gallantry), we must include the choric parts of ballets. The second class is that of mixed dances. The dancers still dance in bands, but there is no limitation of sex. My reverend friend rather unkindly speaks of this class as "instituted only for pleasure and wantonnesse sake." The *animus* which he displays all through his treatise might be put down to physical inability, had he not foreseen that such an accusation might arise, and written, "My age is not the cause nor my inhabilitie the reason thereof." Lord Byron's reason for writing his diatribe is only too obvious. Before proceeding to the third class, I venture to suggest that this, the second class, might be subdivided into square and round dances. By the way, Mr. Northbroke's opinion as to the invention of round dances is rather amusing. Women, he says, invented them that "holding upon men's arms they may hop the higher." The third class consists of those dances in which one individual dances alone. In the near future I purpose to enlarge upon and exemplify these classes, by enumerating, age by age, country by country, race by race, all the dances that have been in vogue, that are still in vogue, and, by a process of induction, all the dances that are likely to be in vogue, among men. It will be a subject of infinite interest, and of infinite length. A friend of mine, indeed, a learned doctor, has left me a work in manuscript in which he labours to show that national character is to be best seen in the national dances; that, as the Irishman (my friend was a Celt) faces his partner in the national jig, so is he straightforward in love and war. However, I must for the present leave this, the more strictly historical part of my subject, and proceed to the more purely scientific.

It seems to me that there is something subtler, something more real in dancing than these rather superficial distinctions—interesting as they may be to the ordinary observer, useful as they must be to one who is treating dancing from a merely historical stand-point. All human knowledge, we are told, is relative; so is all dancing. In dancing, as in everything else, there is an ideal, an ideal

ever unattainable, but towards which all dancing should tend. As the ideal poet is one who writes poetry purely for poetry's sake, so the ideal dancer is one who dances purely for dancing's sake. As all motives of gain, nay, all moral and ethical tendencies, while they may magnify and popularise a poem, lessen its value as pure poetry, so all extraneous motives detract from the purity of dancing. It is true that this ideal is never reached, but some dancing approaches it much more nearly than others.

The dances included in the first class, "Pyrrhica saltatio," were in ancient times entirely religious. The gambols of the Salvationists form the only parallel among us. The secular element has invaded the other representatives of this class—calisthenics, and the choruses in the ballets; in the former the end is health, in the latter the earning of money, or something else, which ought to be equally subsidiary. Plainly it is not in this class that we are to look for dancing for dancing's sake.

There is more difficulty in dealing with the claims of the second class—that of mixed dancing. It will be said that many people waltz for waltzing's sake; waltz and dance are almost synonymous terms nowadays. If, after the manner of Socrates, I ask, as one ignorant of such things, What is meant by "for waltzing's sake"? the answer will in all probability be, "Oh, for the pleasure merely." We will not go into the question as to whether the attainment of pleasure is the ideal end of dancing. That shall be left quite open. Indeed, one must perforce acknowledge that, if a person dances purely for the pleasure he gets in dancing, and is entirely regardless of the person with whom he dances, and all other externals, such a person is much nearer to the ideal than other less ascetic individuals. But is such a course of conduct practicable? That it was not usual in Mr. Northbroke's day, some two hundred years ago, is clear. "Why are men desirous more to daunce rather with this woman, than with that woman? And why are women so desirous rather to choose this man than that man to daunce withall?" Our spelling may have changed since then—we spell daunce without a *u*—but our ways are very much the same. For, consider how such a dancer would act in a ball-room. Recognising the unseemliness of dancing alone, he would find it necessary to get a partner. This may seem easy in his case, as it will not matter whether she be plain or pretty, young or old, silent or talkative, provided she can dance. But looking into it more closely we find that all these adjuncts do exert a certain influence, an influence that would injure ideal purity of dancing. Beauty would attract, ugliness disgust. Youth is untrained, age is over-trained. With a silent partner one must talk, with a loquacious partner one must (still worse) listen. However, supposing our dancer overcomes these distractions; supposing he chooses his partner (or should it be rather *opponent* in these days of fast waltzes and faster flirtations?) after the advice of Jenyns:

> "But let not outward charms your judgment sway,
> Your reason rather than your eyes obey,
> And in the dance, as in the marriage noose,
> Rather for merit than for beauty choose:
> Be her your choice, who knows with perfect skill,
> When she should move, and when she should be still,
> Who uninstructed can perform her share
> And kindly half the pleasing burden bear":

supposing that the rooms are large, and the crush mild; supposing the music is perfect, supposing the floor is smooth—a goodly lot of suppositions truly—nay, supposing he passes through a dance in reverential silence; how is our ideal friend to conduct himself in the intervals? He is expected to talk, in many instances to flirt, or—but may the gods avert it—to spoon, as the youth in Mr. Northbroke's dialogue, evidently prompted by the *chaperons* of that time, says:

"It is well known that by dauncings and leapings very many honest marriages are brought to passe, and therefore, if for that onely, it is good and tolerable." All this cannot be done without descending from the atmosphere of almost spiritual ecstasy which ought to envelop the ideal dancer in the ball-room. Again, supper must be regarded as a wearisome necessity, not an agreeable variation. All those pleasant little interludes in the conservatories must be rigorously avoided —no ices, no champagne, no whispered nothings in a corner.

Mr. Sinnett tells us that a candidate for the Great Brotherhood can pass his probation in the full swing of London Society: he has a much easier time, then, than a dancer who aspires to ideal purity in a London ball-room.

We must turn finally to the third class in our search after the ideal. Here, at all events, we have no distraction of sex; but other agents, perhaps still more powerful, come into play— love of money and love of admiration. All dancing on the stage is done for money, and, to earn money, must excite admiration. But all work that is done for money, be it physical work or mental work, loses in imagination what it gains in condensation. Listen to the pregnant words of a wise man. Mr. Ruskin says: "It would appear therefore that those pursuits which are altogether theoretic, whose results are desirable or admirable in themselves and for their own sake, ... ought to take rank above all pursuits which have any taint in them of subserviency to life, in so far as all such tendency is the sign of less eternal and less holy function." (Mr. Ruskin's books are attainable by every one.)

Were it not for these drawbacks, our professional dancers would be second Pelagias, as Pelagia was on one memorable occasion; ideal dancing would exist; we might bow down and worship Miss Kate Vaughan or Miss Adelaide Wilson. In one case, and in one only, both love of money and love of admiration are absent, and but for a touch of religion—fanaticism— what you will—we should have the ideal dancer incarnate. I mean the dancing dervish, who has been thus glorified by Carlyle: "Are not spinning-dervishes an eloquent emblem, significant of much? Hast thou noticed him, that solemn-visaged Turk, the eyes shut; dingy wool mantle circularly hiding his figure;— bell shaped; like a dingy bell set spinning on the tongue of it? By centrifugal force the dingy wool mantle heaves itself, spreads more and more, like upturned cup widening into upturned saucer: thus spins he to the praise of Allah and advantage of mankind, faster and faster, till collapse ensue, and sometimes death."

It is at a further development of this class that we must aim in our yearnings after the ideal development that cannot be far distant in these days of evolution; a development, that may be artificially hastened when our dancing-masters are paid as State officials, when there is a Minister of Dancing, when the heads of the Dancing Office are graduates of Dervish Colleges—then indeed as a nation may we aspire to the spiritual ecstasy of the dances of the Orient; then will all mockery of the divine science cease; then will men forgive Mephistopheles his many failings for the sake of his one invention; then will Herodias' daughter be a patron saint; then men will wonder that so wise a man as Cicero should have asked so foolish a question as, *Did ever man dance who was neither drunk nor mad?*

OUR NATIVE ARMY IN BENGAL.

At a time when the native army in India is about to be augmented, and when many changes are likely to be made in its organisation and constitution, it may interest Englishmen at a distance to learn something of the men from whom it is recruited.

The infantry regiments of the Bengal army are divided into eight companies, the cavalry regiments into eight troops, and these are generally made up each of a distinct class or race, and are called class companies and troops. The value of this kind of organisation will be easily understood when we remember that in the days before the Mutiny the regiments were recruited from a single country, Oudh, and were all of the Purbiah race. This made disloyalty and the possibility of open revolt very easy. Under the present organisation, in which each regiment contains three or four different races, who in some instances are more inimical to each other than they could be to us, and could never combine for united action, the possibility of the mutiny of the whole army, or indeed of the whole of any one corps, is rendered well-nigh impossible.

The races from which the Bengal native army is recruited are as follows;—Sikhs, Pathans, Panjabi Mohammedans, Hindustanis, Dogras, and Gurkhas. The regiments have different constitutions; some have two, three, or even four companies of Sikhs, one or two of Pathans, and the other two or three Dogras, Panjabi Mohammedans, or Hindustanis. In others the Hindustani or Panjab Mohammedan element will predominate. The idea of the Government is to mix the religions and races together, not only so as to neutralise their power of disloyalty, but also to use the various fighting qualities of which the different races are possessed so as to secure throughout the army a proper admixture of steadiness and dash; of the steady endurance and quiet pluck of the Sikh, for instance, with the greater *élan* of the Pathan.

The Sikhs are a particularly fine set of men, and make excellent soldiers—the very best, I think, in the native army. In prehistoric times a race called Jats invaded India from the regions of Central Asia, and after conquering Upper India settled chiefly in the Panjab. These in process of time became Hindus by religion, and by profession principally agriculturists. Originally a fine, hardy, adventurous race, their new occupation though robbing them of some of their spirit of adventure, only added to their qualities of physical endurance and hardihood. The greater part, as I have said, became agriculturists, but many also adopted the different professions common to Hinduism, and became carriers, grain-sellers, goldsmiths, and the like; and as in Hinduism the son almost always follows the trade of his father, in the course of time there arose in the Panjab regular castes of the different trades, each following its own special calling, and having its own well marked position in the social scale.

It was to a race thus constituted that Nanak, the great reformer and founder of the Sikh faith, came. He found the Hinduism of the Panjab desperately degenerated, both from inherent decline and from its contact with much that was debasing in Mohammedanism. Monotheism had given way to polytheism; morality to licentiousness; the direct worship of the Creator to the mediatorship of priests and shrines and the meretricious dominion of sacerdotalism. The preaching of Nanak was designed to meet these

errors. He taught the spiritual worship of the true and spiritual God. He forbade plurality of wives, the use of tobacco, and so forth. He enjoined as the outward marks of his creed the allowing the hair and beard to grow uncut, and the slaying of animals for food by decapitation with a sword. His disciples, the Sikhs, became very numerous, and in time were welded by the genius of Ranjeet Singh, their great military potentate, into a nation. When we conquered the Panjab these Sikhs, who had composed Ranjeet Singh's army, enlisted freely in our newly raised regiments, and now there is scarcely a regiment in the Bengal army in which there are not one or more companies of these men. They are gifted with all the qualities which go to make a good soldier. Physically they are very fine fellows, averaging in our regiments fully five feet eight inches, with a chest of thirty-six inches. They are brave and wonderfully enduring; very abstemious in their diet, seldom touching meat, and living principally on unleavened bread with a little clarified butter, and occasionally a little coarse sugar or molasses. They are splendid walkers, and when going to their homes on leave will often average thirty or forty miles a day for a week together in the hottest weather. They are very handy, as may be supposed, in the use of the spade, and can throw up entrenchments rapidly and well, and they are also very expert in the loading of baggage animals. I have seen many instances of their bravery. One I may mention. We had advanced up a hill to take a position on an exceedingly hot day in April. One of my officers succumbed to the heat, and fell fainting just as we reached the position. His orderly was carrying a bottle of soda water. This we poured over his head, and it had the effect of reviving him. We remained under fire here for some time, and then the object of the advance having been accomplished the force was withdrawn, and we were directed to retire. We did so, followed by the enemy. When we had gone back some distance the orderly suddenly remembered that he had left the empty bottle behind, and calmly proposed that he should, at the risk of his life, go back for it.

The Pathans are a very different race in figure, in face, and in disposition. The Sikh is a long-bodied and rather lightly made man, whereas the Pathan is short and sturdy. The Sikh has a rather handsome, grave, regular set of features, while the Pathan is merrier if less good-looking. But it is in disposition that they differ most. The character of the Sikh somewhat resembles in its taciturnity and doggedness that of the Scotchman, while the Pathan has more of the lightness, the carelessness and dash of the Frenchman. The Pathan race lives almost entirely on the other side of the Indus. Some in the hills beyond the Khaibar Pass, and in the Takht-i-Suliman mountains, and some in the plains which lie between these mountains and the river. The country, the life, the bringing up of a young Pathan lad all tend to foster and develop in time the qualities which go to make up an ideal soldier, such as our native army, and especially our frontier regiments, require. His country consists for the most part of rugged bare hills with a few small valleys in which is grown scarcely enough grain to support the inhabitants. The villages are generally perched on some hill-top, and surrounded by tower-flanked walls; for pretty nearly every tribe has some *vendetta* of many years standing with its neighbours on every side, and every man, even when carrying on his rare agricultural duties, goes armed as fully as his purse will allow him. They are poorly clad and dirty in their habits; seldom if ever taking a regular bath, and keeping their clothes on them nearly as long as they will hang together. They lead an out-door life, and have all the appearance and springy walk of the mountaineer. Those who live in the hills and lead this free life make the best soldiers; but those who live in the lowlands

have not yet become too much softened by our civilisation to have lost their military qualities, though they have taken to clean clothes and ablutions.

While the Pathan, therefore, makes an excellent soldier, he requires more careful and discreet dealing with than men of any other race in quarters, and cooler leading in the field. For an advance, and especially for a pursuit, there is no better soldier; but for a stubborn resistance, for an orderly retirement, or for any operation of this kind calling for the highest qualifications of a soldier, I would infinitely rather be backed by the quieter and less dashing Sikh. Physically the Pathan is strong and wiry, averaging in our regiments about five feet seven inches with a chest of thirty-seven inches. In the hills he is superior in endurance to any other race in Upper India; but he does not stand heat well, and in the plains cannot march as well as the Sikh. Both Pathans and Sikhs are good riders, and take capital care of their horses.

The language spoken by the Sikh is Panjabi, which in some measure resembles Urdu. It is spoken with a slightly nasal accent, and as much as possible without closing the lips. It is an ugly, inelegant, not to say barbarous *patois*, and is a great trial to our young British officers when they first join a Sikh regiment.

The Pathans speak a totally different language called Pushtoo, which is remotely allied to Persian. It is a rather harsh, gutteral language; though some of the lowlanders by converting the hard *kh* into soft *sh*, and the guttural *gh* into the soft French *j*, have made their language more mellifluous. It is a bold and sturdy tongue though, and infinitely finer than the milk and water accents of Panjabi.

The Panjabi Mohammedans live, as the term implies, in the Panjab. They are the descendants of those Hindus who were converted to Islam when the Mussulman conquerors first overran Northern India. Like the Sikhs they belong to regular hereditary trades and occupations, and each has a well-marked social position. None but those fairly high up in the social ladder are enlisted in our ranks. Physically they are a fine stalwart race, but not quite equal, I think, to the Sikh. This may be accounted for, perhaps, by the less moral tone required by their religion as practised in the Panjab than by the faith and morality of Nanak. Whatever the cause, as soldiers they are certainly not to be compared with either Sikhs or Pathans. They are a conquered race; for their conversion was the result rather of compulsion than conviction, and the race seems stamped with the helot brand. They lack force of character and independence; but they are by no means wanting in intelligence. Under our fostering care education is spreading rapidly, and this class is, perhaps, taking advantage of it more than any other in the Panjab. They are a numerous race, and offer themselves freely for enlistment. Like the Sikhs they talk Panjabi; but many of them are now sufficiently educated to speak fairly good Urdu. In diet and habits, as well as in marching and riding qualities, they resemble their fellow-countrymen the Sikhs, but there exists very little sympathy between the two classes.

Hindustanis belong to the race which before the Mutiny supplied the whole of the soldiery of the Bengal native army. Whether it is that our more peaceful government of their country and smaller demand upon their martial qualities has caused them to degenerate, I know not; but certainly from some cause a marked deterioration has taken place in the native soldiers from Oudh. Even in those regiments in which a number of them are still enlisted, the men bear no comparison with the remarkably fine, soldierly, well set-up fellows of which some of our best Pandy corps used to be composed — men who showed so well at Maharajpur and Sobraon, and vied with our British

soldiers in the storming of the Sikh positions, and in making us the victors of the land of the Five Rivers. Hindustanis are by no means favourites with the majority of British officers; for there are many things in which they compare unfavourably with the other races composing our Bengal army. The chief of these drawbacks is their caste prejudices. It is difficult to get them to mess together, and to have to carry cooking utensils for every individual man would considerably increase the amount of transport. Then they will only eat when almost denuded of clothing, and this on a campaign in a cold climate often makes it difficult to get them fed without great risk to their health. They will not drink water carried in a skin, and there is no other method of carrying water in India so convenient as in a skin. They dislike a meat diet, and this is trying to the commissariat officer, who is glad to be able to drive a portion of the necessary rations. Then they are not good soldiers in hill warfare, and they are miserable in cold and wet. An enormous percentage of a regiment of Hindustanis employed in the Kurram valley during the second Afghan war succumbed to these various causes. From what I have said it will easily be understood that with most commanding officers the Purbiah (the Eastern, as the Hindustani is called) is not popular. So much is this the case that in the Panjab Frontier Force—the portion of our army which guards our north-west frontier in India—there is only one of the eleven infantry regiments which enlists Hindustanis, and that has only one company. Blackly as I have painted them, they are not bad soldiers for fighting in the plains. They stand heat well; they are brave and steady when well led; and they are intelligent, and generally fairly well educated.

The Dogras come chiefly from the Kangra valley, and from the low hills adjacent to it. They are thus almost highlanders by race, and possess, as regards activity and endurance, the qualities which usually characterise those whose lives are spent among mountains. They are of less stature than their neighbours in the plains, and those in our ranks probably scarcely average five feet seven inches. They are a quiet, intelligent, taciturn race, badly educated as a rule, but with lots of intellectual ability where they have had a chance of developing it. Like the Sikhs, their martial qualities lie rather in the direction of steadiness and dogged obstinacy in the face of a foe, than in dash and charge. They are Hindus by religion, and unfortunately retain many of the caste prejudices which render the Hindustanis less welcome than other races in our ranks. However, they are less prejudiced than the Purbiahs, and in most other respects are considerably their superiors. They are generally good shots and take an interest in military work, but they are quiet and sedate to a fault. They are generally rather nice looking, with regular, well-cut features, and are rather dandies in their way. They are good marchers and riders, and are a nice class to deal with.

Gurkhas are not enlisted in the regular native army; but there are five regiments composed solely of men of this race. Physically they form a great contrast to the other East Indian martial races. Though very short, averaging probably not more than five feet three inches, they have fine broad chests, and well-developed limbs: but they are desperately ugly, with features of the Mongolian type, while their small narrow eyes, flat faces, and high cheek bones unmistakably proclaim their Tartar origin. They come chiefly from the independent kingdom of Nepal, which skirts our north-eastern frontier. There is often great difficulty in obtaining recruits of this class, for the Nepalese Government is very jealous of our Government, and does not like to see so many of its men in our army. The Gurkhas make excellent soldiers,

especially for hill warfare; they are remarkably brave, and combine dash with quiet dogged pluck. They ape the British soldier in many of their ways, and get on capitally with him on service. They are capable of higher military training, I think, than the other races; but of course physically they are inferior, man for man, to Sikhs or Pathans. They cannot march well, and are not suited for a campaign in the plains of India during the hot season. Though they look remarkably stupid, and will sometimes take an order from beginning to end without any movement of feature or sign of intelligence to show that they have comprehended it, they are much sharper than they look, and I have been surprised when, after the most stolid reception of an order, I have asked if it was understood, to have it repeated to me word for word as I have given it. They are Hindus by religion, but less strict than the Purbiahs, and being all together in one regiment their caste prejudices interfere less with their value as soldiers. They speak a language called Gurkhali, but learn a mongrel kind of Urdu when they enter our service. Few British officers, therefore, learn Gurkhali. The Gurkha is essentially an infantry soldier. In his own country his favourite weapon is a short curved knife (a *kukurree*), used both for warlike and domestic purposes; this he carries attached to his waistbelt in addition to his other accoutrements, and at close quarters he can use it with terrible effect.

The races I have described are the principal ones from which our native army in Bengal is recruited, but there are a few others, such as Jats and Rohillahs, which furnish a few men.

When we come to think how different the men of these several races and classes are, in religion, in style, in features, and in manner of wearing their dress, it will easily be understood how varied must be the appearance of a native regiment, both on parade and in quarters. On the former, of course, the uniform does much to obliterate national traits; but even here the different methods of tying their turbans, and of wearing their whiskers and beards, serve to give a different look to the different classes. It will be easily understood also, what care and tact are needed to weld into a harmonious whole a body of men composed of races so different and with ideas and prejudices so varied, whose only tie of fellowship is that they are all mercenaries serving one common conqueror.

To help the commandant to carry this out Government has wisely intrusted him with powers of discipline and punishment greater than those possessed by an officer commanding a British regiment. He can himself try and punish summarily offences ordinarily cognizable by a district court martial, and can sentence to forty lashes or a year's imprisonment, and his sentence can be set aside on the score of illegality alone. He possesses also large powers of inflicting punishment without trial, extending to seven days confinement in solitary cells, deprivation of good conduct pay, and thirty days confinement to barracks. But crime is, fortunately, rare in the Bengal army, and this is attributable almost entirely to the absence of drunkenness. Mohammedans are, of course, prohibited by their religion from touching alcohol, and they rarely disobey on this point. Sikhs and Gurkhas drink, but very seldom to excess. During a long experience I have only known three or four cases of drunkenness when on duty. Hence there is but little insubordination; and gambling, absence from quarters, and petty larceny are the principal crimes.

Promotion is perhaps the most difficult part of a commandant's work. He cannot, as a rule, trust much to the advice of his native officers, for their religious and tribal leanings preclude them from giving an impar-

tial opinion; and yet, in the case of the earliest promotion, namely that from the ranks, where one's opportunities of knowing and trying individuals is generally so small, it is peculiarly difficult to select those who will probably exhibit in a higher position those qualifications of intelligence and command which are so essential in non-commissioned officers. Promotion from the ranks is made almost entirely by selection and merit; though in cases of nearly equal merit seniority carries its own weight. In the further promotions from *naik* to sergeant, or *havildar*, seniority plays a larger part; but above that again, from *havildar* to native officer, merit ought to be the almost only rule. Among Pathans selection is not so difficult, for they are an open, cheery race, and are constantly bringing themselves forward; but among Sikhs and other Hindu races it is much more difficult, and I fear one often passes over a good man whom a truer knowledge of facts would have made one glad to advance.

The term of enlistment is for three years; but fully three-fourths of the men serve on for a longer time. An increase in pay of one rupee is given at the end of the third year's service, another at the end of the sixth year's, and a third at the end of the tenth. This is termed good conduct pay, and is withheld if the conduct has not been good. At the end of fifteen years' service a man, if broken in health, gets a pension according to rank. This is one of the greatest boons in the native army and does much to make the service popular. It has also a good political bearing, for it places in almost every village throughout Upper India one or two old and influential residents whose income is dependent on the stability of our Government. The pay of a private is small to begin with, only seven rupees, or fourteen shillings, a month; but it is just sufficient with care to feed and keep him, and indeed most men even manage to save a little to take them to their homes when they go on leave. Furlough is the boon above all others which they value, for though most of them are married, very few bring their wives to quarters with them. Their furlough comes round about every three years, and they then get three or four months at their homes. Besides this, they can often obtain short leave if their homes are near the station where their regiment happens to be quartered.

The soldiers of the Bengal army are generally fairly healthy. They suffer from malarial fever in the autumn, and pneumonia has of late years claimed a too large percentage of victims; but as a rule the regiments are in very good condition. Their barracks are far from comfortable; their food consists almost entirely of cereals, their drink of water; and though their clothing is carefully attended to, there is necessarily a large amount of exposure, especially on hill campaigning. Yet it is marvellous how sturdy and healthy the men keep, and how cheerfully they will carry on their duties if their British officers will only go the right way to work with them and set them a good example. Indeed, I know of no sphere where example exerts a greater influence. A native regiment is just what its British officers make it. The commandant especially and above all; but under him all the British officers as well. If in quarters they are thoroughly upright, impartial, and careful of their men's needs, and on service set them the example of cheeriness and hearty co-operation, both among themselves and with their subordinates, they may demand from them almost any sacrifice, and they will not murmur; they may ask them to follow almost anywhere, and they will not hang back.

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Bengal Staff Corps.

THE LATE MASTER OF TRINITY.

The interest that attaches itself to the life of a notable man is generally very complex: it entwines itself with the great events which our hero helped to bring about, with his personal relations with the other great men of his time, his view of the movements agitating society. And then there is a further interest in his private life. We desire to see the secret sources from which he drew the inspiration he carried into the outside world; we are anxious to know whether he was most real when before the public and made his inner life subserve his outer, or whether he came away from the dust of battle and the rush of the world into the quiet of his own circle with the feeling that he was returning home. All these varying moods are an attractive study: when the mask falls away and we know that he was most dispirited when he seemed most serene, or buoyed up by a divine elation when crushed by a sorrow that seemed irreparable—the disentangling the central strand from the variegated web is a task of fascinating difficulty.

But in the life which we are here endeavouring to trace there was no such bewildering complexity. The secret history of an essentially reticent mind cannot be written; it is at the best, sympathetic guessing. In a life where events are rare, circumstances monotonous, a character with few friends and fewer intimates, withdrawn alike from the political, the religious, the social arena, there can be little to record, unless there has been some definite line taken throughout, some marked attitude which a nature has consistently retained towards the outer world.

In the case of the late Master of Trinity we can lay our finger at once upon the characteristic which made him what he was—which gave to a personality such an exclusive strength that when it slips from the world we feel that no replacing is possible. He stood to the action and thought of the present day in the character of a judge: like Rhadamanthus in the old fables, who dealt not with motives or tendencies but with recorded acts, and sate to give judgment upon them, his function was one of pure criticism. How much that is needed in an age where on the one hand so much is excused on the score of irresistible fatality, while on the other such an unreasonable preponderance is given to the value of action, in the face of a loss such as we have experienced is acutely felt.

It is a part of the strange irony of life that the personalities which make themselves most strenuously felt among their own generation have a way of slipping out of history. A man who is much occupied in leaving his mark on life, in stemming or colouring the whirling stream that passes him, has little time to spend in piling monuments on the banks that are the envy and wonder of the fluid tides that come and go. The wild grief that we sometimes encounter in books, more rarely in real life, that centres about the disappearance of some apparently unemphatic figure can be often thus explained: his vitality did not lend itself to visible labour, it was content to modify the temporary and fluctuating. When such an attitude is artistically maintained; when a character most highly gifted, with a taste and delicacy of perception that overrides the captiousness of less instinctive critics, is seen to devote itself not to gathering straws but to merely watching life, an atmosphere which is at once intensely attractive and baffling begins to rise. When a sinister silence is maintained upon questions

which appear to the young and fervent to be essential to the progress of the race; when an impenetrable contempt for fanaticism and extravagance occasionally steals out in pungent sentences; when the outbursts of not unnatural emotions receive no quarter; when the overbalancing of enthusiasm is not forgiven; a deep and provoking wonder grows gradually up as to what standpoint such a critic has reached that such judgments are possible; as to what platforms, what further heights are visible, that the plain seems so low and despicable. Of all fascinations there is none like the fascination of contempt; and when this is seen justified by a sure touch, a genuine grasp of ideas, a most piercing intellect, and seen moreover steadfast in a place of which the very atmosphere is that of generous and ardent spirits, the wonder becomes almost intolerable.

There is a great and common misapprehension which accepts no criticism as valid except what proceeds from a basis of superior capacity. The ordinary man requires the critic to be a better man than the performer whom he dissects, to be able to beat his victim on his own ground. But this is a deep-seated error. The creative power often confers no clearness of vision on its possessor; the best critics are seldom originative men. The critic is, in fact, meant to clear the air for ordinary people about great work; to ascertain the best points of view, and to sting to death the crawling nerveless creatures who are just capable of obscuring by the closeness of their imitative powers the beauty of their great exemplar.

To this task the late Master of Trinity brought an instinctive taste of the first order. He brought a mind so delicate as to be only saved from becoming hypercritical by a certain robustness and virility of life, a literary discrimination which led the men to whom he lectured to scribble down his very epithets on the margins of their note-books, and which carried into all he wrote a flavour which few writers have leisure to bestow. And yet he was no pedant.

But this critical faculty had its negative side; it grew at the expense of other sides of his intellect. No faculty can be sustained in such perfection except by a loss of balance. And there is something like a sense of failure that crosses us when we look over the list of works by which he will soon be known: an edition of a dialogue or two of Plato's—a few reviews, a sermon or two, occasional contributions to a classical journal—and that is all.

There is a dissatisfaction attending the production of all work even in the most creative minds; but when there is added to this a keenly fastidious taste, working in a region where there can hardly be a constant glow of enthusiasm to propel a student through his exertions, it will be seen that the natural difficulty must have been great. In his later years, moreover, he had to contend with constant ill-health—and ill-health engendering a hypochondriacal tendency, which is of all physical evils the hardest for a student to struggle against. A physical uneasiness which seems to require the perpetual distraction of the mind is fatal to its attaining a firm standpoint for laborious origination. And so his intellect turned aside into the easier path of wide and various literary diversion, the impulse, the imperious conscience, so to speak, of the writer to produce, growing fainter and fainter.

A mind of that kind, with its interest in philosophy, its unique power of entering into the heart of subtle ideas and refined phrases, joined with its keen view of the modern spirit, might have done a great work of reconciliation. He is even now the originator of the present Cambridge Platonic school; but he is more the suggester and inspirer of the movement than its leader—or even to any great extent its pioneer. He was neither the hard progressive thinker

nor the revolutionary scholar; he was merely one of those who by his acute touch, by the keen medium through which he regarded things, made those things seem worth doing.

But to the outer world he was perhaps best known as a conversationalist; he had the kind of reputation upon which stories are fathered. Men who knew the background from which Dr. Thompson's utterances proceeded, who knew the inimitable air, the droop of the eyelids, the inscrutable coldness of the eyes and lips, the poise of the head, were ready to give a fictitious value to sayings that had the sanction of his name. To couple his name, falsely or truly, with an epigram gave it an indefinable prestige; his personality thrown into the scale made a sarcasm that might have passed unnoticed into a crushing hit.

Those of his sayings that survive (and there are a considerable number of a first-rate order) will appeal, it must be confessed, chiefly to those whose humour is of the true derisive order. When he said, for instance, on hearing that the numbers of a rival college were diminishing, that he had heard that emigration was increasing among the lower classes, or that he had never realised what was the full force of the expression in the bidding prayer, "the inferior clergy," till he saw the minor canons of a northern cathedral—the fancy, though irresistibly tickled by the collocation, will on reflection revolt against the cruelty of the expressions. And yet those who knew him best concur in saying that he was an intrinsically kind man; so promptly generous indeed that, in the days when he was a college tutor, undergraduates in trouble went naturally to him for help and advice—a most weighty proof to those who know the undergraduate world and its reticence. His tone, in fact, especially in later days, was always affectionate, even tender when speaking of the lads who came under him. "The boys" (his invariable phrase) "are so good-natured," he said lately to an old friend, who had remarked with some distress upon the riotous behaviour of the undergraduates at a College Feast: "It is so easy to keep them within bounds; they only require a few words to be said to them—in an epigrammatic way."

The explanation is that these sayings were uttered solely with reference to the amusement of those who heard them, with no ulterior idea: he had no wish that the venom of these stings should circulate and rankle—least of all that they should penetrate to those who formed the subjects of them. But he could not resist an epigram; and when on accompanying a popular preacher who was to preach at St. Mary's he found himself so hampered by the crowd at the door as to be almost unable to force an entrance—his suave utterance, "Make way, gentlemen, or some of us will be disappointed", was genuinely made, because the thought had occurred to him, and he was convinced it would amuse the throng, and with no sort of wish to harrow the feelings or dash the innocent pride of the gentleman with him.

It was only a few years ago that the writer of these lines heard him say in a meditative manner at the Lodge at Trinity, speaking of an offensive speech that had been made the evening before at a College dinner which every one felt had marred the flow of the evening, "He reminded me of his father"; whereupon,—his sentences having somewhat of an oracular effect about them, and those present having instinctively turned in his direction, thinking that some interesting reminiscence had been aroused—he continued "he succeeded in being at once dull and flippant", and then, after a pause, "no uncommon combination." This last is a specially characteristic utterance—a strong personal judgment relieved by a general application—by, if we may use the word, a "back-hander" to humanity. This was what he delighted in

doing. No one, again, had a greater power of freezing enthusiasm dead, when expressed with what he considered unnecessary vehemence. A gentleman, now a professor at Cambridge, has told me that in his undergraduate days he was once spending the evening in Dr. Thompson's rooms, and the conversation turned on the respective merits of some well-known Madonnas. This gentleman expressed himself with youthful positiveness in favour of Raffaele's Madonna della Seggiola as compared with Lionardo's Vierge aux Rochers, engravings of which were hanging side by side on the wall, adding, "There can be no reasonable doubt on the subject." Thompson crossed the room and looked at first one and then the other in silence: then in his iciest manner, said, "When you are older, you will think differently,"

But there was one position in which these strokes were undeniably unamiable: they could be forgiven in private—from a man "off duty"—but when the same spirit was transferred into his official relations the problem became a more serious one. Men who had seen him pass to and fro from his rooms to lecture, in a rustling silk gown of the stiffest tutorial black, with the "gyp" behind him carrying his basket of books, exchanging neither word nor smile with any that he passed, could not believe that the impenetrable superb exterior was not the true expression of a mind donnish to the core. "Have you forgotten my rusty sword?" muttered Bentley to some contumacious fellow of Trinity, threatening to revive some ancient regulation long in abeyance. The late Master's sword was neither rusty, nor were mankind ever suffered to forget it. When upon the discussion of some trivial point he said stiffly of an inoffensive Fellow who had previously professed ignorance of the question, "I am surprised that Mr. —— is not acquainted with the fact: it is so very unimportant"; and when at a lecture, after closing a list of books that he recommended, he ended by saying of one of the works of his predecessor in the mastership, that "he had looked through it and corrected some of the grosser blunders,"—we cannot help feeling that such things, though amazingly ingenious in themselves, had better not have been uttered if they were (as they actually were) capable of personal application: we cannot help feeling that the moral reputation of the man who uttered them has instinctively been lowered in our estimation: whether intentionally or not, they are needlessly bitter. If humour is the saline element, the wholesome preservative of the tone of life, we sometimes meet it concentrated when its bitterness seems its only characteristic.

The mastership of Trinity is a unique position; with its traditions it confers a kind of intellectual peerage upon its occupant. It is the only great position at Cambridge which is of Crown appointment and not elective. At another college the man who means to end by being master has to gain the confidence of his colleagues, to conciliate them. It is generally conferred upon the man who has best deserved it by worth and weight, and cheerful labour spent in furthering the college interests; but at Trinity no such exertions are needed. College opinion is, of course, considered; but a man has far more need to impress the outer world. If, on attaining this position, a man isolates himself from his fellow-workers, makes no efforts for popularity, arrogates to himself a critical position, no remarks are possible, so common elsewhere, of the type of "kicking away the ladder by which the ascent was made." It is a great testimony to Dr. Thompson's weight and impressiveness, that among the remarks that were and have been made as to his manner of administrating the position, it has never been hinted that he was unworthy to succeed that intellectual Titan, Whewell. Dr. Thompson had no encyclopædic

knowledge to show; he had no vast capacities of dealing with general subjects; he had not a remarkably comprehensive mind. But he was a man of whom it was impossible to think meanly; he extorted admiration even where he did not win sympathy. His presence among Heads of Houses, in the Senate House, at Boards and Syndicates, was instinctively felt to confer an honour upon his associates; he had, in fact, something of the kingly attributes about him. He moved naturally in an atmosphere of deference, and not only the deference conceded to a man whose speech is feared; his manner had something to do with it, no doubt. It was majestic; there is no other word.

It is to be feared that the impression he will leave will be that of a man whose mind was deliberatively depreciative; and it cannot be denied that his best things were in the depreciative manner. But they were only occasional flashes in much conversation of the subtle deft type that perpetually flowed from him. Of course such a stream cannot be remembered if it is not "photographed" at the time. It only exists in beautiful impressions left on the hearer's mind. Friends who went to see him for a few minutes' chat on business stayed an hour beguiled by the enchantment. It is said of him, that "much of the enjoyment of talking to him was that the expectation of conversational surprises was so frequently gratified." Such a delicate turn as occurs in the prefatory remarks to his edition of the 'Phædrus' will illustrate this. He says, that in sorting "a heap of Neoplatonic rubbish, many remarks emerge that are learned, even sensible;" the inversion of the two epithets—the suspicion hinted that the ground covered by the first is by no means conterminous with the ground of the second, is the kind of turn he delighted to give.

At no period of his life was he probably a very arduous worker, though always fond of serious and sustained reading; he used to lament the change of the dinner hour—which in the old barbarian days was at such a time as four—as depriving him of his long peaceful evenings, when he did all the work he ever did; and, as has been already said, he was the victim for many years of a very hypochondriacal temperament, which may account for many things—for his never applying himself to the production of a great work—for the acid turn of his wit. He was a great smoker at one time; and this is said to have affected him injuriously.

The magnificence of his face and figure will haunt those who knew them well. The complexion like parchment; the large ear; the short snow-white hair in such strange contrast to the coal-black mobile eyebrows, with which, as is recorded of Dr. Keate, he seemed almost able to point at anything; then the critical wrinkles of the brow; the droop of the eyelid, slowly raised as he turned to you, as though to give your faltering remarks his more particular attention; the eye so keen formerly, in latter days so curiously dull and obscured; the depressed curve of the lip drawn away at the corners—it was a face which it will be absolutely impossible to forget, which it was impossible not to take delight in watching; it was a face from which you could not help expecting something.

It is a curious fact, to which all who were admitted to his friendship concur in bearing testimony, that his religious life was throughout sincere and simple and strong; an old pupil of his speaks of the surprise he felt on taking up a Manual of Family Devotions from a bookseller's counter, to find that it was the work of the Master. In truth, he was so unsparing of his contempt for the extremes of every school, Puseyites and Evangelicals alike, that he was often supposed to have no religion at all, yet in the early days of his Mastership he wrote in the Saturday Review a grave and feeling remonstrance against the prevailing idea that Fellows of Colleges

who took Orders, did so insincerely to retain their dividends. He was always markedly reverent in talk; and the simple piety of his closing hours is singularly touching.

There is a strange pathos in his criticism when he was first shown the magnificent but somewhat appalling picture by Mr. Herkomer, taken when he was not far from the end. "Do I really look as though I held the world so cheap?" he said. It was like a kind of recantation, a kind of protest against the opinion which held him to be so innately an unkindly man; a kind of claim to be reckoned as one of the human race whom he was popularly supposed to despise. And an intimate friend has related to the writer a very affecting incident which shows the same deprecating attitude of mind. He was sitting with the Master, who had inquired whether he had lately heard any news of a common friend. "Yes," replied the other, "he's a very unhappy man: he's eaten up with destructive criticism: he began by an intense admiration of Niebuhr's method, and he has allowed it to invade the whole of his own life." The Master was standing with his hand on the handle of the door, but he turned quickly at this, and it was obvious that his eyes were full of tears. "Ah," he said, "criticism is a great thing, a very great thing—but it's not everything."

A great impressive figure is gone from us. We cannot, without a pang, see our characteristic types pass and disappear from the gallery of life. The late Master of Trinity was, perhaps, a character that appealed more to the older, to the humorous, than to the young, the generous, the ardent. But we shall terribly misunderstand him if we do not see that a heart beat beneath the cynical mask, that the figure inside the sardonic shrine was of pure gold.

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THE WOODLANDERS.

BY THOMAS HARDY.

CHAPTER XXX.

Examine Grace as her father might, she would admit nothing. For the present, therefore, he simply watched.

The suspicion that his darling child was being slighted wrought almost a miraculous change in Melbury's nature. No man so furtive for the time as the ingenuous countryman who finds that his ingenuousness has been abused. Melbury's heretofore confidential candour towards his gentlemanly son-in-law was displaced by a feline stealth that did injury to his every action, thought, and mood. He knew that a woman once given to a man for life took, as a rule, her lot as it came, and made the best of it, without external interference; but for the first time he asked himself why this so generally should be done. Moreover this case was not, he argued, like ordinary cases. Leaving out the question of Grace being anything but an ordinary woman, her peculiar situation, as it were in mid-air between two planes of society, together with the loneliness of Hintock, made a husband's neglect a far more tragical matter to her than it would be to one who had a large circle of friends to fall back upon. Wisely or unwisely, and whatever other fathers did, he resolved to fight his daughter's battle still.

Mrs. Charmond had returned. But Hintock House scarcely gave forth signs of life, so quietly had she re-entered it. Autumn drew shiveringly to its end. One day something seemed to be gone from the gardens; the tenderer leaves of vegetables had shrunk under the first smart frost, and hung like faded linen rags; then the forest leaves, which had been descending at leisure, descended in haste and in multitudes, and all the golden colours that had hung overhead were now crowded together in a degraded mass underfoot, where the fallen myriads got redder and hornier, and curled themselves up to rot. The only suspicious features in Mrs. Charmond's existence at this season were two: the first, that she lived with no companion or relative about her, which, considering her age and attractions, was somewhat unusual conduct for a young widow in a lonely country house; the other, that she did not, as in previous years, start from Hintock to winter abroad. In Fitzpiers, the only change from his last autumn's habits lay in his abandonment of night study; his lamp never shone from his new dwelling as from his old.

If the suspected ones met it was by such adroit contrivances that even Melbury's vigilance could not encounter them together. A simple call at her house by the doctor had nothing irregular about it, and that he had paid two or three such calls was

certain. What had passed at those interviews was known only to the parties themselves; but that Felice Charmond was under some one's influence Melbury soon had opportunity of perceiving.

Winter had come on. Owls began to be noisy in the mornings and evenings, and flocks of wood-pigeons made themselves prominent again. One day in February, about six months after the marriage of Fitzpiers, Melbury was returning from Great Hintock on foot through the lane, when he saw before him the surgeon also walking. Melbury would have overtaken him, but at that moment Fitzpiers turned in through a gate to one of the rambling drives among the trees at this side of the wood, which led to nowhere in particular, and the beauty of whose serpentine curves were the only justification of their existence. Felice almost simultaneously trotted down the lane towards the timber-dealer, in a little basket-carriage which she sometimes drove about the estate, unaccompanied by a servant. She turned in at the same place without having seen either Melbury or, apparently, Fitzpiers. Melbury was soon at the spot, despite his aches and his sixty years. Mrs. Charmond had come up with the doctor, who was standing immediately behind the carriage. She had turned to him, her arm being thrown carelessly over the back of the seat. They looked in each other's faces without uttering a word, an arch yet gloomy smile wreathing her lips. Fitzpiers clasped her hanging hand, and, while she still remained in the same listless attitude, looking volumes into his eyes, he stealthily unbuttoned her glove, and stripped her hand of it by rolling back the gauntlet over the fingers, so that it came off inside out. He then raised her hand to his mouth, she still reclining passively, watching him as she might have watched a fly upon her dress. At last she said, "Well, sir, what excuse for this disobedience?"

"I make none."

"Then go your way, and let me go mine." She snatched away her hand, touched the pony with the whip, and left him standing there, holding the reversed glove.

Melbury's first impulse was to reveal his presence to Fitzpiers, and upbraid him bitterly. But a moment's thought was sufficient to show him the futility of any such simple proceeding. There was not, after all, so much in what he had witnessed as in what that scene might be the surface and froth of—probably a state of mind which censure aggravates rather than cures. Moreover, he said to himself that the point of attack should be the woman, if either. He therefore kept out of sight, and musing sadly, even tearfully—for he was meek as a child in matters concerning his daughter—continued his way towards Hintock.

The insight which is bred of deep sympathy was never more finely exemplified than in this instance. Through her guarded manner, her dignified speech, her placid countenance, he discerned the interior of Grace's life only too truly, hidden as were its incidents from every outer eye.

These incidents had become painful enough. Fitzpiers had latterly developed an irritable discontent which vented itself in monologues when Grace was present to hear them. The early morning of this day had been dull, after a night of wind, and on looking out of the window Fitzpiers had observed some of Melbury's men dragging away a large limb which had been snapped off a beech tree. Everything was cold and colourless.

"My good heaven!" he said as he stood in his dressing-gown. "This is life!" He did not know whether Grace was awake or not, and he would not turn his head to ascertain. "Ah, fool," he went on to himself, "to clip your own wings when you were free to soar! . . . But I could not rest till I had done it. Why do I never recognise an opportunity till I have

missed it, nor the good or ill of a step till it is irrevocable? . . . I fell in love. . . . Love, indeed!—

> "'Love's but the frailty of the mind
> When 'tis not with ambition joined;
> A sickly flame which, if not fed, expires,
> And feeding, wastes in self-consuming fires!'"

Grace moved. He thought she had heard some part of his soliloquy. He was sorry—though he had not taken any precaution to prevent her.

He expected a scene at breakfast, but she only exhibited an extreme reserve. It was enough, however, to make him repent that he should have done anything to produce discomfort; for he attributed her manner entirely to what he had said. But Grace's manner had not its cause either in his sayings or in his doings. She had not heard a single word of his regrets. Something even nearer home than her husband's blighted prospects—if blighted they were—was the origin of her mood, a mood that was the mere continuation of what her father had noticed when he would have preferred a passionate jealousy in her as the more natural.

She had made a discovery—one which to a girl of honest nature was almost appalling. She had looked into her heart, and found that her early interest in Giles Winterborne had become revitalised into luxuriant growth by her widening perceptions of what was great and little in life. His homeliness no longer offended her acquired tastes; his comparative want of so-called culture did not now jar on her intellect; his country dress even pleased her eye; his exterior roughness fascinated her. Having discovered by marriage how much that was humanly not great could co-exist with attainments of an exceptional order, there was a revulsion in her sentiments from all that she had formerly clung to in this kind. Honesty, goodness, manliness, tenderness, devotion, for her only existed in their purity now in the breasts of unvarnished men; and here was one who had manifested such towards her from his youth up.

There was, further, that never-ceasing pity in her soul for Giles as a man whom she had wronged—a man who had been unfortunate in his worldly transactions; while, not without a touch of sublimity, he had, like Hamlet's friend, borne himself throughout his scathing

> "As one, in suffering all, that suffers nothing."

It was these perceptions, and no subtle catching of her husband's murmurs, that had bred the abstraction visible in her.

When her father approached the house after witnessing the interview between Fitzpiers and Mrs. Charmond, Grace was looking out of her sitting-room window, as if she had nothing to do, or think of, or care for. He stood still.

"Ah, Grace," he said, regarding her fixedly.

"Yes, father," she murmured.

"Waiting for your dear husband?" he inquired, speaking with the sarcasm of pitiful affection.

"Oh no—not especially. He has a great many patients to see this afternoon."

Melbury came quite close. "Grace, what's the use of talking like that, when you know——. Here, come down and walk with me out in the garden, child."

He unfastened the door in the ivy-laced wall, and waited. This apparent indifference alarmed him. He would far rather that she had rushed in all the fire of jealousy to Hintock House, regardless of conventionality, confronted Felice Charmond, and accused her even in exaggerated shape of stealing away her husband. Such a storm might have cleared the air.

She emerged in a minute or two, and they went into the garden together. "You know as well as I do," he resumed, "that there is something threatening mischief to your life; and yet you pretend you do not. Do you suppose I don't see the trouble in your face

every day? I am very sure that this quietude is wrong conduct in you. You should look more into matters."

"I am quiet because my sadness is not of a nature to stir me to action."

Melbury wanted to ask her a dozen questions—did she not feel jealous? was she not indignant? but a natural delicacy restrained him. "You are very tame and let-alone, I am bound to say," he remarked pointedly.

"I am what I feel, father," she repeated.

He glanced at her, and there returned upon his mind the scene of her offering to wed Winterborne instead of Fitzpiers in the last days before her marriage; and he asked himself if it could be the fact that she loved Winterborne now that she had lost him more than she had ever done when she was comparatively free to choose him.

"What would you have me do?" she asked in a low voice.

He recalled his mind from the retrospective pain to the practical matter before them. "I would have you go to Mrs. Charmond," he said.

"Go to Mrs. Charmond—what for?" said she.

"Well—if I must speak plain, dear Grace—to ask her, appeal to her in the name of your common womanhood, and your many like sentiments on things, not to make unhappiness between you and your husband. It lies with her entirely to do one or the other—that I can see."

Grace's face had heated at her father's words, and the very rustle of her skirts upon the box-edging bespoke disdain. "I shall not think of going to her, father—of course, I could not!" she answered.

"Why—don't 'ee want to be happier than you be at present?" said Melbury, more moved on her account than she was herself.

"I don't wish to be more humiliated. If I have anything to bear I can bear it in silence."

"But my dear maid you are too young—you don't know what the present state of things may lead to. Just see the harm done a'ready! Your husband would have gone away to Budmouth to a bigger practice if it had not been for this. Although it has gone such a little way it is poisoning your future even now. Mrs. Charmond is thoughtlessly bad, not bad by calculation; and just a word to her now might save 'ee a peck of woes."

"Ah, I loved her once," said Grace with a broken articulation, "and she would not care for me then! Now I no longer love her. Let her do her worst: I don't care."

"You ought to care. You have got into a very good position to start with. You have been well educated, well tended, and you have become the wife of a professional man of unusually good family. Surely you ought to make the best of your position."

"I don't see that I ought. I wish I had never got into it. I wish you had never, never thought of educating me. I wish I worked in the woods like Marty South. I hate genteel life, and I want to be no better than she."

"Why?" said her amazed father.

"Because cultivation has only brought me inconveniences and troubles. I say again, I wish you had never sent me to those fashionable schools you set your mind on. It all arose out of that, father. If I had stayed at home I should have married——" She closed up her mouth suddenly and was silent; and he saw that she was not far from crying.

Melbury was much grieved. "What, and would you like to have grown up as we be here in Hintock—knowing no more, and with no more chance of seeing good life than we have here?"

"Yes. I have never got any happiness outside Hintock that I know of, and I have suffered many a heartache at being sent away. Oh the misery of those January days when I had got back to school, and left you all here in the wood so happy! I used to wonder why I had to bear it. And I was always a little despised by the

other girls at school, because they knew where I came from, and that my parents were not in so good a station as theirs."

Her poor father was much hurt at what he thought her ingratitude and intractability. He had admitted to himself bitterly enough that he should have let young hearts have their way, or rather should have helped on her affection for Winterborne, and given her to him according to his original plan; but he was not prepared for her deprecation of those attainments whose completion had been a labour of years, and a severe tax upon his purse.

"Very well," he said with much heaviness of spirit. "If you don't like to go to her I don't wish to force you."

And so the question remained for him still: how should he remedy this perilous state of things. For days he sat in a moody attitude over the fire, a pitcher of cider standing on the hearth beside him, and his drinking-horn inverted upon the top of it. He spent a week and more thus, composing a letter to the chief offender, which he would every now and then attempt to complete, and suddenly crumple up in his hand.

CHAPTER XXXI.

As February merged in March, and lighter evenings broke the gloom of the woodmen's homeward journey, the Hintocks Great and Little began to have ears for a rumour of the events out of which had grown the timber-dealer's troubles. It took the form of a wide sprinkling of conjecture, wherein no man knew the exact truth. Tantalising phenomena, at once showing and concealing the real relationship of the persons concerned, caused a diffusion of excited surprise. Honest people as the woodlanders were, it was hardly to be expected that they could remain immersed in the study of their trees and gardens amid such circumstances, or sit with their backs turned like the good burghers of Coventry at the passage of the beautiful lady.

Rumour, for a wonder, exaggerated little. There threatened, in fact, in Grace's case as in thousands, the domestic disaster, old as the hills, which, with more or less variation, made a mourner of Ariadne, a by-word of Vashti, and a corpse of Amy Dudley. The incidents were rencounters accidental and contrived, stealthy correspondence, sudden misgivings on one side, sudden self-reproaches on the other. The inner state of the twain was one as of confused noise that would not allow the accents of politic reason to be heard. Determination to go in this direction, and headlong plunges in that; dignified safeguards, undignified collapses; not a single rash step by deliberate intention, and all against judgment.

It was all that Melbury had expected and feared. It was more, for he had overlooked the publicity that would be likely to result, as it now had done. What should he do? Appeal to Mrs. Charmond himself, since Grace would not? He bethought himself of Winterborne, and resolved to consult him, feeling the strong need of some friend of his own sex to whom he might unburden his mind.

He had entirely lost faith in his own judgment. That judgment on which he had relied for so many years seemed recently, like a false companion unmasked, to have disclosed unexpected depths of hypocrisy and speciousness where all had seemed solidity. He felt almost afraid to form a conjecture on the weather, or the time, or the fruit-promise, so great was his self-mistrust.

It was a rimy evening when he set out to look for Giles. The woods seemed to be in a cold sweat; beads of perspiration hung from every bare twig; the sky had no colour, and the trees rose before him as haggard, grey phantoms, whose days of substantiality were passed. Melbury seldom saw Winterborne now, but he believed him

to be occupying a lonely hut just beyond the boundary of Mrs. Charmond's estate, though still within the circuit of the woodland. The timber merchant's thin legs stalked on through the pale damp scenery, his eyes on the dead leaves of last year; while every now and then a hasty "ay?" escaped his lips in reply to some bitter mental proposition.

His notice was attracted by a thin blue haze of smoke, behind which arose sounds of voices and chopping: bending his steps that way he saw Winterborne just in front of him. It just now happened that Giles, after being for a long time apathetic and unemployed, had become one of the busiest men in the neighbourhood. It is often thus; fallen friends, lost sight of, we expect to find starving; we discover them going on fairly well. Without any solicitation, or desire for profit on his part, he had been asked to execute during that winter a very large order for hurdles and other copseware, for which purpose he had been obliged to buy several acres of brushwood standing. He was now engaged in the cutting and manufacture of the same, proceeding with the work daily like an automaton.

The hazel-tree did not belie its name to-day. The whole of the copse-wood where the mist had cleared returned purest tints of that hue, amid which Winterborne himself was in the act of making a hurdle, the stakes being driven firmly into the ground in a row, over which he bent and wove the twigs. Beside him was a square, compact pile like the altar of Cain, formed of hurdles already finished, which bristled on all sides with the sharp points of their stakes. At a little distance the men in his employ were assisting him to carry out his contract. Rows of copse-wood lay on the ground as it had fallen under the axe; and a shelter had been constructed near at hand, in front of which burnt the fire whose smoke had attracted Melbury. The air was so dank that the smoke hung heavily, and crept away amid the bushes without rising from the ground.

After wistfully regarding the scene a while Melbury drew nearer, and briefly inquired of Giles how he came to be so busily engaged, with an undertone of slight surprise that Winterborne could recommence thriving, even to this degree, after being deprived of Grace. Melbury was not without emotion at the meeting, for Grace's affairs had divided them, and ended their intimacy of old times.

Winterborne explained just as briefly, without raising his eyes from his occupation of chopping a bough that he held in front of him.

"'Twill be up in April before you get it all cleared," said Melbury.

"Yes, there or there-abouts," said Winterborne, a chop of the bill-hook jerking the last word into two pieces.

There was another interval; Melbury still looked on, a chip from Winterborne's hook occasionally flying against the waistcoat and legs of his visitor, who took no heed.

"Ah, Giles—you should have been my partner. You should have been my son-in-law," the old man said at last. "It would have been far better for her and for me!"

Winterborne saw that something had gone wrong with his former friend, and, throwing down the switch he was about to interweave, he responded only too readily to the mood of the timber-dealer. "Is she ill?" he said hurriedly.

"No, no." Melbury stood without speaking for some minutes, and then, as though he could not bring himself to proceed, turned to go away.

Winterborne told one of his men to pack up the tools for the night, and walked after Melbury.

"Heaven forbid that I should seem too inquisitive, sir," he said, "especially since we don't stand as we used to stand to one another; but I hope it is well with them all over your way?"

"No," said Melbury, "no." He stopped, and struck the smooth trunk of a young ash-tree with the flat of his

hand. "I would that his ear had been where that rind is!" he exclaimed; "I should have treated him to little compared wi' what he deserves."

"Now," said Winterborne, "don't be in a hurry to go home. I've put some mead down to warm in my shelter here, and we'll sit and drink it and talk this over."

Melbury turned unresistingly as Giles took his arm, and they went back to where the fire was, and sat down under the screen, the other woodmen having gone. He drew out the mead-cup from the ashes, and they drank together.

"Giles, you ought to have had her, as I said just now," repeated Melbury. "I'll tell you why for the first time."

He thereupon told Winterborne, as with great relief, the story of how he won away Giles's father's chosen one —by nothing worse than a lover's cajoleries, it is true; but by means which, except in love, would certainly have been pronounced cruel and unfair. He explained how he had always intended to make reparation to Winterborne the father by giving Grace to Winterborne the son; till the devil tempted him in the person of Fitzpiers and he broke his virtuous vow.

"How highly I thought of that man, to be sure! Who'd have supposed he'd have been so weak and wrong-headed as this! You ought to have had her, Giles, and there's an end on't."

Winterborne knew how to preserve his calm under this unconsciously cruel tearing of a healing wound, to which Melbury's concentration on the more vital subject had blinded him. The young man endeavoured to make the best of the case, for Grace's sake.

"She would hardly have been happy with me," he said, in the dry, unimpassioned voice under which he hid his feelings. "I was not well enough educated: too rough in short. I couldn't have surrounded her with the refinements she looked for, anyhow at all."

"Nonsense — you are quite wrong there," said the unwise old man doggedly. "She told me only this day that she hates refinements and such like. All that my trouble and money bought for her in that way is thrown away upon her quite. She'd fain be like Marty South—think o' that! That's the top of her ambition! Perhaps she's right. Giles, she loved you—under the rind; and what's more she loves ye still—worse luck for the poor maid!"

If Melbury only had known what fires he was recklessly stirring up he might have held his peace. Winterborne was silent a long time. The darkness had closed in round them, and the monotonous drip of the fog from the branches quickened as it turned to fine rain.

"Oh, she never cared much for me," Giles managed to say as he stirred the embers with a brand.

"She did, and does, I tell ye," said the other obstinately. "However, all that's vain talking now. What I come to ask you about is a more practical matter—how to make the best of things as they are. I am thinking of a desperate step—of calling on the woman Charmond. I am going to appeal to her, since Grace will not. 'Tis she who holds the balance in her hands—not he. While she's got the will to lead him astray he will follow—poor unpractical lofty-notioned dreamer—and how long she'll do it depends upon her whim. Did ye ever hear anything about her character before she came to Hintock?"

"She's been a bit of a charmer in her time, I believe," replied Giles, with the same level quietude, as he regarded the red coals. "One who has smiled where she has not loved, and loved where she has not married. Before Mr. Charmond made her his wife she was a play-actress."

"Hey? But how close you have kept all this, Giles! What besides?"

"Mr. Charmond was a rich man engaged in the iron trade in the north—twenty or thirty years older than she.

He married her, and retired, and came down here and bought this property."

"Yes, yes—I know all about that. But the other I did not know. I fear it bodes no good. For how can I go and appeal to the forbearance of a woman in this matter who has made cross-loves and crooked entanglements her trade for years? I thank ye, Giles, for finding it out; but it makes my plan the harder that she should have belonged to that unstable tribe!"

Another pause ensued, and they looked gloomily at the smoke that beat about the roof of hurdles through whose weavings a large drop of rain fell at intervals and spat smartly into the fire. Mrs. Charmond had been no friend to Winterborne, but he was manly, and it was not in his heart to let her be condemned without a trial.

"She is said to be generous," he answered. "You might not appeal to her in vain."

"It shall be done," said Melbury, rising. "For good, or for evil, to Mrs. Charmond I'll go."

CHAPTER XXXII.

At nine o'clock the next morning Melbury dressed himself up in shining broadcloth, creased with folding and smelling of camphor, and started for Hintock House. He was the more impelled to go at once by the absence of his son-in-law in London for a few days, to attend, really or ostensibly, some professional meetings. He said nothing of his destination either to his wife or to Grace, fearing that they might entreat him to abandon so risky a project; and went out unobserved. He had chosen his time with a view, as he supposed, of conveniently catching Mrs. Charmond when she had just finished her breakfast, before any other business people should be about, if any came. Plodding thoughtfully onward he crossed a glade lying between Little Hintock Woods and the plantation which abutted on the park. The spot being open he was discerned there by Winterborne from the copse on the next hill, where he and his men were working. Knowing his mission the younger man hastened down from the copse and managed to intercept the timber-merchant.

"I have been thinking of this, sir," he said, "and I am of opinion that it would be best to put off your visit for the present."

But Melbury would not even stop to hear him. His mind was fixed, the appeal was to be made; and Winterborne stood and watched him sadly till he entered the second plantation and disappeared.

Melbury rang at the tradesmen's door of the manor-house, and was at once informed that the lady was not yet visible, as indeed he might have guessed had he been anybody but the man he was. Melbury said he would wait, whereupon the young page informed him in a neighbourly way that, between themselves, she was in bed and asleep.

"Never mind," said Melbury, retreating into the court, "I'll stand about here." Charged so fully with his mission he shrank from contact with anybody.

But he walked about the paved court till he was tired, and still nobody came to him. At last he entered the house, and sat down in a small waiting-room, from which he got glimpses of the kitchen-corridor, and of the white-capped maids flitting jauntily hither and thither. They had heard of his arrival, but had not seen him enter, and, imagining him still in the court, discussed freely the possible reason of his calling. They marvelled at his temerity; for though most of the tongues which had been let loose attributed the chief blame to Fitzpiers, these of her household preferred to regard their mistress as the deeper sinner.

Melbury sat with his hands resting on the familiar knobbed thorn walking-stick whose growing he had seen before he enjoyed its use. The scene to him was not the material environment of his person, but a tragic vision that

travelled with him like an envelope. Through this vision the incidents of the moment but gleamed confusedly here and there, as an outer landscape through the high-coloured scenes of a stained window. He waited thus an hour, an hour and a half, two hours. He began to look pale and ill, whereupon the butler, who came in, asked him to have a glass of wine. Melbury roused himself, and said "No, no. Is she almost ready?"

"She is just finishing breakfast," said the butler. "She will soon see you now. I am just going up to tell her you are here."

"What, haven't you told her before?" said Melbury.

"Oh, no," said the other. "You see you came so very early."

At last the bell rang: Mrs. Charmond could see him. She was not in her private sitting-room when he reached it, but in a minute he heard her coming from the front staircase, and she entered where he stood.

At this time of the morning Mrs. Charmond looked her full age and more. She might almost have been taken for the typical *femme de trente ans*, though she was really not more than seven or eight and twenty. There being no fire in the room she came in with a shawl thrown loosely round her shoulders, and obviously without the least suspicion that Melbury had called upon any other errand than timber. Felice was, indeed, the only woman in the parish who had not heard the rumour of her own weaknesses; she was at this moment living in a fool's paradise in respect of that rumour, though not in respect of the weaknesses themselves, which, if the truth be told, caused her grave misgivings.

"Do sit down, Mr. Melbury. You have felled all the trees that were to be purchased by you this season, except the oaks, I believe?"

"Yes, yes," said Melbury in a reverie. He did not take a chair, and she also remained standing. Resting upon his stick he began: "Mrs. Charmond, I have called upon a more serious matter—at least to me—than tree-throwing. And whatever mistakes I make in my manner of speaking upon it to you, madam, do me the justice to set 'em down to my want of practice, and not to my want of care."

Mrs. Charmond looked ill at ease. She might have begun to guess his meaning; but apart from that she had such dread of contact with anything painful, harsh, or even earnest, that his preliminaries alone were enough to distress her. "Yes, what is it?" she said quickly.

"I am an old man," said Melbury, "whom, somewhat late in life, God thought fit to bless with one child, and she a daughter. Her mother was a very dear wife to me; but she was taken away from us when the child was young; and the child became precious as the apple of my eye to me, for she was all I had left to love. For her sake entirely I married as second wife a homespun woman who had been kind as a mother to her. In due time the question of her education came on; and I said, 'I will educate the maid well, if I live upon bread to do it.' Of her possible marriage I could not bear to think, for it seemed like a death that she should cleave to another man, and grow to think his house her home rather than mine. But I saw it was the law of nature that this should be; and that it was for the maid's happiness that she should have a home when I was gone: and I made up my mind without a murmur to help it on for her sake. In my youth I had wronged my dead friend, and to make amends I determined to give her, my most precious possession, to my friend's son, seeing that they liked each other well. Things came about which made me doubt if it would be for my daughter's happiness to do this, inasmuch as the young man was poor, and she was delicately reared. Another man came and paid court to her—one her equal in breeding and accomplishments; in every way it seemed to me that he only could give her the home

which her training had made a necessity almost. I urged her on, and she married him. But, ma'am, a fatal mistake was at the root of my reckoning: I found that this well-born gentleman I had calculated on so surely was not staunch of heart, and that therein lay a danger of great sorrow for my daughter. Madam, he saw you, and you know the rest. . . I have come to make no demands—to utter no threats; I have come simply as a father in great grief about his only child, and I beseech you to deal kindly with my daughter and to do nothing which can turn her husband's heart away from her for ever! Forbid him your presence, ma'am, and speak to him on his duty, as one with your power over him well can do: and I am hopeful that the rent between them may be patched up. For it is not as if you would lose by so doing; your course is far higher than the courses of a simple professional man; and the gratitude you would win from me and mine by your kindness is more than I can say."

Mrs. Charmond had first rushed into a mood of indignation, on comprehending Melbury's story: hot and cold by turns she had murmured, "Leave me, leave me!" But, as he seemed to take no notice of this, his words began to influence her, and when he ceased speaking she said with hurried breath, "What has led you to think this of me? Who says I have won your daughter's husband away from her? Some monstrous calumnies are afloat—of which I have known nothing until now!"

Melbury started, and looked at her simply: "But surely, ma'am, you know the truth better than I?"

Her features became a little pinched, and the touches of powder on her handsome face for the first time showed themselves as an extrinsic film. "Will you leave me to myself?" she said with a faintness which suggested a guilty conscience. "This is so utterly unexpected—you obtain admission to my presence by misrepresentation—"

"As God's in heaven, ma'am, that's not true. I made no pretence; and I thought in reason you would know why I had come. This gossip—"

"I have heard nothing of it. Tell me the gist of it, pray!"

"Tell you, ma'am—not I. What the gossip is, no matter. What really is, you know. Set facts right, and the scandal will right of itself. But pardon me—I speak roughly; and I came to speak gently, to coax you, beg you to be my daughter's friend. She loved you once, ma'am; you began by liking her. Then you dropped her without a reason, and it hurt her warm heart more than I can tell ye. But you were within your right as the superior, no doubt. But if you would consider her position now—surely, surely, you would do her no harm!"

"Certainly I would do her no harm—I—" Melbury's eye met hers. It was curious, but the allusion to Grace's former love for her seemed to touch her more than all Melbury's other arguments. "Oh, Melbury," she burst out, "you have made me so unhappy! How could you come to me like this! It is too dreadful! Now go away—go, go!"

"I will," he said, in a husky tone.

As soon as he was out of the room she went to a corner and there sat and writhed, under an emotion in which hurt pride and vexation mingled with better sentiments.

Mrs. Charmond's mobile spirit was subject to these fierce periods of high-tide and storm. She had never so clearly perceived till now that her soul was being slowly invaded by a delirium which had brought about all this; that she was losing judgment and dignity under it, becoming an animated impulse only, a passion incarnate. A fascination had led her on: it was as if she had been seized by a hand of velvet; and this was where she found herself—overshadowed with sudden night, as if a tornado had passed.

While she sat, or rather crouched, unhinged by the interview, lunch-time

came, and then the early afternoon, almost without her consciousness. Then "a strange gentleman who says it is not necessary to give his name," was suddenly announced.

"I cannot see him, whoever he may be. I am not at home to anybody."

She heard no more of her visitor; and shortly after, in an attempt to recover some mental serenity by violent physical exercise, she put on her hat and cloak and went out of doors, taking a path which led her up the slopes to the nearest spur of the wood. She disliked the woods, but they had the advantage of being a place in which she could walk comparatively unobserved.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THERE was agitation that day in the lives of all whom these matters concerned. It was not till the Hintock dinner-time—one o'clock—that Grace discovered her father's absence from the house after a departure in the morning under somewhat unusual conditions. By a little reasoning and inquiry she was able to divine his errand.

Her husband was absent, and her father did not return. He had, in truth, gone on to Sherton after the interview, but this Grace did not know. In an indefinite dread that something serious would arise out of Melbury's visit by reason of the inequalities of temper and nervous irritation to which he was subject, something possibly that would bring her much more misery than accompanied her present negative state of mind, she left the house about three o'clock, and took a loitering walk in the woodland track by which she imagined he would come home. This track under the bare trees and over the cracking sticks, screened and roofed in from the outer world of wind and cloud by a network of boughs, led her slowly on till in time she had left the larger trees behind her and swept round into the coppice where Winterborne and his men were clearing the undergrowth.

Had Giles's attention been concentrated on his hurdles he would not have seen her; but ever since Melbury's passage across the opposite glade in the morning he had been as uneasy and unsettled as Grace herself; and her advent now was the one appearance which, since her father's avowal, could arrest him more than Melbury's return with his tidings. Fearing that something might be the matter he hastened up to her.

She had not seen her old lover for a long time, and too conscious of the late pranks of her heart she could not behold him calmly. "I am only looking for my father," she said in an unnecessary tone of apology.

"I was looking for him too," said Giles. "I think he may perhaps have gone on further."

"Then you knew he was going to the House, Giles?" she said, turning her large tender eyes anxiously upon him. "Did he tell you what for?"

Winterborne glanced doubtingly at her, and then softly hinted that her father had visited him the evening before, and that their old friendship was quite restored; on which she guessed the rest.

"Oh, I am glad indeed that you two are friends again!" she cried. And then they stood facing each other, fearing each other, troubling each other's souls. Grace experienced acute regret at the sight of these woodcutting scenes, because she had estranged herself from them; craving, even to its defects and inconveniences, that homely sylvan life of her father which in the best probable succession of events would shortly be denied her.

At a little distance, on the edge of the clearing, Marty South was shaping spar-gads to take home for manufacture during the evenings. While Winterborne and Mrs. Fitzpiers stood looking at her in their mutual embarrassment at each other's presence, they beheld, approaching the girl, a lady

in a dark fur mantle and black hat, having a white veil tied picturesquely round it. She spoke to Marty, who turned and curtsied, and the lady fell into conversation with her. It was Mrs. Charmond.

On leaving her house, Mrs. Charmond had walked on under the fret and fever of her mind with more vigour than she was accustomed to show in her normal moods—a fever which the solace of a cigarette did not entirely allay. Reaching the coppice, she listlessly observed Marty at work, threw away her cigarette, and went near. Chop, chop, chop, went Marty's little bill-hook with never more assiduity, till Mrs. Charmond spoke.

"Who is that young lady I see talking to the woodman yonder?" she asked.

"Mrs. Fitzpiers, ma'am," said Marty.

"Oh," said Mrs. Charmond, with something like a start; for she had not recognised Grace at that distance. "And the man she is talking to?"

"That's Mr. Winterborne."

A redness stole into Marty's face as she mentioned Giles's name, which Mrs. Charmond did not fail to notice: it informed her of the state of the girl's heart. "Are you engaged to him?" she asked softly.

"No, ma'am," said Marty. "*She* was once; and I think—"

But Marty could not possibly explain the complications of her thought on this matter—which was nothing less than one of extraordinary acuteness for a girl so young and inexperienced—namely, that she saw danger to two hearts, naturally honest, in Grace being thrown back into Winterborne's society by the neglect of her husband. Mrs. Charmond, however, with the almost supersensory means to knowledge which women have on such occasions, quite understood what Marty had intended to convey; and the picture thus exhibited to her of lives drifting awry, involving the wreck of poor Marty's hopes, prompted her to more generous resolves than all Melbury's remonstrances had been able to stimulate.

Full of the new feeling she bade the girl good afternoon, and went on over the stumps of hazel to where Grace and Winterborne were standing. They saw her approach, and Winterborne said "She is coming to you; it is a good omen. She dislikes me, so I'll go away." He accordingly retreated to where he had been working before Grace came, and Grace's formidable rival approached her, each woman taking the other's measure as she drew near.

"Dear—Mrs. Fitzpiers," said Felice Charmond with some inward turmoil which stopped her speech. "I have not seen you for a long time."

She held out her hand tentatively, while Grace stood like a wild animal on first confronting a mirror or other puzzling product of civilisation. Was it really Mrs. Charmond speaking to her thus? If it was she could no longer form any guess as to what life signified.

"I want to talk to you," said Mrs. Charmond sensitively, for the gaze of the young woman had chilled her through. "Can you walk on with me till we are quite alone?"

Sick with distaste Grace nevertheless complied, as by clockwork, and they moved evenly side by side into the deeper recesses of the woods. They went further, much further than Mrs. Charmond had meant to go; but she could not begin her conversation, and in default of it kept walking.

"I have seen your father," she at length resumed. "And—I am much troubled by what he told me."

"What did he tell you? I have not been admitted to his confidence on anything he may have said to you."

"Nevertheless, why should I repeat to you what you can easily divine."

"True — true," returned Grace mournfully. "Why should you repeat what we both know to be in our minds already."

"Mrs. Fitzpiers, your husband—"

The moment that the speaker's tongue touched the dangerous subject a vivid look of self-consciousness flashed over her; in which her heart revealed, as by a lightning gleam, what filled it to overflowing. So transitory was the expression that none but a quick-sensed woman, and she in Grace's position, would have had the power to catch its meaning. Upon her the phase was not lost.

"Then you *do* love him!" she exclaimed in a tone of much surprise.

"What do you mean, my young friend?"

"Why," cried Grace, "I thought till now that you had only been cruelly flirting with my husband to amuse your idle moments—a rich lady with a poor professional gentleman whom in her heart she despised not much less than her who belongs to him. But I guess from your manner that you love him desperately; and I don't hate you as I did before. . . . . Yes, indeed," continued Mrs. Fitzpiers, with a trembling tongue, "since it is not playing in your case at all, but *real*—Oh, I do pity you, more than I despise you! For you will s-s-suffer most!"

Mrs. Charmond was now as much agitated as Grace. "I ought not to allow myself to argue with you," she exclaimed. "I demean myself by doing it. But I liked you once, and for the sake of that time I try to tell you how mistaken you are!" Much of her confusion resulted from her wonder and alarm at finding herself, in a sense, dominated mentally and emotionally by this simple schoolgirl. "I do not love him!" she went on with desperate untruth. "It was a kindness—my making somewhat more of him than one usually does of one's doctor. I was lonely; I talked—well, I trifled with him. I am very sorry if such child's playing out of pure friendship has been a serious matter to you. Who could have expected it? But the world is so simple here."

"Oh, that's affectation," said Grace shaking her head. "It is no use—you love him. I can see in your face that in this matter of my husband you have not let your acts belie your feelings. During these last four or six months you have been terribly indiscreet; but you have not been insincere; and that almost disarms me."

"I *have* been insincere—if you will have the word — I mean I *have* coquetted, and do *not* love him!"

But Grace clung to her position like a limpet. "You may have trifled with others; but him you love as you never loved another man."

"Oh, well—I won't argue," said Mrs. Charmond, laughing faintly. "And you come to reproach me for it, child."

"No," said Grace magnanimously. "You may go on loving him if you like—I don't mind at all. You'll find it, let me tell you, a bitterer business for yourself than for me in the end. He'll get tired of you soon, as tired as can be—you don't know him so well as I!—and then you may wish you had never seen him!"

Mrs. Charmond had grown quite pale and weak under this prophecy. It was extraordinary that Grace, whom almost every one would have characterised as a gentle girl, should be of tougher fibre than her interlocutor. "You exaggerate—cruel, silly young woman," she reiterated writhing with little agonies. It is nothing but playful friendship—nothing! It will be proved by my future conduct. I shall at once refuse to see him more—since it will make no difference to my heart, and much to my name."

"I question if you will refuse to see him again," said Grace dryly, as she bent a sapling down. "But I am not incensed against you as you are against me," she added, abandoning the tree to its natural perpendicular. "Before I came I had been despising you for wanton cruelty; now I only pity you for misplaced affection. When Edgar has gone out of the house in hope of seeing you, at seasonable hours and unseasonable; when I have found him riding miles and miles across the

country at midnight, and risking his life, and getting covered with mud, to get a glimpse of you, I have called him a foolish man—the plaything of a finished coquette. I thought that what was getting to be a tragedy to me was a comedy to you. But now I see that tragedy lies on your side of the situation no less than on mine, and more; that if I have felt trouble at my position you have felt anguish at yours; that if I have had disappointments you have had despairs. Heaven may fortify me—God help you!"

"I cannot attempt to reply to your ravings," returned the other, struggling to restore a dignity which had completely collapsed. "My acts will be my proofs. In the world which you have seen nothing of, friendships between men and women are not unknown, and it would have been better both for you and your father if you had each judged me more respectfully, and left me alone. As it, is I wish never to see or speak to you, madam, any more."

Grace bowed, and Mrs. Charmond turned away. The two went apart in directly opposite courses, and were soon hidden from each other by their umbrageous surroundings and by the shadows of eve.

In the excitement of their long argument they had walked onward and zigzagged about without regarding direction or distance. All sound of the woodcutters had long since faded into remoteness, and even had not the interval been too great for hearing them they would have been silent and homeward bound at this twilight hour. But Grace went on her course without any misgiving, though there was much underwood here with only the narrowest passages for walking, across which brambles hung. She had not, however, traversed this, the wildest, part of the wood since her childhood, and the transformation of outlines had been great; old trees which once were landmarks had been felled or blown down, and the bushes which then had been small and scrubby were now large and overhanging. She soon found that her ideas as to direction were vague—that she had indeed no ideas as to direction at all. If the evening had not been growing so dark, and the wind had not put on its night-moan so distinctly, Grace would not have minded; but she was rather frightened now, and began to strike across hither and thither in random courses.

Denser grew the darkness, more developed the wind-voices, and still no recognisable spot or outlet of any kind appeared, nor any sound of the Hintocks floated near, though she had wandered probably between one and two hours, and began to be weary. She was vexed at her foolishness, since the ground she had covered, if in a straight line, must inevitably have taken her out of the wood to some remote village or other; but she had wasted her forces in countermarches; and now, in much alarm, wondered if she would have to pass the night here. She stood still to meditate, and fancied that between the soughing of the wind she heard shuffling footsteps on the leaves heavier than those of rabbits or hares. Though fearing at first to meet anybody on the chance of his being a friend, she decided that the fellow night-rambler, even if a poacher, would not injure her, and that he might possibly be some one sent to search for her. She accordingly shouted a rather timid "Hoi!"

The cry was immediately returned by the other person; and Grace running at once in the direction whence it came beheld an indistinct figure hastening up to her as rapidly. They were almost in each other's arms before she recognised the outline and white veil of her whom she had parted from an hour and half before—Mrs. Charmond.

"I have lost my way, I have lost my way," cried the latter. "Oh—is it indeed you? I am so glad to meet you or anybody. I have been wandering up and down ever since we parted, and am nearly dead with terror and misery and fatigue!"

"So am I," said Grace. "What shall we do?"

"You won't go away from me?" asked her companion anxiously.

"No, indeed. Are you very tired?"

"I can scarcely move, and I am scratched dreadfully about the ankles."

Grace reflected. "Perhaps, as it is dry under foot, the best thing for us to do would be to sit down for half an hour, and then start again when we have thoroughly rested. By walking straight we must come to a track leading somewhere, before the morning."

They found a clump of bushy hollies which afforded a shelter from the wind, and sat down under it, some tufts of dead fern, crisp and dry, that remained from the previous season, forming a sort of nest for them. But it was cold nevertheless on this March night, particularly for Grace, who, with the sanguine prematureness of youth in matters of dress, had considered it springtime, and hence was not so warmly clad as Mrs. Charmond, who still wore her winter furs. But after sitting awhile the latter lady shivered no less than Grace as the warmth imparted by her hasty walking began to go off; and they felt the cold air drawing through the holly leaves which scratched their backs and shoulders. Moreover they could hear some drops of rain falling on the trees, though none reached the nook in which they had ensconced themselves.

"If we were to cling close together," said Mrs. Charmond, "we should keep each other warm. But," she added in an uneven voice, "I suppose you won't come near me for the world!"

"Why not?"

"Because—well, you know."

"Yes I will—I don't hate you at all."

They consequently crept up to one another, and being in the dark, lonely, and weary, did what neither had dreamed of doing beforehand, clasped each other closely, Mrs. Charmond's furs consoling Grace's cold face, and each one's body as she breathed alternately heaving against that of her companion, while the funereal trees rocked, and chanted dirges unceasingly.

When a few minutes had been spent thus Mrs. Charmond said—"I am so wretched!" in a heavy emotional whisper.

"You are frightened," said Grace kindly. "But there is nothing to fear; I know these woods well."

"I am not at all frightened at the wood, but I am at other things."

Mrs. Charmond embraced Grace more and more tightly, and the younger woman could feel her neighbour's breathings grow deeper and more spasmodic, as though uncontrollable feelings were germinating.

"After I had left you," Felice went on, "I regretted something I had said. I have to make a confession—I must make it!" she whispered brokenly, the instinct to indulge in warmth of sentiment which had led this woman of passions to respond to Fitzpiers in the first place leading her now to find luxurious comfort in opening her heart to his wife. "I said to you I could give him up without pain or deprivation—that he had only been my pastime. That was untrue—it was said to deceive you. I could not do it without much pain; and what is more dreadful I cannot give him up—even if I would—of myself alone."

"Why? Because you love him, you mean."

Felice Charmond denoted assent by a movement.

"I knew I was right!" said Grace exaltedly. "But that should not deter you," she presently added in a moral tone. "Oh, do struggle against it, and you will conquer!"

"You are so simple, so simple!" cried Felice. "You think, because you guessed my assumed indifference to him to be a sham, that you know the extremes that people are capable of going to! But a good deal more may have been going on than you have fathomed with all your insight. I *cannot* give him up until he chooses to give up me."

"But surely you are the superior in station and in every way, and the cut must come from you."

"Tchut! Must I tell verbatim,

you simple child? Oh, I suppose I must! It will eat away my heart if I do not let out all, after meeting you like this and finding how guileless you are!" She thereupon whispered a few words in the girl's ear, and burst into a violent fit of sobbing.

Grace started roughly away from the shelter of the furs, and sprang to her feet.

"Oh, my great heaven!" she exclaimed, thunderstruck at a revelation transcending her utmost suspicion. "Can it be—can it be!"

She turned as if to hasten away. But Felice Charmond's sobs came to her ear: deep darkness circled her about, and she did not know which way to go. After a moment of energy she felt mild again, and turned to the motionless woman at her feet.

"Are you rested?" she asked, in what seemed her own voice grown ten years older.

Without an answer Mrs. Charmond slowly rose.

"You mean to betray me!" she said out of the bitterest depths of her soul. "Oh fool, fool I!"

"No," said Grace shortly. "I mean no such thing. But let us be quick now. We have a serious undertaking before us. Think of nothing but going straight on."

They walked on in profound silence, pulling back boughs now growing wet, and treading down woodbine, but still keeping a pretty straight course. Grace began to be thoroughly worn out, and her companion too, when, on a sudden they broke into the deserted highway at the hill top, on which the Sherton man had waited for Mrs. Dollery's van. Grace recognised the spot as soon as she looked around her.

"How we have got here I cannot tell," she said with cold civility. "We have made a complete circuit of Little Hintock. The hazel copse is quite on the other side. Now we have only to follow the road."

They dragged themselves onward, turned into the lane, passed the track to Little Hintock, and so reached the park.

"Here I turn back," said Grace in the same passionless voice. "You are quite near home."

Mrs. Charmond stood inert, seeming appalled by her late admission.

"I have told you something in a moment of irresistible desire to unburden my soul, which all but a fool would have kept silent as the grave," she said. "I cannot help it now. Is it to be a secret, or do you mean war?"

"A secret, certainly," said Grace mournfully. "How can you expect war from such a helpless, wretched being as I!"

"And I'll do my best not to see him. I am his slave; but I'll try."

Grace was naturally kind; but she could not help using a small dagger now.

"Pray don't distress yourself," she said with exquisitely fine scorn. "You may see him—for me." Had she been wounded instead of mortified she could not have used the words; but Fitzpiers's hold upon her heart was slight.

They parted thus and there, and Grace went moodily homeward. Passing Marty's cottage she observed through the window that the girl was writing instead of chopping as usual, and wondered what her correspondence could be. Directly afterwards she met people in search of her, and reached the house to find all in serious alarm. She soon explained that she had lost her way, and her general depression was attributed to exhaustion on that account.

Could she have known what Marty was writing she would have been surprised.

The rumour which agitated the other folk of Hintock had reached the young girl, and she was penning a letter to Fitzpiers, to tell him that Mrs. Charmond wore the writer's hair in addition to her own. It was poor Marty's only card, and she played it, knowing nothing of fashion, and thinking her revelation a fatal one for a lover.

(*To be continued.*)

M. FEUILLET'S 'LA MORTE.'

In his latest novel M. Octave Feuillet adds two charming people to that chosen group of personages in which he loves to trace the development of the more serious elements of character amid the refinements and artifices of modern society, and which make such good company. The proper function of fictitious literature in affording us a refuge into a world slightly better—better conceived, or better finished—than the real one, is, in most instances, performed, less by the imaginary events at which a novelist causes us to assist, than by the imaginary persons to whom he introduces us. The situations of M. Feuillet's novels are indeed of a real and intrinsic importance: tragic crises, inherent in the general conditions of human nature itself, or which arise necessarily out of the special conditions of modern life. Still, with him, in the actual result, they become subordinate, as it is their tendency to do in real life, to the characters they help to form. Often his most attentive reader will have forgotten the actual details of his plot; while the soul, tried, enlarged, shaped in it, remains as a well-fixed type in the memory. He may return a second or third time to 'Sibylle,' or 'Le Journal d'une Femme,' or 'Les Amours de Philippe,' and watch, surprised afresh, the clean, dainty, word-sparing literary operation (word-sparing, yet with no loss of real grace or ease), which, sometimes in a few pages, with the perfect logic of a problem of Euclid, complicates and unravels some moral embarrassment really worthy of a trained dramatic expert. But the characters themselves, the agents in those difficult, revealing situations, such a reader will recognise as old acquaintances after the first reading, feeling for them as for some gifted and attractive persons he has known in the actual world—Raoul de Chalys, Henri de Lerne, Madame de Técle, Jeanne de la Roche-Ermel—many others; to whom must now be added Bernard and Aliette de Vaudricourt.

"How I love those people!" cries Mademoiselle de Courteheuse, of Madame de Sévigné and some other of her literary favourites in the days of the Grand Monarch. "What good company! What pleasure they took in high things! How much more worthy they were than the people who live now!"—What good company! That is precisely what the admirer of M. Feuillet's books feels as one by one he places them on his book-shelf, to be sought again. What we propose here is not to tell his last story, but to give the English reader specimens of his most recent effort at characterisation.

It is with the journal of Bernard himself that the story opens, September, 187–. Bernard-Maurice Hugon de Montauret, Vicomte de Vaudricourt, is on a visit to his uncle, the head of his family, at La Savinière, a country-house somewhere between Normandy and Brittany. This uncle, in manner an artificial old Parisian, but honest in purpose, a good talker, and full of real affection for his heir Bernard, is one of M. Feuillet's good minor characters—one of the quietly humorous figures with which he relieves his more serious company. Bernard, with whom the refinements of a man of fashion in the Parisian world by no means disguise a powerful intelligence cultivated by wide reading, has had thoughts during his tedious stay at La Savinière of writing a history of Louis the Fourteenth, the library of

a neighbouring house being rich in memoirs of that period. Finally, he prefers to write his own story, a story so much more interesting to himself; to write it at a peculiar crisis in his life, the moment when his uncle, unmarried, but anxious to perpetuate his race, is bent on providing him with a wife, and indeed has one in view.

The accomplished Bernard, with many graces of person, by his own confession takes nothing seriously. As to that matter of religious beliefs, "the breeze of the age, and of science, has blown over him, as it has blown over his contemporaries, and left empty space there." Still, when he saw his childish religious faith departing from him, as he thinks it must necessarily depart from all intelligent male Parisians, he wept. But since that moment a gaiety, serene and imperturbable, has been the mainstay of his happily constituted character. The girl to whom his uncle desires to see him united—odd, quixotic, intelligent, with a sort of pathetic and delicate grace, and herself very religious—belongs to an old-fashioned, devout family, resident at Varaville, near by. M. Feuillet, with half a dozen fine touches of his admirable pencil makes us see the place. And the enterprise has at least sufficient interest to keep Bernard in the country, which the young Parisian detests. "This piquant episode of my life," he writes, "seems to me to be really deserving of study; to be worth etching off, day by day, by an observer well-informed on the subject."

Recognising in himself, though as his one real fault, that he can take nothing seriously in heaven or earth, Bernard de Vaudricourt, like all M. Feuillet's favourite young men, so often erring or corrupt, is a man of scrupulous "honour." He has already shown disinterestedness in wishing his rich uncle to marry again. His friends at Varaville think so well-mannered a young man more of a Christian than he really is. Still, at all events, he will never owe his happiness to a falsehood. If he has great faults, hypocrisy at least is no part of them. In oblique paths he finds himself ill at ease. Decidedly, as he thinks, he was born for straight ways, for loyalty in all his enterprises; and he congratulates himself upon the fact.

In truth, Bernard has merits which he ignores, at least in this first part of his journal: merits which are necessary to explain the influence he is able to exercise from the first over such a character as Mademoiselle de Courteheuse. His charm, in fact, is in the union of that gay and apparently wanton nature with a genuine power of appreciating devotion in others, which becomes devotion in himself. With all the much-cherished elegance and worldly glitter of his personality, he is capable of apprehending, of understanding and being touched by the presence of great things. In spite of that happy lightness of heart, so jealously fenced about, he is to be wholly caught at last, as he is worthy to be, by the serious, the generous influence of things. In proportion to his immense worldly strength is his capacity for the immense pity which breaks his heart.

In a few lifelike touches M. Feuillet brings out, as if it were indeed a thing of ordinary existence, the simple yet delicate life of a French country-house, the ideal life in an ideal France. Bernard is paying a morning visit at the old turreted home of the "prehistoric" Courteheuse family. Mademoiselle Aliette de Courteheuse, a studious girl, though a bold and excellent rider — Mademoiselle de Courteheuse, "with her hair of that strange colour of fine ashes"—has conducted her visitor to see the library:

"One day she took me to see the library, rich in works of the seventeenth century and in memoirs relating to that time. I remarked there also a curious collection of engravings of the same period. 'Your father,' I observed,

'had a strong predilection for the age of Louis the Fourteenth.'

"'My father lived in that age,' she answered gravely. And as I looked at her with surprise, and a little embarrassed, she added, 'He made me live there too, in his company.'

"And then the eyes of this singular girl filled with tears. She turned away, took a few steps to suppress her emotion, and returning, pointed me to a chair. Then seating herself on the step of the book-case, she said, 'I must explain my father to you.'

"She was half a minute collecting her thoughts: then, speaking with an expansion of manner not habitual with her, hesitating, and blushing deeply, whenever she was about to utter a word that might seem a shade too serious for lips so youthful:—'My father,' she proceeded, 'died of the consequences of a wound he had received at Patay. That may show you that he loved his country, but he was no lover of his own age. He possessed in the highest degree the love of order; and order was a thing nowhere to be seen. He had a horror of disorder; and he saw it everywhere. In those last years, especially, his reverence, his beliefs, his tastes, all alike were ruffled to the point of actual suffering, by whatever was done and said and written around him. Deeply saddened by the conditions of the present time, he habituated himself to find a refuge in the past, and the seventeenth century more particularly offered him the kind of society in which he would have wished to live—a society, well-ordered, polished, lettered, believing. More and more he loved to shut himself up in it. More and more also he loved to make the moral discipline and the literary tastes of that favourite age prevail in his own household. You may even have remarked that he carried his predilection into minute matters of arrangement and decoration. You can see from this window the straight paths, the box in patterns, the yew trees and clipped alleys of our garden. You may notice that in our garden-beds we have none but flowers of the period—lilies, rose-mallows, immortelles, rose-pinks, in short, what people call parsonage flowers—*des fleurs de curé*. Our old sylvan tapestries, similarly, are of that age. You see too that all our furniture, from presses and sideboards, down to our little tables and our arm-chairs, is in the severest style of Louis the Fourteenth. My father did not appreciate the dainty research of our modern luxury. He maintained that our excessive care for the comforts of life weakened mind as well as body. That,' added the girl with a laugh,—'that is why you find your chair so hard when you come to see us.'

"Then, with resumed gravity—'It was thus that my father endeavoured, by the very aspect and arrangement of outward things, to promote in himself the imaginary presence of the epoch in which his thoughts delighted. As for myself—need I tell you that I was the confidant of that father, so well-beloved: a confidant touched by his sorrows, full of indignation at his disappointments, charmed by his consolations. Here, precisely—surrounded by those books which we read together, and which he taught me to love—it is here that I have passed the pleasantest hours of my youth. In common we indulged our enthusiasm for those days of faith; of the quiet life; its blissful hours of leisure well-secured; for the French language in its beauty and purity; the delicate, the noble urbanity, which was then the honour and the special mark of our country, but has ceased to be so.'

"She paused, with a little confusion, as I thought, at the warmth of her last words.

"And then, just to break the silence, 'You have explained,' I said, 'an impression which I have experienced again and again in my visits here, and which has sometimes reached the intensity of an actual illusion, though a very agreeable one. The look of your house, its style, its tone and keeping, carried me two centuries back so completely that I should hardly have been surprised to hear Monsieur le Prince, Madame de la Fayette, or Madame de Sévigné herself, announced at your drawing-room door.'

"'Would it might be!' said Mademoiselle de Courteheuse. 'Ah! Monsieur, how I love those people! What good company! What pleasure they took in high things! How much more worthy they were than the people who live now!' I tried to calm a little this retrospective enthusiasm, so much to the prejudice of my contemporaries and of myself. 'Most truly, Mademoiselle,' I said, 'the age which you regret had its rare merits—merits which I appreciate as you do. But then, need one say that that society, so regular, so choice in appearance, had, like our own, below the surface, its troubles, its disorders? I see here many of the memoirs of that time. I can't tell exactly which of them you may or may not have read, and so I feel a certain difficulty in speaking.'

"She interrupted me: 'Ah!' she said, with entire simplicity, 'I understand you. I have not read all you see here. But I have read enough of it to know that my friends in that past age had, like those who live now, their passions, their weaknesses, their mistakes. But, as my father used to say to me, all that did but pass over a ground of what was solid and serious, which always discovered itself again anew. There were great faults then; but there were also great repentances. There was a certain higher region to which everything conducted—even what was evil.' She blushed deeply: then rising a little suddenly, 'A long speech!' she said: 'Forgive me! I am not usually so very talkative. It is because my father was in question: and I should wish his memory to be as dear and as venerable to all the rest of the world as it is to me.'"

We pass over the many little dramatic intrigues and misunderstandings, with the more or less adroit interferences of the uncle, which raise and lower alternately Bernard's hopes. M. Feuillet has more than once tried his hand with striking success in the portraiture of French ecclesiastics. He has drawn none better than the Bishop of Saint-Méen, uncle of Mademoiselle de Courteheuse, to whose interests he is devoted. Bernard feels that to gain the influence of this prelate would be to gain his cause; and the opportunity for an interview comes.

"Monseigneur de Courteheuse would seem to be little over fifty years of age: he is rather tall, and very thin: the eyes, black and full of life, are encircled by a ring of deep brown. His speech and gesture are animated, and, at times, as if carried away. He adopts frequently a sort of furious manner which on a sudden melts away into the smile of an honest man. He has beautiful silvery hair, flying in vagrant locks over his forehead, and beautiful bishop's hands. As he becomes calm he has an imposing way of gently resettling himself in his sacerdotal dignity. To sum up:—his is a physiognomy full of passion, consumed with zeal, yet still frank and sincere.

"I was hardly seated, when with a motion of the hand he invited me to speak.

"'Monseigneur!' I said, 'I come to you (you understand me!) as to my last resource. What I am now doing is almost an act of despair; for it might seem at first sight that no member of the family of Mademoiselle de Courteheuse must show himself more pitiless than yourself towards the faults with which I am reproached. I am an unbeliever: you are an apostle! And yet, Monseigneur, it is often at the hands of saintly priests, such as yourself, that the guilty find most indulgence. And then, I am not indeed guilty: I have but wandered. I am refused the hand of your niece because I do not share her faith—your own faith. But, Monseigneur, unbelief is not a crime, it is a misfortune. I know people often say, a man denies God when by his own conduct he has brought himself into a condition in which he may well desire that God does not exist. In this way he is made guilty, or, in a sense, responsible for his incredulity. For myself, Monseigneur, I have consulted my conscience with an entire sincerity; and although my youth has been amiss, I am certain that my atheism proceeds from no sentiment of personal interest. On the contrary, I may tell you with truth that the day on which I perceived my faith come to nought, the day on which I lost hope in God, I shed the bitterest tears of my life. In spite of appearances, I am not so light a spirit as people think. I am not one of those for whom God, when He disappears, leaves no sense of a void place. Believe me!—a man may love sport, his club, his worldly habits, and yet have his hours of thought, of self-recollection. Do you suppose that in those hours one does not feel the frightful discomfort of an existence with no moral basis, without principles, with no outlook beyond this world? And yet, what can one do? You would tell me forthwith, in the goodness, the compassion, which I read in your eyes; Confide to me your objections to religion, and I will try to solve them. Monseigneur, I should hardly know how to answer you. My objections are 'Legion!' They are without number, like the stars in the sky: they come to us on all sides, from every quarter of the horizon, as if on the wings of the wind; and they leave in us, as they pass, ruins only, and darkness. Such has been my experience, and that of many others; and it has been as involuntary as it is irreparable.'

"'And I—Monsieur!' said the bishop, suddenly, casting on me one of his august looks, 'Do you suppose that I am but a play-actor in my cathedral church?'

"'Monseigneur!'

"'Yes! Listening to you, one would suppose that we were come to a period of the world in which one must needs be either an atheist or a hypocrite! Personally, I claim to be neither one nor the other.'

"'Need I defend myself on that point, Monseigneur? Need I say that I did not come here to give you offence?'

"'Doubtless! doubtless! Well, Monsieur, I admit;—not without great reserves, mind! for one is always more or less responsible for the atmosphere in which he lives, the influences to which he is subject, for the habitual turn he gives to his thoughts; still, I admit that you are the victim of the incredulity of the age, that you are altogether guiltless in your scepticism, your atheism! since you have no fear of hard words. Is it therefore any the less certain that the union of a fervent believer, such as my niece, with a man like yourself would be a moral disorder of which the consequences might be disastrous? Do you think it could be my duty, as a relative of Mademoiselle de Courteheuse, her spiritual father, as a prelate of the Church, to lend my hands to such a disorder, to preside over the shocking union of two souls separated by the whole width of heaven?' The bishop, in proposing that question, kept his eyes fixed ardently on mine.

"'Monseigneur,' I answered, after a moment's embarrassment, 'you know as well as, and better than I the condition of the world, and of our country, at this time. You know that unhappily I am not an exception: that men of faith are rare in it. And permit me to tell you my whole mind. If I must needs suffer

the inconsolable misfortune of renouncing the happiness I had hoped for, are you quite sure that the man to whom one of these days you will give your niece may not be something more than a sceptic, or even an atheist?'

"'What, Monsieur?'

"'A hypocrite, Monseigneur! Mademoiselle de Courtcheuse is beautiful enough, rich enough, to excite the ambition of those who may be less scrupulous than I. As for me, if you now know that I am a sceptic, you know also that I am a man of honour: and there is something in that!'

"'A man of honour!' the bishop muttered to himself, with a little petulance and hesitation, 'A man of honour! Yes, I believe it!' Then, after an interval, 'Come, Monsieur,' he said gently, 'your case is not as desperate as you suppose. My Aliette is one of those young enthusiasts through whom Heaven sometimes works miracles.' And Bernard refusing any encouragement of that hope, (the 'very roots of faith are dead' in him for ever), 'since you think that,' the bishop answers, 'it is honest to say so. But God has His ways.'"

Soon after, the journal comes to an end with that peculiar crisis in Bernard's life which had suggested the writing of it. Aliette, with the approval of her family, has given him her hand. Bernard accepts it with the full purpose of doing all he can to make his wife as happy as she is charming and beloved. The virginal first period of their married life in their dainty house in Paris—the pure and beautiful picture of the mother, the father, and at last the child, a little girl, Jeanne—is presented with M. Feuillet's usual grace. Certain embarrassments succeed; the development of what was ill-matched in their union; but still with mutual loyalty. A far-reaching acquaintance with, and reflection upon, the world and its ways, especially the Parisian world, has gone into the apparently slight texture of these pages. The accomplished playwright may be recognised in the skilful touches with which M. Feuillet, unrivalled, as his regular readers know, in his power of breathing higher notes into the frivolous prattle of fashionable French life, develops the tragic germ in the elegant, youthful household. Amid the distractions of a society, frivolous, perhaps vulgar, Aliette's mind is still set on greater things; and, in spite of a thousand rude discouragements, she maintains her generous hope for Bernard's restoration to faith. One day, a little roughly, he bids her relinquish that dream finally. She looks at him with the moist, suppliant eyes of some weak animal at bay. Then his native goodness returns. In a softened tone he owns himself wrong.

"'As to conversions—no one must be despaired of. Do you remember M. de Rancé? He lived in your favourite age—M. de Rancé. Well! before he became the reformer of La Trappe he had been a worldling like me, and a great sceptic—what people called a libertine. Still he became a saint! It is true he had a terrible reason for it. Do you know what it was converted him?'

"Aliette gave a sign that she did not know.

"'Well! he returned to Paris after a few days' absence. He ran straight to the lady he loved; Madame Montbazon, I think: he went up a little staircase of which he had the key, and the first thing he saw on the table in the middle of the room was the head of his mistress, of which the doctors were about to make a *post-mortem* examination.'

"'If I were sure,' said Aliette, 'that my head could have such power, I would love to die.'

"She said it in a low voice, but with such an accent of loving sincerity that her husband had a sensation of a sort of painful disquiet. He smiled, however, and tapping her cheek softly, 'Folly!' he said. 'A head, charming as yours, has no need to be dead that it may work miracles!'"

Certainly M. Feuillet has some weighty charges to bring against the Parisian society of our day. When Aliette revolts from a world of gossip, which reduces all minds alike to the same level of vulgar mediocrity, Bernard, on his side, can perceive there a deterioration of tone which shocks his sense of honour. As a man of honour, he can hardly trust his wife to the gaieties of a society which welcomes all the world "to amuse itself in undress."

"It happened that at this perplexed period in the youthful household, one and the same person became the recipient both of the tearful confidences of Madame de Vaudricourt and those of her husband. It was the

Duchess of Castel-Moret [she is another of M. Feuillet's admirable minor sketches], an old friend of the Vaudricourt family, and the only woman with whom Aliette since her arrival in Paris had formed a kind of intimacy. The Duchess was far from sharing, on points of morality, and above all of religion, the severe and impassioned orthodoxy of her young friend. She had lived, it is true, an irreproachable life, but less in consequence of defined principles than by instinct and natural taste. She admitted to herself that she was an honest woman as a result of her birth, and had no further merit in the matter. She was old, very careful of herself, and a pleasant aroma floated about her, below her silvery hair. People loved her for her grace—the grace of another time than ours—for her wit, and her worldly wisdom, which she placed freely at the disposal of the public. Now and then she made a match: but her special gift lay rather in the way in which she came to the rescue when a marriage turned out ill. And she had no sinecure: the result was that she passed the best part of her time in repairing family rents. That might 'last its time,' she would say. 'And then we know that what has been well mended sometimes lasts better than what is new.'"

A little later, Bernard, in the interest of Aliette, has chivalrously determined to quit Paris. At Valmoutiers, a fine old place in the neighbourhood of Fontainbleau, they established themselves for a country life. Here Aliette tastes the happiest days since her marriage. Bernard, of course, after a little time is greatly bored. But so far they have never seriously doubted of their great love for each other. It is here that M. Feuillet brings on the scene a kind of character new in his books; perhaps hardly worthy of the other company there; a sort of female Monsieur de Camors, but without his grace and tenderness, and who actually commits a crime. How would the morbid charms of M. de Camors have vanished, if, as his wife once suspected of him, he had ever contemplated crime! And surely, the showy insolent charms of Sabine de Tallevaut, beautiful, intellectually gifted, supremely Amazonian, yet withal not drawn with M. Feuillet's usual fineness, scarcely hold out for the reader, any more than for Bernard himself, in the long run, against the vulgarising touch of her cold wickedness. Living in the neighbourhood of Valmoutiers, in a somewhat melancholy abode (the mystery of which in the eyes of Bernard adds to her poetic charm) with her guardian, an old, rich, free-thinking doctor, devoted to research, she comes to Valmoutiers one night in his company on the occasion of the alarming illness of the only child. They arrive escorted by Bernard himself. The little Jeanne, wrapped in her coverlet, was placed upon the table of her play-room, which was illuminated as if for a party. The illness, the operation (skilfully performed by the old doctor) which restores her to life, are described with that seemingly simple pathos in which M. Feuillet's consummate art hides itself. Sabine remains to watch the child's recovery, and becomes an intimate. In vain Bernard struggles against the first real passion of his life;—does everything but send its object out of his sight. Aliette has divined their secret. In the fatal illness which follows soon after, Bernard watches over her with tender solicitude; hoping against hope that the disease may take a favourable turn.

"'My child,' he said to her one day, taking the hand which she abandoned to him, 'I have just been scolding old Victoire. She is losing her head. In spite of the repeated assurances of the doctors, she is alarmed at seeing you a little worse than usual to-day, and has had the *Curé* sent for. Do you wish to see him?'

"'Pray, let me see him!'

"She sighed heavily, and fixed upon her husband her large blue eyes, full of anguish—an anguish so sharp and so singular that he felt frozen to the marrow.

"He could not help saying with deep emotion, 'Do you love me no longer, Aliette?'

"'For ever!' murmured the poor child.

"He leaned over her with a long kiss upon the forehead. She saw tears stealing from the eyes of her husband, and seemed as if surprised."

Soon afterwards Aliette is dead, to the profound sorrow of Bernard. Less than two years later he has become the husband of Mademoiselle Talle-

vaut. It was about two years after his marriage with Sabine that Bernard resumed the journal with which we began. In the pages which he now adds he seems at first unchanged. How then as to that story of M. de Rancé, the reformer of La Trappe, finding the head of his dead mistress; an incident which the reader of 'La Morte' will surely have taken as a "presentiment"? Aliette had so taken it. "A head so charming as yours," Bernard had assured her tenderly, "does not need to be dead that it may work miracles!"—How, in the few pages that remain, will M. Feuillet justify that, and certain other delicate touches of presentiment, and at the same time justify the title of his book?

The journal is recommenced in February. On the twentieth of April Bernard writes, at Valmoutiers:

"Under pretext of certain urgently needed repairs I am come to pass a week at Valmoutiers, and get a little pure air. By my orders they have kept Aliette's room under lock and key since the day when she left it in her coffin. To-day I re-entered it for the first time. There was a vague odour of her favourite perfumes. My poor Aliette! why was I unable, as you so ardently desired, to share your gentle creed, and associate myself to the life of your dreams, the life of honesty and peace? Compared with that which is mine to-day, it seems to me like paradise. What a terrible scene it was, here in this room! What a memory! I can still see the last look she fixed on me, a look almost of terror! and how quickly she died! I have taken the room for my own. But I shall not remain here long. I intend to go for a few days to Varaville. I want to see my little girl: her dear angel's face.

"VALMOUTIERS, *April* 22.—What a change there has been in the world since my childhood: since my youth even! what a surprising change in so short a period, in the moral atmosphere we are breathing! Then we were, as it were, impregnated with the thought of God—a just God, but benevolent and fatherlike. We really lived under His eyes, as under the eyes of a parent, with respect and fear, but with confidence. We felt sustained by His invisible but undoubted presence. We spoke to Him, and it seemed that He answered. And now we feel ourselves alone—as it were abandoned in the immensity of the universe. We live in a world, hard, savage, full of hatred; whose one cruel law is the struggle for existence, and in which we are no more than those natural elements, let loose to war with each other in fierce selfishness, without pity, with no appeal beyond, no hope of final justice. And above us, in place of the good God of our happy youth, nothing, any more! or worse than nothing—a deity, barbarous and ironical, who cares nothing at all about us."

The aged mother of Aliette, hitherto the guardian of his daughter, is lately dead. Bernard proposes to take the child away with him to Paris. The child's old nurse objects. On April the twenty-seventh, Bernard writes:

"For a moment—for a few moments—in that room where I have been shutting myself up with the shadow of my poor dead one, a horrible thought had come to me. I had driven it away as an insane fancy. But now,—yes! it is becoming a reality. Shall I write this? Yes! I will write it. It is my duty to do so; for from this moment the journal, begun in so much gaiety of heart, is but my last will and testament. If I should disappear from the world, the secret must not die with me. It must be bequeathed to the natural protectors of my child. Her interests, if not her life, are concerned therein.

"Here, then, is what passed: I had not arrived in time to render my last duty to Madame de Courteheuse. The family was already dispersed. I found here only Aliette's brother. To him I communicated my plan concerning the child, and he could but approve. My intention was to bring away with Jeanne her nurse Victoire, who had brought her up, as she brought up her mother. But she is old, and in feeble health, and I feared some difficulties on her part; the more as her attitude towards myself since the death of my first wife has been marked by an ill grace approaching to hostility. I took her aside while Jeanne was playing in the garden.

"'My good Victoire,' I said, 'while Madame de Courteheuse was living, I considered it a duty to leave her granddaughter in her keeping. Besides, no one was better fitted to watch over her education. At present my duty is to watch over it myself. I propose therefore to take Jeanne with me to Paris; and I hope that you may be willing to accompany her, and remain in her service.' When she understood my intention, the old woman, in whose hands I had noticed a faint trembling, became suddenly very pale. She fixed her firm, grey eyes upon me: 'Monsieur le Comte will not do that!'

"'Pardon me, my good Victoire, that, I shall do. I appreciate your good qualities of fidelity and devotion. I shall be very grateful if you will continue to take care of my daughter, as you have done so excellently. But for the rest, I intend to be the only master in my own

house, and the only master of my child.' She laid a hand upon my arm: 'I implore you, Monsieur, don't do this!' Her fixed look did not leave my face, and seemed to be questioning me to the very bottom of my soul. 'I have never believed it,' she murmured, 'No! I never could believe it. But if you take the child away I shall.'

"'Believe what, wretched woman? believe what?'

"Her voice sank lower still. 'Believe that you knew how her mother came by her death; and that you mean the daughter to die as she did.'

"'Die as her mother did?'

"'Yes! by the same hand!'

"The sweat came on my forehead. I felt as it were a breathing of death upon me. But still I thrust away from me that terrible light on things.

"'Victoire!' I said, 'take care! You are no fool: you are something worse. Your hatred of the woman who has taken the place of my first wife—your blind hatred—has suggested to you odious, nay! criminal words.'

"'Ah! Ah! Monsieur!' she cried with wild energy. 'After what I have just told you, take your daughter to live with that woman if you dare.'

"I walked up and down the room awhile to collect my senses. Then, returning to the old woman, 'Yet how can I believe you?' I asked, 'If you had had the shadow of a proof of what you give me to understand, how could you have kept silence so long? How could you have allowed me to contract that hateful marriage?'

"She seemed more confident, and her voice grew gentler. 'Monsieur, it is because Madame, before she went to God, made me take oath on the crucifix to keep that secret for ever.'

"'Yet not with me, in fact,—not with me!' And I, in turn, questioned her; my eyes upon hers. She hesitated: then stammered out, 'True! not with you! because she believed, poor little soul! that . . .'

"'What did she believe? That I knew it? That I was an accomplice? Tell me!' Her eyes fell, and she made no answer. 'Is it possible, my God, is it possible? But come, sit by me here, and tell me all you know, all you saw. At what time was it you noticed anything—the precise moment?' For in truth she had been suffering for a long time past."

Victoire tells the miserable story of Sabine's crime—we must pardon what we think a not quite worthy addition to the imaginary world M. Feuillet has called up round about him, for the sake of fully knowing Bernard and Aliette. The old nurse had surprised her in the very act, and did not credit her explanation. "When I surprised her," she goes on:

"'It may already have been too late—be sure it was not the first time she had been guilty—my first thought was to give you information. But I had not the courage. Then I told Madame. I thought I saw plainly that I had nothing to tell she was not already aware of. Nevertheless she chided me almost harshly. "You know very well," she said, "that my husband is always there when Mademoiselle prepares the medicines. So that he too would be guilty. Rather than believe that, I would accept death at his hands a hundred times over!" And I remember, Monsieur, how at the very moment when she told me that, you came out from the little *boudoir*, and brought her a glass of valerian. She cast on me a terrible look and drank. A few minutes afterwards she was so ill that she thought the end was come. She begged me to give her her crucifix, and made me swear never to utter a word concerning our suspicions. It was then I sent for the priest. I have told you, Monsieur, what I know; what I have seen with my own eyes. I swear that I have said nothing but what is absolutely true.' She paused. I could not answer her. I seized her old wrinkled and trembling hands and pressed them to my forehead, and wept like a child.

"*May* 10.—She died believing me guilty! The thought is terrible to me. I know not what to do. A creature so frail, so delicate, so sweet. 'Yes!' she said to herself, 'my husband is a murderer; what he is giving me is poison, and he knows it.' She died with that thought in her mind—her last thought. And she will never, never know that it was not so; that I am innocent; that the thought is torment to me: that I am the most unhappy of men. Ah! God, all-powerful! if you indeed exist, you see what I suffer. Have pity on me!

"Ah! how I wish I could believe that all is not over between her and me; that she sees and hears me; that she knew the truth. But I find it impossible! impossible!

"*June.*—That I was a criminal was her last thought, and she will never be undeceived.

"All seems so completely ended when one dies. All returns to its first elements. How credit that miracle of a personal resurrection? and yet in truth all is mystery,—miracle, around us, about us, within ourselves. The entire universe is but a continuous miracle. Man's new birth from the womb of death—is it a mystery less comprehensible than his birth from the womb of his mother?

"Those lines are the last written by Bernard de Vaudricourt. His health, for some time past disturbed by grief, was powerless against the emotions of the last terrible trial imposed on him. A malady, the exact nature of which

was not determined, in a few days assumed a mortal character. Perceiving that his end was come, he caused Monseigneur de Courteheuse to be summoned,—he desired to die in the religion of Aliette. Living, the poor child had been defeated : she prevailed in her death."

Two distinguished souls !—*deux êtres d'élite*—M. Feuillet thinks, whose fine qualities properly brought them together. When Mademoiselle de Courteheuse said of the heroes of her favourite age, that their passions, their errors, did but pass over a ground of what was solid and serious, and which always discovered itself afresh, she was unconsciously describing Bernard. Singular young brother of Monsieur de Camors—after all, certainly, more fortunate than he—he belongs to the age, which, if it had great faults, had also great repentances. In appearance, frivolous ; with all the light charm of the world, yet with that impressibility to great things, according to the law which makes the best of M. Feuillet's characters so interesting ; above all, with that capacity for pity which almost everything around him tended to suppress ; in real life, if he exists there, and certainly in M. Feuillet's pages, it is a refreshment to meet him.

SONNET.

[The author of these lines—a girl of twenty-five—was drowned in a Welsh river last August. The night before her death she was heard to say : "If I do not die soon, I think I shall make something of poetry."]

If this poor name of mine, now writ in sand
On Life's grey shore, which Time for ever laves
—A hungry ocean of unresting waves—
Might but be graven on rock, and so withstand
A little while the weather and the tide,
Great joy were mine. Alas ! I cannot guide
My chisel right to carve the stubborn stone
Of Fame; and so the numbness of despair
Invades me ; for the sounding names are there
Of all Earth's great ones ; and methinks mine own
Fades in their music ; yet before the light
Has vanished from the sky, and unblest night,
In which no man can work, shall stain the air,
I stand and weep on the grey shore—alone.

MRS. JOHN TAYLOR, OF NORWICH.

I.

In the earliest years of the present century, when Norwich was in its ascendant and giving its intellectual supper parties; when the learned Dr. Sayers was sitting for his likeness to Opie; when Mrs. Barbauld had retired from Palgrave to the suburbs of London; when Elizabeth Gurney and her beautiful sisters, no longer galloping about the country in their riding habits and red boots, were beginning their married lives; when little Harriet Martineau as a child was wandering round Castle Hill and trembling in terror at the depths below, at the sound of the sticks falling with dull thuds upon the feather-beds which the careful housewives of Norwich were beating in their doorways—in these pre-eventful times there lived in a house, not very far from Castle Hill, a friend of Mrs. Barbauld's, a quiet lady, Mrs. John Taylor by name, whose home was the resort of many of the most cultivated men of the day, and whose delightful companionship was justly prized and valued by them. People used to say it was well worth a journey to Norwich to spend an evening with Mrs. John Taylor. She was Mackintosh's friend; she was Mrs. Barbauld's dearest friend; in after days John Austin was her son-in-law; John Mill and Charles Austin were her intimates. Her life was spent in the simplest fashion. She stayed at home, she darned with wool, she read philosophy and poetry, she spoke her mind and she thought for herself, while she stitched, and marketed, and tended her children.

She was a type of a high-bred simple race of women, perhaps more common in those days than now. To some people seven children and limited means might seem a serious obstacle to high mental culture, but Mrs. Taylor and her friends were of a different way of thinking; they were not ashamed of being poor, of attending to the details of life; they were only ashamed of being shabby in spirit, of mean aspirations, of threadbare slovenly interests. The seven children, reared in a wholesome and temperate, yet liberal-minded atmosphere, went their ways in after life, well prepared for the world, fully portioned with those realities and impressions which are beyond silver and gold. The two daughters, Susan and Sarah, both married. Sarah was Mrs. Austin, the translator of Ranke, of the Story Without an End, which children have not yet ceased to read, the mother of Lady Duff Gordon, whose name is also well remembered. Susan, the elder daughter, became the wife of Dr. Reeve, and the mother of Mr. Henry Reeve, the editor of the Edinburgh Review. It is by the kindness of this old friend that the writer has been allowed to read many of the letters from Mrs. Taylor to her early friend, to her daughters, to Dr. Reeve, her son-in-law—the faded writing flows in a still living stream of interest, solicitude, affection, anxiety, and exhortation, flowing on in even lines, and showing so much of that mingled force, of imagination and precision, which goes to make up the literary faculty.

The letters run back to the days before Mrs. Taylor's marriage, and give a vivid picture of a young lady's impressions of life a century ago; for it is more than a hundred years since Miss Susanna Cook sat down to describe what she calls a "jaunt to London," and to recapitulate all the crowding interests and delights of 1776 for the benefit of a friend, Miss Judith Dixon,

somewhat her junior in years and experience, and living tranquilly far removed from the metropolis in St. Andrew's Broad Street in Norwich.

Miss Susanna dips her pen and traces her pretty lines, and the yellow pages seem tinted still by the illumination of these bygone youthful shining mornings and evenings, brilliant anticipations and realisations, to say nothing of the dazzling lamps of Vauxhall which Miss Cook does not fail to visit. The parcel of happy people (so she describes her party) consists of the young lady herself, of a "lively young divine" and his wife, and three sisters: nor can Miss Susanna find too much praise for the most amiable girls she ever met; for the evenings fine beyond expression; for Vauxhall itself, which she had always admired, but which appears to her more enchanting than ever. Let us hope that the young ladies, the great-great-granddaughters of Miss Cook and her companions, still write in the same spirit and find balmy sights at the Colonial Exhibition and elsewhere, as well as lively young divines to escort them. But this is perhaps hoping too much, for I am told the race no longer exists. Nothing, however, not even a jaunt to London, is absolutely perfect, either in this age, or in the last. "Pity me!" writes the young lady, "Garrick played Hamlet at Drury Lane last night, and we might as well have attempted to move St. Paul's as to get in. The crowd was inconceivable." Our youthful company are only consoled at the opera by the voice of the "Siren Leoni." Susanna steadily follows up the records of her sight-seeing: she visits Wedgwood's classic potteries, which were then the fashion, she describes the models brought over by Sir William Hamilton. Her friends also take her to the Exhibition of the Royal Academy of Paintings, where the young ladies, we are told, "divert the gentlemen by delivering opinions with all the arrogance of connoisseurs."

Some of us may know Ramberg's delightful print of an exhibition some ten years later, in 1787, of which a fine copy is in the studio of our own President of 1886. As one looks at the picture, the century rolls off, the sleeping palace awakens, the ladies in their nodding plumes, the courtly gentlemen, with their well-dressed legs and swords, exchange greetings. We seem at home in the unpretending rooms with the familiar pictures on the walls (the dear little strawberry-girl is hanging there among the rest); the originals of those charming figures we all know so well, are depicted gazing up at their own portraits. Rules and regulations must have been less strictly measured out then than they are now, for although umbrellas did not then play that important part which belongs to them at present, sticks and swords without number seem to have been boldly introduced into the gallery, to say nothing of a little dog frisking merrily in the foreground.

The experience of each generation varies in turn, with its dress and peculiarities; ours is (as yet) exempt from certain trials which are feelingly alluded to by Miss Cook in her correspondence, and of which Madame D'Arblay, Mrs. Barbauld, and others also bitterly complain. The elegant ladies of Sir Joshua's powdering times certainly had their own trials. We find the young traveller warmly congratulating her friend Judith upon a marvellous escape; where other head-dresses succumbed, Judith's feather had remained steady in its place. Susanna has seen many distresses occasioned by these fashionable embellishments; among the sufferers she mentions two ladies unfortunately sitting next each other at a concert, "whose heads met and becoming immediately entangled, the attempts they made to extricate themselves only increased the difficulty, until, finally, one of the fabrics was demolished." Another tragic story is that of a *belle* dancing in a *cotillon* who seems suddenly to have "lost the whole of a

majestic superstructure which rolled backwards while the company fled from the cataclysm"; one can imagine, says Miss Cook, "the falling curls and the clouds of powder, and the despair of the poor victim of this vertigo."

Susanna gives another page or two to the fashions; she describes what she calls "an anecdote upon Lady Harriet Foley which made quite a bustle." This lady appeared at Court after her marriage in a suit of white lutestring trimmed with large bunches of acorns, of which the cups had really grown upon oak-trees. The idea was immediately seized upon, the fashion adopted, and the dresses for a masquerade at Carlyle House which followed were whimsical and ridiculous to the highest degree. It must have been on this occasion that one has read of ladies appearing with whole branches of oak, roughly sawn off, and balanced on their powdered heads.

The same gift which stood Mrs. Taylor in such good stead in later life, that power of throwing herself into her surroundings, of appreciating and enjoying the gifts of others, marks her early experiences. She has a decided taste for human nature. There are so many different sorts of people, she says. Her artless enthusiasm for the lovely Miss Linley, who had been singing at Norwich, will not surprise any of those who have lately seen the enchanting portrait of the wife, mother, and grandmother of the Sheridans,—the saint, as Garrick called her a hundred years ago, and whom one might well be inclined to canonise now that the hundred years are past.

II.

Now and again our young traveller varies her correspondence with certain philosophical disquisitions upon the frivolous diversions in which she sees most women engaged; the idle amusements they so ardently desire furnish her with subjects of wonder and amazement. Life was meant for better things, she says, and not least to render ourselves in all our capacities as serviceable as we possibly can. And this outward grace of good-will in the creed of the then inhabitants of Norfolk meant something very substantial, and was represented by many visible signs: kind offices, turkeys, Norfolk pippins, strings of sausages, long visits cordially welcomed from impecunious relatives, were all a part of it.

Perhaps, as these early letters flow on, the sympathetical Judith may have begun to surmise some events in prospect. There is an indefinable change in the style, there are allusions to the writer's happy lot, to a delightful succession of guests and surprises. Although Susanna declares that a certain serenity of mind is absolutely necessary to improvement, we hear of picnics, excursions, and riding parties. Her enthusiastic admiration of a moonlight night is productive of diversion to her friends, she says, who laugh at her raptures, while she rails at their want of taste. One cannot help seeing the picture, as she unconsciously sketches it in, the animated young horsewoman, the happy young company, that friend in particular who is laughing, coming along the moonlit lane. Surely it is an absorbing hour of life which has dawned for Miss Susanna; and before long moonlight, philosophy, serenity of mind—all are resolved into the important fact that Mr. John Taylor, the "excellent young man to whom she is so soon to be united," has appeared upon the scene! There is finally a demure, dignified, yet warm-hearted letter from the bride, Mrs. John Taylor, to her old friend Judith, who is also married by this time, and Judith no longer, but "my dear Mrs. Beecroft." Mrs. Taylor unconsciously throws the light of her own warm and happy hearth upon her exhortations to her friend.

"The constant desire," she says, "of a wife of giving pleasure to her husband, makes even trifling affairs of some importance; this affords that stimulus which is so needful to keep the active mind from weariness and lassitude. I

feel too much on your account, beloved friend, to salute you with the usual forms of congratulation," she concludes; "may as much happiness be yours as this life affords."

Mrs. Taylor herself and her husband only "wish to tread in the peaceful paths of life." Mr. Taylor was established in business at Norwich, and here he and his Susanna settled down in the year 1778 after a wedding tour to the North. They settle among their friends and their kinsfolk. In due time children begin to figure in the closely-written pages despatched to aunts and adjacent relatives, and with little John and little Richard follow the usual categories of a young mother's happy trials and anxious joys. Mr. Taylor's business also flourishes. They do not want for money, for their wishes are moderate enough to be fulfilled. While the children fill the little home and the cares increase, new friends gather round.

We have most of us at one time or another known the old Norse settlement, where the Danish fleets once landed before the sea rolled back, leaving the old city of Norwich high and dry upon its hill side, with its busy interests, its pleasant homes, its lively inhabitants, whose companionship seems to have been seasoned with a certain flavour of independent thought and a taste of Attic salt blown in from the neighbouring bays and shores and promontories; and, indeed, the life of a community within an hour's journey from the sea is one to which certain happy moods and sudden upliftings must necessarily belong. Within easy reach of Norwich stands Felbrigge, once the home of the Windhams, the "hillside-ridge," among the woods and avenues of oak, with its glorious sights of sky and sea beyond; there is also Cromer, between billows of down and broad reaches of silver sand; still nearer at hand is Earlham Hall, the birthplace of the Gurneys—that stately old house among lawns and spreading trees, where Wilberforce used to rest upon a pleasant bench which is still pointed out; whither Elizabeth Fry returned from time to time, and where we sometimes hear of Mrs. Taylor spending a summer's afternoon. At Holkham, another neighbouring place, Mr. Coke (as an epigrammatic historian tells us) was then making poor land fertile, and in return for half a million so liberally spent was destined to be set upon some ten years later by the furious Norwich mob. Mrs. Taylor speaks of visiting at Holkham, and hopes "they may enjoy themselves notwithstanding the French."

She was already popular and much made of in her own little world, and also visited by friends from other circles. Mrs. Procter remembers her own step-father, Basil Montagu, speaking with regard and admiration of the quiet Norwich lady. Another name often occurs in her letters, that of one of the most brilliant and popular men of those brilliant times, Sir James Mackintosh, for whom Madame de Stael and Napoleon (for once agreeing) both expressed their admiration. Madame de Stael used to go so far as to say that Sir James was among Englishmen the most interesting man she had ever met. On one occasion when he and Madame de Stael alone outstayed a brilliant company at Bowood, Lord Lansdowne told Mrs. Kemble that in all his life he had never heard anything to approach the varied charm of the dialogue of these two distinguished people.

Sir James Mackintosh's feeling for Mrs. Taylor must have been of a different order from that which the brilliant Corinne inspired. How homely, how genuine, are his kind words to the quiet Norwich housewife! "I ought to be made permanently better by contemplating such a mind as yours," he writes; and he dwells affectionately upon her goodness, her fidelity in friendship, that "industrious benevolence which requires a vigorous understanding and a decisive character." "The assize week brought us Mr. Mackintosh and Basil Montagu," Mrs.

Taylor says in a letter to Dr. Reeve. "Mackintosh spent an evening with us alone. He was brilliant, instructive, sentimental—in fact, everything that the various powers of his mind would enable him to be."

In the little Norwich parlour, as in the Bowood drawing-room, one can imagine Mackintosh pouring out his delightful flood of talk, while Mrs. Taylor, like the princess in the fairy tale, sits listening, without time to intermit her labours, as she stitches at the shirts of the sleeping brothers upstairs.

III.

The Taylors belonged to the sturdy, sensible, stoical school which flourished in the beginning of the century, amid the alarms and catastrophes all round about; the great wars, the momentous struggles of Napoleon's ambition, the heavings of the French Revolution. This quiet English household was only in so far different from a hundred others that its mistress was a woman possessing more strength of mind, character, and perception than falls to the lot of many.

A friend who still remembers Mrs. Taylor has described her as follows: "I used to see Mrs. John Taylor at Mrs. Barbauld's, when I was a mere child, so that my recollections are only of her appearance and manner. She could never have been tall and handsome as her two daughters were; but she had fine dark grey eyes, and marked features. Her voice was deep-toned, her way of speaking decided and clear." Mrs. Taylor, we are told, cared little for appearances; her dress was apt to be unbecoming. It was Lucy Aiken who used to describe how she would go on darning her sons' grey worsted stockings while she was holding her own with Brougham, or Mackintosh, or Southey—flashing out epigrams at a room full of wits.

Mr. Reeve has sometimes described his grandmother in later days: actively ruling in her little kingdom, full of care and hospitality and help for others, occupied with every household interest; although delicate in health, yet toiling daily up the hill to the great Norwich market, to cater for her family, followed by a maid carrying the brimming baskets. There is something which reminds one of Mrs. Carlyle in the raciness and originality of Susanna Taylor's mind, as well as in the keen interest she gives to all the details of her home, and to the necessities of the people she comes across. She is happier than Jane Carlyle in the good and happy children growing up around her, upon whom she can pour out all the warmth and energy of her affections.

Dr. Reeve seems to have been a sort of adopted son of the house long before his engagement to Susan the younger, and to have lived and grown up among all these young people, and to have been very near the mother's heart. He is sorely missed when the time comes for his departure from among them.

"I rather envy Mr. Frenshaw," writes Mrs. Taylor, "when I see him mending pens and poring over small print: my eyes are somewhat more bedimmed than usual, for they overflow now and then in spite of myself. Cowper says in his address to his mother's picture—

> 'Where thou art gone
> Adieus and Farewells are a sound unknown.'

In this odd world they seem to be the most common of all words. To be sure, partings and meetings give variety to our existence; but I am now grown so dull as not to want variety. If I should wish for any, I must be contented to have it all second-hand. And so, when you have seen London and the Lakes and Edinburgh, all of which I know and have seen in former days, you may tell me what you think of them."

"Nothing at present suits my taste so well," (she says in another letter,) "as Susan's Latin lessons and her philosophical old master. . . . When we get to Cicero's discussions on the nature of the soul, or Virgil's fine descriptions, my mind is filled up. Life is either a dull round of eating, drinking, and sleeping, or a spark of ethereal fire just kindled.

"Do not suppose I am beginning or ever will begin to preach to you. We know each other's opinions upon these topics, and we equally despise any shackles for the human mind, but those which God and Nature impose upon us.

But if we endeavour to escape from these, we certainly subject ourselves to others infinitely more galling."

What a good friend she must have been for a young man at his start in life—what a good companion! Her letters are full of charming sense, of useful and pleasant suggestions, and as one quotes at random one feels that they contain a hundred things which ought still to be said to the young, still to be felt by the old.

On one occasion, after enumerating several remarkable people, she names a certain Mr. Wishaw.

"I would not have said so much about a person you know nothing of, but for the comfortable feeling *that people of the right sort are always to be found*, and also that they are sometimes happily thrown in our way; nothing tends more to enjoyment than to keep up a taste for their company whenever and wherever it can be had, instead of fancying that excellence is the exclusive production of past times or distant parts."

Is there not a whole philosophy of good sense in all this? Mrs. Taylor was no optimist like her friend Mrs. Opie; she had no exaggerated ideas of life and its possibilities; but she fully realised what was possible, and she held faithfully and gratefully to the blessings within her grasp. She continues very warmly attached to her young correspondent. "The very feelings which have produced such a friendship must perpetuate it," she says; and few people knew better than she did what it was to possess warm and enthusiastic friends.

So she writes on, discoursing, philosophising, throwing out the suggestions of her bright and practical mind as they occur to her, and we cannot do better than to go on quoting the passages as they occur. Here is one of her sensible sententious observations.

"There is no surer way of becoming acquainted with our own mind than by the effect produced upon it by the conduct of others; if we can tolerate vice and folly, we may grow fond of them in time. Perhaps," she continues, "you can bear witness to the truth of another remark, that people generally wrap themselves up in a solemn kind of reserve, and particularly those who have taken upon themselves the task of enlightening the world. It is to be accounted for from the jealousy and fear of losing a reputation once acquired, by the unguarded frankness of colloquial intercourse. Be it ours, my dear friend, merrily to philosophise, sweetly to play the fool. Strange counsel to a young man in a grave university."

Through all the tumult of the early years of the century the Taylors' home pursues its steady life. The elder boys grow up and go out into the world; little Sally, the pet of the family, who is to translate Ranke in after life, is beginning to write in round-hand; Susan is still Mr. Frenshaw's pupil; of herself Mrs. Taylor writes:

"For my part I never valued life more than I do at present, yet I think it would be a relief to me to feel as if I could be spared; but perhaps in this I deceive myself, and one of the charms of the world may be that I am still wanted in it. It is a pleasant world after all, and for your comfort, my dear friend, let me tell you that it is not only pleasant at that delicious season which we may denominate the morning of our existence,—there is a chastened, a temperate kind of happiness, which is perhaps to the full as desirable as the more glowing sensations of our early days."

She is greatly interested in the Edinburgh Review, then in its earliest numbers. It was first published in 1802; Jeffrey, Brougham, and Sydney Smith were its founders, clothing the new-born potentate in the Whig colours, blue and yellow. Doctor Reeve, who had then only just taken his degree at Edinburgh, contributed some articles to the first numbers. Reviews have their own life and growth. This one toned down with time; but in its early days it was somewhat over vigorous and unsparing in its measure. Mrs. Taylor has been reading a review of the 'Life of Cowper,' and the busy lady, dispensing her loaves and fishes, still finds time to review the reviewer, and to add her own excellent comment to the text. She says:

"Mr. Hayley's style wants that majestic simplicity with which such a character as Cowper's should have been portrayed. He thinks it necessary too, as Mr. Jeffrey observes, to praise everybody. This is so like the

misses who call all their insipid acquaintance 'sweet,' and 'interesting,' that it makes me rather sick. A biographer is good for nothing who does not give those touches, those lights and shadows which identify his characters;—on this account I do not like a remark of the reviewer that Mrs. Unwin's little jealousies of Lady Austen might as well have been passed over in silence. If the weaknesses of excellent people are to be concealed, how shall we form an accurate impression of human nature?"

It would certainly be difficult to tell one person from another. Again she says:

"Nothing can operate more powerfully against the attainment of excellences in every species of composition, than the indiscriminate praise, and false tenderness, which prevent those writers who are capable of higher degrees of improvement from endeavouring sedulously to aim at greater perfection, or which lead those who are incapable to trouble the public at all. I have been witness to such extravagant praises bestowed upon inferior compositions, especially in London, that I rejoice in the more hardy criticism of our northern metropolis, not from a desire to depreciate, but from a conviction that, the more completely both books and characters find their proper stations, the better it will be for society. I think the 'E. R.' contains just but not ill-natured criticism.

"If I were inclined to make an appeal for any person who has fallen under the lash, it would be for Robert Southey, whose experiments in poetry I acknowledge to be many of them fantastic and extravagant, but they are the experiments of a man of genius. . . I think we ought to be thankful to literary pioneers. . . After all that can be said as an apology for the new school of poets, they (themselves) must find the exact boundary between simplicity and childish puerility."

IV.

One important element of daily life in England all this time must not be overlooked, and that was, the prevailing fear of a French invasion which constantly haunted people's minds. Sir George Napier, in his Memoirs, tells us that he heard from Soult himself that the project was in fact strongly in the Emperor's mind. England was not unprepared, and Norfolk was ready to play her part. Mrs. Taylor describes the start of the Norwich volunteers:

"I begin to think people may make a joke of anything if they try; but I was never less disposed to be merry than this morning when in the midst of pouring rain our volunteers with three cheers bade farewell to their native city; Mr. Houghton, the clergyman, gave a breakfast on the occasion by candle-light. Dear little Mary looked on with wondering eyes at her old friends transformed into soldiers. If the French land in Norfolk, I shall expect prodigies of valour from you. What do you think of Richard in his scarlet uniform? Of all things this is the last sight I should have dreamed of seeing."

The French never landed in Norfolk, but an event which Mrs. Taylor contemplates with far less equanimity is beginning to foreshadow its coming. Mr. Frenshaw's pupil is still following her Greek lessons and sewing her seams, but she is also growing up day by day and hour by hour as maidens of fifteen are apt to do, and her mother (as is the way of mothers) is among the last to realise this fact. Little Susan who leaves her dressing things behind her, who has to be reminded to tie up parcels securely, who but yesterday was a baby,—is it possible that already a woman's life and cares are awaiting her, and that the young doctor is thinking of her as a helpmate and companion for life! The extraordinary fact seems to have taken Mrs. Taylor quite by surprise. Mothers and daughters of our own time are in a different attitude from the affectionate but Minerva-like terms on which they were content to remain in the days of which we are writing. I have heard it lately said with truth, that the difference of feeling now existing between parents and children, far exceeds the natural divergence of a single generation. A whole revolution of opinion and impulse has come about within the last twenty years, dividing even young mothers from their growing daughters. It must require some generosity and intellect in a parent to discriminate between what is harmless in itself, though it may absolutely jar against her own instincts and prejudices, and that which borders upon the common and the reckless, to use no harsher words. Mothers and daughters in

those days were upon terms which we can scarcely realise now. There was a decorum, a deliberation, a stiffness in their intercourse which could perhaps better be carried out before posts, telegrams, daily papers, had multiplied occupation, familiarity, and consequent haste. It was Mrs. Taylor's belief, for instance, that during her girls' absence from home "their moral improvement would keep pace with their intellectual, thanks to the observations and discussions they would receive by letter." All these grand words mean nothing more, after all, than that the mother is ever thinking, hoping, planning for her children's well-doing and safety.

Susan is, however, to know nothing of Dr. Reeve's ardent feelings; not one word is to reveal to her the romance of which the web is silently weaving about her. She is only sixteen; she is to go on with her lessons, to see something of the world, to "practise housekeeping and the culinary arts, that she may not from mere inexperience make mistakes which her husband would not like;" but no glimpse of his real feeling is to be allowed to her. One feels sorry for the poor lover, and yet how wise is the mother's appeal to him not yet to disturb her young daughter's serene and innocent mind!

"Prove," she says, "that you can, as you said to me, command your feelings. The way to allow mind and body to come to perfection is to suffer them to ripen by degrees.

"If you knew what harm it would do to substitute constrained manners for innocent frankness, and to carry forward Susan's attention to distant objects, instead of bestowing the whole force of her mind upon present subjects."

And then comes a little relenting sympathy.

"When either you or I am inclined to torment ourselves with fruitless wishes, let us have the comfort of thinking there is always one person we can sit down and open our hearts to."

The anxious mother writes page after page to her would-be son-in-law, half-scolding, half-soothing. Why does he want to settle in London? Why is he not satisfied with Norwich and Norwich life?

"Dr. Alderson," she says, "after reading me those letters of Mrs. Opie's which completely prove that the whole fraternity of authors, artists, lecturers, and publick people get such an insatiable appetite for praise, that nothing but the greatest adulation can prevent their being miserable, came to this sentence: 'Dr. Reeve, like a sensible man, prefers London to Norwich.' 'Is that a proof of sense,' said I, 'to reject what you allow is an extraordinary chance of settling to advantage in a place, because it contains but 40,000 inhabitants'!"

Meanwhile, in 1805, Mrs. Taylor gives an account of another talk with Dr. Alderson: "'What a pity it is that Dr. Reeve should not settle here,' says Dr. Alderson, 'when there is so fine an opening and nobody to fill up the vacancy at the hospital; but *London*, I suppose.' . . . 'Yes,' said I, 'he has contracted something of the disease which people acquire by living there—a sort of feeling that no other place is fit to live in.'" To which the kind old doctor replies by reminding Mrs. Taylor that he, himself, will be dead before very long, and that this is an additional reason for Dr. Reeve's return to Norwich. And very soon, and with very good reason, Dr. Reeve seems to have made up his mind, and to have given up all thought of settling away from Norwich, and, premature though it may have appeared to the poor anxious mother, he seems to have disclosed his feelings to his future wife.

Then Susan goes to London to visit Mrs. Barbauld, and improve her mind, and the engagement is formally announced. Her mother is glad she reads poetry with Mrs. Barbauld, and delighted she has been to the play. Here comes a gentle motherly rebuke:

"It would have been better if Reeve had not accompanied you to Stoke Newington; we must not only mind our P's and Q's, but our 'R's.' You know how freely I like to talk to you about everything. Do not show a kind of weakness, which in the end never fails to lower a woman, even in the estimation

of a lover! Men may be gratified first by possessing unbounded influence over the mind of a woman, but they generally despise her for it in the end. One of the great evils in contracting engagements of this sort at such an early age as yours is the full disclosure of affections owing to the innocent simplicity of youth, which a woman at a more advanced period, from a due sense of propriety, would certainly in some measure have concealed. For the future show Reeve that you, like him, can bear absence when absence is necessary, and that the only way to be fit for the duties of life hereafter is to perform them with the utmost zeal and alacrity now."

How admirable is all this, how Spartan, how sensible,—and how difficult to carry out! And then comes a touching little bit of sentiment on Mrs. Taylor's own account:

"Your father has just reminded me that to-morrow is my birthday. What a difference between the beginning of life and the close; solicitude on one's own account seems quite extinguished as far as relates to this world, not so for one's children. Towards them it will remain to the last moment; but I will endeavour to make it useful without being troublesome to you."

Other admonitions follow, warnings against want of attention to respectful demeanour such as is never to be observed in well-bred girls; and then, very motherlike, at the end of the letter,

"Now I have written this letter, I have a great mind to burn it, I am so unwilling to give you a moment's pain, but if you take it as a proof of love, and determine to profit by it, it will rather give you pleasure.

"When you are absent it is a great effort to think of faults. I could rather sit down and cry for your company."

One letter winds up with a quotation from one of the lover's epistles. He complains that he has heard nothing for several weeks. And here it is not possible to sympathise as much as usual when the mother points out to the daughter that she should not encourage her lover to expect to hear more often than is convenient.

Mrs. Taylor, as other mothers have been and will be again, is still perturbed by her son-in-law's impatience, by his ineradicable conviction that two people can live at the same expense as one. Little by little, however, difficulties are removed. Mr. Reeve's father promises him a good allowance; all is made smooth for the young couple's future, and at last they are married in the autumn of 1807. A house belonging to the Kerrison family had been taken in Surrey Street. We hear of many details: linen and boilers, and pails, and brushes, and scouring-cloths; a faithful Mary is engaged, who falls ill from over-scrubbing and has to be nursed. The good mother is there ready to see to everything, to nurse, to shop, to order. She writes full and detailed accounts of everything that is in preparation for the home. "Don't you wonder we can be interested in anything," she says, "while these rivers of blood are flowing on the Continent, only to complete the triumph of a tyrant, and to rivet the chains of poor, subjugated, unhappy Europe? But nevertheless, whatever is going on round about, people happily go on being interested in their own lives, and in those belonging to them."

Perhaps the most charming letter in the whole collection is one from Mrs. Taylor to her husband, towards the end of their peaceful married life, in which, in that still steady and exquisitely finished handwriting, she treats of "the only subject of deep interest to either of them," and recapitulates the family history. There is something almost biblical in the calm outlook, in the benediction at the end of this long and loving life. "As the father and mother of seven children, we have reason to be thankful that they are what they are, and to hope that their descendants may do them as much credit, and give them as much comfort . . . that John and his wife are living in a handsome, commodious house in a polite and pleasant neighbourhood is a gratifying circumstance as far as health is concerned." Mrs. Taylor is only afraid that *their* children may not sufficiently remember that this style of living is entirely dependent upon the father's life and exertions. She next comes to

her beloved Richard, "with all his valuable acquirements, his genuine humility, disinterested kindness, undeviating integrity." How wise is the manner of her wish to help him! "I know no other way to make ourselves tolerably easy about this dear clever child of ours, than to let him be the arbiter of his own destiny." She feels, she writes, "that each one of them should attain to that measure of independence which it is in the parents' power to bestow, at whatever cost to themselves." Then of another of her sons, "It would embitter my latter days if I thought that there was anything standing against Edward which would distress him, or that he should owe to the favour of his brethren what he is really entitled to from you; . . . it is sometimes as much a parent's duty to deviate from the equal distribution of property as it is in general to adhere to it. What I have to give goes to Sally and Deborah, because they want it more than my other daughters." The whole letter breathes a spirit of wisdom and good sense and tender justice, and is, indeed, a model of impartiality and unselfish good judgment. The mother is ill and alone at Norwich; but she forbids the father to mention this to the son with whom he is staying. "You know how well I can bear being alone if I have but books, which I am sure never to want." It is in this same letter that Mrs. Taylor speaks of occasional talks with her "eccentric lodger" John Stuart Mill.

As time goes on Susanna Taylor among other gifts cultivates that most precious art, *L'Art d'être Grandmère*. For her child's child her warm heart seems to thaw the formalities of her time and age. It is touching to hear of the faithful remembrances of long-ago games at coach-and-horses, in which grandmamma is the horse, and "darling," as she calls her little grandson, is the coachman. "But I shall have no room for love to Darling Boy," she writes somewhere; "he must have almost lost the idea of Norwich-grandmamma." The grandchild occupies her mind, and delights her heart; how proud she is of his cleverness and bright intellect; she tries to excuse her weakness on utilitarian principles, and frames a scheme in which the grandparents are to spoil in exact proportion to the parents' inflexibility.

Sally, the younger daughter, is also the mother of a little daughter, much beloved by "mamama," as she calls Mrs. Taylor. The present writer has still before her as she writes the image of Lucy, Lady Duff Gordon, that noble Spanish-looking lady of whom as Sally's baby there are such pretty details. "I understand all her language;—the rubbish drawer is her delight," says Mrs. Taylor, and then she adds, "It is time she left me, for I am growing to be too fond of Sally's child."

My story is slender enough. The figures come and go. That of the young doctor disappears far too early from the peaceful scene—for peaceful it is amid the storms and catastrophes of that time, when the selfish ambitions of the ambitious could only be atoned for by the steady moderation and unselfish wisdom of the honourable unknown.

Susanna Taylor died in 1823. Her daughter, Mrs. Reeve, was with her to the last.

Anne Ritchie.

LIFE IN THE ALLEGHANY MOUNTAINS.

We thought we had found Arcadia when we established our domicile among the mountains of North Carolina. A balmy air, a delightful climate, and scenery rarely equalled for picturesque beauty, would seem to give to this Alleghany region all the attractions one could reasonably look for in a home. True, it is remote from the centres of thought, and without libraries and galleries of art; but did not Solomon some ages ago say that much thought is "a weariness to the flesh," and does not constant contact with art and artificiality make us long the more for the unpainted adorning and simple naturalness of Nature?

Our home was much like those old mansions which are still occasionally seen in the rural districts of New England. The house was spacious and picturesque, with large rooms, wide halls, and broad verandahs; and about its generous deep-breasted fire-places and antique oak and walnut mantels was an air of comfort and repose not to be found among the tinsel decorations of a modern city home. It was approached by a winding avenue of trees, and embowered amid groups of oak and poplar, which had stood there for more than a century. Dense masses of these woods, intermixed with pines and chestnuts, stood at the rear of the mansion, and smaller groups were scattered over a broad lawn, which, sloping gently down into a wide meadow, skirted the bank of a quiet stream, so placid and yet so picturesque that it had received from the Indians the name of the Beautiful River. Between the house and the high road lay a deep and shady ravine; and through it trickled a small rivulet, fed by two ice-cold springs, about which were ranged rustic benches, roofed by wide-branching trees—a delightful retreat from the heats of midsummer. This was our home, and around us rose the mountains, of every variety of outline, and every hue of grey and blue—in domes and peaks and pinnacles, piercing the clouds, and towering aloft a mile and more above the level of the sea.

The earth was clad in all the glory of leaf and blossom when we took possession of this mountain home; and I well remember the first evening that we sat under the vine-shaded verandah and watched the sun go down beyond the distant heights, gilding the clouds and the mountains with burnished gold. The air was laden with the sweet breath of the honeysuckle and the climbling rose, and it fanned our faces with a delicious coolness that seemed wafted from some earthly Elysium. Surely, we said to ourselves, in this peaceful locality we shall find

> "Retirement, quiet,
> Ease and alternate labour, useful life,
> Progressive virtue, and approving heaven."

But alas! Satan entered into Paradise, and, according to the negro legend, there followed in his rear a grand army of gnats and mosquitoes, which, when the Lord had cast out our first parents and the Old Adversary, remained behind—"'case dey wus so nimble and so small, de Lord, He wusn't spry 'nuff to kotch 'em." And so, the Satan of slavery had been expelled from this southern Eden, but had left behind a swarm of human gnats—"low-down whites," and "no-account blacks," the legitimate progeny of the Great Evil—to remind us that man has fallen, and that an earthly Paradise is a pure chimera. However, this knowledge was the result of subsequent experience. Now, we fully believed that life here would be one round of rational enjoyment, and that

we had only to hold out our hands to catch the roasted larks which would rain upon our platters. But it was not long before we began to learn that this world is one of tribulation.

Our house needed some repairs, and an old negro-cabin—a relic of slavery, and the only unsightly thing about the grounds—had to be remodelled into a cottage for the gardener, who, blessed with a wife and a baker's dozen of woolly-headed picaninnies, needed a domicile of his own. To do this work I employed a small army of mechanics; but they went about their tasks in so leisurely a way that I soon discovered that my repairs (though the wages were but a dollar a day) were costing about four-fold what similar work would cost at the North. Therefore I discharged the entire gang, and determined I would do what else had to be done by contract.

The work on the negro-shanty was the most pressing, and forthwith I bargained with a master carpenter, (said to be "entirely responsible,") for its reconstruction at a specified price and by a certain time. He sent a solitary workman, who, in the course of ten days, removed the roof and weather-boarding of the ugly edifice, leaving exposed its dingy beams and rafters begrimed with the dust and smoke of nearly a century. This great work was finished on a Saturday. About dark the master-builder came to me, saying that his other patrons had disappointed him, that his workmen must be paid, and, though he was to receive nothing till his work was done, it would be a great favour if I would help him out of his difficulty.

He was a "responsible man," and I a verdant one; and the consequence was that I advanced him about twice what his work was worth, and—saw no more of him during our sojourn in the Alleghanies.

Then for six long weeks the unsightly frame stood there in naked ugliness, an affliction to the eye, and of no possible use except to scare away the crows from the neighbouring corn-field. The master-builder was coming every day, but his day never came. A home, moreover, had to be prepared for the gardener, who now lived half a mile away, and came to his work each day a little later than the preceding on the plea of the distance he had to travel. At last, when his morning advent had lengthened out to noon, and his working hours had shortened to four or five, I determined to employ another builder.

This time I contracted, not with a "responsible" master-mechanic, but with a journeyman carpenter—"not worth a dime, sir, but sober, honest, and 'dustrious, and jest the smartest workman in five counties." And so he proved to be; and in a reasonably short time the roof was halfway on, and one gable weather-boarded. Then, in my absence, he came to the mistress of my household with a pitiful tale of a child sick nigh unto death, and no money in his pocket to buy medicines. The lady is afflicted with human sympathies, and, though she knew the man was to receive nothing till his work was done, she did, out of pity for his sick child, pay him about twice as much as what he had done would amount to.

His child must have been long sick, for we saw no more of him for a fortnight, when one day I encountered him measuring with unsteady strides the village highway. Then I put the amount paid him with the sum I had on permanent deposit with the master-builder, and resolved in my wrath to make an end once for all of the unsightly relic of slavery.

I have omitted to mention that I had bought the house in January (some months before we intended to take possession) and had employed John, who was recommended as a superior gardener, to put the grounds in order, and plant such vegetables as we should need during the season. I was surprised to find, when we came in July, that three-fourths of a two-acre garden

had been planted in cabbages, and I hinted as much to the coloured agriculturist. "Not a cabbage too many, boss," he replied. "Ye'll find it'm so fore de season am ober."

And so I did. The vegetables grew gloriously; but just as, day by day, they opened their great green leaves, they would suddenly disappear, leaving not a trace behind, except the print of a wide No. 11 brogan. A like fate overtook the beets, the parsnips, the squash, and the cucumbers, and when I alluded to the catastrophe John would invariably say, "It am de 'possums, boss; dey'm mighty fond ob garden truck; an' dey'm great tiefs."

At last, when all the grapes had disappeared over night from a choice vine, and nothing was left to account for them but the aforesaid foot-print, which tallied with that of John to a nicety, I said to him. "John, I prefer to have no 'possums on the premises who wear brogans so large as No. 11."

So John left, and there being no longer any pressing need of a gardener's house, the old shanty went down, and was consumed in firewood, which I reasonably supposed would be the last of it. But it was not. In about a fortnight after its demolition the journeyman carpenter presented himself, proposing to go on with his contract. I pointed to the sod which covered the spot where it had stood, and offered him a receipt in full for all damages. But this was not satisfactory. He sued me for the work he had not done, demanding the full amount of the contract. I was my own lawyer, and had a fool for a client. I lost the case.

Being now rid of the gardener and the gardener's cottage, and having no vegetables left for the opossums to steal, we hoped to settle down to a life free from domestic annoyances. Of servants we had still a stableman, who took reasonably good care of our animals; a cook, tolerably well acquainted with her profession; an upstairs maid, who left no dust about, except in corners; and a young imp of darkness who attended upon the others, and went daily to the mail which brought the Northern journals, and was now our only connecting link with modern civilisation. In addition a laundress came two days in the week, and "did" the household linen.

A Northern housekeeper will deem this corps of domestics numerous enough to look after two adults requiring but little attention, and a "farm" of twenty acres, nearly all lawn and primitive forest. But the Southern blacks practise upon the principle of "the division of labour." None of them can, or will, do more than one thing; so I was soon obliged to supplement the stableman by another John, who should do the general out-door work. The acquaintance of this lazy genius I made through Lyddy, the cook, a staid matron of about fifty, well known in the neighbourhood.

John was about thirty years old, and of pure African lineage. He had a stalwart frame, a foot large enough for an elephant, and arms and hands that might have wielded the weaver's beam of Goliath of Gath. His skin was as black as ebony, and had the unctuous brilliancy that is peculiar to the negro "blood-royal"; but his features were regular and of clear European type, which contrasted oddly with the sable hue of his complexion. He had a mouth of uncommon width, filled with two rows of the finest ivory. When not open in an habitual grin, it was distended in a sort of chuckling laugh, which rippled over his face and huge frame in a way that was pleasant to look upon. He had what the blacks call "edication"—that is, he could read, write, and do small sums in arithmetic; but such words as "forethought," "care," or "anxiety" were not in the spelling-book he had studied. With no more thought of the present or the future than an animal, he yet had such a capacity for fun, such a sense of the ludicrous, and such an

ear for melody, as justify my styling him a genius.

With constant supervision John did his daily duties tolerably well; but it was when the day's work was over, and the servants had gathered together in the kitchen for the evening, that his services became of especial value. Then by a droll story, or some strains of improvised but genuine melody from his banjo or violin, he brought the discords of the day into harmony, and no doubt contributed to the longevity of the household. He was allowed the use of the daily newspaper when it had been read in the library, and often his mistress and I would steal of an evening into a dark corner of the dining-room, where, with the door ajar, we could listen unperceived to the "news," as John dispensed it to his sable auditory in the kitchen. This "news" was not generally according to the 'New York Times,' from which he professed to read; but his audience were none the worse, nor the wiser, for the discrepancy. The absurdity of the variations was what made the drollery of the thing.

A report of one of these gatherings will show the character of them all, and cast some light upon the composition of our household. John had read of a whole fleet sunk in mid-ocean, and of an entire country swallowed up by an earthquake, when he told of a woman tried for bigamy, who had been wedded to seven husbands, all of whom, with seventeen children, were in court waiting for the decision of the jury.

"Seventeen children!" echoed Uncle Steve, the stableman. "Why, dat am nuffin. I neber had nary more'n two wives, and I'se had twenty-two."

"Dat'm so, Uncle Steve," rejoined John, "an' ob all cullers, from a dirty white ter coal brack."

"Dat's true," said Stephen, "an' dey'm all smart an' likely loike, 'cep de light cullud; 'pears dey all wus sort of no 'count."

"'Cep little Zip, uncle, what shines de boss's boots. I'se yered him say dat Zip was born ter de profession, an' wurth all de oder darkies on de place. As for you, Uncle Steve, de boss know you can't tell a hoss from a mule."

"Gwo 'way, you John; de boss doan't know nuffin ob de sort. He'm a Nordern man, an' all dey 'spects to git more out of cullud folks dan am in 'em; but he sots a heap on Uncle Steve—he know he hain't no bigamous nigger."

"But yer Emily Jane am. See what you've brung her up to, Uncle Steve—free husbands, an' ebery one ob 'em libin'!"

"Well, I 'clare ter gracious," now chimed in Ida, the yellow up-stairs servitor, "that isn't 'spectable."

"'Spectable!" echoed John. "You talk of 'spectable, what habs free fellers you own self, all on de hooks togeddar. I jest tought I'd a died de oder Sunday when dey all comed to onst—two a foot to de back door, an' tudder in a kerridge, to de front, whar he ringed de bell like as if he wus somebody. But lor! how he did wilt when de missus up an' tole him dat darkies mus' keep dar place, and his place was on de wes' side of de house. Leff him try dat on ag'in, an' you'll walk, Miss Ida—dat's sartain."

"Well," said Miss Ida, with, as we could easily imagine, a high toss of the head, "if I walks, I'll go in a kerridge, as I done dat Sunday."

"Yas," now said Lyddy, "an' hab a white driber, as you done den. But, Miss Ida, you goed 'way in a kerridge, an' you comed back afoot—an' dat am what all de proud 'uns 'll come to. I'se yered it read so out ob de book."

"Dat's so, Miss Lyddy," rejoined John. "I'se read it so myself—dar hain't much in dat book as I hain't read. But tain't much to be driv by such white trash. An' I reckon de boss am a fin'in' ob 'em out, dough he tole me de oder day — dat time he kotch me asleep in de hay mow— dat he wus a gwine to cut all us

darkies adriff, an' hab nary one but white folks. Reckon he'll hab a good time doin' it! 'Spec he'll begin wid de red-headed fellar as brung de missus chickens wid de shells sca'ce off dar backs."

"Or dat oder one," said Stephen, "as brung de blin' hoss nigh dead wid ole age, an' de heabes, an' swored he wus only six year de comin' spring; or de oder dat leff ter sell de hoss sick wid the lungs, when de boss wus away, an' missus an' me had to nuss him day and night ter keep de breff ob life in his body. An' dat ar white man had de imperance when he comed for de animal ter ax, 'How'm dat hoss?' like as if he tought he was dead. I 'spec he war sartin he was, and he meant ter make de boss pay fur de critter."

"Or dat oder ole fellar," resumed John, "dat de boss wus so tooken wid—him as brung de wood wid de ox an' de mule hitched up wid a rope harness, tied togedder wid red flannel and bits of de ole 'ooman's garters. De boss he walk round an' round dat team, an' he say dat dough it wasn't 'zactly 'cordin' to scriptur, it wus wuth gwine a long way to see; an' he ax' dat ole feller to come agin, 'case he b'lieved in patronizin' 'mestic industry."

And here John broke into one of his low ripples of laughter, at the expense of "de boss," who was overhearing him from the next apartment.

"But he bought de wood," now said Lyddy; "an' Lor', how he done storm when I tole him dat all but de top ob de pile wus pine saplin', jess cut, an' as wudn't burn fur no 'sideration. Day say dat ole man lead prayers in de meetin'. I wonder if he eber tink when he'm on his knees, of de spittin' wood dat he made de boss come nigh ter swarin' ober?"

"Well," said John, "de boss am a fin'in' 'em out, an' I reckon we won't hab to trabil. But, 'ludin' to trablin', leff me read you 'bout de great walkin' match dey hab up to New York, whar one cullud man beat de crowd—trabilled 560 mile in a day."

Then John proceeded to read from the Times about the great match in Madison Square, exaggerating the account in a most amusing and amazing manner, and supplementing the whole by professing to read from a sermon of the Rev. George Washington, the illustrious coloured preacher of the North, wherein he strongly denounced the folly of such practices, and adduced Enoch as the greatest walker of all times. "But, my hearers, with all ole man Enoch's grit, and pluck, and persavarance, what comed ob him? What comed ob him? Why, arter walkin' fur free hundred year in fa'r heel an' toe fashion—none ob yer hipple-drum business, like dese yere—walkin' wid de Lord free hundred year, he got tuck, de Lord tuck him. Ole Massa was too long in de stride, and too sound in de wind for him, and so ole boss Enoch got tuck, And leff dat be a warnin' to all ob you to leff alone dis walkin' business."

Amid the wonderment which followed, we heard Lyddy exclaim, "Oh, Mr. Cobble! what a edication you hab—it'm written on yous bery brow."

This was the social life that gathered under our roof, and I think we shall be pardoned for indulging in it in so surreptitious a manner, if I state that it was the best the neighbourhood afforded. Of people professing any kind of cultivation there were but three within a radius of five miles. One of these was a high-pressure philanthropist, whom I had known at the North as a decided sham; another was an ex-confederate, who had not given up his prejudices when he surrendered his sword; and the third was a retired gentleman who saw the most sunshiny day through the medium of a diseased stomach, and was, therefore, not the most cheerful of companions. The remainder of our social horizon was bounded by a dense mist of poor whites, and a denser cloud of blacks, whom, like the mists and clouds in nature, we preferred to

observe and wonder at from a reasonable distance. Our society, therefore, we had to find in nature, in books, and in ourselves; and when tired of such companionship we sought recreation in a study of the nondescript humanity that came under our observation.

The general characteristics of these people I have elsewhere delineated, and a repulsive picture is not improved by frequent exhibition. Rather than dwell too much upon defects, a kindly critic prefers to search for unobtrusive beauties that escape the general eye, and which may redeem an otherwise wretched production. These beauties I found everywhere among the blacks, and even among the "poor whites," who are physically, mentally, and morally, a "bad job." I encountered, here and there, an isolated specimen which showed that, planted in another soil, and given the ideals on which true manhood is fashioned, they might yet be raised above their present grovelling condition, and made valuable citizens of the Republic. Some of these "rough diamonds" are worth a few words of description; but, to preserve a proper connection in my narrative, I must now relate a catastrophe which led to a sudden dismemberment of our coloured family.

It was not long after we had discovered, from the admiring exclamation of Lyddy, that education was written on the very brow of Mr. Cobble, when that lady suddenly presented herself before us one evening, as we were seated together in the library. She was smiling and smirking, and evidently labouring under some violent internal commotion. Her usually quiet eye was lit up by an unwonted gleam; her demure face was irradiated with a kind of oily glow, and her skinny fingers were playing nervously with the two corners of her apron. Sidling up to her mistress, she said in an uncertain tone, that was half speech and half giggle, "Missus, I'se gwine to be married."

"Married!" we both exclaimed, the mistress dropping her sewing, and I looking up from my book, straight at the decayed Venus, already a grandmother.

"Yas, missus," she said with a slight curtsey, and still fondling the corners of her apron. "Yous know dat I'se a widdy, and John's a widdy too —we'se both widdys—so, we'se 'cluded to git married."

"Why, Lyddy," said her mistress. "Will you marry that good-for-nothing John?"

"Yas, missus," answered Lyddy, misunderstanding the question. "He am good—he's got religion, an' he's got edication—reads a heap ob books—reads 'em to me."

"And do you expect those quarters to go up again?" I asked, as a vision of that confounded shanty rose before me in all its ghastly ugliness.

"No, sar; we doan't 'spec' dat. I'se comed to gib de missus warnin'. John wants to gwo off on de kears, an' he wants me to gwo, an' I'se neber rid on de kears."

The tone of anticipated delight in which this was uttered made me smile at the simplicity of the woman, and I said to her mistress,—"It's January and June—Christmas and the fourth of July coming together."

"Yas, sar," said Lyddy. "We'se to git married Chris'mus. John's got de licence. I lent him de fifty cents."

"And you'll lend him a good many more, if you marry him."

"I means to, sar. I'se sabed up quite a heap; an' John mean to put it inter hosses an' a dray; an' I take in boarders, down ter Chatt'nooga. He say it'm a right smart place."

"Well, it is; but what does your son say to all this?"

"He doan't want me to gwo 'way, sar; but he say I must shute myself. You see, sar, he'm a wife an' chillen, an' de book say dey'm 'fore fader or moder."

"I know; but how do you feel to leave him?"

"If I knows him well, an' doin' well, dat'll be 'nuff fur me. Yous know, sar, I'se a gittin old, an' I'se lonesome like; an' John hab edication, an' he kin read to me, an' so de time won't pass quite so heaby."

"Well, Lyddy," said her mistress, "it is your affair, and not ours. We hope it will turn out well; but if it should not, you can come back to your home here—you will be welcome."

The tears came into the woman's eyes as she said, "Bress you, missus," and left the apartment.

On Christmas Day they were married in the negro church, and on the following day took the "kears" for Chattanooga. Our forebodings were not realised. They prospered in a worldly way, he as a drayman, she as mistress of a small hostel, whose sign gave warning to all comers that no ardent spirits were sold on the premises.

It was now midwinter, and, there being but little to do about the grounds, we could dispense with a successor to Mr. Cobble until the ensuing spring. But it was not so with a substitute for Lyddy. Eating being a physical necessity not admitting of postponement, we were obliged to look about at once for a competent person to officiate in our kitchen. Matrimony is to be encouraged on sound considerations of political economy; but it was the thing which, more than all else, interfered with our domestic comfort during our sojourn in the southern country. Cook after cook, gardener after gardener, stableman after stableman, had no sooner got well into our ways before they had honoured us with an invitation—usually printed on a card about six inches square—to a wedding ceremony. The mature age of Lyddy would, we had fondly thought, protect her from the allurements of any black Adonis. But we had not counted on the attractions of "edication" to the untutored intellect, nor imagined the yearnings of lonesome age for the cheerful companionship of youth—especially when that youth was a "shining light," like John, and able to quote scripture by the yard. Some one has said, "We learn wisdom from experience;" and so, pondering this subject on the eve of the exodus of Lyddy, I startled the mistress by proposing that she should instal Emily Jane, the much-married daughter of Uncle Steve, as overseer of our culinary department.

"What!" she exclaimed, "that spitfire! The wife of three living husbands!"

"That is her especial recommendation—even the customs of North Carolina won't allow her a fourth; so we shall be safe from her contracting matrimony."

Emily Jane was sent for. She was a handsome creature—tawny, but beautiful, erect as a flag-staff, supple as an eel, graceful as a leopard, and, in her apparel, gorgeous as an army with banners. Her straight raven hair was as glossy as silk, and her eyes were blazing coals, lit from some volcano within her. She was embodied restlessness, ever on the move, and taking no account of even five-barred impediments. I have known her to vault upon the back of a spirited sixteen-hand horse, and race him, without saddle or bridle, over the grounds in total disregard of fences and such-like obstructions. She was the very poetry of motion; but she slung things about the kitchen in a very unpoetical fashion. In less than a week it was what Uncle Steve called "de bery debil's workshop."

Going into that apartment one day soon after her advent, the lady of the house heard Emily Jane muttering to herself—"How can I be 'spected to cook, with no pots to cook with?"

"No pots?" said the mistress. "How is that, Emily Jane?"

And then the pantries and cupboards were ransacked, and a surprising leanness was discovered in the stock of crockery and kitchen utensils. Enough had disappeared to supply several small families. In reply to the wonderment of the mistress, Emily Jane

remarked: "Don't know for sartin, missus, but Lyddy say you gabe her heaps o' things to sot her up to Chatt'nooga. Reckon she had nigh on to a kear load—'nuff to furnish a big boarding-saloon."

And this was the demure lover of "Scriptur" and black "edication," whom we had mourned as a lost treasure—a black diamond, very cheap at twelve dollars a month!

But the superabundant energy of Emily Jane threatened to be scarcely less destructive to our stock of kitchen ware than the thievish propensities of her pious predecessor. Scarcely a day passed but she came to her mistress with a rueful face, and a broken utensil. "Dar, missus!" she would say, "it'm done broke, and I'se all tore up." We, therefore, counted upon a quieter time among the crockery and ironware when we observed that Emily Jane was becoming serious-minded, and regularly attending a neighbouring meeting-house. If she would only experience a change of heart she might adopt sedate ways, and save us the necessity of entirely refurnishing the kitchen.

And the prospect for this was soon quite encouraging. One morning, after a long night at the "revival," she accosted her mistress with a sad countenance, saying, as she pressed her two hands upon her bosom, "I feels bery sickly like round yere, missus; don't dat show I'se gittin religion?" It was, no doubt, a premonitory symptom, for that evening, hearing a great hubbub in the kitchen, I looked into it, and there, amid a throng of sable brothers and sisters, sat Emily Jane, with upturned eyes, streaming hair, and arms revolving like a wind-mill. At sight of me the tumult suddenly ceased, and the tawny beauty, subsiding into a sort of ecstatic composure, exclaimed, "Bress de Lord, massa! Bress de Lord, I'se got it—I'se got religion!"

We were congratulating ourselves upon the results of Emily Jane's conversion, when one evening she came to her mistress asking the loan of a dress which had seen better days, but was not yet reduced to actual decrepitude.

"And pray, what do you want of my dress, Emily Jane?" asked her mistress.

"I talks ob gittin married to Brother Zeb, missus, and I kinder kalkerlated you'd leff me hab dat dress to be married in."

"But I have understood you are married already."

"Well, I is, missus; but dey'm no 'count—triflin' niggers. Tain't no sin to leff dem go for a good, pious man like Brother Zeb."

So Emily Jane went again the way of womankind; taking with her, however, only what was rightfully her own. We declined an invitation to the wedding-reception, and thereby lost a spectacle conducted in the extreme of coloured fashion—Emily Jane robed in her mistress's gown, and sitting in state for a whole week, amid a crowd of admirers, while her more sensible husband less gloriously propelled his push-cart about the railway station.

Soon the up-stairs Ida followed the way of Emily Jane; and then came the worst of our domestic experiences. Our domicile had long been a negro boarding-house, and fearing it might soon become a negro marriage-mart, I put an often-expressed resolve into execution, and replaced our blacks with an entire corps of white servants. But our last state was worse than our first; and we soon had but too good reason to regret the lazy, shiftless, thievish, but still docile, good-natured, and affectionate blacks.

ENGLISH LITERATURE AT THE UNIVERSITIES.

It is well that this interesting and important question has at length been rescued from the disturbing influences of a personal quarrel. That the unfortunate individual over whose body the writer in the 'Quarterly Review' marched to the attack of our Universities should have done his best to claim a verdict on the personal issue, is, indeed, much to be regretted, but hardly in the circumstances surprising. He had undoubtedly been placed in a difficult position. Without the semblance of a defence he was yet expected to defend himself. One course was indeed open to him, a course which, if it would not have established his claim to lecture on English literature, would at least have secured for him the sympathy and consideration of all right thinking persons, and for which his reading, if it be truly such as he and his friends affirm, might easily have furnished him with a precedent. He might have remembered in what manner Dryden met the grave charges brought against him by Jeremy Collier. The great writer, then in the fulness of his age and fame, the acknowledged chief of English letters, thought that he had been on some points harshly treated; that his meaning had been sometimes misconstrued and sometimes perverted, and that a significance had too often been given to his words which they were not intended to bear, and in fact did not bear. But on the whole he confessed that he had been justly charged. "If Mr. Collier," he said, "be my enemy, let him triumph; if he be my friend, as I have given him no personal occasion to be otherwise, he will be glad of my repentance. It becomes me not to draw my pen in defence of a bad cause, when I have so often drawn it for a good one." But even in those days no man probably but Dryden would have had either the manliness or the sincerity for such an avowal; and it is doubtful whether even Dryden would in these days have risked it. He might have felt that the spirit of the time was too strong against it: that while too many would have rejoiced at the confession of weakness from the strong man, too few would have recognised, or at least allowed, the courage, the candour, and the dignity which alone could make such a confession possible.

Such, at any rate, was not the course of defence determined on. Far other, indeed, it was. It was one which, in truth, the somewhat eruptive energy displayed in demolishing one who had ingenuously confessed himself to be more volatile than a bird and more fragile than a shell, was but too likely to suggest to a certain sort of minds. For in truth it must be owned that the zeal of the Reviewer, if it had not precisely eaten him up, had at least (to borrow again from Dryden) not only devoured some part of his civility, but also seriously disagreed with his sense of proportion. "No man," it has been well said—and we are sure that this Reviewer least of all men needs to be reminded by whom it was said—"no man is so merciless as he who, under a strong self-delusion, confounds his antipathies with his duties." As for the defence itself, one knows not whether most to deplore it for its ignobleness or to laugh at it for its irrelevancy. But though we have said that its adoption is in the circumstances not entirely surprising, it is surprising, and most pitiful, to find men, who have been always understood to be honourable and assumed to be intelligent, not only lending their open support to so preposterous a bid for

the crown of martyrdom, but actually expressing their conviction of its point and dignity.

We have dwelt so long on this aspect of a controversy on which more than enough has long ago been said, because it seems to us to be the most deplorable circumstance of a deplorable affair. It is, indeed, to say the least of it, unfortunate, that a man holding the position of lecturer on English literature in so famous and august a place of learning as Trinity College, Cambridge, should not have taken the trouble to supply in some measure the defects of his education by such simple means as even the most learned writer is too wise to ignore: there are surely books of reference enough in these days to keep the emptiest of us straight in matters at any rate of fact, though for the defects themselves, we think that the discredit lies more with those who made the appointment than with him who holds it. But that, when it was found impossible to excuse or deny blunders resulting from a combination of ignorance and carelessness perhaps unparaleled in the history of literature, an attempt should have been made to extort sympathy for them on grounds so paltry and so degrading, not only to him who made it but to the profession of English letters generally, reflects, in our opinion, a far greater discredit on all concerned in it.

It is impossible here to give entirely in his own words the Reviewer's theory of the only system by which English literature can be adequately taught, though we shall use them as far as possible. He leads off, then, as follows:

"Much has recently been talked about the continuity of history, and the erroneous views which must necessarily result from studying it piecemeal. The continuity of literature is a fact of even more importance, and the persistency with which the fact has been ignored has not only led to errors infinitely more serious than any which can be imputed to historical teachers, but has rendered our whole system of dealing with literature, whether historically, in tracing its development, or critically, in analysing its phenomena, as inadequate as it is unsound. One of the most remarkable illustrations of this is the fact, that the study of our own literature is, in all our schools and colleges, separated on principle from the study of Greece and Rome. . . . Now the literatures of Greece, Rome, and England, are radically and essentially connected. What the literature of Greece is to that of Rome, the literatures of Greece and Rome are to that of England. . . . Not only have most of our poets and all our best prose writers, as well in the present age as in former ages, been nourished on the literatures of Greece and Rome; not only have the forms of at least two-thirds of our best poetry and our best prose derived their distinctive features from those literatures; not only has the influence of those literatures, alternately modifying and moulding our own, determined its course and its characteristics; but a large portion of what is most valuable in our poetry is as historically unintelligible, apart from the Greek and Roman Classics, as the Epic and Lyric Poetry of Rome would be apart from the Epic and Lyric Poetry of Greece."

Then he continues through several pages to show with much truth, eloquence and learning the debt our great writers both in prose and verse have owed to the great writers in what it is the absurd fashion in some quarters to speak of as the Dead Languages. To the proposition, and it finds many supporters, that modern literatures deserve to be studied in connection with our own as well as the older literatures, he answers, in the first place, that Italian is the only modern literature that has seriously affected ours, and, in the second, that so comprehensive a study is not practical: "In no school of literature could a student be expected to read, in addition to Greek and Latin, half-a-dozen other languages, and among those languages Celtic, Anglo-Saxon, and German." A choice must be made between the two, between the literatures of the old world and the literatures of the new; and, both as introductions to our own literature and as interpreters of it, he holds the former to be incomparably the most important. Again, he asserts himself to be no bigoted admirer of the ancients, and proceeds to prove

that his assertion is unquestionably just. But, because Shakespeare is a greater writer of tragedy than the great tragedians of the Attic stage; and Molière a greater writer of comedy than Terence; because Burns is the equal of Catullus, and Dryden the superior of Juvenal; because Burke is a greater orator than Cicero, and Gibbon a greater historian than Thucydides, it is absurd, he says, to maintain, as is often maintained, that "familiarity with the works of modern writers would, in the education of a student of literature, be an equivalent for familiarity with the works of the ancients." Finally he thus sums up the duty of our Universities to the literature of their own country, as he conceives that duty to be.

"What is needed, and we venture to add imperatively needed, is the institution of a school which shall stand in the same relation to pure literature, to poetry, oratory, and criticism, as the present school of history stands to history, and as the present school of Literæ Humaniores stands to philosophy. In both these schools, in the former as it is about to be constituted, in the latter as it always has been constituted, the historical and philosophical classics of the old world are most properly associated with those of the new. No hard-and-fast line is drawn between philosophers and historians who write in Greek and Latin, and philosophers and historians who write in English. Both are studied, not for the light which they may happen to throw collaterally on the structure and history of language, but for the light which they throw on the subjects which are severally treated by them. Herodotus and Thucydides are accordingly included in the same curriculum as Clarendon and Gibbon. 'The Republic' and 'The Ethics' are read side by side with the essay on the 'Human Understanding' and the 'Enquiry concerning the Principles of Morals.' Thus not only are the masterpieces of ancient and modern philosophy brought home to the student, but their relations to each other are rendered intelligible. . . . Why, we ask, should not the same view be taken of the work of Sophocles and Shakespeare, of Cicero and Burke? Are they not 'parts of one living whole'? Is not poetry, poetry; oratory, oratory; criticism, criticism, in whatever language they may be expressed? And is not the study of literature the study of its development generally, and of its masterpieces particularly? Why the works of a philosopher or a historian who writes in a classical language should be studied as illustrating philosophy and history, while the works of a poet or of an orator who writes in a classical language should be regarded as mere material for construing,—why University men should be expected to know in what way modern metaphysics have been affected by Plato and modern ethics by Aristotle, and should not be expected to know in what way modern poetry has been affected by Homer and Horace, and modern oratory by Demosthenes and Cicero—we cannot understand. But of one thing we are quite sure, that it is high time, both in the interests of our classical literature and of our own literature, to take this question into serious consideration, and to see whether the institution of such a school, or some school similar to such a school as we have suggested, be indeed practicable. What the nation has a right to expect from the Universities is that they should provide as adequately for the dissemination of literary culture as they have provided for other branches of education. And this we contend they can never do, if, on the one hand, for the study of the two leading and master literatures of the world, the literatures which are and must always be the basis of the education of which we are speaking, they substitute the study of what certain educational theorists are pleased to call modern equivalents; and if, on the other hand, they continue to exclude our own literature from their curriculum."

No competent judge, to use the Reviewer's own words,—certainly not that Judicious Man whom we have all heard so much of—would, we suppose, deny that this view of the principles on which English literature should be studied, is in the main a sound and reasonable one. But we think that one or two arguments, not in support of a different view, but rather modifying and, as it were, limiting this one, might also be found worth consideration.

Although the Reviewer has generally coupled the literature of our own time with that of times antecedent, as owing its inspiration and its form to the literature of antiquity, yet only in three cases has he sought his illustrations among the writers of the present century. In one respect he has certainly done wisely. In showing the amount of the debt owed by our great orators and our great divines to the orators and prose-writers of Greece and Rome he has indeed done well to

confine himself to past times. Admirable as for their respective purposes they no doubt are, no one would, we apprehend, maintain that the style of Lord Randolph Churchill and the style of the Reverend Mr. Haweis have been modelled on the masterpieces of antiquity. The fact, as we take it, is, that while the Reviewer has made his case indisputably good up to the close of what is generally called the literature of the eighteenth century, it would not be difficult to find some weak points in it, so far, at any rate, as English poetry is concerned, when we enter upon that new era which begins with the names of Burns, Cowper, and Wordsworth. It is true that Wordsworth is one of the modern writers named as really intelligible only to a student of the Platonic Philosophy. But this is surely true only of a part of his work, and that, as many of his admirers and one of his best critics think, not the best part. Certain of his poems have been directly classified as akin to the antique, the famous ode on the 'Intimations of Immortality' and 'Laodameia' being of course conspicuous among them. But of the bulk of his lyrical pieces, such pieces as, 'The Solitary Reaper,' 'The Daffodils,' those on Yarrow, on Matthew, and on Lucy, —surely their connexion with the Classics is slight indeed. Of Byron, again, another of the modern poets named, it is, no doubt, true that, in his earlier satirical pieces, as holding directly of Pope, he may be said to hold of Horace, whom, of course, in one of his pieces he has simply paraphrased. But in the greater part of his work, his romantic tales, 'Don Juan,' 'Childe Harold's Pilgrimage,' and his dramas, a classical influence is, we should be inclined to say, not very easy to trace.[1] Take again such poets as Burns, Crabbe, Scott, Campbell, and Coleridge; by what Greek or Roman writer was the best of their work, either in thought or form, inspired? Nor can the poetry of Keats be truly said to owe anything to the ancient models; for though his earlier work was stimulated by the fancies of the Greek mythology, the native forms of their expression were a sealed book to him; and in his best work, his odes 'To a Grecian Urn,' 'To the Nightingale,' and 'To Autumn,' except in the love they breathe of things beautiful for beauty's sake, which he owed to his temperament and not to any training, there is scant trace of any classic models. It would be easy, of course, to find arguments on the other side; in almost all of Landor's work, for example, both in prose and verse, can they be found, and in much of Shelley's. Southey's prose would hardly have been of such fine quality but for his classical training. De Quincey, again, owed something to the same source, who has well described himself as holding on to the old world with one hand, and with the other to the new.

The truth is that in a chain of continuity stretching from Homer and Herodotus to Wordsworth and Carlyle (to keep living writers out of the argument) it is inevitable that there must be some weak links: and as the universal acceptance of the necessity for a classical education diminishes, as the hurry and struggle of life leave less leisure for any real education at all, as the number of writers swells, so will those weak links inevitably grow weaker, and their number increase. The statement that all English literature can be truly appreciated, and its significance understood, only by students of the literatures of Greece and Rome, is too broad. It cannot, we think, be maintained. But it is beyond all question true of a very con-

[1] The fact of a work containing allusions to classical subjects—the thoughts, the actions, or the art of classical times—or even an occasional quotation or paraphrase from some ancient writer, is not, of course, in itself enough to give that work the classical stamp. There are many such allusions in Carlyle's writings, very many in Mr. Ruskin's—writings surely framed on no antique model our eyes have ever seen.

siderable part of our English literature, and of a very important part: while even of that part which does not directly hold of them, or even has nothing in common with them, it seems to us equally true, that a knowledge of the Classics must in many cases materially enhance both the pleasure with which we read it and the value it has for us. What, as the Reviewer says, when insisting on the value to be gained by comparing even our native Shakespeare with the Greek tragedians, what can be more interesting or more profitable than to note how the same truths, the same passions, the same sentiments, have found independent utterance in writers divided from each other by the vast gulf of centuries?

Let it, then, be fully granted, that to make a student (in the largest and most comprehensive sense of that much-tormented word) of English literature, such a course of study as that proposed in the 'Quarterly Review' is necessary; and that without such a course of study no man has the right to profess himself competent to instruct others in that literature. There still remains an important point to consider: with what object were these Chairs of English Literature founded in our Universities? That object, we apprehend, is the instruction of the undergraduates. It is said, indeed, that the proportion of undergraduates who attend such lectures is not large; that, in point of fact, the audience is mainly composed of those zealous but mistaken females whose yearnings for a University education are threatening to transform Oxford and Cambridge into a sort of glorified girls' schools. "It would be uncandid," Sir Francis Doyle has lately told us in his Reminiscences, "if I did not admit that I often addressed myself to bonnets and frocks rather than caps and gowns; more than once, indeed, I might almost have supposed myself Poetry Professor to Girton instead of at Oxford." But, however this may be, it is obvious that the business of the tutorial staff of our Universities must primarily lie with those for whose instruction those venerable and stately halls of learning were reared.

It will hardly be disputed that a taste for their own literature is not universal among young Englishmen. Perhaps a taste for any literature is not universal. But by the time they have reached the Universities the Classics have come to be regarded almost as an indispensable portion of their young existences, suffered perhaps in the majority of cases not gladly, but still accepted as inevitable. And possibly in more cases than are commonly supposed custom has bred a sort of regard. Men who make no pretensions to scholarship, and whose lives, when they have gone out into the great world, have left them no leisure, even were the inclination there, for books, are often found to entertain a dim, perhaps, but not unkindly memory of the Greek and Latin lessons of their youth. We suspect that for one man who could be called well read in his own literature it would be easy to find a hundred with a tolerable smattering of at least the best known writings of antiquity. But boys as a rule will not learn what they are not taught; and with the large majority of them instruction in their own literature has probably been, to say the least, a little overlooked. There will always, of course, be exceptions to the rule; but those exceptions will be generally formed more by nature than training. Even of those who of their own will turn occasionally to English literature, the most part go rarely beyond the literature of their own epoch. Scott and Macaulay, Thackeray and Dickens, mark, we suspect, in most cases the limit of these literary researches into the backward of time. With the large proportion of boys (and it is unnecessary to assume for that proportion any phenomenal idleness or want of parts) the more serious side of their own literature is probably represented by such books as Holden's 'Foliorum Silvula' and ex-

tracts, more or less elegant, prepared for recital on Speech-day—a form of instruction hardly, perhaps, calculated to stimulate minds not ravenous of knowledge. The result is that every year the Universities are recruited by young men who for their age may be called very fair Greek and Latin scholars, but yet as regards their own literature are in a state which it would hardly be libellous to call profoundly ignorant.

There is surely, then, a question whether such a course of instruction as that propounded in the 'Quarterly Review' might not be found too severe for these young, untrained ideas. Instead of teaching them how to shoot, might it not (to somewhat change the metaphor) have a tendency to make them shy of the gun? It is, of course, right and reasonable that he whose mission in life it is to teach others should himself know, to use a familiar phrase, the best that has been thought and said on the subject of his teaching. A man whose business it is to teach English literature, (and we do not mean by this a man who imparts in his leisure hours such information as those hours have enabled him to pick up) would no doubt very inadequately discharge his business unless he were equipped by such a course of training as that above set forth. And we may go farther and allow that, in the event of such a School as that foreshadowed by the Reviewer being established, it would be right to expect aspirants to Honours in that School to have prepared themselves in a similar way. Whether such a School is a possible thing, whether even, in all the circumstances and conditions of the case, it is a wholly desirable thing, is a different matter. At present it is the fact that no such School does exist. It is also a fact, that has perhaps been a little lost sight of in the dust of this controversy, that the whole question of teaching English literature is at present, as one may say, in the air at both Universities. At any rate it is on its trial; and it is as yet too early even to guess at the probable results of the movement in that direction either at Oxford or Cambridge. But we fancy we can see the horns of a possible dilemma already shaping themselves in the misty future. Is this desired School of English Literature to be an alternative for the present Classical School? If so, how is the necessary classical training to be provided? To count the number of boys who in any given year will bring it up with them from their public schools would hardly lay much strain on a tapster's arithmetic. The training indispensable for the examinations previous to the final examination will hardly provide it in either the necessary quality or quantity. If it be made possible to take a degree in English literature, the general nature of undergraduates must have undergone a surprising change indeed, if large numbers of them do not avail themselves of the chance of escaping from the study of literatures concealed in tongues more or less unknown to the study of a literature touched with the comparative charm that belongs to a familiar dialect. Are such students likely to voluntarily double their studies? For that is practically what it will come to: they must study Greek and Latin in order to take a degree in English. The Reviewer, we presume, will hardly contend that it will be sufficient for the teacher to know what he is talking about. It will surely avail little that he shall be able to dilate, though never so wisely, on the debt of Johnson to Quintilian or of Wordsworth to Plato, to hearers who have never read a line of Plato or Quintilian. The unknown has, we all know, its own charm; but its value as an educational instrument is not large. And if this English School is to be merely facultative; merely, that is to say, a School through which an undergraduate may pass in addition to the Classical School,—just as now he may pass, or might in days not long distant pass, through the additional Schools of Mathematics, or History, or Science

how many students is it likely to win? If it be obligatory; if the undergraduate must pass it in addition to his Classical School, then surely the term of a University course will have to be very materially lengthened—lengthened, we imagine, to a term that few, save those who propose to devote their lives to the study of literature, could afford to give to it. But, after all, we are ourselves at present no more than in the air on this subject. If the School ever be established, no doubt all these possible contingencies will have been foreseen, and will be provided for.

To keep, then, to our original contention: remembering to how very few of those who are likely during their University course to be persuaded to the study of their own literature (and the remark is equally good if the study be obligatory), that study can be more hereafter than the pleasure and refreshment of their leisure hours, there does seem to us a possible source of danger in this insistence on a too vigorous and exhausting course of instruction. Few, we say, are they to whom these early studies can be the preparation for the business of their lives: yet many it may be surely possible to inoculate with a love of their literature, with some power of understanding it, some capacity for judging it. It is not quite with our literature as with the literatures of Greece and Rome. Their value is twofold: there is the value of the mental training gained by the study of the languages; and there is the value of the infinite intellectual treasures which the acquisition of these languages will reveal. Yet some have doubted—men least of all minded to disparage the importance of a knowledge of the Classics, whose own classical training, if not very profound or accurate, has yet been of inestimable service to them—some, we say, have doubted whether the system commonly adopted to impart this knowledge to young people be the best of all possible systems. They have doubted whether the laborious and intricate process that may make one boy in time a scholar, may not render disgusting what might under happier conditions have become a source of at least much intellectual pleasure to hundreds. The young men of our Universities are of course no longer as school-boys. But, having regard to the neglect of their own literature, in comparison with the ancient literatures, which has almost certainly characterised the lessons of their school time, when, in their University career, they are brought to the study of the former, they may perhaps without offence be considered as standing somewhat on the footing of boys for the first time driven up to the outworks of the great citadels of Greece and Rome. And just as the latter are too often repelled at the outset by a dry and pedantic method of teaching, so may it possibly be with the former. There is so much to learn, so little time to learn it in; the attention of young people, even when they have assumed the style and garb of men, is so easily distracted, their inclination to learn so easily crushed, their powers of learning so easily exhausted. Let the general principles of the Reviewer's theory be cordially granted: probably no one will deny that it is a shameful thing for young people to be allowed to pass through the critical years of their education in ignorance of the qualities and importance of their own literature; despite the quantities of nonsense that late years have let loose, very few of those competent to judge will, we believe, deny the great value of a classical training; if not absolutely essential to every state of life, there is surely none in which an intelligent man will not find himself the happier for that training, and his powers of usefulness bettered by it. But, excellent as this theory is, it will be found, we suspect, like so many other theories, necessary to closely regulate and bound it before it can be brought to any practical issue. And more than this: waiving the practical side of the question, we strongly doubt whether,

from the point of view we have wished to consider (which must, as we think, be considered), it is even desirable to press it to the last letter of its law. Granted that it be impossible to elucidate the significance of the work of Milton and Gray without any reference to the ancient literatures to which they both owed so much: it would be not only possible, but we venture to think it might be even desirable to elucidate the significance of Shakespeare's work (so far as our intelligences are capable of such a feat!) without any reference to the treatises of Aristotle.

There is, before concluding, one other point on which we wish shortly to dwell. Among the many contributions which have been made to this discussion within the last few weeks was one, printed in an evening paper, from Mr. William Morris. There are not many people whom one would more gladly hear on matters of literature than the author of 'The Life and Death of Jason': would, indeed, that he were more often heard! He took the view that the Universities had best let the matter alone. Those disasters, as he called them, the Slade Professorships of Art, ought to show them the inutility of establishing Chairs whose occupiers would be obliged "to deal vaguely with great subjects." Philology, he said, can be taught; but English literature cannot. Neither would he admit any analogy between the proposed study of English literature at the Universities and the accepted study of the Classics; the study of the latter implies the study of the language and history of civilised antiquity; they are not taught, at any rate not criticised, as literature. To this it might be answered that the pity of it, as many think, lies in the very fact that the Classics are not taught more as literature than they are; and also, that the real study of English literature would necessarily in a great measure include, as would the real study of any literature, the study of its language and its history.

But the capital point of Mr. Morris's letter lies in this paragraph.

> "What *is* intended seems to me a Chair of *Criticism;* and against the establishment of such a Chair I protest emphatically. For the result would be merely vague talk about literature, which would teach nothing. Each succeeding professor would strive to outdo his predecessor in 'originality' on subjects whereon nothing original remains to be said. Hyper-refinement and paradox would be the order of the day, and the younger students would be confused by the literary polemics which would be sure to flourish round such a Chair."

In these sentences Mr. Morris strikes his finger directly not on the possible weak place only, but, in one case at any rate, on the weak place that actually is. Its blunders apart, the unfortunate book that has been recently issued from the Cambridge Press, if it be really a fair specimen of the style and substance of the lectures delivered in the hall of Trinity College, may be said to contain the very quintessence of the form in which English literature should not be presented to young people—or, for the matter of that, to anybody. Simplicity and straightforwardness have been named as the cardinal virtues of the best poetry; they might, we think, be named as the cardinal virtues of all good literature. It is, at any rate, certain that whoever undertakes to instruct young minds in literature (one might say, indeed, on any subject) cannot be too simple or too straightforward. Yet if it be possible to name any two qualities which are in this unlucky book pre-eminently conspicuous by their absence, those are the two we should select. But, indeed, the danger which Mr. Morris foresees as inevitably threatening the establishment of any Chair of English Literature in our Universities, is precisely that which has been more than once commented on in this magazine. The hyper-refinement, the paradox, the continual striving after originality—what are they all but the characteristics of an Alexandrian Age? And what they lead to has now received so significant an illustration, that we may

surely hope to see in the future, on the part of those responsible for the education of the young ideas, a determination to save them at least from the confusion and the errors inseparable from such a system of teaching.

We could wish to find space to consider one or two other points in Mr. Morris's letter; but it is not now possible to do more than call attention to them. His recommendation of enlargening the present sphere of the Professor of Poetry's duties has been, indeed, already urged by Sir Francis Doyle, who speaks with the authority of one who has held that Chair.[1] It certainly seems an anomaly to divide the study of English poetry from the study of English literature, though Mr. Matthew Arnold has shown how much a Professor of Poetry can do to remove the landmarks of a jealous conventionality. Most interesting also would it be to consider what Mr. Morris means when he says that English literature cannot be taught. If he means (as we take him to mean) that the profit and completeness of its study must mainly rest with the student; that the period of our life, commonly called the period of our education, can only be a preparation for that study; and that the most our teachers can do is to indicate and inspire,—then we are most cordially with him. And the acceptance of this view will form the strongest argument against pressing any such theory of instruction as that propounded in the 'Quarterly Review' to a too rigorous and universal system of practice.

[1] "The holder of this professorship, I think, ought to fill a more important part than he does in University life. He should have a much larger salary, do a great deal more work, and exercise jurisdiction over wider provinces of criticism and thought. In point of fact, as I have always thought, he should reside in Oxford, devote his whole time to his business, and be professor, not of poetry alone, but of literature in general."—'Reminiscences and Opinions,' ch. xix.

NANCY DEDMAN.

"It was an ugly bit of travelling, I can tell you, over Hinde Head in my young days; as lonesome a place as any in the country round. And it weren't for nothing as they gived the place to the Devil neither;—there's the Devil's Jumps over to Frensham, and his Punchbowl at your feet; and over to the Downs you sees his very marks! his claws as where he grabbled as he fell. And the deeds done round about were his own and no mistake.

"I'm thinking now of a tale as is not so known as it should be. That stone before ye tells of the poor sailor chap as was murdered here, for his money no doubt—coming from Portsmouth he were; but no stone nor no book, so far as I know, has spoke for Nancy Dedman.

"Hers was a death indeed. I can't speak to the partiklars, for I had it as it were handed down through ninety years and more; but I won't tell you a lie if I can help it; and for all I haven't it chapter and verse, it's wonderful lifesome, too.

"The Dedmans lived, when they was to home, in a bit of a place in the Combe there. You might pass within a yard of it and not see it, so grandfather said. They was of a smuggling crew. There was a chain of them smugglers, from Portsmouth all the way, and a wild set they was. They had the country on their side though; and the coastguardses was thought no better of than they deserved. There was two brothers, Dick and Joe Dedman, and their father; and Nancy was the one girl. She was a beauty by all accounts—very wild too, and as rare a one at smuggling as any of them; and she would ride bareback on any horse, and be out all night and all day; and many's the time when she's kept the coastguardses at bay, and done many a bit of business as wanted a woman's wit and a man's strength.

"She must have been still a lass when there was news of a rare lot of spirits and baccy (it was the war time), and the word was passed along the line from Portsmouth to Hinde Head, and beyond too, in course. And the King's men got wind on it, and they made ready for a fray—they thought as how they would break the neck of this smuggling business; more fools they! as if poor men was to be put down and denied their rights so easy! Well, it seems as they'd planned to put so many at each of the smuggling posts, all ready—and they said they would settle all, and easy too, excepting the Dedman lot, on account of Dick Dedman; he was a wonderful power of a man! They'd had a warrant agin him ever so long, but never could lay hand on him, nor find out where he put up. So one of the King's men, (a sharp young fellow, whose father were a farmer but lately come over to this side of Godalming,) he took the job. And he dropped down one day on Nancy Dedman in the Combe, and made out as he were a sailor on his way to Lunnon; and he asked for a bite and a drink. And she looked him up and down, and her decidement were that he meant no harm, so she asked him in and gave it he. And he talked from one to t'other of foreign parts and the wars; and Nancy, she were terrible took up with it all; and he had, they said, a way with him, and he were an honest young chap, too, but for his trade. Well, without so much as her finding out, she gets to tell he that she is alone till the night, till the old man come, and that he and the lads was away; Joe to Guildford and Dick to the mill over by Haslemere;

he was but lately come back and keeping quiet; giving his work, and every one was on his side, and would not betray he to any of the King's men—she, who was that sharp they called her 'Hawk-eyed Nance,' she were drawed on and on—and he wound up with more of his tales, and went on his way, leaving her a thinking on the Indies, and wishing she might see the sailor again.

"But he, he went back to his mates, and they followed Dick up, and sure enough they nailed him at the mill, and he were warranted and throw'd into jail. Well, the fray come off, and the coastguardses beat the smugglers all along the line, and Joe Dedman was killed in the fray, and the old man swore as he would track the traitor who told on Dick, and take his life for his son Joe; for had Dick been there he would have made one too many for the devils of King's men. Nancy hadn't a thought as how it were she; no, not when at the Haslemere Fairing she met the sailor, who said as how he'd settled down with his father, old Farmer Kemp, to Godalming—which was truth, for he'd giv'd up the coastguardsing.

"One way and another they was always meeting, and young Kemp he lost his heart to she, and they say as he told his father as he must have Nancy Dedman or he would be off to the war. The old farmer shook'd his head, but he could never give his son any denial, and when once he brought Nancy to see the old man, he said he were bound to confess that Nancy had the ways of a lady, for all she were so brown, and was of the Dedman lot. It made a deal of talk, but old Dedman, he took no heed, till one day—it were soon after Dick come home; I never heard who gotten him out, but it were soon after. Well, one day Nancy spoke up that she was going to get married and to young Farmer Kemp. There *was* a kick-up! the old man and Dick had set their minds to give Nancy to one of their crew to Portsmouth; to keep her in the trade, and to keep theirselves fair with the head crew there. And the whole crew was mad after Nancy Dedman. Nancy stood to it that she'd marry young Kemp; and they gave her a time of it! a reg'lar persecution as ever you find in Fox's Martyrs, short of the stake we'll say. But Nancy were none of they kittle sort; she stood to her say—and one day when they was out of the house but not far off, for they never left she alone—Jim Kemp crawled in from among the bracken (she'd advertised he of the danger) and tells her as his father was just dead, and he must have an end of this, and will she fix the day? He said as how he'd come and take her away by force if need be, he and some of his old mates; and as she was puzzling how he could get a lot of sailors all of a sudden (you see she know'd nought of the coast guards business), Dick looked in at the door! and his face was the devil's own as it flashed to he that there stood the man as had nailed him in the mill and had him to prison. And Nancy saw him; and Jim saw him, and turned milk-white; Dick's look was enough to curdle your very blood. 'Traitor! Nance!' said he; 'so you were a carrying on and we never know'd it! and it was *you* as told on your own flesh and blood, and your father's curse and mine too——' 'Hold there,' cried young Jim, hitting Dick on the mouth to stop his curses (they was afraid of curses then) 'hold there! She never knew'—and he poured it all out as how it happened, and as how he was always thinking on Nancy, and so giv'd up the coastguardsing, part on her account and part on his father's. But afore he had ended Dick were gone, and Nancy was all on a heap with nought to say—but her look cut up young Jim and no mistake. I won't say but that he deserved it—for he'd been double with her—through love on her no doubt, but it's allays best to be straight, and so he felt too late; and that had he spoke truth when he told his love he could but ha' lost her once, and now

he had lost her twice; and the losing on her respect were worse nor the losing she.

"She were a wonderful power of a woman for all as was in her, and she'd had little love except from Joe, and he were dead. So she said to Jim she forgave him, but it were all to an end between they: she'd love he all the days, but she couldn't wed her brother's murderer. That were all.

"Well, the next on it was that when they found as she'd given he up, they believed she had nought to say to it, and was kind to her agin: as kind as they ever was, and that warn't much; but she was unaisy, and knew them too well to think as they 'ud let Jim Kemp be. Whyever Dick hadn't killed him there and then she could not tell. But one night she were to bed, and she heard some un come in to the room next; her room were but a lean-to, and they slept in the big room. And she heard a deal of whispering, and then they took to drinking and their voices gets louder, and she hears Kemp's name, and 'the night after next' named, and 'back from Weyhill Fair,' and 'a-nigh his gate,' and 'ten on us,' and 'the rest will be there to-morrow, we four and they six, that's ten.' And then they gets noisier, and Dick, who always kept his head, hushed some one on 'em up, and turned him out into the shed, and all was still. Nancy knew now what was brewing! But how to get at Jim? how to advertise he? He would be off to Weyhill long afore she could get to he, and she couldn't get out without going through the room with Dick in it, or through the window into the shed with the stranger there. Not that they was strangers, for she know'd their voices; they was of the Portsmouth crew.

"What should she do? how should she save her lover? for he was her lover, and she know'd it. She know'd that though she could never wed with he, she could never love another. Mayhap there was som'at strange in her manners, for all she made as though she was cheerful like, or may be it were from his own knowing what was coming; anyhow Dick looked sharply after Nance all next day, and the day after too. It were a hot, dry summer, and the days were long, and there was a full moon that night, and no doubt that was the more convenient; not but what the Dedmans could make their way blindfold anywhere over the country round, and all their crew.

"Dick went off somewhere to seven, and said, careless like, as Nancy had best not wait, for he and the old man had business away, and would not be back till very late mayhap, mayhap earlier. Nance waited till he was gone, then she took her flint and steel and fastened the door, and went to the shed and took the nag (they had only left the old mare); she didna' wait to bridle she, but off she went as fast as the wind for Holder Hill, over to the sou'-west from here. And she rode and rode and went up the hill, up to the Beacon Point, and there was the bonfire all laid ready,[1] as dry as tinder, and she struck and struck and the third time she got a flame, and soon the beacon was blazing and no mistake; and she rode and she rode toward Blackdown, until the poor beast could go no longer, so she got off and let her go. And Nance walked and walked, until all on a sudden the light sprung up on Blackdown, and she knew as sure as if she saw him that her trap had taken, that Jim had seen the fire on Holder, and instead of going home had turned off to light up Blackdown.

"It was the war time, you see, and he were keen for the cause, and was the first once before to help light up the signal. And she hurried on and came up to he, and he turned round and cried, 'Why, Nancy, love! is it you? There's been some victory, you may depend!' And she, she were out of breath and could scarce speak; but

[1] Signalling was done with beacon fires at night, and with semaphores by day.

she knew as sure as fate her brother and his crew would come after their prey. You see they had worked so long together, these Dedmans, one seemed to guess the other's thoughts like; and she knew as when the time went by, and Jim did not come home, and they saw the light on Holder Hill and sudden the light on Blackdown, they would guess as how it were Nancy; or may be only think Jim was there instead of coming home. However it be, she felt they would follow up there, so she cried, 'Fly, Jim! fly! as quick as you can, down that way. No! not home! Be off, be off! away as far as you can go. Take your horse and go! They're after ye to murder ye, and *I* lit the fire on Holder to turn you from going home. They be waiting for you, and now may be they'll be following you up here. Give me your coat and hat, Jim—see, I've none. I'm cold. And go, Jim—go; I can't go with you, Jim. Good-bye, lad! Oh, lad, I love you, lad!' And the stupid, thick-headed fellow as he was, he took off his long riding-coat and his slouch hat and puts them on her, and takes her in his arms, and she gives him one kiss and sends him off. He steals down as quiet as a mouse, untethers his nag, and off he goes London way. And Nance? She stood with her arms folded, her face to the fire and her back to the path, so as her figure is seen up against the flames in an uncertain kind of way. She was as tall as young Kemp; and she waited there to gain time for he—a decoy, we'll say. She were half-dazed with what she'd gone through, and a strange sort of awaiting feeling as kep' her very still. At last she hears them coming, and she never stirs. And Dick, from behind, without waiting a minute, or taking so much as a step for'arder, fires straight at her back and she falls forward, and he fires again, and then they walked away, satisfied it were Jim Kemp, for they seed the coat and they never thought of Nancy.

"Well, morning came, and as they went back and found the house empty they thought she'd given them the slip, and they laughed as how they had served her right; they little knew *how* they had served her. They wasn't long a-laughing; the fires had made a bestirment, and there they'd found Nancy Dedman—dead, shot twice through the back. And when they brought her in, the old man fell down in a fit, but Dick he said nought, only when they said, 'Had Jim Kemp done this foul deed?' for his papers was in his pockets, Dick said, 'How should he know? He had allays told Nance to have nought to do with that devil Kemp.'

"There was an inquiry, but nought came of it. Old Dedman had another fit and died, and Dick went over the seas, they said. Farmer Kemp, young Jim as was, never come back to settle. He sold up, and nobody would have know'd a word about it only he come once, when he was getting in years, to look at Nancy's grave to Haslemere.

"He told all as he know'd to the sexton, Mr. Keeling; and years after, Dick came as a stranger, and asked for the grave of one Nancy Dedman, as he had a fancy to see. Though he was an old grey man much beshaken, and with nought about he to speak of murder, Mr. Keeling, as was always one with two pair of eyes, determined on seeing justice done, and he tracks the man to the inn, and brings the parson, who was magistrate into the bargain. But the parson found a broken-down old man, and he would not make any bestir; it were too long ago, he said. And afore Dick Dedman died he and the parson were the best of friends, and from Dick parson had it all. After Dick died, he telled Mr. Keeling, who fitted in his part, and so it was told and told again, and the tale was well known when I was a boy, though nobody speaks of it now."

THE BRITISH SCHOOL AT ATHENS.

To those who still believe in the importance of a classical education, it is an encouraging sign that as the area of the study of Greek is lessening year by year in England, its intensity is as steadily increasing. Step by step even the most strenuous upholders of the old system are being driven back by the force of public opinion, which says (rightly or wrongly we need not here discuss) that a knowledge of Greek is not necessary; and by the cry of parents who say that they will not have their sons taught, in these times of stress, what they consider to be at best an elegant accomplishment. At the same time we see in our universities and in our public schools a growing tendency to place classical study upon a wider and a sounder basis. It is felt that it is no longer enough to instil into the youthful mind the mysteries of the verb in *μι*, or the subtle and manifold meanings of *μεν* and *δε*; but that through the gate of an accurate knowledge of a perfectly constructed language, the student should be continually invited to look beyond into the country which produced and at the men who used that language; to realise the part they played in the history of the world; to understand the high and noble ideas which inspired not merely their literature but their art, and in a sense the homeliest details of their daily life. Twenty, nay even ten years ago, a boy might pass, and pass with credit, through Eton and Oxford, through Harrow and Cambridge, and yet be ignorant of the very elements of Greek art. The mere names of Phidias and Praxiteles might conceivably be known to him, but he could certainly not place them in the history of their art, and would probably have seen neither cast nor photograph of their works. Still less would he hear of the art of the architect, the potter, the vase-painter, or the maker of coins. Now, happily, we have passed into a different era. The niceties of language are no less studied than of yore. Comparative philology, the study of dialects, the careful examination of the style and vocabulary of individual authors, have indeed, in this very department of Greek study, introduced a far more fruitful and scientific method. But it is recognised that there are other departments which are no less important, although they had been so long neglected. The group of subjects comprised under the general term "archæology" are now beginning to receive their due share of attention, not only at Oxford and Cambridge, but in our leading public schools.

At Cambridge there has been established a Readership, and at Oxford a Professorship of Classical Archæology. At Cambridge has been formed an admirable museum of casts of the typical monuments of ancient sculpture, together with a reference-library of works bearing upon every branch of ancient art. At Cambridge, also, the old Classical Tripos has been subdivided so as to enable students, after qualifying in the preliminaries of scholarship, to devote themselves to special branches of classical study, archæology among them. At Oxford the subject is receiving scarcely less attention, although it is not yet definitely recognised in the Schools.

The leading classical teachers there are fully alive to the importance of archæology, and a collection of casts is in course of formation. In the same connexion, it is only fair to mention recent publications of the two University Presses: Prof. Michaelis's invaluable account of the private collections of ancient marbles in Great Britain, Professor Gardner's 'Types of Greek Coins,' Dr. Waldstein's 'Essays on the Art of Phidias,' and Mr. Roberts's forthcoming hand-book of Greek Inscriptions, on the part of Cambridge; Mr. Hicks's 'Manual of Greek Historical Inscriptions,' and Mr. Head's forthcoming 'Manual of Greek Numismatics,' on the part of Oxford.

The idea of establishing a school for the study of Greek archæology in the very centre of Greek civilisation is due to the French, whose school at Athens was founded just forty years ago. The German Institute there was established, as a branch of the much earlier Institute at Rome, in 1876. Six years later the scholars of the United States, defying the limitations of time and space, also founded a home of learning in a land whose ancient inhabitants had no conception of the New World. The vision of an English school at Athens upon the same lines, had been present to the minds and familiar in the mouths of many scholars, and others interested in Greek studies, for some years, and had found occasional expression in the magazines and elsewhere. But its fulfilment seemed far enough off, when an article published by Professor Jebb, in the 'Fortnightly Review' for May, 1883, unexpectedly brought the question to the front. Mr. Escott, then editor of the Review, warmly interested himself in the matter, and found means to bring it before the Prince of Wales. A meeting was shortly afterwards held at Marlborough House, and a strong committee formed to carry the scheme into execution. Considering the difficulties which attend all such undertakings, and especially when the object in view does not readily appeal to the millionaire or the man in the street, this committee made good progress in the three years they held office. They did not, as they wished, raise a capital sum of twenty thousand pounds; perhaps few of them ever thought this possible. But considerably over four thousand pounds have been raised. A valuable site upon Mount Lycabettus was generously given by the Greek government, and on this site, at a cost of rather more than three thousand pounds, a good house has been built for the Director and a library. An income of four hundred pounds a year has been promised by corporate bodies and by individuals for three years, a period which will allow of the experiment being put to a fair test. An excellent Director for the first year has been secured in Mr. F. C. Penrose, than whom no available Englishman is better qualified to start such an enterprise upon the right lines. The provisional committee has now been dissolved, and a permanent managing committee has been appointed with full powers.

But it is time to inquire what this school is intended to do. The question will be best answered, in the first instance, by a statement of the objects of the school as defined in the regulations which have just been drawn up by the managing committee. They are these:

I.—The first aim of the School shall be to promote the study of Greek archæology in all its departments. Among these shall be (i.) the study of Greek art and architecture in their remains of every period; (ii.) the study of inscriptions; (iii.) the exploration of ancient sites; (iv.) the tracing of ancient roads and routes of traffic.

II.—Besides being a School of Archæology it shall be also, in the most comprehensive sense, a School of Classical Studies. Every period of the Greek language and literature, from the earliest age to the present day, shall be considered as coming within the province of the School.

III.—The School shall also be a centre at which information can be obtained and books consulted by British travellers in Greece.

IV.—For these purposes a Library shall be formed and maintained of archæological and other suitable books, including maps, plans, and photographs.

This programme will be felt to be at once explicit and comprehensive. The enthusiasts who founded the French School at Athens are said to have founded it in the first instance for the purpose of studying the Greek Classics under the beautiful sky of their own land. However this may be, it is certain that the blossom of sentiment has borne the fruit of solid work. Many an historical problem, many an obscure point in the religious and political and social development of the Greeks, many an interesting question in the history of art, of industry, or of commerce, has received illumination, if not solution, from the patient investigations of the successive directors and students of the French and German Institutes at Athens. It is enough to mention the excavations at Delos and Olympia, and the researches of Messieurs Dumont, Köhler, and Foucart. They have shown the way, and it is now for English scholars to follow in their footsteps, and emulate their achievements. But even apart from such problems, scores of which still invite the labours of generations of students, the advantage to the classical teacher of personal familiarity with Greek scenes and monuments can scarcely be exaggerated. Emphatic testimony on this point was recently borne by the head-masters of Eton and Harrow. Dr. Warre, at the recent meeting of subscribers to the British School, spoke of the advantage to be derived in teaching from the accurate delineation and description of the works of ancient art and manufacture. Dr. Fearon went so far as to say that he would like to see a personal knowledge of the countries about which he was to teach insisted upon as a preliminary qualification for every classical lecturer, or master in a public school. On the same side we may quote the still more emphatic testimony of Professor Goodwin, the first Director of the American School at Athens. In the report issued after his year of office Professor Goodwin said, in speaking of those who were to carry on the classical teaching of schools and universities :

"I am conscious of no better preparation for enthusiastic work, after they have obtained the book-learning commonly deemed necessary for their profession, than to spend eight months in the study of Greece herself, in viewing her temples and learning the secrets of their architecture, and in studying geography and history at once by exploring her battlefields, her lines of communication through her mountain passes, and the sites of her famous cities. So you can study history in riding over the plains of Bœotia, and visiting in quick succession Orchomenos, Chæronea, Leuctra, Platæa, and Thebes. So you can study history in making the circuit of the plain of Mantinea, and in forcing your way through the rocky passes which lead to the beautiful valley of Sparta. Before you get to Sparta you will see why none of these rough stones were needed to build walls for the city ; and before you leave the valley you will understand better the discipline of Lycurgus, with its iron money and its black broth, and the hardihood of Leonidas and the men of Thermopylæ."

"I believe," adds the Professor in words which will be echoed by most people who have thought seriously about the subject, and especially by all who have spent even a short time in Athens,

"I believe, that any scholar who should take in these object-lessons, with the host of others which follow them, in a rapid journey through Greece, and then make a study of the monuments of Athens herself, and of the topography of Athens and Attica, would never regret the year devoted to the pleasant work ; and I believe, further, that any school or college which might hereafter employ him as its teacher of Greek would have made the best possible investment if it had paid his expenses while he was doing it. And, apart from all the purely antiquarian interest which every stone in Athens awakens in the scholar, I am sure that no one can dwell in daily sight of the dark rock

of the Acropolis, crowned with the stately Parthenon, meeting his eyes at every turn in the crowded streets of modern Athens, as it met the eyes of the ancient Athenians, and become familiar with the calm beauty and dignity of this favourite home of Athena, without feeling that merely to live under its shadow is in itself an education."

The final sentence strikes once more the chord of sentiment which thrilled the founders of the French school. And true it is that sentiment is no small factor in such an enterprise. But surely it is a noble sentiment, springing from a recognition of the high services rendered by the Greeks to the cause of humanity, and leading moreover to a practical result in the enlargement of the bounds of knowledge. What Mr. Burn has said in the preface to his 'Rome and the Campagna,' applies with at least equal force to the case of Greece. "The importance of archæological and topographical research continually increases with the progress of criticism, and the more mistrustful modern science renders us with regard to the primitive traditions recited by Roman historians, the more indispensable becomes the appeal to actually existing monuments and sites." If the truth of these words be admitted—and few, we imagine, would now venture to question them—it follows that the establishment of what may be called a biological station for the study of the history of the Greek nation, in the very centre of its activity, is an object which has a direct significance for, and deserves the support of, all concerned in the higher education of the country.

Enough has perhaps now been said to show that the objects of this school are definite and worthy of encouragement. It remains to speak of the conditions of its management, and of the admission and work of its students. The managing committee consists of three trustees, of a treasurer[1] and secretary, of five members elected annually by the subscribers, and of members nominated, one by each corporate body which undertakes to subscribe at least fifty pounds a year towards the maintenance of the school. In this committee is vested the government of the school, including the power of appointing the Director. The Director's chief duties, as defined in the regulations drawn up by the committee are (1) to guide and assist the studies of students of the school, (2) to deliver at least six free public lectures at Athens during the season, (3) to report to the committee, at the end of each season, on the studies pursued by himself and by each student; and on any other matter affecting the interests of the school. To prevent misapprehension we should add that although Mr. Penrose's other engagements do not permit of his acting as Director for more than one year, it is not intended that future Directors shall hold office for less than three years. The system of yearly Directors, adopted from force of circumstances in the case of the American school, has been proved to be at least as unsatisfactory in practice as any one could have anticipated. It takes at least a year for even a trained archæologist to qualify himself to perform efficiently all the varied duties of such a post. The students fall into three classes: (1) holders of travelling fellowships, studentships, or scholarships at any university of the United Kingdom or of the British Colonies, (2) travelling students sent out by the Royal Academy, Royal Institute of British Architects, or other similar bodies, (3) other persons who shall satisfy the managing committee that they are duly qualified to be admitted to the privileges of the school. Intending students are required to apply to the secretary,[2] and no student will be enrolled who does not intend to reside at least three months in Greek lands. When attached to the school a student will be ex-

[1] Mr. Walter Leaf, Old Change, London.

[2] At present, Mr. George Macmillan, 29, Bedford Street, Covent Garden, London.

pected to pursue some definite course of study or research in a department of Hellenic studies, and to write in each season a report upon his work. Such reports will be submitted to the Director, and may afterwards at discretion be published under the sanction of the managing committee. Students will have a right to use the library of the school, and to attend all lectures given in connection with the school, free of charge. At present no arrangements are possible for their boarding and lodging, but it is hoped later on that means may be found to accommodate at least some of them at a fixed rate. Not the least important part of the work of such a school, as has been abundantly shown in the case of the French and German schools, would be that of the exploration or excavation of ancient sites. This object will be kept steadily in view by the governors of the British school, and if possible a special fund will be established for application to such purposes.

This brings us to the financial aspect of the undertaking. It was clearly pointed out in the recent report of the executive committee that although an income of four hundred pounds secured for three years seemed to justify the appointment of a Director and the opening of the school, yet this income is of a precarious nature, and is not enough to insure the efficiency of the school. The University of Oxford and the Hellenic Society have each granted the sum of one hundred pounds a year for three years, and there is a reasonable prospect of these grants being renewed. The remaining two hundred pounds a year is made up of individual subscriptions, and rather more than half of it has been guaranteed by a single donor, who conceals his generosity under the veil of anonymity. The thousand pounds of capital which remain after the building of the house at Athens, will be absorbed in the preliminary expenses of furnishing it, and purchasing the nucleus of a library. It will be seen at once that this is not a very satisfactory state of things. Not more than two-thirds of the present income can be reckoned upon at the end of the first three years. A competent Director can hardly be found for a less salary than four hundred pounds a year, even with the house to live in. The library, if it is to serve its purpose, must be kept up by the annual purchase of new books, and archæological books are necessarily expensive. The wear and tear of the house and furniture, the printing of reports, and other incidental expenses must be provided for. A fund for travelling and exploration is most desirable, if not indispensable. Taking all this into account, it seems obvious that whether by donations, or by annual subscriptions, an endowment of at least five hundred pounds a year beyond the present resources of the school must be raised if its work is to be efficient and fruitful. To establish such an institution, and then to starve it by an inadequate endowment would be a national disgrace in face of the achievements of the French and German schools. These are supported, and liberally supported, by their respective governments. In England and in America such institutions depend for their support upon private enterprise and liberality. The Americans, who opened their school in a hired house, are now building one of their own on a site (also presented to them by the Greek government) adjoining that of the British school. They too have had some difficulty in raising all the funds that are needed, but the scholars who are in charge of the undertaking are hopeful of ultimate success. All who feel that England ought to be at least on a level with her neighbours in the pursuit of every liberal study are bound to see to it that the British school, inaugurated under such favourable auspices, shall not stand out in contrast to her rivals as a conspicuous

failure on financial grounds alone. If funds do not fail, we may count upon a constant supply of able and zealous workers. Time was when English scholars were foremost in the work of exploration and research in Greek lands. The splendid work both of discovery and of publication performed by the Society of Dilettanti, which still flourishes among us, has done lasting honour to the name of English scholarship and munificence. It was two Englishmen, Stuart and Revett, who first published anything worthy to be called a complete account of the monuments of ancient Athens. The topographical writings of Colonel Leake are of still undisputed authority. It should surely not be said that the country which has produced such men, and others like them happily still with us, is less zealous than of old in a field which it was among the first to cultivate.

KEEPSAKES.

Each lover has a keepsake
  For the memory of his love;
One has a note or a ribbon,
  And one a curl or a glove.

But I am rich in keepsakes;
  Three notes I treasure apart;
There are two, accepting my presents,
  And one, declining my heart.

MY GHOST.

I.

Perhaps I shall do well if I admit at once that my ghost belonged to this world. He was not, if I must speak strictly, supernatural, though surely not wholly natural. Even now, when I begin to think of him, my head begins to swim. I had better say merely that he was the man who wrote my books. I think that this paper is a sort of confession; or rather let me say that it is a warning to young persons of literary taste. I will hold up my ghost as a sort of scarecrow to young persons of literary taste. They should know how easy it is to slip into a shirt, which shall cling and consume blood, bones, and the effects of a virtuous education; how playfully one may insert a fox within the coat, and be forced to smile with the Spartan boy while the animal is gnawing one's waistcoat. But I do not wish to speak ill of my ghost. I dare say that it is I who was to blame, and certainly he was not a bit like a fox. Poor fellow! He is a real ghost now—or I suppose so. I must not speculate about him, for he has still this fatal power of confusing me. I will tell my story as plainly as I can.

I was born in a wealthy and smoky town, and my parents were prosperous but not dishonest. I did not care at all for hardware, in which my father had a lively and steadily increasing interest; but I derived from my mother a very deep veneration for literary persons. My mother was herself an author; and one of my earliest recollections is of her little book, which stood on a shelf above my bed in company with the works of Shakespeare and Tennyson. This was the beginning of my library. All the books on the little shelf were bound alike and very neatly, and the name of my dear mother's volume was 'Desultory Conversations with Aunt Maria.'

I was an only child, and my mother and I were inseparable. We thought together; we read together; she saw grow up in me her own tender reverence for her brother and sister writers, the knights and dames of the goose-quill. Her invincible fears kept me from school; her glowing hopes sent me to London a law-student by profession, a lover of letters by nature and education.

I was not happy in London. I was lonely. I did not like statutes nor precedents; even leading cases left me cold. On the other hand I found no pleasure in comic operas nor in surveying life from the open jaws of the Burlington Arcade. I comforted myself by the thought, which has been dear to many young men, that I was apart from my fellows. In the bottom of my heart was a hope, faint as the last star at dawn, that I had some spark or atom of genius. Why else was I unlike the other young men? I went to the same tailor and wore the same collars. I encouraged my lonely musings and my lonely expeditions. I spent a long summer's day in peeping through a crack in a poet's palings, but I only saw the poet's gardener. I dogged the steps of an eminent man of letters, that I might hear him speak; and at last I heard him speak with conviction, with enthusiasm, and his subject was black coffee.

I was thrown back upon myself. I walked alone and thought; I sat for hours in my rooms; I began to write. At last, with wonder I beheld my work, and knew that I had written a novel. It filled me with a pleasurable

alarm. I scarcely dared to look at it; I spoke of it to nobody, not even to my mother. Such was I, and such was my life, when I ran into the arms of my ghost.

There had been a boy in our town —a boy with whom after a very short acquaintance I had been allowed to play no more. He was a vehement player at marbles, with a powerful thumb; and they said, when they told me that I must not play with him any more, that he was a story-teller. My present belief is that he was a child of a too vivid imagination—but I must not begin to speculate about him, or I shall be confused. I must tell my plain tale. The boy had vanished early from our town; it seemed to my young mind as if he had vanished from respectability. Our town always had a very high character for respectability. I had not seen the boy again until I ran into his arms in the Strand. I was walking and meditating, when round the corner came somebody and dashed himself against me. I knew him in a moment by his eyes. His eyes were always remarkable; but now they were amazing. It was a hungry face. The cheeks, if cheeks there were, were hungry, the mouth was hungry, and on the pointed chin a youthful hungry beard; but above all the eyes looked at me with such an appetite, that the familiar street seemed to fall from me and I was alone on a coral island, a succulent missionary at the native dinner-hour. I shut my eyes that I might master my emotion, and blindly there in the crowded street I swayed between too paths. Should I know him or should I not know him? Before I had made up my mind, I felt my elbows seized by sinewy hands and my name was in my ears. It was a moment full of fate for me. "Will you dine with me?" were my first words. It seemed as if any other speech would have been a mockery. "Won't I?" cried Rupert wolfishly. I have sometimes thought that the name Rupert prevented my ghost from being accepted as a respectable boy in our town. Our town is impatient of anything fantastic; and names really are (and that is a part of my defence) very important. I have a high authority for the importance of names in fiction—but I must not wander from my story. My flesh crept at the tone of Rupert's voice, when it said "Won't I?" I made haste to lead him to a little restaurant, which was near at hand. I remember that I found a certain comfort in the thought that the cooking at the little foreign restaurant was good, and the appearance of a somewhat dilapidated visitor not unprecedented.

To this point, if I had felt pity for Rupert, I had felt no sympathy. Sympathy grew as I beheld him eat and drink. He, who had been to me a bore, changed in my eyes, as I beheld him through the delicate veil of good living, to the friend of my childhood lost no more. He was the prodigal returned; I pressed on him another plate of veal. Never have I seen meat and drink work so quick a transformation. My lean and hungry guest (not yet my ghost) seemed to expand in the odorous air. The remarkable eyes glowed; cheeks appeared—flushed cheeks; the features gained roundness and dignity. To pour good claret into my friend was to pour it into a frail rare vessel; I saw it colour him as it flowed in. I sat entranced, and when the eating was done and the drinking had come down to sips, my guest began to talk, and I was entranced indeed. All his talk was of books and of the writers of books. Literature poured out of him, now in a fine flood of quotation, now in sentence after sentence, each drop the essence of a volume. It was the talk of which I had dreamed of old in our family free-stone mansion; here was the society which my dear mother had imagined for me—a society eloquent of anecdotes of literary persons. All his talk was of literature, and not a word of black coffee, though I ordered it with a sinking of the

heart and we sipped it (it was excellent) with satisfaction.

I could not part yet from the friend of my boyhood. I pressed him to spend the rest of the evening in my rooms, and he readily consented. I remember that, when we went into the street, the full moon was shining high above the yellow lights of the street, and the wet pavement (for it had been raining) was splendid with silver and gold. Rupert burst forth into enraptured invocation of the fair goddess Diana, and only stopped when a policeman tapped him on the shoulder and somewhat urgently bade him to keep moving. I stepped nearer to my friend's side, and the policeman, murmuring something, turned away. I think that his change of manner was a tribute to the respectability of my appearance.

Rupert whistled shrilly as I led him into my sitting-room. "A Sybarite, by the living jingo!" he cried. He dropped himself with a sigh into my arm-chair, which was destined to hold him so often. "What reason is there under the sun," he said again, "why you should have a throne like this and I an inverted barrel?" It eased his soul to talk about himself. He spoke again frankly and eloquently. The lamp was shaded, and with my face unseen I sat at ease and listened to his talk. It appeared that he had been working furiously for a small publisher—"doing contemptible cinder-sifting," he said, "for the wages of an organist's monkey." I felt very sorry for him. "Had I but leisure," he cried, "but a few days of generous diet and time to breathe, I would sling out a romance which should enchant the world. My life is a romance, but I have had no time to step outside of it and study it. Time, the common property of all mankind, is denied to me."

I had pricked my ears at the word "romance." My heart beat till I could scarcely speak. But I spoke. Before I knew what I was going to say, I had told this man that I had written a novel. What a spell he had cast on me already! I, who had scarcely confessed to myself that I was an author—I who had kept my work secret from my own mother, herself an author (author of 'Desultory Conversations with Aunt Maria') —I had confided to a person apparently disreputable that I had written my novel. My novel! Yes, it existed then, a solid pile of manuscript written very neatly by my own hand. I sigh as I recall to my mind's eye my very own novel. Rupert heard of it with delight. He took it for granted that he was to read it; he stretched out his hand for it, and I rose with trembling limbs to fetch it. My knees shook, but in my heart was a wild joy, for I thought that retreat was impossible. I was in for it now; I pulled the papers from their secret place; I laid them in Rupert's long fingers with a strange laugh.

But I could not bear to sit and see my novel read. I almost pushed my friend away. I begged him to carry it (I called it "it") home with him, and to bring it back at his leisure. A difficulty appeared. At the moment Rupert had no home; he was changing his lodgings. It appeared that the change involved some expense, and Rupert had no money. That he might have a roof and food and leisure while he read my work, I lent him two sovereigns. I would have given him more, if he had asked it. I would have given him a royal sum, could I have insured him good digestion and a tranquil mind during his hours of study, and for myself kind criticism and a happy verdict. My faith in the judgment of Rupert was strong as its growth was rapid. If only Rupert should approve!

II.

I WILL not dwell upon my anxious days and broken nights, nor on the subtle arguments with which I prepared myself for disappointment. Only a week had passed when Rupert re-

appeared in my rooms. I put out my hand without a word, and he, speechless as I, pressed into it a roll of papers. With a laugh, which I intended as a proof of ease, I spread the papers flat; the writing was not mine. I could not speak; I looked at him for an explanation. "I have done a lot of it," he said. "Of what?" "Of your novel." "But this isn't mine,"—my voice broke as I said it. "Yes, yes," he cried sharply; "it's yours; of course it's yours. I've copied it, touched it, struck a note or two, put in a high light, a nothing here and a nothing there; it's splendid; let me tell you that it's amazing."

My heart swelled; but yet I doubted. I think that I must have had a presentiment. I turned over the papers and recognised with a thrill the names of my characters. Yes, the names were mine.

Rupert drew the work from my hand, and began to read. With nervous energy he pushed me into my arm-chair as he began to read my novel to me. It sounded splendid in my ears; I tried to believe it mine. Here and there came a familiar name, which I had given; I clung to those names; if the names were mine, why not the characters? My excitement grew with the reader's. They were my people, whose words I heard, whose actions passed before me. Rupert arrived at a thrilling scene of love; he pranced about, declaiming; I murmured applause. Yes, yes, my novel was underneath it somewhere; in a sense it was certainly mine; there could not be a house without a foundation. I was intoxicated with a strange triumph; I could not speak my thanks, but I wrung his hand and lent him two more sovereigns.

A week later he brought me another instalment, and each week more till the whole was done. While he worked with a sort of fury, I acquired a habit (I see it clearly now) of believing that he was copying for me. How quickly it was finished! It was clear that no man could have composed a novel in so short a time. It was finished; and Rupert stood opposite to me—glaring. He brought his lean fist down on the last page with a bang, and glared at me across my table. "There's your novel," he said with unnecessary emphasis. Conscience leapt up in me; it had been under a soothing influence for weeks past, but now it leapt up in a moment. "It's not mine," I said—"at least I don't see how it can be mine—at least, it must be more yours than mine."

He shook a long lean finger at me. "Tell me," he said, transfixing me with his eye, "tell me how it could have been without you. Tell me that!"

These were just the words (I see it now) to push my conscience down again. I don't know if he referred to the occasional sovereigns, or to my original work; but he seemed to give a firm soft push to my conscience, and it lay flat. Without me the book would not have been. I was the author—the fundamental author—the author below the author. "And now for a publisher!" cried my ghost. "Your publisher!" I suggested with dry lips. "My publisher," he said, "is a thing of shreds and patches, of paste and scissors. He wouldn't look at it; and, if he looked, he would not understand it. He has even corrected the hack-work which I have done for him, and, by the living jingo, he might correct this! And this, let me tell you, is no slight thing. It is a masterpiece. It is the book of the year—of the century. It is amazing. It must be introduced, and to an enraptured public, by a leading firm."

I found myself blushing and glowing at his praises of the book. Such is the force of self-persuasion. I humbly submit that a man of average reasoning-power may persuade himself in this subtle age of ours not only that black is white, but even that to call it black is the grossest hypocrisy.

"And will you take it to a publisher?" I asked

"In this coat?" asked he with scorn.

It was a bad coat, but no worse than his boots. Some of the ink, which he had borrowed for the making of my book, had been better employed in blacking the seams of that coat. "You must take your novel," he said; "you don't know the value of your appearance; you do look so d——d respectable."

I started at the epithet and he laughed wildly. "They will think you've come with a pocket full of sermons," he said, "or of Meditations of a Canon for private circulation only—a sort of revolving mitrailleuse, by jingo!" He laughed enormously at his idea, but I confess that I could not join in the mirth.

"Put on your very best coat," he said, "pick out a very smart hansom and go down yourself to Messrs. ——." He named a firm of publishers, of whom my dear mother had often spoken to me with bated breath. I wondered if I should be brave enough to go. "I may mention your name?" I asked.

"No!" he cried out, "no! It's your novel. Will you understand that but for you it never could have been written, and but for you it never could be published? If it isn't yours, whose on this dædal earth is it?"

I could not answer; he had a magnetic influence over me; I could only jump. He took leave of me, but almost instantly returned to say that he had been much struck by the appearance of my servant, and to suggest that I should send him with the manuscript instead of going myself. I accepted this idea with avidity.

Early in the next morning I sent my servant to the publishers with a very courteous note and the novel. I did not exactly say that the novel was mine; at least, I did not say that I had written it; I merely said that I sent it by my servant. It was not long before I received an answer. I read with a gasp for air that they were inclined to publish the novel. They raised the question of terms, which filled me with new doubts. I telegraphed for Rupert, who amazed me by his views of remuneration. Was it possible that I had written a book which was worth—or rather was it possible that I was in some sort the author, or underlying author, of a book which was worth so much to any mortal? Rupert laughed at my doubts. He said that the publishers would think nothing of it, if I did not ask a thumping price. "That will fetch 'em," said he; "that, and your sending your manuscript by a servant. Hire a brougham when you go to see them!" Thus wildly and cynically, I am sure, did Rupert speak. He had found his own deplorable coat and bearing so weak in procuring attention, that he took pleasure, I think, in exaggerating the importance of an appearance of respectability.

The publishers showed no alarm at Rupert's terms, which I submitted with a quaking heart. They paid a nice sum down, and promised a share of future gains. I was adamant about the money. I would not touch a penny of it. I forced it all upon Rupert, and my conscience felt better.

"Society with the big S, mysterious fluid expanding and contracting, rejecting the occasional gnat and swallowing daily camels with a smile—Society, bored and boring, rigid and shapeless, exclusive and vulgar, petty and illimitable, a puddle and a sea—" The above is to be found in one of my novels, and I may say without self-praise that it seems to me rather neat. "This enormous machine," as it is further described, "for the manufacture of amusements, turning out, with creaks and groans innumerable, a million monotonous articles for one comparative novelty"—this Society remained indifferent to my existence, even after the conspicuous success of my first novel. It appears that the fashionable world does not trouble itself so much about literary persons as works of fiction had led me to expect. I was a literary lion, or a cub

at least, but I was not petted by Countesses. A Countess did ask me to an evening party, but it was thought likely that her son would contest our prosperous respectable provincial town.

I was more relieved than vexed by the indifference of fashionable ladies. I am naturally shy, and I found much greater pleasure in the more quiet drawing-rooms of the literary people, for whose companionship my mother and I had sighed in the well-built free-stone mansion of my childhood's days. Men and women of letters were very kind to me and spoke of my book and gave me tea and made me feel that I was somebody, an artist, one of themselves. I purred and forgot my doubts. How wonderful is the acquisition of habits! In a few weeks I was purring at the praises of my book with a mind at ease. I bowed, smiled and murmured, as if no Rupert were in the world. I murmured, because I did not know what to say. People asked me questions about my people's motives, but I found that they were content with a sort of slow smile by way of answer. They would smile too, and nod, as if they understood. I fear that they did not find me brilliant, and thought that I kept my best things for my book. I thought so too. I acquired the habit of thinking that I had a great many ideas, which as a literary man I must not waste. I think that my new friends admired my reserve; and then I listened so well. I was a capital listener; I felt myself popular; I was happy. My novel was a real success. I mean that more money began to come in and that really new editions appeared. I was firm as a rock about the money; I sent every penny to Rupert.

III.

Among the new friends whom my reputation had brought me were a charming American couple, who like myself were little lions of the day. They were smart in both the English and the American sense of the word. Mr. Waldron had an ancestor who had come over to New England in the Mayflower, and it was by no means certain that he had not another who had come over to Old England with the Conqueror. Mrs. Waldron was, I think, very pretty, and had studied Greek and written a novel of Society. They were charming people, and, though I was never sure that they did not laugh at me in their quiet way, I liked them very much.

One lovely summer evening I was sitting in the Park with the Waldrons. He was moralising on the sumptuous and impressive show, the multitude of well-groomed men and horses, the gloss and the stateliness; and she was looking here and there with the liveliest interest, and asking more questions than I could answer. Impatient perhaps at my tardiness she passed from asking questions to fanciful comments on crowds. The creeping mass of strangers on foot, the pacing crowd of strangers on horseback, aroused in her, she declared with pretty emphasis, an extraordinary feeling of loneliness. "I feel," she said, "as if I might raise my eyes and see sliding through the throng my double—my *doppelganger* as the Germans say—my other self. Who is that? There! That man looking this way? Why, he is perfectly splendid."

I started at the change in her voice; I looked where she looked—and lo! high on a highly-polished horse, splendid in the slanting rays of the sun, shining like a millionaire, there was my ghost. Under the brim of his glossy hat were waves of that hair which I had known as inelegant rat-tails; the trousers on his thin legs were cut and strapped like an emperor's; in his boots, to my excited fancy, all London seemed to be reflected. His remarkable eyes were fixed on mine, and I could not but obey their summons. I leaped to the rails. "Ha!" he whispered, bending from the saddle till his face was close to mine; "do they take me for some-

body—an Arab chief, a Romeo *redivivus*, a prince of Como?" "Can you afford——?" I stammered. "I have my hour," he answered, and touching his proud beast with his heel he cantered up the Row. He was magnificent in my eyes; but I heard a young man at my elbow ask his friend, "What the deuce is it?" And his friend answered, "Hairdresser, or assassin." There must have been some flaw in Rupert's splendour which I could not detect.

From that day I began to be haunted by my ghost. At night I started from my dreams and heard the cantering of his horse as it died away in the distance. I fancied that he would canter over my grave. I dreamed of a vampire-Rupert stealing to my bedside, and I felt my blood drawn from me and my body grow wrinkled and limp. Was not this to be haunted—to be haunted by a ghost indeed? It was a positive relief when one evening, after long walking of the streets in hopes of fatigue, I found my ghost apparently lifeless in my bed. The young doctor, who attended him, told me that Rupert had been flung on his head by the polished horse; that he had given my address and fainted. I nursed him with entire devotion. I had grown so fanciful and superstitious that I felt as if I were nursing myself. My life seemed one with his. I called in the first of doctors, that he might consult with the young practitioner who had picked up my friend in the street. I hired the best of nurses and did more than half of her work. I spared no expense. As Rupert grew stronger both doctors, with many compliments on my devotion—compliments which I did not deserve—recommended change of air and scene and life. A friend of my father wished to let his yacht, and I took it for a month with the power to take it for a longer time. With jealous care I conveyed the sick man on board, and we sailed for the Mediterranean.

Rupert got well while I was sick. I bore my discomfort with patience, but at times I could not resist the horrible suspicion that he was growing strong at my expense. I felt him drain my life-blood. It was a baseless fancy, and I only mention it to show how weak and nervous he had made me. He haunted me more weirdly than before. Listless I lay on deck, above the summer sea, and thought only of him. It was so strange. This man was my ghost. I had always supposed that an artist's ghost brought him wealth. It might be wrong to start a ghost, but I had always thought that it was lucrative. My ghost would land me in the workhouse. The cost of his illness had been very great; the cost of this yacht, in which we vaguely drifted month after month, was almost ruinous. There was something irrational, or so it seemed to my poor sick brain, in keeping a ghost and being ruined by him.

One morning I raised my eyes and saw Rupert standing over me. He was thin but vigorous. "Ha, ha!" he cried, "let us go home and work. I am ravenous for work, and my fingers grow crooked for the pen. Take me over the wine-dark sea to your patent writing-table." I agreed, but without enthusiasm. I bent all my energies to making strong a single purpose; I determined that this time Rupert should write his own book and not mine. One day I summoned all my strength and said that the new book should be his. "Are you mad?" he cried at me; "you have made a name and you won't use it? You have the ball at your foot and you won't kick it—the repeating-rifle in your hand and you won't make a dozen hits where you have made one?" It ended by my yielding. We talked over the new novel; I made my notes, and he thrust them into his breast. I feel sure now that those notes were a mere sedative for my conscience, that I had no expectation of his using them. He did not use them.

There was some relief in being rid of that consuming yacht. I dared not write to my father for more money, and so I had to borrow the means of paying for my rolling holiday at sea. I was glad to stand erect on the firm earth once more; but Rupert was still with me. He set to work at the novel with such zeal that I began to be fearful of a relapse. He was much annoyed by my anxiety; he declared that I fluttered about him like a hen with one chick; he roared with laughter at the notion that he was my ugly duckling (certainly he was the better sailor), and that I should find that I had hatched a swan. Swans sing before they die, I thought; I was in a twitter lest he should die in my rooms. It would have been in a certain sense a relief, but I should never have got over it—never. He called me "Mammy Dorking," and seemed to think it amazingly funny. I never thought that humour was Rupert's strong point.

I secretly sent for the doctor, who declared that we both suffered from cerebral excitement, that we worked too hard. It was like the voice of conscience; I could not persuade myself that I was working at all. The doctor insisted on my taking Rupert for a daily walk. I was now so nervous that the idea of being seen with him in the street made me shake all over. I could not persuade myself that my acquaintances would not see the strange bond between us—that he would not be recognised as my ghost, my double-goer, or at least something weird and impossible. Rupert was impossible, but a fact.

I used to convey Rupert in a cab to Battersea Park, and there walk him about for an hour. He enjoyed it immensely, but I suffered every minute. And so the winter dragged itself sluggishly away and spring came again, bringing a fresh store of activity to my ghost and fresh tremors to me; and one fair morning in Battersea Park we came face to face with my American friends, the Waldrons. They were doing the London parks. What will not enterprising Americans do? I know that I turned pale; but the charming Mrs. Waldron greeted me with delight. "And do introduce your friend," she said with an emphatic whisper. I murmured something, and in another minute we were all walking together—Waldron and I, and before us the charming lady with my ghost; and my ghost was talking brilliantly, paradoxically, with easy compliment. To my disordered fancy it seemed that my ghost was flirting with my friend's wife.

"But he is perfectly charming," she said to me with intense conviction and scarcely dropping her voice; "he is a real character; I am sure you are studying him, and will put him in your book."

I hope that I did not cry out. Rupert in my book! The idea was too monstrous. My book was in him—somewhere.

IV.

And the book came out in due time. It was advertised well, and with a peculiar thrill I saw my name on the backs of many newspapers. I found little pleasure in it, but Rupert was delighted. The former novel was now nothing in his eyes, but this was amazing. This was what a novel ought to be! I confess that I was no judge of its merits. I studied it diligently, but I could not understand its characters; I wondered why they did this or that—or why they did not do this or that, for they did not do much. Rupert said that it was a novel rather of character than of incident. It bothered me a good deal, for friendly people would ask me questions about the heroine's motives, and I never could understand the heroine; indeed I don't know now whether she was the villain or the good woman of the book. I was obliged to do a great deal of smiling wisely and nodding my head, and I was very tired of it. I was sick of novel-writing—or rather, I was sick of being a novelist.

Most of the critics expressed disappointment. They said that I had not fulfilled the promise of my first work; and, rather oddly I think, I felt a good deal of chagrin at not fulfilling the promise of my first work. They said that the story was less interesting, and that the analysis of character was too subtle. I think that they conveyed to the public the idea that the novel was more meritorious than amusing, and I fear that they checked the sale. My publisher looked solemn. I did not go to see him, but he came to see me. He had paid a good price for the book. He said bluntly that the book was "a d——d sight too clever," and that "girls want something lively to read, with a captain in it"—that "they don't care a hang for all this picking to pieces of a fellow's state of mind when he's handing the muffins." He was very blunt, and I was a good deal discouraged. I could not bear to think that he might lose money by my work. That possibility made my conscience uneasy. Indeed my conscience was absurdly sensitive; for it kept on telling me on the one side that the book was not mine, and on the other that the publisher would lose money by my book. Now the book was either mine or not mine—but if I go into this I shall get confused again. Yet my conscience would not be quieted; and so I looked about anxiously for Rupert. I knew that Rupert was subtle ("supersubtle" one of the reviewers said—or rather he said that I was supersubtle—but it comes to the same thing, I suppose). I wanted to find Rupert, and to put the case of conscience to him. I even thought of suggesting a small return of money, if the book were not selling well.

I looked about for my friend, but I could not find him. My ghost had vanished into thin air. Of course I had transferred to him every penny of my good publisher's money, and I had not seen him since the transfer. I asked again and again at his humble lodgings, and could get no news of him. I haunted the Park, scanning the proud horsemen nervously, but this time the money had not gone into horseflesh and patent leather boots. It had taken a wider flight; it had made itself wings and carried my Rupert, like Icarus, over the sea. Soon it swept me, too, off my feet, and plunged me into fresh expenditure.

I was sitting solitary in my room and thinking of my ghost, when a telegram came from Paris. It came from my friend Waldron, who had accompanied his charming wife to the dress-makers and theatres of that vivacious city. "Come if you can," I read, "we want to consult you about your friend R." The message fell from my hand, and I sat staring. Good heavens! Was it possible? I will not confess the wild fancies which possessed me. If the money which I had earned, or, to put it more accurately, which had been paid to me, had enabled Rupert to follow my charming friend abroad! But I will not further indicate the awful doubts which beset me. I must have been in a very distressing state to have harboured such a notion for a moment. I blush as I write. It is enough to say that I started for Paris that evening. On the next morning I hurried with beating heart to the apartment of my friends. Both Mr. and Mrs. Waldron rose to meet me; even the man showed a certain eagerness; I gazed from one to the other with relief, but with anxiety. It was the lady who did most of the talking. The story was soon told. As soon as he had the money in his pocket, Rupert had flown to Paris and renewed his acquaintance with the Waldrons. "I must say that he is *very* fascinating," Mrs. Waldron said, "and Effie succumbed at once." Effie! It appeared that a young cousin of Mrs. Waldron, a New England girl educated in a Parisian convent, very simple of nature and knowing nothing of the world, had come from her cloister-school to stay with her relations. To

her romantic eyes Rupert had arisen like a star, brilliant, persuasive, irresistible. He on his side had fallen suddenly into the abyss of love. Before my good friends had finished their first smiles at this strange mutual attraction, my fiery ghost had swept away their innocent charge. She departed to visit another cousin in Florence. On the same day Rupert had vanished. "They are married," said Mr. Waldron grimly, "fast as churches or embassies can tie the knot."

I was overwhelmed by a feeling of guilt. I sank into a chair with a groan. "It is too late to make a fuss," said Waldron. "What have I done?" cried I wildly. "Nothing," said Waldron rather crossly; "but we want you to do something. We want you to tell us all about him." "But I know nothing about him." "You know nothing about him, and you introduced him to us!" I shuddered; I seemed a criminal in my own eyes. "You know, George," said Mrs. Waldron to her husband, "that I insisted on his being presented to me. Nobody blames you," she added to me: "we only want to know if your friend is the sort of man to marry." "Oh no," said I; "I think not—how could he be? He was not a good boy in our town, and I don't know what he has done since. How could he afford to be married?" "He had piles of money," said Mr. Waldron, grimly. What could I say? It was the price of my second novel on which my ghost had married. My ghost had married! How could he be "the sort of man to marry"? What was he? My head was swimming.

I think that my distress must have touched the hearts of those good people. "I will show you Effie's letter," said she; "it is full of contrition and devotion; she is a dear little thing. I do hope he will be good to her." I read that artless letter with tears smarting in my eyes. It was like the good-bye of a girl who had been borne away by a demon-lover—and it was I who had supplied the demon-lover with the necessary funds. I felt like Mephistopheles in the play. Inaction was impossible. I must see Rupert, reason with him, plead for her. "Give me their address in Florence," I said, with unwonted decision.

I found them in the Boboli Gardens. I climbed a climbing alley dark for all the sunshine with its ilex gloom, where here and there a marble nymph or faun showed faint and fair; I came out on a sunny slope and I saw her among the daisies. It was my first sight of her and my heart stood still. At her feet lay Rupert looking away from her towards the city of flowers. It restored me to myself and to my annoyance to hear him spouting poetry. Could he keep a wife on poetry? I, who had been from infancy a votary of the Muse, felt for a moment a hatred of these jigging or sonorous measures. Could he buy his wife's bonnets with such flimsy notes?

Mrs. Rupert greeted me very kindly, and we all walked together to their lodgings. There, with a charming delicacy, she withdrew, that she might show without words that she would not come between her husband and his friends. Then I attacked Rupert, but I felt that my attack was vain. I had meant to be impressive, but I felt myself like a scolding nurse. He met me with mockery and brisk counter-charge.

"Prosaic animal," he said, "am I never to carp a day *insouciant* but you must come, croak, croak, croak, a bull-frog into my paradise? A fico for your butchers and bakers! We breakfast off the Pitti pictures; we lunch where you found us, marplot, off daisies and sunshine; our supper is the Perseus by moonlight. Take home your copy-book wisdom and your Cook's ticket; for I must have my hour."

He always wanted his hour.

I dined with the Ruperts at an expensive *café*, or rather they dined with me; and I saw my ghost eat ravenously, for all his talk of feeding on sun and moon.

The next morning I found her alone. She was leaning at her window and looking down on to a small *loggia* with a fountain-basin like a shell, a weather-stained statue musing silently, and a few clothes a-drying. She turned to me with her sweet innocent air, her modest welcome. My heart was full of fear for her and the heavy sense of responsibility. But for me she would be free. But for me she had not been in the shadow of this fear. To be the wife of my ghost! This round-eyed lovely child was my ghost's wife. Before I went away I wrote my London address for her special keeping, and I implored her to let me know at once if at any time she wanted help of any sort. I could see that she was surprised by my vehemence.

V.

I RETURNED to London and began to practise a rigid economy. My foreign travel had prevented me from regaining that sound financial position which had been impaired by my ghost's illness and subsequent yachting-voyage. I felt the want of money and I was possessed by the presentiment of coming calls upon my purse. I was determined to be in a position to help when that poor girl should be in want of money. I would help her at any cost.

No long time passed before I was visited by Rupert. They had left Florence; they could not live for ever even on Florentine air. Rupert looked hungry again, and peremptorily demanded work. "Work for yourself this time!" I said. "No," he answered, "that is out of the question now." "Why?" I asked. "Good heavens, man," he cried with sudden wrath, "don't you know that I am married?" I nodded, for I could not speak. "And you ask me to sacrifice her to your fantastic scruples!" "No.—oh no," I said feebly. "Can't you understand that as a married man I must neglect no advantage? It would be criminal in me not to use your name. You are my vein, and I must work you out."

I was my ghost's vein! There was no more to be said. He set to work with extraordinary diligence at my third novel. He wrote it in my rooms; he said that he could not write in his lodgings, that his wife was a disturbing element. He was a disturbing element to me. I could not sit still and see him writing at my table, with my pens and my ink—writing the book which ought to have been mine. I was driven to the streets; I wandered like an unquiet spirit, a ghost driven out by a ghost. One day, when I had left him composing with excessive care, I suddenly made up my mind to go and see his wife. She tried hard to be cheerful; but I saw that she was not happy and I felt that I—I who would do anything to help her—had caused her unhappiness. With broken words, with false descriptions of the childhood friendship of my ghost and me, I persuaded her to take some money from me as a loan. She promised with a divine simplicity to keep it from her husband. Her gratitude made me cry, and I had to go away in a hurry.

When my third novel was ready, I had a very disagreeable shock. My publisher would not take it. My pride was wounded. It is an extraordinary fact that I felt pique. It seemed that, after all, I had the vanity of an author: it was mine to know the pains but not the pleasures of authorship. Another publisher accepted the book but on less imposing terms. I had hoped for a good sum down, which would have kept my ghost and his wife for a year; but perhaps it was well that I had no big cheque to hand to Rupert, for he might have been in Japan or Central Africa before I had had time to miss him. Touch him with a cheque and he shot into space, an irresponsible electric force, a spark, a current, a wandering voice. I sometimes felt that he was always at the

other end of a telephone; or I started up in bed with a voice from the Himalayas in my ears, or from the Mountains of the Moon, perhaps. He was on my nerves to an alarming extent.

The critics threw cold water on my third novel, and, when I tried to read it, I could not blame them. I was hurt by their remarks, but I confessed to myself that they were right. I don't believe that they understood it; I am sure that I did not. It seemed strange to me that Rupert, pen in hand, should be so indifferent to movement, to incident. His life was sensational, and his fiction uneventful. On the other hand I have heard that sensational writers, whose works are full of edges of cliff and midnight passages, are, many of them at least, elderly fathers of families who ride in omnibuses for safety, or excellent mothers of families, who abandon with delight the agonising pen for the friendly gossip of the Dorcas meeting. Such are the contradictions of authors, who seem to me to lead a double life, each two persons in one skin. But if Rupert was two, then there were three of us. When I arrived at that thought I was so troubled and confused that I abandoned with terror all speculations on the intricate nature of my ghost.

If the critics looked askance at my novel the public would not look at it from any angle. I was obliged to explain to Rupert that my new novel was likely to produce very little money. He at once attacked me as if it were my fault. I stared at him in amazement. He was full of fiery scorn—scorn of the world and of me. "I had rather," he said, "break stones than write for such a race of dunderheads. Do you expect your people to be labelled 'This is the villain,' 'This is the virtuous hero'? Are your brute ears to be tickled by the same old tune squeaked through the triple pipe of the slow-circulating dropsical library! To display the hidden springs of action, the fine secrets of humanity for such a public! Oh! why was I not born a Frenchman?"

I was dumb and offended. I could not tell why Rupert was not born a Frenchman. I wished that he had been the *revenant* of some member of the French Academy. And yet had he been so, I should not have been his—(I hardly know what to call myself) and I might never have met her, who has exalted my view of womanhood and of the fair possibilities of human life. I have sinned, I suppose; I am sure that I have suffered. I would not have it otherwise.

Perhaps Rupert repented of his invective against me and the sturdy Saxon race. He did not apologise, but he invited me with a fine show of affection to be godfather to his boy. I accepted the charge without levity and with a full sense of the responsibility of my position. She thanked me; I think that she understood my feeling.

Rupert was restless. I think that he missed the touch of the cheque, which would have shot him through the universe. He rebelled against the perversity of critics and readers; he shouted to me from a few feet away that my novel was a masterpiece of fine analysis, and that there were bits of it which Shakespeare could not have written. "Shakespeare," he declared to me one day, bounding from my own arm-chair, "was strong but not *fin*." I would not argue with him, and he went away with a snort and banged the door behind him. Presently he flung himself with ardour into the making of my fourth novel. It was my last; I thank Heaven that it was my last; there will never be another. As he wrote he grew radiant. If the last work had bits which Shakespeare could not have written, of the present work he could not have written a single passage. "It is a marvellous study," he said; "there has been no creation like it since that of the world." "Is it very subtle?" I asked with anxiety. "Subtle!" he cried, "it is subtle, subtle—subtle as the old serpent." I

sighed; I had small hopes of it; I was shocked, too, by his exaggerated talk. He told me that he had been full of the characters of this book while he was writing the last. Perhaps he had got them mixed a little, and that explained the fact that nobody could understand the people in my third novel. I did not say this to him; his explosions made me nervous.

I will not write of anything which happened before the completion of my fourth novel. It was finished, and it journeyed up and down Paternoster Row and found no resting-place. At last, terrified by Rupert's increasing excitement, I secretly conveyed a sum of money to my original publisher and published my book at my own expense. It fell flat. If there be anything which falls flatter than the pancake, it fell flat as that. I cannot bear to linger on that time, nor on that book. I felt that I was a failure, and I read it in the eyes of my acquaintances. They did not speak of my novel. Nobody seemed to be aware that an important work of fiction had appeared. I doubt if anybody ever read it to the end. I did not. It was like a nightmare to me. It seemed to me like a long dissection of a single character, and this single character seemed to contain all the contradictions of our intricate humanity. I would have asked Rupert to explain my novel to me, but I had not the heart. I dreaded his explosions; I feared the effect of this disappointment; I could hold out no hope of money. It had been a grave expense to me.

VI.

It was hard to prophesy about my ghost. I had dreaded explosions of wrath; he came with explosions of laughter. I heard him laughing as he came up stairs, and he was laughing still when he came into my room, dropped into my easy-chair, and held out the first edition of a popular evening paper. I took the paper without interest, and saw a letter signed with my ghost's name. The name of my book was at the top of the letter. How can I write of the contents of that letter? I feel the same cold shudder now, the growing horror with which I stared at the printed page. The letter contained a violent attack upon my novel for impropriety. "What do you mean?" I asked. "I mean to start the sale," he said with triumph. "And my reputation?" I gasped. "Reputation!" he cried out, and dissolved into a torrent of laughter. "It was an inspiration," he said when he could speak; "it came to me like a flash, the peculiar advantage of our partnership. As a writer of fiction I do the books; as a journalist I criticise them. Here is my own name put honestly and frankly, as a Briton's name should be, to my outspoken denunciation of your Frenchy and pernicious novel." "My novel!" I said in my bitterness. A steady and respectable life had ended in my being attacked in a wide-read journal for impropriety. And I had published the improper novel at my own expense, and for the sake of this man who had attacked me!

On the afternoon of the following day a lady, closely veiled, was shown into my room. It was my mother. When I saw her face it was white with horror. She had never expected that her boy, son of the author of the blameless 'Conversations with Aunt Maria,' would be attacked for impropriety. What would our native town say? What were they saying now? Had the local papers yet copied the awful letter of my appalling ghost? Ah me! In that hour, kneeling with my head upon my mother's black silk dress, I felt for the first time the full punishment of my first error. Gaily had I spread the painted wings of authorship to the flattering airs of insincerity! How was I punished now! I was accused of having written an improper novel.

My mother had never liked my

books, though she had been proud of my success and sympathised with my interest in literary society. She had told me from the first that they were not the sort of books which she had looked for from me. I had not looked for them from myself. But at least they had been proper. Before my mother left me to return to the respectable town which was blushing now for me, I had promised her to withdraw my novel from circulation.

Strictly speaking, there was no circulation from which to withdraw my novel. I wrote a letter, short and not without dignity, to the offending evening paper. I entirely denied that my book was improper; I wrote (and this was strictly true) that if there was any impropriety in the book I had failed to understand it. I felt a faint pleasure in the midst of my shame when I penned this piece of literature, which was wholly my own. It was printed in the next day's journal, and there was a reference to it in one of the editorial paragraphs. I have them still, the letter and the paragraph. Then with stern resolution I wrote to my publishers and commanded them to destroy the whole edition; and I sent a brief note to my ghost and told him what I had done. He arrived in a whirlwind of passion. He had written a second letter for the paper in answer to my letter of denial; he had supposed that I was only "keeping up the game." "Keeping up the game" was his expression. He declared that I had ruined him. "You," he cried, "have ruined me—you, who are the godfather of my helpless child!" I will do anything for *him*," I said. "You will kill him," he said with frenzy; "he has been ill since your last visit; you put the evil eye upon him. Yes, by the living jingo, you have the evil eye! That is the secret of all." He stood pointing at me with his long skinny fingers, denouncing, terrific, like an archangel for sublimity. I shrank before him. Then, with a snort of scorn, he turned on his heel and went with long strides from the room, from the house, and from the country.

Had I the evil eye? I was so nervous that I feared lest my casual glance might work a wholesale ruin. I passed the cat upon the stairs and dared not look behind lest I should see her in convulsions. The cream was sour on my breakfast-table; I had looked into the jug. As for Mrs. Rupert and her babe, should I go to them or should I not? My fatal eye, worse than a thousand teethings, might wring my godchild as perhaps it had wrung the cat. I reasoned with myself and went. They might be starving. Days had passed since Rupert had flung himself from my rooms; I feared that he had but little money; I had heard nothing of him—nothing of her.

I went to her with a beating heart. I dared not look at her as I shook her hand; I dared not ask to see the boy. But somehow, when she began to speak in her quiet, grave way, my morbid fancies slipped away from me. I found myself looking at her, and she brought her tiny boy and placed him on my knees. I looked at them with pity. She tried to be brave, but the infantine roundness of her face made its sorrow the more sad to me, and the baby's cheerfulness was more pathetic still. My ghost had vanished. He had not been at home since I had seen him last. Did ever man, since the world began, hang round his neck a ghost like this? I could not doubt that, light as a phantom, he had glided away from his innocent wife and child.

I lent Mrs. Rupert all the money which I could spare. I think that she would not have taken it for herself, but she was in great fear for her child. She told me that she had seen Mrs. Waldron in the street and had not dared to speak to her. I saw the light of hope in that direction, and went in search of the Waldrons. They had but just arrived in London after a long tour in the East, and they met

me, before I could speak upon the subject, with inquiries about their poor young cousin. With shame I told them of my friend's disappearance; and they promised to go to her at once, to comfort her, to take charge of her and of the baby.

This was a great relief to me, for it left me free to hunt my ghost. Whither had he fled? I advertised in the papers; I sought him in all sorts of places; I employed detectives. I learned nothing until, when a month had gone, I received a letter from New York. Here is the letter:

"You know," he wrote, "how the sea sets me up. I stepped ashore a new man. I am a new man in a new world and capable of anything. Here the smoke does not lie sluggish along the horizon, but goes straight up to heaven and is lost there. That's what's the matter with me! Up I go; I can't be held; I am on the boom, as they say here. You never saw such a clean country. Europe is beastly dirty. In this air you need not wash, but yet the houses are full of baths. I go West to-morrow to make a fortune with never a pen in my luggage. I mean to live, and not write about life any more. When I think how I have drudged with inky fingers, I wonder at my patience. I have been a fool for my pains. Now I have the world before me, a new world. I shall buy a pickaxe and an ass and go prospecting for silver. Dreams of silver asleep in the immemorial mountains haunt my moonlit slumbers. I am the Endymion of miners. I shall be content with nothing less than a stirring life and a vast fortune to follow. That is how I will sup ere night come. I wish that you were with me, or would send me a hundred pounds. I would quadruple it for you in no time, and meanwhile it would be of use to me for unconsidered trifles. Send it to me at the Union Bank, Chicago, which will be my first halting-place. To-morrow I begin my triumphant journey to the mountains of the moon. Don't worry about me. Addio!

"Yours ever,
"RUPERT."

I turned the letter over and over. I could not believe that there was no postscript, no mention of his wife and child. "A new man" quotha? Was he a new man with no old ties? Had he clean forgotten, in his clean world, that he had left a wife and son behind him? I was excited as never before. Not all the baths in New York, it seemed to me, could wash some immigrants from the dirty actions which they had left behind them in Europe. I was frightened at the warmth of my anger, but rather pleased with it too. I would not falter nor delay. I wrote to Mrs. Waldron and told her that I was going to pursue Rupert; that I trusted her, as indeed I did trust her, to take care of the helpless mother and son, till I returned with him. I borrowed some money for my necessary expenses, and started on the track of my ghost.

VII.

I FOLLOWED my ghost across the long rolling waves of the Atlantic. I, too, was a new man in a new world, not only renovated by revolutionary internal changes but capable of a stronger purpose than I had ever possessed before. I meant to bring back my ghost, dead or alive.

I did not find it so hard as I had expected to learn something of Rupert. They remembered him at his hotel in New York: he owed a trifle to one of the waiters, and I paid the waiter. They remembered him at the barber's shop: he owed for three days' shaving, and I paid the barber's bill. I was referred to a man powerful in railroads, and he remembered Rupert. He had been struck by my ghost's large and free notions of speculative expenditure; he had found him "very enterprising for an Englishman;" he had given him a free pass to Chicago, had "chalked his hat," he said.

I started for Chicago, and as soon as I had arrived and had washed myself, I went to the bank. They remembered him at the bank. They had been very much impressed by him as a probable capitalist, a man of large ideas, who was going West with his head on, and seeking the best investments for his fortune. A loquacious director spoke to me with enthusiasm of Rupert and congratulated me on my friend. He had asked him to dinner, and assured me that he had

had an enormous success with the most fashionable *belles.* My friend had expected to find money at the bank for him (he had really expected to find that hundred pounds of mine); he had expressed amazement at finding neither cash nor letter; he had been prevailed upon to accept a loan from the loquacious banker as he was in a hurry to go on to Milwaukee. I felt myself obliged to say that I was taking Rupert's money to him, and to repay with thanks the sum which he had borrowed.

To Milwaukee! "What in thunder could he want in Milwaukee?" the good banker asked; and I could not answer. The banker evidently credited Rupert with some deep design, and thought that he must have had private information of a coming local boom, for in Chicago they had a poor opinion of Milwaukee. I was very discreet and kept my opinion to myself; but when I heard that they brewed a great deal of lager beer in Milwaukee I thought that my ghost had gone there to see what it was like.

I went at the best possible speed to Milwaukee. It seemed to be a prosperous but rather quiet city; it was not difficult to explore, for it was symmetrical and rectangular as other new cities of America. I could not help looking on it as rather new, though in Wisconsin they seemed to think it venerable. I went to all the hotels and could hear nothing of Rupert; I visited the banks without success. I began to think (I said nothing of this growing intention) of making inquiries at the prisons. I was disheartened. Had he vanished again?

There is a quiet corner in Milwaukee; the day was the most quiet of the year, the hour the most quiet of the day—it was the hour of the mid-day meal. I was out of heart and had no appetite. I wandered down to the waterside and came upon that quiet corner. There was a little wooden quay at the foot of one of those immensely high barns, which are called grain elevators in that country. This tall gaunt building threw a sharply defined shadow across the little quay; the sun was burning in a cloudless sky; there was complete stillness in the place. There was only one person in sight, and he was a tramp. He had taken off his coat and boots and I saw the big toe of his right foot standing up through his sock. He sat in the shade with his back against the barn and a bottle of the local lager beer beside him. I drew near with my heart in my mouth; he looked up and knew me; he was my ghost.

He moved his boots to the other side of him, and patted the boards of the little quay as if he would invite me to sit beside him in the grateful shade. "I have found you," I said. He nodded and smiled. "Why did you go away like that?" I asked with some emotion. "Like what?" he asked smiling. "I'll be hanged if I didn't go off like a tourist. That's what bored me. Oh, that I had wings"—— "Why did you go?" I broke in angrily. "I couldn't stand my wife's sewing-machine," he said; "it got so on my nerves." "Your wife!" I exclaimed. "Then you have not forgotten that you have a wife?" "Dear little woman!" he said, drawing the cork from his beer-bottle. "She is as nice as any one can be who has no imagination. Have you observed that women as a rule have no imagination?" "D—— women as a rule!" cried I. I mention this to show how much moved I was. I think that it was the first time in my life that I made use of an oath. "Naughty man!" said he, laughing. "Here is her health," he said in a moment, and he held up the bottle before he poured the clear amber liquid down his throat. "Her health!" I said in my bitterness, and could say no more. "I shall make her a sort of queen," he said, "an empress of the golden ears." He put back his hand and rapped the wooden wall behind him. "This land," said he, "can feed the world with corn. I shall go rather deep into corn. There are fortunes in it."

I felt that I could not talk to him any more until I had had time to think. I asked for his address and mentioned that I had a little money for him. Smiling like a millionaire he informed me that he had no address at present, having left his lodgings the day before, after a difference of opinion with their owner. "You will find me here," he said, "any time before night."

I stood regarding him ; I was like a rabbit fascinated by a snake. I turned away with an effort, but I had not reached the limit of the little quay when I turned again that I might look at him once more. There he sat with his head dropped backward against the towering wall, and a listening look in his face.

"This elevator," he said, "is literally groaning under the pressure of stored grain. The owner is waiting for his price. I shall wait for my price. There is no hurry, no hurry." He had a musing smile, as if he heard sweet drowsy music. Was the man mad? He smiled like a capitalist at whose nod prices rise and fall ; he smiled as if he had slept in a bed the night before, and would sleep in the same bed in the night to come, as if his pockets were as full of notes as his mind of fancies. O Rupert! O ghost inexplicable to me then and ever, puzzling as the most intricate heroine of my ill-omened novels, if you care to know that I did not hate you as I ought, let me confess it here. You were impossible ; you had deserted your helpless wife and child ; I loved them, but I could not hate you. Face to face with my ghost, I found again a strange magnetic attraction in him.

I can see him now, as he leaned back laughing in the shade. The lager beer, or the large hopes in which he had indulged himself, had flushed his cheeks with a new colour. Laughing, he rapped once more the wall of the great elevator, against which he leaned : "Come and listen," he said ; "it is groaning with plenty like the festive board of the romancer. Come, sit by me and listen."

I can see his listening face now as I saw it then. His smile was sweet and drowsy ; his eyes were half closed. The beer, the quiet spirit of the time, the siren-murmur of the lapping water were lulling him to sleep. "I will come back," I said curtly, and turned my back upon my ghost with stern decision : I would not look back again, but I heard his lazy laughter as I went away.

I shut myself up in solitude that I might think. What could I do with my ghost? I could not force him to return with me to England. Could I persuade him? I dreaded the fatal power of his golden or his silver dreams. What could I hang before his eyes but the picture of a humble home and whole socks? What were these to him in comparison with lager beer and liberty, and the sure hope of a silver mine or a corner in wheat? Should I paint again for him the joys of literature in London? I confess that they seemed tame in comparison with the riches of Aladdin and the life of adventure. Not the dove-like roaring of divers lions in the drawing-room of the Hon. Mrs. Jessup, nor tea at five o'clock with the literary Lady Lopher, could charm my vagrant ghost from the intoxicating possibilities of Milwaukee. Besides, on this literary theme my tongue could only stammer. Conscience made me a coward there. I had been guilty. This is my confession, and I confess my fault once more.

I could think of but one argument for poor Rupert. I would tell him bluntly that not one dollar nor cent should he get from me till he was at home again. I doubted the efficacy of my plan ; I feared that Rupert would laugh aloud, and pawn his coat and go on westward to his millions. But I could think of no other argument which was likely to affect him at all, and I set out for the quiet corner where I had left him, forming curt firm sentences which I would fire at him as from a revolver.

I had not gone far when I was startled by a loud explosion as of a

bursting powder-mill. I was nervous, excited, and I jumped at the terrific sound. It was followed by a loud crashing and rending. It seemed to tear me too. I stood still shuddering; and then I was aware of hurrying people. Milwaukee had been frighted from her propriety. There was a crowd around me—men and women all hurrying in one direction, and I was carried along on the full flood. What could it be? Panting, I asked the people next to me; they shook their heads; they knew no more than I. Somewhere by the quiet water something had happened. I knew that I was being borne along to that still corner of the labouring world where my ghost was waiting for me. Suddenly I had turned the last corner, and lo, the very place. The arrested crowd grew thicker every moment; a hoarse murmur came from them; it was a wonder to them, and to me a growing horror. There was the grain elevator, the towering ill-built barn, which I had left an hour ago. There it was, but it had been rent from top to bottom. Great boards and beams had fallen; great boards hung all askew high in the air; it was one ruin. There was no need to ask the cause. The great elevator had burst under the pressure of stored wheat. Cargoes of wheat had slid into the water; a sloping hill of wheat had buried the little quay. I knew what had happened, as if I had seen it happen; and like a flash came back to me the declaration of my ghost that he would go pretty deeply into grain.

They dug his body from under the mountain of corn.

I only want to add a very few words. I have entirely abandoned literature; and the care of a woman and her child has become the occupation of my life. I know that I do not deserve this happiness. The punishment of my fault has turned to peace. If on some day this peace should turn to perfect joy—but of this I must not write, I must not even think, yet.

I am fond of the boy too. He is wonderfully quick in body and in mind; he gives me but one anxiety; I hope that he will not have genius. I do not know what genius is; but sometimes, when I am nervous and alone, I see those scenes—Rupert resplendent on his prancing horse, Rupert declaiming in the Boboli Gardens, Rupert reclining against the fateful elevator. I see those scenes as if I saw them with my actual eyes, and with a groan I pray that Rupert's boy may not develop genius.

I never have these dark hours when she is near me. Indeed, they are less common now and less black. But sometimes still I feel the nervous horror creeping to me, as if I saw again that torn and gutted barn and the great pile of wheat upon the little quay; and sometimes I have looked round me strangely wondering if I should see moving towards me in the shadows my ghost's ghost.

JULIAN STURGIS.

MACMILLAN'S MAGAZINE.

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THE LETTERS OF CHARLES LAMB.[1]

THE published letters of distinguished men make, as you are aware, an important branch of English literature. To mention a few only, and those distinctively literary men, how much poorer should we be if we had not inherited the letters of Pope and Swift, of Walpole, Cowper, Gray, and Byron, and, in our own day, of Dickens and Carlyle. The letters of these, and others you will recall, form indeed a limited literature, and for that reason perhaps, like the Sibylline Books, will be ever more and more treasured. For letter-writing (of the kind that survives) began late, and I think we may safely predict will (to use the famous apology made by Charles Lamb at the India House) make up for coming late by going away early. Letters of the kind we have in view—those written to relations, and friends and associates in the writer's work or other of his interests—began to be regularly preserved only about the beginning of last century. There were doubtless interesting and charming letters exchanged between men in the centuries before—indeed we know of many such —but with few exceptions they have perished. The reason is a simple one. In early days, letters were scarce because they were so difficult to send. In these later days (it sounds paradoxical), they are getting rarer just because they are so easy to send. For as there are "books that are no books" (*Biblia a-Biblia*), so there are "letters" (to be counted by the million) that are "no letters," in any sense that literature or art can recognise. In these days of ours, they must be persons of a rare self-command and force of character who habitually write letters that, however well they may serve the purpose for which they were written, the world will not willingly let die.

There are of course many reasons for this—the cheapness of postage and the multiplication of posts among the chief. The singular increase in the number of magazines and reviews clamorous for anything that a writer of repute will send them—which causes that the clever and charming things, which a hundred years ago would have gone into a letter, now become "copy," and go into a printed article or essay —supplies another reason. The increasing wear and tear of life, reducing leisure and making brevity in letter-writing a primary consideration, supplies a third. At the same time it is to be remembered that there have been persons endowed with a peculiar faculty for expressing their best talent and noblest selves in this particular form, and as there have been, so there may be again. Let us hope for the best.

It is an interesting theme, but I must pass it by, to dwell with you upon one notable and charming practiser of the art—the unpremeditated art, to use Shelley's phrase, of familiar

[1] A Lecture delivered at Alderley Edge, November 3rd, 1886.

letter-writing. The letters of Lamb have a great variety of interest for us. Taken together and read in order, they form of themselves an autobiography. Of his childhood and youth; his school-time and his holiday seasons; his family and his home surroundings; and the books that trained and fostered his genius—of all these things the 'Essays of Elia' tell us fully, and his letters complete the story. They begin in the year that he came of age, 1796, and with a few regrettable intervals, not easy to explain, they continue in regular order until within a few days of his death, eight-and-thirty years after. I cannot recall any incident in his life (or Mary's, which is the same thing) that the letters do not deal with. All the joys and sorrows of their "dual loneliness"—all their literary pursuits, with the attendant triumphs or disappointments—will be found chronicled there. There is not one of the many sides of his singularly composite being that does not come in turn to the front. Every mood is reflected, from the deep anguish of family bereavement to the lightest vein of raillery, and even the most rollicking horse-play. For Lamb wrote differently to different persons. This is as it should be. Letters, to be worth anything, should tell us something about the person they are written to. If a writer is in genuine sympathy with his correspondent, the letter inevitably reflects something of the nature of the friend addressed. And then, what a circle of friends and intimates Charles Lamb was privileged to have! Other famous collections of letters in our literature are memorable because of the writer, and derive but little interest from the persons addressed. Take those of the poet Cowper, perhaps the closest parallel in kind with Lamb's, and among the most fascinating and delightful reading in our literature. What do we know or care about young Mr. Unwin, or Mr. Hill, or even about Hayley or the Rev. Mr. Newton? They are really only familiar to us at all because Cowper numbered them among his correspondents. So also, I think most of you know the name of Mason chiefly through Gray's letters, and Sir Horace Mann mainly through Walpole's. But think of the chief names in the roll of Lamb's letter-writing friends—Coleridge, Southey, Wordsworth, Manning, Leigh Hunt, and Hazlitt; not to mention Bernard Barton, Godwin, Barry Cornwall, and Thomas Hood. And, as I have said, Lamb wrote differently to these different friends. Those who know and love his letters from long familiarity can recognise this variety of touch—even when the subjects of the letters are nearly akin—as he gossips with Coleridge or Manning, with Southey or Barton.

I do not know that I can do better than illustrate from the letters themselves some of the rarer and more noticeable faculties of Lamb. And it is remarkable, as I have elsewhere observed, that the intellectual accomplishment which asserts itself earliest is just that which ordinarily it takes years, with their increasing experience and wider reading and study, to mature—I mean the critical faculty. Lamb's earliest letters that have survived begin when he was just of age, and his two chief correspondents for the next three years were young men like himself—one his old schoolfellow, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, three years his senior, and the other, whom he had come to know through Coleridge, and who was associated with Coleridge by so many close ties, Robert Southey. All three were starting on a literary career, full of ambition: two of them with the intention of making it their profession, the other, happily for himself, settling down to that desk in Leadenhall which was to prove (though he knew it not) his best blessing and safeguard for thirty years to come. Apart from the family matters—sad and terrible they were—discussed in these letters, the chief topics dealt with are literary and critical. Coleridge and

Southey forward to their friend their verses, their lyrics and eclogues, for his opinion and suggestions; and he in turn submits to them his sonnets and elegies, plaintive and tender after his model, William Lisle Bowles. Coleridge and Southey, each endowed wth a poetic gift far stronger and richer than Lamb's, yet at once recognise in their companion—no university man like themselves, lowly in his home and traditions, humble in his life's occupation—this rare and precious gift of critical insight. These earliest letters of Lamb show how amply justified was their confidence in his powers. If the art of poetical criticism could be made matter of instruction, I know no better introduction to the study than these scattered criticisms of his, first upon Coleridge and Southey's verse, and afterwards upon Wordsworth's, and generally upon all poetry, ancient and modern, quoted or referred to incidentally in these familiar letters. Lamb was among the first to detect the great powers of Coleridge and Wordsworth before the wit of the 'Anti-Jacobin' and 'English Bards and Scotch Reviewers' had done their utmost to crush those writers, and while the Edinburgh and Quarterly Reviews were yet unborn. This boy of twenty-one was already showing that, together with the keenest eye for the weaker side of these poetical reformers, with a true humorist's enjoyment of what was absurd or puerile in their methods, that enjoyment in no way disturbed his appreciation of their genius. With all his prejudices and petulances (and Lamb had plenty of these) the distinguishing feature of his critical power is its width and its versatility. The deepest of all his literary affections, that for Milton, no more interfered with his intense enjoyment of Pope, than did his delight in Pope delay for an instant his recognising the value of Cowper and Burns and their successors. Lamb is our best and wholesomest example of that rare ability to value and enjoy one great literary school without at the same time disparaging its opposites. And he had that even rarer ability to recognise that the same writer often rises above himself, and often sinks below it. These early letters to Coleridge are full of proofs of this. He laughs as frankly at what was namby-pamby in Coleridge and Wordsworth, as he descants with genuine enthusiasm on the 'Ancient Mariner,' and the 'Lines written above Tintern Abbey.' He anticipates, curiously enough, the 'Anti-Jacobin' in parodying Southey and Coleridge's "dactylics" on the 'Soldier's Wife,' which Coleridge had sent him in a letter in the summer of 1796: "What shall I say," he replies, "to your *dactyls?* They are what you would call good *per se*, but a parody on some of 'em is just now suggesting itself, and you shall have it rough and unlicked; I mark with figures the lines parodied:

"4. Sorely your dactyls do drag along limp-footed.
5. Sad is the measure that hangs a clog round 'em so.
6. Meagre and languid, proclaiming its wretchedness.
1. Weary, unsatisfied, not a little sick of 'em.
11. Cold is my tired heart, I have no charity.
2. Painfully trav'lling thus over the rugged road.
7. O begone, measure, half Latin, half English then.
12. Dismal your dactyls are, God help ye, rhyming ones!"

Many of you will recall how irresistibly these unfortunate "experiments in metre" by poor Southey appealed to the parodying-instinct of his enemies. Canning and Frere both had their fling at them in the 'Anti-Jacobin;' Byron has his allusion in the familiar line,

"God help thee, Southey, and thy readers too:"

but Lamb, you see, had been before them, and yet, because he was an all-round, and not a one-sided critic, he passed for a blind worshipper of the young Jacobins. "Messrs. Lamb and

Lloyd," says Byron in a note to the mention of their names in 'English Bards,' "the most ignoble followers of Southey and Co." How little he knew!

Or again, notice the following curious criticism and prediction concerning a too-well known effusion of Coleridge's. In 1796 Coleridge had published his first little volume of poems. At the end of that year a second edition is in preparation, and its author is consulting Lamb as to what poems are to be retained from the former, and what new ones are to be added. Coleridge was (oddly enough) for omitting the musical and buoyant stanzas imitated from Ossian, called the 'Complaint of Ninathoma,' and beginning,

> "How long will ye round me be swelling,
> O ye blue-tumbling waves of the sea?"

and Lamb earnestly pleads for their being allowed to stand:

> "Let me protest strongly against your rejecting the 'Complaint of Ninathoma,' on page 86. The words, I acknowledge, are Ossian's, but you have added to them the 'music of Caril.' If a vicarious substitute be wanting, sacrifice (and 'twill be a piece of self-denial *too*) the 'Epitaph on an Infant,' of which its author seems so proud, so tenacious. Or if your heart be set on *perpetuating* the four-line wonder, I'll tell you what to do: Sell the copyright of it at once to a country statuary; commence, in this manner—Death's prime poet-laureate; and let your verses be adopted in every village round, instead of those hitherto famous ones,
>
> "'Afflictions sore long time I bore,
> Physicians were in vain.'"

You will not need telling that Lamb referred to the quatrain,

> "Ere sin could blight or sorrow fade
> Death came with timely care,"

to which Coleridge had allotted a whole page of his former edition, and of which he had indeed shown himself "tenacious," for it had already appeared twice before, in the 'Morning Post' and in the 'Watchman.' Coleridge was, perhaps, a little nettled at his friend's frank criticism, for he rejected 'Ninathoma' (though he restored it in later editions) and retained the epitaph. But Lamb's playful prediction was destined to be fulfilled. No country statuary ever secured a monopoly of the lines, but they will be found, as you know, in almost every churchyard in the kingdom.

So far we have only discovered that Lamb possessed that easy and common critical faculty which detects the weaknesses of a writer; but side by side may be found abundant proof that he recognised at once the strength and value of the new poetry, while other critics were only perplexed by its novelty and uncertain what to think. In 1798 Wordsworth and Coleridge published their little joint volume, the 'Lyrical Ballads,' containing among other now familiar and classic poems, the 'Ancient Mariner.' Even Southey, it appears, was offended by Coleridge's masterpiece, and Lamb writes to him, in November of that year, to remonstrate:

> "If you wrote that review in 'Critical Review,' I am sorry you are so sparing of praise to the 'Ancient Mariner'; so far from calling it, as you do, with some wit but more severity, 'A Dutch attempt, &c., &c.,' I call it a right English attempt, and a successful one, to dethrone German sublimity. You have selected a passage fertile in unmeaning miracles, but have passed by fifty passages as miraculous as the miracles they celebrate. I never so deeply felt the pathetic as in that part,
>
> 'A spring of love gushed from my heart,
> And I blessed them unaware.'
>
> It stung me into high pleasure, through sufferings. Lloyd does not like it; his head is too metaphysical, and your taste too correct; at least, I must allege something against you both to excuse my own dotage—
>
> 'So lonely 'twas, that God Himself
> Scarce seemèd there to be.'
>
> But you allow some elaborate beauties—you should have extracted 'em. The 'Ancient Mariner' plays more tricks with the mind than that last poem, which is yet one of the finest written."

"That last poem," here referred to, is no other than the immortal poem of Wordsworth's, which had been placed last in the little joint volume—the 'Lines written above Tintern Abbey.' The world was long in making up its mind on the subject, for the professional reviewers of that day would have nothing to say to it;

but Lamb's judgment has prevailed, that most assuredly among England's finest poems is that which contains the lines,

> "For I have learned
> To look on Nature, not as in the hour
> Of thoughtless youth; but hearing oftentimes
> The still sad music of humanity,
> Nor harsh, nor grating, though of ample power
> To chasten and subdue. And I have felt
> A presence that disturbs me with the joy
> Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime
> Of something far more deeply interfused,
> Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
> And the round ocean, and the living air,
> And the blue sky, and in the mind of man."

But Lamb could do more, as a critic, than see the ridiculous on the one hand, and the sublime on the other. He could judge of details, and he could discriminate. Two years after this letter to Southey Wordsworth brought out a second volume of the 'Lyrical Ballads,' and sent it to Lamb, who writes back:

> "Thanks for your letter and present. I had already borrowed your second volume. What most pleases me are, 'the Song of Lucy' [he means, of course, 'Lucy Grey']; Simon's sickly daughter, in the 'Sexton,' made me cry. Next to these are the description of the continuous echoes in the story of 'Joanna's Laugh,' when the mountains and all the scenery absolutely seem alive; and that fine Shakespearian character of the 'happy man' in the 'Brothers:'
>
> '—— That creeps about the fields
> Following his fancies by the hour, to bring
> Tears down his cheek or solitary smiles
> Into his face, until the setting sun
> Write Fool upon his forehead.'
>
> I will mention one more—the delicate and curious feeling in the wish for the 'Cumberland Beggar' that he may have about him the melody of birds, altho' he hear them not. Here the mind knowingly passes a fiction upon herself, first substituting her own feelings for the Beggar's, and, in the same breath, detecting the fallacy, will not part with the wish. The 'Poet's Epitaph' is disfigured, to my taste, by the common satire upon parsons and lawyers in the beginning, and the coarse epithet of 'pin-point' in the sixth stanza."

I may interrupt Charles Lamb for a moment to tell you that Wordsworth originally wrote the stanza thus,

> "Wrapt closely in thy sensual fleece,
> O turn aside,—and take, I pray,
> That he below may rest in peace,
> Thy pin-point of a soul away."

Whether owing to Lamb's objection here made or not, in subsequent editions Wordsworth altered it to the shape in which all his readers know it,

> "Thy ever-dwindling soul away."

"All the rest," Lamb proceeds, "is eminently good, and your own." I must not quote further from this remarkable letter, except to cite this just and admirable remark, "I am sorry that Coleridge has christened his 'Ancient Mariner' 'A Poet's Reverie'; it is as bad as Bottom the Weaver's declaration that he is not a lion, but only the scenical representation of a lion. What new idea is gained by this title, but one subversive of all credit—which the tale should force upon us—of its truth?" Coleridge himself never delivered a criticism more astute and to the point than this; and this second title, 'A Poet's Reverie,' disappeared from all succeeding editions.

Unquestionably the only sound principle of arranging the letters of such a correspondent as Lamb, is the chronological. For thus, as we read on, we are in fact reading an autobiography, embellished with a thousand anecdotes, confidences, and touches of character and feeling that would never have seen the light in an autobiography written intentionally for publication. But there is an interest also in noting, as I have pointed, out the different veins of thought and style that run through the letters addressed to different friends. The letters to Coleridge have a character of their own; and so with those to Manning, and to Bernard Barton. These three groups of letters are the most remarkable in the collection. To the general reader, Manning and Barton are perhaps best known through their friendship with Lamb, although both, in their widely different ways, were noticeable men. Thomas Manning, indeed, until the publication ten years since of his 'Journals of Travel,' with a short memoir prefixed, was an almost unknown name to this generation except as Charles Lamb's

correspondent, and the letters to him are so full of raillery and the wildest frolics of the imagination that it would be difficult to read Manning aright from them alone. But Manning was a remarkable man. The son of a Norfolk clergyman, with a strong turn for both mathematics and metaphysics, he went up to Caius College, Cambridge, and would have taken the highest mathematical honours but for an invincible objection to degrees, with the oaths and tests then attached to them. He wrote divers mathematical treatises, and continued to reside at Cambridge, though without a degree, and while there became known to Lamb, who was visiting his old companion Charles Lloyd at that University. Lamb made Manning's acquaintance about the year 1800. The mingled simplicity and enthusiasm of the man—his abstruse studies and his eccentricities, the fact that his tastes (mathematical, metaphysical, and Oriental) were all so alien from Lamb's own, had evidently a strange fascination for him from the very first, and a correspondence sprung up which continued for many years. Such a character as Manning's drew out Lamb's finest qualities of humour and sympathy. It was not likeness, but unlikeness in his friends that at once stimulated his fancy and warmed his heart towards them. He loved Manning and laughed at him. He confided to him his closest family and personal sorrows; and in the very same letter, perhaps, would bring the whole varied artillery of his fun to play upon his friend's hobbies.

When Lamb first knew Manning, the dominant passion of his life was already working irrepressibly in his breast—the desire to explore the then unknown mysteries of China and Tartary. The plan he formed and carried out, with extraordinary pluck and perseverance, was to begin the study of the Chinese language in England, carry it on in Paris, under the tuition of a great French Orientalist, pass some years in Canton, and when he should have acquired the art of perfectly deporting himself as a Celestial, to make his way, with a confidential native servant, to the sacred capital of Thibet, the abode of the Grand Lama, the very fountain-head of Buddhism. This exploit, so difficult and so hazardous, Manning achieved. He went out to China in 1806, was in Canton till 1810, made his memorable journey to Lhasa in 1810–1811, returned to Canton, where he again resided for some years, and finally returned to England in 1818. In Lamb's letters we follow him through all his changes of abode—from his quiet rooms at Cambridge to his residence in Paris (which he had to leave suddenly when war broke out in 1803), and so to Canton. "I heard that you were going to China," Lamb writes in August, 1801, "with a commission from the Wedgwoods to collect hints for their pottery, and to teach the Chinese *perspective*." Eighteen months later, Manning's schemes were taking more definite shape, for Lamb writes to him in Paris, in tones of serious alarm:

"My dear Manning,—The general scope of your letter afforded no indications of insanity, but some particular points raised a scruple. For God's sake, don't think any more of 'Independent Tartary.' What are you to do among such Ethiopians? Is there no lineal descendant of Prester John? Is the chair empty? Is the sword unswayed? Depend upon it, they'll never make you their king as long as any branch of that great stock is remaining. I tremble for your Christianity. Read Sir John Mandeville's travels to cure you, or come over to England. There is a Tartar-man now exhibiting at Exeter Change. Come and talk with him, and hear what he says first. Indeed, he is no very favourable specimen of his countrymen! But, perhaps, the best thing you can do is to *try* to get the idea out of your head. For this purpose, repeat to yourself every night, after you have said your prayers, the words, Independent Tartary, Independent Tartary, two or three times, and associate with them the *idea* of *oblivion* ('tis Hartley's method with obstinate memories), or say, Independent, Independent, have I not already got an *independence?* That was a clever way of the old Puritans, pun-divinity. My dear friend, think what a sad pity it would be to bury such *parts* in heathen countries among

nasty, unconversable, horse-belching, Tartar people! Some say they are cannibals; and then, conceive a Tartar fellow *eating* my friend, and adding the *cool malignity* of mustard and vinegar! I am afraid 'tis the reading of Chaucer has misled you; his foolish stories about Cambuscan, and the ring and the horse of brass. Believe me, there are no such things—'tis all the poet's invention. . . . The Tartars, really, are a cold, insipid, smouchy set. You'll be sadly moped (if you are not eaten) among them."

He returns to this grim warning at the end of his letter. "Have a care, my dear friend, of Anthropophagi! their stomachs are always craving. 'Tis terrible to be weighed out at fivepence a-pound; to sit at table (the reverse of fishes in Holland), not as a guest, but as a meat." In later years at some party, when we may suppose Manning or his travels were the subject of conversation, Lamb emphatically maintained that, by the showing of their very names, the *Manchew* Tartars were unquestionably cannibals.

By 1806, Manning is fairly settled among the English community at Canton, and on December 5th Lamb acknowledges his friend's first letter. "Manning, your letter dated 'Hottentots, August the what-was-it?' came to hand. China, Canton—bless us!—how it strains the imagination, and makes it ache!" And then he proceeds to tell his friend all the news of Holcroft's new play that had failed, and his own play in preparation, 'Mr. H.,' that was to fail also, alas! though the poor fellow is so sanguine about it. "The story is a coxcomb appearing at Bath vastly rich—all the ladies dying for him—all bursting to know who he is—but he goes by no other name than *Mr. H.* . . . and only think how hard upon me it is that the ship is despatched to-morrow, and my triumph cannot be ascertained till the Wednesday after; but all China will ring of it by and by." It took a long time eighty years ago for letters to travel between England and Canton, and it was not till February, 1808, more than a year afterwards, that Lamb is able to tell his friend how his hopes had been dashed. "I suppose you know my farce was damned. The noise still rings in my ears. Were you ever in the pillory?—being damned is something like that." And then he tells what other literary irons are in the fire—'The Adventures of Ulysses,' "done out of the 'Odyssey'—the 'Shakespeare Tales' suggested the doing it," and another scheme, destined for a wider popularity and more wide-spreading results, "'Specimens of English Dramatic Poets Contemporary with Shakespeare.' Specimens are becoming fashionable. They used to be called 'Beauties.' You have seen 'Beauties of Shakespeare?' So have many people that never saw any beauties *in* Shakespeare." The letter is a wonderful specimen of Lamb's volatile fancy. He reverts to the unfortunate fate of 'Mr. H.,' and dilates on the frantic yells, "as from a congregation of wild geese," that sealed its doom: passes on into wildest enthusiasm over Braham's singing—"The little Jew has bewitched me. I follow him like as the boys follow Tom the Piper." Next come a few details of Manning's friends, which, he supposes, will interest his distant correspondent, and then, without a word of warning or apology for the abruptness of the departure: "I made a pun the other day, and palmed it upon Holcroft, who grinned like a Cheshire cat. (Why do cats grin in Cheshire? Because it was once a County Palatine—the cats cannot help laughing whenever they think of it—though I see no great joke in it.)"

Manning was absent from England twelve years—first at Canton, then on his perilous expedition to the capital of Thibet, and finally, after some further years in Canton, filling the post of Chinese interpreter to Lord Amherst's embassy at Pekin. Lamb's letters extend over this whole period, though with many gaps in the correspondence, often of several years. The distance apart, the long stretches of time, and the wide gulf that separated

the pursuits and interests of the two friends, would have quenched, for most correspondents, the epistolary instinct. It worked the opposite effect upon Lamb. The very incongruity of their relative positions brought into play all his genius. And on Christmas Day, 1815, when the period of his friend's exile was nearing its end, he writes him the following wonderfully picturesque letter, worthy, indeed, of a place among the choicest essays of Elia. It was Manning, by the way, who, either in a letter or after his return to England, told Lamb the Chinese version of that myth as to the "origin of cooking," as old as Porphyry of Tyre, and probably to be found in the folk-lore of many other nations, which suggested the memorable 'Essay on Roast Pig.' Notice the string of monstrous fictions with which the letter ends, and yet the strange pathos and plausibility with which they are unfolded.

"*December* 25, 1815.

"DEAR OLD FRIEND AND ABSENTEE,—This is Christmas day, 1815, with us: what it may be with you I don't know—the twelfth of June next year perhaps; and if it should be the consecrated season with you, I don't see how you can keep it. You have no turkeys; you would not desecrate the festival by offering up a withered Chinese bantam instead of the savoury, grand, Norfolkian holocaust that smokes all round my nostrils at this moment from a thousand fire-sides. Then, what puddings have you? Where will you get holly to stick in your churches, or churches to stick your dry tea-leaves (that must be the substitute) in? What memorials you can have of the holy time, I see not. A chopped missionary or two may keep up the thin idea of Lent and the wilderness; but what standing evidence have you of the Nativity? 'Tis our rosy-cheeked, home-stalled divines, whose faces shine to the tune of 'Unto us a child is born,' faces fragrant with the mince-pies of half a century, that alone can authenticate the cheerful mystery. I feel my bowels refreshed with the holy tide; my zeal is great against the unedified heathen. Down with pagodas, down with the idols, Ching-chong-fo and his foolish priesthood! Come out of Babylon, O my friend! for her time is come; and the child that is native, and the proselyte of her gates, shall kindle and smoke together! And in sober sense, what makes you so long from among us, Manning? You must not expect to see the same England again which you left.

"Empires have been overturned, crowns trodden into dust, the face of the western world quite changed. Your friends have all got old. These you left blooming—myself (who am one of the few that remember you), these golden hairs, which you recollect my taking a pride in, turned to silvery and grey. Mary has been dead and buried many years; she desired to be buried in the silk gown you sent her. Rickman, that you remember active and strong, now walks out supported by a servant-maid and a stick. Martin Burney is a very old man. The other day an aged woman knocked at my door, and pretended my acquaintance. It was long before I had the most distant cognition of her; but at last, together, we made her out to be Louisa, the daughter of Mrs. Topham, formerly Mrs. Merton, who had been Mrs. Reynolds, formerly Mrs. Kenney, whose first husband was Holcroft, the dramatic writer of the last century. St. Paul's church is a heap of ruins; the monument isn't half so high as you knew it, divers parts being successively taken down which the ravages of time had rendered dangerous; the horse at Charing Cross is gone, no one knows whither; and all this has taken place while you have been settling whether Ho-ting-tong should be spelt with a –, or a —. For aught I see you might almost as well remain where you are, and not come like a Struldbrug into a world where few were born when you went away. Scarce here and there one will be able to make out your face. All your opinions will be out of date, your jokes obsolete, your puns rejected with fastidiousness as wit of the last age. Your way of mathematics has already given way to a new method, which after all is, I believe, the old doctrine of Maclaurin, new vamped up with what he borrowed of the negative quantity of fluxions from Euler.

"Poor Godwin! I was passing his tomb the other day in Cripplegate churchyard; there are some verses upon it written by Miss ——, which if I thought good enough I would send you. He was one of those who would have hailed your return not with boisterous shouts and clamours, but with the complacent gratulations of a philosopher anxious to promote knowledge as leading to happiness: but his systems and his theories are ten feet deep in Cripplegate mould. Coleridge is just dead, having lived just long enough to close the eyes of Wordsworth, who paid the debt of nature but a week or two before. Poor Col., but two days before he died he wrote to a bookseller proposing an Epic poem on the 'Wanderings of Cain,' in twenty-four books. It was said he has left behind him more than forty thousand treatises in criticisms, metaphysics, and divinity, but few of them in a state of completion. They are now destined, perhaps, to wrap up spices."

And after some further remonstrances he winds up with,

"I suppose you heard that I have left the India House, and gone into the Fishmongers' Almshouses over the bridge. I have a little cabin there, small but homely, but you shall be welcome to it. You like oysters, and to open them yourself; I'll get you some if you come in oyster time. . . . Come as soon as you can.

"C. LAMB."

If we sought among Lamb's correspondents for a contrast to Manning, the dabbler in strange philosophies and haunter of strange nations, we could not find one more effective than the Quaker-poet, Bernard Barton, clerk for the last forty years of his life in the Messrs. Alexanders's Bank, in the quiet Suffolk town of Woodbridge. Lamb, doubtless, made his acquaintance through the London Magazine to which both were contributors. They had met, perhaps, at the table of the publishers, Taylor and Hessey, who gave periodical dinners, at which their staff were gathered together. Lamb had made some foolish jest about the incongruity of Quakers writing poetry. Barton had been a little hurt, and had remonstrated; and Lamb's first letter is a frank explanation that it was only "one of his levities," and that he had referred rather to what the community of friends might say on the subject. The letter ends,

"In feelings and matters not dogmatical, I hope I am half a Quaker.

"Believe me, with great respect,

"Yours,

"C. LAMB."

Readers of 'Elia' know well that Lamb spoke seriously here. He loved the Quakers, and has devoted one of the tenderest of his essays to their praise. And out of this misunderstanding at the outset there sprung a deep liking between these two, and the letters to Barton are among the most delightful and characteristic. There was something analogous in the situations of the pair. Each was chained to the desk for the best part of each working-day, and each found in literature his happiest refuge. Barton published his frequent volumes of verse, graceful and tender always, and often displaying a real "Doric delicacy," and sent them as they appeared to Lamb, who praises, or criticises, with the same happy discrimination that marks all his judgments. Then Barton and his young daughter and only child, Lucy, came to London, and called on Lamb at Colebrook Row, where the New River ran past his door; and Lucy Barton, happily still surviving, told me only the other day how well she recalls entering the house by the door that opened straight from the open air into the parlour, and finding Elia deep in one of his folios by the fire-side. It was in her album, you remember, that Lamb wrote the charming lines:

"Little book, surnamed of *white*,
Clean as yet, and fair to sight,
Keep thy attribution right.

"Never disproportioned scrawl,
Ugly blot (that's worse than all),
On thy maiden clearness fall!

"In each letter here designed
Let the reader emblem'd find
Neatness of the owner's mind.

"Gilded margins count a sin;
Let thy leaves attraction win
By the golden rules within:

"Sayings fetched from sages old:
Laws which Holy Writ unfold,
Worthy to be graved in gold:

"Lighter fancies not excluding:
Blameless wit, with nothing rude in,
Sometimes mildly interluding

"Amid strains of graver measure:
Virtue's self hath oft her pleasure
In sweet Muses' groves of leisure.

"Riddles dark, perplexing sense:
Darker meanings of offence:
What but *shades*—be banished hence.

"Whitest thoughts in whitest dress,
Candid meanings, best express
Mind of quiet Quakeress."

These letters are rich in sterling sense, as well as poetic gossip and friendly badinage. Barton at one time was tempted, as so many have been and will be again, to leave the

"drudgery of the desk's dead wood" and betake himself to literature as a livelihood.

"Throw yourself on the world," cries Lamb, "without any rational plan of support, beyond what the chance employ of booksellers would afford you!!! Throw yourself rather, my dear sir, from the steep Tarpeian rock, slap-dash headlong upon iron spikes. If you had but five consolatory minutes between the desk and the bed, make much of them, and live a century in them, rather than turn slave to the booksellers. . . . Keep to the bank, and the bank will keep you. . . . I bless every star that Providence, not seeing good to make me independent, has seen it next good to settle me upon the stable foundation of Leadenhall. Sit down, good B. B., in the banking office. What! is there not from six to eleven p.m., six days in the week, and is there not all Sunday? Fie, what a superfluity of man's time, if you could but think so!—enough for relaxation, mirth, converse, poetry, good thoughts, quiet thoughts. O the corroding, torturing, tormenting thoughts that disturb the brain of the unlucky wight who must draw upon it for daily sustenance! Henceforth I retract all my fond complaints of mercantile employment: look upon them as lovers' quarrels. I was but half in earnest. Welcome dead timber of a desk that makes me live!"

Bernard Barton took his friend's advice, and doubtless lived to bless him again and again for it.

And what good things are to be gleaned up and down these letters! Take the amazing illustration that winds up his apology for his slovenly habits in the writing of them. It is in 1826, after he had left the India House on his pension.

"DEAR B. B.,—You may know my letters by the paper and the folding. For the former, I live on scraps obtained in charity from an old friend, whose stationery is a permanent perquisite: for folding, I shall do it neatly when I learn to tie my neck-cloths. I surprise most of my friends by writing on ruled paper, as if I had not got past pot-hooks and hangers. Sealing-wax I have none on my establishment: wafers of the coarsest bran supply its place. . . . All the time I was at the E. India House I never mended a pen; I now cut 'em to the stumps, marring rather than mending the primitive goose-quill. I cannot bear to pay for articles I used to get for nothing. When Adam laid out his first penny upon *nonpareils* at some stall in Mesopotamos, I think it went hard with him, reflecting upon his old goodly orchard, where he had so many for nothing."

Or take the solemn apostrophe to his friend, written on the day after the execution of the famous banker and forger, Fauntleroy.

"Now, my dear sir, trifling apart, the gloomy catastrophe of yesterday morning prompts a sadder vein. The fate of the unfortunate Fauntleroy makes me, whether I will or no, to cast reflecting eyes around on such of my friends as, by a parity of situation, are exposed to a similarity of temptation. My very style seems to myself to become more impressive than usual, with the change of theme. Who that standeth, knoweth but he may yet fall? Your hands, as yet, I am most willing to believe, have never deviated into others' property. You think it impossible that you could ever commit so heinous an offence: but so thought Fauntleroy once; so have thought many beside him, who at last have expiated as he hath done. You are as yet upright; but you are a banker—at least the next thing to it. I feel the delicacy of the subject; but cash must pass through your hands, sometimes to a great amount. If in an unguarded hour—but I will hope better. Consider the scandal it will bring upon those of your persuasion. Thousands would go to see a Quaker hanged, that would be indifferent to the fate of a Presbyterian or an Anabaptist. Think of the effect it would have on the sale of your poems alone, not to mention higher considerations!"

Lamb's letters, need a commentary, for they are full of allusiveness, and full of references to persons and books and incidents of his time not of sufficient importance to have escaped oblivion on their own merits, but fully deserving a word of record in explanation of Lamb's use of them. We read in a letter to Barton: "The 'Prometheus Unbound' is a capital story. The literal rogue!" And it is pleasant to know on authority happily still living, that Barton's neighbour, the Rev. John Mitford, had written to a country bookseller to get him Shelley's 'Prometheus Unbound,' and had received, after a week or two, the reply that they were sorry they could not obtain the book *in sheets.* Moreover, as it is impossible for us to keep all good poetry that has ever been written in our memories, we may be excused for asking explanation even of such an allusion as the following. Lamb writes to Coleridge, in a letter

undated, but probably 1819, for that unmethodical man too often did not date his letters, and thereby entailed grievous labour on his editors. Coleridge had sent his old friend a new sonnet of his own, apparently copied on some very flimsy paper which had torn in the transit, and Lamb replies :

"DEAR C.,—Your sonnet is capital. The paper ingenious, only that it split into four parts in the carriage. I have transferred it to the common English paper, manufactured of rags, for better preservation. I never knew before how the 'Iliad' and 'Odyssey' were written. 'Tis strikingly corroborated by observations on Cats. These domestic animals, put 'em on a rug before the fire, wink their eyes up, and listen to the kettle and then *purr*, which is *their* poetry."

We may, as I have said, remember the 'Ancient Mariner' and 'Christabel;' but may not at once appreciate the reference to the magnificent sonnet, then just written, and soon to be published in 'Blackwood's Magazine,' entitled, 'Fancy in Nubibus: or the Poet in the Clouds,' a sonnet composed on the sea coast. You will not mind, I think, hearing it again.

"O! it is pleasant, with a heart at ease,
Just after sunset, or by moonlight skies,
To make the shifting clouds be what you please,
Or let the easily persuaded eyes
Own each quaint likeness issuing from the mould
Of a *friend's* fancy; or with head bent low
And cheek aslant see rivers flow of gold
'Twixt crimson banks; and then, a traveller, go
From mount to mount through Cloudland, gorgeous land!
Or, listening to the tide with closed sight,
Be that blind bard, who on the Chian strand
By those deep sounds possessed with inward light,
Beheld the 'Iliad' and the 'Odyssee'
Rise to the swelling of the voiceful sea."

I would fain, if only time were consenting, read you many passages of acutest criticism and sterling moral judgments, scattered through these letters. In most matters of artistic taste he was ahead of his age, and often in ethical questions also. For instance, in the year 1824, William Blake, painter and poet, was known to those of the general public who knew his name at all, chiefly as a harmless lunatic, who saw visions. When James Montgomery, of Sheffield, edited the 'Chimney-Sweepers' Friend and Climbing-Boys' Album,' in which he pleaded the cause of the poor little suffering lads, and invited Lamb to contribute something to the volume, Lamb did not find the subject inspiring to his own Muse, but in order not to withhold his name altogether, sent Montgomery Blake's now well-known lines on the chimney-sweeper :

"When my mother died I was very young
And my father sold me while yet my tongue
Could scarcely cry Weep! weep! weep! weep.
So your chimneys I sweep, and in soot I sleep."

They accordingly appear in Montgomery's little volume as "communicated by Mr. Charles Lamb from a very rare and curious little work." This rare and curious work was, of course, the 'Songs of Innocence,' which had been written and illustrated by Blake seven-and-thirty years before. Yet so little known was it that when Bernard Barton, who himself contributed to the 'Album,' and was moreover a man of wide reading, came upon these lines of Blake's he was like Keats's astronomer "when a new planet swims into his ken," and wrote off to Lamb, full of enthusiasm, to know if Blake was a "real name." Lamb returns for answer: "Blake is a real name, I assure you, and a most extraordinary man, if he is still living." This was in 1824, and Blake was then passing slowly towards his grave, poor but uncomplaining. He died in 1827. Even Lamb did not know his Christian name, for he proceeds: "He is the Robert Blake whose wild designs accompany a splendid folio edition of the 'Night Thoughts,' which you may have seen. . . . His poems have been sold hitherto only in manuscript." Lamb meant, I suppose, that the verses were not printed in the usual way,

but engraved by Blake on the same plates as the illustrations, and were therefore necessarily limited in number and costly to buy. "I never read them, but a friend, at my desire, procured the Sweep song. There is one to a tiger, which I have heard recited, beginning

"Tiger, tiger, burning bright
Thro' the deserts of the night,"

which is glorious; but alas! I have not the book, for the man is flown—whither I know not—to Hades, or a mad-house. But I must look on him as one of the most extraordinary persons of the age."

There was another painter of that period whom the public reckoned one of the "most extraordinary persons of the age," but whom Lamb had no liking for. This was John Martin, the designer of 'Belshazzar's Feast,' and 'Joshua Staying the Sun,' and other subjects of a grandiose kind, engravings of which may still be found, I think, hanging in the best parlour of many a country home. But the whirligig of time, and the spread of art-education, have brought the world round to Lamb's point of view. How he hits the nail on the head, when he tells Barton,

"Martin's 'Belshazzar' I have seen. Its architectural effect is stupendous, but the human figures, the squalling, contorted little antics that are playing at being frightened, like children at a sham ghost, who half know it to be a mask, are detestable. Then the letters are nothing more than a transparency lighted up, such as a lord might order to be lit up on a sudden at a Christmas gambol, to scare the ladies. The *type* is as plain as Baskerville's—they should have been dim, full of mystery, letters to the mind rather than to the eye. . . . Just such a confused piece is his 'Joshua,' frittered into a thousand fragments, little armies here, little armies there—you should see only the *Sun* and *Joshua*. If I remember he has not left out that luminary entirely, but for Joshua, I was ten minutes finding him out."

What noble common-sense appears in such criticism as this, and I think the term not unfitly describes Lamb's criticism generally, even in matters more serious and important than pictures and poems. Strange that this jester, this book-man, this too-often flippant handler of themes which pious men shrink from touching, yet so often sees farther than his contemporaries into the moral heart of things. A testimonial was actually proposed, in 1828, in honour of Thomas Clarkson, and it was to take the form of a monument to be erected on the road between Cambridge and London, on the precise spot where the great philanthropist first stopped to rest, and formed the resolution of devoting his life to the abolition of the slave-trade. Basil Montagu's wife writes to Lamb for a subscription, which Lamb sends, but with these words of comment, surely deserving to be printed in letters of gold:

"Dear Madam,—I return your list with my name. I should be sorry that any respect should be going on towards Clarkson, and I be left out of the conspiracy. Otherwise I frankly own that to pillarise a man's good feelings in his lifetime is not to my taste. Monuments to goodness, even after death, are equivocal. I turn away from Howard's, I scarce know why. Goodness blows no trumpet, nor desires to have it blown. *We should be modest for a modest man*—as he is for himself. The vanities of life—art, poetry, skill military—are subjects for trophies; not the silent thoughts arising in a good man's mind in lonely places."

We have modulated, you see, into a more serious key, but it is one just as characteristic of Lamb's individuality as any we have touched on this evening. Common repute sets him down as a humorist, and often enough a reckless one. The world remembers him as a Yorick, with his "jibes, his gambols, and his flashes of merriment." He made many enemies by these things, uttered in season and out of season, in his lifetime, and I dare say they offend many grave persons still. But the flippancies of a man of genius are rarely without some flavour of that genius. When Lamb was travelling once in a stage-coach, with evident marks on him of an influenza, and a fellow-traveller remarked sympathetically, "You have a very

bad cold, sir," Lamb replied, "Well, it's the *b-b-best* I've got." I dare say that old gentleman went home and related how he had met a very odd man—all but uncivil indeed—in the coach. Thomas Carlyle, as he has recorded, thought Lamb very "ill-mannered," and no wonder, if the story be true of what took place on the occasion of one of those visits to Lamb at Enfield. Carlyle was watching the movements of a flock of pigeons with some curiosity, and Lamb inquired (we can imagine with what gravity): "Mr. Carlyle, are you a p-p-p-poulterer?" But I think this flow of "cockney wit," "diluted insanity," or what not, was one of Lamb's safety-valves under the pressure of his anxious life. As we listen to these witty and amusing letters, we might easily forget how lonely was the "lonely hearth" from which for the nine years after he retired from the India House they were written. Too often at the end of some whimsical romance, or some penetrating piece of criticism, we come upon saddest confidences as to domestic trials. The earlier letters often end with "Mary sends love," or "Adieu, with both our loves," and then we know that all was well with the pair. But as time goes on such postscripts become rarer, and we have instead, "Dear Moxon, I have brought my sister to Enfield, being sure that she had no hope of recovery in London. Her state of mind is deplorable beyond any example." Or to Bernard Barton: "Dear B. B., your handwriting has conveyed much pleasure to me in respect of Lucy's restoration. Would I could send you as good news of *my* poor Lucy! But some wearisome weeks I must remain lonely yet." And again to Wordsworth: "Your letter, save in what respects your dear sister's health, cheered me in my new solitude. Mary is ill again. Her illnesses encroach yearly. The last was three months, followed by two of depression most dreadful. I look back upon her earlier attacks with longing. Nice little durations of six weeks or so, followed by complete restoration—shocking as they were to me then. In short, half her life she is dead to me, the other half is made anxious with fears and lookings forward to the next shock." "*One*," he says most pathetically in another letter, "*one* does not make a household." But that lonely figure had to constitute Lamb's household, with exceptions fewer and fewer, till the end came; and we feel that those who then loved him best could hardly have wished that end long deferred.

What constitutes the abiding fascination of Lamb's personality? *Not* his funny sayings—let the "funny man" of every generation lay this well to heart. His humour? Yes—for his humour was part and parcel of his character. It is character that makes men loved. It was the rare combination in Lamb of strength and weakness. He was "a hero, with a failing." His heroism was greater than many of us could hope to show. Charity, in him, most assuredly fulfilled the well-known definition. It suffered long and was kind; it thought no evil; and it never vaunted itself nor was puffed up. And as we watch its daily manifestations, never asking for the world's recognition, never thinking it had done enough, or could do enough, for its beloved object, we may well reckon it large enough to cover a greater multitude of frailties than those we are able to detect in the life of Charles Lamb.

ALFRED AINGER.

THE STRANGE STORY OF MARGARET BEAUCHAMP.

BY GEORGE FLEMING.

PART I.

SIR WILLIAM told us. We had been dining with him: Frazer, the Boy, and I, and the new man, H——: that same H—— whose paper on Heredity and Evolution so very nearly brought matters to a crisis at the last Social Science Congress. He was younger than any of us, always excepting the Boy—a quiet little fellow, with the keenest blue eye and odd parti-coloured hair. He could not have been much more than twenty then, but one side of his head was thickly besprinkled with grey. The Boy used to call him the Magpie; partly because of those curious locks, partly because he was always picking up things—odds and ends of information. But, of course, that was only behind his back. No one ever dreamed of taking a liberty with H——: he was perfectly good-natured, too, but in that respect he resembled Sir William himself more than any man I ever knew.

Perhaps I associate H——'s name so particularly with that evening because it was at his suggestion that we heard the story. We had been talking for half-an-hour or more about what is now, I am told, designated as Psychical research. In those days we called it simply ghosts. And the Boy was affecting extreme terror over some anecdote of Frazer's,—an Aberdeenshire man, and very sensitive on the subject of a certain family apparition, which had, I believe, revealed itself to one of his aunts or cousins.

H—— had been keeping very quiet, turning his attentive bright glance from one speaker to another, as his way was, seldom committing himself by a word. At last, and as we were all laughing at some crowning absurdity of the Boy, he seemed to rouse himself a little, pushing back his wine-glass and his plate: "I fancy, Sir William, you could tell us something worth hearing about all this? If there is anything solid in these supernatural warnings—communications—what not—you must have seen strange cases of it in your practice?" he said, looking across the table at our host.

"Something solid! You hear that, eh, Frazer?" echoed the Boy, beaming with disinterested satisfaction over the prospect of the fray.

For a minute or two Sir William scarcely seemed to be aware of the question. He was still in his own place at the top of the half-cleared table. He had pushed his chair a little to one side, and the lingering light of the summer evening fell full upon his massive head and shoulders, bent somewhat forward, as his manner was. I don't know how it happened, but we all sat there, watching the dear old man, and no one seemed inclined to break the silence. Even H—— did not press his question. He looked hard at Sir William for a minute, and then fell to tracing a regular pattern with olive stones about the edge of his plate.

"I could tell you a story, gentlemen——" began Sir William.

He stopped, and filled up his glass.

"Will you help yourself, Mr. Frazer—and pass the bottle? Thirty years ago, gentlemen, I was very nearly as young, and—we will say for the sake of argument—as wise, as any one of you here. In one way you all have the advantage of me: I did not begin the study of medicine until after I left Oxford. Some of you may even have heard that I went in for honours there. In

point of fact, I took a second class. I had worked hard, especially in my last year: I had a certain reputation to keep up in our set; and I was disappointed. What partly consoled both my tutor and myself was the fact that one of our own men had done the old college more credit. That was Stanleigh Forbes, the cleverest man of his year, and my best friend.

We took our degree at the same time, and went down together. Forbes was the only man to whom I had confided my intention of taking up surgery seriously as a profession. He did his best to discourage the idea; partly, I think, from a sort of social prejudice, rather difficult now to understand; partly, as I have since believed, at the instigation of my father. Forbes was my senior by only six months, but there was a decision about him, a force of character, which often gave his opinion weight in the eyes of much older men. It was characteristic of his influence over those with whom he associated that I very seldom dreamt of protesting against this tacit assumption of his superiority. Twice in my life I have opposed him seriously; but thirty years of familiar acquaintance have not altered my estimate of his cleverness and capacity—his power of using other men.

From Oxford we had come straight to London. We lived there together for some weeks in rather pleasant lodgings: old-fashioned rooms, overlooking the river and the Strand. Forbes had found out the place for us. We had run up to town with much the same vague undergraduate's acquaintance with the theatres and the parks; but a week after our arrival Stanleigh treated himself to the pleasure of explaining a short cut to his hansom driver. Sometimes he would amuse himself by pointing out to me all the faces "with stories attached" in the Row — it was before the days of Society-papers. How did he know these things? It was not through any family affiliation. He was extremely reserved in all matters relating to himself, but I knew that his parents and his only sister lived in Ireland—on a small, and, I fancied, very impoverished, estate.

My own father, as you know, was a rich Yorkshire manufacturer. Forbes had very little money, and I a good deal more than I knew what to do with. My tastes were much simpler than his; but he had a native magnificence about him, a manner of disposing of even the smallest sum, which impressed people. Add to that that he was genuinely indifferent to the opinion of those about him, and I think you will understand the sort of prestige he enjoyed among his contemporaries at college. As for me, I confess I could imagine nothing more flattering to my self-love than the daily familiarity in which we lived. I was never happier in my life than in that little lodging.

One night, coming home from the opera, where I had been to hear Grisi, I found our principal living-room in a state of great confusion. Candles were flaring in the draught on the chimney-piece and the table: Forbes's books (he had a great many) were piled high on every available chair, and through the open door leading into his bedroom I could see his portmanteau lying half packed on the floor.

He was sorting out some papers as I entered, and for a minute or two did not appear to be aware of my return. When he looked up—I can remember distinctly the expression of his face. He was extremely good-looking in those days, and possessed, when he chose to use it, the most winning manner of any man I ever met; but what struck me at that moment was his air of repressed triumphant excitement. Never, at any time—no! not when he was waiting before the schools for the posting of the class-list—had I seen him look so moved.

He sat there staring at me for a minute or two with the blank unseeing gaze of a visionary; then, as if yielding to some uncontrollable impulse, he got up from his chair, walked across

the room to the long French window, and thrust it open with his foot.

"Well, young Crœsus! and so you have returned to the haunts of penniless mortals. And who was singing to-night in your gilded halls of luxury?"

I told him, Grisi.

"And was the house full? Did all the men look rich and sleek and prosperous? Were there shining lights and diamonds and beautiful women—beautiful, more dazzling than either?"

A suspicion flashed across my mind which must have showed itself on my face, for he burst out laughing. "No, old boy," he said, "you're mistaken, you're all wrong there; I have not been drinking—at least, nothing more material than—" He checked himself, that same indefinable expression of triumph still playing about his lips and eyes. "Come out on the balcony, I want to talk to you about business," he said.

He threw himself down on the nearest chair. "London grows hot. It is time to break up the encampment. I shall run down to Brighton to-morrow."

"But, I say, Forbes—"

"Oh! there is no reason you should not come down with me, if you care to. You like the sea; and there will be other people. We will sail: we will ride on the downs: we will lie on our backs in the sun: irresponsible, enjoying, like minor deities on Olympus."

I could not, in my own mind, avoid connecting the other people of whom he spoke with this unwonted excitement.

"Of course," I said, "I will go."

"Of course."

"But I did not know, Forbes, that you were so tired of London."

"Tired of it!" he echoed.

He got up and stood leaning over the iron railing of the balcony, staring down at the dark, glittering surface of the river. Below us Blackfriars Bridge crossed from shore to shore with its shining span of light. In the hot still night the black water lapped audibly against the stones of the nearest pier. There was something almost awful, something evil in the old river's restlessness, its swiftness, its depths of concealing waters under that quiet sky.

He turned and looked up stream towards the distant gas lamps of Westminster. "Tired of you, my great, beautiful city! Some day I shall come back to you and show you in what way I was tired. Some day, among all your foolish four millions, your eating, drinking, clothes-wearing citizens, I shall make you recognise *me*, make room for *me*, listen when I speak, turn to look after me when I pass. You shall learn to come to heel when I call to you, my beauty! for all your riches, all your forgetfulness, all your magnificent indifference now. For in all your great world there is nothing so big, so impossible, so immutable that it was not once an idea, a mere purpose, in some one man's brain. And if other men, why not I? Why not?"

I got up and stood beside him. "You will do it, Forbes," I said. At that moment, if he had told me to throw myself over the balcony into the river, I dare say I should have done it without a word.

"I shall do it, yes." His tone was that of a man who has measured and will conquer life. But almost immediately he laughed, shaking his head and pushing back his hair. "Meantime," he said lightly, "here we stand, two emancipated school-boys, sending precepts to the Leviathan to come ashore."

Whatever had so stirred his nature to the depths, for that day the mood was ended. Not another reasonable word could I get him to speak. As for myself, it was long before I fell asleep. The music I had heard, Grisi's divine voice, the lights and crowded faces of the opera-house, my friend's attitude as, flushed with some secret security of success, he dominated the sleeping city, all these things came and went before me with irritant interchange of impression.

At last a sudden recollection flashed across my mind. The door between our two rooms stood open for coolness' sake. I raised myself from my hot, tumbled pillows.

"Are you asleep?"

"I say, confound it, no!"

His voice was as wakeful as my own.

"I say, Forbes, I never knew that you cared one jot about beautiful women."

He made no answer; but after a moment I heard him laugh.

The next afternoon found us settled at Brighton. Forbes had selected our rooms at the farther, unfashionable end of the town, on the road to Rottingdean. For three days after our arrival I scarcely saw him. He would go out immediately after breakfast, and return late for the ill-cooked dinner which our landlady pronounced the very thing for two young gentlemen. The evening he passed for the most part lying on the hard little horsehair sofa reading a book. Of our rides together, our sails, the friends we were to make—not a word.

This was not at all what I had bargained for. I was willing enough to put up with the inconvenience of our lodgings, but at least I had counted upon the compensation of Forbes's companionship. I began to feel hurt, and then resentful. For a couple of days I tried to convey this fact to him by my manner, but Forbes was not the man to trouble himself about varying shades of cordiality. At last I made up my mind to speak out. It had been raining all day: the Parade was empty: I was feeling insufferably bored. I marched back to our rooms feeling savagely inclined to have it out with Forbes for his selfishness and lack of consideration. But at the first word he stopped me short.

"Oh, that's all right. I know you have been having a dull time of it, old fellow, but never mind that now. I want you to come up with me to the station. I am expecting a—a party of ladies and children. Come along and make yourself useful, like the good fellow that you are!"

I followed him, still feeling rather aggrieved, into the square before our house. The tossing green and white sea was all shining in the light. The rain had ceased, and a bright red streak along the horizon seemed to promise better weather. As we climbed the hill Forbes explained to me that he had been busy finding and engaging a furnished house for his friends.

"Their name is Beauchamp—Somersetshire people. An aunt and her niece and two younger children. The smallest one has been ill—little Mabel: they are bringing her here for the sea air. The boy is to read with a tutor."

"And the niece? The other one?" I asked.

"Well, you'll see her," Forbes answered, and then he laughed.

We reached the station just as the train was gliding in. Railways were not such an old story in those days. I was looking at that smoking engine (I can remember now the idle interest with which I was looking at it) when the door of the first-class carriage opposite me was opened by a sharp-eyed porter and—well, I saw her for the first time then.

Forbes was looking the other way. I touched him on the shoulder. "There she is," I said. Who shall explain it? I barely knew her name: I had never seen her, and I only felt I was recognising what I knew.

Forbes turned sharply round, and I saw them meet. I saw the splendid light and colour flash across her face. She gave him her hand.

Some children had sprung out after her: a lad in an Eton jacket and a little girl carrying a bird-cage. "Tottie is asleep: aunt does not like to wake him," the boy announced with a laugh. At the same moment a servant in livery came running up, touching his hat. "See after Parker, Robinson, and then you may have the luggage put on the fly Mr. Forbes has

engaged for us," the elder sister said in a clear voice. Forbes was helping another lady to descend—a tall, thin woman, with grey curls: she carried a fluffy white Maltese dog in her arms.

"Oh! let me take Tottie for you, aunt," the young girl added hastily. She looked at Forbes as she spoke, and a gleam of amusement passed over both their young faces. I stupidly reflected that they must have known one another for a long time: it was impossible to imagine her ever looking at a stranger—at me, for instance—like that.

"Here, Balfour, I want to introduce you to Miss Beauchamp, to her niece, Miss Margaret Beauchamp," said Forbes. "You've heard me speak of Balfour — at Champstead," he added without lowering his voice but looking at her steadily.

She gave him one glance and then turned to me, putting out her hand. She was dressed all in blue: in her left arm she held the white woolly dog: every minute or two the brute nearly wriggled out of her clasp in his desperate efforts to lick her cheek.

I suppose she must have said something to me. I know a minute afterwards I found myself following in her wake, giving my arm to the elder Miss Beauchamp and carrying Margaret's shawl. To be doing something for her!—I believe I envied the porters who were lifting her boxes. The little girl, little Mabel, walked demurely beside me, hugging her precious bird-cage: I know I offered to carry that, but she only shook her head and looked up at me without speaking. She had big brown eyes, not so dark as her sister's but with something of the same clear, radiant glance, and the pale pinched face of a sickly child.

We put them into their carriage: the boy scrambling up on the box beside the driver. Then I saw Margaret hesitate: she looked at the empty seat, and at Forbes.

"You are not coming with us, then?" she said, leaning a little towards him.

"We will take the short cut down the hill, Balfour and I, and meet you at your own door. I feel all the pride and responsibility of your house-agent. I want to be quite sure that you are pleased with my selection," Stanleigh said gaily, taking off his hat.

We started down the hill together at a great pace, and neither of us spoke. As for myself, I was only conscious of an insane wish to walk on and on, anywhere, to escape hearing that thing about Miss Beauchamp which, I felt sure, Forbes was going to tell me. But he never spoke until, at the foot of the hill, their carriage passed us: the aunt smiled at us through her curls, waving her hand.

"Well — you have seen them," Forbes said, drawing a long breath.

"Yes."

The house he had taken for them was at the same end of the town as our lodgings: a large white house, with wooden pilasters and many green shutters, and balconies overlooking the sea. At the back an unusually large garden was shut away from the street by high brick walls.

"It does not look like a place to let," I remarked, as we stood waiting by the front gate.

"It has been shut up for years, the agent told me. The last man came to grief over a woman: he shot himself through the heart at Paris, or somewhere abroad, and the present owner is still a ward in Chancery. I suppose his guardians want the rent," Forbes answered indifferently, and at that moment we saw the carriage turn the corner of the street.

Margaret was still holding the dog in her arms. As she stepped lightly out of the carriage, the wretched little beast gave a sudden snap and snarl and sprang out of her grasp.

"Good heavens! Miss Beauchamp, has he bitten you?"

"He has hurt you. Show me your

wrist," said Forbes, putting his hand upon her arm.

"He did not touch me. It is nothing. See! he has not even torn my glove. But—oh, aunt! what can have happened to Tottie? Look at him! Can he be going mad? Oh pray, pray be careful!" she said, in tones of real distress.

For Miss Beauchamp had flung herself down upon her knees on the wet gravel of the walk, and was endeavouring with many vain caresses to comfort the spoilt little animal, who crouched and cowered upon the ground, resisting every effort to carry it into the house, whining, scratching wildly at the earth, and exhibiting every symptom of the most abject terror.

"Was it the nasty iron railroad, then, that frightened my pet, my beautiful wee white dog of doggies wif his govies on? There, dear, never mind, it sha'n't be taken in it any more. It shall have a nice big carriage all to itself to drive back to Champstead in, so it shall! There, there! Come to its own muzzer and be comforted—there, there!"

It was to a running accompaniment of such remarks that they finally entered the house, and even as we walked away we could still hear Tottie's thin, disconsolate howl.

After dinner, Forbes, as usual, picked up a book; but his reading was a pretence which would not have deceived a child. About nine o'clock he got up abruptly from the sofa and took his hat.

"Are you coming?" he asked, without looking at me.

"To call on the Beauchamps? I think not. I don't know them: they have seen enough of me for one day."

"As you please." He stood there for a minute or two in the doorway as if reflecting. Then he shrugged his shoulders slightly, with an impatient, half-foreign trick that he had when anything vexed him, and left the room.

It was eleven o'clock before he returned. He came into the room with something of that same air of repressed excitement which had struck me so much in London. "I am sorry you did not come, old fellow," he said cordially. "They both asked after you. Miss Beauchamp wishes particularly that you should know that Tottie is much better to-night. He has consented to drink a little warm milk, and she hopes to-morrow he may have completely recovered from his agitation. You may expect to find yourself in high favour there: I told her how devoted you are to dogs, especially to ladies' lap-dogs!" He laughed in his low, pleasant fashion. "To-morrow we must see about some riding-horses. We sat in the garden to-night," he added suddenly, turning and looking full at me with excited, smiling eyes. "As usual, I observe that you have fallen upon your feet. You will have the freedom of the city—the run of the house—since Margaret likes you."

"Oh—Margaret likes me," I repeated stupidly.

I went to my room, and threw open both windows. The cool breath of the salt wind, the sound of the sea, were like so many friendly but mysterious voices. I looked up at the stars: I could see the constellation of the Great Bear shining down placidly over the big grassy shoulder of the down, over her house, over the whispering trees of her garden. I did not want to speak to Forbes. I did not want to remember her face. Each time that it rose before me I put the vision aside. I wanted to postpone everything. I asked nothing from the world but to sit there in the dark and silence, while life changed within and about me, with the slow, irresistible movement of those stars.

As usual, Forbes proved a competent prophet. In a week I had, as he phrased it, the entire freedom of the city. I came and went about the Beauchamps' house like one of themselves. Within the first forty-eight hours of our acquaintance, the aunt, as we called

her, had told me what little I cared to know about their family affairs. Margaret Beauchamp was an heiress: an orphan brought up by an uncle and aunt, Sir John and Lady Beauchamp, of Champstead Court. I knew of Sir John vaguely by reputation: he was the sort of man whose name always figured largely in any public scheme for improving the dwelling-houses of the poor. I had an indistinct recollection of having once seen him at my father's: a short, thickset man, very argumentative, and with a violent face. But Miss Beauchamp had stories to tell only of her brother's indulgence. "He spoils the children, Margaret in especial. She is his favourite, the queen of the house and village. Until last year I never knew him so much as contradict one of her fancies. Until last year"—Miss Beauchamp added, shaking her curls, with a sigh.

I knew that Forbes had spent his last long vacation in Somerset, but I asked no questions. I was living in a fool's paradise of my own creation. I was so happy I don't think it even occurred to me to envy my friend. It was impossible to see those two together for an hour without understanding their mutual attraction. At the very sound of his hand on the door her face would quiver and flush and soften into the look of a happy child. They were not demonstrative, either of them, but were very generous in their happiness. It was true that Margaret liked me; and day after day I, too, was allowed to ride beside her across the grassy downs, to play to her, to listen to her singing, to sit for hours in the dear old-fashioned garden while she worked and read.

The children, I think, were even fonder of me than of Stanleigh—little Mabel especially. She was a particularly delicate child: sensitive, reticent, and passionately devoted to her sister. When Margaret was within doors it was indeed rare to find those two apart. Always a small brown head, and big brown eyes, grown big out of all proportion, peeped out from behind the sheltering folds of the elder sister's dress. Sometimes, when she thought no one was looking, I have seen her cover a floating end of ribbon, or a forgotten glove, with a perfect storm of furtive jealous kisses; and, absurd as it may seem, I could almost fancy that a kind of understanding had grown up on the subject of our common love between this baby of six and myself.

One day, by some rare chance, I found her alone in the garden. She was playing with the little white dog on the grass, but she ran up to me at once, slipping her frail little fingers confidingly into mine.

"Sister Margaret will come soon," she said gravely. Then she added, "I think Sister Margaret is sad to-day."

I asked her why.

"Oh—I think she is sad," the child repeated wistfully, looking up into my face and swinging my hand between both of hers.

Then she said, "Mr. Balfour, can you keep a secret?"

"I think so, dear."

"Because Billy laughs at me for saying you are my own, own friend, but I will tell you something about Sister Margaret. Aunt does not know it, and Parker doesn't know it, and Billy doesn't know it—Billy doesn't dream of it, though he says I am only a girl."

"And does not Mr. Forbes know of it then?" I asked, picking her up and seating her on my knee.

"No!" She shook her head gravely and nestled her soft little cheek against mine. "Mr. Balfour, whisper! You remember the day we came here, how Tottie cried and would not come in?"

"Oh yes," I said, "I remember."

"And even aunt could not get him to move? He cried all night. When I woke up very early the next morning, while nurse was asleep, I heard him crying. And since then he has been so sad. If Margaret calls him he whines and runs away. He is so, so—melancholy." It was a long word,

but she got over it bravely. "And now," she went on, fixing me with her big serious eyes, "now Sister Margaret is beginning to be just the same."

I confess that I burst out laughing.

"Oh, Mabel, you ungrateful small person!" I said; "and when you call her do you mean to say that Sister Margaret runs away from you?"

But at that she sprang of her own accord off my knee. She doubled up her little fists, her eyes flashing. "I do not like you to-day, Mr. Balfour. I shall not tell you any more secrets. Go away, you do not care for my Margaret. You are bad—you are as bad as Billy!"

She stamped her baby foot upon the gravelled walk: the wrath of the small creature was something amazing. I was still vainly attempting to propitiate her, to make amends for my mistake, when I caught sight of Margaret's white gown moving among the laurels.

Was it my fancy? Was it only the result of a passionate solicitude that even a baby's prattle could awaken? Certainly as she drew nearer to me I seemed to detect something, a shadow of weariness, an unaccustomed look of gravity upon her face. She moved languidly, with her eyes fixed on the ground. As she raised them, as her glance met mine, I saw it was full of trouble. But in one instant the smile that was part of her beauty swept like sunlight across her lovely lips. "I am so glad to see you," she said simply.

"I came on a mission of peace," I said, as she let me touch her hand. "Stanleigh sent me to tell you it is all right about the horses. He has arranged everything as you wish. But I have quarrelled with Mabel since I came, or rather I fear that I have sinned in her eyes past forgiveness; and now I am afraid, if I ask you something, that you, too, will be angry."

"Oh, I am not so implacable as Mabel," she said, smiling and turning to walk by my side. She was bareheaded, dressed all in white, with no ornament about her except a broad new band of gold around her left wrist. I noticed how new it looked and how it shone in the sun.

"You are looking at my bracelet," she said, observing the direction of my eyes. "It is—it is a whim of mine. You know I have my fancies." She tried to laugh, but her pale lips twitched, and a strange shade of fear came over her face.

I looked at her more closely. There was no doubt that within the last fortnight she had grown thin, and there were faint dark marks like stains under her full white eyelids. Her great beauty was not lessened, but as it were veiled, sobered, overshadowed, by an air of trouble.

I stopped short. "Oh, Miss Beauchamp," I said abruptly, "are you ill?"

To my horror she shrank away from me as if I had struck her.

"Why — why do you ask?" she demanded in a voice that was not her own. With one hand she clutched at the thick bough of an old laurel pressing the other against her breast. Her very lips were white, but her dark menacing eyes never faltered or left my face. Even at that moment the child's absurd allusion to Tottie's panic darted across my brain. There was defiance, terror, a blind passion of terror, in every line of Margaret's rigid face. "Why?—why?" she said again in the same choked, hoarse whisper.

I was so inexpressibly shocked that I lost my head completely. "For Heaven's sake, Margaret," I cried, "out of pity, do not look at me like that! I meant nothing; I know nothing; I had no reason. None—none. Only if you look at me as if you hated me, upon my honour I shall go and drown myself! I spoke like a fool. I do not know what I meant. I *could* mean nothing. Only, out of very pity, do not look at me like that."

I doubt if she even heard what I

was saying. But after a minute or more the dreadful tension of her face relaxed: the colour crept back to her cheek and her lips began to quiver. She turned aside abruptly, walked away a few paces, and let herself fall, with hanging hands and sweet head drooped, upon a garden chair.

I followed her, hardly knowing if I dared approach her again. But as I drew near she looked up with piteous eyes.

"Ah, forgive me!" she said. "I was —I do not understand myself—I have hurt you. I have been unkind, and I must not—I cannot explain."

I saw her sweet eyes filled with tears.

"As for an explanation," I said briefly, "I think you know as well as —as Stanleigh does, that all I care for and live for is the hope of some day doing you some service. I don't want to trouble you with myself, Miss Beauchamp. If you can make use of me, there I am. When you don't want me any longer, you have only to send me away. I know what you are to Stanleigh, and I don't grudge him one bit of it. But I—I am like a thing belonging to you, that you can dispose of, or not, as the fancy takes you. I never lived until I knew you, and all my life won't be long enough for me to thank you for what you have given me."

I spoke with still, deliberate desperation, using the strongest words I could think of, with a kind of savage joy in getting it said once for all. But when she lifted up her face I felt my heart die in me.

"Mr. Balfour"—she began. She looked at me. I dare say she understood some of the misery, for her voice suddenly softened and she hesitated a little as she went on. "Mr. Balfour, since you know—about Stanleigh—you must see how very much respect and esteem I have for your character since—after what you have just told me—I am still willing to trust you and treat you as *our* friend."

"Yes," I said; "and now, Miss Beauchamp, unless I can be of any service to you I think I should like to go."

She bent her head gravely in assent.

"Of course," I went on rather brokenly, "of course I know that I have spoken like a madman, although every word I have told you I mean. And it is only your great goodness and mercy which make me feel fit ever to appear before your eyes again. I have no right to ask any favour from you. Only I wish you would believe me when I say that I am ready at any moment to let myself be cut into little pieces for you—or for Stanleigh either, for that matter."

"I believe you," Margaret said.

Then I went out of the garden, past the house where that infernal little dog was still barking. I shut the gate behind me and felt as if I had lost the world.

(*To be continued.*)

THE LAMENT FOR BION.

(After the Greek of Moschus.)

Come, weep with me ye Dorian glades and springs,
Ye Dorian rivers, weep for Bion dead.
Ye groves, and all ye green and flowering things,
In funeral clusters be your sweetness shed.
Blush now, ye roses: ye anemones,
Let your sad petals take a darker red.
And now, ye hyacinths, with whispered sighs
Unfold each graven leaf,
And to its legend add a deeper grief—
The sweetest singer in the world is sped.

Begin, Sicilian Muse, the dirge begin!

Ye nightingales, the thick-leaved woods among
By Arethusa's marge,
Let her Sicilian fountains hear your charge—
Bion is dead, the herdsman Bion dead,
And dead with Bion is the Dorian song.

Begin, Sicilian Muse, the dirge begin!

Ye swans of Strymon, let the waters bear
The melancholy burden of your care
To such enchanting strains
As he would use what time his song had power
To match your music in its sweetest hour.
And let the maids of the Æagrian hill,
And all the nymphs of the Bistonian plains,
Know that our Dorian Orpheus' voice is still.

Begin, Sicilian Muse, the dirge begin!

No more our herdsman to his herds shall sing,
Couched 'neath the lonely oaks he pipes no more,
Who now on Pluto's shore
To some forgetful ditty tunes his reed:
Among their mates the heifers wandering
In their dumb sorrow have no care to feed;
And every mountain is a voiceless thing.

Begin, Sicilian Muse, the dirge begin!

Apollo's self mourns thy untimely fate,
Oh Bion, and the dusky-mantled clans
Who own Priapus mourn, and all the Pans
And Satyrs, for thy song disconsolate.
From all the fountain-fays
Rivers of tears water the forest-ways.

Echo, 'mid the rocks alone,
Thy music and her occupation gone
Bemoans; and for thy fate each tree lets fall
Its fruit, and every flower its coronal.
The ewes no more
Yield their sweet milk; and from the hivèd store
Men draw no honey now, but in its cell
Leave it to waste, wanting thy honied spell.

Begin, Sicilian Muse, the dirge begin!

Oh not as now, along the beachèd flood
Hath mourned the dolphin; nor so sadly sung
The nightingale among the rocks; nor rung
The downs so shrilly to the swallow's strain;
And ne'er did Halcyon brood
O'er Ceyx' fate with such melodious pain;
Nor on the waters grey
Chanted the sea-bird such a doleful lay;
Nor hath that fowl forlorn
Of Memnon, questing ever round the tomb
Of Dawn's dead son in valleys of the morn,
Grieved,—as they all now grieve for Bion's doom.

Begin, Sicilian Muse, the dirge begin!

'Mid the high-branching trees
The swallows whom he taught to syllable,
Who loved his song so well,
With the sad nightingales their mourning make
In mutual threnodies.
In choir responsive all the birds awake
The woods with their shrill cries,
And through the leaves the ringdove's moaning sighs.

Begin, Sicilian Muse, the dirge begin!

What man now dares, oh Master ever-mourned,
Touch to his stammering strain
Thy sacred stops, or set his lips profane
Unto thy quill? What man so over-bold?
Not with the singer is the song inurned.
Echo, among the reeds,
Still on the memory of thy music feeds.
Nay, might not Pan himself forbear to test
His skill, lest men should own thy piping best?

Begin, Sicilian Muse, the dirge begin!

But, hark! 'tis Galatea's voice I hear,
Fair Galatea, whose entrancèd ear
Thy song was used to soothe, as by thy side
She nestled on the margent of the tide—
Song such as Polypheme could never make.
That hateful Cyclops! But she smiled on thee
A smile yet sweeter than she gave her sea.
Ah, now those well-loved waves she heeds no more,
Sole sitting on the sandy shore;
But still she tends thy herds for thy dear sake.

Begin, Sicilian Muse, the dirge begin!

The gifts the Muses have for those they prize
Have gone with thee: delicious kisses won
From girls and soft-lipped boys. Around thy tomb
The grieving Loves gather with rainy eyes.
And far above
The last kiss pressed on Myrrha's dying son
Will Cypris keep the memory of thy love.

Begin, Sicilian Muse, the dirge begin!

Most musical of waters weep anew,
Meles, lament once more. Men say of old
For Homer's loss, Homer that mouth of gold,
Thy goodliest son,
Bank-high to the salt ocean didst thou run,
And fill his spaces with thy sounding tears.
Now, in these later years,
Another son it is thy lot to rue,
Now with fresh flood of tears thy tide is rolled.
Both, both to the eternal Founts were dear.
One at the Pegasean spring his thirst
Slaked only; but the other loved to drink
At Arethusa's brink.
Of Tyndarus' fair daughter sang the first,
And Thetis' mighty child, and Atreus' son.
But not in such wise sang that other one.
He not to wars and tears tempered his note,
But of his brother herdsmen and of Pan
His measures ran,
And as he sang he watched his flocks a-field.
To him their richest milk the kine would yield:
Right deftly could he fashion
The oaten pipe, and teach the lads to kiss
With lips only less cunning-sweet than his;
And well he knew Love's passion,
For Aphrodite's self did on him dote.

Begin, Sicilian Muse, the dirge begin!

Ascra her Hesiod holds in honour yet,
And Pindar's fame is to Bœotia dear;
In pleasant Lesbos still the travellers hear
Of dead Alcæus; and the Teian town
Doth not her son Anacreon forget;
Archilochus wants not his just renown
In Paros; but her greatest citizen
Was ne'er so mourned in each famed capital
As thou, oh Bion, thou art mourned in all.
No more for Sappho now in Mitylene,
For thee, the melancholy echoes thrill.
Yes, they all mourn thee; and I mourn thee too,
To the Ausonian mood tuning my quill;
For I, sole heritor of the Dorian Muse,
The pastoral measure have some skill to use,
The same thy pupils knew.

To others didst thou leave thy wealth: to me
Thy goodliest bequest, thy minstrelsy.

Begin, Sicilian Muse, the dirge begin!

Ah, woe for us!
Look, when the gay life of the garden dies:
The mallows and the tender parsley green,
The anise in its crisp-encurlèd sheen:
When the boon months renew the time of spring
They lift their heads again for blossoming
In all the freshness of a primal birth.
But we, we mighty men, the brave and wise,
When falls our night of doom,
Low lying in the hollow lap of earth
Forever there in silence must we keep
A morningless and unawakening sleep—[1]
So sleepest thou, wrapped in the voiceless gloom.

Begin, Sicilian Muse, the dirge begin!

Poison, our Bion has drunk poison: oh,
Had, then, those honied lips no sorcery
To cheat that draught of woe?
Who wrought this unblest deed to mix for thee,
A singer sweet as thee, the murderous wine?
Ne'er felt that man the charm of song divine.

Begin, Sicilian Muse, the dirge begin!

Well, Justice hath them in her grip: yet I
No less the sad occasion must lament.
But could I win the way to Tartarus
That Orpheus erst and great Alcides went,
And wise Ulysses; and to Pluto's house
Coming, could see thee there, and hear thee sing,
And learn what ditty softens the Dark King!
Ah, then! might my poor pipings aught avail
To buy thee back, Bion, they should not fail!
But thou, for Proserpine,
Temper thy flute to a Sicilian lay,
Some sweet familiar pastoral of thine.
For she herself is of Sicilian blood,
And on the slopes of Ætna wont to play,
And loved the Dorian mood.
Not unrewarded shall thy music be;
But as in old time the enchanting strain
Of Orpheus won him his Eurydice,
So, Bion, shalt thou win thy hills again!

[1] Mr. Arnold will pardon this theft. It had been idle to attempt a better version of the line,

εὕδομες εὖ μάλα μακρὸν ἀτέρμονα νήγρετον ὕπνον,

than he has given in 'Thyrsis.'

DOSTOÏEWSKY AND HIS WORK.

I HAVE joined in this paper an author's life and his writings in a manner which may seem perhaps unnecessary to those who are accustomed to look upon the two as having no necessary relation to each other, if not, indeed, inevitably distinct. But it is to this barely veiled individuality of the teacher, in habit, thought and conviction—to the never dissoluble connection between his ways and his speech—that his hold over his countrymen is chiefly due. Herein he treads boldly in a path which writers of other nations as a rule carefully eschew. It is commonly said that a novelist fails when he relates his own experiences, unless he can so distort them as to be beyond recognition. The whole work has come to be one of perfected fiction, dependent for its success not more upon intrinsic worthiness than upon the correctness of the art with which it is constructed. The unities must be preserved: there must be a definite and coherent plot, the thread of which must never be lost sight of: the characters must be nicely balanced, and must not crowd unduly upon the stage: there must be no exaggeration of sentiment or nature, save in the way of downright caricature: above all, no phase of life or thought must be laid bare, however deeply underlying and leavening the social world, that would in the slightest degree shock our sensitive and peculiarly constituted notions of decency. One takes up Russian work, on the other hand, to find all these academic rules ignored, with the most direct and evidently untutored simplicity. We meet with a man who has got a tale to tell—a tale of an episode, a hardship, or a wrong—and he pours it out in his own intensely thoughtful fashion, quite regardless of any set of guiding principles save those of his own intuitive genius, or of any schooling save that of his own experience. It is nearly always a sombre, miserable tale, of grinding poverty and work, of betrayal, of the irresistible wrongs which the powerful ones of his nation can inflict with impunity upon those beneath them: we have a dull prescience of sombreness and woe from the beginning; but this only makes the recital more touching, from the nobility of purpose, the simplicity, the resignation of characters possessed of only a dangerously little knowledge, and ever struggling towards light and freedom.

And the writer himself always lives before us, endowing at any rate a sufficient number of his company with the most absolute flesh and blood. We can trace out his ways, his friendships, his loves, his sympathies. When Dostoïewsky makes one of his chief personages, a struggling author, speak of "long nights spent in hope and dreams, and in passionate work, while he lived with his phantasies and creations as with dearest friends, loving them, rejoicing with them, grieving with them even to tears," we know perfectly well that it is a piece of his own experience upon which he is drawing; and so we can follow him through the long winding path of suffering and striving, now lit up by dawning hope, now even by absolute accomplishment and triumph, but with the inevitable closing of disappointment and unfruitfulness, which seems to form the only way of common life the thoughtful Russian can point out.

Of the four Russian writers—Tourgueneff, Dostoïewsky, Tolstoï, with their forerunner Gogol—who have within the last fifty years at once

made and over-shadowed the literature of their country, shaping the course of thought, character, and event among their countrymen in a manner little less than phenomenal—of these four writers, Dostoïewsky is the one who seems to me to have most interest and importance for English readers; for, while his range of conception and expression is more limited than those of his great rivals, his materials are more solid and more solidly arranged, his purpose and plan more direct, and his analysis of human nature more searching, subtle and true.

He was born in 1821: his birthplace, strangely enough, and by some grim irony of fate, being one of the hospitals for the poor in Moscow, where his father had obtained the post of medical attendant; and thus his earliest days were spent amid surroundings which, in after years, were to become a weary chain wrapped round and eating into his own life. For the first twenty years or so of his existence, however, he was but a spectator of misery; for there was some family property in a neighbouring province which kept the household in comparatively easy circumstances, and secured for the sons a good education. Periodical visits were undoubtedly made to this small Toula estate, but upon the young Feodor Michaïlovitch all his sojourning in the country seems to have had no shred of influence. While his great contemporaries, Gogol especially, betray a remarkable susceptibility to the charms and beauties of nature, and are often carried away from all soberness of language and simile by their enthusiastic love of her, Dostoïewsky's sympathies seem all absorbed by the scenes and dramas of the narrow streets and narrower homes of the city. He passed presently, with his elder brother Alexis, from the small school at Moscow into one of the huge military establishments of St. Petersburg; but his shy, nervous temperament found there nothing either in life or prospect to compensate for the severe brutality of the routine. His only solace seems from his published letters to have lain in the frequent perusal of such French romances as he could lay hands upon, and in the then recently published novels of Gogol. In the year 1843 he obtained his commission; and in the following year, when his father died, he threw up whatever military vocation or ambition he possessed, and launched himself, with his small share of the family wealth, upon the world of literature.

It happened now to the friendless Feodor Michaïlovitch, as it happens to ninety-nine out of a hundred young literary enthusiasts in a world where what does not depend upon connection depends upon elbowing, and who are too delicate of mental constitution to resort to the one, and too independent to care well for the other. His little capital was speedily dissipated; and he had then to force himself to secure by painful solicitation enough journalistic and translating work to provide bare food and lodging. Proud and reserved by nature, and so shrinking from any appeal that might unnecessarily proclaim neediness, his advance was further blocked by the very keenness of his sympathies, and by the ill-health which was henceforth to be his constant attendant through life, and which made him more than naturally distrustful of his powers.

And yet, had he with proper worldly wisdom cared for the beginnings of his fame—for that philosopher's stone of connection which turns for authors all things into gold—he might, in spite of his waywardness, have quickly risen to a position of affluence and ease. Many lines of his life about this time may be traced out in one of his later novels,[1] which indeed fails as a work of art chiefly through its too manifest record of personal experience. In the first days of his disappointing and grinding life, being then but twenty-two or twenty-three years old, he had occupied his (alas! too many) hours of

[1] 'Oppressed.'

leisure by the composition of a novel, to which he gave one of his usual tersely descriptive titles, 'Poor Folk.' The circumstances of its publication are graphically set forth in his Reminiscences, with perhaps a dash of pardonable exaggeration. What to do with the manuscript to which he had given laborious birth he did not know; when one of his few friends, Grigorovitch by name, laid violent hands upon the packet, and took it to Nekrassof, who had already become a power in the literary world. At three o'clock in the morning there was a great knocking at Dostoïewsky's door, and Grigorovitch presently appeared, ushering in the impatient Nekrassof, who had sat up half the night reading the romance, and would not let another hour pass without embracing the young author. How the three spent the rest of the night in rapturous confabulation, we need not inquire; but with the morning came more solid issues. With the cry, "A new Gogol has arisen among us!" Nekrassof went straight to the famous Bielinsky, whose word was law to several of the best publishers in St. Petersburg, and within three months the book was in everybody's mind and mouth.

It was certainly a strange book for a young enthusiast to write! From two and twenty years we could reasonably look, if not for the trite reproduction of the phrases current in society, at least for the exaggerated colouring of exuberant fancy, of pictured happiness or heroic tragedy. But 'Poor Folk' is simply grey. There is nothing in it that is not part of the dull average of every day misery, with only such picturesque, half-tragical, half-comical situations as commonplace misery yields, lighting them up, for those who look below the surface, with touches of tenderest humanity. There is a petty government servant, who spends his days in ignominious quill-driving, and in alternating struggles against want and the dictates of a proud self-respect. At first sight there is nothing at all interesting about the man; but to any one at all initiated into the peculiar virtues of the Russian people, there is in such a conception a grand opportunity for painting the spirit of unostentatious self-sacrifice and beautiful simplicity which are perhaps the most salient features in the character of the race. Similar creations (in the lower and middle classes, be it always understood) are to be met with in nearly all the novels belonging to this period, and are evidently drawn from life. As a rule, the lower they are in the scale the more true and touching do they become, from their very setting in circumstances, and even accompanying instincts, little short of brutal; but the Devoushkine of 'Poor Folk' is nowhere surpassed.

This man's existence, so hard and commonplace, is lightened by a tender regard for a young girl, a distant relative, who occupies an obscure lodging opposite the attic where he pursues his daily work. Her lot, in degradation and misery, is even a few degrees lower than his own, and it is upon the interlacing and mutual reaction of these two natures (ever a favourite theme with Dostoïewsky) that the interest of the reader is centred. Their affection is altogether platonic, but none the less, on the one side at least, potent and enduring. Devoushkine, while in reality the truest of lovers, poses only as a father, an elder brother, a protective or good genius of any sort that has no hope of very tangible reward; while the girl, his superior in all matters of tact and worldly knowledge, accepts his care and devotion with a trustfulness and reverence which only just fail to be the full complement of his unspoken, and indeed unrecognised passion.

Here I must join issue with those critics who regard Dostoïewsky's women as his finest creations. Save in one or two of his female characters there is always something a little repelling—either the absence of intuition and grateful perceptiveness, or the presence of a thread of selfishness—in

their attitude towards the man who honours them with his devotion. It may pass as a piece of bitter satire—and as such I am bound to conclude the author intended it; but to make it a general rule is neither fair nor admirable, and sometimes turns an otherwise lovable woman into an irritating puppet.

But to return: the development of the story is carried on by means of letters, which pass almost daily between the chief personages. These not only give exquisitely drawn representations of the daily experiences in which we are most interested, but also afford the author an opportunity, without needlessly overcrowding his canvas, of presenting a host of touching and evidently faithful pictures of other hard, brutal, heroic existences which he saw around him; and on behalf of which, while they have no very definite connection with his main story, he would claim our sympathy. Presently there supervenes the crisis for which what I have qualified as an undercurrent of satirical analysis of the woman's character has been preparing us. These two lives are rudely torn asunder: not by any new or overmastering passion which we could forgive, not by any act of overt violence over which we could only grieve, but by a simple, natural, and somewhat shallow piece of feminine calculation, which, of course, the girl bases upon self-abnegation. She accepts the offer of a rich suitor whom she despises, and who has been carefully represented as an evil genius of the drama, and is taken off in triumph by her husband to a distant part of the country. For the final separation, however, there is a lengthened preparation, in which the diverse sentiments which have actuated the two characters are finely, if in most harrowing detail, developed. Varinka, with all her delicate refinement and culture, with all her professions of self-sacrifice, and her exact estimate of the false position which she has elected to occupy, is dazzled and carried away by the glories of her new surroundings and prospects, and fills her letters to her old friend with all sorts of trivial details upon the subject, while loading him with commissions and injunctions exactly calculated to impress upon him the width of the gulf which she has opened between them. Devoushkine is faithful to the end, a man with no distinctly exalted ideas upon any subject on the face of the earth, but only single-hearted and true—true to his accepted burden of life, and single-hearted in his self-sacrifice.

I am continually tempted, while putting together these notes, to illustrate them with extracts; but it is best not to attempt what could not fail to be an unfruitful essay. Apart from any loss of power through imperfect translation, every phrase requires to be read with the context in order to estimate its value. Herein lies one of the most admirable characteristics of all Dostoïewsky's work. There is no striving after effect, no mere fine writing for the sake of display, nor resort to any other of the recognised tricks of authorship. An isolated passage, therefore, inevitably loses its colouring by isolation. Indeed there is no *striving* after anything. Without manifest art—nay, with a manifest absence of art—the whole thing hangs together naturally, page by page and scene by scene; while the exceeding simplicity of the recital almost disarms criticism. We have just the plain, unvarnished tale of a man who has felt and suffered what he writes about; and very few will put down the book without the irrepressible thought that, if one half of what is here set forth is true—if poor burdened humanity is staggering thus secretly at our side under anything like these loads—one ought truly to spend one's life in some great and definite labour of helpfulness; or at least, if that be not possible, to tread with ever careful and reverent tenderness over all the interlacing and inter-

dependent ways which go to make up the strange community of life.

'Poor Folk,' then, as I have said, made its mark at once, and met with a reception which might have assured to its author a prosperous future, if not a brilliant and lasting reputation.

But the very powers which had led Dostoïewsky up to the doors of solid success were destined to close them in his face. Bielinsky and 'Poor Folk' introduced him, promptly enough, into the literary and social circles around which he had been so long hovering, a friendless outsider; but the former, not content with bestowing upon the young author just such scant patronage as a lettered lion is wont to extend to the smaller animals who do him homage, sought to turn Dostoïewsky's peculiar talents to the advantage of his own party and aims. For Bielinsky's sympathies were secretly with the great socialistic and revolutionary wave which had been gradually rolling over Western Europe from the year 1830, or thereabouts; and now, from 1845 onwards, was destined to mark out Russia as its peculiar prey. Democracy, under such guises as the people's rights or social reform, seemed, of course, alluring enough to a young enthusiast like Dostoïewsky, just emerging from his own grinding in the mill of oppression, and restive alike under the smarting of his own personal injuries and the burden of a righteous crusade. Still he seems to have given his adherence only to the moderate party, which adopted the emancipation of the serfs and a constitutional government as its platform; and, at this early stage at least, to have had but little sympathy with the other section of revolutionists—presently to loom up in history as Nihilists—who blindly sought only to destroy, without thought or care for the rebuilding.

It is hard, however, to steer a middle course in a raging torrent, and how far Dostoïewsky's sympathies carried him it is impossible to say. Between 1845 and 1848 his pen was comparatively idle, only producing trifles which have done little to enhance his reputation. Meanwhile secret societies of all shades of revolutionary ideas were formed in St. Petersburg, with one Petrachewsky as head. At their reunions Dostoïewsky undoubtedly assisted: he aided with his pen and eloquence the common cause which socialism has ever made with atheism, and it can hardly be regarded as strange that in due time he came to be looked upon as a dangerous personage. For three years, however, he was allowed to go unmolested, and it is hard to resist here a word of sympathy with the august arbiter of his fate. For, so far as one can judge, the Emperor Nicholas was sincerely desirous to carry out the very reforms for which the moderate party of revolutionists clamoured; and was only hindered by his appreciation of the danger of seeming to do so in obedience to the outcry of turbulent and irresponsible cliques, or in an hour when these were making any form of government and society unstable.

At last came the inevitable catastrophe. Upon the twenty-third of April, 1849, Dostoïewsky was arrested, while assisting at a secret meeting, and with thirty-four other suspects, was forthwith lodged in the dungeons for which St. Petersburg has gained an unenviable notoriety. Eight months of dreary suspense and mental torture slowly rolled away, unrelieved by any break or incident save the periodical and solitary official interrogation. Not a word of fellowship, save by stealth: not a book, nor paper! No one of the band knew what judgment was recorded against him, nor yet what testimony a companion had borne for or against him. Upon a naturally sluggish mind such an existence may induce a certain phase of lethargy, or even contentment; but it is impossible to have more than a faint conception of the effect of an experience of this kind upon a nervous, highly strung temperament like that of

Dostoïewsky, brooding continually, as he must have brooded, over what he had done, and what he might have done had not his fate overtaken him. One gets a glimpse of his state of mind through a remarkable simile which he used in writing to his brother in after days: "I lived literally," he says, "upon my brain: . . . thinking, thinking, always thinking, yet with nothing to sustain or replenish thought. . . I was, as it were, under an air-pump, with all that goes to make breath exhausted."

On the twenty-second of December the prisoners, to the number of twenty-one (thirteen having been set at liberty), were brought out upon a public square to hear their sentence. It took a long time to read; but the criminals, standing there shivering in their shirts, had not to wait until the end to know the fate prepared for them. For the platform upon which they were placed was a scaffold; and at its foot were a couple of covered carts, from which peeped out certain ominous boxes. They were to be shot where they stood!

The reading of the judgment being over, and the ordained form of priestly exhortation gone through, a first batch of the condemned was led out and blindfolded—their companions looking on: an officer gave the word of command, and the soldiers presented their pieces. And then, just as the fatal "Fire!" was about to be uttered, a white flag was waved before their eyes, and they were informed that the Emperor had been graciously pleased to commute their punishment, and that the attendant waggons were to transport them to Siberia!

Dostoïewsky's sentence, however, was light in comparison with that of his companions. He was to be interned for four years only, with a period of forced service afterwards as a common soldier, and loss of all family and civil rights. Of his experiences in Siberia he has given us two pictures: the one, very faint and sketchy, in 'Crime and its Punishment:' the other in 'A Region of the Dead.' The latter romance he wrote shortly after his liberation, and it is doubly interesting, as being both a recital of his own daily existence, and a faithful representation of the scenes and experiences which he noted around him.

The terrible catastrophe of 1849, with all its sequence of bitterness, was in some sort Dostoïewsky's resurrection to good work. It is but natural that this should have been so, when we look carefully at the circumstances. During the period immediately preceding 1849 we see him, a suddenly successful young author, so manifestly yielding to the leadings and drivings of the arch-tempter Success, that for four years he does practically nothing—prostitutes his talents to mere trifling. He is then called upon to undergo a fiery trial which is perhaps unrivalled in the records of literature; and he is first driven in upon himself by solitude until thought becomes a burden, and then so oppressed by uncongenial yet inevitable companionship, and hard manual labour as uncongenial, that acute observation and introspection become again the blessed and only possible relief. If he is able—as Dostoïewsky was just able—to keep heart and brain in fair equilibrium through such a set of experiences, it would be strange indeed if, when he comes once more under the softening influences of friendship, sympathy, and easeful ways, and before there is time for him to be again led astray by their blandishments, he does not produce fine, true, and subtle work.

'A Region of the Dead' was slowly elaborated between 1854 and 1858—bearing indeed internal evidence of having been begun, in extensive notes, before Dostoïewsky's release. Careful thought is apparent in the very conception and plan of the book; and it may easily be understood what a difficult task the author had set himself. A subject so delicate as that of the hardships of Siberian incarceration he must treat of in terms only inferential, if not actually enig-

matical. Himself a suspected and watched personage, and yet with a definite mission to accomplish,[1] he must formulate an indictment indeed, but only by innuendo. He must not nakedly set forth his own history, and yet he must interest his readers in a manifestly true recital, in a living drama, and a central character. He must not deal with the ever-ready theme of exaggerated political offences, nor yet bring any real charge of harshness or injustice against the authorities; but yet must command unhesitating sympathy with oppressed souls, and must forbear, therefore, to paint their faults or crimes with any degree of blackness.

All this Dostoïewsky exactly accomplishes, by transcribing the experiences and impressions of a certain fictitious personage, condemned to ten years of hard labour for the murder of his wife in a fit of rational and almost pardonable jealousy, and dying in Siberia after his term of punishment had expired. A man of keen sensibilities, of refinement and education, and so seeking relief from uncongenial surroundings in psychological observations, we accept it as quite natural and proper that this Goriatchnikow should be able to present us with a long series of studies of character, connected by pictures of daily events, or by the gathering up of threads in the past lives of those who move across the stage, into no very coherent whole indeed—possessing no distinct main line of interest, nor of prospective development — and yet riveting our attention and sympathies by evident faithfulness of portraiture and life, and by the aptest touches of that humanity which makes us all kin.

The realism of the narrative is perhaps its most striking feature. No effort is required of us. We need no specially imported interest, no highly-coloured plot, in order to see and have fellowship with this great band of unfortunates at their hard, grinding tasks, or to follow them one by one into their dark retrospects. We feel the icy cold upon the river: the cruel wind, as it whistles over the undeviating steppe, making the dry yellow grass shiver as it passes: we faint beneath the unsupportable glare of the summer sunshine. The forbidding walls of the fortress rise up before us: the sordid parade ground: the hospital with white-washed corridors and bare floors. We hear the lash of the whip upon the shoulders of the poor soul who has transgressed some stupid disciplinary law through inadvertence or desperation: we stand beside the deathbed of the man who has shrivelled away in his awful prison-house; and the clank of his irons, as they trail after his body upon the floor, seems to startle us out of the rapt watching of his last agony. And then we understand that we really comprehend not the half of it: that, taken sentence by sentence, the writer has told us nothing; but has artfully led us to feel, by the extreme simplicity and lucidity of his form, that, beyond our ken, there lies an experience and woe to which we must for ever remain strangers, while such realisation as we have attained to is only the work of awakened sympathy.

It is something of a lesson to the reviewer to note how much of the effectiveness of the book is owing to what would, academically speaking, be reckoned its fault. In three directions this is apparent. There is, first, the barrenness in development of either character or story, to which allusion has already been made: a defect not only of all Dostoïewsky's conceptions, but working more or less havoc in those of all his great contemporaries. For the Russian romancist there is a present nature and a present existence, both of which he is profoundly able to grasp and analyse; and there is, moreover, a past, about which his imagination will freely play, and into which his understanding will penetrate. But there is no future for him.

[1] A mission which he has accomplished. But few of the severities and barbarities described in 'A Region of the Dead' now exist.

When he attempts to outline it hand and mind alike falter, and he turns quickly from the effort with evident relief. What a dangerous element this is in weak writing, or in a weak position, I need not stay to demonstrate. It is not always that power of description or diagnosis will prove sufficient —we may see in 'Oppressed' how terribly this constructive defect could militate against even Dostoïewsky's success. And yet here, in 'A Region of the Dead,' we only seem to be thereby left the more free to be dominated by the interests and impulses of the moment, as the drama moves disjointedly before us.

Then, springing perhaps out of this weakness in development, there is the unrelieved, and therefore exaggerated, spirit of hopelessness which broods over every character and every scene. It is impossible, of course, to conceive of a great army even of condemned criminals among whom there shall not be found one real hope of a future. But, however one may feel inclined to cry out against such a distortion of the natural order of things, the effect, undoubtedly, is to add sombreness to a recital which is intended to be only dark. A very remarkable instance of this occurs at the close of the book, apparently unstudied, and yet, here at least, fairly ranking as a cunning turn of the master's art. Throughout the whole narrative we have been entering into the prisoners' sighing aspirations after freedom. We see them regarding liberty as the first necessity of a happy existence, and its loss as their greatest privation. We assist at a memorable scene when they let loose a captured eagle, that he may "starve free." And then, when the hour of release comes to Goriatchnikow himself, there is hardly a single note of rejoicing—none of real hope. He trembles before a world which will become strange to him,—before an existence which will prove perhaps unfriendly. He wonders what revolutions, what progress, will have been made; and finally leaves his prison and the companions of his prison, with a feeling akin to regret!

Lastly, there is a fault in the teaching—for the Russian nation, for whom the book was designed, a very grave fault, but for the mere reader a potent spur to his sympathies. There is thrown everywhere over crime a certain ennobling halo of false sentiment. We know perfectly well (one has only to look upon them in real life in order to see it) that the great majority in this army of unfortunates are the most uninteresting and brutal of criminals. And yet we are never allowed to think so, but are led only to note carefully their sufferings, their wrongs, and the wondrously tender humanity which, we are assured, lies immediately below the surface, and is unconquered even by the hardening process of prison-life and discipline. As for the crimes which have darkened the past, they are the offspring of an irresistible fate, of providentially ordered circumstances, of wrong-avenging love, of a burning desire to deliver the world from some evil, of obedience to religious conviction; while everything is atoned for by present sufferings, and paralleled by the lot of the world's Redeemer!

But, as 'Poor Folk,' so 'A Region of the Dead' is a work which cannot be harshly criticised: so deeply touching is it, so full of purpose to improve off the face of the earth the sorrows and evils under which the author himself had bowed. Repelled by its sickening details, and recognising here and there its shortcomings and extravagances, we may long to put the book down, and free ourselves from its fascination, and yet it will finally conquer us. We feel that, however unnatural and distorted may seem to us these recitals of barbarities and cruelty on the one hand, and of feverish energy, courage, devotion, and fortitude on the other, there is yet here an indeterminable element of truth; and we accept the ready explanation that we are in the presence of a race whom we know not, and from whom we can only ex-

pect things which seem to us so strange. To Dostoïewsky his fate was, as he afterwards upheld, "a mother"; and in some lesser degree it may figure in like beneficent guise to those who look upon it.

Upon the next work which calls for notice, the romance entitled 'Oppressed,' to which some reference has already been made, I will not dwell, lest I should be tempted to speak unfairly. It has been pretty generally received with loud acclaim, and it was certainly composed at the best period of the author's life, and yet to me it is pre-eminently unsatisfactory. 'Oppressed' followed 'A Region of the Dead' at no long interval, and, like its great predecessor, represented a peculiar page in the writer's own history,—in fact may be read as a sequel to his prison-life. Upon obtaining his release, he served in the Siberian army as a common soldier, in accordance with the terms of his sentence. In two years' time, however, the customary indulgences of a new reign brought him his pardon, with the restoration of all civil rights, though another three years were yet to elapse before he was allowed to return home. In the meanwhile he had been fettered anew, but this time in softer chains. He had fallen in love with the widow of one of his old fellow-conspirators, who had followed her husband, in 1849, into his banishment. Unfortunately the lady had already set her affections elsewhere, and Dostoïewsky laboured, with his usual self-sacrifice and sincerity, to promote the happiness of his favoured rival. Those who have read 'Oppressed' will at once recognise the situation as forming the ground-work of the novel, but there all resemblance to real life stops. Vania, the hero—Dostoïewsky himself—is, indeed, fairly life-like, but the rest of the characters are little else than puppets; while there is no real plot, but only disjointed threads of narrative leading up to no catastrophe, and action and dialogue are alike stilted. The author himself, in later years, wrote down his personages in this romance as "dolls," qualifying his expression by adding that they "have an artistic form," and are in reality "walking books." Herein, to my thinking, he showed a creator's partiality; for there can be no great art in forms which continually irritate the beholder, and the moral of the book can hardly fail to produce in a thoughtful mind an effect diametrically opposed to the design. We end with the conviction that, if self-sacrifice works only for purposes such as are here glorified, the less there is of it in the world the better: that Vania labours obstinately not only to his own undoing, but in opposition to the true interests of those for whom he professed to care: that Natacha's childish love of Aliocha is a damning blot upon her self-assumed character of the incarnate and outraged deity: that her lover is an impossible fool; and the prime Oppressor, the Prince Valkowsky, a type altogether misunderstood by his creator, and belonging to a sphere into which the writer had never gained access.

There is, however, fortunately, better matter in store for us, though again i was to be the product of grievous adversity. Dostoïewsky was by this time (1860) once more settled at St. Petersburg. He had married his Natacha: he had by his two romances of 'A Region of the Dead' and 'Oppressed,' regained a solid position in the literary world, and, if his unquiet spirit had only allowed it, might have sat at ease for the rest of his days. But we have seen that of old he had been bitten by a love of journalism; and now an ardent embracing of the unpractical tenets of Slavo-philism urged him to embark not only time and talent, but also all his available funds upon a road where none but cool heads reach success. He founded successively two newspapers for the carrying on of his new crusade, and for six years he struggled manfully against impaired credit and declining health. Then he was submerged. Death robbed

him by one stroke of his wife and his brother Alexis, with the latter of whom he had, from his school-days, been associated in truest affection and co-operation: his newspapers failed, one after another, from want of funds; while the epileptic disease to which he had at all times been subject, and which his hard Siberian experiences had aggravated, forbade his undertaking any regular work. He left Russia, and wandered for five or six years in Germany and Italy, never staying long in any one spot, and becoming more and more imbued with misanthropy and irrational mysticism.

His pen, however, was never idle; and his later calamities, like his earlier ones, seemed only to revive and sharpen his dramatic power. In 1866, and in the very hour of his third defeat at the hands of fortune, appeared 'Crime and its Punishment,' beyond all question the finest of his works, and forming, with 'Poor Folk' and 'A Region of the Dead,' a trilogy of which any writer or age might feel justly proud. Here, at least, there is a definite and coherent narrative: so coherent, in fact, and so subtle in its coherence, that not a word, hardly a gesture, certainly no minutest circumstance can be left unmarked without weakening the effect of the whole. But far transcending any dramatic interest—exciting as this is, and well-sustained until almost the last page—is the value of the narrative from a psychological point of view. I know that there may be serious objection taken to such an estimate, and that the work has conduced in Russia to the spread of Nihilistic doctrine, and even to the committal of absolute crime; but it seems to me that the fault lies with the disordered intellect of a few of Dostoïewsky's readers, and that he himself emphatically "wrote to cure."

The narrative is in substance simple enough. The hero is a poor student, Raskolnikow, who, as it afterwards appears, has been strongly imbued with Nihilistic notions concerning the sacredness of life and of property. He lives in idleness, like a beaten dog, in a veritable kennel of a lodging, allowing his mother and sister to suffer hardship and degradation in order that his own head may be kept just above water: possessed, moreover, of a knowledge of his latent powers, and of the grand possibilities of life, in magnificent contrast with his habits and surroundings. We find him haunted by a temptation—at first so distant and impalpable, as to be hardly a temptation—to "suppress" a wretched old female usurer, who not only lives upon such ne'er-do-weels as himself, and grows rich thereby, but makes herself generally objectionable to the world at large, and to a poor long-suffering sister in particular. "What an essentially good action it would be, after all," he thinks, "to rid society of this pest! to possess oneself (especially so gifted a self as I am) of her wealth; and thenceforth, freed from every burden, to spend one's life in benevolent purpose and action!" The scheme gradually lays irresistible hold upon him: it is cherished and matured in every detail, even while it is treated as a chimæra, and finally, through the compelling power of a chain of seemingly providential circumstances, is carried into effect. Then straightway begins the punishment. Raskolnikow is, in reality, far too noble to profit in any way by his sin: he becomes the prey, not exactly of remorse—as we understand the feeling—but of an unrestful, isolating, disappointed, self-condemnatory frame of mind analogous thereto; and in the end, after playing with the justice which has got scent of him, alternately fascinated and repelled by the notion that he must give himself up, he yields to the dictates of his repentance, and is consigned to eight years of hard labour in Siberia.

So much for the main personage in the story. There is a secondary figure, however, perhaps to some minds yet more interesting, and the more so because it is (a rare thing for Dostoïewsky!) the figure of a woman. This Sonia, Raskolnikow's unobtrusive

better angel, is a young girl who, in all unspoiled delicacy and purity of mind, has made herself a common prostitute in order to support her parents. An impossible figure, it may be urged. I can only say, once more, that we are constantly bound to confess that we are in the presence of types which our English prejudices will not allow us to comprehend—among a people, strange to us, from whom we can but expect strange things. It is Sonia to whose influence Raskolnikow owes whatever noble and rational sentiments come from time to time to illuminate his perhaps exaggerated brutality: to her he owes, too, his final resurrection to a better self, and she it is who keeps close to him in his self-imposed abasement, and leaves all to accompany him in his exile. I am tempted to give an extract to show how finely the antagonism and yet mutual sympathy of these two is marked and sustained. Raskolnikow has come, in his usual aimless and desperate state of mind, into the wretched lodging where Sonia lives, and proceeds to lecture her (in terms of needless brutality) upon her foolish persistence in a hopeless course of life, and upon her want of foresight. The girl answers him, in a crushed and yet dignified way, expressing her firm trust in a God who protects the innocent. The whole of this dialogue, I may say in parenthesis, while fine in itself, is most skilfully designed to set forth in vivid colouring the degradation and wretchedness of Sonia's lot: leading up, moreover, to what would seem, without careful preparation, an absurd incident, and yet which is in reality the key-note not only of this but of nearly all Dostoïewsky's works. The conversation is broken off, Raskolnikow pacing rapidly to and fro in the room, without so much as regarding his companion. Presently he stops short, puts his hands upon her shoulders, and looks for a moment steadily into her eyes. Then:

"Suddenly he stooped down to the ground, still without a word, and kissed the girl's feet. Half in terror, half in wonderment, she recoiled from him.

"'What are you doing to me?' she stammered.

"He rose immediately. 'No,' he said, 'it is not to you that I do homage; but to you as the type of all this immense human suffering and enduring.' And turning his back upon her he strode to the window, standing there lost in thought.

"But presently he returned again, and demanded brusquely, with an evident desire to comprehend what seemed to him an alienated and irrational state of mind: 'Then you pray to God, Sonia—eh?'

"For a moment or two she made no reply; but, as he still waited, she murmured, in a low voice, 'Whatever should I be without my God?'

"'But what is it that you conceive God does for you?' he persisted.

"Again she was silent, recognising the uselessness of debating the question; and, indeed, too much overcome by her secret emotion to find a voice.

"'Ah, hush!' she cried at last, looking up at him quickly, in passionate anger. 'You don't understand! And you have no right to question me in that way!'

"'That is certainly true,' he said, sadly.

"But her anger passed away as suddenly as it had arisen. She bent her eyes once more to the ground, and added, as if compelled to some full and final confession of her faith, 'God does everything for me, and is everything to me.'"

The scene is far too long for transcription, and far too subtle in its dramatic power to be fairly represented thus in disintegration. But for yet another reason than those already named it is worthy of special comment; for we may trace here, now in the turn of an expression, now in an action, nearly every tenet and principle of this Romance-School of Russian thought and teaching. "It is a hard world, my masters!" the preacher is for ever crying. And then he goes on to show how that, through no special offence of their own, but by an odd sort of alliance between Fate, Providence, and the rich, the hardest knocks are dealt out to the poor: how that it is only proper and right that oppression and torture should be temporarily endured as a harsh necessity, in childlike dependence upon the

wisdom of God, and, above all, in order to obtain the purification and the crown accorded to patient sufferers; but yet that it is not to be wondered at, indeed is inevitable, that, below all this, there should be a smouldering fire of resistance and vengefulness, which will ever and anon blaze out into open rebellion, and eventually carry all before it. It need hardly be said, however, that the moral of the doctrine has to be skilfully concealed, and must be sought rather by the light of inference and feeling than in plain speech.

Dostoïewsky's strange "life of a cat,"—as he termed it—was in some sort only just beginning with the publication of this novel. Returning to St. Petersburg in 1871 there was in store for him, at last, a lengthened period of comparative rest and comfort, spent in honourable work, and in the enjoyment of a daily increasing popularity. He made a second marriage soon after his rehabilitation in the world,—a union which proved in every way happier than his first; and this, together with the solid success of 'Crime and its Punishment,' and the two quickly following romances, 'The Idiot' and 'The Possessed,' [1] placed him finally out of the range of any pecuniary difficulty. His very eccentricities—as, for example, the carelessly intermittent issue of a professedly monthly 'Note Book'—seemed only to gain for him fresh homage and esteem, and his death, in 1881, called forth an enthusiasm and idolisation which knew no bounds.

But for us, and with the appearance of 'Crime and its Punishment,' his figure ceases to have any special value. Dostoïewsky, the cosmopolitan in emotion and experience, is merged in Dostoïewsky the leader of a sect, and his writings become more and more the mere vehicle of a set of narrow opinions. All these — 'The Possessed,' 'The Brothers Karamazof,' even the more valuable 'Note Book,' in which he returns now and again to his old artistic self and power—I lay aside willingly enough: content if, in some small way, I have been able to rouse the interest and sympathy of a few English readers in the works of a writer who at his best was surely one of the chiefs of his time.

JOHN LOMAS.

[1] The literal rendering of the Russian title is 'The Demons.' The book describes the doings of a certain secret association of students, who bind themselves to work out by every possible means—not shrinking even from open crime—the reforming of such social and political evils as appear to them unsupportable.

LE NOMMÉ W.

In the department of the Basses Pyrénées in December, 1885, I temporarily lost my name. I became known as Le Nommé W. Thieves and murderers in that country are commonly designated in this way, and obtain consideration in plenty. Extenuating circumstances arise on their behalf, self-generated in a night like the mushrooms. But the crime of which my brother and I were accused was one that admitted of no palliation, the mere suspicion of which placed us at once beyond the pale of native sympathy; converted a *procureur*, who may at other times have been a gentleman, into a rough *bureaucrat*, and conjured up about us a Cadmean crop of revolvers and fetters. We were German spies.

About the middle of that December we were at Pau. The early part of the winter in the district had been exceptionally mild. We had spent three weeks in exploring the better known passes and valleys of the Hautes Pyrénées, and now proposed to make our way to Biarritz by a roundabout road through the forest of Iraty, a wild and interesting part of the French Basque country. Accordingly, we sent our heavy baggage by rail to Biarritz, and started ourselves after lunch on the 14th by train to Oloron, our equipment consisting of a knapsack and light pack, a railway rug, two light overcoats, and two walking sticks. The weather was fine and bright, though cold, and we were in high spirits, anticipating a delightful excursion.

At Oloron station we sought out the *diligence* for Tardets. We intended to sleep that evening at this place on the outskirts of the forest, with a view to making an early start on foot next morning. The *diligence* discovered, we put our slight baggage inside, and asked for two places. Then, learning that the vehicle would not leave the town for half-an-hour, we told the driver to pick us up by the way, and started blithely—unwitting lambs as we were—to stir our blood by a brisk walk along the road. This—if a cabinet minister well acquainted with French manners is to be believed—this was the cause of all our woe! To pay for a ride and then to walk is a thing so foreign to the thrifty French nature, that it might form the basis for an accusation of the most abominable crimes. We paid to ride: we walked. From that moment the eye of the French law saw in us German spies.

Once clear of Oloron, we strode along merrily, noting the softer character of the landscape, and admiring the rolling hills and woods, until the *diligence* overtook us some two miles or so beyond the town.

We stepped in, so far as I could afterwards remember, without hesitation, and greeted our fellow-travellers cheerily. They were two—a farmer or peasant-proprietor, and a bluff, ruddy, well-set-up man of middle height, wearing a cocked hat and uniform of dark blue faced with white, of the kind worn by the *gendarmes*. He sported epaulettes, however, and a profusion of silver lace, with a decoration and medal, and a handsome sword; so that I did not set him down either as an ordinary *gendarme* (a conclusion to which my brother had come) or as that which he was in fact, a brigadier of that force. I did not know what he was, but on lighting a cigarette offered him one. He preferred a cigar, and declined. His companion, however, accepted my offer, and we fell into a desultory conversation. To

what place were we going? What was our nationality? What cigarettes were they? Had we come from Pau? What was our purpose in visiting that part of the country? All these questions our smart friend asked, and I, who had never been "wanted," answered without any suspicion that I was being interrogated with a purpose. We were English, I said, travelling for pleasure, and going to Tardets: we had come from Pau: our cigarettes were of Egyptian manufacture.

After this, wearied by the rattling of the omnibus and the strain which the use of a foreign tongue imperfectly known imposed, I was glad to fall into silence. I examined—these details are important—my letter-case to see if I had any gold-beater's skin. And, my brother calling my attention to the sun-set sky behind us, we speculated on the chance of the highest peak in sight being the Pic du Midi d'Ossau, on whose shoulder, six thousand feet above the sea, we had been some weeks before.

About five o'clock the *diligence* stopped in the street of a small village. Near at hand, and apparently awaiting it, stood a *gendarme.* The brigadier, stepping out nimbly, exchanged, as I noticed, a word with him, and passed across the road. The *gendarme* came to the door. "Look here!" exclaimed my brother, "he has left this!" And taking up a smart leather satchel, which the brigadier had left in his place, he handed it to the *gendarme*, telling him that "the monsieur" had left it.

"Thank you," said the man civilly. "Are you going to Tardets?"

"Certainly!" we answered.

"Then you descend here. This is Tardets."

We were astonished. We had not looked to be at Tardets before half-past six. But we had no suspicions, and thanking him cordially, we alighted. The *gendarme* pointed out the inn, a very poor place, and we entered it with him: we were about to ask for a bedroom, when he intervened, opening the door of a room down stairs, and inviting us by a gesture to enter. We did so, and saw immediately that we had fallen into a trap. Before us, looking very stern and uncompromising, stood the brigadier: behind us we heard the door slammed to with unnecessary emphasis.

"This is not Tardets, but Aramits," the Brigadier said harshly. "I wish to ask you some questions. If you answer them satisfactorily, you shall proceed on your journey, gentlemen."

Then he began by asking, as he sat down at the table before us, what was my name. I told him, and that I had a passport, which I produced, not doubting that this would end the matter. Nothing of the kind! It was in English, and our inquisitor knew nothing of that language. Despite his decorations and epaulettes, he could not write with facility, could not spell at all, and I suspect could read but little. He pounced upon the word Majesty, and persisted for some time that that was my name. Then the passport, although countersigned for Spain and Italy, bore no French *visé.* Rejecting it, therefore, he proceeded to put to me, in a tone which grew more loud and imperious each minute, a series of questions. He asked my name, nationality, and profession: where I had entered France: how long I had been in the country: how long I proposed to stay in it: what was my object in travelling: where did I intend to sleep that night—the next—and the next? Then came my brother's turn, our inquisitor's tone growing more bim-bam-bom-like each minute. He disregarded our protestations that he spoke too quickly, and that we did not understand all he said; and, telling us that we had spoken French excellently in the *diligence*, paid us the only compliment which passed at the interview.

"Now, attend to me!" he cried presently, passing from examination-in-chief to cross-examination. "Why did you, when you were about to enter the vehicle, show hesitation

at sight of me—of me—the Brigadier?"

I laughed outright. The idea that I should shrink at sight of even a superintendent of police seemed to me, being an Englishman and not an official-ridden Frenchman, funny in the extreme. "I did not," I said.

"Why did you tell me in the *diligence* that you were Belgians? Answer me that!" And he thumped the table.

"It is not true. I did not tell you so."

"Very well!" in a menacing accent. "Why did you tell me that you were friends, not brothers?"

"I did not tell you so."

"What! You said you were Belgians. That is so?"

"No! no! no!"

"Where is the map which you consulted in the *diligence?*"

"I had no map in the *diligence.*"

"You took something from your pocket, and examined it. Produce it!"

I handed to him a tiny packet containing gold-beater's skin. He looked at it curiously, almost fearfully. He consulted the *gendarme* upon it. He held it up to the light. Finally he put it carefully aside.

"And now the map! Be quick! The map I say!" he roared.

"The only map we have is an authorised French map, that of the *État-major.* But it is in the knapsack. We did not have it in the *diligence.* The knapsack was in the care of the driver."

"You had a pencil. You made a map of the country as you came?"

"I had no pencil. I made no map. I do not draw."

"You made signs."

At this I shrugged my shoulders, and exchanged a glance of wonder with my brother—making signs again, you see!

"You looked behind you at the country," he persisted doggedly. I told him what I have already set down respecting the sunset and the Pic du Midi.

"Why did you not speak to one another in French? Attend! Tell me that," with another thump upon the table.

"It is not our language. We speak it badly, and with difficulty."

"Chut! You understand it perfectly! You said you were travelling for your pleasure."

"Yes, that is so."

"But you said also that you were travelling for your health."

"Yes, that is so, too. Partly for pleasure and partly for health."

"Are you wealthy?"

"No, I wish I were!" And so he continued in an endless round of the same questions. I have set some of them down at length, because they convey an idea of the French system of examining the accused; and offer an example of the false assumptions, the deliberate traps, and the bullying tone by which the prosecution seek to extract either the truth, or something that may weigh against the prisoner. At the end of three quarters of an hour of this the brigadier announced himself to be dissatisfied. He must make an arrest.

I protested loudly. I warned him that we were British subjects. I produced two *lettres d'indication* addressed to a number of foreign bankers, and written in French. I showed him that the name engraved upon my compass, knife-haft, and other things corresponded with that in the passport. I solemnly warned him—well, that we should not perish unavenged: and I probably referred to *Son Excellence l'Ambassadeur de sa Majesté Britannique,* onestly believing at the time in the efficacy of this conjuration.

But he was not afraid of a name! He smiled a Napoleonic smile, and conducted us at once to the police-station. Here, in a little office, he wrote down his version of what we had said of ourselves, mingling with it, without distinguishing marks of any kind, his own evidence and his opinion of us generally. It may be imagined that the result was a very wonderful

document: particularly as I took pity upon his incapacity, spelled some of the French words for him, and occasionally even wrote a sentence, or struck the pen through one which contained too gross a perversion of our statements. This done he took from us our money (for which he gave us a receipt) and our papers, watches, compasses, and walking-sticks; our knapsacks and pack also. But he did not search us, so that we retained our matches and cigarettes. With great difficulty I obtained leave to send a telegram to the vice-consul at Pau.

By this time it was about a quarter-past six and quite dark. I anticipated that we should be lodged in the *gendarmes'* quarters, and was peering about in no apprehensive mood, when the brigadier bade us follow him. Guarded by two *gendarmes* we marched down stairs to a yard at the back of the house. Facing us stood a small detached outhouse with two doors. It would have been in England a pig-sty, or a hen-house, or at best a neglected dog-kennel; but in France, and here, it was the lock-up of Aramits! The two doors were thrown open, the two *gendarmes* bowed, and, immensely astonished, but too proud to complain or make a useless resistance, we stepped in, and the doors were locked behind us. We were in prison: the prison surely of some wild uncivilised country!

Our cells were about eight feet long by four wide and eight high: rough and mean beyond description. The walls and floor were of stones and trodden earth respectively, as we discovered when daylight came. At present we were in the dark: no fires, no lights! Windows proper, there were none, though an oblong aperture over the door admitted light in the day, and air (cold or warm as luck might have it) at all times. A board covered by a frowsy, dark-coloured blanket, and a pitcher in one case, a bucket in the other, formed the whole and only furniture in each cell. The sole alleviation of our discomfort lay in the fact that the partition between us was of rough planks, so that we could talk to one another—an arrangement, I fancy, not entirely matter of accident.

A quarter of an hour later our doors were opened, and I was taken to my brother's cell. One *gendarme* held a smoky, guttering candle: three others stood partly within, and partly without the doorway, around which a dozen women and children clustered, peeping at us. Our dinner, some greasy soup, with bits of bread and cabbage floating in it, was produced: we had only one basin, but, thank heaven, a spoon apiece: a lump of bread, and a bottle of thin sour wine completed the meal. Anxious not to seem cast down, we fell upon the horrid mess with apparent appetite, at intervals drinking toasts and bantering the police; and laughing very loudly at our own jokes. "*Vive la Republique!*" to which a glance round our cell gave point, was well received; so was "*Le Beau Sexe*"; but it was reserved for our third toast, "*Madame la femme de M. le Brigadier!*" to bring down the house, the vicious emphasis which we threw into our enemy's name sending his subordinates into a frenzy of delight. The more they laughed—and the most taciturn face wore a grin—the more fluent grew our French, and the wilder our folly; and when we wound up by begging them to bring our hot water at eight and to see that our beds were well aired and our boots well varnished—when this was done, and we were back in our cells, we had at least the satisfaction of feeling that our entertainment had been as successful as unique; and that M. le Brigadier's importance had not gained much at our hands.

By the way,—"Can we not," my brother had asked, "sleep at the inn, if we pay for our room and for a room for a guard?"

"No, it is out of the question," was the decisive answer—twice given.

At a quarter to seven our doors were locked, and were not again opened until eight o'clock next morning. For thirteen hours no one came near us. They were thirteen hours of

intense cold and misery, as may be understood when I say that the thermometer fell in that neighbourhood on that night several degrees below freezing point. My brother had fortunately been carrying our travelling rug, and it had not been taken from him; yet he felt the cold severely. I had merely my walking suit and a thin dust-coat. The frowsy blanket I at first put from me, shuddering at the least contact with it, and picturing the French tramp who had last used it. But necessity knows no daintiness: before morning I was hugging the blanket about me, and wishing that it were five times as thick. The night air poured in through the unglazed window, and through a dozen chinks and apertures besides. I did not get even ten minutes' sleep: by five o'clock my feet were numbed, my teeth chattering, and my shoulders shaking. For very fear lest the cold should kill me then and there, I rose, and for three hours tramped up and down the cell unceasingly—two steps and a half each way: it was dreary work!

Soon after eight the brigadier came in his shirt-sleeves, and let us out. For some time we had been loudly clamouring, and I think that he was alarmed on finding how cold the night had been; for he took us both to his room, and placed chairs for us before the wood-fire which was burning in the great open fireplace. His wife and child were still in bed in the room. He offered us a glass of Armagnac, and telling us he should take us early in the day to the *procureur* at Oloron, went down stairs. I have no doubt he did this last with a purpose. For almost immediately his wife, ignoring our presence, got up, and, after partly dressing herself, brought the child to the fire. She was a young woman, but thin and careworn. If it were not that wives in France have the upper hand, one would have said that Monsieur Bim-bam-bom began his bullying at home. She sat on the one side of the fire, dressing the child: we sat respectfully on the other. "You say you are English. Is it not so?" she begins, pausing with an uplifted sock in her hand, and fixing us suddenly with her keen eyes. We cheerfully acquiesce. "You do not speak German?" "Not a word." "Belgian?" "Most certainly not." "But you have no papers," she continues, shaking her head. "Papers? Oh dear yes! Abundance of papers! Papers signed by the Marquis of Salisbury, Chevalier de la Jarretière, &c. &c.!" we cry. "No, you have no papers! Dear, dear me!" "No papers!" we reply warmly. "And if it be so? Do we look like brigands, madam: thieves, madam?" "No, gentlemen!" And madam's polite breeding interferes with her duties as assistant police-examiner: she cries, "*Mon Dieu, non!*" many times, and we are comforted.

At nine o'clock the brigadier brought in a telegram. It was addressed to me, but he had opened it. The sender, the vice-consul at Pau, announced that he had telegraphed to the mayor of Aramits respecting us. This second telegram was presently brought. It certified that we were harmless tourists, known to the vice-consul. Upon this the brigadier was so kind as to say that we should soon be permitted to go. I thought he meant that he would release us without taking us before the *procureur*, and I replied sharply, "Our release is not the question now. We have a complaint to make."

"Of what?" he asked.

"Of the treatment we have received. It was your turn yesterday; it is ours to-day."

"What?" he roared. "I have gone out of my way to treat you well, and you threaten me? Take care! If you had not said that you were Belgians, this would not have happened!"

"We did not say so!" we both cried.

"You did!" he shouted.

"We did not!" I retorted as loudly. "No! no! no! It is false!" And we stood glaring into one another's

eyes. I thought he was going to strike me. Over his shoulder I had a glimpse of his wife's frightened face, and the smiling *gendarmes* in the doorway. Then he flung away with a torrent of oaths, leaving us to enjoy some bread and coffee, which we had been allowed to order at the inn, and found delicious. We thought that now our troubles were over and our enemy's beginning; but we reckoned without our host. Back presently came the brigadier, and sternly bade us follow him. He conducted us back to the cells, and locked us up—this time together. I fear we looked a little foolish.

So from half-past nine until about twelve we kicked our heels in my cell. It was in vain that we asked for water, that we might wash, and for our knapsack, that we might brush our hair, and so forth. The *gendarmes* visited us from time to time, but it was for other things than these—in part to see if even yet we would vary our story, and partly, I think, to gather our intentions. I made mine plain. I was sorry, I said, for the brigadier's wife and child; for himself—well, it was a pity that so promising a career should end thus miserably. And I drew a moral from the story. "Too much zeal!" I concluded sadly, "too much zeal!" My words, no doubt, were carried straight to the person concerned, and I think—yes, still I think—that under the bluff, stern exterior he showed us to the end, there was a heart quivering like a jelly.

At noon they let us out to eat a substantial luncheon in the sunny yard. Of course we paid for our chicken and claret, in spite of which it was wonderful how cheerful we grew as the warmth stole through us. The *gendarmes*, moreover, were civil and kindly. In the midst of our meal a visitor came upon the scene in the shape of the *curé* of the parish—a young man, thin and ascetic looking, but with a pleasant smile. I suppose he had come to see us in the ordinary course of his duties, for, after saluting us, he said, "My sons, this is sad! I trust that it will be a warning to you for the future." Now that was not at all the light in which we were looking at the matter, and I told him so very quickly. His perplexity, as we detailed our story and showed the cells in which we had spent the night ("at the Hôtel de la Poste one night!" commented a *gendarme* sympathetically, "here the next!") was most amusing. But when we went on to explain our intentions in regard to the brigadier, he took us up. "Revenge, my sons, is an empty thing," he said gravely.

"But the cells were cold, my father; very cold last night," I replied.

"It is true. Yet let it pass. You will go far away and forget it. You think much of it now, but viewed from afar it will seem a small thing."

"Perhaps. At present I say with St. Paul, *Civis Romanus sum,* and I will not go out privily."

He pricked up his ears. "You know Latin!" he exclaimed.

I told him that I had been at Oxford; and was amused to find that this gave him a graver opinion of the wrongs we had suffered than all my complaints. He made another pilgrimage to the cells: he shrugged his shoulders inimitably; and then, perching himself upon a wall, talked to us for some time. He had a knowledge of English politics most surprising in a man stationed in that obscure village, and was altogether a charming specimen of a charming class.

At two we were ordered to make ready to start. The brigadier ostentatiously loaded his revolver and charged us to make no attempt at escape. He also directed us to carry our baggage. We declined; he blustered. In the end, the *gendarme* who accompanied him agreed to carry the knapsack, and we took up the lesser articles. I noticed that every person, gentle or simple, whom we met on the road, saluted the brigadier, while he ignored many of their greetings.

He was a little king in his district; justice of the peace as well as superintendent of police; and to me at that moment a standing argument in his arrogance for our resident county magistrates. In France such men are wanting, or have no power. There is no one to check official arbitrariness, or to come between the executive and the people.

At a bridge half-way between Aramits and Oloron, the brigadier of the latter place met us and took charge of us, giving our old enemies, from whom we here parted, a written receipt for us. In one respect we had cause to regret the change: our new master bade us carry the luggage: we demurred. Thereupon he produced a long chain with handcuffs at each end. "You can make your choice," he said, "either take up the baggage and carry it, or repeat your refusal. In the latter case we shall handcuff you, chain you together, and force you to carry it."

This he said without a trace of passion; and being quite sure that he would keep his word, my brother took up the knapsack and I the rug and coats. After the night we had spent we were in anything but good condition; and it was not without difficulty that, thus burdened, we walked the remaining distance, over four miles, to Oloron. At the time we were treated in this way, the police, it will be remembered, had the vice-consul's telegram in their possession, and knew that we were English tourists. On our arrival at Oloron we were taken to the house of the *procureur*. He was not at home, and we proceeded to his public office. I believe that our arrest had been noised abroad, for the streets were full of people, who stood and watched our little procession go by. No one was uncivil to us, though we heard the words "*Espions Allemands*" freely exchanged; yet the ordeal of passing, burdened as we were, and in custody, under the eyes of hundreds of Frenchmen, was not to our English taste.

The *procureur* received us in a moderately large room, in the middle of which we were told to stand, while he sat at an ordinary writing-table. The police arranged themselves behind us, and round the room sat a number of men whom I judged to be respectable inhabitants of the town. I at once asked to be furnished with an interpreter, saying that I had had only too much experience of the danger of answering questions in a language imperfectly known. Unfortunately I had well conned the sentences in which I expressed this, and my glibness defeated my object. The *procureur*, a tall, dark, harsh-voiced man, politely assured me that I spoke French sufficiently well, and, save for the aid which one of the gentlemen present who spoke a little English gave us, we fought our own battle. Here, at any rate, I thought, we shall get justice! And at first all went well. I need not give the magistrate's questions, which were not many. There was abundant evidence of our nationality and identity, and with little loss of time he gave his decision: We were free, we might go.

Upon this I stated that I wished to lay a formal complaint against the brigadier of Aramits. I submitted (1) That we had about us sufficient papers of identity, and that therefore the arrest was illegal from the first. (2) That if the arrest and detention were in themselves legal, they were attended by circumstances of illegal and unnecessary severity.

What passed upon this I give in detail, because it may make the position clear to other travellers in France, and solve in some degree a vexed question. "Very well," was the *procureur's* answer, "I understand. Then firstly where are your papers, if you please?"

"I had a British Foreign-Office passport which identified me."

"It bore no French *visé*, and was without weight here on that account."

"Do I understand then," I asked slowly, "that it is absolutely necessary

for every Englishman travelling in France to have a passport countersigned by the French authorities?"

"It is absolutely necessary," was his answer.

"And yet," I cried, "there are hundreds of Englishmen at Pau, and you know that there are not ten such passports among them all! But I leave that. There is my banker's *lettre d'indication.*"

"It is a foreign recommendation on the same footing as your passport."

"Not at all! The bankers who sign it are French as well as English bankers."

That clearly puzzled him, and he spoke a while with his clerk: finally, "It is printed, not written," he said.

I laughed aloud. As a fact, my name, the essential part of the document, was written, but I missed that point. I abandoned under protest my first head of complaint, and passed on to the treatment we had received. To this his sole answer was that it was unlucky for us that we had been arrested at Aramits and not at Oloron, where there was a comfortable prison. It was our misfortune, not the *gendarmes'* fault: they had only done their duty. As for an apology, he would not assist us to any form of one. "If," he concluded harshly, his patience worn thin by my importunity, "you think you have cause for complaint, go to your ambassador!"

"We will!" we cried with one voice, and gave up the fight for that time. Our money—less the cost of telegram, luncheon and breakfast—and papers were returned to us. Our volunteer interpreter kindly told us that there was a train just starting for Pau; and another gentleman, undertaking to show us the way to the station, we left *M. le Procureur* with less ceremony than haste. Once in the train, I lay back in my corner of the carriage fairly exhausted, and morally depressed beyond belief by the continuous bullying to which we had been subjected.

Our first impulse was to keep the whole matter to ourselves; but friendly greetings and a good dinner at our hotel put us in heart again. We sent a brief epitome of the story to the newspapers, and raised our bitter cry before the ambassador. In the issue, both from Lord Lyons and Sir John Walsham, who at the time was his representative, we received most courteous treatment. But, unfortunately, we have never got farther than that, although Mr. Addison, Q.C., Member of Parliament for Ashton-under-Lyne, asked a question in the House on the matter, and the Government expressed themselves dissatisfied with the French minister's explanations.

True, we have been informed that the chief officer of *gendarmes* in the district has privately called upon the vice-consul at Pau to express his regret; and that the brigadier at Aramits has been punished by some days' detention—not, I fear, in his own cells. But no public apology has been made at Oloron, in the newspapers, or elsewhere: no public reprimand has been administered. Nay, the very document from which I learn this, states that the indiscretion of the police was palliated by the suspects' conduct; and goes on to narrate a pure fiction, to the effect that on the day of our arrest we retired under surveillance into a wood with certain instruments, and did very dreadful things indeed!

STANLEY J. WEYMAN.

SUNDERLAND AND SACHARISSA.

There is always a pathetic attraction in the lives of men who have been forced by the stress of circumstances into situations foreign to their nature. The scholar torn from his favourite studies to plunge into the whirl of court intrigues, the painter compelled to lay down the brush and draw the sword in his country's defence, the philosophic prince leaving his meditations to wage war upon barbarian hordes—these all appeal to our sympathy and awaken our interest in a peculiar manner. And when these victims to honour and duty bear themselves well at the inaccustomed post, when we see them reveal sparks of heroic temper and fight bravely or die nobly, the pathos deepens, and the light of immortality rests upon their brows.

Such in an eminent degree was the philosopher who sleeps in an unknown grave under the limes of Great Tew: such, again, was another victim of the civil wars, who fell on the same fatal field as Falkland,—Henry Spencer, Lord Sunderland. Dying at the early age of three-and-twenty, this ancestor of our two great houses of Spencers and Churchills deserves to be remembered among those whose worth is not to be measured by the number of their years. He lived long enough to make himself known and valued by a large circle of friends, and his death was lamented by men of all parties. Even Clarendon, in his grief for the friend who was dear to him as his own soul, pauses to record the loss sustained by the king's cause in the death of this young man "of tender years and an early judgment." In many ways Sunderland's career bears a close resemblance to that of the elder and more illustrious nobleman who fell at Newbury. Like Falkland, the young lord at first took the popular side; but when the breach widened and war became imminent, a chivalrous sense of honour made him devote his life to the king's service. Like Falkland, he was one of the few who laboured in vain for peace, and tried with all their might to effect a reconciliation between the court and the Parliament. Like him, he grew weary of life in the hopeless task; and like him, too, an early death soon set him free from the turmoil and the strife that vexed his generous soul.

Fortunately the preservation of certain letters which he wrote to his wife during the first year of the war admit us to a closer acquaintance with this admirable young man; and although few in number, and written in a cipher not always legible, they are sufficient to inspire us with the deepest interest in the writer and in her to whom they were addressed. For that wife was Dorothy Sidney, the eldest daughter of Robert, Earl of Leicester, whose beauty and virtues Waller celebrated, and whose fair features Vandyke's art has made familiar to us. At Petworth, at Althorp, at Penshurst, we see her painted at different periods of her life, and always, in Horace Walpole's words, "charmingly handsome."

The family of Spencer, to which Sunderland belonged, were wealthy sheep-owners, who from the time of Henry the Eighth owned immense flocks and vast estates, both in Warwickshire and Northamptonshire. In 1603 Sunderland's grandfather, Sir Robert Spencer, gave Queen Anne of Denmark and her son Prince Charles a splendid reception at his house at Althorp, on which occasion a masque of fairies, written by Ben Jonson, was performed in the park. A few

months later Sir Robert was raised to the peerage as Baron Spencer, and on his death, in 1627, was succeeded by his son William, who some years before had married Penelope Wriothesley, the daughter of Henry, Lord Southampton, the patron of Shakespeare and friend of Essex. This second Lord Spencer died in 1636, leaving his widow and thirteen children inconsolable for the loss of the best of husbands and fathers. These were the words inscribed by Penelope on the splendid monument which, at her bidding, Nicholas Stone raised to her lord's memory in Brington church.

Henry, Lord Spencer, the eldest son of this noble pair, inherited the cultured tastes of his mother's family, together with the regular features which we notice in her sepulchral effigy, and in the fine full-length portrait of her still to be seen in that gallery at Althorp which Horace Walpole called "a collection of all one's acquaintance by Vandyke and Lely."

Born in 1620, he was educated under his parents' eyes by a careful tutor, and afterwards at Magdalen College, where he received his degree of Master of Arts at the same time as Prince Rupert, on the visit of Charles the First to Oxford. After his father's death, in the same year, he spent most of his time at Althorp, where he devoted himself to the task of improving his estates and studying the welfare of his tenants, under the guidance of his uncle and guardian, Thomas, Lord Southampton, one of the truest and most faithful of all Charles's servants. Wise and thoughtful beyond his years, he kept aloof from the licentious habits which were held to be indispensable companions of wit and good-fellowship in the gilded youth of his day, and both his own conduct and that of his household were ordered on the strictest pattern.

Such was the young Lord Spencer who, before he had yet completed his nineteenth year, became the accepted suitor of the Lady Dorothy Sidney, who had as yet found no one to her taste among all the many admirers whom her charms had attracted.

Her father Robert, second Earl of Leicester, one of the most accomplished gentlemen of his day, and, as Clarendon owns, a man of the highest honour and fidelity, if he was not always held in great esteem at court, had been sent as ambassador to France in 1636, to negotiate a treaty for the recovery of the Palatinate. During his absence his wife, Dorothy Percy, "in whose vigilancy and discerning spirit," wrote Sir John Temple, "your lordship is so incomparably happy," lived at Penshurst with her large family, administering her husband's estate, and keeping a watchful eye over his interests and those of her children. Through her brother, Lord Northumberland, and her intriguing sister Lucy, Lady Carlisle, with whom, however, she had little in common, and of whom she certainly had not at all a good opinion, Lady Leicester was informed of all that was passing at court, and kept her husband well supplied with news. Nothing can be more natural than the letters in which she retails every scrap of political gossip that she can glean, and mingles it with family affairs and expressions of anxiety for the success of his labours, and regret at his prolonged absence. Sometimes she cannot repress a sigh at her solitude and straitened means, when she hears of her friends' gay doings at Whitehall. "But I will content myself as best I can," she quickly adds, "with this lonely life, without envying their greatness, their plenty, or their jollity." Only in her lord's absence, even fair Penshurst, "and a sweeter place was never seen," cannot please her. "Neither can any other place give me a perfect contentment in your absence, so dearlie is your companie beloved by your D. Leycester."

Many are the allusions to their children, to the seven girls and Robin who were at home, and to Philip and Algernon, the two elder sons who

had gone to Paris with their father. Naturally, Dorothy, the eldest of the thirteen, was above all the object of her parents' affectionate solicitude, and from the day that her grandfather, the old Lord, speaks of her as a two-year-old child at the time of her brother Algernon's birth in 1621, "Doll" is constantly mentioned in the family correspondence. We find her growing up good and beautiful, but timid and retiring in disposition, taking pleasure in the companionship of a few girl-friends, and inheriting all the studious tastes of her father and of his uncle and aunt, the author of the 'Arcadia,' and the Countess of Pembroke. "Learned and fair and good as she," young Lady Dorothy found admirers at an early age, and had, like Sidney's sister, a poet to celebrate her charms in song. For while she was yet a child, her grace and loveliness captivated Edmund Waller, then a young and wealthy widower, in high favour at court, and the intimate friend of the scholars and fashionable ladies of the day. He was in an especial manner the poet of the Sidneys, and had already more than once addressed Lady Carlisle in strains of poetic flattery. But Dorothy, if we are to believe his verse, was the object of a more real and enduring devotion, and countless are the poems in which he sang of her beauty and of the cruel scorn with which she rejected his addresses:

"Thyrsis, a youth of the inspired train,
Fair Sacharissa loved, but loved in vain;
Like Phœbus sang the no less amorous boy,
Like Daphne she, as lovely and as coy."

It is to these poems inspired by Sacharissa that Waller owes whatever share of immortality he has obtained. For her sake the shades of Penshurst became musical with song: the oak which bears Sir Philip Sidney's name, the lofty beeches of the avenue where she took her daily walk, were all invoked in turn as witnesses of his love and of his despair. He addressed an epistle to her father imploring his return that he might decide on the choice of his bright nymph; and tried to approach her now through verses inscribed to her friends, now to her maid, Mrs. Braughton. But of all his poems to Sacharissa, none are so beautiful and none so exactly describe Dorothy's charming and modest nature as the exquisite song to the rose.

"Go lovely rose!
Tell her that wastes her time and me,
That now she knows
When I resemble her to thee
How sweet and fair she seems to be.

"Tell her that's young
And shuns to have her graces spy'd,
That hadst thou sprung
In deserts, where no men abide,
Thou must have uncommended dy'd.

"Small is the worth
Of beauty from the light retir'd;
Bid her come forth;
Suffer herself to be desir'd,
And not blush so to be admired."

"Then die! that she
The common fate of all things rare
May read in thee:
How small a part of time they share,
That are so wondrous sweet and fair!"

How far this passion was of a merely poetic order it is hard to tell. It is not likely that Waller suffered deeply from Lady Dorothy's rejection of his suit, although he does not seem to have thought of another marriage until she had become the wife of Lord Sunderland. Lady Leicester, it is said by Aubrey, would have been well content to give him another of her daughters, but had more ambitious designs for Dorothy, whose own dislike to Waller seems to have been invincible. Perhaps she had clear enough eyes to read the poet's true character; and no one who knows how unworthy was his subsequent career will blame her that she did not, as Johnson says, "think every excellence comprised in wit."

In the meanwhile Waller's verses and the occasional visits of Lady Leicester's illustrious relatives to Pens-

hurst had spread abroad the fame of Dorothy's charms; and when she was seventeen we find one of her uncles, Henry Percy, begging his sister to tell my lady Dorothy, "with his humble service, that she must go into France, so what her beauty and her father's wisdom will do, the Lord knows." Already the gossips of the court had been finding a husband for the young beauty, and towards the close of 1636, Lord Russell, the heir of the house of Bedford, was talked of as a suitable match for her. But this notion had to be abandoned, since the young lord soon fell in love with Ann Carr, the daughter of the notorious Countess of Essex. Perhaps it is to this rumour that Lady Leicester alludes when she writes that Christmas to her husband: "It would joy me much to receive some hope of that lord's addresses to Doll which you writ of to me; for next to what concerns you, I confess she is considered by me above any thing of this world." Or the young man in question may have been Lord Devonshire, lately returned from his travels and now suggested as a match for Lady Dorothy by one of Lady Carlisle's confidants, the Earl of Holland. This very eligible suitor was likely to be the more acceptable since his only sister, Ann Cavendish, the wife of Holland's nephew, Lord Rich, was Dorothy's most intimate friend, as we learn from the verses addressed to Sacharissa by Waller on the sudden death of her lovely and beloved companion. Unfortunately, although both Lord Devonshire's mother and sister were full of affection for Dorothy, the young man himself was apparently less eager, and a few years later married Elizabeth Cecil, Lord Salisbury's daughter, whose portrait by Vandyke, along with these of Lady Rich, Lady Ann Carr, and Dorothy herself, hang side by side in the Beauties' room at Petworth. Lady Leicester, who was anxious for the marriage, felt her disappointment keenly and complained bitterly of Lord Holland's duplicity, concluding that either "his ladie [her sister, Lady Carlisle] commands him to hinder Doll, or else he is so weak and so unfaithful as his friendship is not worthy the least rush."

A fortnight later we find a new lover coming forward. This was Lord Lovelace, whom with this intention Lord Danby presented to Lord Northumberland at St. George's feast at Windsor, in April 1637, and who was introduced to Dorothy and her mother at Leicester House, where they came to pay their respects at court in the May of that year. The new suitor had considerable advantages to recommend him; he had a pretty person, was very wealthy, and just out of his mother's wardship, and the marriage was strongly approved of by all the Percies. But there were serious drawbacks in the eyes of Lady Leicester, who, with all her impatience to see her daughter settled, was a good and affectionate mother. He had kept, she heard, "extreme ill companie, and was given to drinking," a foul fault, which would have prevented her thinking of him at all had she not hoped that good example and advice would cure him of this bad habit. For a while, accordingly, the young man was admitted to Lady Dorothy's society, and the marriage was confidently expected. But soon it became evident that Dorothy herself was altogether averse to the idea. "From the first," her uncle, Henry Percy, complained to Lord Leicester, "she abhorred him;" either because her mind had been poisoned beforehand, or else her natural goodness made her shrink from him as she had shrunk before from Waller. Her mother before long came to the conclusion that the young lord was so uncertain and idle, so fond of low company, and so easily drawn to debauchery, that she "dared not venture to give Doll to him." It was in vain that Henry Percy himself went down to Penshurst

that summer in hopes of renewing the marriage: both his sister and niece, he declared to Lord Leicester, were utterly unreasonable, and there was no means of pleasing them, since, "if the ill be taken upon trust, and the good be strictly examined, she or her friends will with difficulty be satisfied with anybody."

Poor Lady Leicester's temper was sorely tried with these repeated failures, and she wrote to inform her husband of Lord Lovelace's wildness and Lord Devonshire's hesitation in a melancholy strain, concluding with the words: "My dear heart, let not these cross accidents trouble you, for we do not know what God has provided for her." Her anxieties were increased by the intrigues of her husband's enemies at court, and the difficulties in which he constantly found himself owing to the irregularity with which his salary was paid and the scarcity of public money. But in the spring of 1639 the tide suddenly turned. Lord Leicester was summoned home, and received with marks of the highest approval at court. He was made a privy-councillor and commanded to attend the king on his progress to York. And almost at the same moment a new suitor presented himself for Lady Dorothy's hand, a young man whose high rank, great wealth, and stainless character made him an altogether desirable match.

This was the young Lord Spencer, who, as the grandson of the Lord Southampton who had been so intimately connected with Lady Leicester's own uncle Essex, and with all the Sidneys, was the more welcome a son-in-law. In June Sir John Temple, writing from the north, congratulates Lord Leicester on my Lady Dorothy's most happy match, and on the twentieth of July the marriage took place at Penshurst, where Lord Leicester's respected friend, Dr. Hammond, was then rector. Great were the rejoicings in connection with this auspicious event, and the poet Waller distinguished himself by writing his famous letter to the bride's youthful sister, Lady Lucy Sidney, surely the wittiest effusion ever penned by rejected lover.

"MADAM,—In this common joy at Penshurst, I know none to whom complaints may come less unreasonable than to your ladyship, the loss of a bed-fellow being almost equal to that of a mistress, and, therefore, you ought at least to pardon, if you consent not to, the imprecations of the deserted, which just heaven no doubt will hear! May my Lady Dorothy (if we may yet call her so) suffer as much and have the like passion for this young lord, whom she has preferred to the rest of mankind, as others have had for her! And may this love, before the years go about, make her taste the first curse imposed on womankind—the pains of becoming a mother! May her firstborn be none of her own sex, nor so like her, but that he may resemble her lord as much as herself! May she that always affected silence and retiredness have the house filled with the noise and number of her children, and hereafter of her grandchildren! and then may she arrive at that great curse so much declined by fair ladies—old age! May she live to be very old and yet seem young, be told so by her glass, and have no aches to inform her of the truth. And when she shall appear to be mortal may her lord not mourn for her, but go hand in hand with her to that place where we are told there is neither marrying nor giving in marriage, that being there divorced we may all have an equal interest in her again! My revenge being immortal, I wish all this may also befal their posterity to the world's end and afterwards! To you, madam, I wish all good things, and that this loss may in good time be happily supplied with a more constant bed-fellow of the other sex. Madam, I humbly kiss your hands, and beg pardon for this trouble from your ladyship's most humble servant,

"EDMUND WALLER."

Lord Leicester was present at the marriage of his "dear Doll," but returned to Paris immediately afterwards, and was followed at Michaelmas by his wife with her two unmarried daughters, Lucy and Anne, and "my new son-in-law and my daughter," as Lord Leicester records in his journal. During the next two years they all lived happily together in Paris, and there Lady Spencer's first child, a daughter, named Dorothy after her, and Lady Leicester's youngest boy,

Henry Sidney, afterwards Lord Romney were both born.

The storm which Leicester and the more far-sighted of Charles's courtiers had long dreaded was now about to burst, and in September, 1640, the ambassador received what he calls in his journal the worst news he had ever heard in his life—the advance of the Scots. Upon Strafford's fall Leicester received a promise of the post of Lord-Deputy of Ireland, an office which his friends had long coveted for him, and in the following October, 1641, he left Paris and returned with his family to London. A few days afterwards Lord Spencer, now of age, made his first appearance in the House of Lords and spoke on the popular side with a moderation and wisdom which commanded general attention. His wife's uncle, Lord Northumberland, who had already taken a prominent part in resisting the king's unwise counsellors, showed him marked kindness; and in the following spring the young nobleman was appointed Lord-Lieutenant of Northamptonshire by the Parliament, who hoped thus to secure his services. But as the language of the popular leaders grew more violent Lord Spencer hesitated. In common with his own relative Southampton, and a few others, he did his utmost to heal the daily widening breach, and called upon the lords with great vigour and eloquence to come to terms with the king. He was often heard to say that in his opinion seven years would show that the king was the true commonwealth-man; and in the last speech which he made within the walls of the House he concluded by saying—"We had been satisfied long ere this if some men had not shuffled demands into our propositions on purpose that we may have no satisfaction." He, for one, declared that no power on earth would ever induce him to draw the sword against the king, and moved by that spirit of chivalrous loyalty which governed many who had been the boldest in urging reforms Lord Spencer joined the king at York, and was present at the raising of the standard on the twenty-second of August, 1642. The die was cast, and henceforth he was pledged to the king's cause for good or ill; but we learn from his letters how much it cost him to plunge into a struggle which he held to be the worst misfortune which could befall his country. Of him, as of Falkland, it might have been said with truth—"His condition of life before the war was so happy that it was hardly capable of improvement." He was young and handsome, with great connections and vast wealth, and had just entered on the enjoyment of his large estates. He had a wife after his own heart, a lady not only celebrated for her beauty and virtues, but whose tastes were in complete harmony with his own, whose soul was bound up with his in a rare and perfect union. "I know," said Lord Leicester, in that touching letter written to his daughter when the tale of her short married life was for ever ended, "I know you lived happily, and so as nobody but yourself could measure the contentment of it." Already, as Waller had foretold, the bliss of their wedded life had been increased by the birth of two children, the daughter, whom her father often mentions in his letters by the pet name of Popet, and a son, called Robert after Lord Leicester.

And now he had to leave all this—the quiet country home, the wife and child he loved so well—and mingle among men whose society was for the most part utterly distasteful to him, in a cause which, however preferable of the two it might seem to him, was still in his eyes but a choice of evils. "Publicans and sinners on the one hand," his friend Chillingworth said, "on the other scribes and Pharisees." From the first this dislike for his new surroundings is evident. "The discontent that I and many other honest men receive daily is beyond expression," he writes to his wife from

Shrewsbury, a month after the raising of the standard. "How much I am unsatisfied with the proceedings here I have at large expressed in several letters; neither is there wanting daily occasion to retire, were it not for gaining honour; for let occasion be never so handsome, unless a man fight on the Parliament side, than which for my part I had rather be hanged, it will be said a man is afraid to fight." The hope of peace becomes in his opinion every day more dim and distant. "People are much divided. The king is of late much averse to peace, by the persuasions of 202 and 211 [probably Rupert and Lord Digby]. Nevertheless the honest men will take all occasions to procure an accommodation, which the king when he sent the late messages [the mission of Southampton and Falkland to Parliament] did heartily desire, and would still make offers but for 202 and 211, and the expectation of the queen and fear of the Papists." His fears proved true, as he says in his second letter, written on the march to Birmingham on the fourteenth of October. The king's cause, he believes, is in a prosperous condition, and he has little doubt but they will reach London; yet he sees that if this is the case the war-party will have it all their own way. Then "they will be insupportable to all, but most to us who have opposed them, so that if the king prevails by force I must not live at home, which is grievous to me but more to you." Here follow some undeciphered sentences, ending with the words, "I apprehend I shall not be suffered to live in England." He goes on to say that his uncle, Southampton, has "lain in the bed-chamber," and doubtless made the best use of this opportunity to urge moderate measures, while he himself had above an hour's discourse with the king about the treaty, which he knows his wife will be glad to hear, but which he cannot fully retail in cipher and dares not send without. And then he continues:

"Pray let my Lady Leicester know that to write news with or without a cypher is inconvenient; ill compliments I dare not, having heard her so often declaim against good ones, so that out of my respect I forbear writing often to her. I hope 134 [Northumberland] is in no danger, for besides the relation to him by you, I have been so obliged to him that I very often think of him. The Parliament's confidence, which you spake of in your letter, is put on, for really they are in ill condition, and it is impossible but they must know it. I never saw the king look better; he is very cheerful, and by the discourse I thought I had been in the drawing-room. Money comes in beyond expectation. The foot are reasonably well paid; the horse have not been paid, but live upon the country. The king is very good of himself, and would be so still were it not for evil counsellors, for he gives very strict order that as little spoil be made as possible. To-morrow we march to Birmingham, and so on the road to London, from whence, by the grace of God, I will come to Penshurst, when I hope to see you past all your pains. I wrote to you last to desire you to invite all my sisters to you, for I doubt London will be shortly a very ill place."

A week after that letter was written Lord Spencer was present at the first great battle of the civil war on Edge Hill. The night before he received Prince Rupert at his own "faire house" at Wormleighton, a stately structure of which some portions still remain. On the following day he fought gallantly among the king's guards, nicknamed from their splendid appearance the Show Troop, who that day obtained the king's permission to leave his person and charge in the front of the battle.

In the following winter he paid his wife a short visit at Penshurst, where she gave birth to a daughter, who only lived a few days. The beautiful portrait at Althorp was evidently painted about this time. It was the work of Walker, Cromwell's favourite artist and a friend of the Sidney family, and is the best representation we have of Dorothy's husband. We see him in the suit of armour worn by the Show Troop, with a broad lace collar falling over his steel cuirass,

and flowing love-locks. The brow is grave and thoughtful, the blue eyes full of tenderness, and the handsome features touched with a melancholy expression, as if the shadow of the end were already upon him and he heard the voice that was so soon to summon him away.

Early in the following summer we find him with the king at Oxford, and here, in June, 1643, he was created Earl of Sunderland, in recognition of his distinguished services. But nothing could reconcile him to his present position; and writing to his wife from the trenches before Gloucester, during the king's siege of that city, he repeats how much he envies all who can go to their own houses, and how passionately he desires her company and that of his little daughter "Popet," who he hopes will soon be able to join him at Oxford. He reflects sorrowfully "how infinitely more happy I should esteem myself, notwithstanding your mother's opinion of me, quietly to enjoy your company at Althorp than to be troubled with the noises and engaged in the factions of the court, which I shall ever endeavour to avoid." The inconveniences and delays of the siege, he confesses, are yet preferable to that court life which he disliked so much, and he owns that he is not ill pleased at the variety, more especially that he finds himself in good company and enjoys the society of Lord Falkland and Mr. Chillingworth, as he proceeds to tell his wife.

"My dearest Hart, —Just as I was coming out of the trenches on Wednesday I received your letter of the 20th, which gave me so much satisfaction that it put all the inconveniences of this siege out of my thoughts. At that instant, if I had followed my own inclinations, I had returned an answer to yours, writing to you and hearing from you, being the most pleasant entertainment that I am capable of in any place, but especially here, where, but when I am in the trenches (which place is seldom without my company) I am more solitary than ever I was in my life, this country being very full of little private cottages, in one of which I am quartered, where my Lord Falkland did me the honour last night to sup. Mr. Chillingworth is now here with me in Sir Nicholas Selwyn's place, who has been this week at Oxford; our little engineer comes not hither so much out of kindness to me as for his own conveniency, my quarter being three or four miles nearer the leaguer than my Lord Devonshire's, with whom he staid till he was commanded to make ready his engines with all possible speed. It is not to be imagined with what diligence and satisfaction (I mean to himself) he executes his command: for my part I think it not unwisely done of him to change his profession, and I think you would have been of my mind if you had heard him dispute last night with my Lord Falkland in favour of Socinianism, wherein he was by his lordship so often confounded that really it appears he has much more reason for his engines than for his opinions.

"*August 25th, before Gloucester.*"

A week later Charles was forced to abandon the siege on the approach of Essex's army, and Sunderland's next letter is written on the sixteenth of September from Oxford. He had gone there for a few days, as there seemed no probability of an immediate battle, and had joined Lord Leicester, who had been summoned thither from Chester as he was on the point of embarking for Ireland, and had taken up his quarters at Queen's College.

"As soon as I came I went to your father's, where I found Alibone," [the servant who brought Lady Sunderland's letters]—"with whose face I was better pleased than with any of the ladies here. The expression is so much a bolder thing than charging Lord Essex, that should this letter miscarry and come to the knowledge of our dames, I should, by having my eyes scratcht out, be cleared from coming away from the army from fear, where if I had stayed it's odds if I had lost more than one. Last night the king sent the queen word he would come hither upon Monday or Tuesday, upon one of which days, if he alter his resolution, I shall not fail to return to the army, and I am afraid our setting down before Gloucester has hindered us from making an end of the war this year, which nothing could keep us from doing if we had a month's more time which we lost there, for we never were in a more prosperous condition; and yet the divisions do not at all diminish, by which we receive prejudice. . . . Since I came here I have seen no creature but your father and my uncle, so that I am altogether ignorant of the intrigues of the place. Before I go hence I shall have a letter for you I take the best

care I can about my economical affairs : I am afraid I shall not be able to get you a better house, everybody thinking me mad for speaking about it. Pray bless Popet for me, and tell her I would have writ to her but that upon mature deliberation I found it uncivil to return an answer to a lady in another character than her own, which I am not yet learned enough to do. I beseech you present his servants to my ladie, who is most passionatelie and perfectlie yours

"SUNDERLAND.

"My humble services to Lady Lucy, and the other little ladies."

It was the last letter he ever wrote. A few days more and that loyal and constant heart had ceased to beat, and the wife who had been continually present to his mind was left widowed and desolate.

The news reached Oxford that a battle was imminent, and Sunderland hurried back to join the king just in time to take part in the fight at Newbury. That night the two armies lay in the fields under a bright starlight sky, "impatient," writes an officer in the Puritan camp, "of sloth and darkness, wishing for the morning light to exercise their valour, incapable of sleep, their enemy being so nigh." Falkland's heart we know was heavy with the weary longing for peace which was soon to be stilled for ever, and Sunderland's thoughts were turning to the green shades of his home and the pleasant memory of his wife. At break of day the king's horse appeared marshalled in battle array on the brow of the hill, and presently dashed in magnificent confusion on the pikes of the London train-bands, "men till then held in too cheap an estimation, but who now presented an invincible rampart to the cavalier charge." "Officers and commanders," says the same eye-witness, "did many of them leave off their doublets, and with daring resolution did bring on their men, as if they came rather to triumph than to fight." Three times they rode to the charge, and each time were met by the same serried barrier of pikes, standing fast and immovable, "like a grove of pines in a day of wind and tempest." Three times the horsemen wheeled round, and charged again. Three times they went reeling back among a cloud of bullets, which made fearful havoc both of man and horse.

In the brilliant company which that day charged with "a kind of contempt" upon the enemy, rode Lord Sunderland, conspicuous among so many brave men by his heroic bearing. Again and again he returned to the attack, and was in the act of gathering up his reins to charge once more when he fell mortally wounded by a bullet from the Puritan muskets. Calmly and nobly he met his end, and those about him wondered to see him die with so few regrets. In the confusion which followed, his body fell into the hands of the enemy and was rifled by them, but Lord Leicester succeeded in recovering it afterwards, and redeemed his watch from the Parliamentarian soldiers. His heart was taken to Althorp, and buried with his forefathers in the mortuary chapel of the Spencers at Brington. Far and wide men lamented his early death, for he had almost as many friends on the Parliamentary side as on that of the king, and a speaker at Westminster observed that "except in the occasion of his death he had always been a good patriot."

The beautiful letter which Dorothy's father addressed to her a fortnight afterwards bears witness to the devoted love which she bore her dead lord, and to the overwhelming bitterness of her grief. In the most touching language Lord Leicester entreats his dear Doll to moderate her sorrow, and implores her by the very power of that "affection for him whom she loved so dearly" to lift her thoughts to that blessed state of happiness "far beyond any that he did or could enjoy on earth, such as depends upon no uncertainties, nor can suffer any diminution."

"Remember how apprehensive he was of your dangers and how sorry for anything that troubled you. Imagine that he sees how you

afflict and hurt yourself; you will then believe that he looks upon it without any perturbation, for that cannot be admitted by that blessed condition wherein he is, yet he may censure you and think you forgetful of the friendship that was between you, if you pursue not his desires, in being careful of yourself who was so dear to him."

And then he goes on to remind her that she owes it to her husband's memory to take care of herself and her children.

"For their sakes, therefore, assuage your grief; they have all need of you, and one especially whose life as yet doth absolutely depend on yours. I know you lived happily, and so as nobody but yourself could measure the contentment of it. I rejoiced at it, and did thank God for making me one of the means of procuring it for you. That now is past and I will not flatter you so much as to think you can ever be so happy in this life again; but this comfort you owe me, that I may see you bear this change and your misfortunes patiently. . . . I doubt not but your eyes are full of tears, and not the emptier for those they shed. God comfort you, and let us join in prayer to Him that He will be pleased to give His grace to you, to your mother, and myself, that all of us may resign and submit ourselves entirely and cheerfully to His pleasure. So nothing shall be able to make us unhappy in this life, nor to hinder us from being happy in that which is eternal. Which that you may enjoy at the end of your days, whose number I wish as great as of any mortal creature, and that through them all you may find such comforts as are best and most necessary for you, it is, and shall ever be, the constant prayer of your father that loves you dearly,

"LEYCESTER."

A few days after this letter was written Lady Sunderland gave birth to a son, who received his father's name, but died while he was still a child. She herself lived, and after the first violence of the shock had passed, faced her desolate lot bravely. The sweet idyll of her young married life was ended: she had seen its joy and beauty fade with the rose, and share too soon "the common fate of all things rare."

But that strong power of love which had brought her so much of joy and pain was her best stay now. She lived for her children and her father's sake, and to lighten the burden of others by her goodness and her sympathy. In later years she ministered with pitying tenderness to the orphaned and captive Princess Elisabeth during the year she lived at Penshurst; and made her house at Althorp a home for evicted clergy and sufferers in the king's cause. Afterwards, probably to please her parents, she consented to take a second husband, and became the wife of Sir Robert Smyth, of Bounds in Kent, who was connected with the Sidneys, and whose family portrait we see with her own in the gallery at Althorp.

On the ninth of July, 1652, Mr. Evelyn, who was staying at Tunbridge Wells for his wife's health, went over to Penshurst and "found a great company assembled to celebrate the marriage of my Lady Sunderland with my old fellow-collegian Robert Smythe."

This husband too Dorothy survived, and had by her second marriage an only son, afterwards governor of Dover Castle. Of her other children Robert, Lord Sunderland, became notorious as the prime minister who served three kings in turn, and who had no ambition but to be "safe, rich and great;" while Dorothy, the Popet of her father's letters, married Lord Halifax, another leading statesman of the day, but one of a far higher type than Sunderland. Waller's revenge was satisfied, and Lady Sunderland lived to be old and to see grandchildren growing up around her. But we learn, from her letters of this period, that to the last her spirit was as bright and kindly, her heart as true and tender as of old. Troubles enough she had: her son's unscrupulous conduct cost her many a sigh: the old home at Penshurst was sadly changed, her sisters for the most part dead, her brothers estranged and divided by family quarrels. In December, 1683, she saw the best of them, Algernon Sidney, die on the scaffold, condemned to a traitor's doom by the son of the king in whose cause her husband had laid down his life. Her tender heart

felt the shock keenly, and she did not long survive him but died herself early in the following vear. Then, as she lay dying, her thoughts turned to the far-off days of her youth, and she asked to be buried, not in London where she died, not at Penshurst with her father and mother, or with the Smythes in Kent, but in the chapel at Brington, where Sunderland slept with his fathers.

There, on the twenty-fifth of February, 1684, her ashes were laid in the quiet Northamptonshire church on the brow of the hill looking over the grassy banks and wooded slopes of Althorp, and the long parted lovers were at length united. In that chapel the Spencers of past generations sleep, each in his stately tomb. There they rest under marble canopies, knight and baron, lord and lady, clad in splendid armour and ermine-trimmed mantles, with their richly embroidered robes, their jewelled necklets and chains of gold. Their names and titles are recorded in many a long inscription: their armorial bearings are emblazoned on the walls about them: but among all this pomp of heraldry we look in vain for some memorial of the young hero who fell at Newbury, and of his fair Sacharissa. No stone marks their resting-place, no inscription records their names. It is enough to know they sleep there side by side, joined together again by that stern hand which alone had power to part them; enough to feel that we can say of them, they were lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in death they are not divided.

OUR OLDEST COLONY.

Of the countless multitudes who in the course of this summer have roamed with curiosity and delight through the Exhibition at South Kensington, I wonder how many have recognised in the part allotted to Bombay the representatives of England's earliest colonial possession?

In truth, in view of the vast magnitude of her Indian Empire in this nineteenth century, it is difficult to realise how very short has been her tenure of supreme power in Hindostan. Looking at the great city of Calcutta, imagination can scarcely conceive that in the first year of the eighteenth century its site was marked only by three small villages, which were assigned to the British as a sort of complimentary gift in return for presents offered to Azim, son of the mighty Mogul Aurungzebe. Neither is it easy to look on the queenly city of Bombay, with its beautiful blue harbour crowded with shipping, its great docks, its busy commercial quarters, its luxurious houses embowered in delightful shady gardens, forming so fair a foreground to the fine hill-ranges of the mainland, and to realise that only two centuries back this isle was deemed so worthless a possession, that when in 1661 it was ceded to Britain by the Portuguese, as part of the dowry of Queen Catherine of Braganza wife of Charles the Second, the king and his councillors thought they had done a very good stroke of business when they agreed to let it in perpetuity to the East India Company, at an annual rent of ten pounds! So in 1669 it passed into the hands of the Honourable Company who had the forethought to perceive the value of the magnificent harbour from which the island derives its Portuguese name of Bom-Bahia.

Some interesting details of the cession have been recorded by one Hamilton, who visited this far country in the close of the seventeenth century—a solitary pioneer of the travelling legions of the present day. He tells how, after the marriage, "King Charles sent my Lord Malberry with four or five ships to take possession of Bombay, and the King of Portugal sent a Viceroy to deliver it and all its royalties to the said lord." They reached Bombay in 1663, and Sir Abraham Shipman was appointed Governor for King Charles, but the ecclesiastical authorities refused to acknowledge this transfer of proprietorship. In the following year my Lord Malberry returned to England with two ships, leaving Sir Abraham with the rest of the company to pass the westerly monsoon in some port on the coast. "Being unacquainted, they chose a desolate island called Aujadiva to winter at. Here they stayed from April till October, in which time they buried above two hundred of their men!" After this very trying experience the Viceroy returned to Bombay, to ascertain whether the Church had decided on obedience to the King of Portugal's commands. He found the priests disposed to be acquiescent, but ere the terms of the treaty were finally settled Sir Abraham died. It was concluded by his successor, who agreed that the inhabitants of the isle should enjoy the possession of their lands and religious liberty, but he forgot to insert the royalties, which included part of the Isle of Salsette, so these long continued a bone of contention.

Now that insignificant isle is the site of a vast and busy city, the capital of a Presidency whose population may be roughly estimated at about twenty millions, while that of the city itself

exceeds six hundred thousand. The proportion of these subjects of the British Crown may be indicated thus:

Hindoos	300,000
Mohammedans	125,000
Parsees	115,000
Christians	20,000
Jews	1,000

Of course a crowd composed of such varied elements cannot fail to offer innumerable charms to the artistic wanderer, nevertheless the impressions conveyed by the bazaar-life of Bombay differ widely in proportion to previous experience of the other Presidencies. No doubt novelty is at all times a wondrous talisman, and nowhere does this trite truth strike one more vividly than in this city, where the impression produced on travellers from east or west is so strangely different. To those who here first set foot on Indian soil all is so strange, and new, and delightful; while to those whose eyes are already sated with the bewildering beauty of the wonderful Mohammedan or purely Hindoo cities, Bombay presents small attraction, either from its architecture or its somewhat Europeanised inhabitants.

We were, unfortunately, of the latter sort, so we failed to appreciate the city so fully as we might otherwise have done. Yet all the fascination of the happy months spent among the mighty Himalayas could not lessen the charm of the beautiful scenery through which the railway winds so abruptly, when, leaving the weary dead level of the apparently boundless plains, it enters the Thul Ghat, a mountain range which, though comparatively low, assumes most shapely and striking forms, many isolated hills being crowned with huge crags and needles, such as we see on a small scale in our own Isle of Skye at the Quiraing and the Storr. But instead of being clothed only with stunted grass, these hills have a rich and varied vegetation, of which the most striking feature is the graceful cocoa-nut palm.

Once within the city, however, (notwithstanding the luxury of pleasant bungalows with wide verandahs open to every breath of the cool sea-breeze, and fanned by the ceaseless rustling palms) we could not ignore the very unpoetic influence of the western world, which, whatever may be its practical advantages, certainly does not possess the native grace of Oriental clothing or architecture. As regards the latter, many of the buildings are painfully British; and even in the bazaars, although some of the native houses have overhanging wooden roofs supported by carved wooden brackets and pillars, there was no picturesque general effect, as in many of the cities we had seen. Inside the shops, however, we did indeed find treasures of art in the beautiful Bombay carved wood-work—chairs, tables, screens, cabinets, of black wood like ebony, each a marvel of workmanship, and reasonable enough in price.

There was the same painful lack of Oriental grace in the population that struck us so much in their buildings, for, as a rule, the more natives assimilate to Europeans in outward civilisation, the more readily they adopt our dress; and anything more hideously incongruous than Western raiment with Eastern complexion can scarcely be imagined. The vast number of Portuguese half-castes conduce much to produce this effect, and it is a positive shock to one's feelings to find that one is no longer waited on at table by clean, white-robed *khitmutgars*, but by dirty-looking Portuguese waiters, who all answer to the name of "Boy." The *baboo*, or clerk, walks about bare-headed certainly, but with English patent-leather shoes and most orthodox umbrella. Even the carelessly-twisted turban of Bengal, with its graceful varied lines, is here changed into a stiff ugly thing of enormous size, sewn into countless elaborate folds as if stitched over pasteboard.

Amongst the motley crowd, as varied in clothing as in feature and

complexion, my attention was arrested by some whose type of countenance was unmistakably Jewish, and who were further distinguished by a ringlet worn over each ear. I learnt with much interest that these are the descendants of a race of settlers known as the Beni-Israel, the children of Israel. Their numbers are variously estimated at from five to eight thousand, many of these being scattered in the sea-coast villages of the Concan, while others are found in Poonah. They utterly repudiate the term of Jehudi or Jew when applied to them, and consider themselves wholly distinct from the Jews of Arabia and Cochin, who are the only other members of the scattered people known to them, and to whom they acknowledge themselves indebted for much of the old Hebrew lore they still retain. There seems little reason to doubt that they really are descendants of one of the lost tribes, their accounts of themselves being that they came hither, by way of Arabia, after the destruction of the first Temple. Others, however, declare that their ancestors came from some country further north, and were wrecked on the Indian shores, where they have ever since remained, keeping up many of their own distinctive manners and ceremonies—the only race who, should their dead die on the Sabbath day, must (even here, where burial follows straightway after death) leave the body untouched till sunset.

In many respects, however, they have strangely assimilated with the heathen round them, having forgotten much of their old law, as well as the Hebrew tongue in which they recite their prayers, so that the Pentateuch is to them as much a dead letter as the Sanscrit Vedas are to the Brahmin. They, however, fully recognise its authority as the law of Moses, and they acknowledge also all the other books of the Old Testament. But the Talmud is unknown to them. At the time when these people were first taken in hand by Christian missionaries, they were so sunk in ignorance and idolatry, that it was only by their rigid observance of a few of the principal Jewish rites that their descent could be authenticated. While professing to adore Jehovah as the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, there was scarcely a family which had not adopted Hindoo idols as its household gods, and many were openly worshippers of serpents.

Of these malpractices they are now ashamed, though many are said still to worship idols in secret, as also to practise divination after the Hindoo manner. Almost all wear amulets and charms like their neighbours. Their social position was as debased as their intellectual footing: they were chiefly oil-sellers, a profession only followed by men of very inferior caste; but from this low estate many have now arisen, and having been duly instructed in their own law, and supplied with abundant copies of THE BOOK which they reverence, they are daily shaking themselves more free from the old idolatries, and taking up a higher position amongst their fellows. Their synagogue, too, is now a building worthy to rank with any in the city.

But the one prevailing feature of Bombay is the Parsee—a figure as yet unknown to us, for he is not to be seen in Bengal, but one with which our eyes quickly grew familiar, as not only do all Parsees wear the unmistakable and hideous cap of the Guebres, and in all other respects dress exactly alike, but they also have a most extraordinary resemblance of countenance, so that one would fancy the whole race to be brothers. They are a comely, tall, active race, fairer than any Indian tribe: gentle in manner: enterprising, intelligent, and persevering in all they undertake. Their wealth forms a great item in the prosperity of Bombay, as well it may, since it is said that upwards of a hundred and fifteen thousand of them have settled in the city, so that they form one-fifth of the whole population.

They are the descendants of those Guebres who were driven out of Persia by Shah Abbas, and of whom barely eight thousand remain now in their own land. Having at first fled for refuge to the mountains of Khorassan, they were thence hunted out by the Mussulman, when they colonised in Guzerat. Again the Crescent drove out the Children of the Sun, whereupon they settled at Bombay, and have there taken deep root. A more flourishing community could not exist. Though at peace with all men, they intermarry with none, but keep their Persian blood pure, and adhere generally to the dress of their forefathers, the fine old Guebres.

Although commonly spoken of as fire-worshippers, they themselves disclaim the title indignantly. True, they reverence fire, as the purest visible type of the Almighty, and chiefly they revere that globe of fire, the sun, or Mythras, which they hold to be the source and centre of fire and light. But so far from attributing to even this glorious luminary aught of the majesty of its Creator, they do not even give it the first place among His works, reserving that rank for a creation more marvellous still—the human mind. Yet because the all-pervading light is clearly the natural symbol of its all-penetrating, omnipresent Creator, they consider all emanations of light—sun, moon, planets, fire—as emblems of the Divinity, and therefore must the believer look towards one of these when he prays. So great is the reverence for all fire, that the Parsees as a body abstain from smoking. They will not even fire a gun. Nor will they extinguish the fire on their own hearth; or the flame of a lamp or a candle. It is even asserted that they will not assist in extinguishing an accidental fire, but that should such occur they must look on, while men of other creeds rescue their property. Decidedly an unpleasant test of faith!

The sacred fire that burns in the temples is supposed to have been given to Zoroaster direct from Heaven, and must not even be breathed on by the priests, far less touched, except with consecrated instruments. Nor must it be fed with common wood, only with that of certain trees, costly sandal-wood and rose-wood, anointed with precious oils. Thus, like the sacred inextinguishable fire which the Levites of old were commanded to tend night and day, that it might burn for ever before the Lord, is the fire on these altars watched over continually by those set apart for the service of the temple. The office of the priesthood is hereditary; so it is to be inferred that the Magi of the present day are the lineal descendants of those constant watchers of the heavens who first detected the traditional star so long expected to arise out of the east.

The name of Parsee means literally the people of Pars or Fars, that is, ancient Persia. They call themselves Beh Din, meaning "Those of an excellent creed," a name well in keeping with their religious code, which insists upon the worship of a loyal heart, truthfulness, the performance of good actions—in short all that goes to enforce purity of thought, of word, or of deed, and this, they say, is a religion for all nations.

They are followers of Zoroaster, who is variously stated to have lived six or twelve centuries before Christ: most probably, however, in the time of Darius Hystaspes, whose inscriptions bear many traces of his teaching. This was contained in the sacred Zend-Avesta. This, Arabic writers—always lovers of the voluminous—declare to have been originally a work of such vast magnitude that the followers of Zoroaster had to convert twelve thousand cow-skins into parchment for the record of these revelations of God to His prophet. Pliny mentions these as comprising two million verses on all social, moral, and religious questions. Happily for our learned men, a comparatively small portion of this overgrown book is all that is now extant. It is written in the ancient Zend language — one of those old Aryan

dialects that has for ages been a dead tongue; and although the devout Parsee is enjoined therein to recite certain prayers five times a day, few indeed can understand the words they utter. It has been reserved for Professor Max Müller and his learned brethren to find the key that should unlock the hidden treasures of wisdom stored in these sacred writings.

The teaching of Zoroaster tended wholly to enforce purity of action, of speech and thought. Evil was condemned, holiness enjoined, truth and good actions were shown to be the only sacrifices precious to the Most High. This high standard has always been maintained by his followers. Wherever they are found they bear the same high character for uprightness, peacefulness, industry, and benevolence: their practice being well in keeping with their grand faith. Always forward in every good work, their philanthropy is proverbial; and the Bombay government has reported that, although every fifth man in the city is a Parsee, not one has ever applied for government relief, nor been seen begging in the streets.

As with other creeds, however, these followers of Zoroaster are not all run in one mould, but form themselves into an old and new school—a Conservative body, who would fain keep all things as they were from the beginning; and a Liberal body, capable of advanced thought, and ready to adopt whatever seems to them worthy of imitation in European manners and customs. Thus the first thing that strikes the new comer in Bombay is the multitude of Parsee ladies driving about with unveiled faces, in open carriages made by English builders. Some of the Parsee women are beautiful, and of very fair complexion, almost like that of a European. Many of them are highly educated, and mix pleasantly in social life. In fact, many Parsees have almost entirely adopted English manners and customs, and have no scruple in eating, drinking, and holding constant intercourse with Europeans. Some continue the practice of making children marry, and indeed of betrothing babies yet unborn (a very remarkable phase in the counting of unhatched chickens!); but even that is falling into disfavour, as well it may, amongst a people who may only have one wife, bigamy being strictly prohibited. The wives are the helpmates of their husbands. Instead of waiting like a Hindoo wife, while her lord squats on his carpet at his meals, both sit down at table together. Nevertheless, knives and forks are said to be still held superfluous: fingers, which can be incessantly washed, being considered better. The food must be thrown, or dropped into, the mouth, as the fingers must never touch the lips. Also in drinking, all fluid must be poured down the throat, as there must be no contact between the vessel and the lips.

The invariable dress of every Parsee is a tall black cap, fully fifteen inches high, made of pasteboard and covered generally with waxed cloth: it narrows towards the top, which looks as if it were cut off. The long grey dress is always of exactly the same make. Even the shirt must be of a certain cut, with nine seams, and folded on the breast. Over this is worn a girdle, without which no Parsee must ever appear in public, save during prayer, when it is removed. It is said that no agreement or contract is considered valid if either party to the bargain was without the girdle at the time. It is solemnly assumed when a boy attains his ninth year, up to which age children are allowed much freedom. Thenceforth, however, the boy becomes a responsible being, and at the same age the damsel may commence the cares of housekeeping. Among the invariable items in Parsee dress are the white cotton stockings and patent-leather shoes of English manufacture, which entitle the wearer to keep his feet covered in all English places of business, and government offices — a privilege equivalent to

allowing a European to keep his hat on.

When the hour of death is at hand, the dying Parsee is carried down to the cellar, or the lowest room in the house—with what notion I failed to learn. Afterwards the body is borne to a great burial tower, there to be exposed to the winds of heaven, the burning sun, the beating rain, and all the host of foul carrion birds. Some rich families have a private tower of their own, a sort of family mausoleum. The public burial towers, of which there are five, stand on Malabar Hill, in a garden of flowering shrubs overlooking the sea. Here, amid fragrant bowers of roses and jessamine, stand these Towers of Silence, as they are called, ghastly receptacles for the dead. They are about thirty feet high and sixty feet wide. On the top of each is an open grating on which the bodies are laid in three circles: children in the centre, then the women, and men at the outer edge. Innumerable birds of prey are for ever hovering with their sharp hungry cries round these towers, or sitting perched on them, solemnly waiting for the grateful feast that is never long delayed—a feast which daily averages three Parsees, besides women and children; for it is estimated that each day three of these prosperous, intelligent, well-to-do-looking merchants find their last resting-place in the voracious maws of these ravenous birds. And when the birds have done their part, and winds and sun and rain have all combined to whiten the skeleton to a thing like polished ivory, gradually the bones separate and fall through the open grating into a well below the tower, whence, it is said, they are taken by a subterranean passage and cast into the sea, and so the space is left clear for the next comers.

We had by this time got pretty well accustomed to varied modes of dealing with the dead, and had learnt to look on the hungry crows and vultures perched on the floating Hindoo almost as a matter of course. But there it is an accident of poverty—the end of one whose friends, too poor to purchase sufficient fuel for his cremation, have of necessity committed his body to the sacred river. But these towers of death, where, by deliberate choice, the clay once so dearly loved is given to be torn and lacerated like so much carrion by loathsome birds—placed there almost before the warm blood has had time to chill, as a thing that has become utterly worthless—this is, in truth, a mode of sepulture unutterably repugnant to the mind that contrasts it with the deep peace of our green churchyards, our silent islands of the dead, and a thousand other quiet resting-places beside brown rivers or rippling sea-waves.

C. F. Gordon-Cumming.

THE WOODLANDERS.

BY THOMAS HARDY.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

It was at the beginning of April, a few days after the meeting between Grace and Mrs. Charmond in the wood, that Fitzpiers, just returned from London, was travelling from Sherton-Abbas to Hintock in a hired carriage. In his eye there was a doubtful light, and the lines of his refined face showed a vague disquietude. He appeared now like one of those who impress the beholder as having suffered wrong in being born.

His position was in truth gloomy, and to his appreciative mind it seemed even gloomier than it was. His practice had been slowly dwindling of late, and now threatened to die out altogether, the irrepressible old Doctor Jones capturing patients up to Fitzpiers's very door. Fitzpiers knew only too well the latest and greatest cause of his unpopularity; and yet, so illogical is man, the second branch of his sadness grew out of a remedial measure proposed for the first—a letter from Felice Charmond imploring him not to see her again. To bring about their severance still more effectually, she added, she had decided during his absence upon almost immediate departure for the Continent.

The time was that dull interval in a woodlander's life which coincides with great activity in the life of the woodland itself—a period following the close of the winter tree-cutting, and preceding the barking season, when the saps are just beginning to heave with the force of hydraulic lifts inside all the trunks of the forest.

Winterborne's contract was completed, and the plantations were deserted. It was dusk: there were no leaves as yet: the nightingales would not begin to sing for a fortnight; and "the Mother of the Months" was in her most attenuated phase—starved and bent to a mere bowed skeleton, which glided along behind the bare twigs in Fitzpiers's company.

When he reached home he went straight up to his wife's sitting-room. He found it deserted, and without a fire. He had mentioned no day for his return: nevertheless he wondered why she was not there waiting to receive him. On descending to the other wing of the house and inquiring of Mrs. Melbury he learnt with much surprise that Grace had gone on a visit to an acquaintance at Shottsford-Forum, three days earlier: that tidings had on this morning reached her father of her being very unwell there, in consequence of which he had ridden over to see her.

Fitzpiers went up stairs again, and the little drawing-room, now lighted by a solitary candle, was not rendered more cheerful by the entrance of Grammer Oliver with an apron full of wood which she threw on the hearth while she raked out the grate and rattled about the fire-irons, with a view to making things comfortable. Fitzpiers considered that Grace ought to have let him know her plans more accurately before leaving home in a freak like this. He went desultorily to the window, the blind of which had not been pulled down, and looked out at the thin, fast-sinking moon, and at the tall stalk of smoke rising from the top of Suke Damson's chimney, signifying that the young woman had just lit her fire to prepare supper. He became conscious of a discussion in progress on the opposite side of the court. Somebody had looked over the wall to talk to the sawyers, and was telling them

in a loud voice news in which the name of Mrs. Charmond soon arrested his ears.

"Grammer, don't make so much noise with that grate," said the surgeon: at which Grammer reared herself upon her knees and held the fuel suspended in her hand, while Fitzpiers half-opened the window.

"She is off to foreign lands again at last—hev made up her mind quite sudden-like—and it is thoughted she'll leave in a day or two. She's been all as if her mind were low for some days past—with a sort of sorrow in her face, as if she reproached her own soul. She's the wrong sort of woman for Hintock—hardly knowing a beech from a woak—that I own. But I don't care who the man is, she's been a very kind friend to me."

"Well—the day after to-morrow is the Sabbath day, and without charity we are but tinkling simples; but this I do say, that her going will be a blessed thing for a certain married couple who remain."

The fire was lighted, and Fitzpiers sat down in front of it, restless as the last leaf upon a tree. "A sort of sorrow in her face, as if she reproached her own soul"—poor Felice! How her frame must be pulsing under the conditions of which he had just heard the caricature; how her fair temples must ache; what a mood of wretchedness she must be in! But for this mixing up of his name with hers, and her determination to sunder their too close acquaintance on that account, she would probably have sent for him professionally. She was now sitting alone, suffering, perhaps wishing she had not forbidden him to come again.

Unable to remain in this lonely room any longer, or to wait for the meal which was in course of preparation, he made himself ready for riding, descended to the yard, stood by the stable-door while Darling was being saddled, and rode off down the lane. He would have preferred walking, but was weary with his day's travel.

As he approached the door of Marty South's cottage, which it was necessary to pass on his way, she came from the porch as if she had been awaiting him, and met him in the middle of the road, holding up a letter. Fitzpiers took it without stopping, and asked over his shoulder from whom it came.

Marty hesitated. "From me," she said shyly, though with noticeable firmness.

This letter contained, in fact, Marty's declaration that she was the original owner of Mrs. Charmond's supplementary locks, and inclosed a sample from the native stock, which had grown considerably by this time. It was her long contemplated apple of discord, and much her hand trembled as she handed the document up to him.

But it was impossible on account of the gloom for Fitzpiers to read it then, while he had the curiosity to do so; and he put it in his pocket. His imagination having already centred itself on Hintock House, in his pocket the letter remained unopened and forgotten, all the while that Marty was hopefully picturing its excellent weaning effect upon him.

He was not long in reaching the precincts of the Manor House. He drew rein under a group of dark oaks commanding a view of the front, and reflected a while. His entry would not be altogether unnatural in the circumstances of her possible indisposition; but upon the whole he thought it best to avoid riding up to the door. By silently approaching he could retreat unobserved in the event of her not being alone. Thereupon he dismounted, hitched Darling to a stray bough hanging a little below the general browsing line of the trees, and proceeded to the door on foot.

In the meantime Melbury had returned from Shottsford-Forum. The great court or quadrangle of the timber-merchant's house, divided from the shady lane by an ivy-covered wall, was entered by two white gates, one standing near each extremity of the wall. It had so happened that at the moment

when Fitzpiers was riding out at the lower gate on his way to the Manor House, Melbury was approaching the upper gate to enter it. Fitzpiers being in front of Melbury was seen by the latter, but the surgeon, never turning his head, did not observe his father-in-law, ambling slowly and silently along under the trees, though his horse too was a grey one.

"How is Grace?" said his wife, as soon as he entered.

Melbury looked gloomy. "She is not at all well," he said. "I don't like the looks of her at all. I couldn't bear the notion of her biding away in a strange place any longer, and I begged her to let me get her home. At last she agreed to it, but not till after much persuading. I was then sorry that I rode over instead of driving; but I have hired a nice comfortable carriage—the easiest-going I could get—and she'll be here in a couple of hours or less: I rode on ahead to tell you to get her room ready; but I see her husband has come back."

"Yes," said Mrs. Melbury. She expressed her concern that her husband had hired a carriage all the way from Shottsford. "What it will cost!" she said.

"I don't care what it costs!" he exclaimed testily. "I was determined to get her home. Why she went away I can't think! She acts in a way that is not at all likely to mend matters as far as I can see." Grace had not told her father of her interview with Mrs. Charmond, and the disclosure that had been whispered in her startled ear. "Since Edgar is come," he continued, "he might have waited in till I got back, to ask me how she was, if only for a compliment. I saw him go out: where is he gone?"

Mrs. Melbury did not know positively; but she told her husband that there was not much doubt about the place of his first visit after an absence. She had, in fact, seen Fitzpiers take the direction of the Manor House.

Melbury said no more. It was exasperating to him that just at this moment, when there was every reason for Fitzpiers to stay in-doors, or at any rate to ride along the Shottsford road to meet his ailing wife, he should be doing despite to her by going elsewhere. The old man went out of doors again; and, his horse being hardly unsaddled as yet, he told Upjohn to re-tighten the girths, when he again mounted, and rode off at the heels of the surgeon.

By the time that Melbury reached the park, he was prepared to go any lengths in combating this rank and reckless errantry of his daughter's husband. He would fetch home Edgar Fitzpiers to-night by some means, rough or fair: in his view there could come of his interference nothing worse than what existed at present. And yet to every bad there is a worse.

He had entered by the bridle-gate which admitted to the park on this side, and cantered over the soft turf almost in the tracks of Fitzpiers's horse, till he reached the clump of trees under which his precursor had halted. The whitish object that was indistinctly visible here in the gloom of the boughs he found to be Darling, as left by Fitzpiers. "D—— him! why did he not ride up to the house in an honest way?" said Melbury. He profited by Fitzpiers's example: dismounting, he tied his horse under an adjoining tree, and went on to the house on foot, as the other had done. He was no longer disposed to stick at trifles in his investigation, and did not hesitate to gently open the front door without ringing. The large square hall, with its oak floor, staircase, and wainscot, was lighted by a dim lamp hanging from a beam. Not a soul was visible. He went into the corridor and listened at a door which he knew to be that of the drawing-room; there was no sound, and on turning the handle he found the room empty. A fire burning low in the grate was the sole light of the apartment: its beams flashed mockingly on the somewhat showy French furniture and gilding here, in style as unlike that of the structural

parts of the building as it was possible to be, and probably introduced by Felice to counteract the fine old English gloom of the place. Disappointed in his hope of confronting his son-in-law here, he went on to the dining-room, which was without light or fire, and pervaded by a cold atmosphere, which signified that she had not dined there that day.

By this time Melbury's mood had a little mollified. Everything here was so pacific, so unaggressive in its repose, that he was no longer incited to provoke a collision with Fitzpiers or with anybody. The comparative stateliness of the apartments influenced him to an emotion, rather than to a belief, that where all was outwardly so good and proper there could not be quite that delinquency within which he had suspected. It occurred to him, too, that even if his suspicion were justified, his abrupt, if not unwarrantable, entry into the house might end in confounding its inhabitant at the expense of his daughter's dignity and his own. Any ill result would be pretty sure to hit Grace hardest in the long run. He would, after all, adopt the more rational course, and plead with Fitzpiers privately, as he had pleaded with Mrs. Charmond.

He accordingly retreated as silently as he had come. Passing the door of the drawing-room anew he fancied that he heard a noise within, which was not the crackling of the fire. Melbury gently re-opened the door to a distance of a few inches, and saw at the opposite window two figures in the act of stepping out—a man and a woman—in whom he recognised the lady of the house and his son-in-law. In a moment they had disappeared amid the gloom of the lawn.

He returned into the hall, and let himself out by the carriage-entrance door, coming round to the lawn-front in time to see the two figures parting at the railing which divided the precincts of the house from the open park. Mrs. Charmond turned to hasten back immediately that Fitzpiers had left her side; and he was speedily absorbed into the duskiness of the trees.

Melbury waited till Mrs. Charmond had re-entered the drawing-room, and then followed after Fitzpiers, thinking that he would allow the latter to mount and ride ahead a little way before overtaking him, and giving him a piece of his mind. His son-in-law might possibly see the second horse near his own; but that would do him no harm, and might prepare him for what he was to expect.

The event, however, was different from the plan. On plunging into the thick shade of the clump of oaks, he could not perceive his horse Blossom anywhere; but feeling his way carefully along, he by and by discerned Fitzpiers's mare Darling still standing as before under the adjoining tree. For a moment Melbury thought that his own horse, being young and strong, had broken away from her fastening; but on listening intently he could hear her ambling comfortably along a little way ahead. and a creaking of the saddle, which showed that she had a rider. Walking on as far as the small gate in the corner of the park, he met a labourer, who, in reply to Melbury's inquiry if he had seen any person on a grey horse, said that he had only met Dr. Fitzpiers.

It was just what Melbury had begun to suspect: Fitzpiers had mounted the mare which did not belong to him in mistake for his own—an oversight easily explicable, in a man ever unwitting in horse-flesh, by the darkness of the spot, and the near similarity of the animals in appearance, though Melbury's was readily enough seen to be the greyer horse by day. He hastened back, and did what seemed best in the circumstances—got upon old Darling, and rode rapidly after Fitzpiers.

Melbury had just entered the wood, and was winding along the cart-way which led through it, channelled deep in the leaf-mould with large ruts that were formed by the timber-waggons in fetching the spoil of the plantations,

when all at once he descried in front, at a point were the road took a turning round a large chestnut tree, the form of his own horse Blossom, at which Melbury quickened Darling's pace, thinking to come up with Fitzpiers. Nearer view revealed that the horse had no rider. At Melbury's approach it galloped friskily away under the trees in a homeward direction. Thinking something was wrong, the timber-merchant dismounted as soon as he reached the chestnut, and after feeling about for a minute or two discovered Fitzpiers lying on the ground.

"Here—help!" cried the latter as soon as he felt Melbury's touch; "I have been thrown off, but there's not much harm done, I think."

Since Melbury could not now very well read the younger man the lecture he had intended, and as friendliness would be hypocrisy, his instinct was to speak not a single word to his son-in-law. He raised Fitzpiers into a sitting posture, and found that he was a little stunned and stupefied, but, as he had said, not otherwise hurt. How this fall had come about was readily conjecturable: Fitzpiers, imagining there was only old Darling under him, had been taken unawares by the younger horse's sprightliness.

Melbury was a traveller of the old-fashioned sort: having just come from Shottsford-Forum, he still had in his pocket the pilgrim's flask of rum which he always carried on journeys exceeding a dozen miles, though he seldom drank much of it. He poured it down the surgeon's throat, with such effect that he quickly revived. Melbury got him on his legs; but the question was what to do with him. He could not walk more than a few steps, and the other horse had gone away. With great exertion Melbury contrived to get him astride Darling, mounting himself behind, and holding Fitzpiers round his waist with one arm. Darling being broad, straight-backed, and high in the withers, was well able to carry double, at any rate as far as Hintock, and at a gentle pace.

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE mare paced along with firm and cautious tread through the copse where Winterborne had worked, and into the heavier soil where the oaks grew: past Great Willy, the largest oak in the wood, and thence towards Nellcombe Bottom, intensely dark now with overgrowth, and popularly supposed to be haunted by the spirits of the fratricides exorcised from Hintock House. By this time Fitzpiers had quite recovered his physical strength. But he had eaten nothing since making a hasty breakfast in London that morning, his anxiety about Felice having hurried him away from home before dining: as a consequence the old rum administered by his father-in-law flew to the young man's head and loosened his tongue, without his ever having recognised who it was that had lent him a kindly hand. He began to speak in desultory sentences, Melbury still supporting him.

"I've come all the way from London to-day," said Fitzpiers. "Ah, that's the place to meet your equals. I live at Hintock—worse, at Little Hintock—and I am quite lost there. There's not a man within ten miles of Hintock who can comprehend me. I tell you, Farmer What's-your-name, that I'm a man of education. I know several languages: the poets and I are familiar friends: I used to read more in metaphysics than anybody within fifty miles; and since I gave that up there's nobody can match me in the whole county of Wessex as a scientist. Yet I am doomed to live with tradespeople in a miserable little hole like Hintock!"

"Indeed!" muttered Melbury.

Here Fitzpiers, with alcoholic energy, reared himself up suddenly from the bowed posture he had hitherto held, thrusting his shoulders so violently against Melbury's breast as to make it difficult for the old man to keep a hold on the reins. "People don't appreciate me here!" the

surgeon exclaimed; then, lowering his voice, he added softly and slowly, "except one—except one! . . . A passionate soul, as warm as she is clever, as beautiful as she is warm, and as rich as she is beautiful. I say, old fellow, those claws of yours clutch me rather tight—rather like the eagle's, you know, that ate out the liver of Pro— Pre—, the man on Mount Caucasus. People don't appreciate me, I say, except *her*. Ah, gods, I am an unlucky man! She would have been mine, she would have taken my name; but unfortunately it cannot be so. I stooped to mate beneath me; and now I rue it."

The position was becoming a very trying one for Melbury, corporeally and mentally. He was obliged to steady Fitzpiers with his left arm, and he began to hate the contact. He hardly knew what to do. It was useless to remonstrate with Fitzpiers, in his intellectual confusion from the rum and from the fall. He remained silent, his hold upon his companion, however, being stern rather than compassionate.

"You hurt me a little, farmer; though I am much obliged to you for your kindness. People don't appreciate me, I say. Between ourselves, I am losing my practice here; and why? Because I see matchless attraction where matchless attraction is, both in person and position.—I mention no names, so nobody will be the wiser. But I have lost her,—in a legitimate sense, that is. If I were a free man now, things have come to such a pass that she could not refuse me; while with her fortune (which I don't covet for itself) I should have a chance of satisfying an honourable ambition—a chance I have never had yet, and now never, never shall have probably!"

Melbury, his heart throbbing against the other's backbone, and his brain on fire with indignation, ventured to mutter huskily, "Why?"

The horse ambled on some steps before Fitzpiers replied. "Because I am tied and bound to another by law, as tightly as I am to you by your arm—not that I complain of your arm—I thank you for helping me. Well, where are we? Not nearly home yet? . . . Home, say I. It is a home! When I might have been at the other house over there." In a stupefied way he flung his hand in the direction of the park. "I was just two months too early in committing myself. Had I only seen the other first—"

Here the old man's arm gave Fitzpiers a convulsive shake. "What are you doing?" continued the latter. "Keep still, please, or put me down. I was saying that I lost her by a mere little two months! There is no chance for me now in this world, and it makes me reckless—reckless! Unless, indeed, anything should happen to the other one. She is amiable enough; but if anything should happen to her—and I hear she is ill—well, if it should, I should be free—and my fame, my happiness, would be insured."

These were the last words that Fitzpiers uttered in his seat in front of the timber-merchant. Unable longer to master himself, Melbury whipped away his spare arm from Fitzpiers's waist, and seized him by the collar. "You heartless villain—after all that we have done for ye!" he cried with a quivering lip. "And the money of hers that you've had, and the roof we've provided to shelter ye!—It is to me, George Melbury, that you dare to talk like that!" The exclamation was accompanied by a powerful swing from the shoulder, which flung the young man headlong into the road.

Fitzpiers fell with a heavy thud upon the stumps of some undergrowth which had been cut during the winter preceding. Darling continued her walk for a few paces further, and stopped. "God forgive me!" Melbury murmured, repenting of what he had done. "He tried me too sorely; and now perhaps I've murdered him!"

He turned round in the saddle, and looked towards the spot on which Fitzpiers had fallen. To his great surprise he beheld the surgeon rise to his feet

with a bound, as if unhurt, and walk away rapidly under the trees.

Melbury listened till the rustle of Fitzpiers's footsteps died away. "It might have been a crime, but for the mercy of Providence in providing leaves for his fall;" he said to himself. And then his mind reverted to the words of Fitzpiers, and his indignation so mounted within him that he almost wished the fall had put an end to the young man there and then.

He had not ridden far when he discerned his own grey mare standing under some bushes. Leaving Darling for a moment, Melbury went forward and easily caught the younger animal, now disheartened at its freak. He then made the pair of them fast to a tree, and turning back endeavoured to find some trace of Fitzpiers, feeling pitifully that, after all, he had gone further than he intended with the offender. But though he threaded the wood hither and thither, his toes ploughing layer after layer of the little horny scrolls that had once been leaves, he could not find him. He stood still, listening and looking round. The breeze was oozing through the network of boughs as through a strainer: the trunks and larger branches stood against the light of the sky in the forms of writhing men, gigantic candelabra, pikes, halberds, lances, and whatever else the fancy chose to make of them. Giving up the search, Melbury came back to the horses, and walked slowly homeward leading one in each hand.

It happened that on this selfsame evening a boy had been returning from Great to Little Hintock about the time of Fitzpiers's and Melbury's passage home along that route. A horse-collar, that had been left at the harness-mender's to be repaired, was required for use at five o'clock next morning, and in consequence the boy had to fetch it overnight. He put his head through the collar, and accompanied his walk by whistling the one tune he knew, as an antidote to fear.

The boy suddenly became aware of a horse trotting rather friskily along the track behind him, and not knowing whether to expect friend or foe, prudence suggested that he should cease his whistling and retreat among the trees till the horse and his rider had gone by, a course to which he was still more inclined when he found how noiselessly they approached, and saw that the horse looked pale, and remembered what he had read about Death in the Revelation. He therefore deposited the collar by a tree, and hid himself behind it. The horseman came on, and the youth, whose eyes were as keen as telescopes, to his great relief recognised the doctor.

As Melbury surmised, Fitzpiers had in the darkness taken Blossom for Darling, and he had not discovered his mistake when he came up opposite the boy, though he was somewhat surprised at the liveliness of his usually placid mare. The only other pair of eyes on the spot whose vision was keen as the young carter's were those of the horse; and, with that strongly conservative objection to the unusual which animals show, Blossom, on eyeing the collar under the tree—quite invisible to Fitzpiers—exercised none of the patience of the older horse, but shied sufficiently to unseat so second-rate an equestrian as the surgeon.

He fell, and did not move, lying as Melbury afterwards found him. The boy ran away, salving his conscience for the desertion by thinking how vigorously he would spread the alarm of the accident when he got to Hintock—which he uncompromisingly did, incrusting the skeleton event with a load of dramatic horrors.

Grace had returned, and the fly hired on her account, though not by her husband, at the Crown Hotel, Shottsford-Forum, had been paid for and dismissed. The long drive had somewhat revived her, her illness being a feverish intermittent nervousness which had more to do with mind than body, and she walked about her sitting-room in something of a hopeful

mood. Mrs. Melbury had told her as soon as she arrived that her husband had returned from London. He had gone out, she said, to see a patient as she supposed, and he must soon be back, since he had had no dinner or tea. Grace would not allow her mind to harbour any suspicion of his whereabouts, and her stepmother said nothing of Mrs. Charmond's rumoured sorrows and plans of departure.

So the young wife sat by the fire, waiting silently. She had left Hintock in a turmoil of feeling, after the revelation of Mrs. Charmond, and had intended not to be at home when her husband returned. But she had thought the matter over, and had allowed her father's influence to prevail and bring her back ; and now somewhat regretted that Edgar's arrival had preceded hers.

By and by Mrs. Melbury came up stairs with a slight air of flurry and abruptness. "I have something to tell—some bad news," she said. "But you must not be alarmed, as it is not so bad as it might have been. Edgar has been thrown off his horse. We don't think he is hurt much. It happened in the wood the other side of Nellcombe Bottom, where 'tis said the ghosts walk." She went on to give a few of the particulars, but none of the invented horrors, that had been communicated by the boy. "I thought it better to tell you at once," she added, "in case he should not—be very well able to walk home, and somebody should bring him."

Mrs. Melbury really thought matters much worse than she represented, and Grace knew that she thought so. She sat down dazed for a few minutes, returning a negative to her stepmother's inquiry if she could do anything for her. "But please go into the bed-room," Grace said on second thoughts, "and see if all is ready there—in case it is serious." Mrs. Melbury thereupon called Grammer, and they did as directed, supplying the room with everything they could think of for the accommodation of an injured man.

Nobody was left in the lower part of the house. Not many minutes had passed when Grace heard a knock at the door—a single knock, not loud enough to reach the ears of those in the bed-room. She went to the top of the stairs, and said faintly, "Come up," knowing that the door stood, as usual in such houses, wide open. Retreating into the gloom of the broad landing she saw rise up the stairs a woman whom at first she did not recognise, till her voice revealed her to be Suke Damson, in great fright and sorrow. A streak of light from the partially closed door of Grace's room fell upon her face as she came forward, and it was drawn and pale.

"Oh, Miss Melbury—I would say Mrs. Fitzpiers," she said, wringing hands. "This terrible news—is he dead? Is he hurted very bad? Tell me; I couldn't help coming—please forgive me, Miss Melbury—Mrs. Fitzpiers I would say!"

Grace sank down on the oak chest which stood on the landing, and put her hands to her now flushed face and head. Could she order Suke Damson down stairs and out of the house? Her husband might be brought in at any moment, and what would happen? But could she order this genuinely grieved woman away? There was a dead silence of half a minute or so, till Suke said, "Why don't ye speak? Is he here? Is he dead? If so, why can't I see him—would it be so very wrong?"

Before Grace had answered somebody else came to the door below—a footfall light as a roe's. There was a hurried tapping upon the panel, as if with the impatient tips of fingers whose owner thought not whether a knocker were there or no. Without a pause and possibly guided by the stray beam of light on the landing, the new-comer ascended the staircase as the first had done. Grace was sufficiently visible, and the lady, for a lady it was, came to her side.

"I could make nobody hear down stairs," said Felice Charmond, with

lips whose dryness could almost be heard, and panting, as she stood like one ready to sink on the floor with distress. "What is—the matter—tell me the worst! Can he live?" She looked at Grace imploringly, without perceiving poor Suke, who, dismayed at such a presence, had shrunk away into the shade. Mrs. Charmond's little feet were covered with mud: she was quite unconscious of her appearance now. "I have heard such a dreadful report," she went on: "I came to ascertain the truth of it. Is he—killed?"

"She won't tell us—he's dying—he's in that room!" burst out Suke, regardless of consequences, as she heard the distant movements of Mrs. Melbury and Grammer in the bedroom at the end of the passage.

"Where?" said Mrs. Charmond; and on Suke pointing out the direction she made as if to go thither.

Grace barred the way. "He is not there," she said. "I have not seen him any more than you. I have heard a report only—not so bad as you think. It must have been exaggerated to you."

"Please do not conceal anything—let me know all!" said Felice doubtingly.

"You shall know all I know—you have a perfect right to know—who can have a better than either of you?" said Grace with a delicate sting which was lost upon Felice Charmond now. "I repeat, I have only heard a less alarming account than you have heard; how much it means, and how little, I cannot say. I pray God that it means not much — in common humanity. You probably pray the same—for other reasons."

She regarded them both there in the dim light a while.

They stood dumb in their trouble: not stinging back at her, not heeding her mood. A tenderness spread over Grace like a dew. It was well, very well, conventionally, to address either one of them in the wife's regulation terms of virtuous sarcasm, as woman, creature, or thing, for losing their hearts to her husband. But life, what was it, and who was she? She had, like the singer of the Psalm of Asaph, been plagued and chastened all the day long; but could she, by retributive words, in order to please herself, the individual, "offend against the generation," as he would not?

"He is dying, perhaps!" blubbered Suke Damson, putting her apron to her eyes.

In their gestures and faces there were anxieties, affection, agony of heart—all for a man who had wronged them—had never really behaved towards either of them anyhow but selfishly. Neither one but would have well-nigh sacrificed half her life to him, even now. The tears which his possibly critical situation could not bring to her eyes surged over at the contemplation of these fellow-women. She turned to the balustrade, bent herself upon it, and wept.

Thereupon Felice began to cry also, without using her handkerchief, and letting the tears run down silently. While these three poor women stood together thus, pitying another though most to be pitied themselves, the pacing of a horse or horses became audible in the court, and in a moment Melbury's voice was heard calling to his stableman. Grace at once started up, ran down the stairs, and out into the quadrangle as her father crossed it towards the door. "Father, what is the matter with him?" she cried.

"Who, Edgar?" said Melbury abruptly. "Matter? Nothing. What, my dear, and have you got home safe? Why, you are better already! But you ought not to be out in the air like this."

"But he has been thrown off his horse!"

"I know; I know. I saw it. He got up again, and walked off as well as ever. A fall on the leaves didn't hurt a spry fellow like him. He did not come this way," he added significantly. "I suppose he went to look for his horse. I tried to find him, but

could not. But after seeing him go away under the trees I found the horse, and have led it home for safety. So he must walk. Now, don't you stay out here in this night air."

She returned to the house with her father. When she had again ascended to the landing and to her own rooms beyond, it was a great relief to her to find that both Petticoat the First and Petticoat the Second of her *Bien-aimé* had silently disappeared. They had, in all probability, heard the words of her father, and departed, with their anxieties relieved.

Presently her parents came up to Grace, and busied themselves to see that she was comfortable. Perceiving soon that she would prefer to be left alone they went away.

Grace waited on. The clock raised its voice now and then, but her husband did not return. At her father's usual hour for retiring he again came in to see her. "Do not stay up," she said, as soon as he entered. "I am not at all tired. I will sit up for him."

"I think it will be useless, Grace," said Melbury slowly.

"Why?"

"I have had a bitter quarrel with him. And on that account I hardly think he will return to-night."

"A quarrel? Was that after the fall seen by the boy?"

Melbury nodded an affirmative—without taking his eyes off the candle.

"Yes; it was as we were coming home together," he said.

Something had been swelling up in Grace while her father was speaking. "How could you want to quarrel with him?" she cried suddenly. "Why could you not let him come home quietly, if he were inclined to? He is my husband; and now you have married me to him surely you need not provoke him unnecessarily. First you induce me to accept him, and then you do things that divide us more than we should naturally be divided!"

"How can you speak so unjustly to me, Grace?" said Melbury, with indignant sorrow. "*I* divide you from your husband, indeed! You little think—"

He was inclined to say more—to tell her the whole story of the encounter, and that the provocation he had received had lain entirely in hearing her despised. But it would have greatly distressed her, and he forebore. "You had better lie down. You are tired," he said soothingly. "Good-night."

The household went to bed, and a silence fell upon the dwelling, broken only by the occasional skirr of a halter in Melbury's stables. Despite her father's advice Grace still waited up. But nobody came.

It was a critical time in Grace's emotional life, that night. She thought of her husband a good deal, and for the nonce forgot Winterborne.

"How these unhappy women must have admired Edgar!" she said to herself. "How attractive he must be to everybody; and, indeed, he is attractive." The possibility is that, piqued by rivalry, these ideas might have been transformed into their corresponding emotions by a show of the least reciprocity in Fitzpiers. There was, in truth, a love-bird yearning to fly from her heart; and it wanted a lodging badly.

But no husband came. The fact was that Melbury had been much mistaken about the condition of Fitzpiers. People do not fall headlong on stumps of underwood with impunity. Had the old man been able to watch Fitzpiers narrowly enough he would have observed that, on rising and walking into the thicket, he dropped blood as he went; that he had not proceeded fifty yards before he showed signs of being dizzy, and, raising his hands to his head, reeled and fell.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

Grace was not the only one who watched and meditated in Hintock that night. Felice Charmond was in no mood to retire to rest at a customary hour; and over her drawing-room

fire at the Manor House she sat as motionless and in as deep a reverie as Grace in her little chamber at the homestead.

Having caught ear of Melbury's intelligence while she stood on the landing at his house, and been eased of much of her mental distress, her sense of personal decorum returned upon her with a rush. She descended the stairs and left the door like a ghost, keeping close to the walls of the building till she got round to the gate of the quadrangle, through which she noiselessly passed almost before Grace and her father had finished their discourse. Suke Damson had thought it well to imitate her superior in this respect, and, descending the back stairs as Felice descended the front, went out at the side door and home to her cottage.

Once outside Melbury's gates Mrs. Charmond ran with all her speed to the Manor House, without stopping or turning her head. She entered her own dwelling as she had emerged from it—by the drawing-room window. Everything was just as she had left it: she had been gone about three-quarters of an hour by the clock, and nobody seemed to have discovered her absence. Tired in body but tense in mind she sat down, palpitating, round-eyed, bewildered at what she had done.

She had been betrayed by affrighted love into a visit which, now that the emotion instigating it had calmed down under her belief that Fitzpiers was in no danger, was the saddest surprise to her. This was how she had set about doing her best to escape her passionate bondage to him! Somehow, in declaring to Grace and to herself the unseemliness of her infatuation, she had grown a convert to its irresistibility. If Heaven would only give her strength; but Heaven never did! One thing was indispensable: she must go away from Hintock if she meant to withstand further temptation. The struggle was too wearying, too hopeless, while she remained. It was but a continual capitulation of conscience to what she dared not name.

By degrees, as she sat, Felice's mind—helped perhaps by the anti-climax of learning that her lover was unharmed after all her fright about him—grew wondrously strong in wise resolve. For the moment she was in a mood, in the words of Mrs. Elizabeth Montagu, "to run mad with discretion"; and was so persuaded that discretion lay in departure that she wished to set about going that very minute. Jumping up from her seat, she began to gather together some small personal knickknacks scattered about the room, to feel that preparations were really in train.

While moving here and there she fancied that she heard a slight noise out of doors, and stood still. Surely it was a tapping at the window. A thought entered her mind, and burnt her cheek. He had come to that window before; yet was it possible that he should dare to do so now! All the servants were in bed, and in the ordinary course of affairs she would have retired also. Then she remembered that on stepping in by the casement and closing it, she had not fastened the window-shutter, so that a streak of light from the interior of the room might have revealed her vigil to an observer on the lawn. How all things conspired against her keeping faith with Grace! The tapping recommenced, light as from the bill of a little bird: her illegitimate hope overcame her now: she went and pulled back the shutter, determining however to shake her head at him and keep the casement securely closed.

What she saw outside might have struck terror into a heart stouter than a helpless woman's at midnight. In the centre of the lowest pane of the window, close to the glass, was a human face, which she barely recognised as the face of Fitzpiers. It was surrounded with the darkness of the night without, corpse-like in its pallor, and covered with blood. As disclosed in the square area of the pane it met her frightened

eyes like a replica of the Sudarium of St. Veronica.

He moved his lips, and looked at her imploringly. Her rapid mind pieced together in an instant a possible concatenation of events which might have led to this tragical issue. She unlatched the casement with a terrified hand, and bending down to where he was crouching pressed her face to his with passionate solicitude. She assisted him into the room without a word, to do which it was almost necessary to lift him bodily. Quickly closing the window and fastening the shutters she bent over him breathlessly.

"Are you hurt much, much?" she cried faintly. "Oh, oh, how is this!"

"Rather much—but don't be frightened," he answered in a difficult whisper, and turning himself to obtain an easier position if possible. "A little water, please."

She ran across into the dining-room, and brought a bottle and glass, from which he eagerly drank. He could then speak much better, and with her help got upon the nearest couch.

"Are you dying, Edgar?" she said. "Do speak to me!"

"I am half dead," said Fitzpiers. "But perhaps I shall get over it. . . . It is chiefly loss of blood."

"But I thought your fall did not hurt you?" said she. "Who did this?"

"Felice—my father-in-law! . . . I have crawled to you more than a mile on my hands and knees—God, I thought I should never have got here! . . . I have come to you—because you are the only friend—I have in the world now. . . . I can never go back to Hintock—never—to the roof of the Melburys! Not poppy nor mandragora will ever medicine this bitter feud! . . . If I were only well again—"

"Let me bind your head, now that you have rested."

"Yes—but wait a moment—it has stopped bleeding, fortunately, or I should be a dead man before now. While in the wood I managed to make a tourniquet of some halfpence and my handkerchief, as well as I could in the dark. . . . But listen, dear Felice! Can you hide me till I am well? Whatever comes, I can be seen in Hintock no more. My practice is nearly gone you know—and after this I would not care to recover it if I could."

By this time Felice's tears began to blind her. Where were now her discreet plans for sundering their lives for ever? To administer to him in his pain, and trouble, and poverty, was her single thought. The first step was to hide him, and she asked herself where. A place occurred to her mind.

She got him some wine from the dining-room, which strengthened him much. Then she managed to remove his boots, and, as he could now keep himself upright by leaning upon her on one side and a walking-stick on the other, they went thus in slow march out of the room and up the stairs. At the top she took him along a gallery, pausing whenever he required rest, and thence up a smaller staircase to the least used part of the house, where she unlocked a door. Within was a lumber-room, containing abandoned furniture of all descriptions, built up in piles which obscured the light of the windows, and formed between them nooks and lairs in which a person would not be discerned even should an eye gaze in at the door. The articles were mainly those that had belonged to the previous owner of the house, and had been bought in by the late Mr. Charmond at the auction; but changing fashion, and the tastes of a young wife, had caused them to be relegated to this dungeon.

Here Fitzpiers sat on the floor against the wall till she had hauled out materials for a bed, which she spread on the floor in one of the aforesaid nooks. She obtained water and a basin, and washed the dried blood from his face and hands; and when he was comfortably reclining fetched food from the larder. While he ate, her eyes lingered anxiously on his face, following its every movement with

such loving-kindness as only a fond woman can show.

He was now in better condition, and discussed his position with her.

"What I fancy I said to Melbury must have been enough to enrage any man, if uttered in cold blood, and with knowledge of his presence. But I did not know him, and I was stupefied by what he had given me, so that I hardly was aware of what I said. Well—the veil of that temple is rent in twain! . . . As I am not going to be seen again in Hintock, my first efforts must be directed to allay any alarm that may be felt at my absence, before I am able to get clear away. Nobody must suspect that I have been hurt, or there will be a country talk about me. Felice, I must at once concoct a letter to check all search for me. I think if you can bring me a pen and paper I may be able to do it now. I could rest better if it were done. Poor thing! how I tire her with running up and down!"

She fetched writing materials, and held up the blotting-book as a support to his hand, while he penned a brief note to his nominal wife.

"The animosity shown towards me by your father," he wrote in this coldest of marital epistles, "is such that I cannot return again to a roof which is his, even though it shelters you. A parting is unavoidable, as you are sure to be on his side in this division. I am starting on a journey which will take me a long way from Hintock, and you must not expect to see me there again for some time."

He then gave her a few directions bearing upon his professional engagements and other practical matters, concluding without a hint of his destination, or a notion of when she would see him again. He offered to read the note to Felice before he closed it up; but she would not hear or see it: that side of his obligations distressed her beyond endurance. She turned away from Fitzpiers, and sobbed bitterly.

"If you can get this posted at a place some miles away," he whispered, exhausted by the effort of writing, "at Shottsford, or Port-Bredy, or still better, Budmouth, it will divert all suspicion from this house as the place of my refuge."

"I will drive to one or other of the places myself—anything to keep it unknown," she murmured, her voice weighted with vague foreboding, now that the excitement of helping him had passed away.

Fitzpiers told her that there was yet one thing more to be done. "In creeping over the fence on to the lawn," he said, "I made the rail bloody, and it shows rather too plainly on the white paint—I could see it in the dark. At all hazards it should be washed off. Could you do that also, Felice?"

What will not women do on such devoted occasions? Weary as she was she went—all the way down the rambling staircases to the ground-floor, then to search for a lantern, which she lighted and hid under her cloak; then for a wet sponge, and next forth into the night. The white railing stared out in the darkness at her approach, and a ray from the enshrouded lantern fell upon the blood—just where he had told her it would be found. She shuddered. It was almost too much to bear in one day—but with a shaking hand she sponged the rail clean, and returned to the house.

The time occupied by these several proceedings was not much less than two hours. When all was done, and she had smoothed his extemporised bed, and placed everything within his reach that she could think of, she took her leave of him, and locked him in.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

When her husband's letter reached Grace's hands, bearing upon it the postmark of a distant town, it never once crossed her mind that Fitzpiers was within a mile of her still. She felt relieved that he did not write more bitterly of the quarrel with her father, whatever its nature might have been; but the general frigidity of his com-

munication quenched in her the incipient spark that events had kindled so shortly before.

From this centre of information it was made known in Hintock that the doctor had gone away, and as none but the Melbury household was aware that he did not return on the night of his accident, no excitement manifested itself in the village.

Thus the early days of May passed by. None but the nocturnal birds and animals observed that late one evening, towards the middle of the month, a closely wrapped figure, with a crutch under one arm and a stick in his hand, crept out from Hintock House across the lawn to the shelter of the trees, taking thence a slow and laborious walk to the nearest point of the turnpike road. The mysterious personage was so disguised that his own wife would hardly have known him. Felice Charmond was a practised hand at such work, as well she might be; and she had done her utmost in padding and painting Fitzpiers with the old materials of her art in the recesses of the lumber-room.

In the highway he was met by a covered carriage, which conveyed him to Sherton Abbas, whence he proceeded to the nearest port on the south coast, and immediately crossed the Channel.

But it was known to everybody that three days after this time Mrs. Charmond executed her often-deferred plan of setting out for a long term of travel and residence on the Continent. She went off one morning as unostentatiously as could be, and took no maid with her, having, she said, engaged one to meet her at a point further on in her route. After that, Hintock House, so frequently deserted, was again to be let. Spring had not merged in summer when a clinching rumour, founded on the best of evidence, reached the parish and neighbourhood. Mrs. Charmond and Fitzpiers had been seen together in Baden, in relations which set at rest the question that had agitated the little community ever since the winter.

Melbury had entered the Valley of Humiliation even further than Grace. His spirit seemed broken.

But once a week he mechanically went to market as usual, and here, as he was passing by the conduit one day, his mental condition expressed largely by his gait, he heard his name spoken by a voice formerly familiar. He turned and saw a certain Fred Beaucock—once a promising lawyer's clerk and local dandy, who had been called the cleverest fellow in Sherton, without whose brains the firm of solicitors employing him would be nowhere. But later on Beaucock had fallen into the mire. He was invited out a good deal, sang songs at agricultural meetings and burgesses' dinners: in sum, victualled himself with spirits more frequently than was good for the clever brains or body either. He lost his situation, and after an absence spent in trying his powers elsewhere came back to his native town, where, at the time of the foregoing events in Hintock, he gave legal advice for astonishingly small fees—mostly carrying on his profession on public-house settles, in whose recesses he might often have been overheard making country-people's wills for half-a-crown: calling with a learned voice for pen-and-ink and a halfpenny sheet of paper, on which he drew up the testament while resting it in a little space wiped with his hand on the table amid the liquid circles formed by the cups and glasses. An idea implanted early in life is difficult to uproot, and many elderly tradespeople still clung to the notion that Fred Beaucock knew a great deal of law.

It was he who had called Melbury by name. "You look very down, Mr. Melbury—very, if I may say as much," he observed, when the timber-merchant turned. "But I know—I know. A very sad case—very. I was bred to the law, as you know, and am professionally no stranger to such matters. Well, Mrs. Fitzpiers has her remedy."

"How—what—a remedy?" said Melbury.

"Under the new law, sir. A new court was established last year, and under the new statute, twenty and twenty-one Vic., cap. eighty-five, unmarrying is as easy as marrying. No more Acts of Parliament necessary: no longer one law for the rich and another for the poor. But come inside —I was just going to have a nibleykin of rum-hot—I'll explain it all to you."

The intelligence amazed Melbury, who saw little of newspapers. And though he was a severely correct man in his habits, and had no taste for entering a tavern with Fred Beaucock —nay, would have been quite uninfluenced by such a character on any other matter in the world—such fascination lay in the idea of delivering his poor girl from bondage, that it deprived him of the critical faculty. He could not resist the ex-lawyer's clerk, and entered the inn.

Here they sat down to the rum, which Melbury paid for as a matter of course, Beaucock leaning back on the settle with a legal gravity which would hardly allow him to be conscious of the spirits before him, though they nevertheless disappeared with mysterious quickness.

How much of the exaggerated information on the then new divorce laws which Beaucock imparted to his listener was the result of ignorance, and how much of dupery, was never ascertained. But he related such a plausible story of the ease with which Grace could become a free woman that her father was irradiated with the project; and though he scarcely wetted his lips, Melbury never knew how he came out of the inn, or when or where he mounted his gig to pursue his way homeward. But home he found himself, his brain having all the way seemed to ring sonorously as a gong in the intensity of its stir. Before he had seen Grace, he was accidentally met by Winterborne, who found his face shining as if he had, like the Lawgiver, conversed with an angel.

He relinquished his horse, and took Winterborne by the arm to a heap of rendlewood—as barked oak was here called—which lay under a privet-hedge.

"Giles," he said, when they had sat down upon the logs, "there's a new law in the land! Grace can be free quite easily. I only knew it by the merest accident. I might not have found it out for the next ten years. She can get rid of him—d'ye hear—get rid of him. Think of that, my friend Giles!"

He related what he had learnt of the new legal remedy. A subdued tremulousness about the mouth was all the response that Winterborne made; and Melbury added, "My boy, you shall have her yet—if you want her." His feelings had gathered volume as he said this, and the articulate sound of the old idea drowned his sight in mist.

"Are you sure—about this new law?" asked Winterborne, so disquieted by a gigantic exultation which loomed alternately with fearful doubt, that he evaded the full acceptance of Melbury's last statement.

Melbury said that he had no manner of doubt, for since his talk with Beaucock it had come into his mind that he had seen some time ago in the weekly paper an allusion to such a legal change; but, having no interest in those desperate remedies at the moment, he had passed it over. "But I'm not going to let the matter rest doubtful for a single day," he continued. "I am going to London. Beaucock will go with me, and we shall get the best advice as soon as we possibly can. Beaucock is a thorough lawyer—nothing the matter with him but a fiery palate. I knew him as the stay and refuge of Sherton in knots of law at one time."

Winterborne's replies were of the vaguest. The new possibility was almost unthinkable by him at the moment. He was what was called at Hintock "a solid-going fellow"; he maintained his abeyant mood, not from want of reciprocity, but from a taci-

turn hesitancy, taught by life as he knew it.

"But," continued the timber-merchant, a temporary crease or two of anxiety supplementing those already established in his forehead by time and care, "Grace is not at all well. Nothing constitutional, you know; but she has been in a low nervous state ever since that night of fright. I don't doubt but that she will be all right soon. . . . I wonder how she is this evening?" He rose with the words, as if he had too long forgotten her personality in the excitement of her previsioned career.

They had sat till the evening was beginning to dye the garden brown, and now went towards Melbury's house, Giles a few steps in the rear of his old friend, who was stimulated by the enthusiasm of the moment to outstep the ordinary walking of Winterborne. He felt shy of entering Grace's presence as her reconstituted lover—which was how her father's manner would be sure to present him—before definite information as to her future state was forthcoming: it seemed too nearly like the act of those who rush in where angels fear to tread.

A chill to counterbalance all the glowing promise of the day was prompt enough in coming. No sooner had he followed the timber-merchant in at the door than he heard Grammer inform him that Mrs. Fitzpiers was still more unwell than she had been in the morning. Old Dr. Jones being in the neighbourhood they had called him in, and he had instantly directed them to get her to bed. They were not, however, to consider her illness serious—a feverish, nervous attack, the result of recent events, was what she was suffering from—and she would doubtless be well in a few days.

Winterborne therefore did not remain, and his hope of seeing her that evening was disappointed. Even this aggravation of her morning condition did not greatly depress Melbury. He knew, he said, that his daughter's constitution was sound enough. It was only these domestic troubles that were pulling her down. Once free she would be blooming again. Melbury diagnosed rightly, as parents usually do.

He set out for London the next morning, Jones having paid another visit and assured him that he might leave home without uneasiness, especially on an errand of that sort, which would the sooner put an end to her suspense.

The timber-merchant had been away only a day or two when it was told in Hintock that Mr. Fitzpiers's hat had been found in the wood. Later on in the afternoon the hat was brought to Melbury, and, by a piece of ill-fortune, into Grace's presence. It had doubtless lain in the wood ever since his fall from the horse; but it looked so clean and uninjured—the summer weather and leafy shelter having much favoured its preservation—that Grace could not believe it had remained so long concealed. A very little fact was enough to set her fevered fancy at work at this juncture: she thought him still in the neighbourhood: she feared his sudden appearance; and her nervous malady developed consequences so grave that Dr. Jones began to look serious, and the household was alarmed.

It was the beginning of June, and the cuckoo at this time of the summer scarcely ceased his cry for more than two or three hours during the night. The bird's note, so familiar to her ears from infancy, was now absolute torture to the poor girl. On the Friday following the Wednesday of Melbury's departure, and the day after the discovery of Fitzpiers's hat, the cuckoo began at two o'clock in the morning with a sudden cry from one of Melbury's apple-trees, not three yards from the window of Grace's room.

"Oh—he is coming!" she cried, and in her terror sprang clean out from the bed upon the floor.

These starts and frights continued till noon; and when the doctor had

arrived and had seen her, and had talked with Mrs. Melbury, he sat down and meditated. That ever-present terror it was indispensable to remove from her mind at all hazards; and he thought how this might be done.

Without saying a word to anybody in the house, or to the disquieted Winterborne waiting in the lane below, Dr. Jones went home and wrote to Mr. Melbury at the address in London he had obtained from his wife. The gist of his communication was that Mrs. Fitzpiers should be assured as soon as possible that steps were being taken to sever the bond which was becoming a torture to her: that she would soon be free; and was even then virtually so. "If you can say it *at once* it may be the means of averting much harm," he said. "Write to herself; not to me."

On Saturday he drove over to Hintock, and assured her with mysterious pacifications that in a day or two she might expect to receive some good news. So it turned out. When Sunday morning came there was a letter for Grace from her father. It arrived at seven o'clock, the usual time at which the toddling postman passed by Hintock: at eight Grace awoke, having slept an hour or two for a wonder, and Mrs. Melbury brought up the letter.

"Can you open it yourself?" said she.

"Oh yes, yes!" said Grace with feeble impatience. She tore the envelope, unfolded the sheet, and read; when a creeping blush tinctured her white neck and cheek.

Her father had exercised a bold discretion. He informed her that she need have no further concern about Fitzpiers's return: that she would shortly be a free woman; and therefore if she should desire to wed her old lover—which he trusted was the case, since it was his own deep wish—she would be in a position to do so. In this Melbury had not written beyond his belief. But he very much stretched the facts in adding that the legal formalities for dissolving her union were practically settled. The truth was that on the arrival of the doctor's letter poor Melbury had been much agitated, and could with difficulty be prevented by Beaucock from returning to her bedside. What was the use of his rushing back to Hintock? Beaucock had asked him. The only thing that could do her any good was a breaking of the bond. Though he had not as yet had an interview with the eminent solicitor they were about to consult, he was on the point of seeing him; and the case was clear enough. Thus the simple Melbury, urged by his parental alarm at her danger, by the representations of his companion, and by the doctor's letter, had yielded, and sat down to tell her roundly that she was virtually free.

"And you'd better write also to the gentleman," suggested Beaucock, who, scenting fame and the germ of a large practice in the case, wished to commit Melbury to it irretrievably: to effect which he knew that nothing would be so potent as awakening the passion of Grace for Winterborne, so that her father might not have the heart to withdraw from his attempt to make her love legitimate when he discovered that there were difficulties in the way.

The nervous, impatient Melbury was much pleased with the idea of "starting them at once," as he called it. To put his long-delayed reparative scheme in train had become a passion with him now. He added to the letter addressed to his daughter a passage hinting that she ought to begin to encourage Winterborne, lest she should lose him altogether; and he wrote to Giles that the path was virtually open for him at last. Life was short, he declared: there were slips betwixt the cup and the lip; her interest in him should be reawakened at once, that all might be ready when the good time came for uniting them.

(*To be continued.*)

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'SORDELLO.'

READERS, and even students, of Mr. Browning, shy at 'Sordello.' Mr. Hutton gives it up. Mr. Roden Noel expressly puts it aside, for he cannot make out its constructions. Mrs. Orr, in her hand-book, does her best, but plainly feels it an ungrateful task to spend time upon it. And no wonder. Mr. Browning himself calls his poem a "Quixotic attempt." Perplexity, bewilderment, is not the word to express the state of feeling which comes over the mind of the reader when he first opens the book, expecting that language will guide him along the threads of thought to an upshot, more or less distinct, of meaning. His first reading leaves him aghast. Where is he, and what is he among? He is to hear a story told: the story begins, stops for a parenthesis, stops for an address to Shelley, proceeds, breaks off, goes back at a jump thirty years, and we are transported, or rather have to find our way to an entirely different scene and different associations, and so, by hints, and pictures, and enigmas, to yet another set of circumstances, which follow like slides in a magic lantern. But what is the story all about? We find at last a running commentary at the top of the page; but that is probably not an early discovery, and we go on hoping to find the clue, not outside, but in the poem itself. And yet it is not a thing to put down. We feel that we are in strong hands, and with eyes that have really seen—seen, with keenness, with trouble, with thought—only their owner is not disposed to save us any trouble in making us see what he has seen. It all has the oddness and unexpectedness of a dream, where the things which happen, though they never surprise us, do not happen the least in the common order, and are not connected with the usual associations, familiar in waking life. Yet there come in flashes of sympathy, which illuminate dark depths of the heart, which we thought no one knew or imagined but ourselves. There come tracts of pictured landscape, like the background of some great Umbrian or Venetian painter—background only, with perhaps an unintelligible foreground and action.

> "That autumn eve was stilled:
> A last remains of sunset dimly burned
> O'er the far forests, like a torch-flame turned
> By the wind back upon its bearer's hand
> In one long flare of crimson; as a brand
> The woods beneath lay black. A single eye
> From all Verona cared for the soft sky."

Like Turner's pictures in his later manner—when he is clear, he is very clear: when he is obscure, he is very obscure. And then the language: it is like unpointed Hebrew words, where you have the consonants, and, according as you know the language, put in the vowels. Ellipsis reigns supreme: prepositions and relatives are dispensed with: nominatives and accusatives play hide and seek round verbs: we get lost in the maze of transpositions,

and stumble over irritating and obscure parentheses. And then the illustrations and allusions! Sismondi and Milman will give us the history of the time, not quite the same as Mr. Browning's, but something like: the only thing that does not seem arbitrary is the geography. But Mr. Browning is a wide reader, and draws his illustrative materials from sources locked and sealed to us outsiders. How many of us—we feel ourselves in asking the question, to be the "Naddo," the typical critic, on whom Mr. Browning pours such persistent and varied scorn,—but still, how many of us know "Pentapolin of the naked arm?" Why is Cunizza's sphere the "Swooning sphere?" Why is Cunizza called Palma? Who is Dularete, and what is "Saponian strength?" Why is Fomalhaut chosen out of all the stars—a star of the Southern Hemisphere—to be, in the language of a twelfth century lady, the type of a luminous orb? What is the interpretation of the following passages?

> "Nature's strict embrace,
> Putting aside the past, shall soon efface
> Its print as well—
> And turn him pure as some forgotten vest,
> Woven of painted byssus, silkiest
> Tufting the Tyrrhene whelk's pearl-sheeted lip,
> Left welter where a trireme let it slip
> I' the sea, and vexed a satrap; so the stain
> O' the world forsakes Sordello, with its pain,
> Its pleasure: how the tinct loosening escapes,
> Cloud after cloud!"

> "Heart and brain
> Swelled; he expanded to himself again,
> As some thin seedling spice-tree starved and frail,
> Pushing between cat's head and ibis' tail.
> Crusted into the porphyry pavement smooth,
> —Suffered remain just as it sprung, to soothe
> The Soldan's pining daughter, never yet
> Well in her chilly green-glazed minaret,—
> When rooted up, the sunny day she died,
> And flung into the common court beside
> Its parent tree."

And if dictionaries help us to names, the names have to serve in a novel history. Alcamo and Nina are names connected with early Italian poetry in Sicily; but Nina the poetess, in Crescimbeni and Sismondi, becomes Nina the poet in Mr. Browning. Ovid will tell us something of Cydippe, but her old lover Acontius is changed into Agathon. And then the words:—"ginglingly," and "writhled," and "bloom-flinders," and "fastuous," and "mollitious," and many more, some no doubt picked out of local usage, but still to outsiders needing a glossary. Is it astonishing if, after wandering blindfold through what seems at first a hopeless labyrinth, some impatient reader should treat 'Sordello' as the Italian in Giordano Bruno's story treated his "enigmatic prophet"—"*Fratello, tu non vuoi esser inteso: io non ti voglio intendere—vai con cento diavoli*"—and kicked it, with an indignant malediction, into the dust-heap.

What is there to save 'Sordello' from the fate justly due to a σκοτεινὸν ποίημα, like Lycophron's 'Cassandra?' It is quite certain that nothing can be done with it, nothing can be made of it, without great attention and some trouble—more trouble than we usually expect to be called upon to give to any book but one of high mathematics. Is it worth while to take this trouble?

That depends. If we want the pleasant and perfectly legitimate excitement of a dramatic story, with clearly drawn characters and the interest of a well developed plan, we had better keep our time for books where its employment will be more fully rewarded. If there is amusement to be found in 'Sordello,' it is the amusement of finding out puzzles. But if we are people of a tolerant disposition—if we have realised how we all have our own ways of doing things, and then go on to reflect that a strong and deep and eager mind is very likely to have fits of self-will, and the quaint and perhaps unjustifiable habit of taking its own line in the teeth of what is accepted and usual, we may be tempted, by the obvious signs of the poet's being in earnest, and thinking that he has something worth telling to tell us, into a more patient and inquiring frame of mind. And if we begin to inquire, it is possible that we may find—find something worth our trouble.

The reading of 'Sordello' is likely to be accompanied, even to the end, by a plentiful running commentary of notes of interrogation, and marks and sounds of even more energetic feeling. But it will be surprising if we do not find a meaning, and a meaning worth writing an elaborate poem for.

Who was Sordello, and what makes Mr. Browning choose him for a subject? Sordello's name would be a forgotten one, with those of other troubadours of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, but that Dante has chosen that he shall never be forgotten. He was plainly a distinguished person in his time, a cunning craftsman in the choice and use of language; but, if this was all, his name would only rank with a number of others, famous in their time, lost under the cloud of greater successors. He may have been something more than a writer or speaker: he may have been a ruler, though that is doubtful. But we know him, because in the antechamber of Purgatory he was so much to Dante. Through three cantos he is the companion and guide of the two great pilgrims. He is shown to us, as it were, in picture—his solitariness, his lofty port, his melancholy majesty—

> "L'ombra tutta in se romita." . . .
>
> "Ella non ci diceva alcuna cosa,
> Ma lasciavane gir, solo guardando,
> A guisa di leon quando si posa."

His presence calls forth some of Dante's deepest and most memorable laments over the miseries of Italy, and the responsibilities of her indolent and incapable rulers. He leads his companions to the secret and guarded valley where kings and princes of the earth, who have meant to do their duty, but in the end have not fulfilled their trust, must wait outside of Purgatory the hour of mercy; where Dante sees their still sadness, and learns their names, and hears their evening hymns. And here we learn Dante's judgment on Sordello himself: he is placed by himself, more self-centred and in guise haughtier than even the rulers and judges in whose company he waits to begin his cleansing; and he is placed among those who had great opportunities and great thoughts—the men of great chances and great failures.

The filling up the story of Sordello is plainly suggested by the fact—we do not say the history, or the character, but the fact and existence—of such a creation of human experience and human purpose as Dante's poem. Dante, the singer, the artist, who could see in the world about him what none other saw, but wielded the spell to make others see what he saw, seemed naturally to belong to that vast and often magnificent company, from Orpheus and Homer downwards, whose business in life seemed art and the perfection of art. Let the world go as it would, let men quarrel and change and suffer as they might, the artist was outside it all: he worked apart, using, it may be, the materials given him by active life; but imagining, inventing, composing, painting, carving, building, singing, because that was his end and calling in life. He told on actual life according to his power, but he did not seek to tell on it. Virgil sang of Rome indeed, but it was the ideal Rome which he imagined. But Dante, with his artist's eye and artist's strength, was from the beginning, and continued to the end, in the closest contact with the most absorbing interests of human life. His course was shaped by two master influences: for himself, passionate and enduring love: for society, the enthusiasm for righteous government. And these, in a way never known in the world before, were taken up into the poet's nature, combined and fused with it and with each other in indestructible union, and moulded into a character in which we almost forget the poet, and such a poet, in the man. The poet-lover of course was no new thing. The poet-prophet, speaking of truth and sin and doom, had made his voice heard in the cities of Israel, had spoken in solemn tones in the choruses of Greek tragedy. In Dante—a youth dreamed through in the sweetest of Italian homes: a man-

hood spent in effort, in struggle, in defeat, with keen and fierce and unsparing rivals, in the most stirring and revolutionary of Italian commonwealths: an old age dragged through in wandering and hopeless exile, learning all the shapes and secrets of weakness, of wickedness, of pain to be found in that wild scene which Christendom then presented—in Dante, all this made up the man who saw, and who wrote, the *Divina Commedia.* It was no mere magnificent literary production of imaginative genius. It was as real as the man. His life-blood was in it, and with it all that he had seen and felt of the awful and mysterious lot of men: the splendid achievement, the irretrievable fall, the unspeakable prize: the pangs of Francesca and Ugolino, the solemn scene of preparation and self-discipline, the everlasting chant of the Mystic Rose.

The influences which acted on Dante are, in the story, represented as acting on Sordello. Sordello is the child of the same time—the time of awakening perception and longing for the beautiful: the time of awakening power in language and imaginative composition: the time of moral and social anarchy in the cities of Italy, anarchy which neither the Pope nor the Emperor, the supreme representatives of religion and law, could restrain, which they and their factions helped to make more hopeless and more cruel. The idea of a common good, a common government, was still recognised in the municipal order of the cities of Lombardy. The framework and outward form of their institutions were still popular; but from the closer intermeddling of the German Emperor with their affairs, the "tyrant" made his appearance earlier in them than in the Tuscan cities. No such catastrophe had overtaken the cities of the Arno and the Tiber as the destruction of Milan by Barbarossa. No such incredible and fiendish cruelty had tormented the southern cities as Padua and the cities of the March endured from Ecelin da Romano. This is the world in which Sordello's lot is cast, as Dante's was at Florence: a world more terrible in crime, more terrible in suffering than the worst times then at Florence: a world without the nobler instincts, traditions, aspirations which at Florence were interwoven with the selfishness and bitterness of factious strife, and kept up the ideal and the hope of free citizenship, true justice, and generous patriotism in the famous Tuscan republic. The story, Mr. Browning informs us, is to set before us, with historical scenery more or less accurate but not necessary to its unfolding, the "development of a soul," in its ideal growth, choice, and fate. As Florence to Dante, so Mantua to Sordello, but only in vague analogy. Sordello went through changes, temptations, sufferings: his aim in life altered, enlarged, absorbed him. But the progress from love and from art, to great public thoughts and wonderful achievements for mankind, which Dante accomplished, Sordello failed in. This, in its various movements and scenes, is the story. Sordello is meant to interest if not attract us. There is beauty, there is nobleness, there is truthfulness, there is resistance to temptation. But so it was: he mistook the road, tried after it in earnest but missed it, and died.

Mr. Browning has his own way of setting all this before us—abrupt, dislocated, interrupted, incomplete, allusive, broken into by long monologues or meditations. Further, he tells the story, if we may say so, in his shirt-sleeves—with the most pronounced and avowed contempt for mere proprieties as well as for solemnities and pomps: without pretending to help us if we are too slow to catch his humour, or his deep, shy conviction, or his outbursts of amusement: without mercy for us, if we are shocked at the near neighbourhood of the grotesque and the pathetic, the loftiest with the most repulsive and even broad. Is it too much to say that there is sometimes a spirit of mischief in him, and he seems not unwilling to throw us off the trail, or to tempt us into dark places without outlet,

leaving us to make out our whereabouts? Lastly, he takes real men and women, who are known to have lived and acted at a certain time—Sordello, and Ecelin the Monk and his ferocious sons, the younger Ecelin and Alberic, and Cunizza his famous daughter—only Mr. Browning chooses that her name is her sister's, Palma [1]—and Ecelin's terrible soldier, Taurello Salinguerra, and Ecelin's weird wife Adelaide, who reads the stars, and Azzo of Este, and Richard, Count of Saint Boniface—all only too really actors in a dark and miserable time, of whose doings we may read authentic records in Italian chronicles and annals; but, having taken them and their deeds, he transports them all to his own stage of imagination, and sees them only then as he chooses to think of them and to make them think and speak and do. He does what was a common practice at a certain period of classical literature, and to which our critical days have given, often very unjustly, the name of intentional forgery: the practice of taking up famous or well-known names into the sphere of imagination, and making them speak as it is thought they ought to speak—making them speak what is believed to be true in the spirit though feigned in the letter, like the speeches of generals and statesmen in Thucydides or Livy. Mr. Browning takes great liberties: much greater than our historical dramatists and novelists, when they present a Richard the Second or a Savonarola, perhaps no more than Dante has taken with some of his great names, perhaps with his Sordello and his Cunizza. Sordello, like Hamlet, comes from the poet's "inner consciousness:" the scraps that we do possess about him—Dante's magnificent picture in Purgatory, the scant notices collected in Troubadour histories, or the fuller but more mythical accounts, like Platina's, Mr. Browning haughtily passes by. He has a Sordello of his own, utterly unlike anything written of him elsewhere, and of him he knows the innermost secret and struggles of his soul; and it is his story, from his birth to his grave, with all its individual features and critical incidents, with his aspirations, and vicissitudes, that he will tell us if we have patience to listen.

But for Dante—so we are to understand—the Sordello of Mr. Browning's imagination would have lived through the ages. Dante is the first of the great poets of the world who wrote with an idea and an end beyond his art itself, equal in its greatness to the compass of man's whole nature; for Lucretius wrote but for a philosophy, Lucan for a political regret. But such an effort was, sooner or later, in the necessity of things, as time, and time marked by the appearance of Christianity, went on. So Mr. Browning imagines that first effort coming before it was adequately fulfilled: it came in the imaginary Sordello, who represents a tendency, who is Dante's forerunner and herald star, because such an attempt must have been stirring in nobler souls, over and above the mere love and craft of poetry, as shown in the imaginary Eglamor, the representative of the Cinos and Guidos of Dante's time, the predecessors of Petrarch. Sordello is supposed to be much more than the Troubadour known to history. His was the history of a great purpose, though a defeated one. "Gate-vein" of the "heart's blood" of truth and love and mercy "to Lombardy," he was "thy forerunner, Florentine." But Dante absorbed him, "a herald star,"

> "Relentless into thy consummate orb
> That scared it from its right to roll along
> A sempiternal path with dance and song.
> Fulfilling its allotted period,
> Serenest of the progeny of God."

But its brightness is not quenched or lost: it is "blent" for ever with Dante's splendours; but,

> "Still, what if I approach the august sphere
> Named now with only one name, disentwine
> That undercurrent soft and argentine
> From its fierce mate in the majestic mass,
> Leavened as the sea whose fire was mixed
> with glass
> In John's transcendent vision,"

[1] See a list of the family in Rolandinus, iii. 171 (Muratori, vol. viii.)

and tell the story of Sordello, exhibit the "lustre" of his star by itself?

So it pleases the poet to say, for only he knows it. But why—for he does not tell—is this star called, "Serenest of the progeny of God?" Why, "His darling?" We ask, because not even in that realm where the poet disposes all things can we find the reason: unless it be, that Sordello, like Francis, opened his heart to the cries of the poor crowds. Here is an instance of what Mr. Browning asks from us. Is it part of our trial and discipline as his scholars, that we should read, and not know why? Or else, are we mere blind and commonplace critics, such as the personage who plays a prominent part in the poem, the Jongleur, Naddo?

The first portion of the story describes the development of a rich and ambitious poetic nature, its triumphs and failures, its struggles to make its art minister to its pride and selfishness, its profound disappointment and despair, its opening into new life under the inspiration of love—a love fuller and nobler than his own boyish fancy for Palma—Palma's love for him, kindled by her belief in the depth and greatness of his soul, and her longing to live under its power and to behold achievements worthy of it in the world of men and of effort. What shall those achievements be? Then comes a long interlude on the poet's own account. It is an apology—a disclosure for himself—an apology in the guise of banter and skit for letting his own life and soul and purpose appear under the fractures and shortcoming of his poem: a disclosure, a shy, a half-recalled disclosure, of what in his secret heart he has learned is the only object man ought to live for, the one supreme queen and mistress, eclipsing all other charms and temptations, to whom all passion and all homage by right are due—mankind, in all its mixed glory, in its misery and degradation and pathetic silence and patience, in its poorness and meanness and hopeless suffering, in its endless, immense eternal appeal for pity. The poor, blind, dumb multitudes of mankind whom no man can number, unknown, unheeded, helpless, and without hope, "Earth's immense and trampled multitude," whose troubles, whose sins are beyond all reach—the "sheep having no shepherd" to Divine love, the "many-headed beast" to human scorn—take a poetic shape, battered, worn, with traces of happier possibilities—appeal infinitely to justice, compassion, sympathy, chivalrous manliness and patience, become an object for devotion and passionate enthusiasm:

> "Care-bit, erased,
> Broken up beauties ever took my taste
> Supremely; and I love you more, far more,
> Than her I looked should foot Life's temple-floor.
> Years ago, leagues at distance, when and where
> A whisper came, 'Let others seek!—thy care
> Is found, thy life's provision: if thy race
> Should be thy mistress, and into one face
> The many faces crowd.'"

This mistress his heart goes out to, as Francis longs for and espouses poverty. This great interest is alone worth a strong man's strength and love. "It is pleasant to be young," to watch the bright girls in the fruit-boats and under the bridges at Venice; but there rises at his side the vision of the human race—"sad, dishevelled ghost"—and it lays a commanding claim on his devotion, paramount to all other. It is for her—under the stress of that high truth, that on the greatest of men, thinker, maker, actor, comes all the greater the imperious demand for his self-dedication to his race, in the ignorance, the wretchedness, the evil, in which it needs his help—that the story of Sordello is continued. What is it but the great truth, that every great life is the echo, strong or faint, of the One great Life of Love, that came to seek and to save that which was lost?

The second portion of the story tells the opening of new thoughts and a new life to Sordello, under the influence of Palma. She has taught him that life needs a worthy object. He opens his eyes and sees, in palpable,

individual proof, the miseries of his fellows. But how to remedy it? The great spell of the Middle Ages, the name of Rome, acts upon him. He learns its emptiness. Great factions divide society all round him, with great pretensions, and with great and equal and monstrous crimes. He learns who he is—the long-lost son of the mighty warrior who seems to hold the fate of Italy for a moment in his hands. Salinguerra would gladly make him head of a power which should crush all the petty tyrannies, and be able to defy Pope and Emperor. But that would be only to continue the reign of force, of wrong, of blood, which has made the earth so miserable for the crowds to whom his life is due. Sordello will have none of that. What is there to do? Mr. Browning does not tell us. Perhaps he might have used Salinguerra's offer, and used it in a new way: perhaps, have been a leader of mankind. Should he, or Ecelin, grasp the place and power of the House of Romano, and be supreme in North Italy? But Sordello dies, and no work is done: nothing is left behind him but a mythical name. The power of Romano passes into the hands of the merciless Ecelin; and Salinguerra—who, we may say in passing, is the one clearly and strongly painted character in the poem; the powerful, unscrupulous, but not unkindly soldier; magnanimous, touchingly honest in his loyalty and content with the second place, smiling, or "immeasurably yawning" at Sordello's transcendental doctrines and long harangues—Salinguerra ends his career, as Italian warriors often did, in the prisons of the jealous police of order-keeping Venice. It was left to a greater soul to find the way which Sordello had failed in, to benefit his fellows, to do something for mankind. But the teller of his story asks our kind thoughts for him, for the sake of what he died in striving after.

The working out of the first part is comparatively without difficulty. The picture of Sordello's solitary boyhood, passed in a lonely castle and its surrounding woods, near Mantua, an orphan page to an evil and mysterious mistress, with no one to play with and no one to love, left to himself, with nature and what there was in his weird home of art, self-centred, self-pleasing, gradually unfolding his strong, imaginative nature—like a tree gradually bursting out in spring—suggests a contrast with the city life of the boy described in the 'Vita Nuova.' In spite of all perplexities of allusion or construction, it is a charming picture; but it is as the richness and strangeness of Giorgione to the pure simplicity of line and tint in the Umbrians.

> "You can believe
> Sordello foremost in the regal class
> Nature has broadly severed from her mass
> Of men, and framed for pleasure, as she frames
> Some happy lands, that have luxurious names,
> For loose fertility; a footfall there
> Suffices to upturn to the warm air
> Half-germinating spices; mere decay
> Produces richer life; and day by day
> New pollen on the lily-petal grows,
> And still more labyrinthine buds the rose."

The unfathomable doctrine of election is stamped upon all nature; and Sordello is one of the elect. The lonely child works its imaginative will on its companions of nature, tree, and flower, and bird, and insect: creates its own wonderful world and its conditions, alters, transforms, tyrannises over it. The boy hears distant sounds of the great human drama, far from him, which he never sees; but he makes one for himself, with names, and persons, and histories: he fights and conquers and rewards and punishes, a despot above law and fear; and he has, too, glimpses of beauty—only glimpses of living beauty—the Palma of his future life; but he can give a life of his own to the beauty of marble in one of the chambers which he haunts.

> "A vault, see; thick
> Black shade about the ceiling, though fine slits
> Across the buttress suffer light by fits
> Upon a marvel in the midst. Nay, stoop—
> A dullish grey-streaked cumbrous font, a group
> Round it,—each side of it, where'er one sees—
> Upholds it; shrinking Caryatides

Of just-tinged marble like Eve's lilied flesh
Beneath her maker's finger when the fresh
First pulse of life shot brightening the snow.
The font's edge burthens every shoulder, so
They muse upon the ground, eyelids half closed;
Some, with meek arms behind their backs disposed,
Some, crossed above their bosoms, some, to veil
Their eyes, some, propping chin and cheek so pale,
Some, hanging slack an utter helpless length
Dead as a buried vestal whose whole strength
Goes when the grate above shuts heavily.
So dwell these noiseless girls, patient to see,
Like priestesses because of sin impure
Penanced for ever, who resigned endure,
Having that once drunk sweetness to the dregs.
And every eve, Sordello's visit begs
Pardon for them: constant as eve he came
To sit beside each in her turn, the same
As one of them, a certain space: and awe
Made a great indistinctness till he saw
Sunset slant cheerful through the buttress-chinks,
Gold seven times globed; surely our maiden shrinks
And a smile stirs her as if one faint grain
Her load were lightened, one shade less the stain
Obscured her forehead, yet one more bead slipt
From off the rosary whereby the crypt
Keeps count of the contritions of its charge?
Then with a step more light, a heart more large,
He may depart, leave her and every one
To linger out the penance in mute stone.
Ah, but Sordello? 'Tis the tale I mean
To tell you."

So, unknown to himself, he develops power—power within himself to see, to create, to combine, to colour, for his own delight: he is his own singer, inexhaustible, untired, and he is his own audience. And out of this life, left all to itself, as the wild flower from its chance seed in kindly ground, Sordello grows to be a true poet; and discovers it to himself and to others, in a Troubadour contest with the minstrel Eglamor—the mind of real insight and genuine imagination matched against practised but artificial talent.

But there are two classes of souls dowered with the great poetic gift, made to see and feel all that is great and beautiful, and to open the eyes of men to see and feel it too. Both have, it may be, in equal measure, that quick sense to which, as the days and years pass, is revealed in marvellous abundance, the mystery and loveliness of the world.

"Fresh births of beauty wake
Fresh homage, every grade of love is past,
With every mode of loveliness: then cast
Inferior idols off their borrowed crown
Before a coming glory. Up and down
Runs arrowy fire, while earthly forms combine
To throb the secret forth; a touch divine—
And the sealed eyeball owns the mystic rod;
Visibly through his garden walketh God.
So fare they. Now revert. One character
Denotes them through the progress and the stir,—
A need to blend with each external charm,
Bury themselves, the whole heart wide and warm,—
In something not themselves; they would belong
To what they worship—stronger and more strong
Thus prodigally fed—which gathers shape
And feature, soon imprisons past escape
The votary framed to love and to submit
Nor ask, as passionate he kneels to it,
Whence grew the idol's empery. So runs
A legend; light had birth ere moons and suns,
Flowing through space a river and alone,
Till chaos burst and blank the spheres were strown
Hither and thither, foundering and blind:
When into each of them rushed light—to find
Itself no place, foiled of its radiant chance.
Let such forego their just inheritance!
For there's a class that eagerly looks, too,
On beauty, but, unlike the gentler crew,
Proclaims each new revealment born a twin
With a distinctest consciousness within
Referring still the quality, now first
Revealed, to their own soul—its instinct nursed
In silence, now remembered better, shown
More thoroughly, but not the less their own;
A dream come true; the special exercise
Of any special function that implies
The being fair, or good, or wise, or strong,
Dormant within their nature all along—
Whose fault? So homage, other souls direct
Without, turns inward."

To which of these does Sordello belong? Alas! his child's life, his boy's life, has given him nothing to love, nothing to care for but himself: his gift has only created realms to do him homage: it has made him his own idol, whose claims are absolute and limitless. Except the thrill at Palma's beauty, there is nothing outside him, to sway him, to claim duty and service. He finds himself a poet, saluted as such by the pathetic recognition of his defeated and broken-

hearted rival, crowned by the hand of Palma herself. He is spell-bound, fascinated by the amazement of unimagined success. A career of intoxicating triumph and fame is before him. He is the favourite of Mantua, applauded, criticised, envied. Strength grows within him, and new and varied demands task it; and the longing grows, too, for larger recognition, for more unqualified and exclusive worship. And Apollo has no reason to complain that his altars want incense—"*tantus eloquentiæ vir existens non solum in poetando, sed quomodolibet loquendo,*" is the judgment handed down by his great successor. He has all he imagined: all he thought due to him. His "desire" is given him; and with it "leanness sent into his soul." The worship asked for to himself ends in satiety, listlessness, despair. After all, he finds that he does not do his best. His conscience, as one who thinks and knows, reproaches him. He knows that there is something truer and deeper in him, than what he has to put forth on the spur of the moment, to keep his character with judges whom he sees through and despises.

> "Ere he could fix
> On aught, in rushed the Mantuans; much they cared
> For his perplexity. . . .
> Whatever topics they might start
> Had to be groped for in his consciousness
> Straight, and as straight delivered them by guess.
> Only obliged to ask himself, 'What was?'
> A speedy answer followed; but, alas,
> One of God's large ones, tardy to condense
> Itself into a period; . . . .
> The question Naddo asked,
> Had just a lifetime moderately tasked
> To answer, Naddo's fashion. More disgust
> And more: why move his soul, since move it must
> At minute's notice or as good it failed
> To move at all? The end was, he retailed
> Some ready-made opinion, put to use
> This quip, that maxim, ventured reproduce
> Gestures and tones—at any folly caught
> Serving to finish with, nor too much sought
> If false or true 't was spoken."

The great dream, that the world was to put its seal on his hungry self-worship, ends in blank disappointment. All this is worked out into the details of a distinct story, with its incidents, scenery, vicissitudes, as if they had come from a chronicle—with its exhibitions of character, feeling, mental activity, as a dramatist interprets and imagines them. Much of this continued illustration of the course and changes of such a soul as Sordello is supposed to be, is, as it could not fail to be for a poet like Mr. Browning, powerful, subtle, and original. In some parts, it is not easy to follow his meaning: in some, we certainly need an explanatory note. But on the whole, what Sordello's strength and weakness are, what he wants and longs for, where he seeks his happiness and why he misses it, are perfectly intelligible. It is no recondite story. He who turns round God's gifts to his own self-worship will lose what they were meant to bring him, and will find his self-worship a cheat and a delusion.

But the second part is less intelligible. Sordello rises to a higher ideal of life. How this comes about through Palma's influence is told us, but does not appear as clearly as might be wished. But it does come about. He learns that life is not for mere amusement, or pleasure, or glory, or even resigned disappointment; but that to satisfy the standard which he cannot but acknowledge, he must look at the world as it is, not as he may choose to imagine it: he must recognise that he is part of a great brotherhood, a great suffering brotherhood: that he owes it infinite obligations of patient sympathy, duty, help; and that only a life led under the consciousness of these obligations can satisfy him and make him happy. Imagination, the poet's gift, even more than sight, has made him understand this: it is a gift for which he is responsible. But the story passes on in Mr. Browning's hands into a pathetic tragedy. Sordello sees his mission, but somehow fails to fulfil it: resists the temptation that would divert him from it, resists it in its gross sense, and yet does not see to what account the occasion might be turned. The talent, one or five, is not put to wrong use, but is not used, because

he fails to find, though he wishes, how to help mankind. This is his fault; and so, because "what he should have been, could be, and was not"—because he missed something which "he wished should go to him, not he to it"—therefore Dante justly finds him, not among the lost, but among the greatly negligent, almost the "slothful servant," "*servus piger;*" among the well-intentioned leaders of mankind who had trifled over their tasks. Dante did that which bound him for ever to his fellows: which made all Italians henceforth brethren: which gave eyes to see to all generations of mankind: which lifted their souls from the sin and soil of time to the eternal light. Sordello has remained a name—a name added to a few ballads.

But what Mr. Browning's telling does not make plain is, wherein was the failure. Doubtless, he is beaten by his half-heartedness: he is, and he knows he is, too weak for a great work. But where and how does this show itself? What is it that he ought to have done, might have done, and did not? His temptation, it would seem, was when, after Salinguerra had recognised him as his long-lost son, after he had listened, first with amusement and then with impatient scorn, to Sordello's pleadings for the poor and miserable multitudes, and finally had been cowed and overawed by Sordello's gathering earnestness and passion, Salinguerra had offered him the armed leadership of Lombardy, perhaps of Italy. There it was for him to take, if he would. But to take it, was to take it with its small chances of justice and mercy, with all its certainties — witness Salinguerra himself—of violence and cruelty: it was to continue that which had appalled his soul with its ghastly terrors. That, surely, was not what he was called to; and he resisted the temptation. But he had only strength to refuse it, and no more: he had not heart or will to see what it led to; and refusing it, in Mr. Browning's story, he dies: his work left undone in despair, his divine work unfinished, while the poor hermit-bee, which had been working all the day, was able to accomplish what God had given it to do.

> By this, the hermit-bee has stopped
> His day's toil at Goito: the new-cropped
> Dead vine-leaf answers, now 'tis eve, he bit,
> Twirled so, and filed all day: *the mansion's fit*
> *God counselled for.* As easy guess the word
> That passed betwixt them, and become the third
> To the soft small unfrighted bee, as tax
> Him with one fault—so, no remembrance racks
> Of the stone maidens and the font of stone
> He, creeping through the crevice leaves alone.
> Alas, my friend, alas Sordello, whom
> Anon they laid within that old font tomb,
> And, yet again, alas."

But then, what had he to do? Was he too late for everything? Was it the Nemesis of power wasted long ago? Was the opportunity gone for being among the masters of thought, or the masters of action, or the masters, like St. Francis, of sympathy? Could he have made a nobler use of what Salinguerra offered, for the real good of Italy, and had he not the heart? Or, is his death, which is told with such strange reticence, meant to leave us in darkness, with the suggestion that love may accomplish in another life what a poor fellow-mortal failed to accomplish here?

> "Che cima di giudizio non s'avvalla,
> Perchè foco d'amor compia in un punto,
> Ciò che dee satisfar chi qui si stalla."

Sordello, it must always be remembered, has wasted half his life, and, as he says, Nature does not give a second life to mend the first. The man who has dawdled away his first years of power in what is frivolous and selfish, cannot start on the same level with the man who from the first has been in earnest. When, at last, Sordello comes to be in earnest, he has already lost much of his time of preparation for a true life's work. He has missed his chance of knowing its true conditions. So in his very earnestness he is continually jarring against these conditions. He sees great things done in the world—Rome, for instance, or human civilisation—and he wants to do great things. But he mistakes the

way they are done—not all at once, not by some great stroke, but as nature develops the tree, or as the coral-reef is built up. "A man can do but a man's portion, the last of each series of workmen."

> "And then a low voice wound into his heart:
> 'Sordello!' (Low as some old Pythoness
> Conceding to a Lydian King's distress
> The cause of his long error—one mistake
> Of her past oracle) 'Sordello, wake!
> God has conceded two sights to a man—
> One, of men's whole work, Time's completed plan,
> The other, of the minute's work, man's first
> Step to the plan's completeness: what's dispersed
> Save hope of that supreme step which, descried
> Earliest, was meant still to remain untried
> Only to give you heart to take your own
> Step, and there stay—leaving the rest alone?
> Where is the vanity? Why count as one
> The first step, with the last step? What is gone
> Except Rome's aëry magnificence,
> That last step you'd take first?—an evidence
> You were God: be man now! Let those glances fall!
> The basis, the beginning step of all,
> Which proves you just a man—is that gone too?
> Pity to disconcert one versed as you
> In fate's ill-nature! but its full extent
> Eludes Sordello, even: the veil rent,
> Read the black writing—that collective man
> Outstrips the individual! Who began
> The acknowledged greatnesses? Ay, your own art
> Shall serve us: put the poet's mimes apart—
> Close with the poet's self, and lo, a dim
> Yet too plain form divides itself from him!
> Alcamo's song enmeshes the lulled Isle,
> Woven into the echoes left erewhile
> By Nina, one soft web of song: no more
> Turning his name, then, flower-like o'er and o'er!
> An elder poet in the younger's place;
> Nina's the strength, but Alcamo's the grace:
> Each neutralizes each then! Search your fill;
> You get no whole and perfect Poet—still
> New Ninas, Alcamos, till time's mid-night
> Shrouds all—or better say, the shutting light
> Of a forgotten yesterday.'"

"The "multitude" of his imagination is a very different thing from the concrete multitudes whose various items meet him: the ideal Rome falls to pieces in the presence of the real Rome; and he has not power to harmonise the two. How should he help the great "cause," not of Guelf or Ghibellin, but of mankind? He might help it by his gift as a poet—he might help it by hand and action. Should he trust his great gift of access to the souls of men? Should he throw heart and life into its exercise? or should he take the judge's badge, the soldier's sceptre, and rival Charlemagne and Hildebrand? Ah, there is no time now for the first: he saw through the temptation of the last, and refused to "oppress the world." He sees no other way. And so he failed.

> "Who thus, by fortune ordering events,
> Passed with posterity, to all intents,
> For just the god he never could become.
> As Knight, Bard, Gallant, men were never dumb
> In praise of him: while what he should have been,
> Could be, and was not—the one step too mean
> For him to take,—we suffer at this day
> Because of: Ecelin had pushed away
> Its chance ere Dante could arrive and take
> That step Sordello spurned, for the world's sake:
> He did much—but Sordello's chance was gone.
> Thus, had Sordello dared that step alone,
> Apollo had been compassed—*'twas a fit
> He wished should go to him, not he to it*
> —As one content to merely be supposed
> Singing or fighting elsewhere, while he dozed
> Really at home—one who was chiefly glad
> To have achieved the few real deeds he had,
> Because that way assured they were not worth
> Doing, so spared from doing them henceforth—
> A tree that covets fruitage and yet tastes
> Never itself, itself. Had he embraced
> Their cause then, men had plucked Hesperian fruit
> And, praising that, just thrown him in to boot
> *All he was anxious to appear, but scarce
> Solicitous to be.* A sorry farce
> Such life is, after all!"

There is a subtle Scotch proverb, "Good reason and part cause." There was "good reason" why he should shrink from taking the place which Salinguerra wanted him to take, and this was "part cause" why he did nothing more. But it was only "part cause": the rest of the "cause" was his disinclination to think out something better and more troublesome. He failed, because wishes and will are

not the same. He who began with requiring everything to bow to his will, ended by being unable to will the thing he would. He can save himself from being what he ought not to be—what Salinguerra would have made him, the heir of the power of the house of Romano and of its selfishness and violence: further, the supplanter of the rightful heirs, whom Salinguerra proposed to betray—that step was "too mean for him to take;" though it would have been better for the world if he had taken it, and kept out Ecelin and Alberic. But he did nothing more. They proved

> "Wherever's will
> To do, there's plenty to be done, or ill
> Or good."

He would not do the ill, but cared not to do the good from

> "His strange disbelief that aught was ever to be done."

If the good had come to him of itself he would gladly have taken it. But he had not the will to imagine it, to seek it; and so his noble and beautiful nature, with all its grand possibilities, sank into uselessness and into forgetfulness.

Failed, as so many have failed, as so few have not failed. But, as Mr. Browning teaches us, there are different kinds of failure. That there may be earthly falling short and imperfection, which is much greater and more hopeful than great earthly achievement, is, indeed, one of his deepest convictions and favourite lessons. It is developed with great power, and greater clearness than here, in 'Paracelsus': growing out of the strange mixture, in the highest natures, of limitation and hope—hope boundless, limitations impassable, puzzling, humbling. Besides failures which seem absolute and final, there are failures that carry away with them noble qualities and capacities full of promise, though they have been beaten here—failures which are greater even in disaster than the smooth perfect successes with which so many are content. Is not something to be put to the limitations of our short, mortal life? to the disparate conditions of soul and body—an eternal soul with a body of time, bringing what belongs to the eternal into the mould of the temporary, and bursting the vessel too weak to receive it?

> "Now, of the present sphere we call
> Life, are conditions; take but this among
> Many; the body was to be so long
> Youthful, no longer: but, since no control
> Tied to that body's purposes his soul,
> She chose to understand the body's trade
> More than the body's self—had fain conveyed
> Her boundless, to the body's bounded lot.
> Hence, the soul permanent, the body not,—
> Scarce the one minute for enjoying here,—
> The soul must needs instruct her weak compeer,
> Run o'er its capabilities and wring
> A joy thence, she held worth experiencing:
> Which, far from half discovered even,—lo,
> The minute gone, the body's power let go
> Apportioned to that joy's acquirement! Broke
> Morning o'er earth, he yearned for all it woke—
> From the volcano's vapour-flag, winds hoist
> Black o'er the spread of sea,—down to the moist
> Dale's silken barley-spikes sullied with rain,
> Swayed earthwards, heavily to rise again—
> The Small, a sphere as perfect as the Great
> To the soul's absoluteness. Meditate
> Too long on such a morning's cluster-chord
> And the whole music it was framed afford,—
> The chord's might half-discovered, what should pluck
> One string, his finger, was found palsy-struck."

So, while he sorrowfully throws up his Sordello's earthly conquests, his attempt to bind himself to his kind and do some great thing for it, his life wasted by half-heartedness and self-pleasing, he does not part without hope for his gentleness, his quick sympathies, his readiness to let in the love of his fellows, his nobler ideals, his refusal to exchange them for lower ones. Sordello falls short of the heroic, of the saintly, of that perfection which in its own conscious imperfection rises higher and higher after the divine and the unattainable. He falls short of this as much as he is above the narrow completeness represented by Eglamor, which accomplishes what it aims at because it aims but low; which is not troubled, distracted, hindered by the mystery of wider and deeper thoughts; which may be simple and sincere and

contented in its limitations and lowliness; which may be stupid and ignorant self-satisfaction, but which at any rate is incapable of the troubles and the hopes of greatness. Sordello, like so many of us, is between the two. He has not made much of things here, though he had the eye to see and the soul to aspire. But may there not be a future for him still? For did not Dante meet with Sordello at the foot of the steeps of the Mount of Cleansing—having, it may be, long to wait, but still there, where no more change could harm him—waiting amid "majestic pains," as after such an experience he might well wait —in still, stern communion with himself till his time should come?

The following lines seem to sum up the main drift of 'Sordello.' They are clouded by a terrible and inexcusable obscurity of language, allusion, and undisentangled thought. Yet they present in dim and imperfect outline a great and profound idea, struggling to disclose itself. In their force, and in their defects—in what they do, and in what they do not effect they are characteristic of the whole attempt.

> "So much was plain then, proper in the past:
> To be complete for, satisfy the whole
> Series of spheres—Eternity, his soul
> Exceeded, so was incomplete for, each
> Single sphere—Time. But does our knowledge reach
> No farther? Is the cloud of hindrance broke
> But by the failing of the fleshly yoke,
> Its loves and hates, as now when death lets soar
> Sordello, self-sufficient as before
> Though during the mere space that shall elapse
> 'Twixt his enthralment in new bonds, perhaps?
> Must life be ever just escaped, which should
> Have been enjoyed?—nay, might have been and would,
> Each purpose ordered right—the soul's no whit
> Beyond the body's purpose under it—
> Like yonder breadth of watery heaven, a bay,
> And that sky-space of water, ray for ray
> And star for star, one richness where they mixed
> As this and that wing of an angel, fixed,
> Tumultuary splendours folded in
> To die—would soul, proportioned thus, begin
> Exciting discontent, or surelier quell
> The body if, aspiring, it rèbel?
> But how so order life? Still brutalize
> The soul, the sad world's way, with muffled eyes
> To all that was before, all that shall be
> After this sphere—and every quality
> Save some sole and immutable Great and Good
> And Beauteous whither fate has loosed its hood
> To follow? Never may some soul see All
> —The Great Before and After, and the Small
> Now, yet be saved by this the simplest lore,
> And take the single course prescribed before,
> As the king-bird with ages on his plumes
> Travels to die in his ancestral glooms?
> But where descry the Love that shall select
> That course? Here is a soul whom, to affect,
> Nature has plied with all her means, from trees
> And flowers e'en to the Multitude! and these,
> Decides he save or no? One word to end!
> Ah my Sordello, I this once befriend
> And speak for you. Of a Power above you still
> Which, utterly incomprehensible,
> Is out of rivalry, which thus you can
> Love, tho' unloving all conceived by man—
> What need! And of—none the minutest duct
> To that out-nature, nought that would instruct
> And so let rivalry begin to live—
> But of a power its representative
> Who, being for authority the same,
> Communication different, should claim
> A course, the first chose and this last revealed—
> This Human clear, as that Divine concealed—
> What utter need!"

R. W. CHURCH.

MR. PULVERTOFT'S EQUESTRIAN EXPERIENCES.

It was on the way to Sandown Park that I met him first, on that horribly wet July afternoon when Bendigo won the Eclipse Stakes. He sat opposite to me in the train going down, and my attention was first attracted to him by the marked contrast between his appearance and his attire: he had not thought fit to adopt the regulation costume for such occasions, and I think I never saw a man who had made himself more aggressively horsey. The mark of the beast was sprinkled over his linen: he wore snaffle sleeve-links, a hard hunting-hat, a Newmarket coat, and extremely tight trousers. And with all this, he fell as far short of the genuine sportsman as any actor who ever wore his spurs upside down in a hunting-chorus. His expression was mild and inoffensive, and his watery pale eyes and receding chin gave one the idea that he was hardly to be trusted astride anything more spirited than a gold-headed cane. And yet, somehow, he aroused compassion rather than any sense of the ludicrous: he had that look of shrinking self-effacement which comes of a recent humiliation, and, in spite of all extravagances, he was obviously a gentleman; while something in his manner indicated that his natural tendency would, once at all events, have been to avoid any kind of extremes.

He puzzled and interested me so much that I did my best to enter into conversation with him, only to be baffled by the jerky embarrassment with which he met all advances, and when we got out at Esher, curiosity led me to keep him still in view.

Evidently he had not come with any intention of making money. He avoided the grand stand, with the bookmakers huddling in couples, like hoarse love-birds: he kept away from the members' inclosure, where the Guards' band was endeavouring to defy the elements which emptied their vials into the brazen instruments: he drifted listlessly about the course till the clearing-bell rang, and it seemed as if he was searching for some one whom he only wished to discover in order to avoid.

Sandown Park, it must be admitted, was not as gay as usual that day, with its "deluged park" and "unsummer'd sky," its waterproofed toilettes and massed umbrellas, whose sides gleamed livid as they caught the light—but there was a general determination to ignore the unseasonable dampness as far as possible, and an excitement over the main event of the day which no downpour could quench.

The Ten Thousand was run: ladies with marvellously confected bonnets lowered their umbrellas without a murmur, and smart men on drags shook hands effusively as, amidst a frantic roar of delight, Bendigo strode past the post. The moment after, I looked round for my incongruous stranger, and saw him engaged in a well-meant attempt to press a currant bun upon a carriage-horse tethered to one of the trees—a feat of abstraction which, at such a time, was only surpassed by that of Archimedes at the sack of Syracuse.

After that I could no longer control my curiosity—I felt I must speak to him again, and I made an opportunity later, as we stood alone on a stand which commanded the finish of one of the shorter courses, by suggesting that he should share my umbrella.

Before accepting he glanced suspiciously at me through the rills that streamed from his unprotected hat-brim. "I'm afraid," I said, "it is rather like shutting the stable-door after the steed is stolen."

He started. "He *was* stolen, then," he cried; "so you have heard?"

I explained that I had only used an old proverb which I thought might appeal to him, and he sighed heavily: "I was misled for the moment," he said: "you have guessed then that I have been accustomed to horses?"

"You have hardly made any great secret of it."

"The fact is," he said, instantly understanding this allusion to his costume, "I—I put on these things so as not to lose the habit of riding altogether—I have not been on horseback lately. At one time I used to ride constantly—constantly. I was a regular attendant in Rotten Row—until something occurred which shook my nerves, and I am only waiting now for the shock to subside."

I did not like to ask any questions, and we walked back to the station, and travelled up to Waterloo in company, without any further reference to the subject.

As we were parting, however, he said, "I wonder if you would care to hear my full story some day? I cannot help thinking it would interest you, and it would be a relief to me."

I was ready enough to hear whatever he chose to tell me; and persuaded him to dine with me at my rooms that evening, and unbosom himself afterwards, which he did to an extent for which I confess I was unprepared.

That he himself implicitly believed in his own story, I could not doubt; and he told it throughout with the oddest mixture of vanity and modesty, and an obvious struggle between a dim perception of his own absurdity and the determination to spare himself in no single particular, which, though it did not overcome my scepticism, could not fail to enlist sympathy. But for all that, by the time he entered upon the more sensational part of his case, I was driven to form conclusions respecting it which, as they will probably force themselves upon the reader's own mind, I need not anticipate here.

I give the story, as far as possible, in the words of its author; and have only to add that it would never have been published here without his full consent and approval.

My name, said he, is Gustavus Pulvertoft. I have no occupation and six hundred a year. I lived a quiet and contented bachelor until I was twenty-eight, and then I met Diana Chetwynd for the first time. We were spending Christmas at the same country-house, and it did not take me long to become the most devoted of her many adorers. She was one of the most variously accomplished girls I had ever met. She was a skilled musician, a brilliant amateur actress: she could give most men thirty out of a hundred at billiards, and her judgment and daring across the most difficult country had won her the warm admiration of all hunting-men. And she was neither fast nor horsey, seeming to find but little pleasure in the society of mere sportsmen, to whose conversation she infinitely preferred that of persons who, like myself, were rather agreeable than athletic. I was not at that time, whatever I may be now, without my share of good looks, and for some reason it pleased Diana to show me a degree of favour which she accorded to no other member of the house-party.

It was annoying to feel that my unfamiliarity with the open-air sports in which she delighted debarred me from her company to so great an extent; for it often happened that I scarcely saw her until the evening, when I sometimes had the bliss of sitting next to her at dinner; but on these occasions I could not help seeing that she found some pleasure in my society.

I don't think I have mentioned that, besides being exquisitely lovely, Diana was an heiress, and it was not without a sense of my own presumption that I allowed myself to entertain the hope of winning her at some future day. Still, I was not absolutely penniless, and she was her own mistress, and I

had some cause, as I have said, for believing that she was, at least, not ill-disposed towards me. It seemed a favourable sign, for instance, when she asked me one day why it was I never rode. I replied that I had not ridden for years—though I did not add that the exact number of those years was twenty-eight.

"Oh, but you must take it up again!" she said, with the prettiest air of imperiousness. "You ought to ride in the Row next season."

"If I did," I said, "would you let me ride with you sometimes?"

"We should meet, of course," she said; "and it is such a pity not to keep up your riding—you lose so much by not doing so."

Was I wrong in taking this as an intimation that, by following her advice, I should not lose my reward? If you had seen her face as she spoke, you would have thought as I did then—as I do now.

And so, with this incentive, I overcame any private misgivings, and soon after my return to town attended a fashionable riding-school near Hyde Park, with the fixed determination to acquire the whole art and mystery of horsemanship.

That I found learning a pleasure I cannot conscientiously declare. I have passed happier hours than those I spent in cantering round four bare whitewashed walls on a snorting horse, with interdicted stirrups crossed upon the saddle. The riding-master informed me from time to time that I was getting on, and I knew instinctively when I was coming off; but I must have made some progress, for my instructor became more encouraging. "Why, when you come here first, Mr. Pulvertoft, sir, you were like a pair o' tongs on a wall, as they say; whereas now—well, you can tell yourself how you are," he would say, though, even then, I occasionally had reason to regret that I was *not* on a wall. However I persevered, inspired by the thought that each fresh horse I crossed (and some were very fresh) represented one more barrier surmounted between myself and Diana, and encouraged by the discovery, after repeated experiments, that tan was rather soothing to fall upon than otherwise.

When I walked in the Row, where a few horsemen were performing as harbingers of spring, I criticised their riding, which I thought indifferent, as they neglected nearly all the rules. I began to anticipate a day when I should exhibit a purer and more classic style of equestrianism. And one morning I saw Diana, who pulled up her dancing little mare to ask me if I had remembered her advice, and I felt proudly able to reply that I should certainly make my appearance in the Row before very long.

From that day I was perpetually questioning my riding-master as to when he considered I should be ripe for Rotten Row—the word "ripe" suggests a fall, but I did not think of that then. He was dubious, but not actually dissuasive. "It's like this you see, sir," he explained, "if you get hold of a quiet, steady horse—why you won't come to no harm; but if you go out on an animal that will take advantage of you, Mr. Pulvertoft, why you'll be all no how on him, sir."

They would have mounted me at the school; but I knew most of the stud there, and none of them quite came up to my ideal of a "quiet, steady horse;" so I went to a neighbouring job-master, from whom I had occasionally hired a brougham, and asked to be shown an animal he could recommend to one who had not had much practice lately. He admitted candidly enough that most of his horses "took a deal of riding," but added that it so happened that he had one just then which would suit me "down to the ground"—a phrase which grated unpleasantly on my nerves, though I consented to see the horse. His aspect impressed me most favourably. He was a chestnut of noble proportions, with a hogged mane; but what reassured me was the expression of his

eye, indicating as it did a self-respect and sagacity which one would hardly expect for seven and sixpence an hour.

"You won't get a showier Park 'ack than what he is, not to be so quiet," said his owner. "He's what you may call a kind 'oss, and as gentle—you could ride him on a pack-thread."

I considered reins safer, but I was powerfully drawn towards the horse: he seemed to me to be sensible that he had a character to lose, and to possess too high an intelligence wilfully to forfeit his high testimonials. With hardly a second thought, I engaged him for the following afternoon.

I mounted at the stables, with just a passing qualm, perhaps, while my stirrup-leathers were being adjusted, and a little awkwardness in taking up my reins, which were more twisted than I could have wished; however, at length, I found myself embarked in the stream of traffic on the back of the chestnut—whose name, by the way, was Brutus.

Shall I ever forget the pride and ecstasy of finding that I had my steed under perfect control, that we threaded the maze of carriages with absolute security? I turned him into the Park, and clucked my tongue: he broke into a canter, and how shall I describe my delight at the discovery that it was not uncomfortable? I said "Woa," and he stopped, so gradually that my equilibrium was not seriously disturbed: he trotted, and still I accommodated myself to his movements without any positive inconvenience. I could have embraced him for gratitude: never before had I been upon a beast whose paces were so easy, whose behaviour was so considerate. I could ride at last! or, which amounted to the same thing, I could ride the horse I was on, and I would "use no other." I was about to meet Diana Chetwynd, and need not fear even to encounter her critical eyes.

We had crossed the Serpentine bridge, and were just turning in upon the Ride, when—and here I am only too conscious that what I am about to say may strike you as almost incredible—when I heard an unfamiliar voice addressing me with, "I say—you!" and the moment afterwards realised that it proceeded from my own horse!

I am not ashamed to own that I was as nearly off as possible; for a more practised rider than I could pretend to be might have a difficulty in preserving his equanimity in this all but unparalleled situation. I was too much engaged in feeling for my left stirrup to make any reply, and presently the horse spoke once more. "I say," he inquired, and I failed to discern the slightest respect in his tone, "do you think you can ride?" You can judge for yourself how disconcerting the inquiry must have been from such lips: I felt rooted to the saddle—a sensation which, with me, was sufficiently rare. I looked round in helpless bewilderment, at the shimmering Serpentine, and the white houses in Park Lane gleaming out of a lilac haze, at the cocoa-coloured Row, and the flash of distant carriage-wheels in the sun-light: all looked as usual—and yet, there was I on the back of a horse which had just inquired "whether I thought I could ride!"

"I have had two dozen lessons at a riding-school," I said at last, with rather a flabby dignity.

"I should hardly have suspected it," was his brutal retort. "You are evidently one of the hopeless cases."

I was deeply hurt, the more so because I could not deny that he had some claim to be a judge. "I—I thought we were getting on so nicely together," I faltered, and all he said in reply to that was, "*Did* you?"

"Do you know," I began, striving to be conversational, "I never was on a horse that talked before."

"You are enough to make any horse talk," he answered, "but I suppose I *am* an exception."

"I think you must be," said I. "The only horses I ever heard of as

possessing the gift of speech were the Houyhnhnms."

"How do you know I am not one of them?" he replied.

"If you are, you will understand that I took the liberty of mounting you under a very pardonable mistake; and if you will have the goodness to stand still, I will no longer detain you."

"Not so fast," said he: "I want to know something more about you first. I should say now you were a man with plenty of oats."

"I am—well off," I said. How I wished I was!

"I have long been looking out for a proprietor who would not overwork me: now, of course, I don't know, but you scarcely strike me as a *hard* rider."

"I do not think I could be fairly accused of that," I answered, with all the consciousness of innocence.

"Just so—then buy me."

"No," I gasped: "after the extremely candid opinion you were good enough to express of my riding, I'm surprised that you should even suggest such a thing."

"Oh, I will put up with that—you will suit me well enough, I dare say."

"You must excuse me. I prefer to keep my spare cash for worthier objects; and, with your permission, I will spend the remainder of the afternoon on foot."

"You will do nothing of the sort," said he.

"If you won't stop, and let me get off properly," I said with firmness, "I shall *roll* off." There were some promenaders within easy hail; but how was I to word a call for help, how explain such a dilemma as mine?

"You will only reduce me to the painful necessity of rolling on you," he replied. "You must see that you are to a certain extent in my power. Suppose it occurred to me to leap those rails and take you into the Serpentine, or to run away and upset a mounted policeman with you—do you think you could offer much opposition?"

I could not honestly assert that I did. "You were introduced to me," I said reproachfully, "as a *kind* horse!"

"And so I am—apart from matters of business. Come, will you buy, or be bolted with? I hate indecision!"

"Buy!" I said, with commercial promptness. "If you will take me back, I will arrange about it at once."

It is needless to say that my one idea was to get safely off his back: after which, neither honour nor law could require me to execute a contract extorted from me by threats. But, as we were going down the mews, he said reflectively, "I've been thinking—it will be better for all parties, if you make your offer to my proprietor *before* you dismount." I was too vexed to speak: this animal's infernal intelligence had foreseen my manœuvre—he meant to foil it, if he could.

And then we clattered in under the glass-roofed yard of the livery stables; and the job-master, who was alone there, cast his eyes up at the sickly-faced clock, as if he were comparing its pallor with my own. "Why, you *are* home early, sir," he said. "You didn't find the 'orse too much for you, did you?" He said this without any suspicion of the real truth; and, indeed, I may say, once for all, that this weird horse—Houyhnhnm, or whatever else he might be—admitted no one but myself into the secret of his marvellous gifts, and in all his conversations with me, managed (though how, I cannot pretend to say) to avoid being overheard.

"Oh, dear no," I protested, "he carried me admirably—admirably!" and I made an attempt to slip off.

No such thing: Brutus instantly jogged my memory, and me, by the slightest suggestion of a "buck."

"He's a grand 'orse, sir, isn't he?" said the job-master complacently.

"Magnificent!" I agreed, with a jerk. "Will you go to his head, please?"

But the horse backed into the

centre of the yard, where he plunged with a quiet obstinacy. "I like him so much," I called out, as I clung to the saddle, "that I want to know if you're at all inclined to part with him?" Here Brutus became calm and attentive.

"Would you be inclined to make me a orfer for him, sir?"

"Yes," I said faintly. "About how much would he be?"

"You step into my orfice here, sir," said he, "and we'll talk it over."

I should have been only too willing, for there was no room there for the horse, but the suspicious animal would not hear of it: he began to revolve immediately.

"Let us settle it now—here," I said, "I can't wait."

The job-master stroked away a grin. No doubt there *was* something unbusinesslike and unpractical in such precipitation, especially as combined with my appearance at the time.

"Well, you '*ave* took a voilent fancy to the 'orse, and no mistake, sir," he remarked.

"I never crossed a handsomer creature," I said; which was not prudent in a purchaser, but then, there was the animal himself to be conciliated.

"I don't know, really, as I can do without him just at this time of year," said the man. "I'm under-'orsed as it is for the work I've got to do."

A sweet relief stole over me: I had done all that could be expected of me. "I'm very sorry to hear that," I said, preparing to dismount. "That *is* a disappointment; but if you can't, there's an end of it."

"Don't you be afraid," said Brutus, "*he'll* sell me readily enough: make him an offer, quick!"

"I'll give you thirty guineas for him, come!" I said, knowing well enough that he would not take twice the money.

"I thought a gentleman like you would have had more insight into the value of a 'orse," he said: "why, his action alone is worth that, sir."

"You couldn't let me have the action without the horse, I suppose?" I said, and I must have intended some joke.

It is unnecessary to prolong a painful scene. Brutus ran me up steadily from sum to sum, until his owner said at last: "Well, we won't 'aggle, sir, call it a hundred."

I had to call it a hundred, and what is more, it *was* a hundred. I took him without a warranty, without even a veterinary opinion. I could have been induced to take my purchase away then and there, as if I had been buying a canary, so unaccustomed was I to transactions of this kind, and I am afraid the job-master considered me little better than a fool.

So I found myself the involuntary possessor of a Houyhnhnm, or something even worse, and I walked back to my rooms in Park Street in a state of stupor. What was I to do with him? To ride an animal so brutally plain-spoken would be a continual penance; and yet, I should have to keep him, for I knew he was cunning enough to outwit any attempt to dispose of him. And to this, Love and Ambition had led me! I could not, after all I had said, approach Diana with any confidence as a mere pedestrian: the fact that I was in possession of a healthy horse which I never rode, would be sure to leak out in time, and how was I to account for it? I could see no way, and I groaned under an embarrassment which I dared not confide to the friendliest ear. I hated the monster that had saddled himself upon me, and looked in vain for any mode of escape.

I had to provide Brutus with stabling in another part of the town, for he proved exceedingly difficult to please: he found fault with everything, and I only wonder he did not demand that his stable should be fitted up with blue china and mezzotints. In his new quarters I left him for some days to his own devices: a course which I was glad to find, on visiting him again, had considerably reduced his arrogance. He wanted to go in the Row and see

the other horses, and it did not at all meet his views to be exercised there by a stableman at unfashionable hours. So he proposed a compromise. If I would only consent to mount him, he engaged to treat me with forbearance, and pointed out that he could give me, as he expressed it, various "tips" which would improve my seat. I was not blind to the advantages of such an arrangement. It is not every one who secures a riding-master in the person of his own horse: the horse is essentially a generous animal, and I felt that I might trust to Brutus's honour. And to do him justice, he observed the compact with strict good faith. Some of his "tips," it is true, very nearly tipped me off, but their result was to bring us closer together: our relations were less strained: it seemed to me that I gained more mastery over him every day, and was less stiff afterwards.

But I was not allowed to enjoy this illusion long. One day, when I innocently asked him if he found my hands improving, he turned upon me his off sardonic eye. "You'll *never* improve, old sack-of-beans [for he had come to address me with a freedom I burned to resent]: hands! why, you're sawing my mouth off all the time. And your feet 'home,' and tickling me under my shoulders at every stride—why, I'm half ashamed to be seen about with you."

I was deeply hurt. "I will spare you for the future," I said coldly: "this is my last appearance."

"Nonsense," he said, "you needn't show temper over it. Surely, if I can put up with it, *you* can! But we will make a new compact. [I never knew such a beast as he was for bargains.] You only worry me by interfering with the reins. Let 'em out, and leave everything to me. Just mention from time to time where you want to go, and I'll attend to it,—if I've nothing better to do."

I felt that such an understanding was destructive of all dignity, subverting, as it did, the natural relations between horse and rider; but I had hardly any self-respect left, and I consented, since I saw no way of refusing. And on the whole, I cannot say, even now, that I had any grave reason for finding fault with the use Brutus made of my concessions: he showed more tact than I could have expected in disguising the merely nominal nature of my authority.

I had only one serious complaint against him, which was that he had a habit of breaking suddenly away with a merely formal apology, to exchange equine civilities with some cob or mare, to whose owner I was a perfect stranger, thus driving me to invent the most desperate excuses to cover my seeming intrusion; but I managed to account for it in various ways, and even made a few acquaintances in this irregular and involuntary manner. I could have wished he had been a less susceptible animal, for, though his flirtations were merely Platonic, it is rather humiliating to have to play "gooseberry" to one's own horse, a part which I was constantly being called upon to perform!

As it happened, Diana was away in Paris that Easter, and we had not met since my appearance in the Row; but I knew she would be in town again shortly, and with consummate diplomacy I began to excite Brutus's curiosity by sundry careless, half-slighting allusions to Miss Chetwynd's little mare, Wild Rose. "She's too frisky for my taste," I said, "but she's been a good deal admired, though I dare say you wouldn't be particularly struck by her."

So that, on the first afternoon of Diana's return to the Row, I found it easy, under cover of giving Brutus an opportunity of forming an opinion, to prevail on him to carry me to her side. Diana, who was with a certain Lady Verney, her chaperon, welcomed me with a charming smile.

"I had no idea you could ride so well," she said, "you manage that beautiful horse of yours so very easily —with such light hands, too."

This was not irony, for I could now give my whole mind to my seat; and, as I never interfered at all with the steering apparatus, my hands must have seemed the perfection of lightness.

"He wants delicate handling," I answered carelessly, "but he goes very well with *me*."

"I wish you would let me try his paces some morning, Pulvertoft," struck in a Colonel Cockshott, who was riding with them, and whom I knew slightly: "I've a notion he would go better on the curb."

"I shall be very happy," I began, when, just in time, I noticed a warning depression in Brutus's ears. The Colonel rode about sixteen stone, and with spurs! "I mean," I added hastily, "I should have been—only, to tell you the truth, I couldn't conscientiously trust any one on him but myself."

"My dear fellow!" said the Colonel, who I could see was offended, "I've not met many horses in my time that I couldn't manage."

"I think Mr. Pulvertoft is *quite* right," said Diana. "When a horse gets accustomed to one he does so resent a strange hand: it spoils his temper for days. I never will lend Wild Rose to anybody for that very reason!"

The Colonel fell back in the rear in a decided sulk. "Poor dear Colonel Cockshott!" said Diana, "he is so proud of his riding, but *I* think he dragoons a horse. I don't call that *riding*, do you?"

"Well—hardly," I agreed, with easy disparagement. "I never believe in ruling a horse by fear."

"I suppose you are very fond of yours?" she said.

"Fond is not the word!" I exclaimed—and it certainly was not.

"I am not sure that what I said about lending Wild Rose would apply to *you*," she said. "I think you would be gentle with her."

I was certain that I should treat her with all consideration; but as I doubted whether she would wholly reciprocate it, I said I should regard riding her as akin to profanation.

As Brutus and I were going home, he observed that it was a good thing I had not agreed to lend him to the Colonel.

"Yes," I said, determined to improve the occasion, "you might not have found him as considerate as,—well, as some people!"

"I meant it was a good thing for *you!*" he hinted darkly, and I did not care to ask for an explanation. "What did you mean," he resumed, "by saying that I should not admire Wild Rose? Why, she is charming—charming!"

"In that case," I said, "I don't mind riding with her mistress occasionally—to oblige you."

"You don't mind!" he said, "you will *have* to, my boy! and every afternoon."

I suppressed a chuckle: after all, man *is* the nobler animal. I could manage a horse in my own way. My little *ruse* had succeeded: I should have no more forced introductions to mystified strangers.

And now for some weeks my life passed in a happy dream. I only lived for those hours in the Row, where Brutus turned as naturally to Wild Rose as the sunflower to the sun, and Diana and I grew more intimate every day. Happiness and security made me almost witty. I was merciless in my raillery of the eccentric exhibitions of horsemanship which were to be met with, and Diana was provoked by my comments to the sweetest silvery laughter. As for Colonel Cockshott, whom I had once suspected of a desire to be my rival, he had long become a "negligible quantity;" and if I delayed in asking Diana to trust me with her sweet self, it was only because I found an epicurean pleasure in prolonging a suspense that was so little uncertain.

And then, without warning, my riding was interrupted for a while. Brutus was discovered, much to his annoyance, to have a saddle-raw, and was even so unjust as to lay the blame

on me, though, for my own part, I thought it a mark of apt, though tardy, retribution. I was not disposed to tempt Fortune upon any other mount, but I could not keep away from the Row, nevertheless, and appeared there on foot. I saw Diana riding with the Colonel, who seemed to think his opportunity had come at last; but whenever she passed the railings on which I leaned, she would raise her eyebrows and draw her mouth down into a little curve of resigned boredom, which completely reassured me. Still, I was very glad when Brutus was well again, and we were cantering down the Row once more, both in the highest spirits.

"I never heard the horses here *whinny* so much as they do this season," I said, by way of making conversation. "Can you account for it at all?" For he sometimes gave me pieces of information which enabled me to impress Diana afterwards by my intimate knowledge of horses.

"Whinnying?" he said. "They're *laughing*, that's what they're doing—and no wonder!"

"Oh!" said I, "and what's the joke?"

"Why, *you* are!" he replied. "You don't suppose you take them in, do you? They know all about you, bless your heart!"

"Oh, do they?" I said blankly. This brute took a positive pleasure, I believe, in reducing my self-esteem.

"I dare say it has got about through Wild Rose," he continued. "She was immensely tickled when I told her. I'm afraid she must have been feeling rather dull all these days, by the bye."

I felt an unworthy impulse to take his conceit down as he had lowered mine.

"Not so very, I think," I said. "She seemed to me to find that brown hunter of Colonel Cockshott's a very agreeable substitute."

Late as it is for reparation, I must acknowledge with shame that in uttering this insinuation, I did that poor little mare (for whom I entertained the highest respect) a shameful injustice; and I should like to state here, in the most solemn and emphatic manner, my sincere belief that, from first to last, she conducted herself in a manner that should have shielded her from all calumny.

It was only a mean desire to retaliate, a petty and ignoble spite, that prompted me thus to poison Brutus's confidence, and I regretted the words as soon as I had uttered them.

"That beast!" he said, starting as if I had touched him with a whip—a thing I never used—"why, he hasn't two ideas in his great fiddle-head. The only sort of officer *he* ought to carry is a Salvationist!"

"I grant he has not your personal advantages and charm of manner," I said. "No doubt I was wrong to say anything about it."

"No," he said, "you—you have done me a service," and he relapsed into a sombre silence.

I was riding with Diana as usual, and was about to express my delight at being able to resume our companionship, when her mare drew slightly ahead and lashed out suddenly, catching me on the left leg, and causing intense agony for the moment.

Diana showed the sweetest concern, imploring me to go home in a cab at once, while her groom took charge of Brutus. I declined the cab; but, as my leg was really painful, and Brutus was showing an impatience I dared not disregard, I had to leave her side.

On our way home, Brutus said moodily, "It is all over between us—you saw that?"

"I felt it!" I replied. "She nearly broke my leg."

"It was intended for me," he said. "It was her way of signifying that we had better be strangers for the future. I taxed her with her faithlessness: she denied it, of course—every mare does: we had an explanation, and everything is at an end!"

I did not ride him again for some days, and when I did, I found him steeped in Byronic gloom. He even wanted at first to keep entirely on the

Bayswater side of the Park, though I succeeded in arguing him out of such weakness. "Be a horse!" I said. "Show her you don't care. You only flatter her by betraying your feelings."

This was a subtlety that had evidently not occurred to him, but he was intelligent enough to feel the force of what I said. "You are right," he admitted; "you are not quite a fool in some things. She shall see how little I care!"

Naturally, after this, I expected to accompany Diana as usual, and it was a bitter disappointment to me to find that Brutus would not hear of doing so. He had an old acquaintance in the Park, a dapple-grey, who, probably from some early disappointment, was a confirmed cynic, and whose society he thought would be congenial just then. The grey was ridden regularly by a certain Miss Gittens, whose appearance as she titupped laboriously up and down had often furnished Diana and myself with amusement.

And now, in spite of all my efforts, Brutus made straight to the grey. I was not in such difficulties as might have been expected, for I happened to know Miss Gittens slightly, as a lady no longer in the bloom of youth, who still retained a wiry form of girlishness. Though rather disliking her than not, I found it necessary just then to throw some slight effusion into my greeting. She, not unnaturally perhaps, was flattered by my preference, and begged me to give her a little instruction in riding, which—Heaven forgive me for it!—I took upon myself to do.

Even now I scarcely see how I could have acted otherwise: I could not leave her side until Brutus had exhausted the pleasures of cynicism with his grey friend, and the time had to be filled up somehow. But, oh, the torture of seeing Diana at a distance, and knowing that only a miserable misunderstanding between our respective steeds kept us apart, feeling constrained even to avoid looking in her direction, lest she should summon me to her!

One day, as I was riding with Miss Gittens, she glanced coyly at me over her sharp right shoulder, and said, "Do you know, only such a little while ago, I never even dreamed that we should ever become as intimate as we are now: it seems almost incredible, does it not?"

"You must not say so," I replied. "Surely there is nothing singular in my helping you a little with your riding?" Though it struck me that it would have been very singular if I had.

"Perhaps not singular," she murmured, looking modestly down her nose: "but will you think me very unmaidenly if I confess that, to me, those lessons have developed a dawning danger?"

"You are perfectly safe on the grey," I said.

"I—I was not thinking of the grey," she returned. "Dear Mr. Pulvertoft, I must speak frankly—a girl has so many things to consider, and I am afraid you have made me forget how wrongly and thoughtlessly I have been behaving of late. I cannot help suspecting that you must have some motive in seeking my society in so—so marked a manner."

"Miss Gittens," said I, "I can disguise nothing. I have."

"And you have not been merely amusing yourself all this time?"

"Before Heaven," I cried with fervour, "I have *not!*"

"You are not one of those false men who give their bridle-reins a shake, and ride off with 'Adieu for evermore!'—tell me you are not?"

I might shake *my* bridle-reins till I was tired and nothing would come of it until Brutus was in the humour to depart; so that I was able to assure her with truth that I was not at all that kind of person.

"Then why not let your heart speak?"

"There is such a thing," I said gloomily, "as a heart that is gagged."

"Can no word, no hint of mine loosen the gag?" she wished to know.

"What, you are silent still? Then, Mr. Pulvertoft, though I may seem harsh and cruel in saying it, our pleasant intercourse must end—we must ride together no more!"

No more? What would Brutus say to that? I was horrified. "Miss Gittens," I said in great agitation, "I entreat you to unsay those words. I—I am afraid I could not undertake to accept such a dismissal. Surely, after that, you will not insist?"

She sighed. "I am a weak, foolish girl," she said: "you are only too able to overcome my judgment.—— There, Mr. Pulvertoft, look happy again—I relent. You may stay if you will!"

You must believe that I felt thoroughly ashamed of myself, for I could not be blind to the encouragement which, though I sought to confine my words to strict truth, I was innocently affording. But, with a horse like mine, what was a man to do? What would you have done yourself? As soon as was prudent, I hinted to Brutus that his confidences had lasted long enough; and as he trotted away with me, he remarked, "I thought you were never going." Was he weary of the grey already? My heart leaped. "Brutus," I said thickly, "are you strong enough to bear a great joy?"

"Speak out," he said, "and do try to keep those heels out of my ribs."

"I cannot see you suffer," I told him, with a sense of my own hypocrisy all the time. "I must tell you—circumstances have come to my knowledge which lead me to believe that we have both judged Wild Rose too hastily. I am sure that her heart is yours still. She is only longing to tell you that she has never really swerved from her allegiance."

"It is too late now," he said, and the back of his head looked inflexibly obstinate, "we have kept asunder too long."

"No," I said, "listen. I take more interest in you than you are, perhaps, aware of, and I have thought of a little plan for bringing you together again. What if I find an opportunity to see the lady she belongs to—we have not met lately, as you know, and I do not pretend that I desire a renewal of our intimacy—"

"You like the one on the grey best: I saw that long ago," he said, and I left him in his error.

"In any case, for your sake, I will sacrifice myself," I said magnanimously. "I will begin to-morrow. Come, you will not let your lives be wrecked by a foolish lovers' quarrel?"

He made a little half-hearted opposition, but finally, as I knew he would, consented. I had gained my point: I was free from Miss Gittens at last!

That evening, I met Diana in the hall of a house in Eaton Square. She was going down stairs as I was making my way to the ball-room, and greeted me with a rather cool little nod.

"You have quite deserted me lately," she said smiling, but I could read the reproach in her eyes, "you never ride with us now."

My throat was swelling with passionate eloquence—and I could not get any of it out.

"No, I never do," was all my stupid tongue could find to say.

"You have discovered a more congenial companion," said cruel Diana.

"Miss Chetwynd," I said eagerly, "you don't know how I have been wishing—Will you let me ride with you to-morrow, as—as you used to do?"

"You are quite sure you won't be afraid of my naughty Wild Rose?" she said. "I have given her such a scolding, that I think she is thoroughly ashamed of herself."

"You thought it was *that* that kept me!" I cried. "Oh, if I could tell you!"

She smiled: she was my dear, friendly Diana again.

"You shall tell me all about it to-morrow," she said. "You will not have another opportunity, because we are going to Aix on Friday. And now, good-night. I am stopping the

way, and the linkman is getting quite excited over it."

She passed on, and the carriage rolled away with her, and I was too happy to mind very much—had she not forgiven me? Should we not meet to-morrow? I should have two whole hours to declare myself in, and this time I would dally with Fortune no longer.

How excited I was the following day: how fearful, when the morning broke grey and lowering: how grateful, when the benignant sun shone out later, and promised a brilliant afternoon: how carefully I dressed, and what a price I paid for the flower for my buttonhole!

So we cantered on to the Row, as goodly a pair (if I may be pardoned this retrospective vanity) as any there; and by and by, I saw, with the quick eye of a lover, Diana's willowy form in the distance. She was not alone, but I knew that the Colonel would soon have to yield his place to me.

As soon as she saw me, she urged her mare to a trot, and came towards me with the loveliest faint blush and dawning smile of welcome, when, all at once, Brutus came to a dead stop, which nearly threw me on his neck, and stood quivering in every limb.

"Do you see that?" he said hoarsely. "And I was about to forgive her!"

I saw: my insinuation, baseless enough at the beginning, was now but too well justified. Colonel Cockshott was on his raw-boned brown hunter, and even my brief acquaintance with horses enabled me to see that Wild Rose no longer regarded him with indifference.

Diana and the Colonel had reined up and seemed waiting for me—would Brutus never move? "Show your pride," I said in an agonised whisper. "Treat her with the contempt she deserves!"

"I will," he said between his bit and clenched teeth.

And then Miss Gittens came bumping by on the grey, and, before I could interfere, my Houyhnhnm was off like a shot in pursuit. I saw Diana's sweet, surprised face: I heard the Colonel's jarring laugh as I passed, and I—I could only bow in mortified appeal, and long for a gulf to leap into like Curtius!

I don't know what I said to Miss Gittens. I believe I made myself recklessly amiable, and I remember she lingered over parting in a horribly emotional manner. I was too miserable to mind: all the time I was seeing Diana's astonished eyes, hearing Colonel Cockshott's heartless laugh. Brutus made a kind of explanation on our way home: "You meant well," he said, "but you see you were wrong. Your proposed sacrifice, for which I am just as grateful to you as if it had been effected, was useless. All I could do in return was to take you where your true inclination lay. I too can be unselfish."

I was too dejected to curse his unselfishness. I did not even trouble myself to explain what it had probably cost me. I only felt drearily that I had had my last ride, I had had enough of horsemanship for ever!

That evening I went to the theatre, I wanted to deaden thought for the moment; and during one of the intervals I saw Lady Verney in the stalls, and went up to speak to her. "Your niece is not with you?" I said; "I thought I should have had a chance of —of saying good-bye to her before she left for the continent."

I had a lingering hope that she might ask me to lunch, that I might have one more opportunity of explaining.

"Oh," said Lady Verney, "but that is all changed, we are not going, at least, not yet."

"Not going!" I cried, incredulous for very joy.

"No, it is all very sudden; but,— well, you are almost like an old friend, and you are sure to hear it sooner or later. I only knew myself this afternoon, when she came in from her ride. Colonel Cockshott has proposed and she has accepted him. We're *so* pleased about it. Wasn't dear

Mrs.—— delightful in that last act? I positively saw real tears on her face!"

If I had waited much longer she would have seen a similar realism on mine. But I went back and sat the interval out, and listened critically to the classical selection of chamber-music from the orchestra, and saw the rest of the play, though I have no notion how it ended.

All that night my heart was slowly consumed by a dull rage that grew with every sleepless hour; but the object of my resentment was not Diana. She had only done what as a woman she was amply justified in doing after the pointed slight I had apparently inflicted upon her. Her punishment was sufficient already, for I guessed that she had only accepted the Colonel under the first intolerable sting of desertion. No: I reserved all my wrath for Brutus, who had betrayed me at the moment of triumph. I planned revenge. Cost what it might I would ride him once more. In the eyes of the law I was his master. I would exercise my legal rights to the full.

The afternoon came at last. I was in a white heat of anger, though there were bystanders who put a more uncharitable construction upon my complexion as I ascended to the saddle.

Brutus cast an uneasy eye at my heels as we started: "What are those things you've got on?" he inquired.

"Spurs," I replied curtly.

"You shouldn't wear them till you have learnt to turn your toes in," he said. "And a whip, too! may I ask what that is for?"

"We will discuss that presently," I said very coldly; for I did not want to have a scene with my horse in the street.

When we came round by the statue of Achilles and on to the Ride, I shortened my reins, and got a better hold of the whip, while I found that, from some cause I cannot explain, the roof of my mouth grew uncomfortably dry.

"I should be glad of a little quiet talk with you, if you've no objection," I began.

"I am quite at your disposal," he said, champing his bit with a touch of irony.

"First, let me tell you," I said, "that I have lost my only love for ever."

"Well," he retorted flippantly, "you won't die of it. So have I. We must endeavour to console one another!"

I still maintained a deadly calm. "You seem unaware that you are the sole cause of my calamity," I said. "Had you only consented to face Wild Rose yesterday, I should have been a happy man by this time!"

"How was I to know that, when you let me think all your affections were given to the elderly thing who is trotted out by my friend the grey?"

"We won't argue, please," I said hastily. "It is enough that your infernal egotism and self-will have ruined my happiness. I have allowed you to usurp the rule, to reverse our natural positions. I shall do so no more. I intend to teach you a lesson you will never forget."

For a horse, he certainly had a keen sense of humour. I thought the girths would have snapped.

"And when do you intend to begin?" he asked, as soon as he could speak.

I looked in front of me: there were Diana and her accepted lover riding towards us; and so natural is dissimulation, even to the sweetest and best women, that no one would have suspected from her radiant face that her gaiety covered an aching heart.

"I intend to begin *now*," I said. "Monster, demon, whatever you are that have held me in thrall so long, I have broken my chains! I have been a coward long enough. You may kill me if you like. I rather hope you will; but first I mean to pay you back some of the humiliation with which you have loaded me. I intend

to thrash you as long as I remain in the saddle."

I have been told by eye-witnesses that the chastisement was of brief duration, but while it lasted, I flatter myself, it was severe. I laid into him with a stout whip, of whose effectiveness I had assured myself by experiments upon my own legs. I dug my borrowed spurs into his flanks. I jerked his mouth. I dare say he was almost as much surprised as pained. But he *was* pained!

I was about to continue my practical rebuke, when my victim suddenly evaded my grasp; and for one vivid second I seemed to be gazing upon a birdseye view of his back; and then there was a crash, and I lay, buzzing like a bee, in an iridescent fog, and each colour meant a different pain, and they faded at last into darkness, and I remember no more.

"It was weeks," concluded Mr. Pulvertoft, "before that darkness lifted and revealed me to myself as a strapped and bandaged invalid. But—and this is perhaps the most curious part of my narrative—almost the first sounds that reached my ears were those of wedding bells; and I knew, without requiring to be told, that they were ringing for Diana's marriage with the Colonel. *That* showed there wasn't much the matter with me, didn't it? Why, I can hear them everywhere now. I don't think she ought to have had them rung at Sandown though: it was just a little ostentatious, so long after the ceremony, don't you think so?"

"Yes—yes," I said; "but you never told me what became of the horse."

"Ah! the horse—yes. I am looking for him. I'm not so angry with him as I was, and I don't like to ask too many questions at the stables, for fear they may tell me one day that they had to shoot him while I was so ill. You knew I was ill, I dare say?" he broke off: "there were bulletins about me in the papers, look here."

He handed me a cutting on which I read:

"The Recent Accident in Rotten Row.—There is no change as yet in Mr. Pulvertoft's condition. The unfortunate gentleman is still lying unconscious at his rooms in Park Street; and his medical attendants fear that, even if he recovers his physical strength, the brain will be permanently injured."

"But that was all nonsense!" said Mr. Pulvertoft, with a little nervous laugh, "it wasn't injured a bit, or how could I remember everything so clearly as I do, you know?"

And this was an argument that was, of course, unanswerable.

F. Anstey.

THE WENDS IN THE SPREEWALD.

Little more than fifty miles from Berlin, in the province of Brandenburg, and on the affluents of the same river which flows through the capital, there still exists a population, isolated by the nature of the country they occupy, displaying a different physical type and speaking a different language from the rest of Germany. The student of ethnology as well as the lover of nature will find few districts in modern Europe so curious and interesting as the marshlands of the Spree, where this branch of the ancient Wendish stock has retained all its ancient characteristics unchanged down to the present time. But already the hand of change is upon them. To-day the German language only is taught in their schools: the number of churches where the office is read in Wendish is rapidly decreasing: forced military service and situations in the city familiarise the young folk with the life of their German neighbours: the traveller finds his way up the water-channels which are their only roads; and the time is not difficult to foresee when the old Sclavonic language will go the way of the Cornish.

The Wends were a tribe of that great horde of Sclaves who, marching westward from central Asia, established themselves in all the country east of the Elbe and north of the Danube: pressing hard upon the Germanic races who had occupied it before them, the Quadi in the south, the Marcomanni in the centre, and the Goths in the north, and driving these west and south to overrun the Roman Empire, to master Gaul and Spain, and penetrate into northern Africa. They are not to be identified, as the similarity of name might suggest, with the Vandals, an error into which both Carlyle and Gibbon have fallen.[1] The Vandals are generally agreed to have been of one and the same stock with the Goths; while the Wends, as any one may prove to himself to-day, are of the pure Sclavonic type and speak a purely Sclavonic language. Their Germanic predecessors were at the time of the eastern invasion tending to become an agricultural people, and therefore, according to Dr. Felix Dahn, they gave these pastoral nomads, who called themselves *Slovenen*, the distinguishing name of *Wenden*, a corruption of *die Weidenden*, the Pasturers.

History of the Wends there is little enough of. Marching westward somewhere in the fourth century, they inundated these lands, settled themselves down by what struggles we know not, and were masters here until the ninth or tenth. Already, even in the eighth century, the reaction had begun. The German, reasserting his right of priority, pressed upon the Wendish border; and early in the tenth, Henry the Fowler drove them from the fort of Brannibor, as the present Brandenburg was then named. Then, in 937, it was Gero, the great Markgraf, who was intrusted by King Otto the First with the mission of putting down the Wends, and who subdued the whole country between the Elbe and the Oder. In the eleventh

[1] "In the northern parts, these immigrating Sclaves were of the kind called Vandals or Wends."—Carlyle's 'Frederick the Great,' bk. ii. ch. i. Gibbon (ch. xli.) says, "Several populous villages of Lusatia are inhabited by the Vandals; they still preserve their language, their customs, and the purity of their blood." But he subsequently adds that the use of a Sclavonian dialect points to their being rather the successors of the genuine Vandals, who succeeded to their country and, as he seems to have thought, their name.

century they once again assert themselves, victoriously rising in the neighbourhood of Brandenburg; and then through successive years were beaten on by various Markgraves till the days of Albert the Bear, who determined to christianise them and beat them out of history altogether. This he accomplished after a three days' fight, when the Wends broken in spirit retired, what was left of them, into the impenetrable forests and marshes. The legend exists among the people still, how the last of the Wendish Princes, Pribislaw, or another as some say, made his way upon a raft into the heart of the marshlands of the Upper Spree, to found at Burg a fort where he long stood at bay; and certainly there are at Burg the lines of a primitive fortress of considerable extent, known as the Schlossberg, still rising high above the flood-line.

Many dim stories live in the popular tradition of the ancient glory of this Wendish Prince: how he shod his horses with shoes reversed that none should follow in his tracks, and was used to cross the numberless streams on a magical leathern bridge which rolled up of itself behind him. This legend, with others of the wild huntsman and the headless rider, seems to point back to a period before the occupation of the Spreewald; for if the marshes are scarcely accessible to a horseman now they can hardly have been so a thousand years ago, when the whole country was a tangled growth of primal forest, luxuriating from the spongy soil. In those days of the Wendish Prince, the old men say, there stood on the ramparts a splendid castle, which sunk under the earth by enchantment in the day of defeat. There in the buried castle sits the Wendish Princess spinning, bound by a spell to make twelve flaxen shirts, but only to work one stitch in the year. When all are completed the spell will be broken, the castle will rise from the earth once more, and the sceptre return to the Wends. Surely Hans Andersen must have been here! Once, the story goes, there was a deep hole yawning in the centre of the ancient fort, so deep you might count minutes before a falling stone was heard to ring below. Down this hole a traveller dared to be lowered, attached to a long rope with a signal cord in his hand. When he reached the bottom, he said, it grew quite light, and he could see four iron doors opening one from each side of a square chamber; but in front of every door there lay coiled a huge snake, and as they reared their heads against him he grew afraid, pulled at the signal cord, and so was drawn up again.

Since the days of Albert the Bear and the Ascanien Markgraves, his successors, the Niederlausitz (Lusatia) with Lübbenau, the chief town of the Spreewald, has had many masters. Bought by the Bohemian crown in 1364, it fell to Brandenburg in 1448, and to Hungary for nineteen years in 1471, but remained practically Bohemian all the while, its institutions and coinage undergoing no change. In 1637 Lübbenau became Saxon, and so remained until the reconstitution of Europe in 1815, when the Congress of Vienna assigned it to Prussia.

The largest town, however, in the marshes of the Spree is Lübben, on the western border, which has a population of over six thousand. A bright and picturesque little place, through which the river flows in several channels to its confluence with the Berste. The streets are planted with lime, chestnut and ash, the doors gay with oleanders, and the windows full of flowers. Portions of an old *schloss* with a rich *Renaissance* gable, and a tower with walls of abnormal thickness, suggest some outpost of the Markgraves against rebellious barbarism; but of its history or founder there appears to be no record, unless some one cunning in heraldry can identify that shield with the many quarterings, surrounded by eight helmets in a row, which is carved above the entrance-door. All round Lübben are rich marshy meadow-lands which yield three hay crops in the

year; and those who come from the monotonous corn-flats of Pomerania and the sandy fir forests of Northern Brandenburg, are struck with the warmth of the colouring when the sun lights up the red-tiled roofs of Lübben and punts laden with grass or rushes glide along the narrow channels. Already horses and carts are dispensed with: the meadows are intersected in every direction by little streams; and all the carrying is along the water-ways in light punts, propelled by a kind of paddle-pole terminating in a long narrow blade and shod with a crescent-shaped ferrule of steel. These punts are used throughout the Spreewald, and a pretty sight it is at sunset to see them returning home in long procession, swiftly and silently, piled three feet high with fresh-cut hay, and urged perhaps by two Wendish women in their red skirts and full white linen head-dress.

The forest of the Upper Spree, which now covers barely a fourth part of its old area, is entered a few miles from Lübben. The boat glides in among the alder trees, whose branches meet above the channel, as into an enchanted wood. The banks are tall rushes, shaped like double-edged sword-blades of the most pliant steel: beyond, the tangled undergrowth, rich marsh grass and ferns: on either side, except where branching streams divide to right and left, the endless colonnade of tapering grey stems melting in the distance to one harmonious tone with the soft green of the foliage, every reflection drawn clear and true in the still water. Sometimes a tree leans obliquely over the channel, a bridge for the squirrels: silence everywhere, hardly a bird's note,—the silence of solitude. Then at the end of the long aisle of trees a gleam of sunlight breaks through, and across the gleam darts a kingfisher, the spirit of this solitude, with the light striking on his sapphire wings. This is the aspect of the late summer: a little earlier in the year, and these woods were all one song of nightingales.

But in winter, the whole country, meadow and forest alike, from Lübben away to Cottbus and Peitz, is one wide lake, sixteen or seventeen miles in length and five or six in breadth. Then only the alders of the wood, the willows that mark the channel, and the artificial banks, on which the Wends have built their log-houses and laid out their gardens and their flax-plots, appear above the dismal waters. When the winter is a hard one, it is all one great sheet of ice, and then only can the foresters work. In spring and summer, when the sap is in the tree, the wood cannot be cut: in the flood-time the waters stand two feet above the roots. But when the ice is frozen hard enough to bear, the woodman is busy: the growth of thirty years is felled, and the trunks lie upon the ice until the thaw sets in.

For several hours the way lies through the forest. The stranger is bewildered by the network of streams, more puzzling to the uninitiated than a labyrinth of paths; and when at length the open country is reached, the meadows are filled with workers in their Wendish dresses, and the language spoken in the passing boats is an unknown tongue. The streams, seldom more than a dozen feet in width, still divide the meadows into islands: minnows dart across the sandy bottom: the banks are one mass of flowering rush, arrow-head, forget-me-not, and countless other blooms: sometimes a willow or a line of alders shades the bank, and beyond is always the luxuriant grass. Then the first houses of the extensive settlement of Burg come into view: houses built in the Russian manner of horizontal logs, roofed with a high gabled thatch. Now, at intervals, the channels are spanned by light bridges of planks, built high to be beyond reach of the winter floods, approached by steps on either side. And when, as the boat passes under these bridges, a Wendish woman leans against the rustic hand-rail, with her bare feet on the narrow boards raised on their slender pole

supports, her white cap and red skirt with its rough-spun blue apron defined against the background of alder and reflected in the water below, the artist sees his composition ready made.

The settlement of Burg (pronounced Burk) covers some twenty miles with its garden-plots and scattered houses, only a small number of which are gathered round the church. Here excavations have brought to light traces of a people before the Wends. Some twenty minutes' distance from the church, built in the closing years of the last century, are the lines of the ancient fortress, about four hundred by two hundred yards in area, where the Wends are said to have made their last stand for independence, of which they tell the wild legend aforesaid. The log-houses have all their little gardens, plots for vegetables, and stalls for cattle, on ground drained by the surrounding trench, and raised above the flood-level by the earth thrown up from the trench, the banks of which are secured by piles and require constant attention. Generally a belt of alders and willows closes in each small domain, and patches of arable land are artificially secured in the same manner. The old pastoral nature of the people has left its trace, and cattle, all stall-fed, are a great part of their wealth. The little plots, richly manured and farmed with untiring industry, bear two crops in the year: the gardens are bright with fruit-trees and cucumber-beds: Lübbenau supplies Berlin, Dresden, Leipzig, and Stettin with this vegetable so indispensable to German tables; and the whole country has a flourishing and cheerful aspect.

So much may be done with the marsh-country, and an economist might here profitably study the much-tormented question of small holdings. Frederick the Great settled some hundred Austrian immigrants near Burg, on allotments of about twenty acres of what was at that time forest-growth. A hundred years have passed, and their descendants, who have adopted Wendish manners and speech, are almost all of them well off. The two other principal settlements are Leipe and Lehde. All that may be said of Burg holds good of them; except that they are more picturesque from their greater compactness, and that lying rather nearer to frequented roads they seem to have more touch of the outside world. Each of these villages is, as it were, a rustic Venice, with log-houses for palaces, bridges of planks for bridges of stone, and flowering banks for quays. Within, the houses are clean: the smoky kitchen with its rows of quaintly fashioned earthen pots and pans, where at meal times the family all eat together out of one great bowl: the rude four-post beds: the spinning-wheels: the wooden jugs and tubs, which are the winter handiwork of the men when the meadows are under water—all these combine to make a picture of primitive life which one would scarcely look to find but fifty miles from a great European capital. Or go into the village school and watch the pedantic old schoolmaster with strange gesticulations beating time for the singing of a hymn, while in front of him in rows sit the little bare-legged children, all dressed, down to the tiniest, in the national costume, the red skirt and the clean white linen cap—you almost seem to be in that magic land of opera-bouffe, where peasants are always beautiful and aprons always clean. On Sunday the life is seen at its gayest round the village church: the white handkerchief shading the head is replaced by a wonder of starching and ironing with silk bands falling behind: a silk necktie and ornaments of amber or silver light up the short-sleeved velvet bodice above the red or dark blue skirt reaching a little below the knee. The bare feet of every day are covered with stockings, and often silk stockings, which the girls take off as they leave the church, and keep as their most precious possession. In winter a short jacket with very full wadded sleeves is added. Each occasion has its own distinctive dress for the women: the men have almost ceased

to wear any individual costume, though one characteristic is noticeable, namely that they are nearly all clean-shaven. A large Elizabethan ruff is worn by brides, with a wreath of myrtle twigs: the bridesmaids have the ruff also with a red silk handkerchief on the head, a silk apron, and an embroidered scarf. The ruff is also worn by girls on the occasion of their first communion, when they are otherwise dressed entirely in black: black also is the mourning dress, with white cap and white handkerchief over the shoulders. Round the coffin before a funeral the female relatives sit enveloped in a white sheet with only the eyes and the hands visible. Both weddings and funerals at Burg are conducted with strange old-world ceremonies connected with the superstitions of the past, pathetically picturesque. When the head of a family has died, immediately the windows are opened to give the soul free passage, and the heir announces it first of all to the cattle and the bees—

> "Bees, Bees, your master's dead,
> I am master now instead."

The day before the funeral a candle is lighted for every year of the dead man's life: the female relatives in their white sheets sit round lamenting, while a chorus of girls sing a burial hymn, and speeches are made recording his worth. Then, when the coffin is carried out, the bench on which it has rested is immediately thrown down, that no one may inadvertently sit upon it and die. The procession of boats moves slowly and solemnly to the burial ground: in the first the priest and choir, next the coffin hidden in flowers, and then the white-shrouded mourners crooning strange funeral chants—and so they wind away between the grassy banks and the willows.

As with other Sclavonic tribes, music and dancing are the passion of the Wends: their language is especially adapted for song, and the spiritual side of the people has as yet only found its primitive expression in melody. The national vice is also one which they are reported to share with the rest of the Sclavonic stock, namely, spirit-drinking: once it was honey-mead and the spirit distilled from the birch tree, now it is the common and pernicious *branntwein*. Otherwise they are a law-abiding people and thoroughly loyal, in spite of the tradition that there is always a secretly elected king among them. Industry, courage, honour, and hospitality their chroniclers have always credited them with: so faithful indeed, says a letter of the eighth century, were their womankind, that wives immolated themselves on the funeral pyre of their husbands; and if in those early times a custom prevailed which modern sensitiveness must repudiate, the custom of prematurely terminating the lives of the aged, it was prompted by the laudable motive of hastening their journey to the gods. As late as the year 1520, Lewin von der Schulenburg rescued an old man who was being dragged away into the forest by the younger members of his family—Abraham about to be sacrificed by Isaac. "Where are you taking him to?" he cried. "To God," was the grim answer. However, the tough old gentleman was placed beyond the reach of his too zealous family, and survived twenty years as doorkeeper in the castle of his deliverer.

The Marshlands are full of quaint legends and primitive superstitions, which have been recorded by various inquirers in the simple fashion in which they are related by the older folk. Some of them recall dim memories of a past greatness, legends of castles and treasures that the swamp has ingulfed, and of headless warriors that gallop by night; but the greater number deal with the weird, the uncanny, the Evil Forces (*Vis Maligna*) of Nature. It is easy to understand how, in these isolated dwellings surrounded each by its tall belt of trees, with the wan floods of winter beyond, and the lurid marsh sunsets fading into the long winter night, there would arise

this awe of the supernatural; and no less in the moonlit summer nights, when the hot day had drawn the vapours from the sodden earth, the benighted reaper urging his boat home through the dark alder-woods, with their slender branches fantastically closing over the narrow channels, would see the mists gather into phantom shapes and hear strange voices in the shadow.

The Water-Nyx, they say, lurks in the deep places. There is a Nyx in every mill-dam. His skin is white, he is dressed all in red and has a red cap, and is the size of a six-year old child: indeed, some say, drowned children turn to Nyxes. Often when the punts cross the deep places, the Nyx will hold fast to the pole, and at night he will turn the punt's head and prevent its passing. He will cling also to the mill-wheel: when the wheel creaks you may know the Nyx is at his mischief. So late as twenty years ago the millers would throw black ducks and loaves of bread into the water when the mill-wheel creaked: then the Nyx let go, but if not thus propitiated he broke the mill-boards and did all sorts of harm. One day on the Schlossberg people saw a Nyx sitting, mending his shoes. "What are you doing that for?" said one. "Our folk are going away to-morrow," the little man replied, "and I am going with them." After that no one saw the Nyx for a long time.

Then there is the Bud: a little man with a light in his hand who flits about over marsh and dry land, and sometimes, as you watch him, he will divide and become two. Children who die unbaptised turn into Buds.

A little lake, known as the Koboldsee, has the usual legend of a vanished castle, whose turrets rise above the ripples once in the year and sink again almost immediately. In the Koboldsee lives a Kobold. He married a Wendish maiden and many years they lived together in a cave under the lake, and had a child half human and half Kobold. Then one day:

> "Down swung the sound of a far off bell.
> She sighed, she looked up through the clear green sea;
> She said, 'I must go, for my kinsfolk pray
> In the little grey church on the shore to-day.'"

But the Kobold was loth to let her go; and he made his conditions that she should speak no word to any one, and come away before the blessing; and so she went. But when the prayers were over and the priest rose to give the blessing she broke her word and stayed; and as she turned to go she saw the Kobold at the door waiting for her, and she fainted away from fear. Then the priest came and heard her story; and he bade her throw the Kobold's ring back into the lake; and after that she was free and never saw her husband again. The shores of the Koboldsee are haunted at noon by the mid-day witch, the Pschesponiza, who lames or injures all that come in her way; and a stout-hearted Wend he would be who should venture there between eleven and noon.

The belief in witches is very strong. Some go so far as to say they can change their shape and become invisible: one thing at least is certain, they always know, however far away they may be, when any one is speaking of them: so it is best to keep silence, for they will infallibly revenge an ill word. The witch test is a simple one: you have only to lay a broom or a shoe in the path of any one you suspect: if she is a witch she cannot step over it, but will have to go round. There are certain days in the year, notably the first of May, when they go about borrowing; but on no account must you lend them anything, above all neither salt, fire, nor leaven; for if they cross your threshold with any one of these things the cattle will inevitably fall ill or die; and if they carry water out, it is just as bad. However, no witch can harm you if you possess a four-leaved trefoil. Of disembodied spirits perhaps the most grim is the Mürawa, the spirit of some still living being which wanders at night time and will come and sit on

the chest of the sleeper with a weight heavy as lead. There is only one way to keep the Mürawa off—to turn the toes of your shoes away from the bed; then you may go to sleep without misgiving.

Premonitory signs of death occur in many forms: wandering voices that call on the name of the doomed, appearances of those at a distance, and the tickling of the death watch: all these are called *Opokasowanja.* When the cry of an owl is heard round a house, some one will die there before long; and before the death of children the Buzawoscz (God's sorrow), a little woman some two feet high with long hair down her back, is certain to come and moan without. When the dead are buried, it is time to cease excessive lamentation, or they will not be able to rest in peace.

The natives still tell a hundred and one stories of the "little men," the "water maidens," the Nyx, the Nachtjäger or wild huntsman with the phantom hounds. A few years hence, perhaps, and the Nyx, like Kühleborn and the Erl-king, will only live in the story books; but, meantime, here is a land where they are still believed in. And so for the present the Wends remain, a peculiar people little touched by the hand of change, thirty thousand in these marshes, though that does not by any means include all the Wendish population of Germany. Whoever penetrates the Spreewald, either in the native punt, when the water is lowest in August or September, or in the hard winter, skating his ten and twenty miles from Lübben or Lübbenau over the frozen floods, will find it one of the most interesting countries within reach of the ordinary traveller.

HOPE.

(*Suggested by Mr. Watts's picture in the Grosvenor Gallery,* 1886.)

In lonely vigil till the day be born,
Whose one star glimmers pale the clouds among,
She hears the voices of the human throng,
The hopeless murmurs of a world out-worn,
The tumult of immitigable scorn,
The old ancestral cry of mortal wrong,
Sound like the weary burden of a song,
Love loveless left and faithless faith forsworn.
She hears, unheeding. Her self-blinded eyes
Keep still undimmed the glory of the view
Which once was hers, when all the world was new:
Her ears, that catch one strain which never dies,
Hold firm, through chance and change of earth and skies,
Her dumb unswerving faith in Good and True.

VAN DYCK, THE HISTORIAN.

The title of this paper will suggest what the text will amply prove,—that it makes no pretence to be critical. I have no wish to enlist in that army of martyrs which so few painters call noble. Still, while frankly recognising the indecent folly of any man professing a judgment on pictures who is not himself a painter, it is, I submit, possible (and will hope permissible) for every man, not physically blind, to derive some pleasure from their contemplation—though, no doubt, he were wise to abstain from venturing on reasons for his temerity. It is even possible that this inartistic and inanimate pleasure may be in its way a more unalloyed feeling than that which stirs the finer pulses of your true connoisseur. Many things which make the judicious grieve ruffle not the coarser texture of our minds,—for there must, I take it, be some others in this condition, though they will not own to it. And this is not entirely the same as to say that we admire where we should not—which would, of course, be deplorable. All pictorial art contains two possible sources of pleasure: one supplied by the form, the other by the idea. There are the technical qualities—the drawing, colouring, composition, and so on; and there is the painter's meaning, his design—to give the word its unprofessional sense. The first source is open only to the brotherhood of the pictorial guild—and to an extremely select and fortunate few, of whom each painter will furnish you with his own list; but the other is, or may be, open to all. Happy, of course, is he who can feed his soul from both sources; but, though far be the thought that they who can enjoy the first might, by some cruel freak of Nature, be somewhat less susceptible to the second, it is not, I trust, rash to assume that the second may be honestly enjoyed by those to whom the first must necessarily be a mystery as unfathomable as the source of sacred Alph.

Another charm, too, may a picture have for these common souls;—yet happy, perchance, who know not their own unhappiness. It may have the charm of association; whether it be roused by the sight of some once familiar scene or face, a dim memory of long ago, yet cherished still through all the displacing years; or be it that more romantic feeling to which, I think, not the dullest of us can be quite insensible as we gaze on the portraits of the famous dead who for us have never lived save in the pages of the history they helped to make. It is this feeling which gives a peculiar charm to those collections of portraits with which the Directors of the Grosvenor Gallery have so greatly helped to brighten these cheerless latter winters—Reynolds's portraits, Gainsborough's, and now Van Dyck's. Artistically, say those who ought to know, a painter's work, the work even of the greatest painter, suffers from being seen like this in the mass; and, without knowing anything, one can understand that this may be so. But he who walks through these galleries with his mind attuned to the proper pitch, and haunted by no artistic fears or fancies, cares for none of these things. It matters nothing to him whether this picture or that show traces of the partnership of some less cunning hand than the master's own—whether some profess to find in it few, possibly even no traces of the master at all: whether there be a far better version in some other gallery. None of these disquieting doubts affect him. For this

happy Gallio the picture is the thing whereby his easy conscience is caught, not the painter. The years roll back, and he walks not among the dead, but the living. Cardinal Newman, when a young Fellow of Oriel, spent a winter with some friends in the Mediterranean. Coasting about the Greek islands, he was haunted with the sense that the men who had fought and fallen so many centuries ago in the long war that has made those waters famous were still alive — as much alive as he and his friends.

> ' But is their being's history spent and run,
> Whose spirits live in awful singleness,
> Each in its self-formed sphere of light and gloom ? "

Weaker imaginations than the Cardinal's may get for a short hour some touch of this sense (though luckily for them in less disturbing measure) among the still fresh presentments of these fair women and brave men in their habits as they lived, long as they too have been pacing the shadowy house of Pluto.

For this vagrant fancy Van Dyck, I think, supplies the happiest strolling-ground. He is farther away from us than Reynolds and Gainsborough, and so gives more play for the imagination. His times, too, are more picturesque than theirs, more romantic. And this is not only the effect of distance. There has been no such romantic time for England as the time of the first Charles. Elizabeth's was really much less so, though there are no figures in the later reign to match with those of Shakespeare, of Raleigh, and of Philip Sidney. The great queen's time was one of triumph and the intoxication of triumph: everywhere was the stir of a new life: the long darkness of the winter was past, the spring was at hand. Spring came and passed, and summer followed, — a strange and thunderous summer. The feasting and dancing went on: men planned and laboured, made money and love, and squandered both as usual. But over all brooded the shadow of a coming storm. The handwriting was on the wall; but few could read it right, and fewer still would heed the interpretation.

Something too must be set down to the sumptuary splendours of the time. There is a touch of truth in Macaulay's sneer, that much of Charles's favour with posterity is due to his rich dress and handsome face—though his conjugal fidelity might possibly be a less stimulating motive to latter-day loyalty. It is hard to wax sentimental over the portrait of a Puritan. Satins and brocades, lace-collars, jewels, and plumed hats—these make the prettiest man on canvas, there is no doubt of it; and across the gulf of two centuries one cannot pry so closely as to ask with Ben Jonson whether all be sweet and sound beneath this brave show. They ruffled it handsomely, too, in the later days. Fair ladies sat, we know, to Reynolds and Gainsborough, and men as brave and splendid. But about those Georgian splendours there was something formal, something even a little clumsy: they lacked the grace, the easy airy magnificence of the Carolan times. These Cavalier dandies were born to magnificence: it was thrust upon their Georgian descendants. Look on those two brothers of the house of Lennox, the young Lords James and Bernard Stuart: or on those other two, brothers-in-law and sworn friends, the Lords Digby and Bedford: or on Philip Herbert, handsome as a young Apollo, by the side of his sister soon to be the wife, and too soon the widow, of the gallant and gifted Carnarvon: or on Newport, whose steel cuirass gives the soldier's touch to his finery. Where will you match these radiant figures among the beaux of a later time? No Sir Plume was ever half so splendid as this young Bedford, in his rose-red gold-laced doublet and scarlet cloak that set off so rarely the handsome insolent face framed in its soft brown curls: of too high deportment, says Clarendon, to have many friends at court—and he looks it.

About those later times, too, and the

men and women who helped to make them what they were, we know so much more: we know, sometimes one is half inclined to think, a little too much. What with all the diaries, correspondences, memoirs, secret histories, and such other treasures from Time's private cabinets as this enquiring century of ours has dusted and set in order for us, we have grown almost painfully wise. The gilded ashes have been shovelled off our Georgian Pompeii, and signs laid bare beneath of a life somewhat coarse and unlovely for all its energy and strength. So it may have been with that earlier life—as we know it certainly was when the Restoration came; but our knowledge of it is not intimate enough for a judgment. Our really intimate knowledge of the social habits, manners and dispositions of our ancestors, as distinct from our knowledge of their conduct of public affairs, begins with the Restoration: before that all is comparatively dark — comparatively, that is to say, with the extremely and perhaps somewhat inconveniently fierce light that beat about thrones later on. Certain figures do, indeed, stand out clear and well-defined enough, thanks to the incomparable portraits of Clarendon,—who could paint a scene, too, in his own stately fashion. In the letters of Baillie the Covenanter again we get glimpses vivid and real enough of certain memorable episodes. "His words," wrote Carlyle, as usual, quite unconsciously limning himself, "flowing-out bubble-bubble, full of zealous broad-based vehemence, can rarely be said to make a picture; though on rare occasions he does pause, and with distinctness, nay with a singular felicity, give some stroke of one." Such a stroke, and much more than a stroke, has he given us in his account of the trial of Strafford. Sir Philip Warwick, and Sir Simon D'Ewes, help us also; and Mrs. Hutchinson and Sir Kenelm Digby; and even in the weary pages of those Dryasdusts against whom Carlyle thundered so fiercely and so ungratefully, in the pages of Whitelocke and Rushworth, and of the myriad pamphleteers of the day, it is possible sometimes to catch a note of the human speech, a glimpse of the human face. But for the real atmosphere, the "very age and body of the time, his form and pressure"—that knowledge which reveals us the man as well as the statesman or the soldier—we get it not, or at best in mean and intermittent measure: not in that full sparkling stream which was set flowing when the May-breezes of the Restoration had thawed the frost of Puritanism. With Pepys, Evelyn, and Grammont begins that delightful line of gossips which has run prattling on with hardly a break to our own day. Pepys at one end of the line, Charles Greville at the other,—and what a play-ground between!

Among these Cavaliers, then, the fancy may rove unfettered. The sentimentalist may idealise at his own free will, and the romantic maid find them all proper men.

But they are not to be admired only for their fine clothes and handsome faces. Like our own dandies of the Crimean days, they could fight as well as dance, these splendid young aristocrats. Both these young Stuarts gave their blood for Charles as prodigally as their elder brother gave his gold—the handsome indolent-looking "Paris," yet loyal and devoted as the best, who, when he could not buy his king's life with his own, laid his master in the grave, and then went to die of a broken heart in a foreign land. Lord Bernard commanded the Royal Guards; the Show Troop, as its fellows half sneeringly called it, till its fiery valour at Edgehill silenced all sneers. At Cropredy Bridge he shared the honours of the day with Cleveland, when Waller had all but surrounded the king's rear-guard. Then a year later his own time came. In the hot fighting on Rownton Heath, when Poyntz had driven Sir Marmaduke Langdale back under the walls of Chester, Lord Bernard (Lord Lichfield then) fell and many a brave captain with him

The great historian of those times has mourned him as "a very faultless young man, of a most gentle, courteous, and affable nature, and of a spirit and courage invincible." Lord John, who fell at Alresford a year earlier, was of a rougher mould, yet not less valued, if less loved than his brother. Each had barely reached his twenty-second year. The gods loved not the other pair so well: the tale of their lives is longer and less heroic. Digby succeeded to his father's new-won earldom of Bristol, and died in his bed in 1676: Bedford lived to be made a duke by William. Each was in his way a noticeable man. Both at first were in opposition; and Bedford, who had been returned to Parliament with Pym as member for Tavistock, and possibly learned strange counsel from that unquiet Gamaliel, actually drew his sword against the king at Edgehill. In the next year he changed sides, together with the Lords Holland and Clare, and rode with Rupert at Newbury. But the Russells, with the one brilliant exception of the hero of La Hogue, were not a fighting race, and this one seems never to have been able quite to determine under which king he should range himself. Washed from side to side (Mr. Froude's words), he was naturally little prized by either. But though he made his peace with the Parliament after Newbury, he would never sit among Cromwell's peers, and was certainly active in helping on the Restoration, as he was afterwards active in putting William on the throne. His brother-in-law, George Digby, went over in the heat of Strafford's trial, and was forthwith sent to the Upper House to save him from the vengeance of the Lower. He was no friend to the Wicked Earl, but he thought the Bill of Attainder good neither in law nor fact. Thence onwards he kept always to the royal side, but did little good either to it or himself. "The prototype of Lord Bolingbroke," said Swift; but Bristol was a weaker man than Bolingbroke, and, with all his faults and follies, I think an honester one. The most universally odious man in the kingdom, Clarendon has called him. Clarendon had indeed little cause to love him; but in the remarkable character he has given of his mortal enemy—perhaps the most striking instance in all history-writing of justice tempered with discreet severity—the verdict really differs little, if at all, from that passed by two pretty shrewd judges of character on the volatile earl. Sir George Carteret described him to Pepys as a man "of excellent parts, but of no great faith or judgment, and one very easy to get up to great height of preferment, but never able to hold it." And a yet sharper critic, the king himself to wit (so the same authority tells us), said of him that he was a man "able in three years to get himself a fortune in any kingdom in the world, and lose all again in three months."

More of a hero was that round-eyed chubby boy who stands at his mother's side in the large family group that hangs hard by the brothers-in-law. Born in 1629, the son of an ill-fated father, beautiful Francis Villiers (as old Aubrey called him) was destined to a short life and a bloody death; yet both in death and life he was happier than his elder brother, who stands here clasping his mother's hands, that "lord of useless thousands" who was to survive his fortune, fame, and friends, to die at last in circumstances scarce less mean and pitiful than those with which Pope's fancy has surrounded his last hours. Ere his twentieth year was run death found the younger brother, but in a different hour and scene. Lord Francis died, on a summer evening in a lane near Surbiton, holding his own, after his horse had fallen, against six Puritan swords, till the rest of the knaves crept round by the hedge, and slew him from behind. Here, too, is "the young, the lovely, and the brave" of Waller's elegy: Charles Cavendish, with his sweet face, gentle and

womanly as the face of Claverhouse. And he, too, died, scarce older than Villiers, killed "with a thrust under his short-ribs," fighting against Cromwell himself at Gainsborough in Lincolnshire—"a very notable victory" Oliver was pleased to think it; and even Carlyle has grudgingly owned that the brilliant young soldier's death caused a very general sorrow. Almost opposite is the clever, high-bred, yet sensual face of young Killigrew, so like his elder brother Sir William, whom also one finds here, listening to Carew reading, it may be, the pretty lines, "He that loves a rosy cheek," or, possibly, some one of those less convenient fancies the poet occasionally indulged in. Tom Killigrew was no hero, indeed, as Pepys shows him to us; yet he served his king faithfully after his own fashion, and that it was no more seemly one was perhaps not all his own fault. Clarendon, at any rate, thought him "a most hopeful young man"; and he showed himself on one recorded occasion at least a brave and capable soldier.

Not all in this gallant company are conspicuous for their grace and magnificence. Not far from his master, the sad patient face of his standard-bearer, Sir Edmund Verney, looks on us with weary eyes. None carried a heavier heart than he into that cruel war, not Falkland himself nor Sunderland. One of his own sons was in arms against him on the side for which his own conscience told him right and reason were fighting. Yet he had eaten the king's bread for thirty years, and it would have shamed his honour, he said, to desert him in his need. So the royal standard was given into his hand at Nottingham; and death, more welcome than any friend, released him from this and all burdens at Edgehill. Over against him is Sir John Byron, first peer of the name, stern and grim in complete steel, like "some grey crusading knight austere" who had wandered by strange freak of nature into this glittering company; certainly with none of the beauty of his great poetical descendant. A soldier every inch of him, courts and courtiers were little to his taste; and none of all these brave gentlemen gave stronger proof of his devotion than did he, when not even the dishonour done to his name by a shameless wife could alienate him from the son who thus repayed him for his faith to the father. Rupert is close by him, the one disappointing figure in the collection: a common-place uninteresting face, with nothing about him to recall the dashing cavalry leader, and none of the dignity or comeliness of his father, the last Elector Palatine and husband of the luckless Queen of Hearts, who confronts him from the opposite wall.

But not among the brave soldiers or brilliant dandies does one find the face for which we look most eagerly—faces, rather, for there are two here which divide our curiosity: the faces of Thomas Wentworth, Earl of Strafford, and of Lucius Cary, Viscount Falkland. A strange, puzzled and puzzling face is Falkland's: a mean little figure, in a sort of Puritanical dress, with no trace of breeding about it, nor, as one is half inclined to say, of intellect. But as one looks, the first sense of disappointment passes, and one sees (or do we only think we see?) the well-loved, well-recorded friend of Clarendon, the "incomparable young man" of one of the noblest tributes affection ever inspired, whose untimely death the best of both sides mourned alike. A part of his friend's eulogy at least we can recognise: the "flowing and obliging gentleness" we see, and the hatred of all passion and uncharitableness. "Martyr of sweetness and light," another has called him. The sweetness is surely there;—but the light? Those curious, searching, melancholy eyes, would look and long for the light: but are they the eyes of one who has found it? There is the fatal stamp of irresolution on the face; and, though against one's will, one cannot but confess that after all

Macaulay's verdict, harsh as it seems, was probably the true one.

But in the other face is no touch of irresolution. On the broad forehead, in the hard cold eyes, the stern unbending mouth, is written *Thorough* for a child to see. This is the very man who looked (so his few friends whispered among themselves on that dark May morning) more like a general marching at the head of his victorious army than a prisoner walking to his death. As that awful shape Panthea saw coming o'er the slow cloud to the call of the chained Prometheus,

> "Cruel he looks, but stern and strong,
> Like one who does, not suffers wrong."

And yet he did suffer wrong at the hands of the one man of all men who should not have done it. Strafford's death may be justifiable for those who condemned him; but no plea can ever justify Charles's acquiescence in it—not even, as the future proved, that miserable plea that it was needful for his own safety. There are two portraits of Strafford here: both show the same man (it is always so with Van Dyck); but the one in black armour, belonging to Sir Philip Egerton (happy man, for he has surely the most wonderful presentment of humanity ever put on canvass) is the finest. It hangs on the line close to the Duke of Norfolk's famous portrait of Charles, bare-headed, in shining armour, the badge of the Garter slung round his neck, and leading-staff in hand. Strafford is in armour, too, in black armour, sombre and cold as his face. In these two portraits—the weak master and the strong servant—one reads the history of the Civil War. In both one reads, traced in different characters—in too many a face, alas, one reads it—the sentiment which inspired the war and shaped its issue: the sentiment which found utterance in the last words of even the gentle Northampton as he lay beneath his victors' swords on Hopton Heath, "I scorn to ask quarter of such base rogues as you."

There is not time to gossip of the rest: of stately Arundel, patron of all the arts, the father of English *virtuosi*: of crafty, choleric Pembroke, who loved hunting better than fighting, with the Chamberlain's staff in his hand, which he broke over the shoulders of luckless Thomas May, the translator of Lucan — a work, as Clarendon sagely observed, none of the easiest of that kind: of Pope Innocent's nephew, Don Livio Odescalchi, so strangely like the late Chancellor of the Exchequer, as that surprising statesman may have looked when reading his Times on a certain morning last December, and wondering if what he read there had been wisely done: of the grim Spaniard Gondomar, to whom was given the rarest present ever made by an English sovereign to a foreigner — the head of Walter Raleigh: of Newcastle, famous with sword and pen, but who found the Great Houe easier to manage than Hazlerigg's Lobsters: of gay luxurious Carlisle, famous for his costly banquets and his wife, the "busy stateswoman," the lovely but not too honourable Lucy. And why is she not in this company? —she and her sister (no "sister every way"!) the fair and good and wise Sacharissa?

But in truth the ladies are but sparely represented here; except the queen, who figures many times, with her husband, with her children, with her dwarf (that famous little man of war, Sir Geoffrey Hudson), and by herself. And such as are here are not made particularly interesting, or particularly fair: rather insipid creatures are they of the Lely type. Perhaps the painter's eye, accustomed to the more glowing beauties of the south (there are two grand Genoese dames in the gallery), was dissatisfied with the white skins and fair hair of the north; though by all accounts the man's eye was well pleased enough with them. It must be remembered also that women had not yet become the powers either socially or politically that they became in Sir Joshua's day.

At any rate, it certainly seems as though Van Dyck had been less interested in painting them than in painting their husbands, brothers—or lovers, as the case may have been. One woman's face here, however, has a strange romantic charm—the face of Venetia, Lady Digby: the fair Venetia and, unless the old gossips lied even more shamelessly than is the wont of their kind (and some say they did) the frail Venetia. She was the wife of Clarendon's friend, Sir Kenelm Digby, that queer man, half-sage, half-charlatan (an "errant mountebank," Evelyn called him), and is recorded by the historian as a lady, "though of extraordinary beauty, of an extraordinary fame." We see her painted here as she was found dead in her bed, the head resting on her right hand, with closed eyes, looking as one who sleeps: her rich brown hair flows from under her laced cap: a string of pearls is round her neck, and one of rare size hangs from her ear. So, wrote Habington,

> "She past away,
> So sweetly from the world, as if her clay
> Laid only down to slumber."

And the man who bequeathed to us all these delightful things is here, too, painted by his own hand: painted as a gorgeous young man on a prancing white charger (a present, it is said, to his master Rubens): painted twice, as a rather grave delicate young man in sad-coloured raiment: painted last in the guise most familiar to us—in gay clothes, one hand fingering the gold chain that Charles gave him, the other pointing to a sunflower nodding its broad face in front of him. He looks over his right shoulder at us, as though in sly prophetic mood to call our attention to the flower that for one of our many moments of folly was to be emblematic of a phase of what it pleased us to call art. The face shows the character of the man as his contemporaries have recorded it —keen, clever, restless, refined, loving his art, yet loving his pleasures also only too well. A man to whom a magnificent manner of life was a necessity, as became the favourite pupil of Rubens. It is sad to think that his last days were darkened by trouble and sickness and poverty: that this gay brilliant creature should have gone down before his time to the grave not all in honour. Sir Joshua, looking at Van Dyck's great altar-piece in the church of the Recollets in Mechlin, pronounced it to be one of the first pictures in the world, and mourned that his genius had been led away to portraits from "history-painting." This is a regret Englishmen will hardly share; for as they look round these wonderful walls they must own that for them, at least, this is the true history-painting.

THE STRANGE STORY OF MARGARET BEAUCHAMP.

BY GEORGE FLEMING.

PART II.

I ONLY saw Miss Beauchamp once in all the week which followed my confession. Little Mabel had been threatened with a return of the fever, and, day or night, her sister never left her side. Stanleigh himself saw her but for a few minutes at a time. Morning and evening she would come for a quarter of an hour or so and take a turn with him in the garden.

Once, as I was waiting in the darkened hall to hear news of my little playfellow, I saw Margaret pass. She was coming down the broad stair with her hand on the banister, dressed in black, with the heavy hair pushed carelessly away from her forehead : on her face was an expression of tragic, speechless endurance, such as I shall never forget. Years afterwards, on the walls of the Salon, I saw a picture by a great French painter, a picture of Marie Antoinette on her way to the scaffold, and it wore the face of Margaret Beauchamp as she passed me that day. She passed so near to me that the folds of her dress swept against my foot; but she did not notice my presence, and I crept away as if by merely looking at her I had done her a wrong.

On the Sunday afternoon, all the bells ringing for afternoon service, Forbes came in and handed me a note. It was the only time she ever wrote to me. Just a few words to say that Mabel was better, much better, and longing to see me. Would I come? And she signed herself, "Your friend, Margaret Beauchamp."

I threw the book I was trying to read down upon the table, and sprang to my feet.

"You are going, then?" Forbes said; and before I could answer he added, "the child is better now: entirely out of danger. But they have had a bad time of it all the week."

At the prospect of seeing her once more I felt my heart beat and expand with a sympathy which was ready to include all the universe. "I have been so very sorry for you too, old chap," I said.

Forbes gave a queer little laugh. "I am of Aristotle's opinion," he said drily. "A white thing that lasts a long while is no whiter than what lasts but a day. The chief wisdom of man consists in appreciating to the full the quality of whiteness while it lasts. Yes—while it does last!"

He was standing in the middle of the room with his hat on his head, and he continued to watch me with the same provoking, patronising smile. "Go, dear boy! You must not keep little Mabel waiting."

At another time I might have felt inclined to resent such a tone; but then I was simply too happy to care. It was a cloudless afternoon. I made my way as best I might along the Parade, through the devious files of church-goers. There was an air of peace, a sort of Sunday calm and well-being upon all the placid faces. I passed whole family groups, the children in their finery walking soberly in front; and, as I reached the Beauchamps, Billy, with Tottie at his heels, came bounding out to meet me. The very footman who opened the door had a smile and a word of subdued rejoicing.

I ran lightly up the stairs. Mabel had been moved into another room that day, and I found her lying, muffled up in shawls, on a sofa drawn close to the bow-window. Her small

face looked smaller, whiter, more determined than ever; but she greeted me with her sister's own smile.

"Now we can be happy—just we three," she said, in a weak little thread of a voice.

She made me sit down beside her and give her my hand to hold. "Sister Margaret will sit on the other side and take my other hand in hers, because we are all friends: we are three friends, are we not, Margaret?"

"Yes, darling. But you remember what you promised."

"Oh! I am not to excite myself, I know. I am to eat whatever is given me, and not to excite myself. Oh, I have so much experience with doctors, you see," she explained with a perfect gravity.

At a sign from Miss Beauchamp I took up a book of fairy tales which was lying open upon the table, and began reading one of them aloud. After a very little time the child dropped asleep. I looked across at Margaret. Her eyes were fixed upon the open window and the flat shining plain of sea. I could study her face unobserved. In that short week it seemed as if half the youth had gone out of it.

Presently she turned her head a little and her sad eyes met mine. "If you had not come to-day," she said in a very low voice, "if Mabel had not sent for you, I should have sent for you to-morrow. I have been trying—to do without help—but—"

A dark crimson spot burned and flickered out upon her pale cheek. She bit her under-lip hard, and then threw back her head again with something of the old defiant grace. "Mr. Balfour, I want you to answer me seriously, please. Do I impress you as a person who is likely to become insane; the victim of an—an hallucination?"

"Good heavens, Miss Beauchamp—"

"Hush! Oh, please hush! Whatever I say you are not to awaken Mabel. If you want to help me at all you must promise to be very quiet and listen. And first you must answer my question. You are going to be a doctor: in such a matter as this you ought to understand. Am I, Mr. Balfour?"—she kept her great desperate eyes riveted upon my face—"am I, to the best of your knowledge and belief, the kind of person who is likely to suffer from—from—what shall I say?—from visions called up by a diseased, an over-excited imagination?"

"Miss Beauchamp, I am more ignorant than you think. But to the best of my knowledge and belief you are the very last person in the world who would be subject to such—to such phantasmagoria. You have not the temperament for it: you have an unusually clear mind: you are in perfect health. I beg of you, I entreat you, not to distress yourself with such an absurd—forgive me!—with such a cruelly absurd impossibility."

"Then you would accept any statement I made—anything, you understand, however improbable—as the reliable evidence of a sane person?"

"Anything. Upon my honour!"

"Ah!" She let her head fall against the back of her tall chair with a slow gesture of utter discouragement. There was silence between us for a full minute, only broken by the soft breathing of the sleeping child. Some footsteps passed close under the window, and I heard voices, a girl's light laugh: then Margaret spoke.

"Do you remember," she said, "that Stanleigh came to see us the first evening that we spent here? I see that you do. But perhaps you have forgotten that it was a particularly bright, clear night. After he had gone—and we sat a long time in the garden—I went directly to my room. I was not very tired. I felt almost too happy to go to sleep, yet I did. I fell asleep directly. Some time in the night—I cannot tell you what time it was, but the moon was shining full into my room—I woke suddenly, with the feeling that there was something, *something*, near me. I am not nervous, naturally, Mr. Balfour. I sat up

and looked all about the room. The window was wide open, and where the moonlight fell clear upon the white wall, I saw, I felt, the passing of a shadow; yet not a shadow—something more elusive, transparent, indefinite—like the ring about one's breath on a piece of looking-glass. It was not enough even to startle me. I think I was only curious. I looked, and while I was looking, I seemed to feel—there, on my wrist—the faintest possible pressure of something light and cool. I was not frightened—I tell you I was not frightened—only curious. In the morning I had forgotten the whole thing, like a dream. In any case I should not have thought of speaking of it before the children. But three days after the same thing happened again, only it was all more vivid, more coherent, the shadow and the touch on my arm. I got up that time, and meant to ring my bell and waken Parker. I could not do it, Mr. Balfour, I could not. When I was a child my uncle took me once to see the working of a galvanic battery. They made me put my hands upon some knobs and I could not take them away. Something outside of me, something which made me sleepy, held them fast. Well, this was the same thing over again. I had no power to move, no will. I threw myself down on my bed again, and when I woke it was bright morning, and Mabel was knocking at the door. Since then—"

For the first time since she began speaking she lifted her great tragic eyes to mine. She leaned forward in the dusk and laid her little hot hand upon my wrist tremulously: "It comes," she said; "last night—It was here!"

The comprehension of what she had borne, of what in all these days and nights of silence she had suffered, pierced me to the heart with a sickening stab of pain.

"But why," I said, "why have you not asked any one before to help you?"

"I cannot tell Stanleigh!"

I felt the shudder that ran through her from head to foot.

"But, Miss Beauchamp—"

"I cannot! Don't ask me why. I cannot! I cannot!" she repeated in the same wild, hushed whisper. And then, after a long pause, "Oh, do not blame me! I have tried, and It—It comes between us. It will not let me. All about me I feel danger: danger to us both, to him and to me. I feel it! Oh, I have borne it as long as I could, and to-day I could not! It—It is getting so much plainer, Mr. Balfour: so much less like a shadow, that it frightens me. Ah, it frightens me!" she said, with a little piteous catch in her voice.

"Good God!"

We sat for a minute or two with clasped hands like two frightened children: through the silence little Mabel's breath went and came in the divine security of sleep.

Then she said, "I have your promise that you will not tell Stanleigh?"

"Ah!" I cried, "you must give me time! I must think. I must help you. There are a thousand ways to rid you of this horror: only give me time to think! Above all, we need proof."

At that moment the lamp-lighter, whistling as he tramped his round, halted under the window and touched the street-lamp to flame. The light streamed in full on the gay embroidered coverlet and the little motionless figure.

"Mr. Balfour," Margaret said in a strange voice, "I cannot move my other hand without awakening Mabel. Will you unclasp that bracelet for me and—and look—"

I did as she bade me, and I saw—ah! merciful Heaven, it was no illusion, *I saw it*, on either side of her wrist, under the gold, three dull red stains, the clutch of some unspeakable thing upon her shrinking flesh!

She leaned nearer: she whispered: I could hardly hear what she was saying:—

"And last night, Mr. Balfour, and

once before. Ah, I know now that It can see: *It has begun to look at me.*"

The morning found me still under the same confusing impression of horror and bewilderment; yet, so far as Margaret's action was concerned, I believed myself to have hit upon the only satisfactory expedient for deliverance. As soon as I thought there was a chance of finding any one up, I started on my way to the Beauchamps.

It was a radiant morning: cool, transparent sky arching illimitably over the blue sea-plain. At the horizon a procession of white-sailed fishing boats stood steadily away from shore: the chalky curve of cliff, sparkling in the early sunlight, seemed to repeat and heighten that joyous note of pure white. At that hour I was the solitary possessor of all the wide Parade. A few belated housemaids, intent on finishing their daily task of cleaning doorsteps, paused over their scrubbing to stare after me as I passed. A tidy, healthy-looking girl was just putting together her pails and brushes before the Beauchamps' hall-door. She wished me a civil good-morning, addressing me by name; and then, as she opened the door for me, "There is no one down yet, sir, I think, but Miss Margaret. If you please, sir, I saw her in the young ladies' morning-room, sir, as I was coming down stairs." The judgment of the servants' hall was eloquent in the very way in which she lifted aside her pail for me to pass.

I found Margaret waiting for me beside the open window. There was a new colour on her cheek, a new light of hope and expectation in her eye.

"Ah!" she cried, turning swiftly about, and holding out both her hands, "you bring me help! I know—I feel it, I see it in your face! You bring me courage!"

"I have brought you the answer," I said: standing there before her, her new loveliness made a sort of desperate coward of me. I dared not hesitate: I could not stop to discriminate phrases: I threw my conclusions, as it were, pell-mell at her feet.

"Miss Beauchamp," I said, "there is only one course for you to take, and you must—I entreat you to adopt it immediately. You have done me the honour to consult me: well, this is my answer,—you must leave this house. You must leave all this accursed horror behind you. I won't reason with you as to what it is—I won't say it is your fancy. It doesn't matter:—only leave it. Tell Stanleigh to take you away. Marry him at once. Let him take you away from us all—and take care of you—" the words choked me, and I repeated them with a sort of bitter satisfaction in my own pain. "Let Stanleigh marry you, and take you away from us," I said.

A deeper, lovelier rose flushed in her face, as she said unsteadily, "It is impossible. I cannot—I dare not tell him."

"But what—what are you afraid of then?" I urged.

"Ah!—" She drew in her breath with a sort of long, shuddering sigh. She sat down beside the table and put her two elbows upon it, and hid her face in her hands. "It is coming between us. It has come! And yet I cannot tell him: I cannot, I cannot!"

I looked at her bowed figure with a sudden flash of inspiration. "Heaven help us!" I cried, "you are afraid not for yourself but for him!"

Billy had come clattering down the stairs and out into the garden while we stood there talking. Now I heard him scrambling up beneath the window. A little brown head slowly appeared above the window-ledge: his round bright eyes went swiftly wandering about the room. "I heard voices. Halloa, Margaret, is that you? I thought it was the servants, and I should catch old Parker up to some of her tricks. I say, Balfour, you *are* an early customer, and no mistake!"

I moved and stood in front of his sister. "My dear boy, it is high time some one set you a good example."

"Oh, I dare say! And I suppose you picked up your taste for early

rising at school. But I say, Madge, I can't hold on here much longer. Just catch hold of Tottie, will you? The little beggar will run after me over the wet grass, and aunt will be in such a wax if he wets his precious feeties."

He dropped the dog into the room very gently and cleverly with one hand, and disappeared once more into the garden.

"Poor Tottie!" Margaret said mechanically, and stooped to smooth the little creature's ruffled curls. But as she put her hand near him, the little brute drew himself up, stiffened all over, and began to tremble violently: then slowly, step by step, he dragged himself backward out of her reach, until he disappeared, whimpering, beneath the cover of the sofa. "You see," said Margaret, very bitterly.

She got up from her chair, walked over to the window, and then, coming back to her place by the table, she suddenly put both hands before her face and burst into a passionate fit of tears.

I waited until she had wept herself into comparative quiet. I could see the convulsive movement of her shoulders under the delicate summer gown that she wore, and each stifled sob seemed to burst and tear at my own breast. When she was quieter, "Dear Margaret," I said, "be brave! You have been so good, so noble, so patient: only be brave a little longer. Don't break down now. I will say nothing to Stanleigh, I promise you. When he comes, tell him everything or nothing, as you like. Only make him take you away from here at once. There is no reason—there need be no delay about your marriage."

I went a step nearer and laid my hand on the table beside hers.

"You are so generous," I said, "I think if you reflect a little you will understand what your suffering costs me. I would not speak of myself if I knew better how to persuade you. But, if not for your own sake, yet I think you will put an end to this to—to spare your friend."

"Ah, my friend!" she echoed through her sobbing. For an instant she laid her hand, her poor little disfigured hand, upon mine. More than thirty years have passed since that morning, and nothing has effaced in me the memory of her touch, the ring of her voice as she spoke.

I left her as all the house was beginning to awaken. I would not go back to our lodgings. I had no shadow of reason to avoid Forbes, and yet the very idea of meeting him filled me with a sort of curious repugnance. I breakfasted somewhere in the town; and then wandered about aimlessly, making a point of speaking to as many people as I could. About three o'clock, I found myself sitting on the shady side of the pier, the centre of a group of idle good-for-nothing sailors and longshore men. Mere reprobates, lazy hangers-on to life's fringe as they were, I was yet thankful to them for giving me a firmer sense of reality: their coarse appreciation of the chance pleasures of existence made the world seem more possible. My nerves ached with the pressure: I sickened for the familiarities and securities of every day.

As we lounged in the shadow of the great pile of stone, they filled their afternoon pipes more leisurely with tobacco of my providing, and one after another each hoary mariner uplifted his voice in tales of dubious worth. It was in the very midst of one of these fallacious histories that I sprang abruptly to my feet.

"Oh, yes, they will go away together and that will be the end of it!" I cried out, in very mockery of my thoughts.

I left my late companions speechless with mingled wrath and confusion of spirit, and, like an arrow shot from the bow, I sped away to the Beauchamps' house upon the cliff. During the last three weeks we had been accustomed to go in and out there at our will; but with my hand on the bell, I remembered the termination of my morning visit. Instead of ringing, I

turned aside and forced my way through the overgrown laurels.

At the farther end of the garden, I stumbled upon a clear spot of turf and threw myself down upon it to wait—I did not myself know for what—unhinged, wearied beyond expression. I had not sat ten minutes in that cool green shade before I fell asleep.

I was wakened by the sound of voices close beside me. For a moment they mingled vaguely, uneasily with my dream: then it was my own name caught my ear. "Jealous? and of Will Balfour?" I heard Forbes's voice repeating. Then I heard him give a little laugh. "Pardon me, Margaret, if I remind you that such a suggestion could only wrong yourself—or me!"

"Ah, Stanleigh! You are cruel!" she answered quickly, Her voice had a tremble in it like the quivering of a wounded creature.

They had halted not ten paces from me; where the broad gravelled walk ended beside an old pear tree, the oldest in the garden, propped up by iron supports, and girded about its trunk with a circular wooden bench. I had not had the wit to move away at the first, and while I hesitated Margaret spoke again: she made my showing myself an impossibility.

"Stanleigh, it is not a question of any one but you and me." She turned and clung to him suddenly. "Oh, it is cruel to force me to repeat it! Yet you love me—forget that I am speaking. It is not I who ask: it is your own love that expects it." She bowed her head until it rested against his arm, on her clasped hands. "Stanleigh, I want you to marry me: to marry me and take me away from here," she said.

There followed a full minute of complete silence. Twice I saw Forbes lift his head as if about to speak, but no sound came. Then her hands dropped to her side: she shrank away from him slowly, with averted face. "Ah" she cried, "and you have forgotten—already!" It was the summing up of all unspoken and unspeakable reproach.

"You excite yourself," said Forbes; "and I can assure you that I have forgotten nothing—nothing!"

He took her by the hand and made her seat herself beside him on the moss-grown bench. "You do me the honour of suggesting that we should no longer delay our marriage. I can only remind you of your own former determination to await the very last day of the period set by Sir John. You give me no new reason. It seems to me it is not I who—forget."

"And if I answer you, Stanleigh, that I have reasons, sufficient reasons, which I cannot—which I may never tell you? If I answer you that, what then? But oh, my own," she said, "my own—that you should ask me to give reasons for our love!"

Stanleigh's eye shifted uneasily. "It is you who are cruel now, Margaret. But those reasons: I am not a child!"

"It has come between us at last. At last! You do not love me, Stanleigh."

His face darkened. He looked weary, harassed. His lips set close: with that expression he looked dangerous.

"I have told you, Margaret, that I am not a child. Am I then so unreasonable?" he asked bitterly. "After all I ask only for a divided trust. For no doubt you have taken Mr. Balfour into your confidence."

"Yes."

Her voice was toneless as if she hardly heard herself speak. She gave a long hopeless sort of sigh; and then with a sudden, swift movement she slipped to the ground, kneeling on the weedy turf, her arms about his neck, her head resting on his breast.

"I ask you to marry me, love, and yet what security have I? If you will not love me, you will not trust me now—what security is there for all the years to be? Yet I will tell you all you ask of me. If there is only one will between us, let

it be yours. Have your own way: be master, Stanleigh." She pressed her cheek closer against him with a gesture of infinite appeal. "Do you remember that day we rode through Dimmock Wood together?" her sad voice grew suddenly fluent, resonant with the music of a great love. "I think that you would have died for me—for the touch of my hand, that day—if I had asked you, Stanleigh. And now—Ah, don't move," she said, "don't take your arm away. I will tell you all, Stanleigh, and then—happen what will! if only it is not to you!"

I could bear no more. Whether they were aware of my presence or not, seemed now the smallest matter. I plunged straight through the crowding laurels. In five minutes I had gained the gate: I had left that pleading, maddening voice behind me: I had reached the friendly commonplace of the street.

Between ten and eleven that same night Forbes walked into my room. He had been dining at the Beauchamps, but to my surprise I saw that he had changed his evening dress and wore a rough morning-coat. I got up as he came in, and we stood looking at one another across the table.

"My dear Balfour," he began, "I have a request to make and an apology to offer you. Let us begin with the more important first. I have been grossly unjust both to you and to Margaret: I mention her name because I am aware that you know of it already. And I ask your pardon."

"I fell in love with her," I answered calmly, "when I saw her step out of the railway-carriage at the station. She holds me, you know, about one degree less important than Billy. I don't see why you should not be told of it, or why you should not have seen it long ago for yourself. It was plain enough."

"Ay, plain enough!" he echoed with a laugh.

He tapped with his finger-tips absently for a minute upon the gaudy table-cover, the burning candles lighting up his face. "By Jove!" he cried, "I believed myself to be a fine fellow, but you have shamed me." He stretched out his hand with the gesture of a prince. "Think of me what you like. Yet I thank you for the lesson: for the sake of old friendship, I thank you."

"I was there," I retorted, "this afternoon, under that tree. How can I touch your hand?"

His forehead flushed all over, but he controlled himself with an effort. "As you please. Yet I spoke in the name of an old kindness." He thrust his hands into the pockets of his shooting-coat. "You have half sickened me of speaking. I came in here prepared to offer you what reparation lies in my power. She has told me everything, and to-night I intend to sit up and watch in their garden. She has been made, I am convinced, the victim of some infernal trick. The night is warm and still: I came here to ask you to watch with me."

There was only one answer possible. I looked for my hat on the chair where I had tossed it. "I am ready whenever you care to lead the way."

"You had better take a plaid with you, or a top-coat. It will be chill enough before daybreak," Forbes added drily.

All the familiar way up the hill we paced in silence side by side, and my heart smote me for the rejected proffer of his hand. The light white mist which enveloped us the instant we stepped into the cool outer air, the great silence of the night, the low wash and murmur of the sea, brought each its measure of sanity and healing indifference. I glanced twice or thrice inquiringly at my companion, but some devil of pride held us both silent.

As we turned into the Beauchamps' garden by the little side-gate, some clock in the house struck the half hour after eleven. It was, as Forbes said, a very warm, still night; but the fine weather of the last three weeks seemed

on the point of breaking. The air was full of an impalpable haze, which, as the red and laggard moon rose higher, filled all the spaces between the trees with a sort of luminous whiteness. You could see plainly, and you could not. At twenty paces distance the laurel-bushes loomed like trees. There were no lights burning on that side of the big, silent house, which looked at once so strange and so familiar. In the garden, too, all was still: the thread of water trickled steadily into its basin: now and then a bird whistled, or something rustled lightly in the dark, motionless trees—that was all.

For a long time Forbes continued his monotonous pacing up and down like a sentinel: the wet gravel sparkled in the moonlight, and at regular intervals his shadow moved across it, and his deliberate footstep crushed the loose stones. As he was taking perhaps his fiftieth turn, I got up from my seat by the old sun-dial and joined him.

"Won't you sit down for a bit? I can take your place."

"I am not tired," he said briefly.

"Look here, Forbes."

"Well?"

"Oh, you may be as confoundedly superior as you please, but—there are some things I could find it in my heart to say I shall never forgive you, and yet—— Confound it all! There,—I wish you would shake hands."

He laughed; but I went back to my seat a little comforted. Presently he came and sat down beside me at the opposite end of the bench. He leaned his back against a tree, and I could see his upturned profile dark against the sky. We were neither of us inclined to speak. For my part, I tried with all my might to banish the very thought of Margaret. Her face kept rising up before me—her face as I had last seen it. If I shut my eyes and listened to the fountain it was worse: I saw her then as when we rode the downs together—a mocking vision, smiling, rose-flushed.

All this time Forbes never said a word. The night grew full of faint, uncertain sounds: rustlings in the grass—an unripe apple dropping in the orchard with the echo of a step. In the house, a clock kept striking the quarters and the half hours. As the moon set, the light changed without seeming to diminish. About half-past two we heard a cock crow from the other side of the wall; then after a very long interval, another answered; then half-a-dozen. From this shut-in garden we could see the zenith of the arching sky grow bluer, colder: the stars were extinguished one by one while the eye was yet fixed upon them. A sudden wind stirred in the tree-tops: the garden-scents were overcome by a thrill of salt air from the sea.

"It is dawn," said Forbes, rising and stretching out his cramped arms.

As at a given signal, the birds began twittering and piping from every crotch and angle of the branches. The roses, which all night long had looked like dark round spots sprinkling the bushes, now began royally to re-assert their presence, showing scarlet and white and dusky red.

"So that is over, and nothing gained," he said half regretfully. He went up to the dripping fountain and dipped his hands into its mossy basin, and dashed the ice-cold water over his face and hair.

"Ah!—look!" I cried out.

The shutters of Margaret's window were pushed gently open, slowly, as if yielding to the pressure of a deliberate hand.

"She has not slept either, poor child!" Forbes murmured with a sudden flash of tenderness.

He stepped out into the middle of the cleared space before the dial. "Four o'clock of a July morning, and all's well!" he called out in a long musical note.

I half hoped that she would show herself; but there was no answer. The sun climbing well up in the clear, empty sky shone full at last above the

matted tree-tops, flooding all the fresh quiet of the garden, the blank silent house. That silence began to trouble me.

"Do call out again. Say something to show her we are here," I said to Forbes.

He looked at me with an odd expression and answered nothing. After a moment he stooped and broke off a handful of dewy roses. "It will serve for a fair good-morrow, a Troubadour's greeting to the lady of his dreams," he said with a sort of mocking tenderness, and tossed the bunch of flowers through Margaret's open window. He stood with upturned face looking after them: the fatigues of a watchful night had left not a trace on his superb physique: he was fresh and vigorous as the morning.

We saw the roses fall fairly into the room. There was no answer. Again we stood facing one another, silent.

The clock in the house struck sharply on the half hour. "She said that she, too, would be waking," he muttered, half to himself. He turned once more and looked at the house, scanning the blank line of windows. "Come on!" he said impatiently. We made the circuit of the place half running, and then a very obvious difficulty brought us up standing: the doors were all locked.

"Shall I ring?" I asked breathlessly.

"Yes—no. The servants will be in bed. They won't hear you." We went back into the garden. Margaret's window was still flung wide open. The sunshine poured into the room. All at once I remembered Billy. "Hold on, Forbes. I think those lower windows can be made to open." I swung myself up on the ledge and all the panes rattled as I shook them. "Come on, now—just another push; so — gently now — together!" The slight bolt gave way with a rattle of broken glass on the gravel.

"I hope we sha'n't frighten all the women into fits: it's a clear case of burglary with violence," Forbes said under his breath, swinging himself down into the room. But neither of us felt the least inclined to smile. We stepped cautiously up the broad carpeted stair: the house was marvellously still, and the air felt dead and close after the garden. Forbes led the way to a door on the second landing, where he paused and knocked gently. "Parker! wake up, Parker!"

At the third or fourth summons a sleepy voice called out; "Who is there? Go away. What's the matter?"

"It is I, Mr. Forbes; and Mr. Balfour is with me. Don't be frightened, but look sharp, there's a good woman, and open your door."

We waited for a minute or two. On the floor beneath us Tottie began shrilly barking. Then the key turned with a rattle in the lock, the door was set ajar, and Parker's face appeared in the opening—her sober face swollen, flushed, and unrecognisable with sleep.

"For Heaven's sake, gentlemen, what is it? Oh, sir, don't say Miss Mabel is took worse?"

"Look here, Mrs. Parker, I want you to go to Miss Margaret's room and wake her. Wake her, do you hear? And then say it was I who sent you."

"Oh, gentlemen!" the woman said drawing back, much affronted, "if it is all for a silly joke that you wakened me—and me making no doubt that at least it was illness in the house."

She would have shut the door in our faces, but Forbes caught her by the arm. "Do as I tell you. You don't know what you are talking about," he said imperatively. "Your dress! Oh, confound your dress! No, never mind, there's a good soul—you can settle your dress as you come back."

He half led, half dragged her to the top of the stairs. "There—go quick—oh, never mind arguing—go!"

We heard her unwilling footsteps shuffle down the stairs and along the hall. She paused before Margaret's door: we could hear her knocking: for

a minute or two only Tottie's sharp, wiry yelp answered.

Then the woman gave a call of distress. Some panic had seized her; as we ran down the stairs we could hear her rattling at the lock.

"Oh, sir—oh, Mr. Balfour—if this is some trick! Oh, I should never believe any one could treat me so! And she sleeps so light—Miss Margaret! it's me — Parker—oh, pray open the door, Miss Margaret!"

I had got my shoulder against the lock but Forbes pushed me aside roughly. "Stand back—all of you. It's *my* place," he said. His lips were as white as death, but his eyes blazed like the eyes of a madman. He braced himself against the angle of the wall: there was a splintering sound of wood—and the middle panel cracked across the bottom. He tore off one of the pieces, put in his hand and unlocked the door.

There, stretched out on a couch near the window, in the white gown I had seen her wearing, lay Margaret.

Forbes walked straight up to her. "Oh, God!" he cried out in a high, unnatural voice, "Oh, God—Balfour!"

When we found her she must have been dead for some hours. On either side of her throat were two dull red marks, like bruises, exactly like the marks on her wrist, as we ascertained when we compared them afterwards. There was no sign of any struggle about her, no violence. Her eyes were open: there was a half-smile on her lips: she lay high on the pillows, as if watching us. One hand rested on her breast, the other arm, with the bracelet still on her wrist, hung straight down by her side, and on the floor, within an inch of the dead fingers, lay Forbes' roses, as they fell.

I do not pretend to have given this story precisely in Sir William's own language; yet many of the remarks are textually his own. I particularly remember the words in which he described the dead girl to us.

When he had finished, there was a little silence; nobody ventured on a comment. At last the Boy moved his elbows off the table. "By Jove!" he said, sitting up, and drawing a deep breath.

"For a long while after that," Sir William added, "or it seemed a long while then, Forbes and I saw very little of each other. I travelled, and then took up my profession in good earnest. I thought I should never learn to endure further association with the man whom I could not but consider, to a certain extent, responsible for her death. For if she had obeyed her own strenuous instinct—if she had never told him; and yet, who knows? who can answer such a question? Slowly, slowly, I took hold again of life. For Nature, gentlemen, is the great, insidious, indefatigable enemy of our griefs: suffering is sterile, and she will not let men suffer. She lures us back, reclaims us, forces us back, if need be; and the first time after any overwhelming wreck of passion that we are conscious of the grateful warmth of the sun, the falling rain, hunger, thirst, fatigue, life has already taken repossession. A man may struggle, gentlemen: Nature can wait."

He pushed aside his empty glass and leaned back in the old leather chair.

"You must have heard of Stanleigh Forbes and his political successes. He wrote to me on the occasion of his marriage, and after that I saw him often. His wife is a distant connection of old Sir John's: the Beauchamp family interest has always been faithful to him. Next year I expect one of his sons to come to me. The lad has talent, and I offered to take him and teach him what I can: had things gone differently it might have been Margaret's boy."

CHING-KI-FU AND THE CRISIS.

I AM an early riser, and generally get to my morning papers by a little after nine o'clock. But as I always take them up in the order of their reputation as purveyors of early and exclusive intelligence, it was not till after eleven o'clock on the 23rd of December that I discovered that Lord Randolph Churchill had resigned. Ching-Ki-Fu was due at twelve, and it at once occurred to me that this startling incident and its results would, in all likelihood, afford a unique opportunity for giving my pupil a clearer insight into the working of our political institutions than he could obtain in any other way. He was making fair progress with the language, though his tendency to lapse at times into pigeon-English, which he had unfortunately picked up during a year's sojourn at Hong-Kong before visiting this country, had not yet quite disappeared; and it seemed to me to be about time to start him on the other "subject" which he wished to master before presenting himself for his seventeenth examination (for although he had reached his twenty-second year, he had got no further than this) ere he returned to his native land. I decided, on reflection, that if the exercise I had set him on the occasion of the last hour with me proved satisfactory, I would put him into "politics" at once.

Just as I had arrived at this resolution, my pupil appeared; and after the exchange of our usual salutations, I asked him for his exercise, which he produced from some mysterious recess in his costume, and laid on the table before me. It was an exercise which I had given him as much, I am afraid, to practise myself in his language as to instruct him in mine. I had thrown the first fifty lines of the Æneid roughly into Chinese, and had set him to translate them back into English, to see what sort of job he would make of it. On the whole it was fairly done; not perhaps with quite the force and elegance of a Conington, but still with reasonable correctness, and in a sufficiently literary style. I met with only one or two slight outbreaks of pigeon-English,—such as his version of *Tantæne animis cœlestibus iræ?* which he had proposed to render, "What fo' Joss makee such dam bobbely?"

Altogether I thought he was proficient enough in our language to be ripe for the study of our institutions, and I accordingly plunged at once into the subject by informing him that "a Ministerial crisis had occurred." These words, as I had expected, conveyed no idea whatever to his mind; and I proceeded as my custom was, to make him pronounce them after me several times before I attempted to explain their meaning. When he could articulate "Ministelial clisis" tolerably plainly, I set to work to define the terms; but found to my surprise a considerable difficulty in doing so. "Ministelial" was plain sailing enough. He had indeed very distinct conceptions on the subject of officialism and official persons. But "clisis" bothered him, as, to tell the truth, it did me. I looked out κρίσις in my 'Liddell and Scott,' and found myself embarrassed with the choice between the various meanings of "a separating or putting asunder," "a deciding or determining," "a judgment or trial," "a dispute or quarrel," "the event or issue of a thing," and "the turning-point of a disease." Nearly every one of these meanings might be made, it seemed to me, to fit Lord Randolph Churchill's resignation. It was beyond question

"a separating or putting asunder" of the Cabinet: it arose out of a "dispute or quarrel" on causes variously assigned: it was distinctly "a trial," and the Radicals said, "a judgment;" while many of the old Tories would, I suspected, describe it as the natural "event or issue" of constructing a Cabinet which numbered Lord Randolph among its members. On reflection, however, I came with little doubt to the conclusion that the last of the meanings assigned to it by the lexicographers was the one intended to be suggested in the political employment of the word; and I proceeded to explain to my pupil that the Government were, figuratively speaking, in the condition of a sick man at "the turning-point of his malady."

I think he might have been got to grasp this idea more easily than he did if I had been more careful not to mix my metaphors. But unfortunately I had felt bound, as a good Conservative, to describe the retirement of the late Chancellor of the Exchequer as an act of political suicide; and Ching, having once got it into his head that Lord Randolph was the dead man, was unable to see how the Cabinet could suffer by his removal. They ought even, he argued, to be the stronger and healthier for it.

"S'posey," he said (his English always became less literary when he grew excited), "s'posey my catchee spoilum t'his piecee arm" (extending it). "S'posey muchee-muchee spoilum: s'posey my velly much 'flaid get chop-chop die-lo. My talkee 'Tákta, makee cuttee so-fash." And he imitated the motion of severing the arm from the body.

Of course I could have demolished the analogical basis of this argument by comparing Lord Randolph Churchill's functions in the House of Commons to those of the head rather than of the arm, and suggesting that decapitation was not a recognised process of surgery; but I could not make an admission so damaging to my party, and, although I sighed to think that Radicals should have the monopoly of it, I refrained. This self-restraint, however, necessitated my entering more fully into the general political situation, and endeavouring thus to make him understand how the event which he fallaciously supposed to be a source of strength to the Government had, in fact, reduced them to the position of a sick man at "the turning-point of his disease."

To do this, it was necessary to recount to him as briefly as I could the history of the Home Rule Bill in the last Parliament. Ching had no great difficulty in understanding what the Union was, nor in correctly estimating the moral and political turpitude of the legislative attempt (as I explained it to him) to dismember the United Kingdom. But he asked so many puzzled questions about the action of her Majesty in the matter that I thought it best, though it went rather against my political conscience, to prevent further confusion by telling him roundly that the real sovereign of the country was the People. It was to them, I told him, that the question of Separation had ultimately to be referred. He listened with the deepest interest to my narrative of the general election, and of the condemnation which the Sovereign People had pronounced on the policy of the late Prime Minister. But when I reached this point he stopped me in my recital, and inquired with an air of the liveliest curiosity whether any of Mr. Gladstone's family were still living.

Not at once perceiving the drift of this question, I replied with some surprise that to the best of my knowledge they were all living. Upon this Ching-Ki-Fu, who, as I had already discovered, had been considerably bitten with Western Liberalism and humanitarianism during his residence in Hong Kong, and indeed was rather rallied by his countrymen on his pretension to enlightenment, expressed the warmest satisfaction. He had for some

time, he said, felt sensible of the injustice of confounding the innocent with the guilty; and, much as he preferred the institutions of his own country to those of ours, he did not scruple to confess his regret that when it became necessary to behead a Chinese minister for a political blunder it should so often be, he could not but think erroneously, deemed advisable to strengthen the force of the example by putting his family to death along with him. But nevertheless, he said, I must have grossly exaggerated the enormity of the late Prime Minister's misconduct. If he were so wicked, argued Ching, we should already have punished him. "You talkee he belongey too muchee bad heart," he urged. "What fo' you no makee walkee way-lo bottom-side?"

I felt the hopelessness of trying to make him understand that English statesmen were never disgraced nowadays for political offences; but that we were satisfied with dismissing the offender from office and excluding him therefrom until he succeeds in tripping up the minister who has supplanted him,—a punishment which sometimes incapacitates him from fresh mischief for more than a year. So I rather led him to suppose that Mr. Gladstone had been not so much acquitted as merely reprieved; and that he was, in fact, in the position of a prisoner bound over in his own recognizances to come up for judgment when called for.

The next thing was to explain to him the position of Lord Hartington, Mr. Chamberlain, and the two sections of Liberal Unionists respectively owning allegiance to them. This was a somewhat more difficult task, and I found it especially hard to explain to my pupil the exact political position of Mr. Chamberlain. At last, however, I succeeded, or thought I did, and Ching's hour being now up, I dismissed him with the injunction to study our newspapers daily, and to bring me on the following Wednesday a connected account of the successive developments of the crisis, together with an intelligent commentary of his own thereon.

At the appointed day and hour my pupil again presented himself, and I saw from the first glance at the well filled note-book which he laid before me, that he had not been idle. The results of his labours, however, proved when I came to examine them to be of very little value. In directing him to study the daily papers diligently, I had forgotten to warn him that the keen competition between them rendered it frequently necessary for them to contradict each other's information without too close or constant a reference to the actual state of the facts. Unaware of this peculiarity of our journalistic enterprise, the unfortunate young man had each morning industriously collected all the various paragraphs of latest political intelligence which were to be found in his newspapers, and copied them one after another, without any attempt at collation, into his diary of events. The effect when he began at my request to read out to me the contents of his note-book was, of course, very remarkable. "Lord Hartington has been invited by the Prime Minister to form a Government, Lord Salisbury offering in that event to serve under him." "Lord Salisbury has offered Lord Hartington a place in the Cabinet, but there has never been any question of the Prime Minister's stepping down from his place to make room for the leader of the Unionist Liberals." "Lord Salisbury has asked Lord Hartington either to form a Coalition Government himself, or to enter the existing Administration, the Prime Minister expressing his entire willingness to assent to either arrangement." "Lord Salisbury has neither invited Lord Hartington to form a Coalition Government nor offered him a seat in the Conservative Cabinet: he has simply expressed a wish to consult the leader of the Unionist Liberals as to the course to be pursued in the new situation of affairs." Again: "In accordance with the Prime Minister's request for his

immediate presence Lord Hartington left Rome on Saturday night." "Lord Hartington, we are informed, will not start on his homeward journey until Sunday afternoon." "Lord Hartington, it is stated, will leave Rome for England on Monday." "It is not expected that Lord Hartington will now deem it necessary to hasten in any degree his departure from Rome. He will now probably complete the fortnight's stay which he originally contemplated making in the Eternal City," &c., &c., &c.

Ching-Ki-Fu read through this series of extracts in the order in which I have transcribed them with immovable gravity; and, regarding them as a useful exercise in the pronunciation of English, I did not interrupt him. When he had finished, I asked to see his own commentary on the situation. It was full of interest, and contained more than one ingenious suggestion for the settlement of the political difficulty; but, taken as a whole, the plans involved a somewhat greater amount of beheading and banishing than could, I fear, be exactly fitted in to our democratic system. I perceived that I should have to enlighten him still further as to the working of our institutions, and I thought it better to postpone the lesson until the crisis had more nearly approached a solution. I accordingly requested him to defer his next visit for a week, by which time I calculated that the work of Ministerial reconstruction would be complete. I added, as he took his leave, that he need not trouble himself to do more than read the political intelligence which appeared in the newspapers from day to day, and do his best to master its bearings upon the situation.

When Ching-Ki-Fu came to me for his next lesson, the crisis had reached what may be called the conclusion of its second act. Lord Hartington having definitely refused either to form, or to take office in a Coalition Government, the Premier had made proposals of Ministerial marriage to Mr. Goschen; and that distinguished politician had, with only as much hesitation as is considered becoming under the circumstances, whispered that he would ask Mamma. The maternal consent, and even the maternal blessing had been not only pronounced at Devonshire House, but had been formally published in the newspapers along with the announcement of the match, and nothing now remained but to take the necessary steps for providing the bride with an eligible country seat.

I must confess that the series of negotiations which had thus resulted was very little to my liking. As an old-fashioned Tory, I was inclined to regard Lord Randolph's departure as rather in the nature of a good riddance; and if I had been consulted by the leaders of my party, I should strongly have recommended filling his place by some judicious selection from within our own ranks. However, I did not care to press this particular view of the matter upon a foreigner; so, after ascertaining that Ching had correctly informed himself as to the actual events of the previous week, I proceeded to comment upon them from the orthodox and official Conservative standpoint. But before I had got far with my observations on the absolute necessity of strengthening the Cabinet by an infusion of Liberal Unionist blood, I perceived that he was getting puzzled; so I stopped, and asked him his difficulty. He then told me, in tolerably good book-English that he had understood me to say that the Liberal Unionists were still good friends with the Government, and meant to support them in Parliament. I admitted that that was so, but still insisted on the importance of getting their leader or a prominent member of their party to take a seat on the Treasury Bench. At this, Ching became more and more impatient and excited, till at last he broke out: "What fo' wantchee catchee one piecee, two piecee, Libbelal Uniumist? What fo' wantchee makee belongey Tleasuly Bench? S'posey no belongey

Tleasuly Bench, allo-same no chin-chin Gland Olo Man. Seppalatist no catchee topside."

I had of course to admit that after Lord Hartington's pledges it was true, as Ching had said, that even if no Liberal Unionist joined the Government, that party were still bound not to return to their allegiance to Mr. Gladstone, and consequently that they could and would defeat any attempt of the Separatist party to recover power. But I endeavoured to make Ching understand the extreme importance of "debating strength" under our Parliamentary system of government, and assured him that any administration which did not possess an adequate supply of this strength available for use in the House of Commons would be in a very precarious position. I thought, however, that I should never succeed in making him understand this characteristic of our institutions. Again and again he asked me whether I meant any more than that the members of a government should "belongey smart inside," or, in other words, be able and intelligent men; and again and again I answered that in our politics it was not sufficient to "belongey smart inside," one must belongey smart outside also—as smart as possible, smart to the fingerends, in order to get to the top of the Parliamentary tree and keep there. He could not be got to see the sense of this, although, as he frankly assured me, he had no prejudice against the gift of eloquence. "My likee velly good talkee," he frequently repeated. "My velly much chin-chin joss-pidgin-man China-side." He had conceived a great respect for the oratory of our missionaries; but a nation that could seriously agree to intrust the whole of its "law-pidgin" to those men, or, what is still more extraordinary, to that man who can talk most fluently, appeared to be in a condition of positive mental imbecility. "Hab got wata topside," as he graphically expressed it.

By this time I was beginning to despair of ever getting Ching-Ki-Fu to comprehend the peculiar merits of a democratic system; but after proceeding a little further in my exposition I came upon a difficulty which induced me to abandon the attempt as hopeless. I was dwelling on the importance of maintaining the union of the Unionist party in the House of Commons, and pointing out that the effect of their meeting with a Parliamentary defeat would inevitably be to compel recourse to another general election when my pupil, in a state of high excitement interrupted me.

"What fo' you no wantchee catchee genlal 'lection nothertim'?" cried he. "'Lector-man talkee allo-same. No hab Home Lule. No can do."

He had touched the weak place. I told him that that was the very thing we doubted. No human being I said could be certain that "'lector men" would "talkee allo-same" on the subject of Home Rule if the question were put to him a second time. But this only increased Ching's perplexity. He reminded me that I had told him that the people were now supreme, and if that were the case, he argued, no political party had a right to balk them of the declaration of their will. If there was any ground for supposing that they had changed their minds on the subject of Home Rule, that was a reason not for obstructing but for facilitating the delivery of their new mandate.

I confess that, as a Tory, I was not blind to the anomaly which he thus exposed. But I had undertaken to expound Parliamentary Democracy to him as a reasonable and workable system, and I felt that it was futile to persist in the attempt in the face of such objections as these.

So I requested him to go out for half-an-hour's walk, and promised him that on his return I would have ready for him a rough Chinese version of another fifty lines of the first Æneid for translation into English prose.

THE EVANGELICAL REVIVAL OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.[1]

THE Evangelical Revival, specially identified with the name of John Wesley, has long since won for itself an important place in the social history of the eighteenth century, and has now been made the subject of an interesting little monograph by Canon Overton, in Professor Creighton's series entitled 'Epochs of Church History.' Mr. Overton's volume, however, is not so much an historical narrative as a collection of biographical sketches and essays upon various aspects of the movement. One chapter is devoted to John Wesley himself, another to George Whitefield and others of Wesley's immediate colleagues, a third to a comparison between Methodism and Evangelicalism—a term for which the author apologises—a fourth to the leading Evangelical clergy of the century, and a fifth to the contemporary Evangelical laity. Then we have separate chapters on the Literature, the Doctrines, and the Results, of the Revival, with a discerning estimate of its weak points and of the opposition which it encountered. All these topics are treated in an independent and charitable spirit; nor would it be easy to gather from Mr. Overton's temperate criticisms to which school of theological opinion he may profess to belong. But, after all, we miss that which the character of the volume would have led us to expect—a consecutive account of the rise and progress of Methodism in this country. For this we must still look to more elaborate biographical works, like Southey's and Tyerman's Lives of Wesley, or learned monographs on the movement, such as that to be found in Sir James Stephen's admirable 'Essays on Ecclesiastical Biography.'

The part played by the University of Oxford in the early history of Methodism is treated far too lightly by Mr. Overton. During the first half of the eighteenth century, that University was equally degenerate both as a place of religion and as a place of learning. Too much has been made, it is true, of Gibbon's malicious strictures upon it, but the evidence is conclusive that, during the two generations when Oxford Jacobitism was at its height, Oxford education was at its lowest ebb. The influence of religion was no less weakened in the University, and had, indeed, been on the decline ever since the Restoration. Notwithstanding their boisterous demonstrations of sympathy with the High Church party in politics, many of its senior members, both clerical and lay, secretly leaned to Rationalism, and the Deism which came in with the Revolution of 1688 became rife again under the Georges. In the year 1730 three students were expelled for holding Deistical tenets: several Heads of Colleges issued a joint notice censuring the spread of Deism among the students; and the Vice-Chancellor, in a *programma*, solemnly warned tutors and undergraduates against literature calculated to disturb Christian faith.

It was in this unpromising soil, teeming with High Church prejudices, deeply saturated by worldliness, and now tainted with Deism, that the seeds of Methodism were sown at Oxford.

John Wesley, its chief founder, was the son of an excellent clergyman, Samuel Wesley, Rector of Epworth, and, after passing through Charterhouse and Christ Church, had been

[1] 'The Evangelical Revival in the Eighteenth Century,' by John Henry Overton, Canon of Lincoln, and Rector of Epworth. London. 1886.

elected Fellow of Lincoln in 1726. Having been ordained in the previous year, he acted for a while as his father's curate, and, on his return to Oxford in 1729, found his younger brother Charles, then an undergraduate of Christ Church, already a member of a small religious association, which afterwards expanded into the Methodist communion. Of this little band John Wesley at once became the acknowledged leader. Their earliest meetings were held for the purpose of reading the Greek Testament, and encouraging one another in study and good works. But within a year their sympathies widened, and they extended their charity to others. William Morgan, one of their number, visiting a condemned prisoner, was struck by the misery which he witnessed in the gaol, and persuaded the Wesleys to aid him in what may be called a prison-mission. With the consent of the Bishop of Oxford, and of his chaplain, they undertook the work of visitation, both in Bocardo, the debtors' prison, and in the county gaol. Active benevolence soon claimed even more of their energy than earnest study, which, however, they never abandoned. This handful of friends, themselves very poor, started a school for poor children, and maintained the mistress at their joint expense, assisted poor debtors and kept their families from penury, visited the parish workhouse, relieved the sick, and in all their ministrations strove to better the spiritual condition of those whom they befriended. Nor were the undergraduates neglected. Wesley and his associates did their utmost to rescue the weaker of them from vice, and to bring them under the influence of quiet and serious companions. They encouraged them to study earnestly, and to lay out their time carefully, specially insisting on habits of close thinking, for they were intolerant of indolence, even in thought. In order to gain the confidence of his juniors, John Wesley would invite them to breakfast, and endeavour to interest them in his own efforts. To him and to his fellows the essence of the movement was not devotional but practical, not the propagation of a new creed, but the moral salvation of human souls.

From the first, they adopted a strict code of religious observance, and made a practice of receiving the Holy Communion weekly—in that age, a rare act of religious devotion. Clayton, one of their first adherents, is said to have induced his colleagues to cultivate the habit of rigorous fasting. It was thoroughly in harmony with the self-denial and abstraction from the world already characteristic of the Society. For instance, Wesley and his companions would sometimes break off deliberately in the middle of a sentence, when the chapel bell began to ring, that they might "beware of the lust of finishing." It is strange that George Whitefield, another of the early converts, should have almost fallen a victim to his ascetic enthusiasm. He confessed that he at first believed that Christianity had required him to "go nasty"; for which reason he abstained from washing, clothed himself in evil garments, and fasted so continuously during Lent that he became unable to walk upstairs, and was compelled to submit to medical treatment. Charles Wesley, too, injured his health by excessive fasting; and John Wesley so exhausted himself, not only by fasting, but by overwork and walks of a length then almost unknown among students, that he broke a blood-vessel and was laid by for a time. The saddest case of all was that of William Morgan, whose fasting laid the foundation of an illness which developed madness, and terminated in his untimely death. This event naturally produced a sensation in the University, and was most unfairly laid at the door of John Wesley; but Morgan's father, no friend to Methodist practices, entirely exonerated Wesley, and even intrusted to him another son, as a pupil.

This ascetic discipline seems to have been almost the only outward and visible peculiarity of the Society calculated

to attract much attention or to provoke hostile criticism. As Mr. Overton remarks, it is "difficult to realise the fact that, in a place especially devoted to Christian education, the mere sight of a few young men going quietly to receive the Holy Communion every Sunday at St. Mary's, their own University Church, should have attracted a crowd of ridiculing spectators," or that piety and active benevolence should have been "thought eccentric in a little body of men, the leader of whom was an ordained clergyman, and all of whom were intending to take Holy Orders." But it is not so astonishing that an unsocial, if not Pharisaical, demeanour, sometimes attended with slovenliness of costume and even with neglect of personal cleanliness, should have exposed the young reformers to some obloquy among their companions, most of whom, no doubt, would have gained much by cultivating their acquaintance. At all events, they soon incurred a storm of juvenile ridicule. They were nick-named Bible-moths, Supererogation-men, Sacramentarians, the Holy or the Godly Club. But the name by which they were specially known, and which has acquired a world-wide currency, was that of Methodists. This name was not of modern origin. There was an ancient society of physicians known by it, and, like the kindred name of "precisians," it had been applied, as Dr. Calamy informs us, to "those who stood up for God." It was now fastened on this little group of Oxford zealots, probably on account of the methodical rules whereby they endeavoured to regulate their behaviour and hours of work. Nor were the undergraduates their only foes. The seniors of Christ Church held a meeting to consider what could be done against them. At Lincoln College, the Rector and Fellows showed determined hostility to them: the Master of Pembroke threatened to expel Whitefield unless he gave up visiting: a brother Fellow would not oblige a Methodist by reading prayers for him in chapel, lest his obnoxious practices should be thus facilitated. Still, they persevered, and persecution doubtless contributed to keep their union unbroken. Whitefield, afterwards as great a power in the Revival as Wesley himself, did not in Oxford assert his independence. As a servitor of Pembroke, he occupied too lowly a position to admit of his taking a lead in a Society which, modest as it was, consisted of Fellows, tutors, and ordinary students. Moreover, he entered College nearly three years after the movement was initiated, and during the early part of his career knew little of its promoters, though ardently desirous of joining them. This was accomplished by an accident. He was called to the bedside of a poor man who had attempted to cut his throat, and, pitying his miserable condition, sent in haste for Charles Wesley, begging the messenger to conceal his own name. The injunction was disobeyed. Charles Wesley sought out Whitefield, asked him to breakfast, and immediately introduced him to the Society. So narrow were his means that during his three years' residence at Oxford he received but twenty-four pounds from his friends, supporting himself mainly on the emoluments of his servitorship and the kind presents of his tutor. There was, indeed, little wealth in the infant Methodist Church, and John Wesley himself, having fallen into debt, had been thankful to find a garret for fifty shillings a year.

But Methodism in Oxford was short-lived, and its history virtually ends with the ill-advised mission of John and Charles Wesley to Georgia in 1735. Long before this, it had been manifest that, without John Wesley's personal influence, the Society must cease to flourish. During his absence in 1733 the number of communicants shrank from twenty-seven to five; and it was because he then appreciated the importance of Oxford as his special field of duty that he declined the living of Epworth. In 1738 there were but three Methodist gentlemen in the

University. In the following year none visited the prison or the workhouse, and the little school was on the eve of being given up. The Oxford Methodists could not survive without the presence and example of their leader; and within three years of his departure they were virtually extinct in the city which had been at once the cradle of the movement and the stronghold of opposition to it. After his return from Georgia in 1738, John Wesley revisited Oxford at intervals, but found himself unable to resuscitate the Methodist Society during these flying visits. The old prejudice against it, however, was still alive. In 1740, a student named Graves, being suspected of Methodism, was forced, in order to obtain his *testamur*, to sign a paper renouncing "the modern practice and principles of the persons commonly called Methodists." At midsummer, 1741, John Wesley spent three weeks in Oxford, in order to inquire about the exercises for his B.D. degree, and preached a sermon, of which it was predicted by Gambold, a former associate, then unfriendly to him, that it was not worth preparing it, as there would be no audience. In 1744 he occupied the University pulpit for the last time, in spite of the authorities, who would gladly have excluded him, if they could, from preaching in his turn. In the course of this sermon he roundly upbraided the gownsmen as a generation of triflers, and reproached the Fellows for their proverbial uselessness, pride, haughtiness of spirit, impatience, peevishness, sloth, gluttony, and sensuality. It was subsequently arranged that in future some other Fellow should preach in Wesley's place. In 1751, according to the Statutes, he resigned his Fellowship on his marriage. Six years later, Romaine, who as a student had stood aloof from Methodism, was excluded from the University pulpit for insisting upon Justification by Faith, and the imperfection of our best works. Finally, in 1768, the Vice-Chancellor expelled six Methodist students from St. Edmund Hall, as disturbers of the peace; and this high-handed act was actually defended by Dr. Johnson at a time when University discipline was at its lowest—gambling, drunkenness, and blasphemy being condoned as venial offences. After this, we hear no more of Methodism at Oxford. It is not hard to understand why it failed to command success there after its first conquests, since it appealed more and more to the religious enthusiasm of the less educated classes, abandoning any attempt to satisfy the speculative reason.

Thirty years before this official condemnation of Methodism at the University, it had begun to spread with marvellous rapidity over the country. John Wesley himself dated the beginning of the Revival from the spring of 1738, when he came under the influence of the Moravian Peter Böhler, and experienced a sudden "conversion," which he regarded as the birth of his true spiritual life. But the energy of his nature soon caused him to rebel against the mystic "stillness" of the Moravians, as well as the quietism of Law, his first spiritual guide, and launched him upon a career of missionary labour which he carried on without intermission for more than half a century. The preface to his Journal records that "he published more books, travelled more miles, and preached more sermons, than any minister of his age." As Canon Overton tells us, "the whole length and breadth of England were traversed by him over and over again: he made frequent journeys into Scotland and Ireland; and at every town and village where he stayed, he was ready, in season and out of season, to preach the everlasting Gospel." He constantly rode on horseback forty, fifty, or sixty miles a day: he found time for reading and writing on his journeys; and he would often preach three or four times a day. It has even been calculated that, in the course of his working life, he travelled above two hundred thousand miles, and preached

some forty thousand sermons. From the first, he was the life and soul of Methodism, yet Canon Overton, defending him against the charge of despotic self-will, remarks that several of its most distinctive features were not originated by him, but adopted in deference to the opinions of others. One of these was the practice of field-preaching, initiated by Whitefield, on the 17th February, 1739, when he delivered an open-air sermon to the colliers of Kingswood, near Bristol. Wesley felt and confessed a great repugnance to such a deviation from Church order, but soon afterwards followed Whitefield's example, though he never rivalled Whitefield's power of entrancing vast audiences. In the same year, the first separate meeting-house for Methodists was founded, also in Bristol; and, perhaps in consequence of this, Wesley and his associates found themselves generally excluded from the pulpits of churches. The next step towards separation was taken in the following autumn, when lay-preaching was sanctioned by Wesley, though not without great reluctance. In 1743, the Rules of the Society, which still constitute its fundamental law, were drawn up and issued with the signatures of John and Charles Wesley. In 1744, the first "Conference" was held, and "class-meetings" soon became a characteristic feature of Methodism. Mr. Overton, however, is unwilling to suspect the early Methodists of schismatic intentions. According to him, the class-meetings "arose simply from the necessity of finding money to pay for what Wesley himself would have called a 'preaching-house' at Bristol." They were instituted for the purpose of a weekly collection, and converted incidentally into gatherings for the mutual censorship of conduct. With equal charity, he endeavours to show that many other Methodist institutions —such as the "love-feasts, "the "watch-nights," the "quarterly tickets," the "band-meetings," the "circuits," the offices of "superintendents" and "circuit-stewards," and the "Conference," —grew naturally out of practical exigencies, and were not consciously devised as parts of an elaborate system designed to supplant the National Church. At all events, it is certain that, notwithstanding his disparagement of parochial discipline, Wesley remained at heart an Anglican, both in doctrine and policy. He was a stout opponent of Calvinism, he condemned the Puritan spirit of the seventeenth century, he avowed his dislike of the Presbyterian services in Scotland, and his admiration of the services prescribed by the English liturgy; and, though he was not borne to his grave, like his brother Charles, by clergymen of the National Church, he always manifested, and especially in his later years, a cordial sympathy and respect for them.

Canon Overton, like Tyerman, Wesley's latest biographer, passes rapidly over the physical manifestations, or "outward signs" of the Methodist propaganda, on which Southey lays so great a stress, and which impressed contemporary observers as the most striking feature of the Revival. Now, it is important to observe that contagious paroxysms of religious excitement are by no means peculiar to Methodism, or even to Protestantism. On the contrary, Protestantism has never yet rivalled Catholicism in its power of inspiring sudden and wholesale devotion. The sweeping triumphs of Latin Christianity over the barbarian conquerors are still unparalleled, or paralleled only by the success of Xavier and his followers. Pilgrimage was the expression of an intense and universal religious impulse, and it may well be doubted whether the most powerful spiritual leaders of modern times could extort so laborious a pledge of sincerity from their disciples. The audiences of Peter the Hermit and Bernard thrilled with a more overwhelming flood of emotion than John Wesley's congregations at the Kingswood collieries. The cry of "God wills it" that burst

from the great Council at Clermont spread wider and sank deeper into the heart of Christendom than the groans which filled the early Methodist prayer-meetings. The annals of the Middle Ages are full of passionate ebullitions of religious enthusiasm, sometimes coloured by political feelings, but invariably accompanied by the two characteristic symptoms of Methodist Revivalism — affections of the nervous system, and a temporary reformation of life and manners. They recurred during the exciting epoch of the Crusades, and the camp of Walter the Penniless was probably fertile in scenes wilder than those which John Wesley complacently recorded in his Diary, and justified in his letters to his brother Samuel. Again, during the memorable years of tribulation which preceded and followed the Black Death, the emotional and spasmodic element became dominant in the religion of the day, and vented itself in three extraordinary outbreaks during the fourteenth century. Of the same nature were the panics which led to so many massacres of the Jews, and the strange popular suspicions which proved the ruin of the Templars. The Reformation cleared the atmosphere for a time; not, however, without leaving the germs of new religious disorders, belonging to a different type, and corresponding to the more spiritual character of the Reformed doctrines.

The sectarian fanaticism of the seventeenth century, extravagant as it was, owed much of its extravagance to political fanaticism. But we are fortunate in possessing, from the pen of the celebrated Jonathan Edwards, an elaborate 'Narrative of the Revival of Religion in New England,' during the years 1734 and 1735, which shows that Methodist Revivalism, as the systematic propagation of a religious epidemic, had been anticipated in the American colonies. Mr. Edwards's narrative is couched in the language of the 'Pilgrim's Progress' and the Puritan divines, and is highly charged with the quaint technical phraseology of Calvinism. We read of "legal terrors," "legal distresses." "legal humiliation," "legal convictions," "legal awakenings," "legal humblings." The author writes in the spirit of a physician describing the pathology of a familiar disease to a brother professor, and displays a candour and good faith, which does not shrink from recognising the boasted "visions" as figments of the imagination. Nevertheless, his pages are darkened by a mysticism compared to which the fierce penitence of the Flagellants may appear genial and humane. In all the varieties of experience which he enumerates, we do not find that he recognises any exemption from the "Slough of Despond." According as they have or have not passed this, he inexorably determines the respective destinies of men. He maintains the doctrine of God's arbitrary will to have been the most salutary medicine for the times. In many of the converted he discerned "a sort of complacency in the attribute of God's judgment as displayed in his threatenings of eternal damnation to sinners," and adds that "they have sometimes almost called it a willingness to be damned." Yet this morbid exaltation does not seem to have struck him as any evidence of mental aberration, nor did he suspect that instances of suicide and religious insanity, which he admitted, were related to Revivalism by any physical connection of cause and effect.

Probably this New England Revival is the earliest recorded precedent, within Protestant memory, for that initiated by John Wesley. It is remarkable that his sermons were far more productive of convulsions and hysterical fits than those of Whitefield, although, as Canon Overton observes, they were less sensational, and, in their published form, appear little calculated to excite sentimental frenzy. On the other hand, it is certain that, while Charles Wesley mildly condemned, and Whitefield distrusted, such proofs of instantaneous

conversion, John Wesley accepted and favoured them as witnesses of the Spirit; at least, until a late period of his life. As his brother frankly said, with a large fund of common sense and administrative ability, he "seemed born for the benefit of knaves." He owned that, in some cases, "nature mixed with grace," and "Satan mimicked this work of God." But he did not perceive that indulgence of the religious passions has in it something of sensuality, and that Protestant Revivalism, when it descends to a kind of jugglery in the production of moral renovation, cannot afford to cast reproach on the meretricious arts of Romanism. Wesley even declared, in deprecating the remonstrances of his brother Samuel, that he had known people converted in their sleep; but most of the instances which he mentions strongly resemble the accounts of demoniacal possession in the Gospels, the evil spirits being exorcised by prayer, and the converts relieved by a sudden access of saving faith. No wonder that Methodism was discredited in the sceptical world by these extravagances, that grave Bishops and moderate Churchmen withdrew the qualified countenance which they had first given to it, and that before long the miracles of Methodist Revivalism were out-heroded by certain foreign enthusiasts called the French Prophets, against whom John Wesley himself warned his followers. Before his death, the fanatical excesses of early Methodism had already spent their strength, and a more rational tone of practical religion had supervened; but, among the communities which he founded, Revivals on a smaller scale have recurred at irregular periods, both in this country and in America. Among the latter, may be specially mentioned those of 1816, 1843, and 1857-8, when, as we are informed by a sympathetic chronicler, the crews of ships on their homeward voyages were affected by the same wave of religious emotion which was sweeping over their countrymen on shore. Another memorable Revival spread itself on both sides of the Atlantic in 1859-60, until its progress was significantly checked by the outbreak of the great American Civil War. We must not, however, allow these questionable phenomena to occupy too large a space in our general conception of Methodism. While many of its first converts insisted upon signs from Heaven, tens of thousands were led to embrace it by the force of moral conviction: its cardinal doctrines left a permanent impression on the religious world, and became the inheritance of the great Evangelical School at the beginning of the present century.

The wonderful expansion of Methodism during the life of its founder is perhaps without precedent in religious history. In 1730, as we have seen, its only adherents were a handful of Oxford students: twelve years later it numbered eleven hundred members in London: long before the end of the century all Great Britain and nearly all the American colonies had rung with the eloquence of Whitefield or with the soberer but hardly less effective appeals of Wesley himself: meeting-houses had sprung up in every important town, an army of missionaries was engaged in itinerating over the country, and, partly through Lady Huntingdon's influence, Methodism had found a considerable amount of acceptance even in the higher ranks of society. Franklin's testimony to the power of Whitefield's preaching is well known; but Chesterfield, Bolingbroke, and even Hume, were also among his hearers. At the time of Wesley's death, in 1791, the Methodist Church, or Connexion, as it was called, numbered above three hundred preachers in Great Britain alone, and nearly two hundred in the United States, where the success of the Revolution had made it necessary for Wesley to establish a separate organisation, under a "superintendent," whom, to the horror of good Churchmen, he consecrated as all but a bishop.

The number of members in the United Kingdom already exceeded seventy thousand, and rose to more than one hundred thousand in the course of the next decade. Considering how carefully Wesley had weeded out backsliders and weak-kneed brethren: considering also that schism had broken out at an early stage and detached a considerable body from the orthodox Connexion, this aggregate may be taken as representing not merely the nominal but the effective strength of Methodism. As it had sprung from the bosom of the Established Church, so its converts were chiefly drawn from that communion, or, at least, from a class of persons who belonged to none of the ordinary sects of Nonconformists. That it gave a powerful impulse to Dissent, in spite of Wesley's personal attachment to the Church, may be inferred from the fact "that, whereas at George the First's death, the proportion of Dissenters to Churchmen was about one to twenty-five, by 1800 it was computed to be one to four." On the other hand, its indirect effect in stimulating zeal within the Church itself was undoubtedly great. Though neither Sunday Schools, nor Foreign Missions, nor the Abolition of the Slave Trade, can be claimed among the results of Methodism — indeed, Whitefield himself was a slave-owner —all these movements owed much to the religious and benevolent spirit kindled by Methodism, as well as by the more constant influence of the Evangelical School.

The short chapter in which Canon Overton shows the affinity and the contrast between Methodism and so-called Evangelicalism is one of the most interesting in the volume. It would be a great delusion to imagine that "Evangelical" religion, as now understood, was invented or first developed by the apostles of Methodism. Not to speak of the great Puritan divines, or of such American writers as Jonathan Edwards, there had never been wanting in the Church of England a succession of pious and sober-minded clergymen holding the same views as were afterwards connected with the names of Wilberforce and the Clapham School. Both Methodists and Evangelical Churchmen "aimed at reviving spiritual religion; they both so far resembled the Puritanism of the seventeenth century in that they contended for the immediate and particular influence of the Holy Spirit, for the total degeneracy of man, for the vicarious nature of the Atonement, for the absolute unlawfulness of certain kinds of amusement, for the strict observance of the Lord's Day or Sabbath (for they used the words indiscriminately); and they both agreed in differing from Puritanism, by taking either no side in politics at all, or else taking the opposite side from that which the Puritans would have taken, by disclaiming sympathy with Dissenters or Nonconformists, by glorying in the fact that they were members of the Church of England (Methodists no less than Evangelicals), and by the most staunch loyalty to the Throne." The distinctions between them consisted mainly in the differences of spirit and mode of working. The Methodists were restless and impulsive, the Evangelicals valued moderation and self-restraint: the Methodists drew their converts from the lower and lower-middle classes, "the backbone of Evangelicalism was in the upper and upper-middle classes:" the Methodists adopted an elaborate organisation of "societies" in lieu of the parochial system, to which the Evangelicals adhered. But there were many connecting links between the two, and many excellent clergymen whom it would be difficult to assign exclusively to either camp. Such were James Hervey, William Romaine, John Newton, the friend of Cowper, Thomas Scott, Richard Cecil, the two Milners, Walker of Truro, and Fletcher of Madeley, who, though closely identified with Methodism, were thoroughly attached to parochial work, and refused to be diverted from it. These

men, with others to whom Canon Overton devotes short notices, were only not Methodists because they were satisfied to labour for the good of souls within the sphere traced for them by the Church of England, and would assuredly have kept alive Evangelical religion in the country, even if Wesley and Whitefield had never existed.

As we review the work of the Evangelical Revival of the last century, we cannot but recognise in it a noble expression of individual piety, and a powerful instrument for the purification of national character. The Christian life has seldom been seen in greater perfection, or missionary enthusiasm in a manlier form, than among the apostles of Methodism, with their Evangelical precursors and successors in the Church of England itself. They may have been inferior in mental stature to the greatest of the Puritan leaders, and in scholarly culture to the pioneers of the Tractarian movement. They knew little of Biblical criticism, and never dreamed of the influence to be exercised by modern science on theology : many articles of their dogmatic creed will not bear the scrutiny of a later philosophy : their popular discourses were too highly charged with appeals to mere religious emotion : their domestic controversies were sometimes carried on with an acrimony unworthy of their professions. But, in personal holiness, in self-denial, and in single-minded devotion to Christian duty, as exemplified by Christ and His Apostles, they rose as far above the ordinary moral standard of their age as they sank below its highest intellectual aspirations. Theirs was no barren faith : it constantly bore fruit in good works, and its unseen operation was felt in that practical spirit of philanthropy which stirred the heart of England, while the dreams of Rousseau were plunging France into anarchy, in the latter part of the eighteenth century. This is a debt which the nation owes to Wesley and his Evangelical contemporaries, but which has never been fully acknowledged. It was they who laboured most abundantly among the Christian ministers of their day to associate religion with humanity, making it a true bond of sympathy between classes, teaching rich men to regard the poor as their brothers in Christ, and poor men to console themselves with a hope beyond the grave, welcoming into their fellowship the very outcasts of society as the chosen objects of Divine mercy ; and thus insensibly combating those perilous counsels of revenge and despair which possessed the minds of the French peasantry at the same epoch, and culminated in the French Revolution.

George C. Brodrick.

THE WOODLANDERS.

BY THOMAS HARDY.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

At these warm words Winterborne was not less dazed than he was moved in heart. The novelty of the avowal rendered what it carried with it incomprehensible by him in its entirety. Only a few short months ago completely estranged from this family—beholding Grace going to and fro in the distance, clothed with the alienating radiance of obvious superiority, the wife of the then popular and fashionable Fitzpiers, hopelessly outside his social boundary down to so recent a time that flowers then folded were hardly faded yet—he was now asked by that jealously-guarding father of hers to take courage; to get himself ready for the day when he should be able to claim her.

The old times came back to him in dim procession. How he had been snubbed: how Melbury had despised his Christmas party: how that sweet, coy Grace herself had looked down upon him and his household arrangements, and poor Creedle's contrivances!

Well, he could not believe it. Surely the adamantine barrier of marriage with another could not be pierced like this! It did violence to custom. Yet a new law might do anything. But was it at all within the bounds of probability that a woman who, over and above her own attainments, had been accustomed to those of a cultivated professional man, could ever be the wife of such as he? Since the date of his rejection he had almost grown to see the reasonableness of that treatment. He had said to himself again and again that her father was right: that the poor ceorl, Giles Winterborne, would never have been able to make such a dainty girl happy. Yet now that she had stood in a position further removed from his own than at first, he was asked to prepare to woo her. He was full of doubt. Nevertheless, it was not in him to show backwardness. To act so promptly as Melbury desired him to act seemed, indeed, scarcely wise, because of the uncertainty of events. Giles knew nothing of legal procedure; but he did know that for him to step up to Grace as a lover before the bond which bound her was actually dissolved was simply an extravagant dream of her father's overstrained mind. He pitied Melbury for his almost childish enthusiasm, and saw that the aging man must have suffered acutely to be weakened to this unreasoning desire.

Winterborne was far too magnanimous to harbour any cynical conjecture that the timber-merchant, in his intense affection for Grace, was courting him now because that young lady, when disunited, would be left in an anomalous position, to escape which a bad husband was better than none. He felt quite sure that his old friend was simply on tenterhooks of anxiety to repair the almost irreparable error of dividing two whom nature had striven to join together in earlier days, and that in his ardour to do this he was oblivious of formalities. The cautious supervision of his past years had overleapt itself at last. Hence Winterborne perceived that, in this new beginning, the necessary care not to compromise Grace by too early advances must be exercised by himself.

Perhaps Winterborne was not quite so ardent as heretofore. There is no such thing as a stationary love: men are either loving more or loving less. But Giles himself recognised no decline

in his sense of her dearness. If the flame did indeed burn lower now than when he had fetched her from Sherton at her last return from school, the marvel was small. He had been labouring ever since his rejection and her marriage to reduce his former passion to a docile friendship, out of pure regard to its expediency; and their separation may have helped him to a partial success.

A week and more passed, and there was no further news of Melbury. But the effect of the intelligence he had already transmitted upon the elastic-nerved daughter of the woods had been much what the old surgeon Jones had surmised. It had soothed her perturbed spirit better than all the opiates in the pharmacopœia. She had slept unbrokenly a whole night and a day. The "new law" was to her a mysterious, beneficent, god-like entity, lately descended upon earth, that would make her as she once had been without trouble or annoyance. Her position fretted her, its abstract features rousing an aversion which was even greater than her aversion to the personality of him who had caused it. It was mortifying, productive of slights, undignified. Him she could forget: her circumstances she had always with her.

She saw nothing of Winterborne during the days of her recovery; and perhaps on that account her fancy wove about him a more romantic tissue than it could have done if he had stood before her with all the specks and flaws inseparable from material humanity. He rose upon her memory as the fruit-god and the wood-god in alternation: sometimes leafy and smeared with green lichen, as she had seen him amongst the sappy boughs of the plantations: sometimes cider-stained and starred with apple-pips, as she had met him on his return from cider-making in White Hart Vale, with his vats and presses beside him. In her secret heart she almost approximated to her father's enthusiasm in wishing to show Giles once for all how she still regarded him. The question whether the future would indeed bring them together for life was a standing wonder with her. She knew that it could not with any propriety do so just yet. But reverently believing in her father's sound judgment and knowledge, as good girls are wont to do, she remembered what he had written about her giving a hint to Winterborne lest there should be risk in delay, and her feelings were not averse to such a step, so far as it could be done without danger at this early stage of the proceedings.

From being a frail phantom of her former equable self she returned in bounds to a condition of passable philosophy. She bloomed again in the face in the course of a few days, and was well enough to go about as usual. One day Mrs. Melbury proposed that for a change she should be driven in the gig to Sherton market, whither Melbury's man was going on other errands. Grace had no business whatever in Sherton; but it crossed her mind that Winterborne would probably be there, and this made the thought of such a drive interesting.

On the way she saw nothing of him; but when the horse was walking slowly through the obstructions of Sheep Street, she discerned the young man on the pavement. She thought of that time when he had been standing under his apple-tree on her return from school, and of the tender opportunity then missed through her fastidiousness. Her heart rose in her throat. She abjured all such fastidiousness now. Nor did she forget the last occasion on which she had beheld him in that town, making cider in the courtyard of the Earl of Wessex Hotel, while she was figuring as a fine lady in the balcony above.

Grace directed the man to set her down there in the midst, and immediately went up to her lover. Giles had not before observed her, and his eyes now suppressedly looked his pleasure, without the embarrassment that had formerly marked him at such meetings.

When a few words had been spoken, she said archly, "I have nothing to do. Perhaps you are deeply engaged?"

"I? Not a bit. My business now at the best of times is small, I am sorry to say."

"Well, then—I am going into the Abbey. Come along with me."

The proposition had suggested itself as a quick escape from publicity, for many eyes were regarding her. She had hoped that sufficient time had elapsed for the extinction of curiosity; but it was quite otherwise. The people looked at her with tender interest as the deserted girl-wife—without obtrusiveness, and without vulgarity; but she was ill-prepared for scrutiny in any shape.

They walked about the Abbey aisles, and presently sat down. Not a soul was in the building save themselves. She regarded a stained window, with her head sideways, and tentatively asked him if he remembered the last time they were in that town alone.

He remembered it perfectly, and remarked, "You were a proud miss then, and as dainty as you were high. Perhaps you are now?"

Grace slowly shook her head. "Affliction has taken all that out of me," she answered impressively. "Perhaps I am too far the other way now." As there was something lurking in this that she could not explain, she added so quickly as not to allow him time to think of it, "Has my father written to you at all?"

"Yes," said Winterborne.

She glanced ponderingly up at him. "Not about me?"

"Yes."

She saw that he had been bidden to take the hint as to the future which she had been bidden to give, and the discovery sent a scarlet pulsation through her for the moment. However it was only Giles who stood there, of whom she had no fear; and her self-possession returned.

"He said I was to sound you with a view to—what you will understand, if you care to," continued Winterborne in a low voice. Having been put on this track by herself, he was not disposed to abandon it in a hurry. They had been children together, and there was between them that familiarity as to personal affairs which only such acquaintanceship can give.

"You know, Giles," she answered, speaking in a very practical tone, "that that is all very well; but I am in a very anomalous position at present, and I cannot say anything to the point about such things as those."

"No?" he said, with a stray air as regarded the subject. He was looking at her with a curious consciousness of discovery. He had not been imagining that their renewed intercourse would show her to him thus. For the first time he realised an unexpectedness in her, which after all should not have been unexpected. She before him was not the girl, Grace Melbury, whom he had used to know. Of course, he might easily have prefigured as much; but it had never occurred to him. She was a woman who had been married: she had moved on; and without having lost her girlish modesty, she had lost her girlish shyness. The inevitable change, though known to him, had not been heeded; and it struck him into a momentary fixity. The truth was that he had never come into close comradeship with her since her engagement to Fitzpiers, with the brief exception of the evening encounter on Rubdown Hill, when she met him with his cider apparatus; and that interview had been of too cursory a kind for insight.

Winterborne had advanced, too. He could criticise her. Times had been when to criticise a single trait in Grace Melbury would have lain as far beyond his powers as to criticise a deity. This thing was sure: it was a new woman in many ways whom he had come out to see: a creature of more ideas, more dignity, and, above all, more assurance, than the original Grace had been capable of. He could

not at first decide whether he were pleased or displeased at this. But upon the whole the novelty attracted him.

She was so sweet and sensitive that she feared his silence betokened something in his brain of the nature of an enemy to her. "What are you thinking of that makes those lines come in your forehead?" she asked. "I did not mean to offend you by speaking of the time being premature as yet."

Touched by the genuine loving-kindness which had lain at the foundation of these words, and much moved, Winterborne turned his face aside, as he took her by the hand. He was grieved that he had criticised her.

"You are very good, dear Grace," he said in a low voice. "You are better, much better, than you used to be."

"How?"

He could not very well tell her how, and said with an evasive smile, "You are prettier;" which was not what he really had meant. He then remained still holding her right hand in his own right, so that they faced in opposite ways; and, as he did not let go, she ventured upon a tender remonstrance.

"I think we have gone as far as we ought to go at present—and far enough to satisfy my poor father that we are the same as ever. You see, Giles, my case is not settled yet, and if—Oh, suppose I *never* get free!—there should be any hitch or informality!"

She drew a catching breath, and turned pale. The dialogue had been affectionate comedy up to this point. The gloomy atmosphere of the past, and the still gloomy horizon of the present, had been for the interval forgotten. Now, the whole environment came back, the due balance of shade among the light was restored.

"It is sure to be all right, I trust?" she resumed in uneasy accents. "What did my father say the solicitor had told him?"

"Oh—that all is sure enough. The case is so clear—nothing could be clearer. But the legal part is not yet quite done and finished, as is natural."

"Oh, no,—of course not," she said, sunk in meek thought. "But father said it was *almost*—did he not? Do you know anything about the new law that makes these things so easy?"

"Nothing—except the general fact that it enables ill-assorted husbands and wives to part in a way they could not formerly do without an Act of Parliament."

"Have you to sign a paper, or swear anything? Is it something like that?"

"Yes, I believe so."

"How long has it been introduced!"

"About six months or a year, the lawyer said, I think."

To hear these two poor Arcadian innocents talk of imperial law would have made a humane person weep who should have known what a dangerous structure they were building up on their supposed knowledge. They remained in thought, like children in the presence of the incomprehensible.

"Giles," she said at last, "it makes me quite weary when I think how serious my situation is, or has been. Shall we not go out from here now, as it may seem rather fast of me—our being so long together, I mean—if anybody were to see us? I am almost sure," she added uncertainly, "that I ought not to let you hold my hand yet, knowing that the documents—or whatever it may be—have not been signed; so that I—am still as married as ever—or almost. My dear father has forgotten himself. Not that I feel morally bound to anyone else, after what has taken place—no woman of spirit could—now, too, that several months have passed. But I wish to keep the proprieties as well as I can."

"Yes, yes. Still, your father reminds us that life is short. I myself feel that it is; that is why I wished to understand you in this that we have begun. At times, dear Grace, since receiving your father's letter, I am as uneasy and fearful as a child at what

he said. If one of us were to die before the formal signing and sealing that is to release you have been done —if we should drop out of the world and never have made the most of this little, short, but real opportunity, I should think to myself as I sank down dying, 'Would to my God that I had spoken out my whole heart—given her one poor little kiss when I had the chance to give it! But I never did, although she had promised to be mine some day; and now I never can.' That's what I should think."

She had begun by watching the words from his lips with a mournful regard, as though their passage were visible; but as he went on she dropped her glance. "Yes," she said, "I have thought that, too. And, because I have thought it, I by no means meant, in speaking of the proprieties, to be reserved and cold to you who loved me so long ago, or to hurt your heart as I used to do at that thoughtless time. Oh, not at all, indeed! But—ought I to allow you—Oh, it is too quick—surely!" Her eyes filled with tears of bewildered, alarmed emotion.

Winterborne was too straightforward to influence her further against her better judgment. "Yes—I suppose it is," he said repentantly. "I'll wait till all is settled. What did your father say in that last letter?"

He meant about his progress with the petition; but she, mistaking him, frankly spoke of the personal part. "He said—what I have implied. Should I tell more plainly?"

"Oh, no—don't, if it is a secret."

"Not at all. I will tell every word, straight out, Giles, if you wish. He said I was to encourage you. There. But I cannot obey him further to-day. Come, let us go now." She gently slid her hand from his, and went in front of him out of the Abbey.

"I was thinking of getting some dinner," said Winterborne, changing to the prosaic as they walked. "And you, too, must require something. Do let me take you to a place I know."

Grace was almost without a friend in the world outside her father's house: her life with Fitzpiers had brought her no society; had sometimes, indeed, brought her deeper solitude and inconsideration than any she had ever known before. Hence it was a treat to her to find herself again the object of thoughtful care. But she questioned if to go publicly to dine with Giles Winterborne were not a proposal due rather to his unsophistication than to his discretion. She said gently, that she would much prefer his ordering her lunch at some place, and then coming to tell her it was ready, while she remained in the Abbey porch. Giles saw her secret reasoning, thought how hopelessly blind to propriety he was beside her, and went to do as she wished.

He was not absent more than ten minutes, and found Grace where he had left her. "It will be quite ready by the time you get there," he said, and told her the name of the inn at which the meal had been ordered, which was one that she had never heard of.

"I'll find it by inquiry," said Grace, setting out.

"And shall I see you again?"

"Oh, yes—come to me there. It will not be like going together. I shall want you to find my father's man and the gig for me."

He waited on some ten minutes or a quarter of an hour, till he thought her lunch ended, and that he might fairly take advantage of her invitation to start her on her way home. He went straight to The Three Tuns—a little tavern in a side street, scrupulously clean, but humble and inexpensive. On his way he had an occasional misgiving as to whether the place had been elegant enough for her; and as soon as he entered it, and saw her ensconced there, he perceived that he had blundered.

Grace was seated in the only dining-room that the simple old hostelry could boast of, which was also a general parlour on market days: a long,

low apartment, with a sanded floor herring-boned with a broom: a wide, red-curtained window to the street, and another to the garden. Grace had retreated to the end of the room looking out upon the latter, the front part being full of a mixed company which had dropped in since he was there.

She was in a mood of the greatest depression. On arriving, and seeing what the tavern was like, she had been taken by surprise; but having gone too far to retreat, she had heroically entered and sat down on the well-scrubbed settle, opposite the narrow table, with its knives and steel forks, tin pepper-boxes, blue salt-cellars, and posters advertising the sale of bullocks against the wall. The last time that she had taken any meal in a public place it had been with Fitzpiers at the grand, new Earl of Wessex Hotel in that town, after a two months' roaming and sojourning at the gigantic hotels of the Continent. How could she have expected any other kind of accommodation in present circumstances than such as Giles had provided? And yet how unprepared she was for this change! The tastes that she had acquired from Fitzpiers had been imbibed so subtly that she hardly knew she possessed them till confronted by this contrast. The elegant Fitzpiers, in fact, at that very moment owed a long bill at the above-mentioned hotel for the luxurious style in which he used to put her up there whenever they drove to Sherton. But such is social sentiment, that she had been quite comfortable under those debt-impending conditions, whilst she felt humiliated by her present situation, which Winterborne had paid for honestly on the nail.

He had noticed in a moment that she shrank from her position, and all his pleasure was gone. It was the same susceptibility over again which had spoiled his Christmas party long ago.

But he did not know that this recrudescence was only the casual result of Grace's apprenticeship to what she was determined to learn in spite of it—a consequence of one of those sudden surprises which confront everybody bent upon turning over a new leaf. She had finished her lunch, which he saw had been a very mincing performance; and he brought her out of the house as soon as he could.

"Now," he said, with great sad eyes, "you have not finished at all well, I know. Come round to the Earl of Wessex. I'll order a tea there. I did not remember that what was good enough for me was not good enough for you."

Her face faded into an aspect of deep distress when she saw what had happened. "Oh, no, Giles," she said with extreme pathos: "certainly not. Why do you—say that, when you know better? You *ever* will misunderstand me."

"Indeed, that's not so, Mrs. Fitzpiers. Can you deny that you felt out of place at The Three Tuns?"

"I don't know! Well, since you make me speak, I do not deny it."

"And yet I have felt at home there these twenty years. Your husband used always to take you to the Earl of Wessex, did he not?"

"Yes," she reluctantly admitted. How could she explain in the street of a market-town that it was her superficial and transitory taste which had been offended, and not her nature or her affection? Fortunately, or unfortunately, at that moment they saw Melbury's man driving vacantly along the street in search of her, the hour having passed at which he had been told to take her up. Winterborne hailed him, and she was powerless then to prolong the discourse. She entered the vehicle sadly, and the horse trotted away.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

All night did Winterborne think over that unsatisfactory ending of a pleasant time, forgetting the pleasant

time itself. He feared anew that they could never be happy together, even should she be free to choose him. She was accomplished: he was unrefined. It was the original difficulty, which he was too sensitive to recklessly ignore, as some men would have done in his place.

He was one of those silent, unobtrusive beings who want little from others in the way of favour or condescension, and perhaps on that very account scrutinise those others' behaviour too closely. He was not versatile, but one in whom a hope or belief which had once had its rise, meridian, and decline, seldom again exactly recurred, as in the breasts of more sanguine mortals. He had once worshipped her, laid out his life to suit her, wooed her, and lost her. Though it was with almost the same zest, it was with not quite the same hope, that he had begun to tread the old tracks again, and allowed himself to be so charmed with her that day.

Move another step towards her he would not. He would even repulse her—as a tribute to conscience. It would be sheer sin to let her prepare a pitfall for her happiness not much smaller than the first by inveigling her into a union with such as he. Her poor father was now blind to these subtleties, which he had formerly beheld as in noontide light. It was his own duty to declare them—for her dear sake.

Grace, too, had a very uncomfortable night, and her solicitous embarrassment was not lessened the next morning when another letter from her father was put into her hands. Its tenour was an intenser strain of the one that had preceded it. After stating how extremely glad he was to hear that she was better, and able to get out of doors, he went on:

"This is a wearisome business, the solicitor we have come to see being out of town. I do not know when I shall get home. My great anxiety in this delay is still lest you should lose Giles Winterborne. I cannot rest at night for thinking that while our business is hanging fire he may become estranged, or go away from the neighbourhood. I have set my heart upon seeing him your husband, if you ever have another. Do then, Grace, give him some temporary encouragement, even though it is over-early. For when I consider the past I do think God will forgive me and you for being a little forward. I have another reason for this, my dear. I feel myself going rapidly down hill, and late affairs have still further helped me that way. And until this thing is done I cannot rest in peace."

He added a postscript:

"I have just heard that the solicitor is to be seen to-morrow. Possibly, therefore, I shall return in the evening after you get this."

The paternal longing ran on all fours with her own desire; and yet in forwarding it yesterday she had been on the brink of giving offence. While craving to be a country girl again just as her father requested; to put off the old Eve, the fastidious miss—or rather madam—completely, her first attempt had been beaten by the unexpected vitality of that fastidiousness. Her father on returning and seeing the trifling coolness of Giles would be sure to say that the same perversity which had led her to make difficulties about marrying Fitzpiers was now prompting her to blow hot and cold with poor Winterborne.

If the latter had been the most subtle hand at touching the stops of her delicate soul instead of one who had just bound himself to let her drift away from him again (if she would) on the wind of her estranging education, he could not have acted more seductively than he did that day. He chanced to be superintending some temporary work in a field opposite her windows. She could not discover what he was doing, but she read his mood keenly and truly: she could see in his coming and going an air of determined abandonment of the whole landscape that lay in her direction.

Oh, how she longed to make it up with him! Her father coming in the evening—which meant, she supposed, that all formalities would be in train, her marriage virtually annulled, and she be free to be won again—how

could she look him in the face if he should see them estranged thus?

It was a fair green evening in June. She was seated in the garden, in the rustic chair which stood under the laurel-bushes, made of peeled oak branches that came to Melbury's premises as refuse after barking-time. The mass of full-juiced leafage on the heights around her was just swayed into faint gestures by a nearly spent wind which, even in its enfeebled state, did not reach her shelter. All day she had expected Giles to call—to inquire how she had got home, or something or other; but he had not come. And he still tantalised her by going athwart and across that orchard opposite. She could see him as she sat.

A slight diversion was presently created by Creedle bringing him a letter. She knew from this that Creedle had just come from Sherton, and had called as usual at the post-office for anything that had arrived by the afternoon post, of which there was no delivery at Hintock. She pondered on what the letter might contain—particularly whether it were a second refresher for Winterborne from her father, like her own of the morning.

But it appeared to have no bearing upon herself whatever. Giles read its contents; and almost immediately turned away to a gap in the hedge of the orchard—if that could be called a hedge which, owing to the drippings of the trees, was little more than a bank with a bush upon it here and there. He entered the plantation, and was no doubt going that way homeward to the mysterious hut he occupied on the other side of the woodland.

The sad sands were running swiftly through Time's glass; she had often felt it in these latter days; and, like Giles, she felt it doubly now after the solemn and pathetic reminder in her father's communication. Her freshness would pass, the long-suffering devotion of Giles might suddenly end—might end that very hour. Men were so strange. The thought took away from her all her former reticence, and made her action bold. She started from her seat. If the little breach, quarrel, or whatever it might be called, of yesterday, was to be healed up it must be done by her on the instant. She crossed into the orchard, and clambered through the gap after Giles, just as he was diminishing to a faun-like figure under the green canopy and over the brown floor.

Grace had been wrong—very far wrong—in assuming that the letter had no reference to herself because Giles had turned away into the wood after its perusal. It was, sad to say, because the missive had so much reference to herself that he had thus turned away. He feared that his grieved discomfiture might be observed. The letter was from Beaucock, written a few hours later than Melbury's to his daughter. It announced failure.

Giles had once done that thriftless man a good turn, and now was the moment when Beaucock had chosen to remember it, in his own way. During his absence in town with Melbury, the lawyer's clerk had naturally heard a great deal of the timber-merchant's family scheme of justice to Giles, and his communication was to inform Winterborne at the earliest possible moment that their attempt had failed, in order that the young man should not place himself in a false position towards Grace in the belief of its coming success. The news was, in sum, that Fitzpiers's conduct had not been sufficiently cruel to Grace to enable her to snap the bond. She was apparently doomed to be his wife till the end of the chapter.

Winterborne quite forgot his superficial differences with the poor girl under the warm rush of deep and distracting love for her which the almost tragical information engendered.

To renounce her for ever—that was then the end of it for him, after all. There was no longer any question about suitability, or room for tiffs on

petty tastes. The curtain had fallen again between them. She could not be his. The cruelty of their late revived hope was now terrible. How could they all have been so simple as to suppose this thing could be done?

It was at this moment that, hearing some one coming behind him, he turned and saw her hastening on between the thickets. He perceived in an instant that she did not know the blighting news.

"Giles, why didn't you come across to me?" she asked with arch reproach. "Didn't you see me sitting there ever so long?"

"Oh, yes," he said in unprepared, extemporized tones, for her unexpected presence caught him without the slightest plan of behaviour in the conjuncture. His manner made her think that she had been too chiding in her speech; and a mild scarlet wave passed over her as she resolved to soften it.

"I have had another letter from my father," she hastened to continue. "He thinks he may come home this evening. And—in view of his hopes—it will grieve him if there is any little difference between us, Giles."

"There is none," he said, sadly regarding her from the face downwards as he pondered how to lay the cruel truth bare.

"Still—I fear you have not quite forgiven me about my being uncomfortable at the inn."

"I have, Grace, I'm sure."

"But you speak in quite an unhappy way," she returned, coming up close to him with the most winning of the many pretty airs that appertained to her. "Don't you think you will ever be happy, Giles?"

He did not reply for some instants. "When the sun shines on the north front of Sherton Abbey—that's when my happiness will come to me!" said he, staring as it were into the earth.

"But—then that means that there is something more than my offending you in not liking The Three Tuns. If it is because I—did not like to let you kiss me in the Abbey—well, you know, Giles, that it was not on account of my cold feelings, but because I did certainly, just then, think it was rather premature, in spite of my poor father. That was the true reason—the sole one. But I do not want to be hard—God knows I do not," she said, her voice fluctuating. "And perhaps—as I am on the verge of freedom—I am not right, after all, in thinking there is any harm in your kissing me."

"Oh, Heaven!" said Winterborne to himself. His head was turned askance as he still resolutely regarded the ground. For the last several minutes he had seen this great temptation approaching him in regular siege; and now it had come. The wrong, the social sin, of now taking advantage of the offer of her lips, had a magnitude, in the eyes of one whose life had been so primitive, so ruled by purest household laws as Giles's, which can hardly be explained.

"Did you say anything?" she asked timidly.

"Oh, no—only that ——"

"You mean that it must *be* settled, since my father is coming home?" she said gladly.

Winterborne, though fighting valiantly against himself all this while—though he would have protected Grace's good repute as the apple of his eye, was a man; and, as Desdemona said, men are not gods. In face of the agonising seductiveness shown by her, in her unenlightened school-girl simplicity about the laws and ordinances, he betrayed a man's weakness. Since it was so—since it had come to this, that Grace, deeming herself free to do it, was virtually asking him to demonstrate that he loved her—since he could demonstrate it only too truly—since life was short and love was strong—he gave way to the temptation, notwithstanding that he perfectly well knew her to be wedded irrevocably to Fitzpiers. Indeed he cared for nothing

past or future, simply accepting the present and what it brought, desiring once in his life to clasp in his arms her he had watched over and loved so long.

She started back suddenly from his embrace, influenced by a sort of inspiration. "Oh, I suppose," she stammered, "that I am really free?—that this is right? Is there *really* a new law? Father cannot have been too sanguine in saying——"

He did not answer, and a moment afterwards Grace burst into tears in spite of herself. "Oh, why does not my father come home and explain!" she sobbed, "and let me know clearly what I am! It is too trying, this, to ask me to—and then to leave me so long in so vague a state that I do not know what to do, and perhaps do wrong!"

Winterborne felt like a very Cain, over and above his previous sorrow. How he had sinned against her in not telling her what he knew! He turned aside: the feeling of his cruelty mounted higher and higher. How could he have dreamt of kissing her? He could hardly refrain from tears. Surely nothing more pitiable had ever been known than the condition of this poor young thing, now as heretofore the victim of her father's well-meant but blundering policy.

Even in the hour of Melbury's greatest assurance Winterborne had harboured a suspicion that no law, new or old, could undo Grace's marriage without her appearance in public; though he was not sufficiently sure of what might have been enacted to destroy by his own words her pleasing idea that a mere dash of the pen, on her father's testimony, was going to be sufficient. But he had never suspected the sad fact that the position was irremediable.

Poor Grace, perhaps feeling that she had indulged in too much fluster for a mere kiss, calmed herself at finding how grave he was. "I am glad we are friends again anyhow," she said smiling through her tears. "Giles, if you had only shown half the boldness before I married that you show now you would have carried me off for your own, first instead of second. If we do marry I hope you will never think badly of me for encouraging you a little, but my father is *so* impatient, you know, as his years and infirmities increase, that he will wish to see us a little advanced when he comes. That is my only excuse."

To Winterborne all this was sadder than it was sweet. How could she so trust her father's conjectures? He did not know how to tell her the truth and shame himself. And yet he felt that it must be done. "We may have been wrong," he began, almost fearfully, "in supposing that it can all be carried out whilst we stay here at Hintock. I am not sure but that people may have to appear in a public court even under the new Act; and if there should be any difficulty and we cannot marry after all——"

Her cheeks became slowly bloodless. "Oh, Giles," she said, grasping his arm, "you have heard something! What—cannot my father conclude it there and now? Surely he has done it? Oh, Giles, Giles, don't deceive me. What terrible position am I in?"

He could not tell her, try as he would. The sense of her implicit trust in his honour absolutely disabled him. "I cannot inform you," he murmured, his voice as husky as that of the leaves under foot. "Your father will soon be here. Then we shall know. I will take you home."

Inexpressibly dear as she was to him he offered her his arm with the most reserved air, as he added correctingly, "I will take you at any rate into the drive."

Thus they walked on together, Grace vibrating between happiness and misgiving. It was only a few minutes walk to where the drive ran, and they had hardly descended into it when they heard a voice behind them cry, "Take out that arm!"

For a moment they did not heed,

and the voice repeated more loudly and hoarsely:

"Take out that arm!"

It was Melbury's. He had returned sooner than they expected and now came up to them. Grace's hand had been withdrawn like lightning on her hearing the second command. "I don't blame you, I don't blame you," he said, in the weary cadence of one broken down with scourgings. "But you two must walk together no more—I have been surprised—I have been cruelly deceived—Giles, don't say anything to me; but go away!"

He was evidently not aware that Winterborne had known the truth before he brought it; and Giles would not stay to discuss it with him then. When the young man had gone Melbury took his daughter indoors to the room he used as his office. There he sat down, and bent over the slope of the bureau, her bewildered gaze fixed upon him.

When Melbury had recovered a little he said, "You are now as ever Fitzpiers's wife. I was deluded. He has not done you *enough* harm. You are still subject to his beck and call."

"Then let it be, and never mind, father," she said with dignified sorrow. "I can bear it. It is your trouble that grieves me most!" She stooped over him, and put her arm round his neck, which distressed Melbury still more. "I don't mind at all what comes to me," Grace continued; "whose wife I am, or whose I am not. I do love Giles: I cannot help that; and I have gone farther with him than I should have done if I had known exactly how things were. But I do not reproach you."

"Then Giles did not tell you?" said Melbury.

"No," said she. "He could not have known it. His behaviour to me proved that he did not know."

Her father said nothing more, and Grace went away to the solitude of her chamber.

Her heavy disquietude had many shapes; and for a time she put aside the dominant fact to think of her too free conduct towards Giles. His love-making had been brief as it was sweet; but would he on reflection contemn her for forwardness? How could she have been so simple as to suppose she was in a position to behave as she had done! Thus she mentally blamed her ignorance; and yet in the centre of her heart she blessed it a little for what it had momentarily brought her.

CHAPTER XL.

Life among the people involved in these events seemed to be suppressed and hide-bound for a while. Grace seldom showed herself outside the house, never outside the garden; for she feared she might encounter Giles Winterborne; and that she could not bear.

This pensive intramural existence of the self-constituted nun appeared likely to continue for an indefinite time. She had learnt that there was one possibility in which her formerly imagined position might become real, and only one; that her husband's absence should continue long enough to amount to positive desertion. But she never allowed her mind to dwell much upon the thought; still less did she deliberately hope for such a result. Her regard for Winterborne had been rarefied by the shock which followed its avowal into an ethereal emotion that had little to do with living and doing.

As for Giles he was lying—or rather sitting—ill at his hut. A feverish indisposition which had been hanging about him for some time, the result of a chill caught the previous winter, seemed to acquire virulence with the prostration of his hopes. But not a soul knew of his languor, and he did not think the case serious enough to send for a medical man. After a few days he was better again, and crept about his home in a great-coat, attending to his simple wants as usual with his own hands. So matters stood

when the limpid inertion of Grace's pool-like existence was disturbed as by a geyser. She received a letter from Fitzpiers.

Such a terrible letter it was in its import, though couched in the gentlest language. In his absence Grace had grown to regard him with toleration, and her relation to him with equanimity, till she had almost forgotten how trying his presence would be. He wrote briefly and unaffectedly: he made no excuses, but informed her that he was living quite alone, and had been led to think that they ought to be together, if she would make up her mind to forgive him. He therefore purported to cross the Channel to Budmouth by the steamer on a day he named, which she found to be three days after the time of her present reading.

He said that he could not come to Hintock for obvious reasons, which her father would understand even better than herself. As the only alternative, she was to be on the quay to meet the steamer when it arrived from the opposite coast, probably about half an hour before midnight, bringing with her any luggage she might require; join him there, and pass with him into the twin vessel, which left immediately the other entered the harbour; returning thus with him to his Continental dwelling-place, which he did not name. He had no intention of showing himself on land at all.

The troubled Grace took the letter to her father, who now continued for long hours by the fireless summer chimney-corner, as if he thought it were winter, the pitcher of cider standing beside him, mostly untasted, and coated with a film of dust. After reading it he looked up,

"You sha'n't go," said he.

"I had felt I would not," she answered. "But I did not know what you would say."

"If he comes and lives in England, not too near here, and in a respectable way, and wants you to come to him, I am not sure that I'll oppose him in wishing it," muttered Melbury. "I'd stint myself to keep you both in a genteel and seemly style. But go abroad you never shall with my consent."

There the question rested that day. Grace was unable to reply to her husband in the absence of an address, and the morrow came, and the next day, and the evening on which he had requested her to meet him. Throughout the whole of it she remained within the four walls of her room.

The sense of her harassment, carking doubt of what might be impending, hung like a cowl of blackness over the Melbury household. They spoke almost in whispers, and wondered what Fitzpiers would do next. It was the hope of every one that, finding she did not arrive, he would return again to France; and as for Grace, she was willing to write to him on the most kindly terms if he would only keep away.

The night passed, Grace lying tense and wide awake, and her relatives, in great part, likewise. When they met the next morning they were pale and anxious, though neither speaking of the subject which occupied all their thoughts. The day passed as quietly as the previous ones, and she began to think that in the rank caprice of his moods he had abandoned the idea of getting her to join him as quickly as it was formed. All on a sudden, some person who had just come from Sherton entered the house with the news that Mr. Fitzpiers was on his way home to Hintock. He had been seen hiring a carriage at the Earl of Wessex Hotel.

Her father and Grace were both present when the intelligence was announced.

"Now," said Melbury, "we must make the best of what has been a very bad matter. The man is repenting: the partner of his shame, I hear, is gone away from him to Switzerland, so that chapter of his life is probably over. If he chooses to make a home for ye I think you should not say him

nay, Grace. Certainly he cannot very well live at Hintock without a blow to his pride; but if he can bear that, and likes Hintock best, why, there's the empty wing of the house as it was before."

"Oh, father!" said Grace, turning white with dismay.

"Why not?" said he, a little of his former doggedness returning. He was, in truth, disposed to somewhat more leniency towards her husband just now than he had shown formerly, from a conviction that he had treated him over roughly in his anger. "Surely it is the most respectable thing to do?" he continued. "I don't like this state that you are in—neither married nor single. It hurts me, and it hurts you, and it will always be remembered against us in Hintock. There has never been any scandal like it in the family before."

"He will be here in less than an hour," murmured Grace. The twilight of the room prevented her father seeing the despondent misery of her face. The one intolerable condition, the condition she had deprecated above all others, was that of Fitzpiers's reinstatement there. "Oh, I won't, I won't see him," she said, sinking down. She was almost hysterical.

"Try if you cannot," he returned moodily.

"Oh, yes, I will, I will," she went on inconsequently. "I'll try;" and jumping up suddenly she left the room.

In the darkness of the apartment to which she flew nothing could have been seen during the next half hour; but from a corner a quick breathing was audible from this impressible creature, who combined modern nerves with primitive emotions, and was doomed by such co-existence to be numbered among the distressed, and to take her scourgings to their exquisite extremity.

The window was open. On this quiet, late summer evening, whatever sound arose in so secluded a district—the chirp of a bird, a call from a voice, the turning of a wheel—extended over bush and tree to unwonted distances. Very few sounds did arise. But as Grace invisibly breathed in the brown glooms of the chamber, the small remote noise of light wheels came in to her, accompanied by the trot of a horse on the turnpike road. There seemed to be a sudden hitch or pause in the progress of the vehicle, which was what first drew her attention to it. She knew the point whence the sound proceeded—the hill-top over which travellers passed on their way hitherward from Sherton Abbas—the place at which she had emerged from the wood with Mrs. Charmond. Grace slid along the floor, and bent her head over the window-sill, listening with open lips. The carriage had stopped, and she heard a man use exclamatory words. Then another said, "What the devil is the matter with the horse?" She recognised the voice as her husband's.

The accident, such as it had been, was soon remedied, and the carriage could be heard descending the hill on the Hintock side, soon to turn into the lane leading out of the highway, and then into the "drong" which led out of the lane to the house where she was.

A spasm passed through Grace. The Daphnean instinct, exceptionally strong in her as a girl, had been revived by her widowed seclusion; and it was not lessened by her affronted sentiments towards the comer, and her regard for another man. She opened some little ivory tablets that lay on the dressing-table, scribbled in pencil on one of them, "I am gone to visit one of my school-friends," gathered a few toilet necessaries into a hand-bag, and, not three minutes after that voice had been heard, her slim form, hastily wrapped up from observation, might have been seen passing out of the back door of Melbury's house. Thence she skimmed up the garden-path, through the gap in the hedge, and into the mossy cart-track under the trees which led into the depth of the woods.

The leaves overhead were now in their latter green—so opaque, that it was darker at some of the densest spots than in winter time, scarce a crevice existing by which a ray could get down to the ground. But in open places she could see well enough. Summer was ending: in the daytime singing insects hung in every sunbeam: vegetation was heavy nightly with globes of dew; and after showers creeping damps and twilight chills came up from the hollows. The plantations were always weird at this hour of eve—more spectral far than in the leafless season, when there were fewer masses and more minute lineality. The smooth surfaces of glossy plants came out like weak, lidless eyes: there were strange faces and figures from expiring lights that had somehow wandered into the canopied obscurity; while now and then low peeps of the sky between the trunks were like sheeted shapes, and on the tips of boughs sat faint cloven tongues.

But Grace's fear just now was not imaginative or spiritual; and she heeded these impressions but little. She went on as silently as she could, avoiding the hollows wherein leaves had accumulated, and stepping upon soundless moss and grass-tufts. She paused breathlessly once or twice, and fancied that she could hear, above the beat of her strumming pulse, the vehicle containing Fitzpiers turning in at the gate of her father's premises. She hastened on again.

The Hintock woods owned by Mrs. Charmond were presently left behind, and those into which she next plunged were divided from the latter by a bank, from whose top the hedge had long ago perished—starved for want of sun. It was with some caution that Grace now walked, though she was quite free from any of the commonplace timidities of her ordinary pilgrimages to such spots. She feared no lurking harms, but that her effort would be all in vain, and her return to the house rendered imperative.

She had walked between three and four miles when that prescriptive comfort and relief to wanderers in woods—a distant light—broke at last upon her searching eyes. It was so very small as to be almost sinister to a stranger, but to her it was what she sought. She pushed forward, and the dim outline of a dwelling was disclosed.

The house was a square cot of one story only, sloping up on all sides to a chimney in the midst. It had formerly been the home of a charcoal-burner, in times when that fuel was still used in the county-houses. Its only appurtenance was a paled inclosure, there being no garden, the shade of the trees preventing the growth of vegetables. She advanced to the window whence the rays of light proceeded, and the shutters being as yet unclosed, she could survey the whole interior through the panes.

The room within was kitchen, parlour, and scullery all in one: the natural sandstone floor was worn into hills and dales by long treading, so that none of the furniture stood level, and the table slanted like a desk. A fire burnt on the hearth, in front of which revolved the skinned carcase of a rabbit, suspended by a string from a nail. Leaning with one arm on the mantel-shelf stood Winterborne, his eyes on the roasting animal, his face so rapt that speculation could build nothing on it concerning his thoughts, more than that they were not with the scene before him. She thought his features had changed a little since she saw them last. The firelight did not enable her to perceive that they were positively haggard.

Grace's throat emitted a gasp of relief at finding the result so nearly as she had hoped. She went to the door and tapped lightly.

He seemed to be accustomed to the noises of woodpeckers, squirrels, and such small creatures, for he took no notice of her tiny signal, and she knocked again. This time he came and opened the door. When the light of the room fell upon her face he

started; and, hardly knowing what he did, crossed the threshold to her, placing his hands upon her two arms, while surprise, joy, alarm, sadness, chased through him by turns. With Grace it was the same: even in this stress there was the fond fact that they had met again. Thus they stood,

> "Long tears upon their faces, waxen white
> With extreme sad delight."

He broke the silence by saying in a whisper, "Come in."

"No, no, Giles!" she answered hurriedly stepping yet further back from the door. "I am passing by—and I have called on you—I won't enter. Will you help me? I am afraid. I want to get by a roundabout way to Sherton, and so to Exbury. I have a school-fellow there—but I cannot get to Sherton alone. Oh, if you will only accompany me a little way! Don't condemn me, Giles, and be offended! I was obliged to come to you because—I have no other help here. Three months ago you were my lover: now you are only my friend. The law has stepped in, and forbidden what we thought of. It must not be. But we can act honestly, and yet you can be my friend for one little hour? I have no other—"

She could get no further. Covering her eyes with one hand, by an effort of repression she wept silent tears, without a sigh or sob. Winterborne took her other hand. "What has happened?" he said.

"He has come."

There was a stillness as of death, till Winterborne asked, "You mean this, Grace—that I am to help you to get away?"

"Yes," said she. "Appearance is no matter, when the reality is right. I have said to myself, I can trust you."

Giles knew from this that she did not suspect his treachery—if it could be called such—earlier in the summer, when they met for the last time as lovers; and in the intensity of his contrition for that tender wrong, he determined to deserve her faith now at least, and so wipe out that reproach from his conscience. "I'll come at once," he said. "I'll light a lantern."

He unhooked a dark lantern from a nail under the eaves, and she did not notice how his hand shook with the slight strain, or dream that in making this offer he was taxing a convalescence which could ill afford such self-sacrifice. The lantern was lit and they started.

(*To be continued.*)

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GENERAL LEE.[1]

THE history of the war between the Northern and Southern States of North America is yet to be written. General Long's work on the great Confederate general is a contribution towards the history of that grand but unsuccessful struggle by the seceding States to shake off all political connection with the Union Government. It will be read with interest as coming from the pen of one who was Lee's military secretary, and its straightforward, soldier-like style will commend it to all readers. It is not my intention to enter upon any narrative of the events which led to that fratricidal war. The unprejudiced outsider will generally admit the sovereign right, both historical and legal, which each State possessed under the constitution, to leave the Union when its people thought fit to do so. At the same time, of Englishmen who believe that "union is strength," and who are themselves determined that no dismemberment of their own empire shall be allowed, few will find fault with the men of the north for their manly determination, come what might, to resist every effort of their brothers in the south to break up the Union. It was but natural that all Americans should be proud of the empire which the military genius of General Washington had created, despite the efforts of England to retain her Colonies.

[1] 'Memoirs of Robert E. Lee: his Military and Personal History.' By General A. L. Long and General Marcus J. Wright. London. 1886.

It is my wish to give a short outline of General Lee's life, and to describe him as I saw him in the autumn of 1862, when at the head of proud and victorious troops he smiled at the notion of defeat by any army that could be sent against him. I desire to make known to the reader not only the renowned soldier, whom I believe to have been the greatest of his age, but to give some insight into the character of one whom I have always considered the most perfect man I ever met. Twenty-one years have passed since the great Secession war ended, but even still, angry remembrances of it prevent Americans from taking an impartial view of the contest, and of those who were the leaders in it. Outsiders can best weigh and determine the merits of the chief actors on both sides, but if in this attempt to estimate General Lee's character I offend any one by the outspoken expression of my opinions, I hope I may be forgiven. On one side I can see, in the dogged determination of the North persevered in to the end through years of recurring failure, the spirit for which the men of Britain have always been remarkable. It is a virtue to which the United States owed its birth in the last century, and its preservation in 1865. It is the quality to which the Anglo-Saxon race is most indebted for its great position in the world. On the other hand, I can recognise the chivalrous valour of those gallant men whom Lee led to victory: who fought not only for fatherland and in defence of home

but for those rights most prized by free men. Washington's stalwart soldiers were styled rebels by our king and his ministers, and in like manner the men who wore the grey uniform of the Southern Confederacy were denounced as rebels from the banks of the Potomac to the head waters of the St. Lawrence. Lee's soldiers, well versed as all Americans are in the history of their forefathers' struggle against King George the Third, and believing firmly in the justice of their cause, saw the same virtue in one rebellion that was to be found in the other. This was a point upon which, during my stay in Virginia in 1862, I found every Southerner laid the greatest stress. It is a feeling that as yet has not been fully acknowledged by writers on the Northern side.

> "Rebellion, foul dishonouring word,
> Whose wrongful blight so oft hath stained
> The holiest cause that tongue or sword
> Of mortal ever lost or gained.
> How many a spirit born to bless
> Hath sunk beneath thy withering name,
> Whom but a day's, an hour's success,
> Had wafted to eternal fame."

As a looker-on, I feel that both parties in the war have so much to be proud of, that both can afford to hear what impartial Englishmen or foreigners have to say about it. Inflated and bubble reputations were acquired during its progress, few of which will bear the test of time. The idol momentarily set up, often for political reasons, crumbles in time into the dust from which its limbs were perhaps originally moulded. To me, however, two figures stand out in that history towering above all others, both cast in hard metal that will be for ever proof against the belittling efforts of all future detractors. One, General Lee, the great soldier: the other, Mr. Lincoln, the far-seeing statesman of iron will, of unflinching determination. Each is a good representative of the genius that characterised his country. As I study the history of the Secession war, these seem to me the two men who influenced it most, and who will be recognised as its greatest heroes when future generations of American historians record its stirring events with impartiality.

General Lee came from the class of landed gentry that has furnished England at all times with her most able and distinguished leaders. The first of his family who went to America was Richard Lee, who in 1641 became Colonial Secretary to the Governor of Virginia. The family settled in Westmorland, one of the most lovely counties in that historic state, and members of it from time to time held high positions in the government. Several of the family distinguished themselves during the War of Independence, amongst whom was Henry, the father of General Robert Lee. He raised a mounted corps known as "Lee's Legion," in command of which he obtained the reputation of being an able and gallant soldier. He was nicknamed by his comrades, "Light Horse Harry." He was three times governor of his native state. To him is attributed the authorship of the eulogy on General Washington, in which occurs the so-often-quoted sentence, "First in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen," praise that with equal truth might have been subsequently applied to his own distinguished son.

The subject of this slight sketch, Robert Edward Lee, was born January 9th, 1807, at the family place of Stratford, in the county of Westmorland, state of Virginia. When only a few years old his parents moved to the small town of Alexandria, which is on the right bank of the Potomac river, nearly opposite Washington, but a little below it.

He was but a boy of eleven when his father died, leaving his family in straitened circumstances. Like many other great commanders, he was in consequence brought up in comparative poverty, a condition which has been pronounced by the greatest of them as the best training for soldiers. During his early years he attended a day-school near his home in Alexandria. He was thus able in his leisure hours

to help his invalid mother in all her household concerns, and to afford her that watchful care which, owing to her very delicate health, she so much needed. She was a clever, highly-gifted woman, and by her fond care his character was formed and stamped with honest truthfulness. By her he was taught never to forget that he was well-born, and that, as a gentleman, honour must be his guiding star through life. It was from her lips he learnt his Bible, from her teaching he drank in the sincere belief in revealed religion which he never lost. It was she who imbued her great son with an ineradicable belief in the efficacy of prayer, and in the reality of God's interposition in the every-day affairs of the true believer. No son ever returned a mother's love with more heartfelt intensity. She was his idol, and he worshipped her with the deep-seated, inborn love which is known only to the son in whom filial affection is strengthened by respect and personal admiration for the woman who bore him. He was her all in all, or, as she described it, he was both son and daughter to her. He watched over her in weary hours of pain, and served her with all that soft tenderness which was such a marked trait in the character of this great, stern leader of men.

He seems to have been throughout his boyhood and early youth perfect in disposition, in bearing, and in conduct —a model of all that was noble, honourable, and manly. Of the early life of very few great men can this be said. Many who have left behind the greatest reputations for usefulness, in whom middle age was a model of virtue and perhaps of noble self-denial, began their career in a whirlwind of wild excess. Often, again, we find that, like Nero, the virtuous youth develops into the middle-aged fiend, who leaves behind him a name to be execrated for all time. It would be difficult to find in history a great man, be he soldier or statesman, with a character so irreproachable throughout his whole life as that which in boyhood, youth, manhood, and to his death, distinguished Robert Lee from all contemporaries.

He entered the military academy of West Point at the age of eighteen, where he worked hard, became adjutant of the cadet corps, and finally graduated at the head of his class. There he mastered the theory of war, and studied the campaigns of the great masters in that most ancient of all sciences. Whatever he did, even as a boy, he did thoroughly with order and method. Even at this early age he was the model Christian gentleman in thought, word, and deed. Careful and exact in the obedience he rendered his superiors, but remarkable for that dignity of deportment which all through his career struck strangers with ad-admiring respect.

He left West Point when twenty-two, having gained its highest honours, and at once obtained a commission in the Engineers. Two years afterwards he married the grand-daughter and heiress of Mrs. Custis, whose second husband had been General Washington, but by whom she left no children. It was a great match for a poor subaltern officer, as his wife was heiress to a very extensive property and to a large number of slaves. She was clever, very well educated, and a general favourite: he was handsome, tall, well made, with a graceful figure, and a good rider: his manners were at once easy and captivating. These young people had long known one another, and each was the other's first love. She brought with her as part of her fortune General Washington's beautiful property of Arlington, situated on the picturesque wooded heights that overhang the Potomac river, opposite the capital to which the great Washington had given his name. In talking to me of the Northern troops, whose conduct in Virginia was then denounced by every local paper, no bitter expression passed his lips, but tears filled his eyes as he referred to the destruction of his place that had been the cherished home of the father of the United States. He could forgive their cutting down his trees,

their wanton conversion of his pleasure grounds into a grave-yard; but he could never forget their reckless plunder of all the camp equipment and other relics of General Washington that Arlington House had contained.

Robert Lee first saw active service during the American war with Mexico in 1846, where he was wounded, and evinced a remarkable talent for war that brought himself prominently into notice. He was afterwards engaged in operations against hostile Indians, and obtained the reputation in his army of being an able officer of great promise. General Scott, then the general of greatest repute in the United States, was especially attracted by the zeal and soldierly instinct of the young captain of Engineers, and frequently employed him on distant expeditions that required cool nerve, confidence, and plenty of common sense. It is a curious fact that throughout the Mexican war General Scott in his despatches and reports made frequent mention of three officers — Lee, Beauregard, and McClellan — whose names became household words in America afterwards, during the great Southern struggle for independence. General Scott had the highest opinion of Lee's military genius, and did not hesitate to ascribe much of his success in Mexico as due to Lee's "skill, valour, and undaunted energy." Indeed subsequently, when the day came that these two men should part, each to take a different side in the horrible contest before them, General Scott is said to have urged Mr. Lincoln's Government to secure Lee at any price, alleging he "would be worth fifty thousand men to them." His valuable services were duly recognised at Washington by more than one step of brevet promotion: he obtained the rank of colonel, and was given command of a cavalry regiment shortly afterwards.

I must now pass to the most important epoch of his life, when the Southern States left the Union and set up a government of their own. Mr. Lincoln was in 1860 elected President of the United States in the Abolitionist interest. Both parties were so angry that thoughtful men soon began to see war alone could end this bitter dispute. Shipwreck was before the vessel of state, which General Washington had built and guided with so much care during his long and hard-fought contest. Civil war stared the American citizen in the face, and Lee's heart was well nigh broken at the prospect. Early in 1861 the seven Cotton States passed acts declaring their withdrawal from the Union, and their establishment of an independent republic, under the title of "The Confederate States of America." This declaration of independence was in reality a revolution: war alone could ever again bring all the States together.

Lee viewed this secession with horror. Until the month of April, when Virginia, his own dearly-cherished State, joined the Confederacy, he clung fondly to the hope that the gulf which separated the North from the South might yet be bridged over. He believed the dissolution of the Union to be a dire calamity not only for his own country, but for civilisation and all mankind. "Still," he said, "a Union that can only be maintained by swords and bayonets, and in which strife and civil war are to take the place of brotherly love and kindness, has no charm for me." In common with all Southerners he firmly believed that each of the old States had a legal and indisputable right by its individual constitution, and by its act of Union, to leave at will the Great Union into which each had separately entered as a Sovereign State. This was with him an article of faith of which he was as sure as of any Divine truths he found in the Bible. This fact must be kept always in mind by those who would rightly understand his character, or the course he pursued in 1861. He loved the Union for which his father and family in the previous century had fought so hard and done so much. But he loved his own State

still more. She was the Sovereign to whom in the first place he owed allegiance, and whose orders, as expressed through her legally-constituted government, he was, he felt, bound in law, in honour, and in love to obey without doubt or hesitation. This belief was the mainspring that kept the Southern Confederacy going, as it was also the corner-stone of its constitution.

In April, 1861, at Fort Sumter, Charleston Harbour, the first shot was fired in a war that was only ended in April, 1865, by the surrender of General Lee's army at Appomattox Court House in Virginia. In duration it is the longest war waged since the great Napoleon's power was finally crushed at Waterloo. As the heroic struggle of a small population that was cut off from all outside help against a great, populous and very rich Republic, with every market in the world open to it, and to whom all Europe was a recruiting ground, this Secession war stands out prominently in the history of the world. When the vast numbers of men put into the field by the Northern States, and the scale upon which their operations were carried on, are duly considered, it must be regarded as a war fully equal in magnitude to the successful invasion of France by Germany in 1870. If the mind be allowed to speculate on the course that events will take in centuries to come, as they flow surely on with varying swiftness to the ocean of the unknown future, the influence which the result of this Confederate war is bound to exercise upon man's future history will seem very great. Think of what a power the re-United States will be in another century! Of what it will be in the twenty-first century of the Christian era! If, as many believe, China is destined to absorb all Asia and then to overrun Europe, may it not be in the possible future that Armageddon, the final contest between heathendom and Christianity, may be fought out between China and North America? Had secession been victorious, it is tolerably certain that the United States would have broken up still further, and instead of the present magnificent and English-speaking empire, we should now see in its place a number of small powers with separate interests.

Most certainly it was the existence of slavery in the South that gave rise to the bitter antagonism of feeling which led to secession. But it was not to secure emancipation that the North took up arms, although during the progress of the war Mr. Lincoln proclaimed it, for the purpose of striking his enemy a serious blow. Lee hated slavery, but, as he explained to me, he thought it wicked to give freedom suddenly to some millions of people who were incapable of using it with profit to themselves or the State. He assured me he had long intended to gradually give his slaves their liberty. He believed the institution to be a moral and political evil, and more hurtful to the white than to the black man. He had a strong affection for the negro, but he deprecated any sudden or violent interference on the part of the State between master and slave. Nothing would have induced him to fight for the continuance of slavery: indeed he declared that had he owned every slave in the South, he would willingly give them all up if by so doing he could preserve the Union. He was opposed to secession, and to prevent it he would willingly sacrifice everything except honour and duty, which forbid him to desert his State. When in April, 1861, she formally and by an act of her Legislature left the Union, he resigned his commission in the United States army with the intention of retiring into private life. He endeavoured to choose what was right. Every personal interest bid him throw in his lot with the Union. His property lay so close to Washington that it was certain to be destroyed and swept of every slave, as belonging to a rebel. But the die was cast: he forsook everything for principle and the stern duty it entailed. Then came that final temptation which opened out before him a vista of power

and importance greater than that which any man since Washington had held in America. General Long's book proves beyond all further doubt that he was offered the post of commander-in-chief of the Federal army. General Scott, his great friend and leader, whom he loved and respected, then commanding that army, used all his influence to persuade him to throw in his lot with the North, but to no purpose. Nothing would induce him to have any part in the invasion of his own State, much as he abhorred the war into which he felt she was rushing. His love of country, his unselfish patriotism, caused him to relinquish home, fortune, a certain future, in fact everything for her sake.

He was not, however, to remain a spectator of the coming conflict: he was too well known to his countrymen in Virginia as the officer in whom the Federal army had most confidence. The State of Virginia appointed him major-general and commander-in-chief of all her military forces. In open and crowded convention he formally accepted this position, saying, with all that dignity and grace of manner which distinguished him, that he did so "trusting in Almighty God, an approving conscience, and the aid of my fellow-citizens." The scene was most impressive: there were present all the leading men of Virginia, and representatives of all the first families in a State where great store was attached to gentle birth, and where society was very exclusive. General Lee's presence commanded respect, even from strangers, by a calm self-possessed dignity, the like of which I have never seen in other men. Naturally of strong passions, he kept them under perfect control by that iron and determined will, of which his expression and his face gave evidence. As this tall, handsome soldier stood before his countrymen, he was the picture of the ideal patriot, unconscious and self-possessed in his strength: he indulged in no theatrical display of feeling: there was in his face and about him that placid resolve which bespoke great confidence in self, and which in his case—one knows not how—quickly communicated its magnetic influence to others. He was then just fifty-four years old, the age of Marlborough when he destroyed the French army at Blenheim: in many ways and on many points these two great men much resembled each other. Both were of a dignified and commanding exterior: eminently handsome, with a figure tall, graceful, and erect, whilst a muscular, square-built frame bespoke great activity of body. The charm of manner, which I have mentioned as very winning in Lee, was possessed in the highest degree by Marlborough. Both, at the outset of their great career of victory, were regarded as essentially national commanders. Both had married young, and were faithful husbands and devoted fathers. Both had in all their campaigns the same belief in an ever-watchful Providence, in whose help they trusted implicitly, and for whose interposition they prayed at all times. They were gifted with the same military instinct, the same genius for war. The power of fascinating those with whom they were associated, the spell which they cast over their soldiers, who believed almost superstitiously in their certainty of victory, their contempt of danger, their daring courage, constitute a parallel that is difficult to equal between any other two great men of modern times.

From the first Lee anticipated a long and bloody struggle, although from the bombastic oratory of self-elected politicians and patriots the people were led to believe that the whole business would be settled in a few weeks. This folly led to a serious evil, namely, the enlistment of soldiers for only ninety days. Lee, who understood war, pleaded in favour of the engagement being for the term of the war, but he pleaded in vain. To add to his military difficulties, the politician insisted upon the officers being elected by their men. This was a point which, in describing to me the constitution of his army, Lee most deplored. When war bursts upon a country unused to that ordeal, and therefore unskilled in preparing for it,

the frothy babbling of politicians too often forces the nation into silly measures to its serious injury during the ensuing operations. That no great military success can be achieved quickly by an improvised army is a lesson that of all others is made most clear by the narrative of this war on both sides. All through its earlier phases, the press, both Northern and Southern, called loudly, and oftentimes angrily, for quick results. It is this impatience of the people, which the press is able to emphasize so strongly, that drives many weak generals into immature action. Lee, as well as others at this time, had to submit to the sneers which foolish men circulated widely in the daily newspapers. It is quite certain that under the existing condition of things no Fabius would be tolerated, and that the far-seeing military policy which triumphed at Torres Vedras would not be submitted to by the English public of to-day. Lee was not, however, a man whom any amount of irresponsible writing could force beyond the pace he knew to be most conducive to ultimate success.

The formation of an army with the means alone at his disposal was a colossal task. Everything had to be created by this extraordinary man. The South was an agricultural, not a manufacturing country, and the resources of foreign lands were denied it by the blockade of its ports maintained by the fleet of the United States. Lee was a thorough man of business, quick in decision, yet methodical in all he did. He knew what he wanted. He knew what an army should be, and how it should be organised, both in a purely military as well as an administrative sense. In about two months he had created a little army of fifty thousand men, animated by a lofty patriotism and courage that made them unconquerable by any similarly constituted army. In another month, this army at Bull's Run gained a complete victory over the Northern invaders, who were driven back across the Potomac like herds of frightened sheep. As the Federals ran, they threw away their arms, and everything, guns, tents, waggons, &c., was abandoned to the victors. The arms, ammunition, and equipment then taken were real godsends to those engaged in the organisation of the Southern armies. Thenceforward a battle to the Confederates meant a new supply of everything an army required. It may be truthfully said, that practically the Government at Washington had to provide and pay for the arms and equipment of its enemies as well as for all that its own enormous armies required. The day I presented myself in General Lee's camp, as I stood at the door of his tent awaiting admission, I was amused to find it stamped as belonging to a colonel of a New Jersey regiment. I remarked upon this to General Lee, who laughingly said, "Yes, I think you will find that all our tents, guns, and even the men's pouches are similarly marked as having belonged to the United States army." Some time afterwards, when General Pope and his large invading army had been sent back flying across the Maryland frontier, I overheard this conversation between two Confederate soldiers: "Have you heard the news? Lee has resigned!" "Good G——!" was the reply, "What for?" "He has resigned because he says he cannot feed and supply his army any longer, now that his commissary, General Pope, has been removed." Mr. Lincoln had just dismissed General Pope, replacing him by General McClellan.

The Confederates did not follow up their victory at Bull's Run. A rapid and daring advance would have given them possession of Washington, their enemy's capital. Political considerations at Richmond were allowed to outweigh the very evident military expediency of reaping a solid advantage from this their first great success. Often afterwards, when this attempt to allay the angry feelings of the North against the Act of Secession had entirely failed, was this action of their political rulers lamented by the Confederate commanders.

In this article to attempt even a

sketch of the subsequent military operations is not to be thought of. Both sides fought well, and both have such true reason to be proud of their achievements that they can now afford to hear the professional criticisms of their English friends in the same spirit that we Britishers have learnt to read of the many defeats inflicted upon our arms by General Washington.

What most strikes the regular soldier in these campaigns of General Lee is the inefficient manner in which both he and his opponents were often served by their subordinate commanders, and how badly the staff and outpost work generally was performed on both sides. It is most difficult to move with any effective precision young armies constituted as these were during this war. The direction and movement of large bodies of newly-raised troops, even when victorious, is never easy, is often impossible. Over and over again was the South apparently "within a stone's throw of independence," as it has been many times remarked, when, from want of a thoroughly good staff to organise pursuit, the occasion was lost, and the enemy allowed to escape. Lee's combinations to secure victory were the conceptions of a truly great strategist, and, when they had been effected, his tactics were also almost always everything that could be desired up to the moment of victory, but there his action seemed to stop abruptly. Was ever an army so hopelessly at the mercy of another as that of McClellan when he began his retreat to Harrison's Landing after the seven days' fighting round Richmond? What commander could wish to have his foe in a "tighter place" than Burnside was in after his disastrous attack upon Lee at Fredericksburg? Yet in both instances the Northern commander got safely away, and other similar instances could be mentioned. The critical military student of this war who knows the power which regular troops, well-officered and well-directed by a thoroughly efficient staff, place in the hands of an able general, and who has acquired an intimate and complete knowledge of what these two contending American armies were really like, will, I think, agree that from first to last the co-operation of even one army corps of regular troops would have given complete victory to whichever side it fought on. I felt this when I visited the South, and during the progress of the war I heard the same opinion expressed by many others who had inspected the contending armies. I say this with no wish to detract in any way from the courage or other fighting qualities of the troops engaged. I yield to none in my admiration of their warlike achievements; but I cannot blind myself to the hyperbole of writers who refer to these armies as the finest that have ever existed.

Those who know how difficult it is to supply our own militia and volunteer forces with efficient officers can appreciate what difficulties General Lee had to overcome in the formation of the army he so often led to victory. He had about him able assistants, who, like himself, had received an excellent military education at West Point. To the experienced soldier it is no matter of surprise, but to the general reader it will be of interest to know that, on either side in this war, almost every general whose name will be remembered in the future had been educated at that military school, and had been trained in the old regular army of the United States. In talking to me of all the Federal generals, Lee mentioned McClellan with most respect and regard. He spoke bitterly of none—a remarkable fact, as at that time men on both sides were wont to heap the most violent terms of abuse upon their respective enemies. He thus reproved a clergyman who had spoken in his sermon very bitterly of their enemies:—"I have fought against the people of the North because I believed they were seeking to wrest from the South her dearest rights; but I have never cherished towards them bitter or vindictive feelings, and I have never seen the day when I did not pray for them."

I asked him how many men he had at the battle of Antietam, from which he had then recently returned. He said he had never had, during that whole day, more than about thirty thousand men in line, although he had behind him a small army of tired troops and of shoeless stragglers who never came up during the battle. He estimated McClellan's army at about one hundred thousand men. A friend of mine, who at that same time was at the Federal head-quarters, there made similar inquiries. General McClellan's reply corroborated the correctness of Lee's estimate of the Federal numbers at Antietam, but he said he thought the Confederate army was a little stronger than that under his command. I mention this because both those generals were most truthful men, and whatever they stated can be implicitly relied on. I also refer to it because the usual proportion throughout the war between the contending sides in each action ranged from about twice to three times more Federals than there were Confederates engaged. With reference to the relative numbers employed on both sides, the following amusing story was told to me at the time. A deputation from some of the New England States had attended at the White House, and laid their business before the President. As they were leaving Mr. Lincoln's room one of the delegates turned round and said: "Mr. President, I should very much like to know what you reckon to be the number of rebels in arms against us." Mr. Lincoln, without a moment's hesitation, replied: "Sir, I have the best possible reason for knowing the number to be one million of men, for whenever one of our generals engages a rebel army he reports that he has encountered a force twice his strength: now I know we have half a million of soldiers in the field, so I am bound to believe the rebels have twice that number."

As a student of war I would fain linger over the interesting lessons to be learnt from Lee's campaigns: of the same race as both belligerents, I could with the utmost pleasure dwell upon the many brilliant feats of arms on both sides; but I cannot do so here.

The end came at last, when the well-supplied North, rich enough to pay recruits, no matter where they came from, a bounty of over five hundred dollars a head, triumphed over an exhausted South, hemmed in on all sides, and even cut off from all communication with the outside world. The desperate, though drawn battle of Gettysburg was the death-knell of Southern independence; and General Sherman's splendid but almost unopposed march to the sea showed the world that all further resistance on the part of the Confederate States could only be a profitless waste of blood. In the thirty-five days of fighting near Richmond which ended the war of 1865, General Grant's army numbered one hundred and ninety thousand, that of Lee only fifty-one thousand men. Every man lost by the former was easily replaced, but an exhausted South could find no more soldiers. "The right of self-government," which Washington won, and for which Lee fought, was no longer to be a watchword to stir men's blood in the United States. The South was humbled and beaten by its own flesh and blood in the North, and it is difficult to know which to admire most, the good sense with which the result was accepted in the so-called Confederate States, or the wise magnanimity displayed by the victors. The wounds are now healed on both sides: Northerners and Southerners are now once more a united people, with a future before them to which no other nation can aspire. If the English-speaking people of the earth cannot all acknowledge the same Sovereign, they can, and I am sure they will, at least combine to work in the interests of truth and of peace, for the good of mankind. The wise men on both sides of the Atlantic will take care to chase away all passing clouds that may at any time throw even a

shadow of dispute or discord between the two great families into which our race is divided.

Like all men, Lee had his faults: like all the greatest of generals, he sometimes made mistakes. His nature shrank with such horror from the dread of wounding the feelings of others, that upon occasions he left men in positions of responsibility to which their abilities were not equal. This softness of heart, amiable as that quality may be, amounts to a crime in the man intrusted with the direction of public affairs at critical moments. Lee's devotion to duty and great respect for obedience seem at times to have made him too subservient to those charged with the civil government of his country. He carried out too literally the orders of those whom the Confederate Constitution made his superiors, although he must have known them to be entirely ignorant of the science of war. He appears to have forgotten that he was the great Revolutionary Chief engaged in a great Revolutionary war: that he was no mere leader in a political struggle of parties carried on within the lines of an old, well-established form of government. It was very clear to many at the time, as it will be commonly acknowledged now, that the South could only hope to win under the rule of a Military Dictator. If General Washington had had a Mr. Davis over him, could he have accomplished what he did? It will, I am sure, be news to many that General Lee was given the command over all the Confederate armies a month or two only before the final collapse; and that the military policy of the South was all throughout the war dictated by Mr. Davis as president of the Confederate States! Lee had no power to reward soldiers or to promote officers. It was Mr. Davis who selected the men to command divisions and armies. Is it to be supposed that Cromwell, King William the Third, Washington, or Napoleon could have succeeded in the revolutions with which their names are identified, had they submitted to the will and authority of a politician as Lee did to Mr. Davis?

Lee was opposed to the final defence of Richmond that was urged upon him for political, not military reasons. It was a great strategic error. General Grant's large army of men was easily fed, and its daily losses easily recruited from a near base; whereas if it had been drawn far into the interior after the little army with which Lee endeavoured to protect Richmond, its fighting strength would have been largely reduced by the detachments required to guard a long line of communications through a hostile country. It is profitless, however, to speculate upon what might have been, and the military student must take these campaigns as they were carried out. No fair estimate of Lee as a general can be made by a simple comparison of what he achieved with that which Napoleon, Wellington, or Von Moltke accomplished, unless due allowance is made for the difference in the nature of the American armies, and of the armies commanded and encountered by those great leaders. They were at the head of perfectly organised, thoroughly trained and well disciplined troops; whilst Lee's soldiers, though gallant and daring to a fault, lacked the military cohesion and efficiency, the trained company leaders, and the educated staff which are only to be found in a regular army of long standing. A trial heat between two jockeys mounted on untrained horses may be interesting, but no one would ever quote the performance as an instance of great racing speed.

Who shall ever fathom the depth of Lee's anguish when the bitter end came, and when, beaten down by sheer force of numbers, and by absolutely nothing else, he found himself obliged to surrender! The handful of starving men remaining with him laid down their arms, and the proud Confederacy ceased to be. Surely the crushing, maddening anguish of awful sorrow

is only known to the leader who has so failed to accomplish some lofty, some noble aim for which he has long striven with might and main, with heart and soul—in the interests of king or of country. A smiling face, a cheerful manner, may conceal the sore place from the eyes, possibly even from the knowledge of his friends; but there is no healing for such a wound, which eats into the very heart of him who has once received it.

General Lee survived the destruction of the Confederacy for five years, when, at the age of sixty-three, and surrounded by his family, life ebbed slowly from him. Where else in history is a great man to be found whose whole life was one such blameless record of duty nobly done? It was consistent in all its parts, complete in all its relations. The most perfect gentleman of a State long celebrated for its chivalry, he was just, gentle, and generous, and child-like in the simplicity of his character. Never elated with success, he bore reverse, and at last, complete overthrow, with dignified resignation. Throughout this long and cruel struggle his was all the responsibility, but not the power that should have accompanied it.

The fierce light which beats upon the throne is as that of a rushlight in comparison with the electric glare which our newspapers now focus upon the public man in Lee's position. His character has been subjected to that ordeal, and who can point to any spot upon it? His clear, sound judgment, personal courage, untiring activity, genius for war, and absolute devotion to his State mark him out as a public man, as a patriot to be for ever remembered by all Americans. His amiability of disposition, deep sympathy with those in pain or sorrow, his love for children, nice sense of personal honour and genial courtesy endeared him to all his friends. I shall never forget his sweet winning smile, nor his clear, honest eyes that seemed to look into your heart whilst they searched your brain. I have met many of the great men of my time, but Lee alone impressed me with the feeling that I was in the presence of a man who was cast in a grander mould, and made of different and of finer metal than all other men. He is stamped upon my memory as a being apart and superior to all others in every way: a man with whom none I ever knew, and very few of whom I have read, are worthy to be classed. I have met but two men who realize my ideas of what a true hero should be: my friend Charles Gordon was one, General Lee was the other.

The following lines seem written for him:

> "Who is the honest man?
> He who doth still and strongly good pursue,
> To God, his country and himself most true;
> Who when he comes to deal
> With sick folk, women, those whom passions sway,
> Allows for this, and keeps his constant way."

When all the angry feelings roused by Secession are buried with those which existed when the Declaration of Independence was written, when Americans can review the history of their last great rebellion with calm impartiality, I believe all will admit that General Lee towered far above all men on either side in that struggle: I believe he will be regarded not only as the most prominent figure of the Confederacy, but as the great American of the nineteenth century, whose statue is well worthy to stand on an equal pedestal with that of Washington, and whose memory is equally worthy to be enshrined in the hearts of all his countrymen.

WOLSELEY.

THE EARLIEST GREEK MORALIST.

THE most notable event in the history of the Greek race is undoubtedly the death of Socrates. Let us briefly recall the circumstances of that death, or rather martyrdom. Socrates was an Athenian, who spent the greater part of a long life chiefly in instructing his fellow countrymen in the principles of a high morality. He gathered round him a small circle of admirers and disciples, men mostly much younger than himself, invited them to examine the foundations of the accepted morality, rejected it when it was unsound, inculcated both by example and precept doctrines of temperance, soberness and chastity —such as command respect even in these days of brilliant moral illumination—and, if we may believe his disciple, Plato, was convinced that the supremest happiness was uprightness of life, and guilt the greatest misery. The formal dogmas of his countrymen, as to the nature of the gods, he does not seem directly to have interfered with, and, indeed, to have accepted on this subject the popular view; but, in spite of such moderation in speculation, and nobleness of life, he was at the age of seventy accused of corrupting the young men of Athens, of worshipping gods which that city did not worship, and on this charge was condemned to death.

The victims of religious persecution have been so many since his day, and we are so well accustomed to the deaths of courageous men in support of a religion, that we are apt to undervalue the greatness of the first heathen philosopher who sealed his evidence to the cause of goodness with his blood; and this is the more to be lamented, because there has probably been no more consistent life and death recorded in the pages of profane history, with the exception, perhaps, of the life and death of our own countryman Sir Thomas More.

Socrates, like Sir Thomas More, might have escaped the extreme penalty of death had he been willing to plead guilty. In a large jury of nearly six hundred persons, a majority of five votes only found a verdict against him, and had he appealed for mercy there is no doubt that it would have been granted; but to appeal for mercy would have been to admit guilt, and to admit guilt would have been to discredit that divine commission—to better his countrymen—which he believed himself to have received. Further, he had always declared that death was in itself no evil: to live unjustly was evil: to suffer unjustly was a small misfortune in comparison with doing unjust acts; and so he submitted to his sentence with a dignified cheerfulness, which, as described by his friend and disciple, Plato, has been the object of the veneration of all the centuries of learned and good men who have since been privileged with the contemplation of his great example.

But if our admiration and love for Socrates are high, what are our feelings towards his accusers, what towards those who condemned him?

There was a time when their wickedness was accepted as a matter of course, and readily accounted for by the proverbial fickleness and unsoundness of a democracy. What else could you expect of a people who tolerated such a government, than that they should be whimsical, envious of real greatness, and ready enough to give themselves the luxury of hunting an unpopular good man to death when opportunity occurred? We have happily passed through the stage of

indiscriminating condemnation of a democracy simply because it is a democracy, and not having this simple means of accounting for Athenian depravity must look for some other causes. Men have accounted for, but not excused, this judicial murder by imputing a variety of motives to the accusers of Socrates and the men who condemned him. He had become unpopular with the democracy because eminent members of the party opposed to it had been among his disciples: he was confounded with certain natural philosophers who had questioned the existence of the national divinities: by his unremitting and vexatious cross-examination of eminent politicians and others who were fully persuaded of their own wisdom, he had created in the minds of powerful men a feeling of resentment against him: very possibly some ultra-enthusiastic young men had gone away from his discourses in a state of moral elevation, which led them to ask awkward questions of their fathers, and make themselves unpleasant in the family circle—indeed, we are expressly informed that one of his accusers owed him a grudge, because his son preferred following Socrates to entering the paternal leather-shop, recklessly throwing away a magnificent opening. But when all is said and done, if we abandon the primary assumption of an innate depravity in the Athenian people, and judge them on this occasion by the light of their other history, these suggestions appear somewhat trivial; and so, perhaps, it may be as well to assume that there were, after all, a sufficient number of men in Athens who honestly believed that their religion was threatened and the foundations of morality shaken by the actions of Socrates, to make that generally tolerant people suddenly appear in the character of a Torquemada.

The chief obstacle in the way of adopting this view has been a tendency to deny to the Greeks as a nation any morality based on religion at all. Most of us know them only by the light of St. Paul's Epistles and his contemptuous descriptions of their trivial intellectuality and abandoned moral condition. Others of us, who have read Greek, have a vague impression that Greek morality began with Socrates—was indeed invented by him: that previously to his time there had been superstition—if you will, sacrifices, expiations—but no body of popular morality of sufficiently definite and positive form to be sensible of its own existence and resent the emergence of another moral code. Faith there was in destiny, in a mysterious curse ever following the perpetrators of particular crimes, in a strange retribution which overtook the too prosperous man; but morality, based on religious conviction, and associated with strictly religious ideas, did not exist.

The present paper has two main purposes: one to prove that the Greeks did believe in such a thing as a divine revelation of morality: the other to present to the English reader a few fragments of their revealed morality which have been preserved indeed to our own time, but have fallen into strange neglect.

Nothing can be clearer than the evidence of Plato as to the faith held by the ordinary Greek, not only in the inspiration of the poet, of the maker of song, who was the only historian and teacher up to a comparatively late period in their history, but even of his interpreters. He compares the professional reciter of the Homeric poems to the last atom in a chain of iron filings linked together by magnetic attraction: as the force which binds the iron filings together is ultimately derived from the magnet, so the inspiration which enables the rhapsodist to recite the poems of Homer is derived through a long chain of predecessors from the poet, and by the poet from Zeus himself. It is true that Plato gives indications of not altogether sympathising with this view, but then he was the advanced speculative philosopher of his

day, and he lets us plainly see that the theory of inspiration was the popular view.

The two poets whose works were credited with the highest authority were Homer and Hesiod: besides these there were some singers, such as Musæus, whose works have only come down to us in isolated lines or sentences, and whose existence is only known from allusions or quotations in later authors.

If the origin of the Homeric poems and the history of their author are mysterious, deeper still is the gloom which envelops the author of the two Hesiodic poems. All the facts of which we can be certain with regard to him, and which it is important for us to know, are that his personality was already prehistoric in the days of Herodotus—the first half of the fifth century before Christ: that he was supposed to have been a countryman: that his works were known to Aristophanes, Plato, Æschines, and Aristotle, who quote portions of the poems which have come down to us: that his works, like our Scriptures, were learned by heart in schools: that he was well known more than three hundred years after the great epoch of Athenian literature to the literary men, at any rate, of the age of Augustus, to Horace and to Virgil. These facts are sufficient to establish his high antiquity and the veneration in which he was held.

Two poems have come down to us under the name of Hesiod: they are not particularly long, but they are both an evident patch-work, in which all, or nearly all, is of extreme antiquity —all probably earlier than Herodotus —and in which much was evidently grafted upon fragments of a literature as old as any that still survives in the world. It must be remembered that the age of criticism was as slow in coming to the Greeks as to us: the most glaring differences of style in a poem, which had received the sanction of religion, passed unnoticed, and were probably denied by all but learned men long after learned men had invented plausible theories to account for them. In consequence of this the Homeric and Hesiodic poems represent the history of the Greek mind during that long period in which literature was oral: there came a time when pains were taken to collect the floating masses of popular literature, and edit a standard edition—an authorised version, if you please, of the prehistoric poets. This period was fixed by the Greeks at the time when Pisistratus was tyrant of Athens, before 500 B.C.: after that time the interpolations and additions were probably few.

The longer of the two Hesiodic poems is an elaborate history of the gods: a description of the beginning of the world, and of the hierarchy of heaven. As much of it is an elaborate genealogy extending to the heroes and minor divinities, it is not particularly amusing reading; nor can much really profitable information be extracted from what is evidently a conscious attempt to introduce order into the incongruous mass of celestial legends in which the Greek race was so unusually rich. The poem is chiefly interesting to us from the evidence it contains of having been added to from time to time as fresh legendary facts were discovered. It was probably recited at fixed periods in certain temples, and the priests who were intrusted with the charge of it brought it up to date, so to speak. Whatever its antiquity, there is no doubt that it was the authority on theological matters which was accepted by the contemporaries of Aristophanes.

The other poem is far more interesting. It is still occasionally read at the English universities, and is well known in humbler German institutions of the same kind—if it is safe to draw such an inference from the assiduity with which that labour-loving people edit even this fragment of antiquity.

As we have it the poem purports to be an address to a brother, much as Solomon's Proverbs purport to be

advice to his son; but it is easy to see that really there are four poems on distinct subjects—three of nearly equal importance, and one of minor weight—which have been first roughly joined together, and probably afterwards added to and increased. This does not in the least detract from the merit of the combined mass considered as a picture of the average Greek intellect: the additions are such as might easily have been made by a conscientious editor anxious to perpetuate every fragment of his author, but not able to discriminate between different versions of the same sentence, and different sentences: moreover, a poem which is transmitted orally has always a tendency to incorporate fragments of other poems, especially when each reciter believes himself to be inspired, and repairs the breaches in his memory by improvisation, which does not appear to him as improvisation, but as fresh inspiration.

The four original poems were—first, a treatise on righteousness, the origin of evil, the relations of God and man, and the duty of man to his neighbour: secondly, a treatise on agriculture: thirdly, a similar treatise on navigation and trading: lastly, a short calendar of lucky and unlucky days.

To fix with any approach to accuracy the period at which these four poems were first united and believed to be the work of one author is a task which may be left to those earnest German students to whom such questions are of paramount importance: as also the ultimate decision as to whether they are the work of the same man or of several. The far more important and interesting fact to us is, that the cultivated Greeks of Plato's time were taught at school the poem as we have it, and that they learned by heart, as school-boys, a poem which professed to teach morality, husbandry, trading, and the calendar; and that the poem in question claims the authority of inspiration even on such a practical matter as seamanship. "I have never been on the sea—not I," says the poet; "but even thus will I tell thee the will of Zeus that beareth the ægis, for the Muses taught me to sing an inspired strain." Such a combination did not escape criticism from the learned, and we are informed on good authority that the Greeks did not value the technical precepts of Hesiod so much as his moral teaching, whereas the Romans took precisely the opposite view; but let us not forget that to uninstructed people all knowledge is equally mysterious. Did not the mediæval craftsmen call the rules of their craft "a mystery," and associate the admission to its secrets with religion? Even now persons not deeply soaked in mathematics talk about the "curious" properties of the number nine, and so forth, as if there were something uncanny in the ordinary processes of arithmetic.

We must further remember that though men like Plato and Aristophanes might venture to criticise and even slyly to make fun of the inspired poet, such an attitude was quite beyond the mental reach of the large middle-class even of a stirring city such as Athens. We may be quite sure that Strepsiades and Dicaropolis devoutly learned their Hesiod at school, and imagined themselves to be on the high road to fortune when they acted on his precepts—no shadow of a suspicion ever crossing their minds that the utterances of consummate celestial wisdom on all branches of human knowledge were not to be found there.

At present we are concerned chiefly with Hesiod as a moralist, and may therefore dismiss with brief notice the treatises on husbandry, seafaring, and the calendar.

The last of these is a short statement, in sixty hexameter lines, of the days which were considered lucky and unlucky for special purposes. Students of folk-lore, who know how widespread is the superstition about the mysterious influences of particular days, will find some facts here likely to repay investi-

gation. The properties of days are described in great detail: not only are we informed which are the best days to get married on—a subject still much in the hands of superstition, the danger and uncertainty of the step being so great—but even the best day of the month to break in a horse and build a sheep-cote. The poet concludes with the statement that after all very little is known on the subject. Some days are like mothers, others like stepmothers; but perhaps the best way of getting on is to act blamelessly in the sight of the immortals, study the omens, and avoid transgressions.

The treatise on seamanship is very meagre and inappreciative. It confines itself chiefly to advice as to the best times for sailing and the right amount of cargo to stow: should further curiosity on the subject be shown the author is prepared to provide a table of distances. This indifference to, and indeed dislike of, the sea, which also appears in the earliest part of the poem, is an important indication of its extreme age and of the locality in which it was first produced. The Greeks of history are before all things a seafaring people: so are the Greeks of the Iliad and the Odyssey. What a part the sea plays in this latter poem! The verses are impregnated with brine: we feel the sea in all its moods—lazily lapping with the rising tide on the sand-banks of the Egyptian coast, dashing in on the rocks of Phœnicia, at rest within the sheltered bays of Calypso's Isle and Pylos.

But if our author is meagre and inappreciative when talking of the sea, he is disposed to be very communicative on the subject of the farm. Unfortunately he does not appear to have much to say. The moral aspect of farming appeals to him most strongly. Work, work, work—that is his constant advice, repeated in many forms. Get up early, waste no time, find indoor occupation for the winter, choose your wife and servants well, watch the seasons—this is the substance of his remarks. They are, however, rendered more interesting and profitable to us than they were to the Greeks by the picture which they give us of the life of a yeoman-farmer in the beginnings of civilisation. The advocates of small holdings will be grieved to hear that in these early days the life of the peasant proprietor was a very hard one. If he failed to secure a good harvest he would starve before the next harvest came round. Our author had practical experience of this: he knows the last stages of starvation—the listless sitting and waiting, "pinching the swollen foot with the wasted hand." How different this from Virgil's idea of the farmer's life!—Virgil who, having read up all the literature on agricultural matters extant in his time, visits his relations at Mantua, contrasts their simple, homely lives with those of the rakes of Rome, and writes a long poem in praise of the country and its divinities, and thinks how much happier and better everybody would be if we all took to farming. We are not without our Virgil now. Faith in the delights and wholesomeness of rustic occupations is an old superstition: only now and again do we hear the truth, and find that perfect happiness is not attainable by the pursuit of agriculture. Hesiod's picture of a farmer's life is the more interesting because it is the solitary instance in literature, in real literature, of the farmer speaking for himself. We have the very man before us—his thrifty, painstaking habit of mind, his tendency to expect that things will turn out badly for the most part, his want of confidence even in the gods as managers of the weather, and then his appreciation of good eating as a means of relaxation. The very language reminds one of rustics: the "snatchy weather," "the snaggle-toothed dog," "him as carries his house on his back," in whom we recognise the snail; and again, with some humour, "him as goes to bed in the day time," a delicate way of describing the thief, which

may be profitably compared with a Buckinghamshire peasant's euphemism for an idler, "that afternoon chap."

There is sufficient evidence in detached lines of the treatises on husbandry, seafaring, and the calendar to justify the assumption that there was a complete poem on these subjects emanating from the same author, or at any rate from the same school, as the earlier part of the poem, as we have it; and that these treatises suffered a restoration or re-editing in times earlier than Herodotus. A few lines, of course, there are in this poem, as in the Homeric poems, which were interpolated by zealous editors at a comparatively late period, and which we may confidently leave for identification to the ingenuity of German critics.

It remains to describe the earliest part of the poem—that which is chiefly moral. In the last three sections, indeed, there are many interesting fragments of morality, which seem more properly to belong to the first, having no reference to husbandry, seamanship, or times and seasons. It is not improbable that to these fragments of morality these later sections owe their preservation, for their technical value must always have been small, and their technical precepts soon have become antiquated.

The answer to the question whether the circumstances which gave occasion to the utterance of the poem are real or fictitious must remain as uncertain as in the case of the Book of Job. It is, however, in accordance with all probability that the events which caused Hesiod to pronounce his declaration of the claims of righteousness to the obedience of men really happened, and as they illustrate the manner of life in a Greek village community it is worth our while to be acquainted with them.

Hesiod had a brother Perses, and on the death of their father his farm and movables were divided between them. There are indications that Perses was the elder brother, and obtained the lion's share at any rate of the movables, on the decision of the village elders or judges. Justice in those days was not dispensed by stipendiary magistrates: the heads of families in a township or canton formed the supreme tribunal. They seem to have formed a court at very short notice, taking their places readily on certain polished stone benches, which were provided for the purpose in the market-place, and then deciding any case which was brought before them by a majority of votes. It was further the custom for the contending parties to make some present to the judges, not necessarily with the object of obtaining a favourable verdict, though, indeed, we are all subject to the imputation of mixed motives, but to recompense them for their trouble. As there were no fixed laws of inheritance, relations who could not agree as to the most equitable division of a deceased ancestor's property would bring their dispute to be settled in the court of the elders. We have a picture of such a court in the Book of Ruth.

It would seem that in Hesiod's time the archaic simplicity and innocence of the elders were disappearing. The gifts made by the litigants had become an object of greed: it had become profitable to stir up strife between neighbours, to neglect the regular business of life—farming—and wait about the market-place in the hope of being invited to settle a dispute. Further, the integrity of the judges was no longer above suspicion. Injustice was openly worshipped, righteousness set aside, and the man with the better case was less sure of securing a verdict than the man with most friends on the bench.

Relying on this iniquitous state of things, Hesiod's brother Perses having mismanaged his farm (chiefly by neglecting it for the market-place) and brought himself to penury, determined to try to secure a fresh division of his father's property, on the plea that the first division had been unfair. He would point to his brother's present

wealth and his own poverty, and ask if it was not self-evident that the prosperous brother had secured the better share in the original division.

There was only too much danger that he would prevail in his iniquitous attempt. He belonged to the set who ruled the market-place: his brother was rich, and therefore an object of envy.

Hesiod anticipated the process by appearing in the market place and reciting the vigorous protest against iniquity, judicial and otherwise, which we know as the *Farm* and the *Calendar*. The thread connecting the three separate poems which have come down to us as one is the fact that all are addressed to this brother, who is first warned against trying to make money by unrighteousness, and then shown how to earn a living by industry. The consequences of waiting on unrighteousness in the market-place are first plainly set forth, and then the alternative of earning a subsistence by honest labour is fully treated.

The moral teaching of the poem falls into two divisions, not clearly separated by the author or his editors, but still plainly apparent to the attentive reader. Morality is first considered in its relation to the gods, then in reference to the practical needs of life. Thus, while a great part of Hesiod's teaching is nothing more than the practical experience of the Greeks in matters of conduct set forth in proverbs, a small and far more valuable part, which raises him above the level of the mere proverbial philosopher, is concerned with the necessity for morality at all. Looking around him he sees iniquity triumphant, the perjurer happy in his ill-gotten gains, and looking forward to continued enjoyment of them, so that it would seem to be more profitable to a man to be unrighteous; but, says Hesiod, "I do not yet believe that Zeus, who hurleth the thunderbolt, will consent to this." In spite of all evidence to the contrary, our poet believes in the goodness of God; and so did the Athenians who condemned Socrates believe. They were no longer savages timidly worshipping they knew not what, but civilised men who believed that there were gods, and that to these gods unrighteousness was abhorrent.

To find a supernatural sanction for righteousness was the problem before Hesiod: he looks for it, where all early moralists have looked for it, in the legendary lore of his race. He takes the two well-known legends of Pandora and the golden age as illustrating the fact that the gods were originally well disposed to men, and that men were originally virtuous; but men by their own sin and wickedness brought down upon themselves the wrath of the gods, who let loose upon them all the evils of plague, pestilence, and famine, which will continue among them so long as wickedness continues. In Hesiod we find these legends for the first time in Greek literature: he did not invent them, but repeated what was well known to his audience, drawing a new lesson from it: he could not have supported his teaching on an invented legend, and, indeed these legends are found in Sanskrit literature among the earliest records of the great Aryan race.

The end of the legend of Pandora, as told by Hesiod, is as follows:—"Aforetime the children of men lived on the earth apart from evil, and apart from the weariness of toil, and pain, and sickness which bringeth unto death: yea, quickly do men grow old in affliction. But the woman lifting with her hands the lid of a mighty vessel spread sorrows abroad: yea, she devised bitter woes for men. Foreknowledge alone remained within under the rim of the jar in a strong hiding-place, nor did she fly abroad. . . Then did thousands of sorrows wander forth among men; for the earth is full of mischief, yea the sea is full; and pestilences move unbidden day and night among men, bringing woe to mankind in silence; for Zeus hath taken away language from them."

Pandora had originally been sent to punish mankind for a transgression in the matter of sacrifice. It is noticeable that the Greek legend connects the fall of man with the creation of woman; that the greatest misfortune, that of knowing what is to befall him, is not inflicted on man,—even the very diseases do not announce their approach: further, it is interesting to compare Hesiod's silent pestilences with the "terror by night" and "pestilence that walketh in darkness" of the Hebrew poet.

The legend of the successive ages of mankind, gold, silver, and brass, follows on that of Pandora. The latter ascribes the miseries of man to one particular act: the legend of the ages show his progressive degeneracy from a good beginning.

The description of the golden age is beautiful. "Their life was the life of gods, their spirit had no care, toil and sorrow were far from them. Nor did the weakness of old age come upon them; but they gladdened themselves with feasting apart from all that is evil. Nor did their feet and hands ever wax feeble: as one sleepeth so did they die, and everything that was good was theirs. The earth that giveth grain rendered them her fruit—a rich and bounteous freewill offering: tranquilly they shared the quiet fields along with many blessings, rich in cattle, beloved by the blessed gods. So when the earth hath covered this kind, by the will of Zeus they are good spirits above ground, guardians of mortal men; yea, they watch over causes and the works of wickedness, clad in mist they move everywhere upon the face of the earth, dispensers of riches, yea, this kingly office is theirs."

To the golden race succeed the silver, who, neglecting to sacrifice to the gods, and giving way to presumptuousness, pass under the earth in their turn, becoming the blessed mortals of the lower world: to be succeeded by a brazen race, who are described as terrible in all respects, neglecting the culture of the land for fighting, and at length passing away mutually destroyed. To them apparently no form of immortality was granted after death but, "Terrible though they were, black death took them, and they left the sun's bright light."

This doctrine of the immortality of the golden age, and of the permanent wandering of the spirits upon the earth, is the parent, or at any rate a progenitor, of the whole demonological creed of the early Christians and mediæval Europe. To the Greek these dæmons were good spirits, but when Christianity declared war upon Heathenism, the good spirits of Heathenism easily became the bad spirits of Christianity, the faith in their existence still remaining.

The brazen race would in the natural order of metallurgy be succeeded by an iron race; but it would seem that before the final edition of the poem the belief in the age of heroes had grown up, and consequently the regular sequence is interrupted and space allowed for the heroic age; who, their fighting done, "dwell with hearts free from sorrow among the islands of the blessed by the deep ocean streams." "Happy heroes are they," says Hesiod; "for them the bounteous soil thrice yearly beareth her luxuriant honey-sweet fruit."

From them we pass to this present iron age, whose awful condition drives the poet into a desperate region where neither grammar nor logic longer has sway. "Would that I had never come among the fifth kind," he says; "rather had I died before them, or been born hereafter." They will proceed from bad to worse till the climax is reached by the departure of Conscience and Retribution, who, "veiling their fair forms in white raiment, will depart from the wide earth to Olympus, to the family of the gods. And the pangs which are of mourning shall be left to men, and there shall be no bulwark against evil." A nation

which believes the worst calamity to be the absence of restraining influences has surely advanced some distance in moral perception.

These two legends of Pandora and the ages are followed by some hundred lines of moral teaching, consisting partly of a more explicit statement of the functions of spirits upon earth, who, indeed, are ever wandering about unseen among men, and reporting to Zeus upon their good or evil actions; and he, in consequence of their communications, bestows rewards or punishments. "But they who give straight judgments to the stranger and to the townsman, and transgress not from the right at any time, their city waxeth, and her people blossom in her: peace, which bringeth children, is in their land; nor doth Zeus, that seeth afar, ordain for them at any time grievous war; nor doth famine ever wait upon them whose judgments are straight; nor a curse, but their farms are farms of feasting. For them the earth beareth much sustenance, and the oak that is on the mountains hath acorns at the top, and in her midst is honey. Their sheep have thick fleeces, and are weighed down with wool: the children that their women bear are like the fathers; they abound in good things altogether; nor do they go on the sea in ships, but the plenteous earth rendereth them her fruit."

On the other hand, those who practise unrighteousness suffer a list of calamities more compendious than, but quite as terrible as, those with which the backsliding Hebrews are threatened in the Book of Deuteronomy. But if we recognise an echo of the Book of Deuteronomy and some of the Hebrew Psalms in these promises of temporal happiness to the virtuous, and temporal misfortune to the vicious, of what do the following sentences remind us? "I tell thee that easy it is to gather the fruits of iniquity, even in heaps: smooth indeed is the way, and very near it lieth; but before Virtue have the immortal gods placed Toil and Sweat: long and steep is the way to her, and rough at the first." And again: "Take good measure from thy neighbour, and pay him back in the same measure—yea, and better, if haply thou art able: so shalt thou have plenty hereafter, when thyself art in want." "Whatsoever man giveth willingly, even if he give a great gift, rejoiceth in the gift, and hath pleasure in his soul; but whosoever taketh for himself, and hath no shame, small though the thing be, it hath straitened his heart."

The special prohibitions, occupying the place of the decalogue in Greek morality, are exceedingly interesting: "Equal is his iniquity, whosoever wrongeth the stranger and the suppliant, or climbeth to his brother's bed and secretly defileth the wife of his brother, or wilfully injureth orphan children, or rebuketh his aged father, and attacketh him with bitter words upon the painful threshold of old age." And closely in connection with this passage we have, "Render to the immortal gods their due with pure heart and clean hands, and burn rich sacrifices: make thyself acceptable to them at one time with drink offerings, at another time with incense, both when thou layest thee down to slumber, and when the holy dawn cometh."

Enough of the higher teaching of Hesiod has been quoted to show that the Greeks, five hundred years before Christ, were not misguided in their veneration for him, and that their posterity might well feel alarmed at any attempt to destroy his teaching, and replace it by a morality based on the uncertain verdict of a jury of philosophers and professional disputants.

But if there was high teaching, there was also low. "Nor ever presume to reproach a man with baneful poverty that cankereth the soul; lo, that also is a gift of the immortals:" such an ordinance indicates a delicacy of feeling which we shall with difficulty find beyond the frontiers of Hellenism; but there are others which are shrewd rather than elevated. "Even though thou laugh, set a wit-

ness to thy brother: confidence hath ruined a man even as mistrust." "No better prize hath a man won than a good wife: than a bad one there is nothing more horrible: strong though her husband be, she singeth him without fire, and bringeth cruel old age upon him." "It is a poor sort of man that changeth his friends." "Bid not him that hath many friends, nor him that hath none, nor him that consorteth with the froward, nor the reviler of the good." "If thou speak evil, soon shalt thou hear worse." "An evil reputation is light to raise, yea, very light, but painful to bear, and difficult to put away: no Rumour, which much people chatter of, altogether dieth away: she too is, after a kind, an immortal."

Space will not admit of a full treatment of the numberless points of personal conduct in such matters as cleanliness and decency, which are touched upon by Hesiod; nor of the many curious superstitions, especially with regard to water, which appear in his works, and which are still strong among the Greeks of the islands. Nor is the present an adequate opportunity for entering upon the astronomical problems which are raised by his methods of fixing the seasons; or for following Mr. Gladstone's example, and establishing a connection between Hesiod and Hebrew literature. One point alone we may be allowed to touch on, and that is the similarity between the form in which Hesiod puts forth his moral teaching, and the form of parts of the Sermon on the Mount, especially in St. Luke's version. If we remember that Christianity, though of Hebrew origin, was spread into the world through the medium of the Greek language in the mouths of men of the people, we shall see that such a similarity might have been anticipated, and that it is no more startling to find traces of Greek proverbial philosophy in the Gospels, than to come across Oriental proverbs or similes.

Even this cursory description of the Hesiodic poems is perhaps sufficient to convince our readers that it is a serious loss to real learning for men to believe that Hesiod is only worth study as a predecessor of Virgil in didactic poetry, and that all that need be known about him is to be found in Conington's introduction to the Georgics. Of which the moral is that Learning, like Virtue, will be pursued for herself alone; and when she is simply used as the stepping-stone to wealth or distinction, or for merely business purposes, she avenges herself upon those who thus prostitute her, and, veiling herself in exploded wind-bags, prepares to glide from the earth altogether.

LYNCH LAW.

Few people in England understand what Lynch Law really means. The name has a barbarous sound to civilised ears, and "lynching" is generally supposed to be the result of wild indignation on the part of an ignorant mob. The present writer has heard this opinion expressed very frequently since his return from the West some years ago; and knowing from practical experience that it is not founded on fact, ventures to submit the following narrative of a typical lynching case, in which he took an active part. The name of the town where the incident occurred is fictitious, as well as the names of the citizens with whom we are concerned. Many of these gentlemen are still living, and being now most highly respectable and peaceful members of society, might object to be reminded of old frontier days—those days being very substantial facts, for all that.

It was a few minutes after five, on a sultry evening in July, when the jury in the little court-house of Toros City, New Mexico, adjourned to a private room in the saloon hard by to consider their verdict. They had been busy all day trying a criminal case that excited considerable interest in the settlement of which Toros was the centre, and they were very tired and thirsty. It had been no joke to sit in a hot room for ten hours at a stretch, listening to sharp-tongued attorneys cross-examining witnesses, and perorating by the hour; but the ordeal was over at last, and the jury had now only to make up their minds as to their verdict, and go their ways rejoicing.

Ten minutes passed. Easily and swiftly sped half that number of whisky cock-tails down the throats of the weary twelve. Then they looked at the foreman questioningly.

"Gentlemen," said that worthy, tossing down a sixth tumbler with a sigh of satisfaction, "are we all agreed on this little matter?"

"It is possible, boss!" was the ironical reply from two or three jurors, while the rest drummed their glasses in acquiescence.

The foreman cleared his throat sonorously, and frowned. "Then, gentlemen, I understand you to be unanimously of opinion that Sam Cobbett and Jim Grobe, accused by Tom Hanson of the murder of his brother Ed'ard, are——"

"Not guilty." All twelve joined in this response, unceremoniously interrupting the smooth flow of their foreman's words. He looked somewhat taken aback at this extreme unanimity, and twirled a heavy moustache uneasily.

"Well," he continued in a slightly sulky manner, "if this is our idea we'd better say so, I s'pose."

They trooped back to the court-house. A considerable number of people were gathered there. Throughout the day these folk had come and gone, but now every inch of space was taken up, except a small half-circle below the raised platform, where the judge was enthroned in a large cane-bottomed chair. This gentleman was thoughtfully stirring a savoury compound of beaten egg, brandy, and milk, known as egg-nog, which he swallowed at a draught upon the re-appearance of the jury.

If the foreman's manner was nervous in the jury's retiring-room, it was painfully so as he took his seat in the court-house and became the cynosure of all eyes. But as the judge asked the usual question, the man gathered himself together, faced the people boldly, and gave the verdict in

a loud and emphatic tone — "Not guilty."

It was received in dead silence. The judge smiled and nodded, and filled himself another tumbler of egg-nog. The spectators of the trial looked at each other with a reflection of the foreman's uneasiness on their faces, and walked slowly out, discussing in no measured terms the various aspects of the event of the day.

Toros City was at this time in that primitive stage of development expressed by the title of "Railway Town," that is to say, the railway depot was the most important establishment in it. Three months before, the "city" had been a "station," and consisted of two buildings only: one, combining the four qualities of hotel, post-office, restaurant, and saloon: the other a general shop, or store, from which everything necessary to the comfort and well-being of a Western man could be procured. Between these two mansions the stage-coach, running from Santa Fè to Trinidad, stopped once a week, and for many years was the only medium of communication between Toros and the East. But at length the railway, creeping steadily westward, reached this station, and in a few days it was transformed into a "city," as only a village on the American frontier can be. The rude railway station and telegraph office were scarcely in working order ere a whole street of small shops was created, dubbed Grand Avenue, and crowded daily by the most extraordinary mixture of nationalities ever beheld in the world. Englishmen, Germans, Dutchmen, Frenchmen, Spaniards, Italians, Mexicans, Indians, Chinese, and Negroes, all were to be seen there, besides every grade of American, from the lanky New Englander to the swarthy West Virginian. Such was Toros at the time of which I write, some eight years ago. Our friends the jurymen were the owners of the aforesaid small shops; the judge, landlord of the "Railway Hotel," a most pretentious a wooden structure of three stories—which had been built four weeks.

There was one fact about this trial worth noting here, as it formed the subject of much comment among the gossips of the place. The oldest inhabitant of the town, Joseph Cartright, owner of the old store—which had stood opposite the saloon for ten years past—a man much respected in the settlement, had not taken any part in the business. It was known that he was a personal friend of Tom Hanson, the prosecutor, and it was said that he had refused to become a juryman on that ground. Nevertheless, people shook their heads and raised their eyebrows significantly when he came into court, a mere spectator. Be this as it may, Josh Cartright's grim face did not betray the least emotion as the verdict was given.

I was sitting opposite to him, with a feeling of indignation in my heart at the acquittal of the prisoners, which could only be realised by my readers had they heard the strong evidence brought forward by the prosecutor's attorney, and the scurrilous abuse of Hanson's character, as false as it was bitter, with which it was met by the defence. I knew Cartright well. He had been very kind to me a year before, when I reached Toros, a raw "tender-foot," sorely in need of wise advice and sympathy. When the court rose I walked with him to the door, and then, obeying a sudden impulse, gave vent to my indignation at the verdict.

"Mr. Cartright, what on earth does this mean? These men are guilty. The jury must be mad!"

"I guess not, Pat. They've the reputation of being a level-headed lot."

"And they call this justice?"

"It is the law."

Cartright's manner and my own were in strange contrast. He was cold as an iceberg. I was in a heated state of intense perplexity and irritation. I knew many of the

settlers about Toros, and had always found them fair and just in their dealings with each other. A man might fail in business, and owe money right and left, but as long as he stayed in the neighbourhood, and did his best to work himself back into a state of solvency, no one dreamt of touching any of his property. They would all wait patiently for their money, and I may say, perhaps, rarely failed to get it. Again, if a poor rancheman were robbed of his horse, the neighbours would form a *posse* in a twinkling, and chase the thief night and day till they secured him; and then, short shrift for the poor wretch. For horse-stealing of that description was a capital crime. And yet, in the very midst of such a community as this, a glaring piece of injustice was allowed to pass with the off-hand remark that "it was the law." Greater surprises than this, however, were in store for me. Cartright had only just delivered himself of the above reply, when he shook hands with a man who had followed us from the court-house. I knew him well. He was the wildest character in the settlement: Mike Alison, the desperado.

I have not space to explain, in the way the subject merits, the exact meaning of this rather ambiguous title, "desperado." In the present instance, it signified that this Mike Alison was famed for extreme recklessness, in a country where the primitiveness of society requires every man to carry loaded fire-arms habitually, and at certain times of the year to treat his personal safety as a thing of no account whatever. To record the risks to life and limb this man voluntarily encountered in one calendar month, would fill a volume equal in excitement to any of Captain Mayne Reid's stories. He was a horse-breaker of extraordinary skill and success. His shooting was marvellous. I have seen him split the stalk of a sun-flower at twenty yards distance with a revolver, and put four holes through an old tomato-can, which I had thrown into the air, before it touched the ground. As for his courage, the Sheriff of Toros, who knew Mike Alison well, expressed the strength of the man's nerve in a sufficiently graphic manner when he said, in answer to a query from a curious stranger: "Courage—pshaw! Why that cuss would walk up to the mouth of a cannon, when they were applyin' the match, as cool as you'd eat your dinner."

Such was Mike Alison. I am sorry to say that he was something more—and it was this fact which caused me to open my eyes wide when Cartright shook hands with him. Mike Alison was a horse-stealer, and at the very top of his profession. To be sure, he never robbed the struggling stockman—never even pounced upon the property of the rich man, unless he had made himself obnoxious by some act of meanness or injustice; but none the less, this Robin Hood of the prairies was considered a sheep of blackest dye by the respectable citizens of Toros.

Yet wonders were not to cease, for behind Cartright was Tom Hanson, brother of the man lately deceased, and himself one of the substantial settlers, and he also shook hands with the horse-thief, their hands meeting with such a warm, close grip that it was difficult not to believe them to be old and tried friends. The climax of my perplexity came, however, when Cartright observed in his dry quiet tone: "Gentlemen, it's almost six o'clock. Supper will be ready in ten minutes. Will you come through and have a wash?" And when he added carelessly to me, "Say, Pat, you'll join us this evening, won't you? The folk at your ranche can do without you until to-morrow," I simply nodded in reply, and followed him "in a maze."

This confusion of mind lasted until I found myself sitting beside Mike Alison at a long deal table in Cartright's parlour. There were present the desperado, myself, Mr. and Mrs.

Cartright, Tom Hanson, and three other guests, ranchemen of the neighbourhood, and settlers of long standing and considerable property. I began to wake up a little now, helped materially to keenness of mental vision by a plentiful meal of antelope steak and mutton cutlets, succeeded by canned peaches and cream, which Mrs. Cartright had provided for us. I felt that oppressive consciousness of something being about to happen, called presentiment. I could not have put my conjectures into words to save my life; but the subsequent scenes and incidents which followed each other in such quick succession, ceased to awake the least surprise in my breast. The men around me took all as a matter of course,—and so did I. Having been some eighteen months out west, I had been accustomed to prairie life long enough to acquire a fair share of that grimness of character which, for the sake of a principle or sentiment, can cause a man to act as if there were no human sympathy in his heart: that will enable him to suffer, and see others suffer, to almost any extent, if he believes that right or justice demand the sacrifice. I am not defending or condemning this hardness of nature. I merely state a fact which must be carefully borne in mind if the narrative that I have to tell is to be understood. But it must not be imagined that the hard lives western men lead turn their hearts to stone. No! Whatever self-reliance and strength of endurance a man possesses before going out west is braced and stiffened to an extraordinary degree by the lonely life of the prairie, and were it not so, frontier-men would go mad. But their affections are still held intact, and when they have an object upon which to lavish them, they are capable of a devotion scarcely conceivable by those who see but their grim outside, and are accustomed to the refined selfishness of civilisation.

Any one who may doubt this after reading my rough sketch, should have been at Cartright's supper-table on that twentieth day of July. Mrs. Cartright had left the table, and the company, with one exception, were regaling themselves with whisky and cigars. The exception was Tom Hanson; and do as I would, I could not help looking at him—a man I had known intimately—and remarking the expression of his face as he sat apart from the rest, his head resting on his great muscular hand. His mouth was set in a line as hard and straight as a crack on the face of a granite boulder, and his eyes—those brown eyes which used to beam and dance and twinkle all day long, as only the eyes of a humorous, tender-hearted Yankee can—were fixed now in a dull stare of such misery and despair, that I felt a pang of absolute physical pain as I glanced at them. It was not necessary to be told in words that Tom and Edward Hanson had been all in all to each other. One look at the face of the surviving brother was enough.

My reflections upon this subject, however, were not of long duration; for the cigars of the company were scarcely half smoked, when Hanson turned his haggard face fully towards us, and slowly rising from his chair made the following speech. His words were clearly pronounced, and came without apparent effort.

"Gentlemen, What I have to say now, ain't much news to any of you. A week ago my brother Edward was shot. To-day, two men have been tried for the murder—and acquitted. Now, some say this is justice: some say not. There are folk who believe Cobbett and Grobe should be hung. Gentlemen, I want you to fix this as you think right. You represent this settlement better than the jury who sat to-day, and it 'll be your place this evening to say whether the verdict given a few hours ago was right or wrong. One thing more. By coming here, you have tacitly agreed already to try this matter in the usual way; therefore, I've another duty,—to propose a judge. Gentlemen, I propose that Josh Cartright, as the oldest citizen

of Toros, be chosen. It is in your hands."

Hanson sat down, amid a low murmur of approval. There was a pause. We looked at each other in doubt for a moment, uncertain who should take the initiative. Then Mike Alison stood up, his great keen eyes roving from face to face while he spoke.

"Gentlemen, I second this proposal. Mr. Cartright is the straightest man I know, and is therefore far away the best person for the business of judge. Hold up your hands, those who agree."

Every hand was raised.

At this expression of opinion, Cartright discarded his whisky and laid aside his cigar. Though a little man, there was true dignity and power in his tone and manner as he delivered his reply in a deep musical voice.

"I am gratified, friends, at this honour. I will accept the responsibility, and do all in my power to see justice done. Now to business. The issue before us is a simple one. You were all present at the trial to-day, and heard the evidence. The case for the prosecution hung principally upon the evidence of the paper found in the pocket of Tulcher, the murderer, whom Edward Hanson shot before he was plugged himself. This paper was an agreement on the part of two men to help Tulcher in the business he had in hand on the 15th instant, for which assistance they were to receive a thousand dollars. The names signed below were Cobbett and Grobe. There was further evidence, you will remember, proving that Tulcher was the only man who knew that Edward would have cash by him on the 15th instant, and be alone at his ranche. The defence was an *alibi*, sworn to by three men, and an attempt to prove that the paper referred to had nothing to do with Edward Hanson. The prisoner's attorney, however, refused to say what the agreement did mean. Such was the case, gentlemen, and the verdict was, Not guilty. Now, do you confirm this? Do you believe in your hearts that Cobbett and Grobe are innocent; or, do you not? The question is before you. Let me hear what you have to say."

The judge stopped speaking, and there was a dead silence for more than a minute. Every man's mind was made up, but no one liked to be the first to speak. At last, Mike Alison rose, with the grimmest look on his face that I ever saw worn by mortal man. His tone was now abrupt, and his style unceremonious to a degree: sure sign that he was in earnest, and meant his words to carry weight.

"Boys, I can see that there is no difference of opinion among you about this thing. It is not likely. You knew what was coming: your minds must have been made up since the verdict. Now, p'raps you'd like to hear my notion of the case, as Cobbett and Grobe have been members of my gang. The judge, here, asked me to come without any questions, and knowing that Edward Hanson and I nearly pulled on one another a year ago. Well, I came; and I say, as one who was a friend to Grobe once, that these men are guilty. The judge and jury who acquitted them were bribed to do it. I could get wind of the amount given, now, if I wanted. There, that's all. You know what I am! What I've been for eight years past! P'raps you'll say, why does he think Cobbett and Grobe should be hung, when he is as bad as they? I'll tell you. I've done most things, but I've never put a hole through an old man to get hold of his money; and I think it's the meanest crime in this whole world."

As the horse-stealer stopped speaking, he was greeted with a cheer; but this was hushed in an instant, as Cartright, suddenly addressing the man on his right, said curtly, "Are they guilty, or not guilty?"

"Guilty!" was the emphatic answer; and the word was repeated with grim earnestness by every man, as his turn came.

"And now," said the judge, slowly, as the last vote was given, "it is my duty to pass sentence."

Cartright paused at this point. He was very pale; and though his voice was perfectly steady, and his face set with inflexible determination, it was quite evident that he felt this duty to be no light one.

"I do hereby decree that Sam Cobbett and Jim Grobe, being guilty of the murder of Edward Hanson, on the 15th day of July, shall die, by hanging, at three o'clock to-morrow morning; and I call upon all men here present to assist me, at whatever risk to themselves, in seeing that justice be done. I do this in virtue of my authority as Judge Lynch; and swear that I have given judgment without malice toward any one. So help me God!"

Cartright paused again. We drew a long breath. Then we all rose, as the judge taking from his coat pocket a small Bible, said quietly: "Gentlemen, will you please just step up, and take your oath on this thing?"

There was a general creaking of chairs and shuffling of feet as we came forward. Mike Alison was the first to act: with his right hand he grasped Cartright's, with his left he held the Bible. "I swear that at whatever risk to my own life, I will see justice done this night upon Cobbett and Grobe. So help me, God!" He pressed the hand of the judge as he spoke, kissed the book, and handed it to Tom Hanson, who repeated the same formula, and was followed by the rest of us, in turn.

This ceremony, rude though it was, was inexpressibly solemn. There was no passion or bitterness in the tones of the Lynchers, as they took the oath; but this very quietness of manner, when you knew the men, was in itself the best guarantee of the reality and significance of their vow.

Shortly after this, we were ushered by the storekeeper into another room, where there were piles of blankets and heaps of sheepskins. With these we speedily constructed most comfortable beds, and, with the exception of Hanson and Cartright, who had the arrangements to make for the carrying out of the sentence, and did not sleep that night, we were soon buried in sound slumber.

Thanks to a good digestion and a hard day's ride, I dropped off to sleep pretty quickly, in spite of thoughts of the work that was to be done before dawn. A light touch on the shoulder from Tom Hanson, however, brought me back to vivid consciousness of my surroundings. It was two o'clock in the morning, and time to make our last preparations. A weird and gruesome sight met my eyes as I jumped up. On a table in the middle of the room was a small kerosene lamp, the only light in the place. Close by the lamp was a heap of black calico, steadily diminishing in size, as each man took a piece and secured it round the upper part of his face. This was the badge or uniform of the Lyncher. It was not used as a mask: indeed, the persons of all the members of the party (with the exception of myself) were so well known that anything of the kind would have been absurd. For the part we had to play, however, a conspicuous badge was most important, as will soon appear. When I awoke, most of the men had already donned their uniform, and were filling their belts with cartridges, sharpening long knives, and examining their revolvers: an example of necessary forethought that I speedily followed.

These preliminary arrangements concluded, the judge curtly gave us the usual orders.

"Boys, everything is fixed. The gibbet has been put up near Holt's ranche, and my waggon and mules are behind the depôt now, ready to receive the prisoners. They have been watched since the trial, and having had a big drink, are asleep on the first floor of the hotel. I have now to pass the word. From this moment your six-shooters and rifles must be kept at full cock: every man we meet, or who puts his head out of a window,

must be covered by not less than two of you, and if he refuses to come along, plugged instantly. As members of the Lynching party, you will be held blameless for any lives taken in this way, or in any other that I may direct. Remember that the town is in our hands until Cobbett and Grobe are hung. One thing more, as there will be no time for orders when we've nailed the cusses: Tom Hanson, Mike Alison, and myself, will bring out the prisoners. When they appear, three of you must stand by 'em with your knives, the rest holding revolvers pointed at their breasts; and if there's a shot fired by their friends, *go through them.* Now, boys, *vamos.*"

We passed out into the street. It was a bright, still, moonlight night: not a sound to be heard but the steady tramp of our feet, as we made our way up Grand Avenue to the new Railway Hotel. As we neared the place, figures were discernible, clustered in loose order round a large lumber waggon, behind the station. Most of these men were employed in various capacities by Hanson and others of our party, and all wore the ominous black badge. No word of greeting passed between us, however, and we marched steadily on to the door of the hotel. Cartright knocked smartly three times, and as he did so we covered every window in the place with our firearms, the judge pointing his weapon at the door, so that the first thing seen by the man who opened it was the muzzle of a revolver. He looked intensely scared, this unfortunate man, as he saw this grim array. I could scarcely recognise the complacent judge of the afternoon, in the trembling creature who tried to assure his Lynch-law brother that Cobbett and Grobe had gone East by the midnight train. Cartright's gruff answer, however, of, "Show us up to their room, Mr. Standard," followed by the brief order, "Plug him, Mike, if he says another word!" brought the apologies to a sudden conclusion; and with a despairing shrug of the shoulders, as he recognised the desperado, the man slowly led the way upstairs: Judge Lynch, Hanson, Mike Alison, and two of Hanson's men followed him closely.

The rest of us remained outside, and watched the waggon brought round to the door. Presently, there was a stir in the houses round about, and faces appeared at windows. They were promptly covered: upon which their owners hastily dressed themselves, and joined the crowd stationed near the waggon. A little later, quickly-stepping figures began to come up in twos and threes from the outskirts of the town, as the news of what was on hand spread abroad; and it was not long before un-masked folk formed a large majority of the assembly. But close around the waggon, in a compact ring, stood the Lynching party, shoulder to shoulder, with gleaming firearms, in grim defiance of any protest or interference.

We were all silent as we waited for those inside to re-appear; but it was impossible not to be conscious of the fact that there was a section of the crowd, armed like ourselves and now considerably out-numbering us, that was sullenly opposed to what was going on. At first only a few muttered curses were to be heard, which died away as new men came up whose feelings were not known. But gradually these imprecations developed into a continuous and angry murmur, which it seemed only too probable would become an organised assault upon the appearance of the prisoners.

The prospect was not cheerful. There were twenty of us, all told; and fifty people stood apparently ready for a charge the moment there was a favourable opportunity. I cannot remember, however, feeling nervous or frightened. We were there for a purpose, and until that purpose was accomplished our lives were of no importance. That was our one thought. As the murmur rose higher, and became more menacing, a burly fellow standing next to me answered it by an order

to our men, short and to the point: "Boys, mark your men, now; and fire when I give the word." Every revolver was instantly pointed at some individual member of the unmasked. The effect was magical. The angry murmurs ceased, and there was a quick retrograde movement, causing a space of several yards to be made between the persons of the prisoners' friends and the revolvers of the Lynching party.

A light was now seen flickering in the hall of the hotel, and we could hear heavy steps descending the stairs. The two men stationed in the waggon to receive the prisoners stood up, placing their knives between their teeth to have their hands quite free. The crowd remained silent, straining their eyes to see Cobbett and Grobe brought out. Now four men, followed by the judge, came slowly along the passage, kept clear by our revolvers, with two forms bound hand and foot, which they hoisted into the waggon. At this sight the murmur of the crowd rose to a shriek, and we thought our time had come. Obeying the order of the judge, four of us turned our backs upon the crowd and stood over the prisoners, waiting for the first shot to be fired. But as our fingers tightened round the locks of pistols and the handles of our knives, the voice of Mike Alison, deep and sonorous, rang out above the tumult, and silenced it.

"Boys, shut down on this. D'ye think I'd take a share in the business if there wern't good reason for it? If any man of ye can stand out and say Cobbett and Grobe ain't the blamedest curs in this country, and didn't kill Ed. Hanson, let him do it, and I'll put as many holes through him as there are balls in my six-shooters. There! Do you understand?"

As he spoke the desperado had sprung into the waggon, and stood in the full light of the moon, glaring defiantly at the crowd, a cocked revolver in either hand. This action had an immediate result of a most wholesome kind. At least half our foes admired Mike Alison personally more than any man living, and the rest would as soon have thought of accepting his challenge as of driving knives between their own ribs. So the opposition to our movements collapsed as suddenly as it had begun. From this moment the crowd which surged around us was of a perfectly peaceful character.

The waggon was now put in motion, and we moved down Grand Avenue at a foot's pace towards Holt's Ranche, a deserted homestead on the outskirts of the town. The place was reached in fifteen minutes, and another detachment of masked men, who had just completed the construction of the gibbet—a rough framework of poles—joined the main body. The crowd now came to a standstill, as the waggon passed slowly on a few paces, and then stopped exactly under the cross-bar of the gibbet, from which hung two pieces of rope.

The end was close at hand. For the first time my flesh began to creep, and the hand that held my revolver trembled violently, in spite of every effort to keep it still. Disposed in a huge circle the crowd stood round us—calm, stolid, inactive—waiting to see the end. I looked in vain for a face that expressed any of the horror of which I knew my own was full. In the centre of a space of some twenty square yards, kept clear round the gibbet, stood the judge, Tom Hanson, and Mike Alison, watching the men in the waggon who were making the prisoners ready for their fate. So far the poor wretches had uttered no kind of protest or prayer for mercy. No one knew better than they the hopelessness of such a thing. But at this moment I heard the voice of one raised in urgent entreaty to the man adjusting the ropes, in response to which he was loosed for a moment. Leaping from the waggon, he threw himself at the feet of the judge, and gasped out some inaudible prayer in a hoarse whisper.

Cartright stood like a pillar of stone. "Mercy?" he said sternly. "You ask for mercy? What mercy did you show to Edward Hanson? What——"

"I don't want mercy," interrupted the prisoner. "I deserve death—I wish for it. But, judge! for God's sake shoot me, or cut me in pieces—I don't care which: don't let me hang like a dog! I've a mother alive in Illinois: she will hear of it, and the disgrace will break her heart." He stopped, choked by heavy convulsive sobs.

Cartright paused before he answered. "Jim Grobe, I have passed sentence upon you, and I could not commute it if I would. But in these cases an appeal may be made to the person most injured by the crime. Tom Hanson," turning to his friend, "it is in your hands. Shall Grobe's wish be granted?"

There was another pause. Hanson made a step forward, and laid his hand heavily on the shoulder of his brother's murderer, saying huskily: "Is this true about your mother?"

Before the man could reply, Mike Alison interposed in his quick, decided way—"Yes, I can vouch for it."

"Then," said the rancheman, slowly and heavily, while the silence of the crowd might be almost felt, "You—may—be—shot."

"God bless you! God bless you!" cried Grobe joyfully, leaping to his feet and grasping Hanson's hand. Then he stood erect and turned to the desperado with a smile. "Good-bye, Mike. You've been a good friend to me. If I had taken your advice—but it's too late now. Judge, set your men. Steady there, boys, with your revolvers: don't aim too high. Now, I'm ready. *Fire!*"

We must close this scene. When the sun rose, half an hour later, all was over. The murderers of Edward Hanson had gone before a higher tribunal than ours, and the work of Judge Lynch and his Court of Appeal was done.

A. H. Paterson.

THE EVER-MEMORABLE JOHN HALES.

The churchyard at Eton is a triangular piece of ground converging into a sharp remote angle, bordered on one side by the Long Walk and screened from it by heavy iron railings. On the second side skirted and overlooked by tall irregular houses, and on the third by the deep buttressed recesses of the chapel, venerable with ivy and mouldering grey stone.

It is a strangely quiet place in the midst of bustling life. The grumbling of wagons in the road, the hoarse calls of the jackdaws awkwardly fluttering about old red-tiled roofs, the cracked clanging of the college clock, the voices of boys from the fields, fall faintly on the ear. It has all the beauty of a deserted place, too, for many years have passed since it was used for a burial-ground: the grass is long and rank, the cypresses and yews grow luxuriantly out of unknown vaults, and push through broken rails: the gravestones slant and crumble: moss gathers in the letters of forgotten names, and creepers lay their spoiling hands upon monumental urns: heaps of old carven, crumbling stones litter the ground. On early summer mornings a resident thrush tells his rapture to the silence with flute notes marvellously clear; and on wet winter evenings boisterous winds roll steadily up, and the tall chapel windows flame, and the organ's voice is blown about the winding over-grown paths and the memorials of the dead.

Just inside the gate, visible from the road among the dark evergreens, stands a tall, conspicuous altar-tomb,—conspicuous more for the miserable way in which a stately monument has been handled than for its present glories. It has been patched and framed in grey stucco, and the inscription scratched on the surface is three-quarters obliterated. Let into the sides are the grey stone panels of the older tomb, sculptured with quaint emblems of life and death, a mattock and an uncouth heap of bones, an hour-glass and a skull, a pot of roses and lily flowers—such is the monument of one of Eton's worthiest servants and sons.

"I ordain," runs the quaint conclusion of his will, "that at the time of the next even-song after my departure (if conveniently it may be), my body be laid in the churchyard of the town of Eton (if I chance to die there), as near as may be [a strangely pathetic touch of love from the celibate philosopher, the friend of courtiers and divines] to the body of my little godson, Jack Dickenson the elder; and this to be done in plain and simple manner, without any sermon or ringing the bell, or calling people together; without any unseasonable commessation or compotation or other solemnity on such occasions usual; for as in my life I have done the church no service, so I will not that in my death the church do me any honour."

And the prophecy is fulfilled to the letter. In such a tomb he rests; and by a strange irony of fate, the pompous title claiming so universal and perennial a fame—the Ever-memorable—is the only single fact which we bear in our minds about him—he has even been identified with Sir Matthew Hale of just memory.

John Hales was neither an Etonian nor a Kingsman. He was of a Somersetshire family, and was educated at Corpus Christi College, Oxford, where he spent no less than seven years before taking his degree (in 1603), from the age of thirteen to the age of twenty.

The Warden of Merton at that time was Sir Henry Savile, Queen Elizabeth's Greek tutor, held to be the most learned scientist of the time, founder of the Savilian professorships for astronomy and geometry, a severe, clear-headed student. It is recorded of him

that he had a great dislike for brilliant instinctive abilities, and only respected the slow cumulative processes. "Give me the plodding student," he said. "If I would look for wits, I would go to Newgate: there be the wits." He was not popular among the rising young men in consequence: John Earle, the author of the *Microcosmography*, that delightful gallery of characters that puts Theophrastus into the shade, was the only man he ever admitted on his reputation as a wit into the sacred society of Merton. For such intellects as he desired, he made search in a way that was then described as "hedge beating." Savile was attracted by Hales: he found in him a mind which young as it was, showed signs of profundity. Savile's choice is a great testimony to the depth of Hales's attainments; for his later reputation was acquired more by his grace and originality of mind than for his breadth of learning. Savile was then at work on his *Chrysostom*, printed privately at Eton in the grave collegiate house in Weston's Yard, now the residence of the Head Master. Hales became a congenial fellow-labourer, and in 1613 was moved to a fellowship at Eton, of which College Savile had for seventeen years been Provost.

A Fellow of Eton is now a synonym for a member of the Governing Body, that is to say a gentleman in some public position, who is willing to give up a fraction of his time to the occasional consideration and summary settlement of huge educational problems. Twenty years ago it meant a handsome competence, light residence, a venerable house, and a good living in the country. In Hales's time it meant a few decent rooms, a small dividend, home-made bread and beer at stated times, a constant attendance at the church service, and the sustaining society of some six or seven earnest like-minded men, grave students, at least under Savile, mostly celibates. To such the life was dignified and attractive. Early rising, with a light breakfast. A long, studious morning, with Matins, an afternoon dinner, a quiet talk round the huge fire or a stroll in the stately college garden with perhaps some few promising boys from the school,—then merely an adjunct of the more reverend college, not an absorbing centre of life—more quiet work and early to bed. Busy, congenial monotony! There is no secret like that for a happy life!

After five years, this was broken by a piece of vivid experience—Hales accompanied Sir Dudley Carleton to the Synod of Dort.

It must be clearly borne in mind that theological and religious problems then possessed a general interest for the civilised world and Englishmen in particular, which it cannot be pretended that they possess now. Political gossip has taken the place of theological discussion. Then, contemporary writers thought fit to lament the time that common folk wasted in such disputes. When the Trinitarian controversy could be discussed in an alehouse, and apprentices neglect their work to argue out the question of Prevenient Grace, we feel that we are in an atmosphere which, if not religious, was at any rate theological.

Hales went to Dort a Calvinist—which in those days was equivalent to saying that he had never given his theological position much attention. What he heard there is uncertain, for a more unbusinesslike meeting was never held: "ignorance, passion, animosity, injustice," said Lord Clarendon, were its characteristics. There was no one to whose ruling speakers deferred. No one knew what subject was to be discussed next, often hardly what was under discussion. A third of the members disappeared, after what an eye-witness called a "powdering speech" from the President. Such a theological schooling is too severe for a reflective mind. Hales came home what was called a Latitudinarian, having, as he quaintly says, "at the well pressing of John iii. 16, by

Episcopius [Simon Bischof, a divine present at the Synod] bid John Calvin good-night." A Latitudinarian translated into modern English would be a very broad churchman indeed. For it is evident that Hales's native humour, which was very strong, prevented him from even considering religious differences in a serious light: "theological scarecrows!" he said, half bitterly, half humorously. When in later years he was found reading one of Calvin's books, he said playfully "Formerly I read it to reform myself, but now I read it to reform him." And the delightful comparison which he makes in one of his tracts is worth quoting, as showing the natural bent of his mind to the ludicrous side of these disputes: he compares the wound of sin and the supposed remedy of confession, to Pliny's cure for the bite of a scorpion—to go and whisper the fact into the ear of an ass.

Only once did he encounter Laud—the little restless, ubiquitous, statesman-priest, who so grievously mistook and underrated the forces with which he had to deal, and the times in which he had fallen. The whole incident of the meeting is dramatic and entertaining in the highest degree. Hales, for the edification of some weak-minded friend, wrote out his views on schism, treating the whole subject with a humorous contempt for the authority of the Church. This little tract got privately printed, and a copy fell into Laud's hands, (as indeed, what dangerous matter did not!) which he read and marked, and instantly sent for his recalcitrant subaltern, to be rated and confuted and silenced. It is exquisitely characteristic of Laud, both in the idea and in the method of carrying it out. "Mr. Hales came," says Heylin, "about nine o'clock to Lambeth on a summer morning," with considerable heart-sinking no doubt. The Archbishop had him out into the garden, giving orders that they were on no account to be disturbed. The bell rang for prayers, to which they went by the garden door into the chapel, and out again till dinner was ready—hammer and tongs all the time. Then they fell to again, but Lord Conway and several other persons of distinction having meantime arrived, the servants were obliged to go and warn the disputants how the time was going. It was now about four in the afternoon. "So in they came," says Heylin, "high coloured and almost panting for want of breath; enough to show that there had been some heats between them not then fully cooled." The two little black-gowned figures, (both were very small men) with their fresh complexions, set off by tiny mustachios and imperials such as churchmen wore, pacing up and down under the high elms of the garden, and arguing to the verge of exhaustion, is a wonderful picture. Hales afterwards confessed that it had been dreadful. "He had been ferreted," he said, "from one hole to another, till he was resolved to be orthodox, and declare himself a true son of the Church of England both for doctrine and discipline." Laud evidently saw the mettle of the man with whom he had to deal, and what a very dangerous, rational opponent he was; so he made him his own chaplain, and got the king to offer him a canonry at Windsor in such a way that refusal, much to Hales's distaste, was out of the question, thus binding him to silence in a manner that would make further speech ungracious. "And so," said Hales, quietly grumbling at his wealthy loss of independence, "I had a hundred and fifty more pounds a year than I cared to spend."

During all these years Hales was a member of the celebrated Mermaid Club, so called from the tavern of that name in Friday Street. Thither Shakespeare, Beaumont and Fletcher, Donne, and many more repaired. There, too, he saw the coarse, vivacious figure of Ben Jonson, the presiding genius of the place, drinking his huge potations of canary, and warming out of his native melancholy

into wit and eloquence, merging at last into angry self-laudation, and then into drunken silence, till at last he tumbled home with his unwieldy body, rolling gait, and big, scorbutic face: a figure so strangely similar, down to the smallest characteristics, in his gloom, his greediness, his disputatious talk, to the great Samuel of that ilk, were it not for the stern religious fibre that is somehow the charm of the latter.

It was in London, at one of these convivial gatherings, that Suckling, Davenant, Endymion Porter, Ben Jonson, and Hales were talking together: Jonson, as was his wont, railing surlily at Shakespeare's fame, considering him to be much overrated,—"wanting art," as he told Drummond at Hawthornden. Suckling took up the cudgels with great warmth, and the dispute proceeded: Hales in the background, sitting meekly, with the dry smile which he affected—deliberately dumb, not from want of enthusiasm or knowledge, but of choice. Ben Jonson, irritated at last beyond the bounds of patience, as men of his stamp are wont to be by a silent humorous listener, turned on him suddenly and began to charge the poet with "a want of Learning and Ignorance of the Ancients." Hales at last emerged from his shell, and told Jonson, with considerable warmth, that if Mr. Shakespeare had not read the ancients, he had likewise not stolen anything from them—"a fault," adds the biographer, "the other made no Conscience of"—"and that if he would produce any one topic finely treated of by any of them, he would undertake to show something upon the same subject, at least as well written by Shakespeare."

The combat did not end here. The enemies of Shakespeare would not give in: so it came to a trial of skill. The place agreed on for these literary jousts was Hales's rooms at Eton, a number of books were sent down, and on the appointed day Lord Falkland and Suckling, with several persons of wit and quality assembled there. The books were opened, Shakespeare was arraigned before antiquity, and unanimously, (except for Sir John) awarded the palm. We may be sure it would have been different if old Ben Jonson had been present: there would have been less unanimity and more heat; but he was much troubled with symptoms of an old, recurrent paralysis, of which he had only partly got the better, and he was melancholic and therefore kept away. Still it is a scene to think of with envy—little Lord Falkland with his untuneable voice, brisk wit, and sweet manner, moderating the assembly: the summer afternoon, the stately collegiate room, overlooking the studious garden, girdled about by the broad and even-flowing Thames among sedge and osier-beds, and haunted by no human presence.

This period was probably the happiest time of Hales's life, when he was at the height of his social reputation. He was a man of an inveterately companionable disposition. He disliked being alone except for study, and in congenial company was a sympathetic talker. Once a year for a short time he used to resort to London for the polite conversation which he so much enjoyed, and when the Court was at Windsor he was greatly in request, being not only a good talker, but a better listener, as his biographer says. Not only divines and scholars resorted to the rooms of this *bibliotheca ambulans*, as Provost Wotton called him, but courtiers, sprightly wits, and gay sparks from the castle. This it was that earned him his epithet. He was familiar with, or corresponded with, all the ablest men of the day, counting, as he did, Davenant, Suckling, Ben Jonson, Lord Falkland and all that brilliant circle, among his intimate friends.

He was made Canon of Windsor in 1639. In two years the whole pleasant life breaks up before our eyes, never to be restored. Laud's death showed him that, as his chaplain, he was in

a dangerous position, and the event itself was a frightful shock to him. He left his lodging in college and went for a quarter of a year in utter secrecy to a private house at Eton, next door to the old Christopher Inn, the house of Mrs. Dickenson to whose lad he was godfather. Search was made for him, but unsuccessfully, though he says that his hiding place was so close that if he had eaten garlic he could have been nosed out. Here he subsisted for three months entirely on bread and beer (strange diet) fasting —as he appears to have done from mistaken medical notions—from Tuesday night to Thursday night. The reason for this retirement was the fear that certain documents and keys, entrusted to him as Bursar, should fall into the adversary's hands—for it is probable that at first he shared the belief with other enthusiastic royalists that the troubles would speedily blow over. He was of course ejected from fellowship and canonry, refusing with some spirit a proposal made to him by Mr. Penwarren who succeeded him that he should retain half: "All or none is mine," was his answer, though he was reduced to the greatest poverty. He sold his library which was large and valuable, for seven hundred pounds, devoting a large proportion to others suffering from similar deprivation. The account of his conversation with Faringdon, an intimate friend, is absolutely heartrending.

"His friend Mr. Faringdon coming to see Hales some few months before his death, found him in very mean lodgings at Eton, but in a temper gravely cheerful, and well becoming a good man under such circumstances. After a slight and homely dinner, suitable to their situation, some discourse passed between them concerning their old friends and the black and dismal aspect of the times; and at last Hales asked Faringdon to walk out with him to the churchyard. There this unhappy man's necessities pressed him to tell his friend that he had been forced to sell his whole library, save a few books which he had given away, and six or eight little books of devotion which lay in his chamber; and that for money, he had no more than what he then showed him, which was about seven or eight shillings; and 'besides,' says he, 'I doubt I am indebted for my lodgings.' Faringdon did not imagine that it had been so very low with him, and presently offered him fifty pounds, in part-payment of the many sums he and his wife had received of him in their great necessities. But Hales replied, 'No, you don't owe me a penny, or if you do, I here forgive you, for you shall never pay me a penny, but if you know any other friend that hath too full a purse and will spare me some of it I will not refuse that.'"

For a few months he went as nominal chaplain and tutor to the children of a lady living at Richings Park near West Drayton, where there was a little college of deprived priests, among them being King, bishop of Chichester. But when this was declared treasonous, he retired again to Eton to the same faithful friends, the Dickensons—the house being called his own to avoid the accusation of harbouring malignants falling on the real owner.

There is a charming contemporary description of him at this date by John Aubrey, the antiquary, who went to see him.

"I saw him, a prettie little man, sanguin [fresh-coloured], of a chearful countenance, very gentele and courteous. I was received by him with much humanity; he was in a kind of violet-coloured cloth gowne with buttons and loopes, (he wore not a black gowne), and he was reading Thomas à Kempis. It was within a year before he deceased. He loved Canarie, but moderately to refresh his spirits; he had a bountiful mind."

At last the end came very quietly. He was in his seventy-second year, "weary of this uncharitable world" as he said. Only a fortnight ill, and then dying so quietly that Mr. Montague, who had been talking to him, left the room for half-an-hour and found him dead on his return.

He was one of those great men with a genuine dislike of publicity. He could not be induced to publish anything in his lifetime except a Latin funeral oration—not that it mattered, as one of his contemporaries hinted, "for he was so communicative that his chair was a pulpit and his chamber a church." In fact it became so much a matter of habit that his friends should

propound questions on which he should discourse, that he is recorded to have made a laughing refusal: "he sets up tops" he said in his allusive way "and I am to whip them for him." But it is plain that he had a genuine contempt for his own written style: he says that on the one side he errs by being "overfamiliar and subrustick," on the other as "sour and satyrical." He evidently had the ironical quality in great perfection: his writings and recorded conversation abound in quaint little unexpected turns and capricious illustrations, and his mind was of that figurative cast that loves to express one idea in the terms of another, and see numberless and felicitous connections. His sermons are strange compositions, straggling on through page after page of thickly printed octavos: "a great preacher according to the taste of those times," says an antique critic of them, going on to object that they keep the reader in a "continued twitter throughout." He must have been very light of heart who could have "twittered" continuously during the good hour that the very shortest of them must have taken to deliver. Quotations from Homer, mystically interpreted, strange mythological stories, well worn classical jests: perhaps their sense of humour was as different from ours as their sense of theology undoubtedly was—more discursive if not deeper!

It has struck more than one writer about John Hales that it is remarkable how good a man of business he was. He was bursar of Eton for many years, and his precise, formal signature may still be seen in the audit books; and it is told of him that he was accustomed to throw into the river at the bottom of the college garden any base or counterfeit coin that he chanced to receive on behalf of the college, paying the loss out of his own pocket.

Pure-minded, simple-hearted little man, reading Thomas-à-Kempis in his violet gown! Poor, degraded but not dishonoured—what a strong, grave protest your quiet, exiled life, self-contained and serious, is against the crude follies, the boisterous energies of the Rebellion seething and mantling all about you. The clear-sighted soul that can adopt no party cries, swear allegiance to no frantic school, enlightened, at the mercy of no tendency or prejudice, resigns all that gave dignity to blessed quiet, and takes the peace without the pomp. With unobtrusive, unpretentious hopes and prospects shattered in the general wreck, the true life-philosopher still finds his treasures in the dear old books, the eternal thoughts and in the kindly offices of retired life: a gentle figure that Eton's sons may well be glad to connect with her single street, her gliding waters and her immemorial groves: though as yet the reverence of antiquity sate lightly upon her, though she was not yet in the forefront of the blustering educational world, yet in her sequestered peace there was a cloistral stateliness that she somewhat misses now. Not that we grudge her the glory of a nobler mission, a wider field of action, a more extended influence, in days when the race and battle are more than ever for the fleet and for the strong. But we lament over the nooks that the ancient years so jealously guarded and fenced about from the world and its incisive voice, where among some indolence and some luxury and much littleness the storage of great forces was accomplished, and the tones of a sacred voice not rarely heard. It is an ideal that this century has lost the knack of sympathising with! Perhaps she is but creating the necessity for its imperious recall.

A PSALM OF LIFE.

Through the wild Babel of our fever'd time
The song of Homer cometh, grave and stern,
With tidings from the world's fresh, healthy prime,—
Tidings which our worn, wearied age concern.

Unchang'd, through all the long unnumber'd years,
The voice of Homer sings the song divine,
Which tells of godlike toils, of heroes' tears,
And of the punishment of Priam's line.

The battle in the plain is raging yet:
The watchfires blaze, the beak'd-ships line the shore:
For us the foe in grim array is set:—
Ah! but do we fight as they fought of yore?

For we, too, like the heroes long ago,
Must wage slow wars and sail the bitter sea:
Fierce is the conflict, loud the tempests blow,
And the waves roar and rage unceasingly.

Still must we wander o'er the stormy main:
'Twixt rocks and whirlpools a dread passage make:
Still must the Sirens sing to us in vain:
Still from the toils of Circe must we break.

Turn, then, to Homer's Psalm of Life, and see
How they endured, whose pilgrimage is done;
And hear the message they have left for thee:—
Only by Patience is the victory won.

SOME THOUGHTS ABOUT NOVELS

America has of late been treating us rather despitefully. She has been mocking at our poor old worn-out literature (which is no doubt good for us), and recommending instead some new manufacture of her own, which, with every disposition to be pleased, it is hard to find so very much better. But she has perhaps done nothing more malevolent than when she took Mr. Lowell away from us. Fortunately his communicable part she could not take: he being gone, as one may say, yet speaketh. Few living men on either side of the Atlantic speak better than Mr. Lowell, and many as are the delightful volumes we owe to him, perhaps no one is more delightful than that he has just published,[1] containing the addresses delivered on various occasions during the last few years, both here in England, during his too short term of office among us, and in his own country. Of all men who have ever attained the dangerous popularity of the platform, Mr. Lowell is the least of a preacher; yet there is hardly a page in this little volume which does not offer, besides the charm that belongs to good language, good sense and good breeding, something wholesome to think upon and remember. We read,

> "not only with the sense
> Of present pleasure, but with pleasing thoughts
> That in this moment there is life and food
> or future years."

Among these addresses is one upon *Don Quixote*, delivered at the Working Men's College in Great Ormond Street, which contains the following passage.

> "It was the first time that characters had been drawn from real life with such nicety and discrimination of touch, with such minuteness in particulars, and yet with such careful elimination of whatever was unessential, that the personages are idealised to a proper artistic distance from mere actuality. With all this, how perfectly life-like they are! As Don Quixote tells us that he was almost ready to say he had seen Amadis, and proceeds to describe his personal appearance minutely, so we could affirm of the Knight of La Mancha and his Squire. They are real, not because they are portraits, not because they are drawn from actual personages, but rather because of their very abstraction and generalisation. They are not so much taken from life as informed with it. They are conceptions, not copies from any model; creations as no other characters but those of Shakespeare are in so full and adequate a manner; developed out of a seminal idea like the creatures of nature, not the matter-of-fact work of a detective's watchfulness, products of a quick eye and a faithful memory, but the true children of the imaginative faculty from which all the dregs of observation and memory have been distilled away, leaving only what is elementary and universal. I confess that in the productions of what is called the realistic school I generally find myself in company that is little to my taste. Dragged back into a world from which I am only too willing to escape, and set to grind in the prison-house of the Philistines, I walk about in a nightmare, the supreme horror of which is that my coat is all button-holes for bores to thrust their fingers through and bait me to their heart's content. Give me the writers who will take me for a while out of myself and (with pardon be it spoken) away from my neighbours! I do not ask that characters should be real; I need but go into the street to find such in abundance. I ask only that they should be possible, that they should be typical, because these I find in myself and with these can sympathise. Hector and Achilles, Clytemnestra and Antigone, Roland and Oliver, Macbeth and Lear, move about, if not in worlds not realised, at least in worlds not realised to any eye but that of imagination, a world far from the police reports, a world into which it is a privilege, I might almost call it an achievement, to enter."

It would be hard to formulate more simply and yet so explicitly the kind of intellectual refreshment those who agree with Mr. Lowell look for in novels. The limitation is necessary.

[1] *Democracy, and other Addresses*, by James Russell Lowell. London, 1887.

If one may judge by the booksellers' lists he must be in a singularly small minority, and those who range themselves with him must console themselves by remembering what Carlyle said of the majority of mankind. If novel-writing be like play-writing, and the quality of its supply be regulated by the demand of its patrons, it would seem that the number of people who wish to be taken out of themselves and away from their neighbours can hardly constitute a public for which it will be worth any man's while to write—who writes to make money. Yet if this be so, there is no need to grow angry over it. It is surely unreasonable to pass an absolute judgment on any work of fiction. Certain universal rules of criticism are no doubt applicable here, as they may be said to be applicable to almost any work of man's hand. But, when all is said and done, the first business of fiction is to interest. If this business be accomplished in a seemly manner, without any violation of decency and morality (to be sure, there is much virtue in this *if!*) there can be no right reason for complaint. The late George Henry Lewes was not perhaps an extremely wise man, but he made one very sensible observation on this head. "If an author," he wrote once, in an essay on Dickens, "if an author makes me laugh, he is humorous; if he makes me cry, he is pathetic. In vain will any one tell me that such a picture is not laughable, is not pathetic; or that I am wrong in being moved." Beyond this there is no passing. Mr. Lowell (and you and I, good reader, with him) may prefer, when we settle down in our arm-chairs with a book in our hands, to be taken out of ourselves and away from our neighbours, as far as this psychical transportation is possible—those neighbours, whom in the flesh we are always so glad to see, and whose affairs we are never weary of discussing. But if our neighbours think differently, so let them think. If they find Miss Jones a more attractive heroine of romance than Diana Vernon: if they are more interested in the financial or amatory entanglements of Captain Spurs than in the epic achievements of D'Artagnan, in the runic conceits of some bean-fed rustic rather than the noble simplicity of Leather-Stocking: if the chatter of Chelsea tea-tables or the rumble of the Bayswater omnibus has a sweeter sound in their ears than the brogue of Captain Costigan or the rattle of Mr. Pickwick's post-chaise—what then? What ails us who think otherwise to be angry? There is food enough for all tastes, and we who prefer the old style of cookery have at any rate from one point of view the best of it. For what has Mr. Lowell said in another place and time?

> "Reading new books is like eating new bread.
> One can bear it at first, but by gradual steps he
> Is brought to death's door of a mental dyspepsy."

It is not, of course, essential to this process of transportation that the means employed should be antique or impossible: that the world to which we are carried should be one of which we have no knowledge, and can form no conception, or that our companions should be unlike any specimens of humanity we have ever encountered. It is not essential that the times and manners should be even remote. Personally I myself prefer to wander amid the mists of a reasonable antiquity. I like *Old Mortality* better than *Guy Mannering*, and *A Tale of Two Cities* better than *Bleak House*: the adventures of Henry Esmond interest me more than those of Philip Firmin: I would any day sooner go round the world with Amyas Leigh than stay at home with Tom Thurnall: would sooner creep with Jan Ridd than fly with Tommy Upmore. But these are mere private fancies: like the contents of missing pocket-books, of no interest to anybody but the owner. All that is really essential—all we ask for, is change, some release

from "the trivial round, the common task." Let our new acquaintances be of like flesh and blood with ourselves: let them wear the same clothes, if our master of the ceremonies please, and dwell in houses made with the hands that built ours. The same dancers, if you will, but a different measure. "The matter-of-fact work of a detective's watchfulness, products of a quick eye and a faithful memory." That is what we do not want. It was Congreve, I think, who said that a literal report of the conversation of the two wittiest men in the world would be a monstrous dull thing to read. It may, perhaps, be a question whether wit is so common a quality now as it was in Congreve's time; but of the literalness of our reporters there can be no question. What we want in short, is, to use a well-worn illustration, pictures and not photographs; and we want the pictures painted in some livelier colour than that drab which is, alas, no longer the tone of the future, but of the present.

Let it be said again that this is no attempt to lay down rules for the manufacture of novels: it is merely an attempt made by one of its feeblest members to plead the cause of a minority, to show that it has some reason for its existence, and is not really so arbitrary or so wrong-headed as the triumphant majority asserts. We do not wish to quarrel with the other side, or to burn their libraries. Sons of a new world, with all the follies of the old to warn them, not, as Heine said of de Musset, with a fine career behind them, but with all the promise of the ages before them, why should they wish to be taken out of themselves, or to be rid of their neighbours? What better company could they find? Happy men! We, ancients of the earth and just abandoning this ungrateful stage, we envy, we do not disparage them, not them nor any of their works. But we wish to be so transported, and they cannot do it: or will not, for we must not suppose they could not an they would: it can be only the mind that is wanting, as Lamb said of Wordsworth's reason for not writing another *Hamlet.* We do wish to be taken out of ourselves, to be rapt for one short hour from off this dull common earth: whether, worn with the unending warfare, we yearn only for "the dark house and the long sleep;" or, vexed by one of these petty checks which ruffle some natures more than Fortune's weightiest buffets—

> "When Lady Jane is in a pet,
> Or Hoby in a hurry,
> When Captain Hazard wins a bet,
> Or Beaulieu spoils a curry"—

we are merely out of temper with the passing moment.

There is, indeed, (or there may be,) another side to this case. It has been assumed that we of the old romantical school are in a minority, partly on the strength of the rule that the supply of any commodity is always regulated by the demand, and partly on the strength, at least the vehemence, of the assertion that we are so. But of the validity of the first of these reasons I confess to feeling a little sceptical. In former times, when the body of readers was much smaller, and, rightly or wrongly, some sort of deference was paid to the recognised arbiters of literary taste, this may have been so: the public asked for that they were assured, by people in whose judgment they trusted, was the best. But now, I suspect the booksellers and the libraries are really the arbiters of taste, and the good, patient public take whatever is offered them across the counter. It seems hard to believe that an age which has bought twenty-three editions of *Lorna Doone*, and has so ungrudgingly accepted the lively and ingenious tales of Mr. Stevenson and Mr. Rider Haggard, has really no stomach for romantic fiction. It may be true that when wisdom crieth in the streets, no man regardeth her; but there are other voices which, if only they cry loud enough, have a better chance of a hearing. A man with good lungs, and hampered by no unreasonable

modesty, should have no great difficulty nowadays in getting himself taken at his own valuation: at any rate he need not go far or look long for reason to think the trial worth his while. It is not then, perhaps, quite certain that it is the voice of the people we hear bidding Romance stand aside. Novels there must be. "The only genuine Romance for grown persons," growled Carlyle, "is Reality," pouring his anathemas on "this exceeding great multitude of novel writers and such like," bidding them either "retire into nurseries and work for children, minors, and semi-fatuous persons of both sexes; or else, what were far better, sweep their novel-fabric into the dust cart, and betake them with such faculty as they have, to understand and record what is true." This is very terrible, but Carlyle's bark, as we know by this time, was always worse than his bite: at any rate he has himself told us that on one memorable occasion when the Eternal Verities were more than commonly shy of revealing themselves, he put all his papers away for a fortnight, and soothed his troubled brain and temper with a course of Marryat's novels. "All people, with healthy literary appetites love them," wrote Thackeray, calling novels the sweets of literature, just as all people with healthy physical appetites have a sweet tooth somewhere in their head. A later witness declares that women are the chief patrons of fiction, and of the bulk of current fiction this, I suppose, is true; for, without offence either to our novelists or their patrons, the modern novel can hardly be expected to have much flavour for what is known as a masculine appetite: but take the work of the men who, so as to avoid any invidious distinction, shall be called the Old Masters of their craft, does this limitation of patronage hold good? I suspect not. Take them all from Fielding to Dickens: how many, even of our Literary Ladies think you could give off-hand an intelligent summary of the plots of *Redgauntlet* or *Martin Chuzzlewit*, the name of Roderick Random's wife or of Beatrix Esmond's first husband? The female taste is too delicate for these strong meats, though it will sometimes nibble on the sly at some well-spiced French dish. Then, perhaps, some one will say, if our women-folk are the chief patrons of fiction, of course the manufacturers of fiction consult the taste of their most remunerative clients; and so the old theory of supply and demand is, for all your scepticism, proved true. But may not something be said for the converse of the proposition?

It may be that the general taste of the time is less masculine than it was: that the shock of being taken out of itself is too much for it: that, estranged from its neighbours, from the familiar faces and voices of its common life, it feels lonely and frightened. Some arguments might be found for this view. In the preface to his translation of the plays of Sophocles, Dr. Plumptre explains the difference in the methods of education practised at Athens in the periods before and after the Persian war—a difference which will also be found very amply and curiously illustrated in the *Clouds* of Aristophanes. The later method, he says,

> "under the influence of sophists and rhetoricians, was open to the charge of cultivating sharpness of intellect at the expense of manliness, and strength and purity. It proposed political success as the one object in life, and that was only to be obtained by the skill of speech, which involved long practice and attendance in the assemblies, deliberative and judicial, of the people. So trained, the youths of Athens became pale and narrow-chested, glib of speech, chattering in the Agora, boasting that they were better than their fathers, calling good evil and evil good, sinking into all forms of effeminacy."

Certainly there is a good deal of chattering in the Agora nowadays, and some young gentlemen, we know, are very firmly persuaded of their superiority to their fathers; while the supremacy of politics is matter of universal acknowledgment. Just then, as the *Clouds*, which the author,

and as most moderns are agreed justly, considered his masterpiece, was among the least successful of his plays at the time, so it is not hard to understand why Thackeray's caustic wit and the broad laughter of Dickens should be less to the taste of the sons than of the fathers. For the same reason the tales of Sir Walter, breathing as they do the very spirit of manliness and sincerity, may also be out of favour. This, however, is to take a very low view both of the physical and intellectual characteristics of the present age. It will perhaps be better to run the risk of offending a smaller part of the community, to take it for granted that women are the chief patrons of our latter-day novelists, and to fall back for an explanation on the belief that had those Old Masters not yet earned their brevet of distinction, but were still working among us and for us to-day, they would still find audiences, fit and not few.

After all, there is nothing so strange as to need explanation in the fact, if fact it be, that novels are most read by what it would perhaps now be thought an insult to call the softer sex. Women—those at least who do not make it the business of their lives to unsex themselves, those whom we like still to think of as women —have more leisure to spend on their amusements, and it is right that they should have more leisure: it is the province of men to work that women may have leisure. And after all novel-reading, the reading even of the best novels, is an amusement, not the business of life. We have seen Thackeray calling novels the sweets of literature. The demand for these sweets is immense, and the merchant must supply it, "as he will supply saddles and pale ale for Bombay and Calcutta." But, continues the ingenious moralist, "as surely as the cadet drinks too much ale, it will disagree with him; and so surely, dear youth, will too much novels cloy on thee;" and he wonders whether novel-writers themselves read many novels, and makes no doubt, in answer, that they all "partake of novels in moderation—eat jellies, but mainly nourish themselves upon wholesome roast and boiled." No doubt, indeed: if it had not been for that wholesome roast and boiled we should have had no *Tom Jones*, no *Waverley*, no *Esmond*. Some, indeed, have thought a little more of that nourishing diet had done the author of *Pickwick* himself no harm, though it seems sheer wantonness to wish Charles Dickens had been other than he was. It would certainly do their successors no harm to-day. No: reading novels is an amusement, a recreation, a relief, alike for the man of business and the student, from their severer hours. To say this is to do novels no wrong, nor would any of their great makers have thought so. Theirs is a great work: to make this weary, dusty world fresh and bright and cheerful: to soothe the tired heart and head: to make the lagging hours of sickness fly—in a word, to take us out of ourselves! A ministering work, indeed; and an ungrateful wretch he were who would grudge their dues to them who wrought it. "Scott ruined!" said one to whom the sad news had just been told, "the author of *Waverley* ruined! Good God, let every man to whom he has given months of delight give him a sixpence and he will rise to-morrow morning richer than Rothschild!"

One of the latest, and not least valuable of recruits to this noble army of benefactors has just been making some profession of his faith.[1] Mr. Rider Haggard says boldly out what a more feeble voice can only venture to hint as possible—that the vast bulk of contemporary fiction is no great thing. The French school of "Naturalism," the American school of "Laboured Nothingness" (one might find shorter words, but let that pass) he runs a tilt at both, and there is one at least who will not get in his way. But he thinks not much better

[1] See *The Contemporary Review* for February.

of his own countrymen, only for them he can find an excuse. Here, he says,

> "We are at the mercy of the Young Person, and a dreadful nuisance most of us find her. The present writer is bound to admit that, speaking personally and with humility, he thinks it a little hard that all fiction should be judged by the test as to whether or no it is suitable reading for a girl of sixteen. There are plenty of people who write books for little girls in the schoolroom; let the little girls read them, and leave the works written for men and women to their elders. . . . Why do men hardly ever read a novel? Because, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, it is utterly false as a picture of life; and, failing in that, it certainly does not take ground as a work of high imagination. The ordinary popular English novel represents life as it is considered desirable that school-girls should suppose it to be. . . . He [the author] ought, subject to proper reservations and restraints, to be allowed to picture life as life is, and men and women as they are. At present, if he attempts to do this he is denounced as immoral; and perchance the circulating library, which is curiously enough a great power in English literature, suppresses the book in its fear of losing subscriptions. . . . Surely, what is wanted in English fiction is a higher ideal, and more freedom to work it out."

From my researches into contemporary English fiction (which are, indeed, neither many nor deep) I confess I should not have thought the Young Person a dominant power in it. The book, on whose suppression by one of the circulating libraries some little while ago the author tried to raise an outcry, seemed to me not so much immoral, in the sense of being likely to disturb the morals of its readers, as dirty—dirty and dull, as all dirty things are, except to those who love them for their own sake, and their morals, I apprehend, are not likely to be injured by a wilderness of Zolas. However, this dominance of the Young Person is, after all, no new discovery. Thackeray made a few observations about her in the preface to *Pendennis.* Since Fielding, he said, no one had been allowed to depict to his utmost power a man: he must be draped and given a certain conventional simper. "Society will not tolerate the Natural in our Art." He owns that he has been franker than was commonly thought convenient, but with no harm he hopes, and certainly with no thought of harm. We can hardly nowadays conceive *Pendennis* as likely to "kill the girls or thrill the boys" with any very inconvenient feelings; yet the writer tells us that the little affair between Fanny Bolton and the hero brought many remonstrants in its course and lost him many subscribers. No doubt now he would be blamed, or condoled with, as the case might be, for his undue devotion to the cause of the Young Person in not bringing that little affair to what lovers of "the Reality" would call a natural issue. But here, Thackeray, as I imagine, was not so much making a complaint as stating a fact and offering an apology, suggested no doubt rather by a sense of courtesy than a consciousness of error. And when he goes on to say, "You will not hear—it is best to know it—what moves in the real world, what passes in society, in the clubs, colleges, mess-rooms—what is the life and talk of your sons," is he thereby implying that he would like to write it, that it ought to be written? Surely not: surely Thackeray, the supreme artist, he who so beautifully praised Goldsmith for his purity, so manfully rebuked Sterne for his indecency, recognised above all men that it is the business of art not to report but to select, that a literal transcript of the conversation of young men, or for the matter of that of old men, in their private hours would rarely be interesting and very often far from seemly, and that above all things it behoves those whom Genius has blessed with powers above their fellows to remember also that it has laid on them more serious responsibilities.

The question of morality in art must of course in some measure be determined by extrinsic rules, by what we sometimes call Convention. It is the old story over again of that Greek word on which Mr. Matthew Arnold

once lectured to the Eton boys: the *eutrapelia* of Thucydides becomes the *eutrapelia* of Saint Paul. There are offences against the good manners of the time, and there are offences against what Coleridge called the good manners of human nature itself. Fielding, for instance, and Smollett are coarse, but they are not immoral: Sterne is coarse and also immoral. In the two former we feel no consciousness of sympathy with their heroes' lapses from virtue: in the latter, for all his wonderful wit and drollery, for his many touches of exquisite tenderness, his many proofs of sympathy with goodness and purity, there is, to use Thackeray's own words, "not a page but has something that were better away, a latent corruption—a hint, as of an impure presence." Swift, again, is coarse even to beastliness: alone, I think, of all English writers, at any rate of all English writers of the first class, he seems to have the French delight in sheer nastiness. But Swift is not immoral; whereas Defoe who is rarely if ever coarse, is in some of his less read tales very frequently immoral. But on this distinction it can hardly be necessary to press: the meanest capacity can be capable only of wilfully misconceiving its importance. Anything which gives a shock to modesty or tends to demolish innocence is to be deplored. Life brings such offences soon enough to most of us, without Literature anticipating the time. Let the ears of the Young Person then by all means be kept from the plain speaking of a coarser day. If it be true, as Mr. Haggard says it is (without appearing to perceive that if it is true, his complaint rather vanishes into the air) that plenty of people write books for little girls in the schoolroom, let the little girls be content with such relish to their bread and butter, and leave the stronger fare to their elders.

But after all possible arguments have been used on both sides the case resolves itself into one simple issue, as Mr. Haggard himself, half-consciously and perhaps half-unconsciously, has owned. "Genius," he says, "of course, can always find material wherewith to weave its glowing web." That is it: "so very much depends upon the style in which it's done." Sir Walter has given a striking instance of this in *Redgauntlet:* were I limited to a single proof of his exquisite tact I do not know what better one I could choose. It will be remembered that what one may call the more domestic part of the plot turns upon the boyish fancy of Darcy for the mysterious Green Mantle, who proves in the end to be no other than his own sister. Now, had a clumsier hand worked with such materials it is inevitable that there would have been some sense of unfitness, a touch of something not wholly convenient, even had the intentions of the workman been all that the British Matron herself could have desired: it is impossible even to conceive what the ingenious disciples of the "Natural" School—the Philosophers of the Pig-stye—might not have made of such a game of cross-purposes. But no one reads *Redgauntlet* without thinking the mistake the most natural and laughable thing possible, and an agreeable relief to a somewhat tragic and painful close. Mr. Haggard, indeed, would put Genius out of the plea, and certainly I do not remember that Genius has ever very grievously bewailed its bondage. His remarks, he says, are made "from the humbler standing-ground of the ordinary conscientious labourer in the field of letters, who, loving his art for her own sake, yet earns a living by following her, and is anxious to continue to do so with credit to himself." No one would wish to answer harshly one so modestly speaking, one especially who has done so much credit to himself; but when we find a man complaining that he has not genius sufficient to make his novels interesting unless he is allowed to write of things which the order and sense of the world have agreed are not convenient for such purposes, it is

impossible to refrain from suggesting the obvious alternative. And the suggestion can be made with less fear of offence by reason that Mr. Haggard shows himself quite conscious of the danger of granting this license even to the conscientious labourer. "Once start the average mind upon this subject, and it will go down the slope of itself. It is useless afterwards to turn round and say that, although you cut loose the cords of decent reticence which bound the fancy, you intended that it should run *uphill* to the white heights of virtue." Useless, indeed, and worse than useless: for it would be untrue.

No: the "young, light-hearted masters" of the modern novel may be sure that neither glory nor profit lies that way. Run over in your mind the greatest names in literature and think what they are honoured for. "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." The men who think on these things are the men whose work will really live for all the chatter of all the cliques. It is of no avail to say that the world then was less straitlaced, and that the famous dead men were hampered by no Puritanical restrictions. It is not what we call the coarseness of the old writers, much less their impurity when they were impure, that gives them their abiding fame. No man who has an honest love for good literature but must often have wished much that is inextricably mixed up with the Old Masters' work were away from it. It were wiselier done to try and imitate, at how long soever a distance, their better part, or, failing that, to be humbly content to admire it—than to cry out because we are not suffered to imitate the worse. There is no languor inevitable to virtue, as certainly there is no enduring rapture in vice. "Let your speech be with grace, seasoned with salt:" if nature has denied you the salt, will you be the richer for throwing away the grace?

But let us hope the prospect is not so dreary and so hopeless as Mr. Haggard thinks. The world is still young, though some of us have grown old in it. I forget how many years it has yet to last; but some one of our philosophers settled the other day with the customary precision of this century, the moment when the sun should be burned out and our world perish from cold. A tolerable amount of æons still remains for the sons of men, and we will hope a tolerable crop of good novels still remains to written. After all, the breed of brave men did not wholly perish with Agamemnon.

"The word unto the prophet spoken
Was writ on tables yet unbroken;
The word by seers or sybils told,
In groves of oak or fanes of gold,
Still floats upon the morning wind,
Still whispers to the willing mind."

Meanwhile if the aspiring novelists of to-day cannot find their materials in the life around them, there are, as Mr. Haggard truly observes, "the paths and calm retreats of pure imagination" for them. Would that some more could find the way there: pure imagination will beat impure reality any day, whatever the Frenchmen may say. The author of *She* should not, I think, despair of finding food for his fancy. But before he ventures once more "to cross the bounds of the known, and, hanging between earth and heaven, gaze with curious eyes into the great profound beyond," might a humble admirer venture to suggest to him to read what Sir Walter has written, (inspired by a little misadventure of his own that way) on the treatment of the supernatural in works of fiction?

PERUGIA.

"Cursed is he who removeth his neighbour's landmark." These are words which many of us no longer care to hear in church: to some of us it seems that these words, and others like them, are not suited to the solemnity, the serenity of that sacred place. They are words which, Mr. Jesse Collings and his friends would tell us, are vain and useless, for no landmarks are left: the greater landlords have moved them all long ago. They are words which, perhaps, when Mr. Chamberlain and his friends have had their will, and we are a pastoral people again, may have once more some reason for their public and solemn utterance. But they are also words which all lovers of old towns and old buildings must often have upon their lips, or at least in their minds, as they see the havoc of restoration, or the ruin of modern improvements aiding the work of time and decay. One age is too fond of destroying the work of another, of removing its landmark; and our own age, if it has been the most restoring, has, possibly, been the most destroying as well. Few places, few buildings, indeed, have escaped restoration, or ruin, or destruction. Perugia has been singularly fortunate in avoiding their worst evils, and it is this good fortune which seems to constitute half its charm. And this most interesting old city is, perhaps, not as well known, as much visited, as it deserves to be. There are not many places of its size, even in Italy, which are more full of art, of beauty, and of associations, than the capital of Umbria. Nature, too, aids it as well as history. It stands on a long ridge of hill, at the foot of which the Tiber flows, yellow and poplar-fringed as it sweeps through the Umbrian plain. The town still preserves, on the whole, its mediæval look, with some touch, also, of its classical descent. The mediæval walls surround it, and within them the circuit of the Roman walls can yet be traced. At the entrance of one steep street there is a massive gateway of plain, gigantic masonry (a relic, they say, of Etruscan rule) and on the span of the arch we read *Augusta Perusia*—a legend which speaks to us of the beginning of the empire. One side of this old town gate supports a loggia of the Renaissance; and by the Roman wall, of which it forms a part, there winds a steep, rough, mediæval foot-way, half stair, half slope, to some desolate, but more modern, palaces. It is this close mingling of the ages which is the charm, the characteristic of Perugia.

Its neighbour, Assisi, is far more mediæval; but though it has a Roman portico above ground, and a forum beneath, it has not much of the Renaissance. Gubbio, a little farther off, is most mediæval in its look, and very full of the Renaissance in its decoration and detail; but its classicism is not mingled with these, it gives no character to the appearance of the town. Assisi is always reminding one of St. Francis, or of Dante and Giotto, and the thirteenth century. Gubbio speaks, too, of that flowering time of the middle ages, and of the Dukes of Urbino. But at Perugia it is impossible to forget Etruscans, Romans, mediæval burghers, Baglioni nobles, and the art of the Renaissance: they are all confronting us at every turn. The ages here have, no doubt, destroyed a good deal, but they have had some respect for each other's landmarks—they have left a good deal. An antiquarian seeker will have that formula of

commination, "Cursed is he who removeth his neighbour's landmark," less often on his lips, than he is wont to have in historical towns.

The streets of Perugia are narrow, winding, and steep. Little cave-like shops open on to them: the shopman, often a workman too, busy at his trade, may be seen within, and his wares generally overflow and cover the scanty pavement. Above, on clear days, is the deep blue sky; and the whole effect—the dark, shady street, the darker shops, the tall houses, the clear sky overhead—is most Italian. The streets, narrow as they are, are crossed by passages yet narrower; and down these picturesque vistas of quaint architecture are visible, vignetted often against a landscape as blue as the background of an early Tuscan painter. All the smaller streets lead, after more or less winding, to the main thoroughfare, the Corso Vannucci, which lies along the ridge of the hill, and in which are the chief buildings, the Duomo and the Municipio.

Passing through the Arch of Augustus, and following a steep, narrow street, such as I have just described, the explorer will cross the little Piazza Ansidei, and take a small vaulted foot-road: this will lead him to the south side of the Duomo, and if he keeps under its wall to the western door, he will find himself by the statue of Julius the Third. The figure is of bronze, and is on a high pedestal. The Pontiff, in cope and tiara, is seated on a throne, with his right hand raised in the act of blessing. The folds of the drapery, as the cope falls from the outstretched arm, are very fine; and the whole pose of the figure is noble and dignified.

The Duomo is on the right. Outside, like so many Italian cathedrals, it is unfinished; but the west entrance is a good specimen of Italian Gothic; and the north side, with its exterior pulpit (said to have been used by St. Bernardino of Siena) is irregular and picturesque. The whole fabric is raised by several steps above the level of the piazza. Inside, the building wants the grace and lightness of the great Northern churches, of Amiens, or Salisbury, or Westminster; and it has not the severe beauty of the cathedral of Florence; but it leaves an impression of breadth, height, and spaciousness. Some of the pillars are of very beautiful veined marble, and there are two rich Renaissance chapels at each side of the nave. But all that can be done to lessen its dignity and vulgarise its beauty has been done: decorations which should be severe, are tawdry: furniture which should be simple, is gaudy; and the church is spoilt. Perhaps, to Englishmen, the most interesting object in it is the tomb of Innocent the Third, the liege lord and protector of King John, the foe and condemner of the Great Charter: the Pope who, from the standpoint of matured feudalism, looked at the assertion of an English freedom more venerable than his own system, and thought it new, audacious, and dangerous to religion and order.

The north wall of the Duomo forms one side of the great piazza, and opposite to it is the Municipio. Between them stands the fountain of Nicholas and John of Pisa. It is formed by three tiers of basins, two of marble and one of bronze. The marble ones below are polygons, richly sculptured: the uppermost is a shell of bronze, from which nymphs and griffins rise and pour water. This fountain is a beautiful specimen of the art of the thirteenth century.

The Municipio is one of those buildings which are common enough in Italy, or France, or Flanders, but which are too uncommon here. If we put London aside, it is very rare in England to find fine municipal buildings of any historical interest: Exeter has an old town-hall, and so has Coventry, but these are neither large nor imposing: they do not add much to the character of the towns. In Worcester there is a fine guildhall of

Queen Anne's time; and Windsor, unless I mistake, has a building of the same period, though inferior to the one at Worcester. But it is, I think, impossible to find in any of our English cathedral towns, municipal buildings which can compare with the ecclesiastical ones. We have but to think of Florence or Siena, of Bruges, Louvain, or Poictiers, to see how true, unfortunately, this is: if we think of the cathedrals and town buildings in these places, and in Salisbury, we shall realise the difference.

However, to return to Perugia. The Municipio, there, is a fine old building of the thirteenth century, the sort of building we long for in Salisbury, quite worthy of the fountains beneath it and of the Duomo opposite. Its chief entrance, arched and beautifully enriched with twisted moulding, is terraced above the piazza on a graceful staircase. Over the arch are two large heraldic monsters with fetters of iron beneath their feet, to commemorate the triumph of Perugia over a rival city. The general appearance of the building is not very unlike that of some of the Venetian palaces, though it has not quite the lightness of the latter. Inside, on the ground floor, there is a large open hall, from which a severely plain staircase leads to the middle storeys, which are still used for town business, and to the upper floor, where the picture gallery is. In this a great deal of interesting work from private galleries, churches, and country places round has been gathered together. There are some frescoes, by Bonfigli, which give a capital idea of Perugia as it was in its best days, and some specimens of early art, which show us how painting advanced by slow degrees to Perugino.

No doubt there are better Peruginos elsewhere than Perugia now possesses. In Florence there are better ones, and, for colour, we have a better one in the National Gallery; but to understand Perugino it is necessary to study him here, with the Umbrian people round, and the Umbrian country and colouring at hand. It is usual to speak of Perugino's work as artificial, mechanical, soulless; but when it is seen in his own country and among his own people the truer epithet for it will be realistic. His backgrounds give the flat, thinly-timbered character of the Umbrian valley, or the receding ridges of the Umbrian hills, blue or brown as they are sunlit or in shadow; and the types of his people may still be seen in Perugia or about the country-side.

Besides the Peruginos, there is a set of delicate little pictures by Fra Angelico; and near them hangs a painting by Boccati, one of those tender mediæval works which are full of devotion and of nature. The Madonna and Child are enthroned and attended by a group of saints: inclosing them all is a ring of angels, bright, dainty, young-eyed, who are singing or playing on instruments of music. Their figures lean on a marble terrace, and all of them, Madonna, Child, angels, and saints, are embowered in cypress-trees and flowers. Near the Municipio is the Cambio, the old chamber of commerce, and in its hall are some frescoes by Perugino and his pupils. Perugia is worth a visit for the sake of this alone. The walls of the Cambio are interesting, not only on account of Perugino, or on account of their workmanship, but because they show us very perfectly that strange mingling of spirits which the Renaissance produced. Sybils and prophets, saints, heroes and virtues cover its walls, and do honour to two great frescoes of the Nativity and Transfiguration. But on the ceiling the Greek gods reign, as they are represented by the planets we name from them: not, indeed, as we see them in the severe repose of real Greek work, but treated with a mediæval, fantastic touch very foreign to the Greeks but characteristic of the lightness of early Renaissance. The chapel of the Cambio

is also rich with frescoes, but restoration and re-painting have hidden much of the master's work.

From the Cambio the Corso leads past the new Prefettura to a terrace bright with flowers and planted with aloes. From this a wall goes sheer down to the hill-side which slopes away, still downwards, to the broad space on which the cattle-fairs are held and the soldiers drilled. On the edge of it is a large old church, and from that the ground falls away to the station beneath. Beyond, the hills rise again, ridge behind ridge sweeping back into a far blue distance, where higher, bolder mountain-lines are faintly seen. To the left, Assisi gleams white on the flanks of Monte Soubasio, a bare, bleak, round-topped hill, and from the foot of this the valley of the Tiber stretches away to the horizon. The river winds through a broad, flat valley, and flashes here and there as the sunlight catches it, while it seems as though it could never find an outlet through the gates of the hills which protect and close the valley.

A few fragments of Roman sculpture are built into the wall which supports this terrace on the Assisi side. Passing these, and following a low-lying street by St. Dominico and the barracks to the Porta Romana, a road leads to the church of St. Pietro. This is part of a Benedictine monastery, now suppressed, and in the sacristy are five very beautiful heads of saints by Perugino. The view from a small balcony, hung high in air behind the choir, is extremely good. Just opposite the church are some shady gardens, ilex-grown and cool, from which there is another pleasant view of Assisi. Past St. Pietro, too, is the road to the Etruscan tomb of the Volumnii, near Ponte St. Giovanni. This tomb is well worth a visit. Some plain steps lead down to an entrance in the solid rock, where maidenhair grows thick: a stern, carved portal guards an almost church-like excavation, with nave, chancel, and side chapels. These vaults are full of sculptured urns, in which the ashes of the Volumnian family were laid.

Perugia is in many senses a city of the dead. Its streets are quiet now and still: power has left it, and its trade is small. Everything in it points to the past. In this, as I said, it is kinder to us than most historical places, it has moved fewer of its landmarks. And, oddly enough, to fit in with all this, its chief time of rejoicing is what is called the Feast of the Dead, that is, the great cattle-fair, which is held on All Souls' Day.

This is the peculiar holiday of Perugia and its people. All classes share alike in the rejoicing. From their country villas the great Perugini families go to spend a few days in their palaces, which are usually all still and silent. The peasants flock in from the country-side in a long procession, with oxen and mules and donkeys: the women gay with bright shawls and handkerchiefs, and the beasts making the journey lively with their jingling bells. The face of the town itself is changed. All down the Corso are booths and stalls, which spread away into various side-streets. In the market-place, under the shadow of the Duomo and the Municipio, is a noisy crowd of cheap-jacks and quack-doctors. The fountain of the Pisani is circled round with pottery and china. The statue of Julius looks down on bales of wool. The theatre is open for the week, and during my visit a Miss Mèry, as she called herself with an attempt at our English Mary, was giving a wondrous entertainment.

The Corso is thronged with buyers and onlookers, and noisy with the voices of competing sellers. At one stall, just under St. Bernardino's pulpit, is a man in a large fur robe, with stentorian lungs praising scissors and patent needle-threaders. Near him a rival with a trumpet is selling knives, and at each sale he blows a terrible blast of triumph. At a third stall, a man, who has improvised

a turban, scarf, and waist-belt from his gaudy wares, is selling bright-coloured handkerchiefs. Round a fourth is gathered a knot of keen-eyed but rather frightened peasants, who are watching some experiments in electricity. Above all other noises is the shrill, perpetual scream of inflated bladders, which blow a whistle as the air escapes from them.

But amid all this, the dead are not forgotten. On the evening of the day before their first vespers are sung in church and cathedral. Then, in the cemetery, which is on a hill-top just beyond the city walls, the graves are visited, and on each is placed a lighted lamp, some tombs being favoured with as many as five or six. Early on the morning of the second of November a solemn mass of requiem is sung, and the cathedral rings with the stern, sweet tones of antiquated music, as eternal rest and everlasting light are begged for the departed. At times the burying-place is as busy as the fair, for everybody during the day goes to pay a visit to the grave of some well-loved lost one.

The feast is indeed a Feast of the Dead; and, somehow, the shadow of the dead seems to abide always in this Umbrian city. A peculiar sweetmeat is sold here called Dead Men's Bones: a thick, sweet paste, of the consistency of marrow, encased in a sugar covering of the shape and colour of human leg-bones. Besides this delicacy there is another eatable which savours of the grave, a small biscuit made of bean-flour, a dim relic possibly of far-off Etruscan funeral rites. This is called the Cake of the Dead.

It is strange that this old human dwelling-place should fill with the bustle and turmoil of life only on the Feast of All Souls: that its one time of rejoicing should be the octave of the dead. And yet it is not strange; for above all other places of mediæval Italy, Perugia has been the home of violence and bloodshed. The Duomo has been flooded with the blood of murdered men: faction fights have strewn its streets and palaces with corpses: its chronicles are filled with lamentation and mourning and woe. Family feuds were fiercer and more deadly here than in other places. It is fitting, then, that the living should come together here to pray that the dead may rest in peace. On reading the past one may cease to wonder that the great day in Perugia should be the Feast of the Dead.

Arthur Galton.

THE SONG OF MALDON.

In the appendix to Thomas Hearne's edition of the *Chronicle of John of Glastonbury*, published at Oxford in 1726, there is, in company with Dr. John Dee's account of his life and studies, a note about the battle of Bannockburn, and much other unexpected matter, an Anglo-Saxon poem which is thus described: "A historical fragment, mutilated at the beginning and end, consisting of six leaves, celebrating in a poetical and Cædmonian style the prowess of Beorthnoth the Ealdorman and other Anglo-Saxons in battle with the Danes." The manuscript of this poem, which was once in the Cottonian Library, has been lost, so it is to Hearne and his curiously miscellaneous appendix that we owe our knowledge of a fragment which, in Mr. Freeman's words, "ranks among the noblest efforts of Teutonic poetry." In truth there is nothing in old English literature finer than this fragment of a ballad on the battle of Maldon and the death of Brihtnoth; and it has moreover a unique value as a specimen of an epic contemporary with the events it describes—so closely contemporaneous, indeed, that the poet does not even know the name of the Vikings' leader and, with venial inaccuracy, confounds Norwegians with Danes, besides stigmatising them as heathens.[1] And although the battle was in itself of little moment—only one of many scores which were fought in that unquiet tenth century between the English and their northern foes—it is made interesting and important by the poem. Rarely is the evidence for any historical fact so direct and so trustworthy. The reader feels at once that, making due allowance for poetical exaggerations and amplifications, the story is true and faithfully told. Even the speeches of the warriors, which we naturally regard with most suspicion, are perhaps only a poetic setting of the very words they used. All the indirect touches which irresistibly win our belief—and the poem is full of them—shows that if the poet was not actually an eye-witness of the battle, he at any rate knew the ground thoroughly, and got his information at first hand.

The event is twice briefly recorded in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle. First, in texts C D and E, under the year 991, it is said: "This year was G . . . wic harried, and very soon afterwards Brihtnoth the Ealdorman was killed at Mældun." Again, in text A only, under 993: "This year came Unlaf with ninety-three ships to Staines, and laid waste all around, and thence he went to Sandwich, and thence to Gypswic [Ipswich] and harried it all, and so to Mældun; and there Byrhtnoth the Ealdorman and his force came against him and fought with him, and there they slew the Ealdorman and kept the battle field." But for the poem this is all that we should have known of the battle of Maldon, and Brihtnoth's name would have lived only in the signature of *Brihtnoth Dux* to many charters of the reign of Æthelred, and as a Northumbrian Ealdorman, a benefactor of the great

[1] If the date of the battle is 993, and not 991, it is the very year in which Olaf Tryggvason became a Christian; and if his baptism in the Scilly Isles preceded the battle of Maldon, we may be quite sure that no man under his command dared thenceforward to call himself a heathen. The earlier, however, is the generally accepted date, and the Norwegians at that time were certainly unconverted.

monastery which sheltered his remains. The Saga of Olaf Tryggvason (the Unlaf of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle) only speaks in general terms of that monarch's expedition to England, and gives no details; and there is no allusion to the battle of Maldon anywhere in Norse literature, except possibly in a single line of the poet Hallfred.[1] On the other hand, the Chronicle of Ely is very full and explicit on the subject, but unhappily not very trustworthy. It tells us that Brihtnoth was a Northumbrian Ealdorman of noble birth, of great personal strength and courage, wise and eloquent, honouring the holy Church and its ministers, and applying to their use the whole of his patrimony. How it came to pass that the duty of repelling an invasion in Essex devolved on a Northumbrian Ealdorman the chronicler does not say; but he relates that when Brihtnoth heard that the Danes had landed at Maldon he at once marched against them, and defeated them at a bridge over the river. After his victory he returned to Northumberland, and the Danes, burning for revenge, sent a second expedition to Maldon, under Justin and Guthmund the son of Stectan. They sent a message to Brihtnoth, challenging him to fight with them under pain of being deemed a coward if he refused; and Brihtnoth, nothing loth, hastily gathered a small force and started. On his way he came to the Abbey of Ramsey, and asked for entertainment for his army. The abbot replied that he had not room for so great a multitude, but professed his readiness to receive Brihtnoth himself with seven attendants only: to which handsome offer Brihtnoth chivalrously answered, "Let the lord abbot know, that as I cannot fight without my men I will not eat without them." The Ramsey historian, I may remark, asserts, on the other hand, that Brihtnoth said not a word; but admits that he was very angry, and that the abbot made a mistake, by which the rival monastery, much to Ramsey's disgust, profited. For when Brihtnoth came to Ely and asked for rations, the abbot, wiser in his generation than his brother of Ramsey, at once received the whole army with effusion, and treated them with "regal hospitality." Brihtnoth was not ungrateful, and we may conceive how the monks of Ramsey gnashed their teeth, and how "merrily sang the monks of Ely," when they heard that the hospitality of the monastery had been requited with the gift of half a dozen good manors—Spaldwick, Trumpington, and so forth. Moreover, Brihtnoth made a covenant with the abbot that if he fell in battle the latter should recover his body and give it fitting burial at Ely, receiving in return for this service eight or nine more manors, thirty marks of gold and twenty pounds of silver, two gold crosses, two pall lappets (*duabus laciniis pallii*) adorned with gold and gems, and a pair of gloves (*cyrothecis*, "hand-boxes") curiously wrought. Then, commending himself to the prayers of the brethren, Brihtnoth went on his way, met the enemy, and fought with them for fourteen days, until at last the Danes killed him and cut off his head, which in their flight (for the chronicler will not in the least admit that the English were beaten) they bore away with them. There may, perhaps, be some fragments of truth in this story, which was composed more than a century and a half after the event; but there is certainly a great deal of fiction, and the account of the two battles in particular is very apocryphal. But what follows is probably true. "The abbot of Ely," the chronicler continues, "on learning the issue of the battle, went with some monks to the field, and having discovered Brihtnoth's body, had it borne to their church and buried with honour. In the place of the head he put a round mass of wax, and long

[1] *Corpus Poeticum Boreale*, ii. 95. I owe this reference to Mr. York Powell.

afterwards, in these days, the corpse, being recognised by this token, was honourably placed among the other benefactors of the monastery."[1]

Towards the end of last century the bones of the hero were again moved, and they now rest, let us hope permanently, in the south aisle of the choir of the magnificent cathedral which rises on the spot where long ago the humble church covered his headless corpse. A marble tablet records his virtues and his benefactions, and his effigy, with his name mis-spelt, occupies (it can hardly be said to adorn) a window of the famous lantern. But the priceless treasure associated with his name which Ely once possessed has unhappily been lost—the curtain wrought with the glorious deeds and death of her husband which his widow, Æthelflæd, gave to the monastery. The tapestry and the poem were no doubt closely connected. The devotion which wrought the one probably ordered the composition of the other; and if we had the curtain before us we should most likely see on it (outlined in herring-bone stitch, *opus anglicum*) all the incidents of the fight exactly as they are recorded in the poem. We might then have known something of the beginning of the story which is now lost to us: how Brihtnoth heard of the Viking raid and collected his force to repel it—not his East Saxon force alone, but men apparently from all parts. We should have seen the leaders with their names inscribed over them, and perhaps a running commentary, as in the Bayeux tapestry —Ælfwine the Mercian, Leofsuncu the Anglian, and Æscferth the Northumbrian: Offa's kinsman riding up with his hawk on his wrist, and casting it off when sterner duties called him from the chase: Wulfstan and his kinsmen holding the bridge; and so on, through all the varying fortunes of the battle, until at last we might have seen the end of the story, and learned more surely than from any chronicle how the hero's body was found when the disastrous day was over, and how it was given fitting burial.

[1] The story of the substitution of a lump of wax for the head is also told of St. Edmund.

The little town of Maldon in Essex stands picturesquely enough, with its red roofs and church towers, on the ridge of a steep hill on the southern bank of the Blackwater overlooking a wide prospect northward and eastward. Two rivers mingle their waters in the estuary of the Blackwater, the Chelmer and the Pant—the Panta of the poem. This stream, rising near Saffron Walden, flows softly in a south-easterly direction, until at Beleigh, about a mile above Maldon, it approaches so near to the Chelmer that advantage has been taken of it to alter its course, and transform the rest of it into what is now the Chelmer and Blackwater Canal. Formerly, however, as old maps show, it flowed parallel to the Chelmer and at no great distance from it, until nearly opposite Maldon it suddenly bent northward, and sweeping round by Heybridge fell into the estuary by what is now called the Heybridge Creek. The tide runs up as far as Beleigh, and the ground between the rivers, which is a dead flat stretching from Beleigh downwards, and widening as the Panta bent north in its final sweeping curve, was probably in old times a marsh. Where it is widest, immediately opposite Maldon, a road still called the Causeway (retaining the name, and no doubt occupying the place, of a work which may very well have existed in the tenth century) runs straight to the village of Heybridge, where it crosses the Panta (now the Creek), by a bridge, a successor of the bridge mentioned in the poem. North of the Panta the ground rises slightly but decidedly, and it was at Heybridge that Brihtnoth drew up his forces and intrusted the guardianship of the narrow wooden bridge to Wulfstan and his kinsmen. The ford by which the Vikings crossed must have been somewhere above the bridge where the

direction of the stream is northerly, for the poem expressly says that they went through it westward.[1]

The Viking ships lay in the stream beneath the town of Maldon. Olaf evidently landed his men on the opposite bank, and moving along the causeway towards the ford and bridge sent his herald to the river-side to summon Brihtnoth to yield. Finding it impossible to force the bridge against Wulfstan's opposition he waited till the ebb of tide, and then moved to the ford. Had Brihtnoth attacked the Norsemen while struggling through the water and the banks of clammy ooze left bare by the ebb, the fate of the day might have been different; but his chivalrous nature, or his pride, forbade him to seize his advantage, and he allowed the enemy to cross unmolested, and to form up on the bank for a fair fight.[2] In many a hall, no doubt, in after years, noisy warriors over their cups of mead, while bragging of their own achievements (as our English ancestors, it must be confessed, dearly loved to do), would severely criticise Brihtnoth's fatal generosity, and point out to an admiring audience exactly how and where the battle ought to have been won. Odda's sons in particular would be very eloquent on the subject.

Of the battle itself the poem is the best exponent. We are, as it were, eye-witnesses of the scene, and from this battle we may dimly learn or guess how all battles in those times were fought. As Brihtnoth drew up his men at Maldon, so did Æthelstane at Brunanburh, so did Harold at Hastings. But many points in old English tactics still remain very obscure. For example, we hear much in this poem of the famous "shield-wall," but (without insisting on the phrase, which is, I think, a mere poetical flower of speech signifying in plain prose the ranks of armed men) it is not very easy to see how, except as a purely defensive formation, it worked in practice. Did the warriors sally out of their fortress to wage the hand-to-hand struggles in which they distinguished themselves? If so, what became of the shield-wall, and of Brihtnoth's or his lieutenants' injunctions to keep the serried ranks unbroken? We may see from this poem that the breaking of the shield-wall was deemed fatal, just as at Hastings ruin was wrought when the English pursued the flying Normans; or, to take a later instance, as terrible disaster followed at Tamasi when the face of the square charged the Arabs, and the square (as a square, the shield-wall in fact) ceased to exist. Yet unless we suppose constant sorties of individual knights to single combat with their adversaries, fighting was impossible. In a densely packed mass such as Mr. Freeman describes[3] at Hastings no man could have drawn bow or hurled dart, much less wielded brand or battle axe; and the army encased in the panoply of its shield-wall would have been as invulnerable indeed, but as useless for fighting purposes, as the overladen Italian soldiers of the middle ages who might fight all day without giving or getting a single wound. We must suppose, then, that a series of single combats took place in the space between the contending armies, and on the result of these the

[1] Mr. Freeman supposes that it was at or near the little Romanesque church that Brihtnoth drew up his men; but the church is below the bridge, and too far from the ford to have been Brihtnoth's first position. He may have retired there, however, when he allowed the Danes to cross; and it is quite possible that the church may mark the spot where he was killed.

[2] So James the Fourth allowed Surrey to cross the Till unmolested, and lost Flodden Field.

[3] *Norman Conquest*, iii. 492. Mr. Freeman very justly calls it "a strange warfare." I should say an impossible one. Harold was a man of sense and an able soldier, and it is simply incredible—let Guy of Amiens and William of Poitiers say what they please—that he would have jammed his men into such a helpless mass.

fate of the day would chiefly hang. But, of course, the two armies would not stand idle spectators of a succession of duels. From within the shield-wall, where the formation must undoubtedly have been loose enough to allow every man the free use of his weapons, darts and arrows would be discharged : into it a shower of missiles would fall, and the boldest man was he who, like Beowulf, bore without flinching " the iron shot of arrowy shower."

Meanwhile champion after champion would rush forth to meet a foe in single combat, their places in the ranks being filled up, and the shield-wall preserved as they went forward ; and as one after another they fell or were driven back, and the shower of missiles was doing its work, the ranks would get thinner and thinner, until the whole body became so shaken that a fierce charge of the enemy would transform the battle into a confused *mêlée*, ending in a total rout.

Another point on which a few words may not be out of place is the use of the old English lance or javelin. There can be no doubt that the *gar*, *spere*, *franca*, or *daroð*, as it is variously called in the poem, was a weapon for throwing, not for thrusting, and it does not appear that any man carried more than one. It is therefore probable that after hurling his lance at the foe, the warrior rushed on to finish his work with the sword ; just as at Killiecrankie or Prestonpans the Scotch Highlanders discharged their firelocks, threw them down, and then set on with the claymore. Brihtnoth, indeed, is said to have hurled two spears in swift succession at the man who wounded him, but we may suppose that he snatched the second weapon from one of his men or picked up a spent lance, many of which must have been lying on the field in every battle. The same weapon, for instance, which mortally wounded Brihtnoth, killed the man who wounded him—nay, it may quite possibly have been the very spear which the hero brandished aloft when he bade defiance to the Danes.

Of the men whose names are recorded in the poem the hero alone can be certainly identified. His signature occurs repeatedly in the charters of the reign of Æthelred, for the last time in 990, the year before his death. That he was not Ealdorman of Northumbria, as the Ely Chronicle asserts, there can be little doubt. Had he been so, it is not easy to see why such a devoted friend of the Church should have neglected the great ecclesiastical foundations in his own province when he bestowed such liberal benefactions on Ely and Ramsey ; or how he came to have such large property in the eastern counties, and none at all apparently north of the Humber. But it is quite possible that he may have been Northumbrian by descent, and the appearance in his force of Æscferth, the hostage, seems to point to a connection with Northumbria which may perhaps be the foundation for the statement in the Ely history. Brihtnoth, Mr. York Powell suggests, may more than once in the course of his long life have been sent to those northern parts on the king's errands, and, in the settlement of some blood feud perhaps, Æscferth may have been placed in his hands as a hostage for the good conduct of his father or his kinsmen. Even as an Ealdorman of the East Saxons, however, Brihtnoth's position is not quite clear. How came he to have Mercians and East Angles under his command? When Brihtnoth is killed, Leofsuncu, from Stourmere in East Anglia, declares that he will not " go home lordless." Now, no doubt he was a neighbour, and perhaps a kinsman, of Brihtnoth (whose nephew was Ealdorman of East Anglia), and he might very readily have brought his men to help ; but " lordless " is a very strong word with a technical signification, and would mean that Leofsuncu had not merely lost the leader of the army with which he was

serving, but that he was an outlaw—a "lordless" man. Similarly Ælfwine the Mercian says:

"Never shall my people's thanes reproach me that I fled
To seek my native land, and left my leader lying dead—
To me the worst of ills, for he my kinsman was and lord."

If Ælfwine was the son of the banished Ealdorman Ælfric, as Mr. Freeman suggests,[1] it is quite intelligible that he may have joined the following of such a famous leader as Brihtnoth; but in that case he would hardly have spoken of returning to his native Mercia.

Eadric perhaps may be the infamous Eadric Streona who in 1007 became Ealdorman of Mercia, and married King Æthelred's daughter Eadgyth; but Offa, Leofsuncu, and the rest I am unable to identify.

But after all, we are not much the wiser even if we could prove to demonstration that A or B is the very identical A or B who appears for one brief moment in some document preserved by Kemble. An authentic man no doubt; but the poetical record of him is quite as authentic, and far more interesting. The following translation will, I trust, give those who are unacquainted with the original, some notion of the spirit of this remarkable poem.

THE SONG OF MALDON,

OR

THE DEATH OF BRIHTNOTH.

. . . .

He bade each youth turn loose his horse and drive it far away,
And onward go with steadfast heart to mingle in the fray.
When Offa's kinsman saw the Earl no cowardice would brook,
Off from his wrist to woodland wide his falcon dear he shook:
He joined the ranks, and straightway then might all men clearly know
Never the knight would shrink from fight when armed against the foe.
Beside his liege lord Eadric, too, in battle sought to be:
Forth to the war he bore his spear—a dauntless heart had he—
The while he with his hands could grasp the buckler and broad sword:
Right well he kept the vow he pledged to fight before his lord.
There Brihtnoth then arrayed his men and taught them how to stand,
To keep their ranks, and fearless grasp the buckler in the hand.
And when they were in order set, he lighted from his steed
Among his own loved household-men whom he knew good at need.
The herald of the Vikings stood beside the river shore,
And the sea-rover's haughty words before the Earl he bore:
"From seamen bold I come: they bid that thou shalt straightway send
Treasure for ransom: better 'twill be for you in the end
To buy with gifts our onslaught off than with us war to hold.
No need to fight if ye agree—we'll make a peace for gold:
If so thou orderest it, who here among the rest art chief,
That thou wilt set thy people free, then bid for their relief,
That they shall to the seamen give as seamen shall decree
Treasure for peace: then take ye peace, and we will put to sea
With booty-laden ships, and peace henceforth between us be!"
Then Brihtnoth lifted up his voice—his shield he brandished high,
And shook his slender ashen shaft—and thus he made reply.
Wrathful and resolute he spake: "O thou sea-robber hear
What saith this folk! To you they give no tribute but the spear,
The venomed point, the old keen edge, and all the battle gear
That works no good for you in fight! Go, seamen's herald, say
This message of yet deeper hate: that here, an Earl, I stay
Undaunted with my men to guard the kingdom, folk, and land
Of Æthelred my lord. In war the heathen shall not stand!
That ye should with our spoil go hence unfought, since thus ye came
So far into this land of ours, too great meseems the shame!
Nor think ye to win gold with ease—rather shall grim war-play
And sword and spear our compact make ere we will tribute pay!"
With that he bade his men go forth: their bucklers then they bore
Till at the landing-place they stood beside the river shore.

[1] *Norman Conquest*, i. 272, n. 4.

Neither could reach the other there—between them flowed the tide ;
For after ebb the flood rolled up, it filled the channel wide.
And till their spears together clashed too long the time did seem
To Vikings and East Saxon ranks arrayed by Panta's stream,
For neither could the other hurt save by the arrows' flight
Till ebb of tide. Then ready there and burning for the fight
The Vikings stood, the seamen host. But Wulfstan—warrior old,
The son of Ceola—with his kin by Brihtnoth sent to hold
The bridge against them, with the lance the foremost Viking slew
Who stepped, foolhardy, on the bridge. With Wulfstan heroes two,
Ælfhere and Maccus, firmly stood, no passage would they yield,
But bravely fought against the foe while they could weapons wield.

Now when the hated strangers saw the bridge-wards there so stout,
They changed their ground, and to the ford they led their forces out.
Then for the heathen host the Earl made way, and overbold
Men heard the son of Brihthelm shout across the waters cold :
"Lo ! here is room for you ! Come on, come warriors to the fray !
God only knows which of us twain shall hold the field to-day."
Then onward came the wolves of war, they recked not of the flood :
Westward o'er Panta's gleaming waves they bore their shields and stood
Upon the bank. There 'gainst their foes were Brihtnoth's men arrayed,
And at his word they held their ground and buckler-wall they made.

Now drew the time of glorious deeds, the tide of battle nigh ;
And now the fatal hour was come when death-doomed men must die !
Now loud uprose the battle cry, and, greedy for their prey,
The ravens wheeled, the eagles screamed. On earth was noise of fray !

From hand was hurled the sharp-filed spear, the whetted arrow flew,
The bow was busy, shield met spear, and fierce the combat grew.
On either side brave soldiers fell. There Brihtnoth's kinsman died,
Wulfmær, his sister's son, all hewn with sword-wounds deep and wide.
But to the Vikings recompense was fully paid : I know
That Eadward smote one with his sword, nor did the stroke forego
Till at his feet the doomed foe lay. For this his lord gave thanks
To his bower-thane in season due. Thus stoutly in the ranks
The warriors fought with weapons sharp, and each one strove to be
The first whose spear might reach the life of death-doomed enemy.
On earth was slaughter ! Firm they stood ; and Brihtnoth's words of flame
Stirred every heart to bide the brunt and win a glorious name.

Forth went the hero old in war, he raised his sheltering shield
And shook his spear, and onward went into the battle-field.
Thus of one mind went earl to churl—alike their fell intent.
A southern lance the warrior's lord now pierced, by Viking sent ;
But with his shield he thrust at it, the shaft to splinters broke
And bent the head till out it sprang : then fierce his wrath awoke,
And at the foe who dealt the wound he hurled his deadly spear.
Skilled was the leader of the host—he sent the javelin sheer
Through the youth's neck : his guiding hand that Viking sought to slay ;
And then another swift he shot, through corslet it made way,
And in the heart through rings of mail the venomed lance-head stood.
The blither was the Earl for that—he laughed, the bold of mood,
And for the day's work rendered thanks that God to him had given.

But from a warrior's clenchèd hand a dart was fiercely driven,
Too sure it went, and pierced the noble thane of Æthelred.
Besides him stood a beardless youth—a boy in battle dread—
Young Wulfmær, son of Wulfstan : he swift from the hero drew
The bloody dart and hurled it back : the hardened spear-head flew,
And on the earth the Viking lay who thus had reached his lord.
Then rushed a warrior armed to seize the goodly graven sword,
Bracelets, and corslet of the Earl, but Brihtnoth drew his blade,
Brown-edged and broad, and fierce the strokes he on his corslet laid.
Too soon another smote his arm and hindered him. Then rolled
On earth the yellow-hilted sword, nor longer could he hold
Keen blade, nor weapon wield ; but still the grey-haired leader bade
His men keep heart and onward press, good comrades undismayed.

No longer could he stand upright, his eyes to heaven he bent :
"Ruler of nations ! I give thanks for all that Thou hast lent

Of joys in this world. Now have I, O gracious Lord! most need
That Thou show favour to my soul, that it to Thee may speed,
And to Thy kingdom, Lord of Angels! pass in peace. I pray
That hell foes do me no despite."
They hewed him as he lay—
The heathen dogs!—and two with him, Ælfnoth and Wulfmær; there
Beside their lord they gave their lives. Then those who did not dare
To bide the battle turned away, and foremost in the flight
Were Odda's sons: Godric forsook his leader and the fight:
On his lord's horse he basely leaped—he who from that kind man
Had many a horse received—and with him both his brothers ran.
Godrinc and Godwy turned and fled, they cared not for the strife,
But sought the fastness of the wood and saved their coward life!
And many more ran with them than beseemed if they had thought
Of all the good in happier times the Earl for them had wrought,
So in the mead-hall at the moot had Offa said one day,
That many there spoke boldly who at need would fall away.
Thus fell the leader of the host, the Earl of Æthelred,
And all his hearth-companions saw that there their lord lay dead.
But hotly thither came proud thanes and dauntless men drew nigh:
One thing alone they all desired—to take revenge or die!
Young Ælfwine, Ælfric's son was he, thus boldly spake to all
And cheered them on: "O think how oft we've sat—brave men in hall!—
And on the benches o'er the mead made boast of deeds in fight!
Now let the truly brave be seen! I will in all men's sight
Uphold my ancestry: I come of noble Mercian race,
Ealhelm my grandsire was—a ruler wise and high in place;
And never shall my people's thanes reproach me that I fled
To seek my native land, and left my leader lying dead—
To me the worst of ills, for he my kinsman was and lord!"
Then forward burning for revenge he rushed, and with his sword
He smote a seaman 'mong the foe (on earth the heathen lay
Hewn with the weapon) and he cheered his comrades to the fray.
"Ælfwine, well said!" cried Offa then, and shook his ashen spear,
"Full surely it behoves us all, when slain our lord lies here,
To cheer each other on to fight while we can weapons wield,
Good sword, hard brand, or lance! Nigh lost to us hath been the field
Through Godric, Odda's dastard son; when on the noble steed
He rode away, too many deemed it was our lord indeed,
And thus the folk were all dismayed—broken the buckler-wall:
On his foul deed that wrought such flight my curses ever fall!"
Leofsuncu to the warriors spake and raised his linden shield:
"A vow I've made that one foot's length here will I never yield,
But to revenge my dear loved lord right onward will I fare!
Round Stourmere never shall they say—the sturdy fighters there—
The scornful words that now my lord is fall'n I turned from fray
And went home lordless! No! me rather spear and sword shall slay!"
Wrathful he rushed, he scorned to flee, but fought with steadfast heart.
Dunhere (an aged churl was he) then spoke and shook his dart:
Each warrior to revenge the earl he bade, and loud o'er all,
"Let him," he cried, "who on the foe would wreak his leader's fall
Brook no delay, nor care for life!" And onward went they then—
Regardless of their lives they went. Fiercely the household men,
The grim spear-bearers fought: to God they prayed that they might take
Full vengeance on their enemies for their loved leader's sake.
The hostage Æscferth, Ecglaf's son, now helped them readily,
(Of stout Northumbrian race he came): never at all paused he
In war-play, but continually he let his arrows go:
Sometimes with them he struck a shield, and sometimes pierced a foe:
With every shot he dealt a wound while he could weapons wield.
Eager and fierce tall Eadward stood, the foremost in the field,
Never a foot length would he flee, thus haughtily he spoke,
Nor turn his back on his dead lord! The buckler-wall he broke,
And fought the foe till, ere he died, full vengeance he had wrought,
For his wealth-giver, on the Danes. And fiercely likewise fought
His noble comrade Sigbyrht's brother Ætheric, brave and true,
And many more: the keelèd shields they clove, they sternly slew.

All broken was the buckler's edge—dreadful the corslets' song !
Now Offa struck and felled to earth a seaman 'mid the throng,
But there Gadd's kinsman bit the dust—too soon was Offa slain !
Yet he fulfilled the vow he pledged his lord that both again
Should ride safe homeward to the burgh, or wounded in the fray
Die on the battle-field. Thane-like, beside his lord, he lay !
Loud clashed the shields ! Oft went the spear through doomed man's house of life !
The Vikings burning for the war, came on. Then to the strife
Wigstan the son of Thurstan rushed, and in the crowd slew three
Ere he lay dead. 'Twas fiercest moot ! The warriors steadfastly
In battle stood and wounded fell. On earth was slaughter dire !
Oswald and Ealdwold all the while still kept the ranks entire,
And both the brothers with fit words besought their kinsmen dear
Unflinchingly to bide the brunt and wield the sword and spear.
Then Byrhtwold the old comrade spoke : he shook his ashen dart
And grasped his shield and proudly cried : "The bolder be each heart,
Each spirit sterner, valour more, now that our strength is less !
Here our good leader lies on earth : may he who now from stress
Of war-play turns, for ever rue ! Full old of years am I—
Hence will I never, but beside my lord I hope to lie,
The man beloved ! "
So Godric, too, the son of Æthelgar,
Cheered on the warriors to the fight. Oft flew his spear afar—
His deadly spear—and Vikings smote ; then rushing on the foe
Foremost of all he cut and hewed till battle laid him low.
Not that same Godric he who turned from fight. . . . .

H. W. Lumsden.

THE LATE MASTER OF TRINITY.

I WISH, as a friend of fifty years standing, to contribute some notes by way of supplement to an article which has already appeared in this Magazine. I shall merely set down such observations as my own knowledge suggests as likely to throw additional light upon the late Master's life and character.

My own personal acquaintance with Dr. Thompson commenced in the summer of 1835, when I had the privilege of being his pupil for a long vacation at Keswick. I need not explain how it came about, that as a mere schoolboy I had the honour of reading with such a tutor; but it will be well believed that in reading Thucydides and Sophocles under his penetrating eye, and subject to his comments upon my mistakes, I had abundant opportunity of appreciating that side of his character which was not the most attractive or the most reassuring. Nevertheless, I was always sensible of his kindness. His manner impressed me with awe. I felt pretty sure that if I said a foolish thing my knuckles would be rapped; but I had sense enough to perceive the real gentleness of his heart, and our connection as tutor and pupil led to an unbroken friendship, or at all events to an acquaintance of the most solid and agreeable kind.

More than twenty years afterwards we were brought into close relation in very different circumstances. I became Dean of Ely, when Thompson, as Professor of Greek, held one of the canonries. Till the time of his removal to Cambridge as Master of Trinity we were thus for a quarter of the year near neighbours, much dependent upon each other for daily society, thrown together in matters of business, with plenty of opportunity of taking each other's measure in small things, and of quarrelling had we been so disposed: throughout, our relations were most pleasant, and no cross word or thought ever passed between us.

I venture to record these slight personal reminiscences, because I think they may be calculated to afford some justification of the step which I am taking in writing this article. I am at all events writing concerning a man whom I had much opportunity of knowing.

Thompson suffered intensely from shyness. This fact I place in the forefront and emphasise, because it is impossible to judge him fairly without bearing it in mind. Much that was attributed to coldness and haughtiness in his dealings with others had, I am convinced, their true explanation in this feature of his natural constitution. I have heard him speak of his sufferings on this score. "Nobody," he said to me once, "knows what shyness is, except those who suffer from it." A verdict in which, I believe, shy people (and there are many who suffer from this curious calamity, without being generally credited with it) will heartily agree. His own sense of shyness and its attendant peculiarities sometimes took an amusing form. When leaving Ely for Trinity Lodge, I recommended to him a young servant, who had lived at the Deanery. I said: "I think he will suit you. His manners are particularly good. You must have noticed him when you have been at the Deanery." "Manners!" replied the Master: "Yes; a great deal better than mine." An instance this of a feature of character which I should wish the reader to bear in mind, namely, that the Master's sarcastic form of expression was applied

by himself to himself as freely as to others: there was more of fun than of ill-nature in most of his sarcasm.

And connected probably with this shyness there was an extreme nervousness of temperament, which tends to account both for some things which the Master did, and for some which he left undone. Let me illustrate what I mean by an example. On one occasion, Dr. Whewell had been reading a paper, containing some views which he entertained with regard to certain dialogues of Plato, before the Cambridge Philosophical Society. I happened to be sitting behind Professor Thompson; and when the paper was finished, I whispered to him, that he ought to rise and say something. "Do you think I ought?" "Yes: I am sure that every one will expect it from you." Whereupon he rose and made some remarks, which no doubt were all they should have been. A few days afterwards, I chanced to meet him, and referred to the little incident. "Yes," said he, "you cost me a night's rest: I could not sleep a wink. I tried smoking, but it was no use: I had no rest all night."

Perhaps it was partly due to this same shy and nervous temperament, and partly to an almost inordinate shrinking from anything like sham or Pharisaism, that he seemed to dislike the notion of being thought generous, kind, liberal. Few men had more right to these epithets, but any suggestion to him that he had done anything to deserve them was at once steadily combated. When he succeeded to his canonical residence at Ely he took by valuation everything that he found in the house, though it was obvious that many of the fittings were not such as his own refined taste would have suggested. "How kind of you," said a friend, "to have taken all these things: you cannot like them." "Not kind at all," replied he: "I only took them to save myself trouble." This trifling incident is typical of a feature of character which his intimate friends must have often observed.

A man with this peculiarity of character and temperament is never seen to such advantage as when the outside world is entirely shut out. Few are more discerning of good and evil, or more instinctively just in their judgments than children, or perhaps I should say, young people. And no one was happier amidst the fun and chaff and merry games of a family at Christmas than the supposed stiff and stately personage of whom I am writing. Not unfrequently have I smiled at the contrast between the Thompson visible in the Deanery at Ely and the Thompson as Cambridge men, perhaps, for the most part, conceived the Tutor of Trinity or the Regius Professor of Greek.

I have spoken of Thompson's sarcasm as not being spared upon himself. I was returning from Cambridge on a certain Saturday, when, walking up from the station, I met the Canon in Residence. "Would you object to preach in the cathedral to-morrow morning instead of me?" said the Canon. "No; I will preach if you desire it. But why?" "Well," replied the Canon, "I have prepared a sermon, but I am certain that before I get to the end of it the congregation will pray for rain." Had he said this concerning any one else but himself he might have been thought ill-natured. It was his way: there was no ill-nature in the matter. He was, however, very modest about his sermons. Perhaps for the less educated part of the congregation the wish for rain might have some reality; and, doubtless, his sermons were marble cold, stern, statuesque; but there was always much to be learned from them, and one or two made a deep impression upon me, as conveying new thoughts and new views of Scripture.

His dislike of anything unreal or hypocritical may be illustrated by an anecdote of his tutorial days in College. An undergraduate, guilty of some irregularity, was summoned to his tutor's rooms. The line taken by the culprit was that of the good boy led

away by temptation, sorry for his fault, grieved to think of his father knowing of his disgrace, and so forth. Thompson knew his man, and was not to be taken in. "These feelings, sir," he said, "do you great credit; but you must be well aware that they are their own reward. You are gated for a fortnight."

This was cutting enough, but I do not imagine anything cruel was intended by it. Certainly, no tutorial lecture was likely to sink deeper or be better remembered. But this kind of pithy, epigrammatic expression of his thoughts was quite natural, involved no effort, and found its vent in cases in which there could be no question of any intent to wound.

An inventor of some new contrivance, I know not of what kind, desired to advertise his invention with some new Greek name, after the pattern of the *Eureka* shirt, the *Eucnemida* gaiters, and the rest. The Professor of Greek seemed to the inventor the proper person to whom to apply for help in the formation of his new name. Application was made, and, in answer, the Professor expressed himself in this fashion:—"My business as Professor of Greek is, to the best of my ability, to keep the language free from impurities. To apply to me for a new Greek word is much the same thing as writing to the Archbishop of Canterbury and asking him to invent a new heresy. If, however," he added, "you must have a new name, take this"—and then he gave a most ingenious Greek compound, with a marvellous number of syllables, and by me quite unrememberable. Professor Selwyn told me the story, and repeated the name: I wonder if any record of it exists: it was a *verbum sesquipedale* beyond all mistake.

Sometimes a very smart thing may be said by a man having a brain and a tongue such as Thompson had, which, when repeated in cold blood, sounds very cutting and severe; but which, when spoken and taken in conjunction with the circumstances of the occasion, would be felt to have no unkindly bitterness in it. Here is an instance.

A common friend of his and mine had taken a step which we both thought unwise, and which we endeavoured to persuade him to retrace. "Do you think," said I, "that —— will do as we wish?" "No," replied Thompson, "I think not. I have frequently known —— change his course when he was right, but never when he was wrong." It would be difficult to shoot a sharper arrow than this, but it was not poisoned.

Let me, however, relieve my paper by passing from all that can suggest the sarcastic side of his character to a few reminiscences in which there shall be nothing but sunshine.

The following *mot,* which has, I think, not yet been in print, has always appeared to me to be one of Thompson's neatest utterances.

Sitting at the table in the hall of Trinity College one day he heard two of his brother Fellows discussing, with an animation which seemed beyond the value of the point in dispute, whether the father of a certain man was a lawyer or a coachmaker. Neither combatant yielding his contention, Thompson interposed: "Why," said he, "do you not split the difference, and say that he was a conveyancer?"

It would not be difficult to produce other specimens almost as excellent as the preceding, but I resist the temptation in order to find room for two letters, which will admit the reader into closer intimacy than has hitherto been permitted.

The first is on the occasion of his appointment to the Mastership.

"*March* 15, 1866.

"MY DEAR MRS. GOODWIN,—You are, as you always have been, most kind to me. I assure you that it has cost me a struggle to accept so great a change. You will believe this when I tell you that I have been nearly sleepless ever since: indeed, I may say even before the arrival of the missive from high quarters, for I had intelligence which prepared me for the possibility of this result. It is some satisfaction not to have the responsibility of either having taken the first step, or, indeed, any step in the matter. My friends had my

name laid before Lord R—— without—*absolutely* without—my knowledge. So I hope they may be considered entitled to half the responsibility.

"My mother, to whom you so kindly allude, has, I find, harboured this desire in her foolish maternal heart; and for her sake, if for no other reason, I felt it impossible to refuse. Believe me, I shall not forget my pleasant summer residences, of which I hope to have one more. . . .

"With kindest regards to your daughters,
"I am yours most truly,
"W. H. T."

The second is a reply to a letter congratulating him upon his approaching marriage. It. was written during his last Ely residence, when my own family chanced to be absent, and when (as will be seen, and as his habit was) he visited the Deanery precincts and inspected the live stock belonging to the young people. Nothing very hard, cold, or sarcastic in this letter.

"THE COLLEGE, ELY,
"*July* 23, 1866.

"MY DEAR MRS. GOODWIN,—Thank you for your brief but expressive congratulations. I do think, for once, that I have not done a very foolish thing.

"Pray tell Frances (*yours* I mean) that her guinea-pigs deeply interest me. Their impressive countenances are frequently turned towards me, for I give them parsley, which the cock always insists on pecking to pieces, and even then will not allow them to approach.

"But the rabbits *do* gobble the sow-thistles which are *their* portion. The hawks are, I am sorry to say, more greedy than is becoming at their age. They are always screaming, 'Give, give!' and as I have no liver or other delicacy of the kind to give them, and they despise parsley, our interviews are anything but satisfactory.

"I think I may now venture to send my love to your girls—at any rate to the two younger ones.

"Yours sincerely,
"W. H. T."

There is one other aspect in which I must speak of Dr. Thompson as I intimately knew him, namely, as a Canon of the cathedral of which I was Dean. He was not great in ordinary business qualities: chapter meetings were doubtless a weariness to him, and frequently after such occasions I used to find Greek iambics scribbled upon the paper before him, by which he had beguiled the time devoted to the discussion of renewal of leases and such like sublunary matters. But he was alive to questions which really needed his intervention, and was ready with his opinion and advice. Above all, in cases of discipline and the like, which must always occur from time to time in capitular bodies, he did not shrink from unpleasant responsibilities. I always knew that if called upon to perform any duty which needed nerve and firmness I could depend upon his active support, if he believed my course to be right. The sphere of this kind of action, bounded as it is by the cathedral precincts, is somewhat contracted; but nevertheless, or perhaps just because the sphere is so contracted and so thoroughly withdrawn from external criticism, that which takes place is one of the best indications of the real character and principles of the man. When Thompson ceased to be Canon of Ely, in writing to him I thanked him heartily for his conduct towards me while a member of the chapter.

The last letter I ever received from the late Master of Trinity was an answer to one written by me from Rome to announce the circumstances of the death of Professor Munro, who was still Fellow of the college. I cannot resist the temptation to insert an extract from this letter, not only because it was the last, but because it contains an appreciative and loving notice of one who had a very gentle nature and was much worthy of being loved.

"TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE,
April 3, 1885.

. . . . . .

"We are very sensible of your kindness in regard of our departed friend. I found your letter on our return yesterday from a short holiday in the neighbourhood of London, whither the telegram concerning the sad event was forwarded to me. It did little more than announce the fact, and I was impatient to hear a fuller account from one of Munro's medical attendants. Your letter was therefore most interesting to me, and to a certain

extent consolatory, for it showed that he did not die quite alone and neglected. It is very good in you to arrange for the funeral, and to read the service over the remains. The Protestant cemetery at Rome is a very fitting resting-place for so great an authority in Roman literature, and with whom Latin philology was a passion—*the* passion, one may say, of his life. He is not the only eminent Englishman who rests there, and his grave will not be unvisited of English pilgrims. It is not generally known what an accurate Italian scholar he was, and how wide his reading in that as well as in French and German literature. In Greek he was scarcely less profoundly versed than in Latin. His taste, too, in art was just, as well as comprehensive. Of this I can judge, for I once spent some weeks with him in Florence." . . . .

One more word and I have done. I am glad that the writer of the former article in this Magazine has recorded the fact that the late Master of Trinity was the author of a manual of family devotions. It is I believe a fact not generally known, and certainly one which many of his friends would not have suspected. But it bears testimony to two features in his character: first, his delicate and sensitive taste, which recoiled from the possibility of introducing anything vulgar or offensively familiar into the solemnity of prayer; and secondly, the reality and depth of his religious feeling. Like all his other feelings, those which were concerned with religion lay much beneath the surface, but they were genuine, honest, real.

And now all that is mortal of him rests in the ante-chapel of the college over which he was called to preside. His name will not be the most conspicuous in the splendid roll of members of that noble foundation, but it will be worthy of its place; and they who knew him well will be quite sure that besides the more conspicuous features of his life and character which were known to the world, there were inner qualities of gentleness, kindness, and unaffected piety, which are infinitely more precious.

H. Carlisle.

THE WOODLANDERS.

BY THOMAS HARDY.

CHAPTER XLI.

THE first hundred yards of their course lay under motionless trees, whose upper foliage began to hiss with falling drops of rain. By the time that they emerged upon a glade it rained heavily.

"This is a little awkward," said Grace, with an effort to hide her concern.

Winterborne stopped. "Grace," he said, preserving a strictly business manner which belied him: "You cannot go to Sherton to-night."

"But I must!"

"Why? It is nine miles from here. It is almost an impossibility in this rain."

"True—*why*," she replied mournfully at the end of a silence. "What is reputation to me?"

"Now hearken," said Giles. "You won't—go back to your—"

"No, no, no! Don't make me!" she cried piteously.

"Then let us turn." They slowly retraced their steps, and again stood before his door. "Now this house from this moment is yours, and not mine," he said deliberately. "I have a place near by where I can stay very well."

Her face had drooped. "Oh," she murmured as she saw the dilemma. "What have I done!"

There was a smell of something burning within, and he looked through the window. The rabbit that he had been cooking, to coax a weak appetite, was beginning to char. "Please go in and attend to it." he said. "Do what you like. Now I leave. You will find everything about the hut that is necessary."

"But, Giles—your supper," she exclaimed. "An outhouse would do for me—anything—till to-morrow at daybreak!"

He signified a negative. "I tell you to go in—you may catch agues out here in your delicate state. You can give me my supper through the window, if you feel well enough. I'll wait a while."

He gently urged her to pass the doorway, and was relieved when he saw her within the room sitting down. Without so much as crossing the threshold himself he closed the door upon her, and turned the key in the lock. Tapping at the window he signified that she should open the casement, and when she had done this he handed in the key to her.

"You are locked in," he said; "and your own mistress."

Even in her trouble she could not refrain from a faint smile at his scrupulousness, as she took the door-key.

"Do you feel better?" he went on. "If so, and you wish to give me some of your supper, please do. If not, it is of no importance. I can get some elsewhere."

The grateful sense of his kindness stirred her to action, though she only knew half what that kindness really was. At the end of some ten minutes she again came to the window, pushed it open, and said in a whisper "Giles!" He at once emerged from the shade, and saw that she was preparing to hand him his share of the meal upon a plate.

"I don't like to treat you so hardly," she murmured with deep regret in her words as she heard the rain pattering on the leaves. "But—I suppose it is best to arrange like this?"

"Oh yes," he said quickly.

"I feel that I could never have reached Sherton."

"It was impossible."

"Are you sure you have a snug place out there?" (With renewed misgiving.)

"Quite. Have you found everything you want? I am afraid it is rather rough accommodation."

"Can I notice defects? I have long passed that stage, and you know it, Giles, or you ought to."

His eyes sadly contemplated her face as its pale responsiveness modulated through a crowd of expressions that showed only too clearly to what a pitch she was strung. If ever Winterborne's heart fretted his bosom it was at this sight of a perfectly defenceless creature conditioned by such circumstances. He forgot his own agony in the satisfaction of having at least found her a shelter. He took his plate and cup from her hands, saying, "Now I'll push the shutter to, and you will find an iron pin on the inside, which you must fix into the bolt. Do not stir in the morning till I come and call you."

She expressed an alarmed hope that he would not go very far away.

"Oh, no—I shall be quite within hail," said Winterborne.

She bolted the window as directed, and he retreated. His snug place proved to be a wretched little shelter of the roughest kind, formed of four hurdles thatched with brake-fern. Underneath were dry sacks, hay, and other litter of the sort, upon which he sat down; and there in the dark tried to eat his meal. But his appetite was quite gone. He pushed the plate aside, and shook up the hay and sacks, so as to form a rude couch, on which he flung himself down to sleep, for it was getting late.

But sleep he could not, for many reasons, of which not the least was thought of his charge. He sat up, and looked towards the cot through the damp obscurity. With all its external features the same as usual, he could scarcely believe that it contained the dear friend (he would not use a warmer name) who had come to him so unexpectedly and, he could not help admitting, so rashly. He had not ventured to ask her any particulars; but the position was pretty clear without them. Though social law had negatived for ever their opening paradise of the previous June, it was not without stoical pride that he accepted the present trying conjuncture. There was one man on earth in whom she believed absolutely, and he was that man. That this crisis could end in nothing but sorrow was a view for a moment effaced by this triumphant thought of her trust in him; and the purity of the affection with which he reresponded to that trust rendered him more than proof against any frailty that besieged him in relation to her.

The rain, which had never ceased, now drew his attention by beginning to drop through the meagre screen that covered him. He rose to attempt some remedy for this discomfort, but the trembling of his knees and the throbbing of his pulse told him that in his weakness he was unable to fence against the storm, and he lay down to bear it as best he might. He was angry with himself for his feebleness—he who had been so strong. It was imperative that she should know nothing of his present state, and to do that she must not see his face by daylight, for its sickliness would inevitably betray him.

The next morning, accordingly, when it was hardly light, he rose and dragged his stiff limbs about the precincts, preparing for her everything she could require for getting breakfast within. On the bench outside the window-sill he placed water, wood, and other necessaries, writing with a piece of chalk beside them, "It is best that I should not see you. Put my breakfast on the bench."

At seven o'clock he tapped at her window as he had promised, retreating at once that she might not catch sight of him. But from his shelter under

the boughs he could see her very well, when, in response to his signal, she opened the window and the light fell upon her face. The languid largeness of her eyes showed that her sleep had been little more than his own, and the pinkness of their lids, that her waking hours had not been free from tears.

She read the writing, seemed, he thought, disappointed, but took up the materials he had provided, evidently thinking him some way off. Giles waited on, assured that a girl who, in spite of her culture, knew what country life was, would find no difficulty in the simple preparation of their food.

Within the cot it was all very much as he conjectured, though Grace had slept much longer than he. After the loneliness of the night she would have been glad to see him; but appreciating his feeling when she read the request, she made no attempt to recall him. She found abundance of provisions laid in, his plan being to replenish his buttery weekly, and this being the day after the victualling-van had called from Sherton. When the meal was ready, she put what he required outside, as she had done with the supper; and, notwithstanding her longing to see him, withdrew from the window promptly, and left him to himself.

It had been a leaden dawn, and the rain now steadily renewed its fall. As she heard no more of Winterborne, she concluded that he had gone away to his daily work, and forgotten that he had promised to accompany her to Sherton: an erroneous conclusion, for he remained all day, by force of his condition, within fifty yards of where she was. The morning wore on; and in her doubt when to start, and how to travel, she lingered yet: keeping the door carefully bolted lest an intruder should discover her. Locked in this place she was comparatively safe, at any rate, and doubted if she would be safe elsewhere.

The humid gloom of an ordinary wet day was doubled by the shade and drip of the leafage. Autumn, this year, was coming in with rains. Gazing, in her enforced idleness, from the one window of the living room, she could see various small members of the animal community that lived unmolested there—creatures of hair, fluff, and scale: the toothed kind and the billed kind: underground creatures, jointed and ringed—circumambulating the hut, under the impression that, Giles having gone away, nobody was there; and eying it inquisitively with a view to winter quarters. Watching these neighbours, who knew neither law nor sin, distracted her a little from her trouble; and she managed to while away some portion of the afternoon by putting Giles's home in order, and making little improvements which she deemed that he would value when she was gone. Once or twice she fancied that she heard a faint noise amid the trees, resembling a cough; but as it never came any nearer she concluded that it was a squirrel or a bird. At last the daylight lessened, and she made up a larger fire, for the evenings were chilly. As soon as it was too dark (which was comparatively early) to discern the human countenance in this place of shadows, there came to the window, to her great delight, a tapping which she knew from its method to be Giles's.

She opened the casement instantly, and put out her hand to him, though she could only just perceive his outline. He clasped her fingers, and she noticed the heat of his palm, and its shakiness. "He has been walking fast, in order to get here quickly," she thought. How could she know that he had just crawled out from the straw of the shelter hard by; and that the heat of his hand was feverishness?

"My dear, good Giles!" she burst out impulsively.

"Anybody would have done it for you," replied Winterborne, with as much matter-of-fact as he could summon.

"About my getting to Exbury?" she said.

"I have been thinking," responded Giles, with tender deference, "that you had better stay where you are for the present, if you wish not to be caught. I need not tell you that the place is yours as long as you like; and perhaps in a day or two, finding you absent, he will go away. At any rate, in two or three days, I could do anythink to assist—such as make inquiries, or go a great way towards Sherton-Abbas with you; for the cider season will soon be coming on, and I want to run down to the Vale to see how the crops are, and I shall go by the Sherton road. But for a day or two I am busy here." He was hoping that by the time mentioned he would be strong enough to engage himself actively on her behalf. "I hope you do not feel over-much melancholy in being a prisoner."

She declared that she did not mind it; but she sighed.

From long acquaintance they could read the symptoms of each other's hearts like books of large type. "I fear you are sorry you came," said Giles, "and that you think I should have advised you more firmly than I did not to stay."

"Oh, no! dear, dear friend," answered Grace, with a heaving bosom. "Don't think that that is what I regret. What I regret is my enforced treatment of you—dislodging you, excluding you from your own house. Why should I not speak out? You know what I feel for you—what I have felt for no other living man, what I shall never feel for a man again! But as I have vowed myself to somebody else than you, and cannot be released, I must behave as I do behave, and keep that vow. I am not bound to him by any divine law, after what he has done; but I have promised, and I will pay."

The rest of the evening was passed in his handing her such things as she would require the next day, and casual remarks thereupon, an occupation which diverted her mind to some degree from pathetic views of her attitude towards him, and of her life in general. The only infringement (if infringement it could be called) of his predetermined bearing towards her was an involuntary pressing of her hand to his lips when she put it through the casement to bid him good-night. He knew she was weeping, though he could not see her tears.

She again entreated his forgiveness for so selfishly appropriating the cottage. But it would only be for a day or two more, she thought, since go she must.

He replied, yearningly, "I—I don't like you to go away."

"Oh, Giles," said she, "I know—I know! But—I am a woman, and you are a man. I cannot speak more plainly. 'Whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are of good report' —you know what is in my mind, because you know me so well."

"Yes, Grace, yes. I do not at all mean that the question between us has not been settled by the fact of your marriage turning out hopelessly unalterable. I merely meant—well, a feeling—no more."

"In a week, at the outside, I should be discovered if I stayed here; and I think that by law he could compel me to return to him."

"Yes: perhaps you are right. Go when you wish, dear Grace."

His last words that evening were a hopeful remark that all might be well with her yet: that Mr. Fitzpiers would not intrude upon her life, if he found that his presence cost her so much pain. Then the window was closed, the shutters folded, and the rustle of his footsteps died away.

No sooner had she retired to rest that night than the wind began to rise, and after a few prefatory blasts to be accompanied by rain. The wind grew more violent, and as the storm went on, it was difficult to believe that no opaque body, but only an invisible colourless thing, was trampling and climbing over the roof, making branches creak, springing out

of the trees upon the chimney, popping its head into the flue, and shrieking and blaspheming at every corner of the walls. As in the old story, the assailant was a spectre which could be felt but not seen. She had never before been so struck with the devilry of a gusty night in a wood, because she had never been so entirely alone in spirit as she was now. She seemed almost to be apart from herself—a vacuous duplicate only. The recent self of physical animation and clear intentions was not there.

Sometimes a bough from an adjoining tree was swayed so low as to smite the roof in the manner of a gigantic hand smiting the mouth of an adversary, to be followed by a trickle of rain, as of blood from the wound. To all this weather Giles must be more or less exposed; how much, she did not know.

At last Grace could endure no longer the idea of such a hardship in relation to him. Whatever he was suffering, it was she who had caused it: he had vacated his house on account of her. She was not worth such self-sacrifice: she should not have accepted it of him. And then, as her anxiety increased with increasing thought, there returned upon her mind some incidents of her late intercourse with him, which she had heeded but little at the time. The look of his face—what had there been about his face which seemed different from its appearance of yore? Was it not thinner, less rich in hue, less like that of ripe Autumn's brother to whom she had formerly compared him? And his voice: she had distinctly noticed a change in tone. And his gait: surely it had been feebler, stiffer, more like the gait of a weary man. That slight occasional noise she had heard in the day, and attributed to squirrels: it might have been his cough after all. Thus conviction took root in her perturbed mind that Winterborne was ill, or had been so, and that he had carefully concealed his condition from her that she might have no scruples about accepting a hospitality which by the nature of the case expelled her entertainer.

"My own, own, true l—— my dear kind friend!" she cried to herself. "Oh it shall not be—it shall not be!"

She hastily wrapped herself up, and obtained a light, with which she entered the adjoining room, the cot possessing only one floor. Setting down the candle on the table here she went to the door with the key in her hand, and placed it in the lock. Before turning it she paused, her fingers still clutching it; and pressing her other hand to her forehead she fell into agitating thought.

A tattoo on the window, caused by the tree-droppings blowing against it, brought her indecision to a close. She turned the key, and opened the door.

The darkness was intense, seeming to touch her pupils like a substance. She only now became aware how heavy the rainfall had been and was: the dripping of the eaves splashed like a fountain. She stood listening with parted lips, and holding the door in one hand, till her eyes, growing accustomed to the obscurity, discerned the wild brandishing of their boughs by the adjoining trees. At last she cried loudly, with an effort: "Giles! you may come in!" There was no immediate answer to her cry, and overpowered by her own temerity, Grace retreated quickly, shut the door, and stood looking on the floor. But it was not for long. She again lifted the latch, and with far more determination than at first. "Giles, Giles!" she cried, with the full strength of her voice, and without any of the shamefacedness that had characterised her first cry. "Oh, come in—come in! Where are you? I have been wicked. I have thought too much of myself! Do you hear? I don't want to keep you out any longer. I cannot bear that you should suffer so. Gi-i-iles!"

A reply? It was a reply! Through the darkness and wind a voice reached her, floating upon the weather as though a part of it.

"Here I am—all right! Don't trouble about me."

"Don't you want to come in? Are you not ill? I don't mind what they say, or what they think any more."

"I am all right," he repeated. "It is not necessary for me to come. Good night! good night!"

Grace sighed, turned, and shut the door slowly. Could she have been mistaken about his health? Perhaps, after all, she had perceived a change in him because she had not seen him for so long. Time sometimes did his ageing work in jerks, as she knew. Well, she had done all she could. He would not come in. She retired to rest again.

CHAPTER XLII.

The next morning Grace was at the window early. She felt determined to see him somehow that day, and prepared his breakfast eagerly. Eight o'clock struck, and she then remembered that he had not come to arouse her by a knocking as usual, her own anxiety having caused her to stir.

The breakfast was set in its place without. But he did not appear to take it, and she waited on. Nine o'clock, and the breakfast was cold: still there was no Giles. A thrush, who had been repeating himself a good deal on an opposite bush for some time, came and took a morsel from the plate and bolted it, waited, looked around, and took another. At ten o'clock she drew in the tray, and sat down to her own solitary meal. He must have been called away on business early, the rain having cleared off.

Yet she would have liked to assure herself, by thoroughly exploring the precincts of the hut, that he was nowhere in its vicinity; but as the day was comparatively fine the dread lest some stray passenger or woodman should encounter her in such a reconnoitre paralysed her wish. The solitude was further accentuated to-day by the stopping of the clock for want of winding, and the fall into the chimney-corner of flakes of soot loosened by the rains. At noon she heard a slight rustling outside the window, and found that it was caused by an eft which had crept out of the leaves to bask in the last sun-rays that would be worth having till the following May.

She continually peeped out through the lattice, but could see little. In front lay the brown leaves of last year, and upon them some yellowish-green ones of this season that had been prematurely blown down by the gale. Above stretched an old beech, with vast arm-pits, and great pocket-holes in its sides where branches had been removed in past times: a black slug was trying to climb it: dead boughs were scattered about like ichthyosauri in a museum, and beyond them were perishing woodbine stems resembling old ropes. From the other window all she could see were more trees, in jackets of lichen and stockings of moss. At their roots were stemless yellow fungi like lemons and apricots, and tall fungi with more stem than stool. Next were more trees close together, wrestling for existence, their branches disfigured with wounds resulting from their mutual rubbings and blows. It was the struggle between these neighbours that she had heard in the night. Beneath them were the rotting stumps of those of the group that had been vanquished long ago. Further on were other tufts of moss in islands divided by the shed leaves—variety upon variety, dark green and pale green: moss like little fir-trees, like plush, like malachite stars—like nothing on earth except moss.

The strain upon Grace's mind in various ways was so great on this the most desolate day she had passed there that she felt it would be well-nigh impossible to spend another in such circumstances. The evening came at last: the sun, when its chin was on the earth, found an opening through which to pierce the shade, and stretched irradiated gauzes across the damp atmosphere, making the wet trunks shine, and throwing splotches of such

ruddiness on the leaves beneath the beech that they were turned to hues of blood. When night at last arrived, and with it the time for his return, she was nearly broken down with suspense.

The simple evening meal, partly tea, partly supper, which Grace had prepared, stood waiting upon the hearth; and yet Giles did not come. It was now nearly twenty-four hours since she had seen him. As the room grew darker, and only the firelight broke against the gloom of the walls, she was convinced that it would be beyond her power to pass the night without hearing from him or from somebody. Yet eight o'clock drew on, and his form at the window did not appear.

The meal remained untasted. Suddenly rising from before the hearth of smouldering embers, where she had been crouching with her hands clasped over her knees, she crossed the room, unlocked the door, and listened. Every breath of wind had ceased with the decline of day, but the rain had resumed the steady dripping of the night before. Grace might have stood there five minutes when she fancied she heard that old sound, a cough, at no great distance; and it was presently repeated. If it were Winterborne's he must be near her: why then had he not visited her?

A horrid misgiving that he could not visit her took possession of Grace, and she looked up anxiously for the lantern, which was hanging above her head. To light it and go in the direction of the sound would be the obvious way to solve the dread problem; but the conditions made her hesitate, and in a moment a cold sweat pervaded her at further sounds from the same quarter. They were low mutterings; at first like persons in conversation, but gradually resolving themselves into varieties of one voice. It was an endless monologue, like that we sometimes hear from inanimate nature in deep secret places where water flows, or where ivy leaves flap against stones; but by degrees she was convinced that the voice was Winterborne's. Yet who could be his listener, so mute and patient; for though he argued so rapidly and persistently nobody replied.

A dreadful enlightenment spread through the mind of Grace. "Oh," she cried in her anguish as she hastily prepared herself to go out; "how selfishly correct I am always—too, too correct! Can it be that cruel propriety is killing the dearest heart that ever woman clasped to her own!"

While speaking thus to herself she had lit the lantern, and hastening out without further thought took the direction whence the mutterings had proceeded. The course was marked by a little path, which ended at a distance of about forty yards in a small erection of hurdles, not much larger than a shock of corn, such as were frequent in the woods and copses when the cutting season was going on. It was too slight even to be called a hovel, and was not high enough to stand upright in: appearing, in short, to be erected for the temporary shelter of fuel. The side towards Grace was open, and turning the light upon the interior she beheld what her prescient fear had pictured in snatches all the way thither.

Upon the hay within Winterborne lay in his clothes, just as she had seen him during the whole of her stay here, except that his hat was off, and his hair matted and wild. Both his clothes and the hay were saturated with rain. His arms were flung over his head and his face flushed to an unnatural crimson. His eyes had a burning brightness, and, though they met her own, she perceived that he did not recognise her.

"Oh, my Giles," she cried, "what have I done to you!"

But she stopped no longer even to reproach herself. She saw that the first thing to be thought of was to get him indoors.

How Grace performed that labour

she never could have exactly explained. But by dint of clasping her arms round him, rearing him into a sitting posture and straining her strength to the uttermost, she put him on one of the hurdles that was loose alongside, and, taking the end of it in both her hands, dragged him along the path to the entrance of the hut, and, after a pause for breath, in at the doorway. It was somewhat singular that Giles in his semi-conscious state acquiesced unresistingly in all that she did. But he never for a moment recognised her: continuing his rapid conversation to himself, and seeming to look upon her as some angel or other supernatural creature of the visionary world in which he was mentally living. The undertaking occupied her more than ten minutes; but by that time, to her great thankfulness, he was in the inner room lying in bed, his damp outer clothing removed.

Then the unhappy Grace regarded him by the light of the candle. There was something in his look which agonised her, in the rush of his thoughts, accelerating their speed from minute to minute. His soul seemed to be passing through the universe of ideas like a comet: erratic, inapprehensible, untraceable. Her distraction was almost as great as his. In a few moments she firmly believed he was dying. Unable to withstand her impulse, she knelt down beside him, kissed his hands, and his face, and his hair, moaning in a low voice, "How could I? How could I?" Her timid morality had, indeed, underrated his chivalry till now, though she knew him so well. The purity of his nature, his freedom from the grosser passions, his scrupulous delicacy had never been fully understood by Grace till this strange self-sacrifice in lonely juxtaposition to her own person was revealed. The perception of it added something that was little short of reverence to the deep affection for him of a woman who, herself, had more of Artemis than of Aphrodite in her constitution.

All that a tender nurse could do, Grace did; and the power to express her solicitude in action, unconscious though the sufferer was, brought her mournful satisfaction. She bathed his hot head, clasped his twitching hands, moistened his lips, cooled his fiery eyelids, sponged his heated skin, and administered whatever she could find in the house that the imagination could conceive as likely to be in any way alleviating. That she might have been the cause, or partially the cause, of all this, interfused misery with her sorrow.

Six months before this date a scene, almost similar in its mechanical parts, had been enacted at Hintock House. It was between a pair of persons most intimately connected in their lives with these. Outwardly like as it had been, it was yet infinite in spiritual difference, though a woman's devotion had been common to both.

Grace rose from her attitude of affection, and, bracing her energies, saw that something practical must immediately be done. Much as she would have liked, in the emotion of the moment, to keep him entirely to herself, medical assistance was necessary whilst there remained a possibility of preserving him alive. Such assistance was fatal to her own concealment; but even had the chance of benefiting him been less than it was, she would have run the hazard for his sake. The question was, where should she get a medical man, competent and near? There was one such man, and only one, within accessible distance: a man who, if it were possible to save Winterborne's life, had the brain most likely to do it. If human pressure could bring him, that man ought to be brought to the sick Giles's side. The attempt should be made.

Yet she dreaded to leave her patient, and the minutes raced past, and still she postponed her departure. At last, when it was after eleven o'clock, Winterborne fell into a fitful sleep, and it seemed to afford her an opportunity. She hastily made him as com-

fortable as she could, put on her things, cut a new candle from the bunch hanging in the cupboard, and having set it up, and placed it so that the light did not fall upon his eyes, she closed the door and started, there being now no rain.

The spirit of Winterborne seemed to keep her company and banish all sense of darkness from her mind. The rains had imparted a phosphorescence to the pieces of touchwood and rotting leaves that lay about her path, which, as scattered by her feet, spread abroad like spilt milk. She would not run the hazard of losing her way by plunging into any short, unfrequented track through the denser parts of the woodland, but followed a more open course, which eventually brought her to the highway. Once here, she ran along with great speed, animated by a devoted purpose which had much about it that was stoical; and it was with scarcely any faltering of spirit that, after an hour's progress, she passed over Rubdown Hill and onward towards that same Hintock and that same house out of which she had fled a few days before in irresistible alarm. But that had happened which, above all other things of chance and change, could make her deliberately frustrate her plan of flight, and sink all regard of personal consequences.

One speciality of Fitzpiers's was respected by Grace as much as ever: his professional skill. In this she was right. Had his persistence equalled his insight, instead of being the spasmodic and fitful thing it was, fame and fortune need never have remained a wish with him. His freedom from conventional errors and crusted prejudices had indeed been such as to retard rather than accelerate his advance in Hintock and its neighbourhood, where people could not believe that Nature herself effected cures, and that the doctor's business was only to smooth the way.

It was past midnight when Grace arrived opposite her father's house, now again temporarily occupied by her husband, unless he had already gone away. Ever since her emergence from the denser plantations about Winterborne's residence, a pervasive lightness had hung in the damp autumn sky, in spite of the vault of cloud, signifying that a moon of some age was shining above its arch. The two white gates were distinct, and the white balls on the pillars; and the puddles and damp ruts left by the recent rain had a cold, corpse-eyed luminousness. She entered by the lower gate, and crossed the quadrangle to the wing wherein the apartments that had been hers since her marriage were situate, till she stood under a window which, if her husband were in the house, gave light to his bedchamber.

She faltered, and paused with her hand on her heart, in spite of herself. Could she call to her presence the very cause of all her foregoing troubles? Alas!—Old Jones was seven miles off: Giles was possibly dying—what else could she do? She picked up some gravel, threw it at the panes, and waited to see the result. The night-bell which had been fixed when Fitzpiers first took up his residence there still remained; but as it had fallen into disuse with the collapse of his practice, and his elopement, she did not venture to pull it now. Whoever slept in the room had heard her signal, slight as it was. In half a minute the window was opened, and a voice said "Yes?" inquiringly. Grace recognised her husband in the speaker at once. Her effort was now to disguise her own accents.

"Doctor," she said, in as unusual a tone as she could command, "a man is dangerously ill in One-Chimney Hut, out towards Delborough, and you must go to him at once—in all mercy!"

"I will, readily."

The alacrity, surprise, and pleasure expressed in his reply amazed her for a moment. But, in truth, they denoted the sudden relief of a man who, having got back in a mood of contrition, from erratic abandonment to doubtful joys

found the soothing routine of professional practice unexpectedly opening anew to him. The highest desire of his soul just now was for a respectable life of painstaking. If this, his first summons since his return, had been to attend upon a cat or dog, he would scarcely have refused it in the circumstances.

"Do you know the way?" she asked.

"Yes," said he.

"One-Chimney Hut," she repeated. "And—immediately!"

"Yes, yes," said Fitzpiers.

Grace remained no longer. She passed through the white gate without slamming it, and hastened on her way back. Her husband, then, had re-entered her father's house. How he had been able to effect a reconciliation with the old man, what were the terms of the treaty between them, she could not so much as conjecture. Some sort of truce must have been entered into, that was all she could say. But close as the question lay to her own life, there was a more urgent one which banished it; and she traced her steps quickly along the meandering trackways.

Meanwhile, Fitzpiers was preparing to leave the house. The state of his mind, over and above his professional zeal, was peculiar. At Grace's first remark he had not recognised or suspected her presence; but as she went on, he was awakened to the great resemblance of the speaker's voice to his wife's. He had taken in such good faith the statement of the household on his arrival, that she had gone on a visit for a time because she could not at once bring her mind to be reconciled to him, that he could not quite believe this neighbour to be she. It was one of the features of Fitzpiers's repentant humour at this date that, on receiving the explanation of her absence, he had made no attempt to outrage her feelings by following her: though nobody had informed him how very shortly her departure had preceded his entry, and of all that might have been inferred from her precipitancy. Melbury, after much alarm and consideration, had decided not to follow her either. He sympathised with her flight, much as he deplored it: moreover the tragic colour of the antecedent events that he had been a great means of creating checked his instinct to interfere. He prayed and trusted that she had got into no danger on her way (as he supposed) to Sherton, and thence to Exbury, if that were the place she had gone to, forbearing all inquiry which the strangeness of her departure would have made natural. A few months before this time a performance by Grace of one-tenth the magnitude of this would have aroused him to unwonted investigation.

It was in the same spirit that he had tacitly assented to Fitzpiers's domicilation there. The two men had not met face to face, but Mrs. Melbury had proposed herself as an intermediary who made the surgeon's re-entrance comparatively easy to him. Everything was provisional, and nobody asked questions. Fitzpiers had come in the performance of a plan of penitence which had originated in circumstances hereafter to be explained: his self-humiliation to the very bass-string was deliberate; and as soon as a voice reached him from the bedside of a dying man his desire was to set to work and do as much good as he could with the least possible fuss or show. He therefore refrained from calling up a stableman to get ready any horse or gig, and set out for One-Chimney Hut on foot as Grace had done.

CHAPTER XLIII.

She re-entered the hut, flung off her bonnet and cloak, and approached the sufferer. He had begun anew those terrible mutterings, and his hands were cold. As soon as she saw him there returned to her that agony of mind which the stimulus of her journey had thrown off for a time.

Could he really be dying? She bathed him, kissed him, forgot all things but the fact that lying there before her was he who had loved her more than the mere lover would have loved: had martyred himself for her comfort, cared more for her self-respect than she had thought of caring. This mood continued till she heard quick, smart footsteps without: she knew whose footsteps they were.

Grace sat on the inside of the bed against the wall, holding Giles's hand, so that when her husband entered the patient lay between herself and him. He stood transfixed at first, noticing Grace only. Slowly he dropped his glance, and discerned who the prostrate man was. Strangely enough, though Grace's distaste for her husband's company had amounted almost to dread, and culminated in actual flight, at this moment her last and least feeling was personal. Sensitive femininity was eclipsed by devoted purpose, and that it was a husband who stood there was forgotten. The first look that possessed her face was relief: satisfaction at the presence of the physician obliterated thought of the man, which only returned in the form of a sub-consciousness that did not interfere with her words.

"Is he dying—is there any hope?" she asked.

"Grace!" said Fitzpiers in an indescribable whisper—more than invocating, if not quite deprecatory.

He was arrested by the spectacle, not so much in its intrinsic character (though that was striking enough to a man who called himself the husband of the sufferer's friend and nurse), but in its character as the counterpart of one that had its run many months before, in which he had figured as the patient, and the woman had been Felice Charmond.

"Is he in great danger—can you save him?" she asked again.

Fitzpiers aroused himself, came a little nearer, and examined Winterborne as he stood. His inspection was concluded in a mere glance. Before he spoke he looked at her contemplatively as to the effect of his coming words.

"He is dying," he said with dry precision.

"What?" said she.

"Nothing can be done, by me or any other man. It will soon be all over. The extremities are dead already." His eyes still remained fixed on her, the conclusion to which he had come seeming to end his interest, professional and otherwise, in Winterborne for ever.

"But it cannot be? He was well a week ago."

"Not well I suspect. This seems like what we call a sequel, which has followed some previous disorder—possibly typhoid—it may have been months ago, or recently."

"Ah—he was ill last year—you are right. And he must have been ill when I came."

There was nothing more to do or say. She crouched down at the side of the bed, and Fitzpiers took a seat. Thus they remained in silence, and long as it lasted she never turned her eyes, or apparently her thoughts, at all to her husband. He occasionally murmured, with automatic authority, some slight directions for alleviating the pain of the dying man, which she mechanically obeyed: bending over him during the intervals in silent tears.

Winterborne never recovered consciousness of what was passing; and that he was going became soon perceptible also to her. In less than an hour the delirium ceased: then there was an interval of somnolent painlessness and soft breathing, at the end of which Winterborne passed quietly away.

Then Fitzpiers broke the silence. "Have you lived here long?" he said.

Grace was wild with sorrow—bitter with all that had befallen her—with the cruelties that had attacked her—with life—with Heaven. She answered at

random. "Yes. By what right do you ask?"

"Don't think I claim any right," said Fitzpiers sadly. "It is for you to do and say what you choose. I admit, quite as much as you feel, that I am a vagabond—a brute—not worthy to possess the smallest fragment of you. But here I am, and I have happened to take sufficient interest in you to make that inquiry."

"He is everything to me!" said Grace, hardly heeding her husband, and laying her hand reverently on the dead man's eyelids, where she kept it a long time, pressing down their lashes with gentle touches, as if she were stroking a little bird.

He watched her a while; and then glanced round the chamber, where his eyes fell upon a few dressing necessaries that she had brought.

"Grace—if I may call you so," he said, "I have been already humiliated almost to the depths. I have come back since you refused to join me elsewhere—I have entered your father's house—and borne all which that cost me without flinching, because I have felt I deserved humiliation. But is there a yet greater humiliation in store for me? You say you have been living here—that he was everything to you. Am I to draw from that the obvious, the extremest inference?"

Triumph at any price is sweet to men and women—especially the latter. It was her first and last opportunity of repaying him for the slights which she had borne at his hands so docilely.

"Yes," she answered; and there was that in her subtly compounded nature which made her feel a thrill of pride as she did so.

Yet the moment after she had so mightily belied her character she half repented. Her husband had turned as white as the wall behind him. It seemed as if all that remained to him of hope and spirit had been abstracted at a stroke. Yet he did not move, and in his efforts at self-control closed his mouth together as a vice. His determination was fairly successful, though she saw how very much greater than she had expected her triumph had been. Presently he looked across at Winterborne.

"Would it startle you to hear," he said, as if he hardly had breath to utter words, "that she who was to me what he was to you is dead also?"

"Dead—*she* dead?" exclaimed Grace.

"Yes. Felice Charmond is where this young man is."

"Never!" said Grace vehemently.

He went on without heeding the insinuation: "And I came back to try to make it up with you—but——"

Fitzpiers rose, and moved across the room to go away, looking downwards with the droop of a man whose hope was turned to apathy if not despair. In going round the door his eye fell upon her once more. She was still bending over the body of Winterborne, her face close to his.

"Have you been kissing him during his illness?" asked her husband.

"Yes."

"Since his fevered state set in?"

"Yes."

"On his lips?"

"Yes."

"Then you will do well to take a few drops of this in water as soon as possible." He drew a small phial from his pocket, and returned to offer it to her.

Grace shook her head.

"If you don't do as I tell you you may soon be like him."

"I don't care. I wish to die."

"I'll put it here," said Fitzpiers, placing the bottle on a ledge beside him. "The sin of not having warned you will not be upon my head at any rate, amongst my other sins. I am now going, and I will send somebody to you. Your father does not know that you are here, so I suppose I shall be bound to tell him?"

"Certainly."

Fitzpiers left the cot, and the stroke of his feet was soon immersed in the

silence that pervaded the spot. Grace remained kneeling and weeping, she hardly knew how long, and then she sat up, covered poor Giles's features, and went towards the door where her husband had stood. No sign of any other comer greeted her ear, the only perceptible sounds being the tiny cracklings of the dead leaves, which, like a feather bed, had not yet done rising to their normal level where indented by the pressure of her husband's receding footsteps. It reminded her that she had been struck with the change in his aspect: the extremely intellectual look that had always been in his face was wrought to a finer phase by thinness; and a careworn dignity had been superadded. She returned to Winterborne's side, and during her meditations another tread drew near the door, entered the outer room, and halted at the entrance of the chamber where Grace was.

"What—Marty!" said Grace.

"Yes. I have heard," said Marty, whose demeanour had lost all its girlishness under the stroke that seemed almost literally to have bruised her.

"He died for me!" murmured Grace heavily.

Marty did not fully comprehend, and she answered, "He belongs to neither of us now, and your beauty is no more powerful with him than my plainness. I have come to help you, ma'am. He never cared for me, and he cared much for you; but he cares for us both alike now."

"Oh don't, don't, Marty!"

Marty said no more, but knelt over Winterborne from the other side.

"Did you meet my hus—Mr. Fitzpiers?"

"No."

"Then what brought you here?"

"I come this way sometimes. I have got to go to the further side of the wood this time of the year, and am obliged to get there before four o'clock in the morning, to begin heating the oven for the early baking. I have passed by here often at this time."

Grace looked at her quickly. "Then did you know I was here?"

"Yes, ma'am."

"Did you tell anybody?"

"No. I knew you lived in the hut, that he had gied it up to ye, and lodged out himself."

"Did you know where he lodged?"

"No. That I couldn't find out. Was it at Delborough?"

"No. It was not there, Marty. Would it had been! It would have saved—saved ——" To check her tears she turned, and seeing a book in the window-bench took it up. "Look, Marty, this is a Psalter. He was not an outwardly religious man; but he was pure and perfect in his heart. Shall we read a psalm over him?"

"Oh, yes—we will—with all my heart!"

Grace opened the thin brown book, which poor Giles had kept at hand mainly for the convenience of whetting his penknife upon its leather covers. She began to read in that rich, devotional voice peculiar to women only on such occasions. When it was over Marty said, "I should like to pray for his soul."

"So should I," said her companion. "But we must not."

"Why? Nobody would know."

Grace could not resist the argument, influenced as she was by the sense of making amends for having neglected him in the body; and their tender voices united and filled the narrow room with supplicatory murmurs that a Calvinist might have countenanced. They had hardly ended when new and more numerous footfalls were audible: also persons in conversation, one of whom Grace recognised as her father.

She rose, and went to the outer apartment, in which there was only such light as beamed from the inner one. Melbury and Mrs. Melbury were standing there.

"I don't reproach you, Grace," said her father with an estranged manner, and in a voice not at all like his old voice. "What has come upon you and us is beyond reproach, beyond weeping

and beyond wailing. Perhaps I drove you to it. But I am hurt: I am scourged: I am astonished. In the face of this there is nothing to be said."

Without replying Grace turned and glided back to the inner chamber. "Marty," she said quickly, "I cannot look my father in the face until he knows the true circumstances of my life here. Go and tell him—what you have told me—what you saw—that he gave up his house to me."

She sat down, her face buried in her hands, and Marty went, and after a short absence returned. Then Grace rose, and going out asked her father if he had talked to Marty.

"Yes," said Melbury.

"And you know all that has happened? I will let my husband think the worst—but not you."

"I do. Forgive me, Grace, for suspecting ye of worse than rashness—I ought to know ye better. Are you coming with me to what was once your home?"

"No. I stay here with *him*. Take no account of me any more."

The tender, perplexing, agitating relations in which she had stood to Winterborne during the summer (brought about by Melbury's own contrivance) could not fail to soften the natural anger of a parent at her more recent doings. "My daughter, things are bad," he rejoined. "But why do you persevere to make 'em worse? What good can you do to Giles by staying here with him? Mind, I ask no questions. I don't inquire why you decided to come here, or anything as to what your course would have been if he had not died, though I know there's no deliberate harm in ye. As for me, I have lost all claim upon you; and I make no complaint. But I do say that by coming back with me now you will show no less kindness to him, and escape any sound of shame."

"But I don't wish to escape it."

"If you don't on your own account cannot you wish to on mine and hers? Nobody except our household knows that you have left home. Then why should you by a piece of perverseness bring down my hairs with sorrow to the grave?"

"If it were not for my husband—" she began, moved by his words. "But how can I meet him there? How can any woman who is not a mere man's creature join him after what has taken place?"

"He would go away again rather than keep you out of my house."

"How do you know that, father?"

"We met him on our way here, and he told us so," said Mrs. Melbury. He had said something like it before. He seems very much upset altogether."

"He declared to her when he came to our house that he would wait for time and devotion to bring about his forgiveness," said Melbury. "That was it, wasn't it, Lucy?"

"Yes. That he would not intrude upon you, Grace, till you gave him absolute permission," Mrs. Melbury added.

This antecedent considerateness in Fitzpiers was as welcome to Grace as it was unexpected; and though she did not desire his presence, she was sorry that by her retaliatory fiction she had given him a different reason for avoiding her. She made no further objections to accompanying her parents, taking them into the inner room to give Winterborne a last look, and gathering up the two or three things that belonged to her. While she was doing this the two women came who had been called by Melbury, and at their heels poor Creedle.

"Forgive me, but I can't rule my mourning nohow as a man should, Mr. Melbury," he said. "I ha'n't seen him since Thursday se'night, and have wondered for days and days where he's been keeping. There was I expecting him to come and tell me to wash out the cider-barrels against the making, and here was he. . . . Well, I've knowed him from table-high: I knowed his father—used to bide about upon two sticks in the sun afore he died!—and

now I've seen the end of the family, which we can ill afford to lose, wi' such a scanty lot of good folk in Hintock as we've got. And now Robert Creedle will be nailed up in parish boards 'a b'lieve; and nobody will glutch down a sigh for he!"

They started for home, Marty and Creedle remaining behind. For a time Grace and her father walked side by side without speaking. It was just in the blue of the dawn, and the chilling tone of the sky was reflected in her cold, wet face. The whole wood seemed to be a house of death, pervaded by loss to its uttermost length and breadth. Winterborne was gone, and the copses seemed to show the want of him: those young trees, so many of which he had planted, and of which he had spoken so truly when he said that he should fall before they fell, were at that very moment sending out their roots in the direction that he had given them with his subtle hand.

"One thing made it tolerable to us that your husband should come back to the house," said Melbury at last. "The death of Mrs. Charmond."

"Ah, yes," said Grace, arousing slightly to the recollection, "he told me so."

"Did he tell you how she died? It was no such death as Giles's. She was shot—by a disappointed lover. It occurred in Germany. The unfortunate man shot himself afterwards. He was that South Carolina gentleman of very passionate nature, who used to haunt this place to force her to favour him, and followed her about everywhere. So ends the brilliant Felice Charmond—once a good friend to me, but no friend to you."

"I can forgive her," said Grace absently. "Did Edgar tell you of this?"

"No; but he put a London newspaper, giving an account of it, on the hall table, folded in such a way that we should see it. It will be in the Sherton paper this week, no doubt. To make the event more solemn still to him he had just before had sharp words with her, and left her. He told Lucy this, as nothing about him appears in the newspaper. And the cause of the quarrel was, of all people, she we've left behind us."

"Do you mean Marty?" Grace spoke the words but perfunctorily. For, pertinent and pointed as Melbury's story was, she had no care for it now.

"Yes. Marty South." Melbury persisted in his narrative, to divert her from her present grief, if possible. "Before he went away she wrote him a letter, which he kept in his pocket a long while before reading. He chanced to pull it out in Mrs. Charmond's presence, and read it out loud. It contained something which teased her very much, and that led to the rupture. She was following him to make it up when she met with her terrible death."

Melbury did not know enough to give the gist of the incident, which was that Marty South's letter had been concerning a certain personal adornment common to herself and Mrs. Charmond. Her bullet had reached its billet at last. The scene between Fitzpiers and Felice had been sharp as only a scene can be which arises out of the mortification of one woman by another in the presence of a lover. True, Marty had not effected it by word of mouth: the charge about the locks of hair was made simply by Fitzpiers reading her letter to him aloud to Felice in the playfully ironical tones of one who had become a little weary of his situation, and was finding his friend, in the phrase of George Herbert, a "flat delight." He had stroked those false tresses with his hand many a time without knowing them to be transplanted; and it was impossible when the discovery was so abruptly made to avoid being finely satirical, despite her generous disposition. That was how it had begun, and tragedy had been its end. On his abrupt departure she had followed him to the station, but the train was gone; and in travelling to Baden in

search of him she had met his rival, whose reproaches led to an altercation, and the death of both. Of that precipitate scene of passion and crime Fitzpiers had known nothing till he saw an account of it in the papers, where, fortunately for himself, no mention was made of his prior acquaintance with the unhappy lady; nor was there any allusion to him in the subsequent inquiry, the double death being attributed to some gambling losses, though in point of fact neither one of them had visited the tables.

Melbury and his daughter drew near their house, having seen but one living thing on their way, a squirrel, which did not run up its tree, but, dropping the sweet chestnut which it carried, cried chut-chut-chut, and stamped with its hind legs on the ground. When the roofs and chimneys of the homestead began to emerge from the screen of boughs, Grace started, and checked herself in her abstracted advance.

"You clearly understand," she said to her stepmother, some of her old misgiving returning, "that I am coming back only on condition of his leaving as he promised? Will you let him know this, that there may be no mistake?"

Mrs. Melbury, who had had some long private talks with Fitzpiers, assured Grace that she need have no doubts on that point, and that he would probably be gone by the evening. Grace then entered with them into Melbury's wing of the house, and sat down listlessly in the parlour while her stepmother went to Fitzpiers.

The prompt obedience to her wishes which the surgeon showed did honour to him, if anything could. Before Mrs. Melbury had returned to the room Grace, who was sitting in the parlour window-bench, saw her husband go from the door under the increasing light of morning, with a bag in his hand. While passing through the gate he turned his head. The firelight of the room she sat in threw her figure into dark relief against the window as she looked through the panes, and he must have seen her distinctly. In a moment he went on, the gate fell to, and he disappeared. At the hut she had declared that another had displaced him; and now she had banished him.

(*To be continued.*)

CARMEN SÆCULARE.

AN ODE

IN HONOUR OF

THE JUBILEE OF QUEEN VICTORIA.

I.

Fifty times the rose has flower'd and faded,

Fifty times the golden harvest fallen,

Since our Queen assumed the globe, the sceptre.

II.

She beloved for a kindliness

Rare in Fable or History,

Queen, and Empress of India,

Crown'd so long with a diadem

Never worn by a worthier,

Now with prosperous auguries

Comes at last to the bounteous

Crowning year of her Jubilee.

III.

Nothing of the lawless, of the Despot,

Nothing of the vulgar, or vainglorious,

All is gracious, gentle, great and Queenly.

IV.

You then loyally, all of you,

Deck your houses, illuminate

All your towns for a festival,

And in each let a multitude

Loyal, each, to the heart of it,

One full voice of allegiance,

Hail the great Ceremonial

Of this year of her Jubilee.

V.

Queen, as true to womanhood as Queenhood,

Glorying in the glories of her people,

Sorrowing with the sorrows of the lowest!

VI.

You, that wanton in affluence,

Spare not now to be bountiful,

Call your poor to regale with you,

Make their neighbourhood healthfuller,

Give your gold to the Hospital,

Let the weary be comforted,

Let the needy be banqueted,

Let the maim'd in his heart rejoice

At this year of her Jubilee.

VII.

Henry's fifty years are all in shadow,

Gray with distance Edward's fifty summers,

Ev'n her Grandsire's fifty half forgotten.

VIII.

You, the Patriot Architect,

Shape a stately memorial,

Make it regally gorgeous,

Some Imperial Institute,

Rich in symbol, in ornament,

Which may speak to the centuries,

All the centuries after us,

Of this year of her Jubilee.

IX.

Fifty years of ever-broadening Commerce !

Fifty years of ever-brightening Science !

Fifty years of ever-widening Empire !

X.

You, the Mighty, the Fortunate,

You, the Lord-territorial,

You, the Lord-manufacturer,

You, the hardy, laborious,

Patient children of Albion,

You, Canadian, Indian,

Australasian, African,

All your hearts be in harmony,

All your voices in unison,

Singing "Hail to the glorious

Golden year of her Jubilee!"

XI.

Are there thunders moaning in the distance?

Are there spectres moving in the darkness?

Trust the Lord of Light to guide her people,

Till the thunders pass, the spectres vanish,

And the Light is Victor, and the darkness

Dawns into the Jubilee of the Ages.

TENNYSON.

THE WOODLANDERS.

BY THOMAS HARDY.

CHAPTER XLIV.

FITZPIERS had hardly been gone an hour when Grace began to sicken. The next day she kept her room. Old Jones was called in: he murmured some statements in which the words "feverish symptoms" occurred. Grace heard them, and guessed the means by which she had brought this visitation upon herself.

One day while she still lay there with her head throbbing, wondering if she were really going to join him who had gone before, Grammer Oliver came to her bedside. "I don't know whe'r this is meant for you to take, ma'am," she said. "But I have found it on the table. It was left by Marty, I think, when she came this morning."

Grace turned her hot eyes upon what Grammer held up. It was the phial left at the hut by her husband when he had begged her to take some drops of its contents, if she wished to preserve herself from falling a victim to the malady which had pulled down Winterborne. She examined it as well as she could. The liquid was of an opaline hue, and bore a label with an inscription in Italian. He had probably got it in his wanderings abroad. She knew but little Italian, but could understand that the cordial was a febrifuge of some sort. Her father, her mother, and all the household were anxious for her recovery, and she resolved to obey her husband's directions. Whatever the risk, if any, she was prepared to run it. A glass of water was brought, and the drops dropped in. The effect, though not miraculous, was remarkable. In less than an hour she felt calmer, cooler, better able to reflect, less inclined to fret and chafe and wear herself away. She took a few drops more. From that time the fever retreated, and went out like a damped conflagration.

"How clever he is!" she said regretfully. "Why could he not have had more principle, so as to turn his great talents to good account! Perhaps he has saved my useless life. But he doesn't know it, and doesn't care whether he has saved it or not; and on that account will never be told by me! Probably he only gave it to me in the arrogance of his skill, to show the greatness of his resources beside mine, as Elijah drew down fire from Heaven."

As soon as she had quite recovered from this foiled attack upon her life, Grace went to Marty South's cottage. The current of her being had again set towards the lost Giles Winterborne.

"Marty," she said, "we both loved him. We will go to his grave together."

Great Hintock church stood at the upper part of the village, and could be reached without passing through the street. In the dusk of the late Sep-

tember day they went thither by secret ways, walking mostly in silence side by side, each busied with her own thoughts. Grace had a trouble exceeding Marty's, that haunting sense of having put out the light of his life by her own hasty doings. She had tried to persuade herself that he might have died of his illness, even if she had not taken possession of his house. Sometimes she succeeded in her attempt: sometimes she did not.

They stood by the grave together, and though the sun had gone down they could see over the woodland for miles, and down to the vale in which he had been accustomed to descend every year with his portable mill and press to make cider about this time.

Perhaps Grace's first grief, the discovery that if he had lived he could never have claimed her, had some power in softening this, the second. On Marty's part there was the same consideration: never would she have been his. As no anticipation of gratified affection had been in existence while he was with them, there was none to be disappointed now that he had gone.

Grace was abased when, by degrees, she found that she had never understood Giles as Marty had done. Marty South, alone of all the women in Hintock and the world, had approximated to Winterborne's level of intelligent intercourse with Nature. In that respect she had formed his true complement in the other sex, had lived as his counterpart, had subjoined her thought to his as a corollary. The casual glimpses which the ordinary population bestowed upon that wondrous world of sap and leaves called the Hintock woods had been with these two, Giles and Marty, a clear gaze. They had been possessed of its finer mysteries as of commonplace knowledge and had been able to read its hieroglyphs as ordinary writing. To them the sights and sounds of night, winter, wind, storm, amid those dense boughs which had to Grace a touch of the uncanny and even of the supernatural, were simple occurrences whose origin, continuance, and laws they knew. They had planted together, and together they had felled: together they had with the run of the years mentally collected those remoter signs and symbols which seen in few were of runic obscurity, but all together made an alphabet. From the light lashing of the twigs upon their faces when brushing through them in the dark, they could pronounce upon the species of the tree whence they stretched: from the quality of the wind's murmur through a bough they could in like manner name its sort afar off. They knew by a glance at a trunk if its heart were sound, or tainted with incipient decay; and by the state of its upper twigs the stratum that had been reached by its roots. The artifices of the seasons were seen by them from the conjuror's own point of view, and not from that of the spectator.

"He ought to have married you, Marty, and nobody else in the world!" said Grace with conviction, after thinking somewhat in the above strain.

Marty shook her head. "In all our outdoor days and years together, ma'am," she replied, "the one thing he never spoke of to me was love; nor I to him."

"Yet you and he could speak in a tongue that nobody else knew—not even my father, though he came nearest knowing—the tongue of the trees and fruits and flowers themselves."

She could indulge in mournful fancies like this to Marty; but the hard core to her grief, which Marty's had not, remained. Had she been sure that Giles's death resulted entirely from his exposure, it would have driven her well nigh to insanity; but there was always that bare possibility that his exposure had only precipitated what was inevitable. She longed to believe that it had not done even this. There was only one man whose opinion on the circumstances she would be at all disposed to trust. Her husband was that man. Yet to ask him

it would be necessary to detail the true conditions in which she and Winterborne had lived during those three or four critical days that followed her flight; and in withdrawing her original defiant announcement on that point there seemed a weakness she did not care to show. She never doubted that Fitzpiers would believe her if she made a clean confession of the actual situation; but to volunteer the correction would seem like signalling for a truce, and that in her present frame of mind was what she did not feel the need of.

It will probably not appear a surprising statement, after what has been already declared of Fitzpiers, that the man whom Grace's fidelity could not keep faithful was stung into passionate throbs of interest concerning her by her avowal of the contrary. He declared to himself that he had never known her dangerously full compass if she were capable of such a reprisal; and, melancholy as it may be to admit the fact, his own humiliation and regret engendered a smouldering admiration of her.

He passed a month or two of great misery at Exbury, the place to which he had retired—quite as much misery indeed as Grace, could she have known of it, would have been inclined to inflict upon any living creature, how much soever he might have wronged her. Then a sudden hope dawned upon him: he wondered if her affirmation were true. He asked himself whether it were not the act of an innocent woman whose pique had for the moment blinded her to the contingencies of such an announcement. His wide experience of the sex had taught him that, in many cases, women who ventured on hazardous matters did so because they lacked an imagination gross enough to feel their full force. In this light Grace's bold avowal might merely have denoted the desperation of one who was a child to the realities of obliquity.

Fitzpiers's mental sufferings and suspense led him at last to take a melancholy journey to the neighbourhood of Little Hintock; and here he hovered for hours around the scene of the purest emotional experiences that he had ever known in his life. He walked about the woods that surrounded Melbury's house, keeping out of sight like a criminal. It was a fine evening, and on his way homeward he passed near Marty South's cottage. As usual she had lighted her candle without closing her shutters; he saw her within as he had seen her many times before.

She was polishing tools, and though he had not wished to show himself he could not resist speaking to her through the half-open door. "What are you doing that for, Marty?"

"Because I want to clean them. They are not mine." He could see indeed that they were not hers, for one was a spade, large and heavy, and another was a bill-hook which she could only have used with both hands. The spade, though not a new one, had been so completely burnished that it was bright as silver.

Fitzpiers somehow divined that they were Giles Winterborne's, and he put the question to her.

She replied in the affirmative. "I am going to keep 'em," she said, "but I can't get his apple-mill and press. I wish I could: it is going to be sold, they say."

"Then I will buy it for you," said Fitzpiers. "That will be making you a return for a kindness you did me." His glance fell upon the girl's rare-coloured hair, which had grown again. "Oh, Marty, those locks of yours—and that letter! . . . But it was a kindness to send it, nevertheless," he added musingly.

After this there was confidence between them—such confidence as there had never been before. Marty was shy, indeed, of speaking about the letter, and her motives in writing it; but she thanked him warmly for his promise of the cider-press. She would travel with it in the autumn season as he had done, she said. She

would be quite strong enough, with old Creedle as an assistant.

"Ah!—there was one nearer to him than you," said Fitzpiers, referring to Grace. "One who lived where he lived, and was with him when he died."

Then Marty, suspecting that he did not know the true circumstances, from the fact that Mrs. Fitzpiers and himself were living apart, told him of Giles's generosity to Grace in giving up his house to her at the risk, and possibly the sacrifice, of his own life. When the surgeon heard it he almost envied Giles his chivalrous character. He expressed a wish to Marty that his visit to her should be kept secret, and went home thoughtful, feeling that in more than one sense his journey to Hintock had not been in vain.

He would have given much to win Grace's forgiveness then. But whatever he dared hope for in that kind from the future, there was nothing to be done yet, while Giles Winterborne's memory was green. To wait was imperative. A little time might melt her frozen thoughts, and lead her to look on him with toleration, if not with love.

CHAPTER XLV.

WEEKS and months of mourning for Winterborne had been passed by Grace in the soothing monotony of the memorial act to which she and Marty had devoted themselves. Twice a week the pair went in the dusk to Great Hintock, and, like the two mourners in *Cymbeline* sweetened his sad grave with their flowers and their tears. Nothing ever had brought home to her with such force as this death how little acquirements and culture weigh beside sterling personal character. While her simple sorrow for his loss took a softer edge with the lapse of the autumn and winter seasons, her self-reproach at having had a possible hand in causing it knew slight abatement.

Little occurred at Hintock during these months of the fall and decay of the leaf. Discussion of the almost contemporaneous death of Mrs. Charmond abroad had waxed and waned. Her body was not brought home. It seemed to accord well with the fitful fever of that impassioned woman's life that she should not have found a native grave. She had enjoyed but a life-interest in the estate, which, after her death, passed to a relative of her husband's—one who knew not Felice, one whose purpose seemed to be to blot out every vestige of her.

On a certain day in February—the cheerful day of St. Valentine—a letter reached Mrs. Fitzpiers, which had been mentally promised her for that particular day a long time before.

Her husband announced that he was living at some midland town, where he had obtained a temporary practice as assistant to a local medical man, whose curative principles were all wrong, though he dared not set them right. He had thought fit to communicate with her on that day of tender traditions to inquire if, in the event of his obtaining a substantial practice that he had in view elsewhere, she could forget the past and bring herself to join him. There the practical part ended: he then went on:

"My last year of experience has added ten years to my age, dear Grace and dearest wife that ever erring man undervalued. You may be absolutely indifferent to what I say, but let me say it: I have never loved any woman alive or dead as I love, respect, and honour you at this present moment. What you told me in the pride and naughtiness of your heart I never believed [this, by the way, was not strictly true]; but even if I had believed it, it could never have estranged me from you. Is there any use in telling you—no, there is not—that I dream of your ripe lips more frequently than I say my prayers: that the old familiar rustle of your dress often returns upon my mind till it distracts me? If you could condescend even only to see me again you would be breathing life into a corpse. My pure, pure Grace, modest as a turtle-dove, how came I ever to possses you? For the sake of being present in your mind on this lovers'

day, I think I would almost rather have you hate me a little than not think of me at all. You may call my fancies whimsical; but remember, sweet, lost one, that 'nature is fine in love, and where 'tis fine it sends some instance of itself.'—I will not intrude upon you further now. Make me a little bit happy by sending back one line to say that you will consent, at any rate, to a short interview. I will meet you and leave you as a mere acquaintance, if you will only afford me this slight means of making a few explanations, and of putting my position before you. Believe me, in spite of all you may do or feel,

"Your lover always (once your husband),

"E. F."

It was, oddly enough, the first occasion, or nearly the first, on which Grace had ever received a love-letter from him, his courtship having taken place under conditions which rendered letter-writing unnecessary. Its perusal, therefore, had a certain novelty for her. She thought that, upon the whole, he wrote love-letters very well. But the chief rational interest of the letter to the reflective Grace lay in the chance that such a meeting as he proposed would afford of setting her doubts at rest one way or the other on her actual share in Winterborne's death. The relief of consulting a skilled mind, the one professional man who had seen Giles at that time, would be immense. As for that statement that she had uttered in her disdainful grief, which at the time she had regarded as her triumph, she was quite prepared to admit to him that his belief was the true one; for in wronging herself as she did when she made it she had done what to her was a far more serious thing, wronged Winterborne's memory.

Without consulting her father, or any one in the house or out of it, Grace replied to the letter. She agreed to meet Fitzpiers on two conditions; of which the first was that the place of meeting should be the top of Rubdown Hill, the second that he would not object to Marty South accompanying her.

Whatever art, much or little, there may have been in Fitzpiers's so-called valentine to his wife, he felt a delight as of the bursting of spring when her brief reply came. It was one of the few pleasures that he had experienced of late years at all resembling those of his early youth. He promptly replied that he accepted the conditions, and named the day and hour at which he would be on the spot she mentioned.

A few minutes before three on the appointed day found him climbing the well-known hill, which had been the axis of so many critical movements in their lives during his residence at Hintock. The sight of each homely and well-remembered object swelled the regret that seldom left him now. Whatever paths might lie open to his future, the soothing shades of Hintock were forbidden him for ever as a permanent dwelling-place. He longed for the society of Grace. But to lay offerings on her slighted altar was his first aim, and until her propitiation was complete he would constrain her in no way to return to him. The least reparation that he could make, in a case where he would gladly have made much, would be to let her feel herself absolutely free to choose between living with him and without him. Moreover, a subtlist in emotions, he cultivated, as under glasses, strange and mournful pleasures that he would not willingly let die just at present. To show any forwardness in suggesting a *modus vivendi* to Grace would be to put an end to these exotics. To be the vassal of her sweet will for a time—he demanded no more, and found solace in the contemplation of the soft miseries she caused him.

Approaching the hill-top with a mind strung to these notions, Fitzpiers discerned a gay procession of people coming over the crest, and was not long in perceiving it to be a wedding-party. Though the wind was keen the women were in light attire, and the flowered waistcoats of the men had a pleasing vividness of pattern. Each of the gentler ones clung to the arm of her partner so tightly as to have with him one step, rise, swing, gait, almost one centre of gravity. In

the buxom bride Fitzpiers recognised no other than Suke Damson, who in her light gown looked a giantess: the small husband beside her he saw to be Tim Tangs.

Fitzpiers could not escape, for they had seen him; though of all the beauties of the world whom he did not wish to meet Suke was the chief. But he put the best face on the matter that he could, and came on, the approaching company evidently discussing him and his separation from Mrs. Fitzpiers. As the couples closed upon him he expressed his congratulations.

"We be just walking round the parishes to show ourselves a bit," said Tim. "First we het across to Delborough, then athwart to here, and from here we go to Rubdown and Millshot, and then round by the cross roads home. Home says I, but it won't be that long! We be off next month."

"Indeed. Where to?"

Tim informed him that they were going to New Zealand. Not but that he would have been contented with Hintock, but his wife was ambitious and wanted to leave: so he had given way.

"Then good-bye," said Fitzpiers; "I may not see you again." He shook hands with Tim and turned to the bride. "Good-bye, Suke," he said, taking her hand also. "I wish you and your husband prosperity in the country you have chosen." With this he left them, and hastened on to his appointment.

The wedding-party re-formed and resumed march likewise. But in restoring his arm to Suke, Tim noticed that her full and blooming countenance had undergone a change. "Hullo! me dear—what's the matter?" said Tim.

"Nothing to speak o'," said she. But to give the lie to her assertion she was seized with lachrymose twitches, that soon produced a dribbling face.

"How — what the devil's this about!" exclaimed the bridegroom.

"She's a little wee bit overcome, poor dear!" said the first bridesmaid, unfolding her handkerchief and wiping Suke's eyes.

"I never did like parting from people!" said Suke as soon as she could speak.

"Why him in particular?"

"Well—he's such a clever doctor, that 'tis a thousand pities we sha'n't see him any more! There'll be no such clever doctor as he in New Zealand, if I should require one; and the thought o't got the better of my feelings!"

They walked on, but Tim's face had grown rigid and pale, for he recalled slight circumstances disregarded at the time of their occurrence. The former boisterous laughter of the wedding-party at the groomsman's jokes was heard ringing through the woods no more.

By this time Fitzpiers had advanced on his way to the top of the hill, where he saw two figures emerging from the bank on the right hand. These were the expected ones, Grace and Marty South, who had evidently come there by a short and secret path through the wood. Grace was muffled up in her winter dress, and he thought that she had never looked so seductive as at this moment, in the noontide bright but heatless sun, and the keen wind, and the purplish-grey masses of brushwood around. Fitzpiers continued to regard the nearing picture, till at length their glances met for a moment, when she demurely sent off hers at a tangent and gave him the benefit of her three-quarter face, while with courteous completeness of conduct he lifted his hat in a large arc. Marty dropped behind; and when Fitzpiers held out his hand Grace touched it with her fingers.

"I have agreed to be here mostly because I wanted to ask you something important," said Mrs. Fitzpiers, her intonation modulating in a direction that she had not quite wished it to take.

"I am most attentive," said her husband. "Shall we take to the wood for privacy?"

Grace demurred, and Fitzpiers gave in, and they kept the public road.

At any rate, she would take his arm? This also was gravely negatived, the refusal being audible to Marty.

"Why not?" he inquired.

"Oh, Mr. Fitzpiers—how can you ask!"

"Right, right," said he, his effusiveness shrivelled up.

As they walked on she returned to her inquiry. "It is about a matter that may perhaps be unpleasant to you. But I think I need not consider that too carefully."

"Not at all," said Fitzpiers, heroically.

She then took him back to the time of poor Winterborne's death, and related the precise circumstances amid which his fatal illness had come upon him, particularising the dampness of the shelter to which he had betaken himself, his concealment from her of the hardships that he was undergoing, all that he had put up with, all that he had done for her in his scrupulous considerateness. The retrospect brought her to tears as she asked him if he thought that the sin of having driven him to his death was upon her.

Fitzpiers could hardly help showing his satisfaction at what her narrative indirectly revealed, the actual harmlessness of an escapade with her lover, which had at first, by her own showing, looked so grave; and he did not care to inquire whether that harmlessness had been the result of aim or of accident. With regard to her question, he declared that in his judgment no human being could answer it. He thought that upon the whole the balance of probabilities turned in her favour. Winterborne's apparent strength, during the last months of his life, must have been delusive. It had often occurred that after a first attack of that insidious disease a person's apparent recovery was a physiological mendacity.

The relief which came to Grace lay almost as much in sharing her knowledge of the particulars with an intelligent mind as in the assurances Fitzpiers gave her. "Well, then, to put this case before you, and obtain your professional opinion, was chiefly why I consented to come here to-day," said she, when he had reached the aforesaid conclusion.

"For no other reason at all?" he asked ruefully.

"It was nearly the whole."

They stood and looked over a gate at twenty or thirty starlings feeding in the grass, and he started the talk again by saying in a low voice, "And yet I love you more than ever I loved you in my life."

Grace did not move her eyes from the birds, and folded her delicate lips as if to keep them in subjection.

"It is a different kind of love altogether," said he. "Less passionate, more profound. It has nothing to do with the material conditions of the object at all: much to do with her character and goodness, as revealed by closer observation. 'Love talks with better knowledge, and knowledge with dearer love.'"

"That's out of *Measure for Measure*," said she slily.

"Oh yes—I meant it as a citation," blandly replied Fitzpiers. "Well then, why not give me a very little bit of your heart again?"

The crash of a felled tree in the remote depths of the wood recalled the past at that moment, and all the homely faithfulness of Winterborne. "Don't ask it! My heart is in the grave with Giles," she replied staunchly.

"Mine is with you—in no less deep a grave I fear, according to that."

"I am very sorry; but it cannot be helped."

"How can you be sorry for me, when you wilfully keep open the grave?"

"Oh no—that's not so," returned Grace quickly; and moved to go away from him.

"But, dearest Grace!" said he. "You have condescended to come; and I thought from it that perhaps when I had passed through a long

state of probation you would be generous. But if there can be no hope of our getting completely reconciled, treat me gently—wretch though I am."

"I did not say you were a wretch, nor have I ever said so."

"But you have such a contemptuous way of looking at me that I fear you think so."

Grace's heart struggled between the wish not to be harsh and the fear that she might mislead him. "I cannot look contemptuous unless I feel contempt," she said evasively. "And all I feel is lovelessness."

"I have been very bad I know," he returned. "But unless you can really love me again, Grace, I would rather go away from you for ever. I don't want you to receive me again for duty's sake, or anything of that sort. If I had not cared more for your affection and forgiveness than my own personal comfort I should never have come back here. I could have obtained a practice at a distance, and have lived my own life without coldness or reproach. But I have chosen to return to the one spot on earth where my name is tarnished—to enter the house of a man from whom I have had worse treatment than from any other man alive—all for you!"

This was undeniably true, and it had its weight with Grace, who began to look as if she thought she had been shockingly severe.

"Before you go," he continued, "I want to know your pleasure about me: what you wish me to do, or not to do."

"You are independent of me, and it seems a mockery to ask that. Far be it from me to advise. But I will think it over. I rather need advice myself than stand in a position to give it."

"*You* don't need advice, wisest, dearest woman that ever lived. If you did . . ."

"Would you give it to me?"

"Would you act upon what I gave?"

"That's not a fair inquiry," said she smiling despite her gravity. "I don't mind hearing it—what you do really think the most correct and proper course for me."

"It is so easy for me to say, and yet I dare not, for it would be provoking you to remonstrances."

Knowing of course what the advice would be she did not press him further, and was about to beckon Marty forward and leave him, when he interrupted her with, "Oh! one moment, dear Grace—you will meet me again?"

She eventually agreed to see him that day fortnight. Fitzpiers expostulated at the interval, but the half-alarmed earnestness with which she intreated him not to come sooner made him say hastily that he submitted to her will—that he would regard her as a friend only, anxious for his reform and well-being, till such time as she might allow him to exceed that privilege.

All this was to assure her: it was only too clear that he had not won her confidence yet. It amazed Fitzpiers, and overthrew all his deductions from previous experience, to find that this girl, though she had been married to him, could yet be so coy. Notwithstanding a certain fascination that it carried with it, his reflections were sombre as he went homeward: he saw how deep had been his offence to produce so great a wariness in a gentle and once unsuspicious soul. He was himself too fastidious to care to coerce her. To be an object of misgiving or dislike to a woman who shared his home was what he could not endure the thought of. Life as it stood was more tolerable.

When he was gone, Marty joined Mrs. Fitzpiers. She would fain have consulted Marty on the question of Platonic relations with her former husband, as she preferred to regard him. But Marty showed no great interest in their affairs, so Grace said nothing. They came onward, and saw Melbury standing at the scene of the felling which had been audible to them, when, telling Marty that she wished her meeting with Mr. Fitzpiers to be kept private, she left the girl to join

her father. At any rate, she would consult him on the expediency of occasionally seeing her husband.

Her father was cheerful, and walked by her side as he had done in earlier days. "I was thinking of you when you came up," he said. "I have considered that what has happened is for the best. Since your husband is gone away, and seems not to wish to trouble you, why, let him go, and drop out of your life. Many women are worse off. You can live here comfortably enough, and he can emigrate, or do what he likes for his good. I wouldn't mind sending him the further sum of money he might naturally expect to come to him, so that you may not be bothered with him any more. He could hardly have gone on living here without speaking to me, or meeting me; and that would have been very unpleasant on both sides."

These remarks checked her intention. There was a sense of weakness in following them by saying that she had just met her husband by appointment. "Then you would advise me not to communicate with him?" she observed.

"I shall never advise ye again. You are your own mistress—do as you like. But my opinion is that if you don't live with him, you had better live without him, and not go shilly-shallying and playing bo-peep. You sent him away; and now he's gone. Very well: trouble him no more."

Grace felt a guiltiness—she hardly knew why—and made no confession.

CHAPTER XLVI.

THE woods were uninteresting, and Grace stayed indoors a great deal. She became quite a student, reading more than she had done since her marriage. But her seclusion was always broken for the periodical visit to Winterborne's grave with Marty, which was kept up with pious strictness for the purpose of putting snowdrops, primroses, and other vernal flowers thereon as they came.

One afternoon at sunset she was standing just outside her father's garden, which, like the rest of the Hintock inclosures, abutted into the wood. A slight footpath led along here, forming a secret way to either of the houses by getting through its boundary hedge. Grace was just about to adopt this mode of entry when a figure approached along the path, and held up his hand to detain her. It was her husband.

"I am delighted," he said, coming up out of breath; and there seemed no reason to doubt his words. "I saw you some way off—I was afraid you would go in before I could reach you."

"It is a week before the time," said she reproachfully. "I said a fortnight from the last meeting."

"My dear, you don't suppose I could wait a fortnight without trying to get a glimpse of you, even though you had declined to meet me! Would it make you angry to know that I have been along this path at dusk three or four times since our last meeting? Well, how are you?"

She did not refuse her hand, but when he showed a wish to retain it a moment longer than mere formality required, she made it smaller, so that it slipped away from him, with again that same alarmed look which always followed his attempts in this direction. He saw that she was not yet out of the elusive mood, not yet to be treated presumingly; and he was correspondingly careful to tranquillise her.

His assertion had seemed to impress her somewhat. "I had no idea you came so often," she said. "How far do you come from?"

"From Exbury. I always walk from Sherton-Abbas, for if I hire people will know that I come; and my success with you so far has not been great enough to justify such overtness. Now, my dear one—as I *must* call you—I put it to you: will you see me a little oftener as the spring advances?"

Grace lapsed into unwonted sedate-

ness, and avoiding the question, said: "I wish you would concentrate on your profession, and give up those strange studies that used to distract you so much. I am sure you would get on."

"It is the very thing I am doing. I was going to ask you to burn—or, at least, get rid of—all my philosophical literature. It is in the bookcases in your rooms. The fact is, I never cared much for abstruse studies."

"I am so glad to hear you say that. And those other books—those piles of old plays—what good are they to a medical man?"

"None whatever!" he replied cheerfully. "Sell them at Sherton for what they will fetch."

"And those dreadful old French romances with their horrid spellings of 'filz' and 'ung' and 'ilz' and 'mary' and 'ma foy'?"

"You haven't been reading them, Grace?"

"Oh, no—I just looked into them, that was all."

"Make a bonfire of 'em directly you get home. I meant to do it myself. I can't think what possessed me ever to collect them. I have only a few professional hand-books now, and am quite a practical man. I am in hopes of having some good news to tell you soon, and then do you think you could —come to me again?"

"I would rather you did not press me on that just now," she replied with some feeling. "You have said you mean to lead a new, useful, effectual life; but I should like to see you put it in practice for a little while before you address that query to me. Besides —I could not live with you."

"Why not?"

Grace was silent a few instants. "I go with Marty to Giles's grave. We swore we would show him that devotion. And I mean to keep it up."

"Well, I wouldn't mind that at all. I have no right to expect anything else, and I will not wish you to keep away. I liked the man as well as any I ever knew. In short, I would accompany you part of the way to the place, and smoke a cigar on the stile while I waited till you came back."

"Then you haven't given up smoking?"

"Well—ahem—no. I have thought of doing so, but"—

His extreme complaisance had rather disconcerted Grace, and the question about smoking had been to effect a diversion. Presently she said firmly, and with a moisture in her eye that he could not see, as her mind returned to poor Giles's "frustrate ghost;" "I don't like you—to speak lightly on that subject, if you did speak lightly. To be frank with you—quite frank—I think of him as my betrothed lover still. I cannot help it. So that it would be wrong for me to join you."

Fitzpiers was now uneasy. "You say your betrothed lover still," he rejoined. "When, then, were you betrothed to him, or engaged, as we common people say?"

"When you were away."

"How could that be?"

Grace would have avoided this, but her natural candour led her on. "It was when I was under the impression that my marriage with you was about to be annulled, and that he could then marry me. So I encouraged him to love me."

Fitzpiers winced visibly at this; and yet, upon the whole, she was right in telling it. Indeed, his perception that she was right in her absolute sincerity kept up his affectionate admiration for her under the pain of the rebuff. Time had been when the avowal that Grace had deliberately taken steps to replace him would have brought him no sorrow. But she so far dominated him now that he could not bear to hear her words, although the object of her high regard was no more.

"It is rough upon me—that!" he said bitterly. "Oh, Grace—I did not know you—tried to get rid of me! I suppose it is of no use, but I ask, cannot you hope to—find a little love in your heart for me again?"

"If I could I would oblige you; but

I fear I cannot!" she replied, with illogical ruefulness. "And I don't see why you should mind my having had one lover besides yourself in my life, when you have had so many."

"But I can tell you honestly that I love you better than all of them put together, and that's what you will not tell me!"

"I am sorry; but I fear I cannot," she said sighing again.

"I wonder if you ever will?" He looked musingly into her indistinct face as if he would read the future there. "Now have pity, and tell me: will you try?"

"To love you again?"

"Yes; if you can."

"I don't know how to reply," she answered, her embarrassment proving her truth. "Will you promise to leave me quite free as to seeing you or not seeing you?"

"Certainly. Have I given any ground for you to doubt my first promise in that respect?"

She was obliged to admit that he had not.

"Then I think you might get your heart out of that grave," said he, with playful sadness. "It has been there a long time."

She faintly shook her head, but said: "I'll try to think of you more—if I can."

With this, Fitzpiers was compelled to be satisfied, and he asked her when she would meet him again.

"As we arranged—in a fortnight."

"If it must be a fortnight, it must!"

"This time, at least. I'll consider by the day I see you again if I can shorten the interval."

"Well, be that as it may, I shall come at least twice a week to look at your window."

"You must do as you like about that. Good-night."

"Say husband."

She seemed almost inclined to give him the word; but exclaiming, "No, no; I cannot," slipped through the garden-hedge and disappeared.

Fitzpiers did not exaggerate when he told her that he should haunt the precincts of the dwelling. But his persistence in this course did not result in his seeing her much oftener than at the fortnightly interval which she had herself marked out as proper. At these times, however, she punctually appeared; and, as the spring wore on, the meetings were kept up, though their character changed but little with the increase in their number.

The small garden of the cottage occupied by the Tangs family (father, son, and now son's wife) aligned with the larger one of the timber-dealer at its upper end; and when young Tim, after leaving work at Melbury's, stood at dusk in the little bower at the corner of his inclosure to smoke a pipe, he frequently observed the surgeon pass along the outside track before-mentioned. Fitzpiers always walked loiteringly, pensively, looking with a sharp eye into the gardens one after another as he proceeded; for he did not wish to leave the now absorbing spot too quickly, after travelling so far to reach it: hoping always for a glimpse of her whom he passionately desired to take to his arms anew.

Now Tim began to be struck with these loitering progresses along the garden's boundaries in the gloaming, and wondered what they boded. It was, naturally, quite out of his power to divine the singular, sentimental revival in Fitzpiers's heart: the fineness of tissue which could take a deep, emotional, almost also an artistic pleasure in being the yearning lover of a woman he once had deserted, would have seemed an absurdity to the young sawyer. Mr. and Mrs. Fitzpiers were separated; therefore the question of affection as between them was settled. But his Suke had, since that meeting on their marriage-day, repentantly admitted, to the urgency of his questioning, a good deal concerning her past levities. Putting all things together, he could hardly avoid connecting Fitzpiers's

mysterious visits to this spot with Suke's residence under his roof. But he made himself fairly easy: the vessel in which they were about to emigrate sailed that month; and then Suke would be out of Fitzpiers's way for ever.

The interval at last expired, and the eve of their departure arrived. They were pausing in the room of the cottage allotted to them by Tim's father, after a busy day of preparation which had left them weary. In a corner stood their boxes, crammed and corded, their large case for the hold having already been sent away. The firelight shone upon Suke's fine face and form as she stood looking into it, and upon the face of Tim seated in a corner, and upon the walls of his father's house, which he was beholding that night almost for the last time. Tim Tangs was not happy. This scheme of emigration was dividing him from his father, for old Tangs would on no account leave Hintock; and had it not been for Suke's reputation and his own dignity Tim would at the last moment have abandoned the project. As he sat in the back part of the room he regarded her moodily, and the fire, and the boxes. One thing he had particularly noticed this evening—she was very restless: fitful in her actions, unable to remain seated, and in a marked degree depressed.

"Sorry that you be going, after all, Suke?" he said.

She sighed involuntarily. "I don't know but that I be," she answered. "'Tis natural, isn't it, when one is going away?"

"But you wasn't born here as I was."

"No."

"There's folk left behind that you'd fain have with 'ee, I reckon?"

"Why do you think that?"

"I've seen things, and I've heard things; and Suke, I say 'twill be a good move for me to get 'ee away. I don't mind his leavings abroad, but I do mind 'em at home."

Suke's face was not changed from its aspect of listless indifference by the words. She answered nothing; and shortly after he went out for his customary pipe of tobacco at the top of the garden.

The restlessness of Suke had indeed owed its presence to the gentleman of Tim's suspicions, but in a different, and, it must be added in justice to her, more innocent sense than he supposed, judging from former doings. She had accidentally discovered that Fitzpiers was in the habit of coming secretly once or twice a week to Hintock, and knew that this evening was a favourite one of the seven for his journey. As she was going next day to leave the country, Suke thought there could be no great harm in giving way to a little sentimentality by obtaining a glimpse of him quite unknown to himself or to anybody, and thus taking a silent last farewell. Aware that Fitzpiers's time for passing was at hand she thus betrayed her feeling. No sooner, therefore, had Tim left the room than she let herself noiselessly out of the house, and hastened to the corner of the garden, whence she could witness the surgeon's transit across the scene—if he had not already gone by.

Her light cotton dress was visible to Tim lounging in the arbour of the opposite corner, though he was hidden from her. He saw her stealthily climb into the hedge, and so ensconce herself there that nobody could have the least doubt her purpose was to watch unseen for a passer-by. He went across to the spot and stood behind her. Suke started, having in her blundering way forgotten that he might be near. She at once descended from the hedge.

"So he's coming to-night," said Tim laconically. "And we be always anxious to see our dears."

"He *is* coming to-night," she replied with defiance. "And we *be* anxious for our dears."

"Then will you step indoors, where your dear will soon jine 'ee? We've to mouster by half-past three to-morrow, and if we don't get to bed by eight at latest our faces will be as long as clock-cases all day."

She hesitated for a minute, but ultimately obeyed, going slowly down the

garden to the house, where he heard the door-latch click behind her.

Tim was incensed beyond measure. His marriage had so far been a total failure, a source of bitter regret; and the only course for improving his case, that of leaving the country, was a sorry, and possibly might not be a very effectual one. Do what he would, his domestic sky was likely to be overcast to the end of the day. Thus he brooded, and his resentment gathered force. He craved a means of striking one blow back at the cause of his cheerless plight, while he was still on the scene of his discomfiture. For some minutes no method suggested itself, and then he had an idea.

Coming to a sudden resolution he hastened along the garden, and entered the one attached to the next cottage, which had formerly been the dwelling of a gamekeeper. Tim descended the path to the back of the house, where only an old woman lived at present, and reaching the wall he stopped. Owing to the slope of the ground the roof-eaves of the linhay were here within touch, and he thrust his arm up under them, feeling about in the space on the top of the wall-plate. With some exertion he drew down a cobwebbed object curiously framed in iron, which clanked as he moved it. It was about three feet in length and half as wide. Tim contemplated it as well as he could in the dying light of day, and raked off the cobwebs with his hand.

"That will spoil his pretty shins for'n, I reckon!" he said.

It was a man-trap.

CHAPTER XLVII.

Were the inventors of automatic machines to be ranged according to the excellence of their devices for producing sound artistic torture, the creator of the man-trap would occupy a very respectable, if not a very high place. It should rather, however, be said, the inventor of the particular form of man-trap of which this found in the keeper's outhouse was a specimen. For there were other shapes and other sizes, instruments which, if placed in a row beside one of the type disinterred by Tim, would have worn the subordinate aspect of the bears, wild boars, or wolves in a travelling menagerie as compared with the leading lion or tiger. In short, though many varieties had been in use during those centuries which we are accustomed to look back upon as the true and only period of merry England (in the rural districts more especially) and onward down to the third decade of the nineteenth century, this model had borne the palm, and had been most usually followed when the orchards and estates required new ones. There had been the toothless variety used by the softer-hearted landlords, quite contemptible in their clemency. The jaws of these resembled the jaws of an old woman to whom time has left nothing but gums. There were also the intermediate or half-toothed sorts, probably devised by the middle-natured squires, or those under the influence of their wives: two inches of mercy, two inches of cruelty, two inches of mere nip, two inches of probe, and so on, through the whole extent of the jaws. There were also, as a class apart, the bruisers, which did not lacerate the flesh but only crushed the bone.

The sight of one of these gins, when set, produced a vivid impression that it was endowed with life. It exhibited the combined aspects of a shark, a crocodile and a scorpion. Each tooth was in the form of a tapering spine, two and a quarter inches long, which, when the jaws were closed, stood in alternation from this side and from that. When they were open, the two halves formed a complete circle between two and three feet in diameter, the plate, or treading-place, in the midst being about a foot square, while from beneath extended in opposite directions the soul of the apparatus, the pair of springs, each one being of a stiffness to render necessary a lever or the whole weight of the body when forcing it down.

There were men at this time still living at Hintock who remembered when the gin and others like it were in use. Tim Tangs's great-uncle had endured a night of six hours in this very trap, which lamed him for life. Once a keeper of Hintock woods set it on the track of a poacher, and afterwards, coming back that way forgetful of what he had done, walked into it himself. The wound brought on lockjaw, of which he died. This event occurred during the thirties, and by the year 1840 the use of such implements was well nigh discontinued in the neighbourhood. But being made entirely of iron they by no means disappeared, and in almost every village one could be found in some nook or corner as readily as this was found by Tim. It had indeed been a fearful amusement of Tim and other Hintock lads (especially those who had a dim sense of becoming renowned poachers when they reached their prime, to drag out this trap from its hiding, set it, and throw it with billets of wood, which were penetrated by the teeth to the depth of near an inch.

As soon as he had examined the trap, and found that the hinges and springs were still perfect, he shouldered it without more ado, and returned with his burden to his own garden, passing on through the hedge to the path immediately outside the boundary. Here, by the help of a stout stake, he set the trap, and laid it carefully behind a bush while he went forward to reconnoitre. As has been stated, nobody passed this way for days together sometimes; but there was just a possibility that some other pedestrian than the one in request might arrive, and it behoved Tim to be careful as to the identity of his victim. Going about a hundred yards along the rising ground to the right, he reached a ridge whereon a large and thick holly grew. Beyond this for some distance the wood was more open, and the course which Fitzpiers must pursue to reach the point, if he came to-night, was visible a long way forward.

For some time there was no sign of him or of anybody. Then there shaped itself a spot out of the dim mid-distance, between the masses of brushwood on either hand. As it enlarged Tim could hear the brushing of feet over the tufts of sour grass. The airy gait revealed Fitzpiers even before his exact outline could be seen.

Tim Tangs turned about and ran down the opposite side of the hill, till he was again at the head of his own garden. It was the work of a few moments to drag out the man-trap, very gently (that the plate might not be disturbed sufficiently to throw it) to a space between a pair of young oaks which, rooted in contiguity, grew apart upward, forming a V-shaped opening between; and, being backed up by bushes, left this as the only course for a foot-passenger. Here he laid the trap with the same gentleness of handling, locked the chain round one of the trees, and finally slid back the guard which was placed to keep the gin from accidentally catching the arms of him who set it, or, to use the local and better word, "toiled" it. Having completed these arrangements, Tim sprang through the adjoining hedge of his father's garden, ran down the path, and softly entered the house.

Obedient to his order, Suke had gone to bed; and as soon as he had bolted the door, Tim unlaced and kicked off his boots at the foot of the stairs, and retired likewise, without lighting a candle. His object seemed to be to undress as soon as possible. Before, however, he had completed the operation a long cry resounded without—penetrating, but indescribable.

"What's that?" said Suke, starting up in bed.

"Sounds as if somebody had caught a hare in his gin."

"Oh no," said she. "It was not a hare, 'twas louder. Hark!"

"Do 'ee get to sleep," said Tim. "How be you going to wake at half-past three else?"

She lay down and was silent. Tim stealthily opened the window and listened. Above the low harmonies produced by the instrumentation of

the various species of tree around the premises he could hear the twitching of a chain from the spot whereon he had set the man-trap. But further human sound there was none. Tim was puzzled. In the haste of his project he had not calculated upon a cry; but if one, why not more? He soon ceased to essay an answer, for Hintock was dead to him already. In half-a-dozen hours he would be out of its precincts for life, on his way to the antipodes. He closed the window and lay down.

The hour which had brought these movements of Tim to birth had been operating actively elsewhere. Awaiting in her father's house the minute of her appointment with her husband, Grace Fitzpiers deliberated on many things. Should she inform her father before going out that the estrangement of herself and Edgar was not so complete as he had imagined, and deemed desirable for her happiness? If she did so she must in some measure become the apologist of her husband, and she was not prepared to go so far.

As for him, he kept her in a mood of considerate gravity. He certainly had changed. He had at his worst times always been gentle in his manner towards her. Could it be that she might make of him a true and worthy husband yet? She had married him, there was no getting over that; and ought she any longer to keep him at a distance? His suave deference to her lightest whim on the question of his comings and goings, when as her lawful husband he might have shown a little independence, was a trait in his character as unexpected as it was engaging. If she had been his empress, and he her thrall, he could not have exhibited a more sensitive care to avoid intruding upon her against her will.

Impelled by a remembrance she took down a prayer-book, and turned to the marriage-service. Reading it slowly through she became quite appalled at her recent off-handedness, when she re-discovered what solemn promises she had made him at those chancel steps not so very long ago. She became lost in long ponderings how far a person's conscience might be bound by vows made without at the time a full recognition of their force. That particular sentence, beginning "Whom God hath joined together," was a staggerer for a gentle woman of strong devotional sentiment. She wondered whether God really did join them together. Before she had done deliberating the time of her engagement drew near, and she went out of the house almost at the moment that Tim Tangs retired to his own.

The position of things at that critical juncture was briefly as follows. Two hundred yards to the right of the upper end of Tangs's garden Fitzpiers was still advancing, having now nearly reached the summit of the wood-clothed ridge, the path being the actual one which further on passed between the two young oaks. Thus far it was according to Tim's conjecture. But about two hundred yards to the left, or rather less, was arising a condition which he had not divined, the emergence of Grace as aforesaid from the upper corner of her father's garden with the view of meeting Tim's intended victim. Midway between husband and wife was the diabolical trap, silent, open, ready.

Fitzpiers's walk that night had been cheerful, for he was convinced that the slow and gentle method he had adopted was promising success. The very restraint that he was obliged to exercise upon himself, so as not to kill the delicate bud of returning confidence, fed his flame. He walked so much more rapidly than Grace that, if they continued advancing as they had begun, he would reach the trap a good half minute before she could reach the same spot. But here a new circumstance came in: to escape the unpleasantness of being watched or listened to by lurkers (naturally curious by reason of their strained relations) they had arranged that their meeting for to-night should be at the holm-tree on the ridge above-

named. So soon, accordingly, as Fitzpiers reached the tree he stood still to await her.

He had not paused under the prickly foliage more than two minutes when he thought he heard a scream from the other side of the ridge. Fitzpiers wondered what it could mean; but such wind as there was just now blew in an adverse direction, and his mood was light. He set down the origin of the sound to one of the superstitious freaks or frolicsome scrimmages between sweethearts that still survived in Hintock from old-English times; and waited on where he stood till ten minutes had passed. Feeling then a little uneasy, his mind reverted to the scream; and he went forward over the summit and down the embowered incline, till he reached the pair of sister oaks with the narrow opening between them.

Fitzpiers stumbled and all but fell. Stretching down his hand to ascertain the obstruction it came in contact with a confused mass of silken drapery and ironwork that conveyed absolutely no explanatory idea to his mind at all. It was but the work of a moment to strike a match; and then he saw a sight which congealed his blood.

The man-trap was thrown; and between its jaws was part of a woman's clothing—a patterned silk skirt—gripped with such violence that the iron teeth had passed through it, skewering its tissue in a score of places. He immediately recognised the skirt as that of one of his wife's gowns—the gown that she had worn when she met him on the very last occasion. Fitzpiers had often studied the effect of these instruments when examining the collection at Hintock House; and the conception instantly flashed through him that Grace had been caught, taken out mangled by some chance passer, and carried home, some of her clothes being left behind in the difficulty of getting her free. The shock of this conviction, striking into the very current of high hope, was so great that he cried out like one in corporal agony, and in his misery bowed himself down to the ground. Of all the degrees and qualities of punishment that Fitzpiers had undergone since his sins against Grace first began, not any even approximated in intensity to this. "Oh, my own—my darling! Oh, cruel Heaven—it is too much this!" he cried, writhing and rocking himself over the sorry accessories of her he deplored.

The voice of his distress was sufficiently loud to be audible to any one who might have been there to hear it; and one there was. Right and left of the narrow pass between the oaks were dense bushes; and now from behind these a female figure glided, whose appearance even in the gloom was, though graceful in outline, noticeably strange. She was in white up to the waist, and figured above. She was, in short, Grace, his wife, lacking the portion of her dress which the gin retained.

"Don't be grieved about me—don't, dear Edgar!" she exclaimed, rushing up and bending over him. "I am not hurt a bit! I was coming on to find you after I had released myself, but I heard footsteps; and I hid away, because I was without some of my clothing, and I did not know who the person might be."

Fitzpiers had sprung to his feet, and his next act was no less unpremeditated by him than it was irresistible by her, and would have been so by any woman not of Amazonian strength. He clasped his arms completely round her, pressed her to his breast, and kissed her passionately.

"You are not dead!—you are not hurt! Thank God—thank God!" he said, almost sobbing in his delight and relief from the horror of his apprehension, "Grace, my wife, my love, how is this—what has happened?"

"I was coming on to you," she said as distinctly as she could in the half-smothered state of her face against his. "I was trying to be as punctual as possible, and as I had started a minute late I ran along the path very swiftly—fortunately for myself. Just when I had passed between these trees

I felt something clutch at my dress from behind with a noise, and the next moment I was pulled backwards by it, and fell to the ground. I screamed with terror, thinking it was a man lying down there to murder me; but the next moment I discovered it was iron, and that my clothes were caught in a trap. I pulled this way and that, but the thing would not let go, drag it as I would, and I did not know what to do. I did not want to alarm my father or anybody, as I wished nobody to know of these meetings with you; so I could think of no other plan than slipping off my skirt, meaning to run on and tell you what a strange accident had happened to me. But when I had just freed myself by leaving the dress behind, I heard steps, and not being sure it was you, I did not like to be seen in such a pickle, so I hid away."

"It was only your speed that saved you! One or both of your legs would have been broken if you had come at ordinary walking pace."

"Or yours, if you had got here first," said she, beginning to realise the whole ghastliness of the possibility. "Oh, Edgar, there has been an Eye watching over us to-night, and we should be thankful indeed!"

He continued to press his face to hers. "You are mine—mine again now."

She gently owned that she supposed she was. "I heard what you said when you thought I was injured," she went on shyly; "and I know that a man who could suffer as you were suffering must have a tender regard for me. But how does this awful thing come here?"

"I suppose it has something to do with poachers." Fitzpiers was still so shaken by the sense of her danger that he was obliged to sit a while, and it was not until Grace said, "If I could only get my skirt out nobody would know anything about it," that he bestirred himself.

By their united efforts, each standing on one of the springs of the trap, they pressed them down sufficiently to insert across the jaws a billet which they dragged from a faggot near at hand; and it was then possible to extract the silk mouthful from the monster's bite, creased and pierced with many holes, but not torn. Fitzpiers assisted her to put it on again; and when her customary contours were thus restored they walked on together, Grace taking his arm, till he effected an improvement by clasping it round her waist.

The ice having been broken in this unexpected manner she made no further attempt at reserve. "I would ask you to come into the house," she said, "but my meetings with you have been kept secret from my father, and I should like to prepare him."

"Never mind, dearest. I could not very well have accepted the invitation. I shall never live here again—as much for your sake as for mine. I have news to tell you on this very point, but my alarm had put it out of my head. I have bought a practice, or rather a partnership, in the Midlands, and I must go there in a week to take up permanent residence. My poor old great-aunt died about eight months ago, and left me enough to do this. I have taken a little furnished house for a time, till we can get one of our own."

He described the place, and the surroundings, and the view from the windows; and Grace became much interested. "But why are you not there now?" she said.

"Because I cannot tear myself away from here till I have your promise. Now, darling, you will accompany me there—will you not? To-night has settled that!"

Grace's tremblings had gone off, and she did not say nay. They went on together.

The adventure, and the emotions consequent upon the reunion which that event had forced on, combined to render Grace oblivious of the direction of their desultory ramble, till she noticed they were in an encircled

glade in the densest part of the wood, whereon the moon, that had imperceptibly added its rays to the scene, shone almost vertically. It was an exceptionally soft, balmy evening for the time of year, which was just that transient period in the May month when beech trees have suddenly unfolded large limp young leaves of the softness of butterflies' wings. Boughs bearing such leaves hung low around and completely inclosed them, so that it was as if they were in a great green vase, which had moss for its bottom and leafy sides.

The clouds having been packed in the west that evening so as to retain the departing glare a long while, the hour had seemed much earlier than it was. But suddenly the question of time occurred to her.

"I must go back," she said; and without further delay they set their faces towards Hintock. As they walked he examined his watch by the aid of the now strong moonlight.

"By the gods, I think I have lost my train!" said Fitzpiers.

"Dear me—whereabouts are we?" said she.

"Two miles in the direction of Sherton."

"Then do you hasten on, Edgar. I am not in the least afraid. I recognise now the part of the wood we are in, and I can find my way back quite easily. I'll tell my father that we have made it up. I wish I had not kept our meetings so private, for it may vex him a little to know I have been seeing you. He is getting old and irritable, that was why I did not. Good-bye."

"But, as I must stay at the Earl of Wessex to-night, for I cannot possibly catch the train, I think it would be safer for you to let me take care of you."

"But what will my father think has become of me! He does not know in the least where I am—he thinks I only went into the garden for a few minutes."

"He will surely guess—somebody has seen me for certain. I'll go all the way back with you to-morrow."

"But that newly done-up place—the Earl of Wessex!"

"If you are so very particular about the publicity I will stay at the Three Tuns."

"Oh no—it is not that I am particular—but I haven't a brush or comb or anything!"

CHAPTER XLVIII.

All the evening Melbury had been coming to his door saying, "I wonder where in the world that girl is! Never in all my born days did I know her bide out like this! She surely said she was going into the garden to get some parsley."

Melbury searched the garden, the parsley-bed, and the orchard, but could find no trace of her; and then he made inquiries at the cottages of such of his workmen as had not gone to bed, avoiding Tangs's because he knew the young people were to rise early to leave. In these inquiries one of the men's wives somewhat incautiously let out the fact that she had heard a scream in the wood, though from which direction she could not say.

This set Melbury's fears on end. He told the men to light lanterns, and headed by himself they started: Creedle following at the last moment with quite a burden of grapnels and ropes which he could not be persuaded to leave behind; and the company being joined by the hollow-turner and the man who kept the cider-house as they went along.

They explored the precincts of the village, and in a short time lighted upon the man-trap. Its discovery simply added an item of fact without helping their conjectures; but Melbury's indefinite alarm was greatly increased when, holding a candle to the ground, he saw in the teeth of the instrument some frayings from Grace's clothing. No intelligence of any kind was gained till they met a woodman of Delborough, who said that he had

seen a lady answering to the description her father gave of Grace, walking through the wood on a gentleman's arm in the direction of Sherton.

"Was he clutching her tight?" said Melbury.

"Well—rather," said the man.

"Did she walk lame?"

"Well, 'tis true her head hung over towards him a bit."

Creedle groaned tragically.

Melbury, not suspecting the presence of Fitzpiers, coupled this account with the man trap and the scream. He could not understand what it all meant; but the sinister event of the trap made him follow on. Accordingly, they bore away towards the town, shouting as they went, and in due course emerged upon the highway. Nearing Sherton-Abbas, the previous information was confirmed by other strollers, though the gentleman's supporting arm had disappeared from these later accounts. At last they were so near Sherton that Melbury informed his faithful followers that he did not wish to drag them further at so late an hour, since he could go on alone and inquire if the woman who had been seen were really Grace. But they would not leave him alone in his anxiety, and trudged onward till the lamplight from the town began to illuminate their fronts. At the entrance to the High Street they got fresh scent of the pursued, but coupled with the new condition that the lady in the costume described had been going up the street alone.

"Faith, I believe she's mesmerised, or walking in her sleep!" said Melbury.

However, the identity of this woman with Grace was by no means certain; but they plodded along the street. The hairdresser who had despoiled Marty of her tresses was standing at his door, and they duly put inquiries to him.

"Ah—how's Little Hintock folk by now!" he said before replying. "Never have I been over there since one winter night some three year ago—and then I lost myself finding it. How can ye live in such a one-eyed place? Great Hintock is bad enough; but Little Hintock—the bats and owls would drive me melancholy-mad! It took two days to raise my sperrits to their true pitch again after that night I went there. Mr. Melbury, sir, as a man that's put by money, why not retire and live here, and see something of the world?"

The responses at last given by him to their queries guided them to the building that offered the best accommodation in Sherton, having been enlarged contemporaneously with the construction of the railway—namely, The Earl of Wessex Hotel.

Leaving the others without, Melbury made prompt inquiry here. His alarm was lessened, though his perplexity was increased, when he received a brief reply that such a lady was in the house.

"Do you know if it is my daughter?" asked Melbury.

The waiter did not.

"Do you know the lady's name?"

Of this, too, the household was ignorant, the hotel having been taken by brand-new people from a distance. They knew the gentleman very well by sight, and had not thought it necessary to ask him to enter his name.

"Oh, the gentleman appears again now," said Melbury to himself. "Well, I want to see the lady," he declared.

A message was taken up, and after some delay the shape of Grace appeared descending round the bend of the staircase, looking as if she lived there, but in other respects rather guilty and frightened.

"Why, what the name—" began her father. "I thought you went out to get parsley!"

"Oh, yes—I did—but it is all right," said Grace in a flurried whisper. "I am not alone here. I am here with Edgar. It is entirely owing to an accident, father."

"Edgar! An accident! How does he come here? I thought he was two hundred miles off."

"Yes; so he is—I mean he has got a beautiful practice two hundred miles

off: he has bought it with his own money, some that came to him. But he travelled here, and I was nearly caught in a man-trap, and that's how it is I am here. We were just thinking of sending a messenger to let you know."

Melbury did not seem to be particularly enlightened by this explanation.

"You were caught in a man-trap?"

"Yes; my dress was. That's how it arose. Edgar is up stairs in his own sitting-room," she went on. "He would not mind seeing you, I am sure."

"Oh, faith, I don't want to see him! I have seen him too often a'ready. I'll see him another time, perhaps, if 'tis to oblige 'ee."

"He came to see me; he wanted to consult me about this large partnership I speak of, as it is very promising."

"Oh, I am glad to hear it," said Melbury drily.

A pause ensued, during which the inquiring faces and whitey-brown clothes of Melbury's companions appeared in the doorway.

"Then baint you coming home with us?" he asked.

"I—I think not," said Grace, blushing.

"H'm—very well—you are your own mistress," he returned in tones which seemed to assert otherwise. "Good-night;" and Melbury retreated towards the door.

"Don't be angry, father," she said, following him a few steps. "I have done it for the best."

"I am not angry, though it is true I have been a little misled in this. However, good-night. I must get home along."

He left the hotel, not without relief, for to be under the eyes of strangers while he conversed with his lost child had embarrassed him much. His search-party, too, had looked awkward there, having rushed to the task of investigation—some in their shirt-sleeves, others in their leather aprons, and all much stained—just as they had come from their work of barking, and not in their Sherton marketing attire; while Creedle, with his ropes and grapnels and air of impending tragedy, had added melancholy to gawkiness.

"Now, neighbours," said Melbury, on joining them, "as it is getting late we'll leg it home again as fast as we can. I ought to tell you that there has been some mistake—some arrangement entered into between Mr. and Mrs. Fitzpiers which I didn't quite understand—an important practice in the Midland counties has come to him, which made it necessary for her to join him to-night—so she says. That's all it was; and I'm sorry I dragged you out."

"Well," said the hollow-turner, "here be we six mile from home, and night-time, and not a hoss or four-footed creeping thing to our name. I say, we'll have a mossel and a drop o' summat to strengthen our nerves afore we vamp all the way back again? My throat's as dry as a kex. What d'ye say so's?"

They all concurred in the need for this course, and proceeded to the antique and lampless back-street in which the red curtain of the Three Tuns was the only radiant object. As soon as they had stumbled down into the room Melbury ordered them to be served, when they made themselves comfortable by the long table, and stretched out their legs upon the herring-boned sand of the floor. Melbury himself, restless as usual, walked to the door while he waited for them, and looked up and down the street.

"I'd gie her a good shaking if she were my maid; pretending to go out in garden, and leading folk a twelve-mile traipse that have got to get up at five o'clock to-morrow," said a bark-ripper; who, not working regularly for Melbury, could afford to indulge in strong opinions.

"I don't speak so warm as that," said the hollow-turner; "but if 'tis right for couples to make a country talk about their separating, and excite the neighbours, and then make fools of 'em like this, why, I haven't stood upon one leg for five-and-twenty year."

All his listeners knew that when he alluded to his foot-lathe in these enigmatic terms, the speaker meant to be impressive; and Creedle chimed in with, "Ah, young women do wax wanton in these days! Why couldn't she ha' bode with her father, and been faithful." Poor Creedle was thinking of his old employer.

"But this deceiving of folks is nothing unusual in matrimony," said Farmer Bawtree. "I knowed a man and wife—faith, I don't mind owning, as there's no strangers here, that the pair were my own relations—they'd be at it that hot one hour that you'd hear the poker, and the tongs, and the bellows, and the warming-pan flee across the house with the movements of their vengeance; and the next hour you'd hear 'em singing 'The Spotted Cow' together as peaceable as two holy twins; yes—and very good voices they had, and would strike in like professional ballet-singers to one another's support in the high notes."

"And I knowed a woman, and the husband o' her went away for four-and-twenty year," said the bark-ripper. "And one night he came home when she was sitting by the fire, and thereupon he sat down himself on the other side of the chimney-corner. 'Well,' says she, 'have ye got any news?' 'Don't know as I have,' says he; 'have you?' 'No,' says she, 'except that my daughter by my second husband was married last month, which was a year after I was made a widow by him.' 'Oh! Anything else?' he says. 'No,' says she. And there they sat, one on each side of that chimney-corner, and were found by the neighbours sound asleep in their chairs, not having known what to talk about at all."

"Well, I don't care who the man is," said Creedle, "they required a good deal to talk about, and that's true. It won't be the same with these."

"No. He is such a projick, you see. And she is a wonderful scholar too!"

"What women do know nowadays!" observed the hollow-turner. "You can't deceive 'em as you could in my time."

"What they knowed then was not small," said Upjohn. "Always a good deal more than the men! Why, when I went courting my wife that is now, the skilfulness that she would show in keeping me on her pretty side as she walked was beyond all belief. Perhaps you've noticed that she's got a pretty side to her face as well as a plain one?"

"I can't say I've noticed it particular much," said the hollow-turner blandly.

"Well," continued Upjohn, not disconcerted, "she has. All women under the sun be prettier one side than t'other. And, as I was saying, the pains she would take to make me walk on the pretty side were unending! I warrant that whether we were going with the sun or against the sun, uphill or downhill, in wind or in lewth, that wart of hers was always towards the hedge, and that dimple towards me. There was I, too simple to see her wheelings and turnings; and she so artful, though two years younger, that she could lead me with a cotton thread, like a blind ram; for that was in the third climate of our courtship. . . . No; I don't think the women have got cleverer, for they was never otherwise."

"How many climates may there be in courtship, Mr. Upjohn?" inquired a youth—the same who had assisted at Winterborne's Christmas party.

"Five, from the coolest to the hottest: leastwise there was five in mine."

"Can ye give us the chronicle of 'em, Mr. Upjohn?"

"Yes—I could. I could certainly. But 'tis quite unnecessary. They'll come to ye by nater, young man, too soon for your good."

"At present Mrs. Fitzpiers can lead the doctor as your mis'ess could lead you," the hollow-turner remarked. "She's got him quite tame. But how long 'twill last I can't say. I happened to be setting a wire on the

top of my garden one night when he met her on the other side of the hedge; and the way she queened it and fenced and kept that poor feller at a distance was enough to freeze yer blood. I should never have supposed it of such a girl."

Melbury now returned to the room, and the men having declared themselves refreshed, they all started on the homeward journey, which was by no means cheerless under the rays of the high moon. Having to walk the whole distance they came by a footpath rather shorter than the highway, though difficult except to those who knew the country well. This brought them by way of Great Hintock; and passing the churchyard they observed as they talked a motionless figure standing by the gate.

"I think it was Marty South," said the hollow-turner parenthetically.

"I think 'twas; 'a was always a lonely maid," said Upjohn. And they passed on homeward, and thought of the matter no more.

It was Marty, as they had supposed. That evening had been the particular one of the week upon which Grace and herself had been accustomed to privately deposit flowers on Giles's grave, and this was the first occasion since his death eight months earlier on which Grace had failed to keep her appointment. Marty had waited in the road just outside Little Hintock, where her fellow-pilgrim had been wont to join her, till she was weary; and at last, thinking that Grace had missed her and gone on alone, she followed the way to Great Hintock, but saw no Grace in front of her. It got later, and Marty continued her walk till she reached the churchyard gate; but still no Grace. Yet her sense of comradeship would not allow her to go on to the grave alone, and, still thinking the delay had been unavoidable, she stood there with her little basket of flowers in her clasped hands, and her feet chilled by the damp ground, till more than two hours had passed. She then heard the footsteps of Melbury's men, who presently passed on their return from the search. In the silence of the night Marty could not help hearing fragments of their conversation, from which she acquired a general idea of what had occurred, and where Mrs. Fitzpiers then was.

Immediately they had dropped down the hill she entered the churchyard, going to a secluded corner behind the bushes where rose the unadorned stone that marked the last bed of Giles Winterborne. As this solitary and silent girl stood there in the moonlight, a straight slim figure, clothed in a plaitless gown, the contours of womanhood so undeveloped as to be scarcely perceptible, the marks of poverty and toil effaced by the misty hour, she touched sublimity at points, and looked almost like a being who had rejected with indifference the attribute of sex for the loftier quality of abstract humanism. She stooped down and cleared away the withered flowers that Grace and herself had laid there the previous week, and put her fresh ones in their place.

"Now, my own own love," she whispered, "you are mine, and on'y mine; for she has forgot 'ee at last, although for her you died. But I—whenever I get up I'll think of 'ee, and whenever I lie down I'll think of 'ee. Whenever I plant the young larches I'll think that none can plant as you planted; and whenever I split a gad, and whenever I turn the cider-wring, I'll say none could do it like you. If ever I forget your name let me forget home and heaven! . . . . . But no, no, my love, I never can forget 'ee; for you was a good man, and did good things!"

THE END.

WILLIAM HAZLITT.

The following paper was in great part composed when I came across some sentences on Hazlitt, written indeed before I was born, but practically unpublished until the other day. In a review of the late Mr. Horne's *New Spirit of the Age*, contributed to the *Morning Chronicle* forty-two years ago, and but recently included in his collected works, Thackeray writes thus of the author of the book whose title Horne had rather rashly borrowed:

> "The author of the *Spirit of the Age* was one of the keenest and brightest critics that ever lived. With partialities and prejudices innumerable, he had a wit so keen, a sensibility so exquisite, an appreciation of humour, or pathos, or even of the greatest art, so lively, quick, and cultivated, that it was always good to know what were the impressions made by books or men or pictures on such a mind; and that, as there were not probably a dozen men in England with powers so varied, all the rest of the world might be rejoiced to listen to the opinions of this accomplished critic. He was of so different a caste to the people who gave authority in his day—the pompous big-wigs and schoolmen, who never could pardon him his familiarity of manner so unlike their own—his popular—too popular—habits and sympathies so much beneath their dignity; his loose, disorderly education gathered round those bookstalls or picture-galleries where he laboured a penniless student, in lonely journeys over Europe tramped on foot (and not made, after the fashion of the regular critics of the day, by the side of a young nobleman in a postchaise), in every school of knowledge from St. Peter's at Rome to St. Giles's in London. In all his modes of life and thought he was so different from the established authorities with their degrees and white neckcloths, that they hooted the man down with all the power of their lungs, and disdained to hear truth that came from such a ragged philosopher."

Some exceptions, no doubt, must be taken to this enthusiastic, and in the main just, verdict. Hazlitt himself denied himself wit, yet if this was mock humility, I am inclined to think that he spoke truth unwittingly. His appreciation of humour was fitful and anything but impartial, and, biographically speaking, the hardships of his apprenticeship are very considerably exaggerated. It was not, for instance, in a penniless or pedestrian manner that he visited St. Peter's at Rome; but journeying comfortably with surroundings of wine, *vetturini*, and partridges, which his second wife's income paid for. But this does not matter much, and, on the whole, the estimate is as just as it is generous. Perhaps something of its inspiration may be set down to fellow-feeling both in politics and in the unsuccessful cultivation of the arts of design. But as high an estimate of Hazlitt is quite compatible with the strongest political dissent from his opinions, and with a total freedom from the charge of wearing the willow for painting.

There is indeed no doubt that Hazlitt is one of the most absolutely unequal writers in English, if not in any, literature, Wilson being perhaps his only compeer. The term absolute is used with intention and precision. There may be others who in different parts of their work are more unequal than he is; but with him the inequality is pervading, and shows itself in his finest passages, in those where he is most at home, as much as in his hastiest and most uncongenial taskwork. It could not, indeed, be otherwise, because the inequality itself is due less to an intellectual than to a moral defect. The clear sunshine of Hazlitt's admirably acute intellect is always there; but it is constantly obscured by driving clouds of furious prejudice. Even as the clouds pass, the light may still be seen on distant and scattered parts of the landscape; but wherever their influence extends there is nothing but thick darkness, gusty wind and drenching rain. And the two phenomena,

the abiding intellectual light and the fits and squalls of moral darkness, appear to be totally independent of each other, or of any single will or cause of any kind. It would be perfectly easy, and may perhaps be in place later, to give a brief collection of some of the most absurd and outrageous sayings that any writer not a mere fool can be charged with : of sentences not representing quips and cranks of humour, or judgments temporary and one-sided, though having a certain relative validity, but containing blunders and calumnies so gross and palpable that the man who set them down might seem to have forfeited all claim to the reputation either of an intelligent or a responsible being. And yet side by side with these are other passages (and fortunately a much greater number) which justify, and more than justify, Hazlitt's claims to be, as Thackeray says, "one of the keenest and brightest writers that ever lived ;" as Lamb had said earlier "one of the wisest and finest spirits breathing."

The only exception to be taken to the well-known panegyric of Elia is, that it bestows this eulogy on Hazlitt "in his natural and healthy state." Unluckily, it would seem, by a concurrence of all testimony, even the most partial, that the unhealthy state was quite as natural as the healthy one. Lamb himself plaintively wishes that "he would not quarrel with the world at the rate he does"; and De Quincey, in his short, but very interesting, biographical notice of Hazlitt (a notice entirely free from the malignity with which De Quincey has been sometimes charged), declares with quite as much truth as point, that Hazlitt's guiding principle was, "Whatever is, is wrong." He was the very ideal of a literary Ishmael ; and after the fullest admission of the almost incredible virulence and unfairness of his foes, it has to be admitted, likewise, that he was quite as ready to quarrel with his friends. He succeeded at least once in forcing a quarrel even upon Lamb. His relations with Leigh Hunt (who, whatever his faults were, was not unamiable) were constantly strained, and at least once actually broken by his infernal temper. Nor were his relations with women more fortunate or more creditable than those with men. That the fault was entirely on his side in the rupture with his first wife is, no doubt, not the case ; for Mrs. Hazlitt's, or Miss Stoddart's, own friends admit that she was of a peculiar and rather trying disposition. It is indeed evident that she was the sort of person (most trying of all others to a man of Hazlitt's temperament) who would put her head back as he was kissing her to ask if he would like another cup of tea, or interrupt a declaration to suggest shutting the window. As for the famous and almost legendary episode of Sarah Walker, the lodging-house keeper's daughter, and the *Liber Amoris,* the obvious and irresistible attack of something like erotic madness which it implies absolves Hazlitt partly—but only partly ; for there is a kind of shabbiness about the affair which shuts it out from all reasonable claim to be regarded as a new act of the endless drama of "All for Love, or The World Well Lost !" Of his second marriage, the only persons who might be expected to give us some information either can or will say next to nothing. But when a man with such antecedents marries a woman of whom no one has anything bad to say, lives with her for a year chiefly on her money, and is then quitted by her with the information that she will have nothing more to do with him, it is not, I think, uncharitable to conjecture that most of the fault is his.

It is not, however, only of Hazlitt's rather imperfectly known life, or of his pretty generally acknowledged character, that I wish to speak here. His strange mixture of manly commonsense and childish prejudice, the dislike of foreigners which accompanied his Liberalism and his Bonapartism, and

other traits, are very much more English than Irish. But Irish, at least on the father's side, his family was, and had been for generations. He was himself the son of a Unitarian minister, was born at Maidstone in 1778, accompanied his parents as a very little boy to America, but passed the greater part of his youth at Wem in Shropshire, where the interview with Coleridge, which decided his fate, took place. Yet for some time after that he was mainly occupied with studies, not of literature, but of art. He had been intended for his father's profession, but had early taken a disgust to it. At such schools as he had been able to frequent he had gained the character of a boy rather insusceptible of ordinary teaching; and his letters (they are rare throughout his life) show him to us as something very like a juvenile prig. According to his own account, he "thought for at least eight years" without being able to pen a line, or at least a page; and the worst accusation that can be brought against him (it is an accusation which his Tory foes never dreamt of bringing, and which is based on his own and his grandson's confessions) is, that when he began to write he left off reading. Those of us who (for their sins or for their good) are condemned to a life of writing for the press know that such an abstinence as this is almost fatal. Perhaps no man ever did good work in periodical writing unless he had previously had a more or less prolonged period of reading with no view to writing. Certainly no one ever did other than very faulty work if, not having such a store to draw on, when he began writing he left off reading.

The first really important event in Hazlitt's life, except the visit from Coleridge in 1798, was his own visit to Paris after the Peace of Amiens in 1802—a visit authorised and defrayed by certain commissions to copy pictures at the Louvre, which was then, in consequence of French conquests, the picture-gallery of Europe. The chief of these commissioners was a Mr. Railton, a person of some fortune at Liverpool, and, unless John Hazlitt, the critic's brother, was a man of genius, the father of a daughter who had one of the most beautiful faces of modern times. Miss Railton was one of Hazlitt's many loves: it was, perhaps, fortunate for her that the course of the love did not run smooth. Almost immediately on his return he made acquaintance with the Lambs, and, as Mr. W. C. Hazlitt, his grandson and biographer thinks, with Miss Stoddart, his future wife. Miss Stoddart, there is no doubt, was an elderly coquette, though perfectly "proper." Besides the "William" of her early correspondence with Mary Lamb, we hear of three or four other lovers of hers between 1803 and 1808, when she married Hazlitt. It so happens that one, and only one, letter of his to her has been preserved. His biographer seems to think it in another sense "unique;" but it is, in effect, a very typical letter from a literary lover of a rather passionate temperament. The two were married, in defiance of superstition, on Sunday, the first of May; and certainly the superstition had not the worst of it.

At first, however, no evil results seemed likely. Miss Stoddart had a certain property settled on her at Winterslow, on the south-eastern border of Salisbury Plain, and for nearly four years the couple seem to have dwelt there, once, at least, entertaining the Lambs, and producing children, of whom only one lived. It was not till 1812 that they removed to London, and that Hazlitt engaged in writing for the newspapers. From this time till the end of his life, some eighteen years, he was never at a loss for employment—a succession of daily and weekly papers, with occasional employment on the *Edinburgh Review*, providing him, it would seem, with sufficiently abundant opportunities for copy. The *London*, the *New Monthly* (where Campbell's dislike did him no harm), and other magazines also employed him. For a time he seems to have

joined "the gallery" and written ordinary press-work. During this time, which was very short, and this time only, his friends admit a certain indulgence in drinking, which he gave up completely, but which was used against him with as much pitilessness as indecency in *Blackwood;* though heaven only knows how the most Tory soul living could see fitness of things in the accusation of gin-drinking brought against Hazlitt by the whisky-drinkers of the *Noctes.* For the greater part of his literary life he seems to have been almost a teetotaller, indulging only in the very strongest of tea. He soon gave up miscellaneous press-work, as far as politics went; but his passion for the theatre retained him as a theatrical critic almost to the end of his life. He gradually drifted into the business really best suited to him, that of essay-writing, and occasionally lecturing on literary and miscellaneous subjects. During the greatest part of his early London life he was resident in a famous house, now destroyed, in York street, Westminster, next door to Bentham and reputed to have once been tenanted by Milton; and he was a constant attendant on Lamb's Wednesday evenings. The details of his life, it has been said, are not much known. The chief of them, besides the breaking out of his life-long war with *Blackwood* and the *Quarterly*, was, perhaps, his unlucky participation in the duel which proved fatal to Scott, the editor of the *London.* It is impossible to imagine a more deplorable muddle than this affair. Scott, after refusing the challenge of Lockhart, with whom he had, according to the customs of those days, a sufficient ground of quarrel, accepted that of Christie, Lockhart's second, with whom he had no quarrel at all. Moreover, when his adversary had deliberately spared him in the first fire, he insisted (it is said owing to the stupid conduct of his own seconds) on another, and was mortally wounded. Hazlitt, who was more than indirectly concerned in the affair, had a professed objection to duelling, which would have been more creditable to him if he had not been avowedly of a timid temper. But, most unfortunately, he was said, and believed, to have spurred Scott on to the acceptance of the challenge, nor do his own champions deny it. The scandal is long bygone, but is unluckily a fair sample of the ugly stories which cluster round Hazlitt's name, and which have hitherto prevented that justice being done to him which his abilities deserve and demand.

This wretched affair occurred in February, 1821, and shortly afterwards the crowning complication of Hazlitt's own life, the business of the *Liber Amoris* and the divorce with his first wife, took place. The first could only be properly described by an abundance of extracts for which there is here no room. Of the second, which, it must be remembered, went on simultaneously with the first, it is sufficient to say that the circumstances are nearly incredible. It was conducted under the Scotch law with a blessed indifference to collusion: the direct means taken to effect it were, if report may be trusted, scandalous; and the parties met during the whole time, and placidly wrangled over money matters, with a callousness which is ineffably disgusting. I have hinted, in reference to Sarah Walker, that the tyranny of "Love unconquered in battle" may be taken by a very charitable person to be a sufficient excuse. In this other affair there is no such palliation; unless the very charitable person should hold that a wife, who could so forget her own dignity, justified any forgetfulness on the part of her husband; and that a husband, who could haggle and chaffer about the terms on which he should be disgracefully separated from his wife, justified any forgetfulness of dignity on the wife's part.

Little has to be said about the rest of Hazlitt's life. Miss Sarah Walker would have nothing to say to him; and it has been already mentioned that the lady whom he afterwards

married, a Mrs. Bridgewater, had enough of him after a year's experience. He did not outlive this last shock more than five years; and unfortunately his death was preceded by a complete financial break-down, though he was more industrious during these later years than at any other time, and though he had abundance of well-paid work. The failure of the publishers, who were to have paid him five hundred pounds for his *magnum opus*, the one-sided and almost valueless *Life of Napoleon*, had something to do with this, and the dishonesty of an agent is said to have had more, but details are not forthcoming. He died on the eighteenth of September, 1830, saying, "Well, I have had a happy life"; and despite his son's assertion that, like Goldsmith, he had something on his mind, I believe this to have been not ironical but quite sincere. He was only fifty-two, so that the infirmities of age had not begun to press on him. Although, except during the brief duration of his second marriage, he had always lived by his wits, it does not appear that he was ever in any want, or that he had at any time to deny himself his favourite pleasures of wandering about and being idle when he chose. If he had not been completely happy in his life, he had lived it: if he had not seen the triumph of his opinions, he had been able always to hold to them. He was one of those men, such as an extreme devotion to literature now and then breeds, who, by the intensity of their enjoyment of quite commonplace delights—a face passed in the street, a sunset, a quiet hour of reflection, even a well-cooked meal—make up for the suffering of not wholly commonplace woes. I do not know whether even the joy of literary battle did not overweigh the pain of the dishonest wounds which he received from illiberal adversaries. I think that he had a happy life, and I am glad that he had. For he was in literature a great man. I am myself disposed to think that, for all his accesses of hopelessly uncritical prejudice, he was the greatest critic that England has yet produced; and there are some who think (though I do not agree with them) that he was even greater as a miscellaneous essayist than as a critic. It is certainly upon his essays, critical and other, that his fame must rest; not on the frenzied outpourings of the *Liber Amoris*, or upon the one-sided and ill-planned *Life of Napoleon;* still less on his clever-boy essay on the *Principles of Human Action*, or on his attempts in grammar, in literary compilation and abridgment, and the like. Seven volumes of Bohn's Standard Library, with another published elsewhere containing his writings on Art, contain nearly all the documents of Hazlitt's fame: a few do not seem to have been yet collected from his *Remains* and from the publications in which they originally appeared.

These books—the *Spirit of the Age*, *Table-Talk*, *The Plain Speaker*, *The Round Table* (including the *Conversations with Northcote* and *Characteristics*), *Lectures on the English Poets and Comic Writers*, *Elizabethan Literature* and *Characters of Shakespeare*, *Sketches and Essays* (including *Winterslow*)—represent the work, roughly speaking, of the last twenty years of Hazlitt's life; for in the earlier and longer period he wrote very little, and indeed declares that for a long time he had a difficulty in writing at all. They are all singularly homogeneous in general character, the lectures written as lectures differing very little from the essays written as essays, and even the frantic diatribes of the "Letter to Gifford" bearing a strong family likeness to the good-humoured reporting of the "On Going to a Fight," or the singularly picturesque and pathetic egotism of the "Farewell to Essay-Writing." This family resemblance is the more curious because, independently of the diversity of subject, Hazlitt can hardly be said to possess a style or, at least, a manner—indeed, he somewhere or other distinctly disclaims the possession. Yet, irregular as he is in his fashion of writing, no less than in the merit of it, the germs of some of the most famous

styles of this century may be discovered in his casual and haphazard work. Everybody knows Jeffrey's question to Macaulay, "Where the devil did you get that style?" If any one will read Hazlitt (who, be it remembered, was a contributor to the *Edinburgh*) carefully, he will see where Macaulay got that style, or at least the beginning of it, much as he improved on it afterwards. Nor is there any doubt that, in a very different way, Hazlitt served as a model to Thackeray, to Dickens, and to many not merely of the most popular but of the greatest writers of the middle of the century. Indeed, in the *Spirit of the Age* there are distinct anticipations of Carlyle. He had the not uncommon fate of producing work which, little noted by the public, struck those of his juniors who had any literary faculty very strongly. If he had been just by a little a greater man than he was, he would, no doubt, have elaborated an individual manner, and not contented himself with the hints and germs of manners. As it was, he had more of seed than of fruit. And the secret of this is, undoubtedly, to be found in the obstinate individuality of thought which characterised him all through. Hazlitt may sometimes have adopted an opinion precisely because other people did not hold it, but he never adopted an opinion because other people did hold it. And all his opinions, even those which seem to have been adopted simply to quarrel with the world, were genuine opinions. He has himself drawn a striking contrast in this point between himself and Lamb in one of the very best of all his essays, the beautiful "Farewell to Essay-Writing" reprinted in *Winterslow.* The contrast is a remarkable one, and most men, probably, who take great interest in literature or politics, or indeed in any subject admitting of principles, will be able to furnish similar contrasts from their own experience.

"In matters of taste and feeling, one proof that my conclusions have not been quite shallow and hasty is the circumstance of their having been lasting. I have the same favourite books, pictures, passages that I ever had; I may therefore presume that they will last me my life—nay, I may indulge a hope that my thoughts will survive me. This continuity of impression is the only thing on which I pride myself. Even Lamb, whose relish of certain things is as keen and earnest as possible, takes a surfeit of admiration, and I should be afraid to ask about his select authors or particular friends after a lapse of ten years. As for myself, any one knows where to have me. What I have once made up my mind to, I abide by to the end of the chapter."

This is quite true if we add a proviso to it—a proviso, to be sure, of no small importance. Hazlitt is always the same when he is not different, when his political or personal ails and angers do not obscure his critical judgment. His uniformity of principle extends only to the two subjects of literature and of art; unless a third may be added, to wit, the various good things of this life, as they are commonly called. He was not so great a metaphysician as he thought himself. He "shows to the utmost of his knowledge, and that not deep"; a want of depth not surprising when we find him confessing that he had to go to Taylor, the Platonist, to tell him something of Platonic ideas. It may be more than suspected that he had read little but the French and English philosophers of the eighteenth century: a very interesting class of persons, but, except Condillac, Hume and Berkeley, scarcely metaphysicians. As for his politics, Hazlitt seems to me to have had no clear political creed at all. He hated something called "the hag legitimacy," but for the hag despotism, in the person of Bonaparte, he had nothing but love. How any one possessed of brains could combine Liberty and the first Napoleon in one common worship is, I confess, a mystery too great for me; and I fear that any one who could call "Jupiter Scapin" "the greatest man who ever lived," must be entirely blind to such constituents of greatness as justice, mercy, chivalry, and all that makes a gentleman. Indeed, I fear that "gentleman" is exactly what cannot

be predicated of Hazlitt. No gentleman could have published the *Liber Amoris*, not at all because of its so-called voluptuousness, but because of its shameless "kissing and telling." But the most curious example of Hazlitt's weaknesses is the language he uses in regard to those men with whom he had both political and literary differences. That he had provocation in some cases (he had absolutely none from Sir Walter Scott) is perfectly true. But what provocation will excuse such things as the following, all taken from one book, the *Spirit of the Age?* He speaks of Scott's "zeal to restore the spirit of loyalty, of passive obedience, and of non-resistance, as an acknowledgment for his having been created a baronet by a prince of the House of Brunswick." Alas! for dates and circumstances, for times and seasons, when they stand in the way of a fling of Hazlitt's. In the character of Scott himself an entire page and a half is devoted to an elaborate peroration in one huge sentence, denouncing him in such terms as "pettifogging," "littleness," "pique," "secret and envenomed blows," "slime of rankling malice and mercenary scorn," "trammels of servility," "lies," "garbage," &c., &c. The Duke of Wellington he always speaks of as a brainless noodle, forgetting apparently that the description does not exactly make his idol's defeat more creditable to the vanquished. As for the character of Gifford, and the earlier "Letter to Gifford," I should have to print them entire to show the state of Hazlitt's mind in regard to this notorious, and certainly not very amiable, person. His own words, "the dotage of age and the fury of a woman," form the best short description of both. He screams, he foams at the mouth, he gnashes and tears and kicks, rather than fights. Nor is it only on living authors and living persons (as some of his unfavourable critics have said) that he exercises his spleen. His remarks on Burke (*Round Table*, p. 150) suggest temporary insanity. Sir Philip Sidney (as Lamb, a perfectly impartial person who had no politics at all, pointed out) was a kind of representative of the courtly monarchist school in literature. So down must Sir Philip go; and not only the *Arcadia*, that "vain and amatorious poem" which Milton condemned, but the sonnets which one would have thought such a lover of poetry as Hazlitt must have spared, go down also before his remorseless bludgeon.

But there is no need to say any more of these faults of his, and there is no need to say much of another and more purely literary fault with which he has been charged—the fault of excessive quotation. In him the error lies rather in the constant repetition of the same than in a too great multitude of different borrowings. Almost priding himself on limited study, and (as he tells us) very rarely reading his own work after it was printed, he has certainly abused his right of press most damnably in some cases: "dry as a remainder biscuit," and of "no mark or likelihood," occur to me as the most constantly recurrent tags, but there are many others.

These various drawbacks, however, only set off the merits which almost every lover of literature must perceive in him. In most writers, in all save the very greatest, we look for one or two, or for a few special faculties and capacities, and we know perfectly well that other (generally many other) capacities and faculties will not be found in them at all. We do not dream of finding rollicking mirth in Milton, or gorgeous embroidery of style in Swift, or unadorned simplicity in Browne. But in Hazlitt you may find something of almost everything, except the finer kinds of wit and humour; to which last, however, he makes a certain side approach by dint of his appreciation of the irony of Nature and Fate. Almost every other grace of matter and form that can be found in prose may be found at times in his. He is generally thought of

as, and for the most part is, a rather plain and straightforward writer, with few tricks and frounces of phrase and style. Yet most of the fine writing of these latter days is but as crumpled tarlatan to brocaded satin beside the passage on Coleridge in the *English Poets*, or the description of Winterslow and its neighbourhood in the "Farewell to Essay-writing," or "On a Landscape of Nicolas Poussin," in the *Table-Talk.* Read these pieces and nothing else, and an excusable impression might be given that the writer was nothing if not florid. But turn over a dozen pages, and the most admirable examples of the grave and chaste manner occur. He is an inveterate quoter, yet few men are more original. No man is his superior in lively, gossiping description, yet he could within his limits reason closely and expound admirably. It is indeed almost always necessary when he condemns anything to inquire very carefully as to the reasons of the condemnation. But nothing that he likes is (except Napoleon) ever bad : everything that he praises will repay the right man who, at the right time, examines it to see for what Hazlitt likes it. I have, for my part, no doubt that Miss Sarah Walker was a very engaging young woman ; but (though the witness is the same) I have the gravest doubts as to Hazlitt's charges against her.

We shall find this same curious difference everywhere in Hazlitt. He has been talking, for instance, with keen relish of the "Conversation of Authors" (it is he, be it remembered, who has handed down to us the immortal debate at one of Lamb's Wednesdays on "People one would Like to have Seen"), and saying excellent things about it. Then he changes the key, and tells us that the conversation of "Gentlemen and Men of Fashion" will not do. Perhaps not; but the wicked critic stops and asks himself whether Hazlitt had known much of the conversation of "Gentlemen and Men of Fashion"? We can find no record of any such experiences of his. In his youth he had no opportunity: in his middle age he was notoriously recalcitrant to all the usages of society, would not dress, and scarcely ever dined out except with a few cronies. This does not seem to be the best qualification for a pronouncement on the question. Yet this same essay is full of admirable things, the most admirable being, perhaps, the description of the man who "had you at an advantage by never understanding you." I find, indeed, in looking through my copies of his books, re-read for the purpose of this paper, an innumerable and bewildering multitude of essays, of passages and short phrases, marked for reference. In the seven volumes above referred to (to which, as has been said, not a little has to be added) there must be hundreds of separate articles and conversations ; not counting as separate the short maxims and thoughts of the *Characteristics*, and one or two other similar collections, in which, indeed, several passages are duplicated from the Essays. At least two out of every three are characteristic of Hazlitt: not one in any twenty is not well worth reading and, if occasion served, commenting on. They are, indeed, as far from being consecutive as (according to the Yankee) was the conversation of Edgar Poe ; and the multitude and diversity of their subjects fit them better for occasional than for continuous reading. Perhaps, if any single volume deserves to be recommended to a beginner in Hazlitt it had better be *The Plain Speaker*, where there is the greatest range of subject, and where the author is seen in an almost complete repertory of his numerous parts. But there is not much to choose between it and *The Round Table* (where, however, the papers are shorter as a rule), *Table-Talk*, and the volume called, though not by the author, *Sketches and Essays*. I myself care considerably less for the *Conversations with Northcote*, the personal element in which has often attracted readers ; and the attempts referred to

above as *Characteristics*, avowedly in the manner of La Rochefoucauld, are sometimes merely extracts from the essays, and rarely have the self-containedness, the exact and chiselled proportion, which distinguishes the true "thought" as La Rochefoucauld and some other Frenchmen, and as Hobbes perhaps alone of Englishmen, wrote it. But to criticise these numerous papers is like sifting a cluster of motes, and the mere enumeration of their titles would fill up more than half the room which I have to spare. They must be criticised or characterised in two groups only, the strictly critical and the miscellaneous, the latter excluding politics; and as for art, I do not pretend to be more than a connoisseur according to Blake's definition, that is to say, one who refuses to let himself be connoisseured out of his senses. I shall only, in reference to this last subject observe that the singularly germinal character of Hazlitt's work is noticeable here also; for no one who reads the essay on Nicolas Poussin will fail to add Mr. Ruskin to Hazlitt's fair herd of literary children.

His criticism is scattered through all the volumes of general essays; but is found by itself in the series of lectures, or essays (they are rather the latter than the former), on the characters of Shakespeare, on Elizabethan Literature, on the English Poets, and on the English Comic Writers. I cannot myself help thinking that in these four Hazlitt is at his best; though there may be nothing so attractive to the general, and few such brilliant passages as may be found in the "Farewell to Essay Writing," in the paper on Poussin, in the "Going to a Fight," in the "Going a Journey," and others of the same class. The reason of the preference is by no means a greater interest in the subject of one class than in the subject of another. It is that, from the very nature of the case, Hazlitt's unlucky prejudices interfere much more seldom with his literary work. They interfere sometimes, as in the case of Sidney, as in some remarks about Coleridge and Wordsworth, and elsewhere; but these instances are rare indeed compared with those that occur in the other division. On the other hand, Hazlitt's enthusiastic appreciation of what is good in letters, his combination of gusto with sound theory as to what is excellent in prose and verse, his felicitous method of expression, and the acuteness that kept him from that excessive and paradoxical admiration which both Lamb and Coleridge affected, and which has gained many more pupils than his own moderation, are always present. Nothing better has ever been written than his general view of the subject as an introduction to his Lectures on Elizabethan Literature; and almost all the faults to be found with it are due merely to occasional deficiency of information, not to error of judgment. He is a little paradoxical on Jonson; but not many critics could furnish a happier contrast than his enthusiastic praise of certain passages of Beaumont and Fletcher, and his cool toning down of Lamb's extravagant eulogy on Ford. He is a little unfair to the Caroline poets; but here the great disturbing influence comes in. If his comparison of ancient and modern literature is rather weak, that is because Hazlitt was anything but widely acquainted with either; and, indeed, it may be said in general that wherever he goes wrong, it is not because he judges wrongly on known facts, but because he either does not know the facts, or is prevented from seeing them by distractions of prejudice. To go through his Characters of Shakespeare would be impossible, and besides, it is a point of honour for one student of Shakespeare to differ with all others. I can only say that I know no critic with whom on this point I differ so seldom as with Hazlitt. Even better, perhaps, are the two sets of lectures on the Poets and Comic Writers. The generalisations are not always sound, for, as must be constantly repeated, Hazlitt was not widely read in literatures other than his

own, and his standpoint for comparison is therefore rather insufficient. But take him where his information is sufficient and how good he is! Of the famous four treatments of the dramatists of the Restoration — Lamb's, Hazlitt's, Leigh Hunt's and Macaulay's—his seems to me by far the best. In regard to Butler, his critical sense has for once triumphed over his political prejudice; unless some very unkind devil's advocate should suggest that the supposed ingratitude of the King to Butler reconciled Hazlitt to him. He is admirable on Burns; and nothing can be more unjust or sillier than to pretend, as has been pretended, that Burns's loose morality engaged Hazlitt on his side. De Quincey was often a very acute critic, but anything more uncritical than his attack on Hazlitt's comparison of Burns and Wordsworth in relation to passion, it would be difficult to find. Hazlitt "could forgive Swift for being a Tory," he tells us—which is at any rate more than some other people, who have a better reputation for impartiality than his, seem to have been able to do. No one has written better than he on Pope, who still seems to have the faculty of distorting some critical judgments. His chapter on the English novelists (that is to say, those of the last century) is perhaps the best thing ever written on the subject; and is particularly valuable nowadays when there is a certain tendency to undervalue Smollett in order to exalt Fielding, who certainly needs no such illegitimate and uncritical leverage. I do not think that he is on, the whole, unjust to Campbell; though his Gallican, or rather Napoleonic mania made him commit the literary crime of slighting "The Battle of the Baltic." But in truth in criticism of English literature (and he has attempted little else, except by way of digression) he is for the critic a study never to be wearied of, always to be profited by. His very aberrations are often more instructive than other men's right-goings; and if he sometimes fails to detect or acknowledge a beauty, he never praises a defect.

It is less easy to sum up the merits of the miscellaneous pieces, for the very obvious reason that they can hardly be brought under any general form or illustrated by any small number of typical instances. Perhaps the best way of "sampling" this undisciplined multitude is to select a few papers by name, so as to show the variety of Hazlitt's interests. The one already mentioned, "On Going to a Fight," which shocked some proprieties even in its own day, ranks almost first; but the reader should take care to accompany it with the official record of that celebrated contest between Neate and the Gasman. All fights are good reading; but this particular effort of Hazlitt's makes one sigh for a *Boxiana* or *Pugilistica* edited by him. Next, I think, must be ranked "On Going a Journey," with its fine appreciation of solitary travelling which does not exclude reminiscences of pleasant journeys in company. But these two, with the article on Poussin and the "Farewell to Essay-writing," have been so often mentioned that it may seem as if Hazlitt's store were otherwise poor. Nothing could be farther from the truth. The "Character of Cobbett" is the best thing the writer ever did of the kind, and the best thing that has ever been written on the subject. "Of the Past and the Future" is perhaps the height of the popular metaphysical style—the style from which, as was noted, Hazlitt perhaps never got free as far as philosophising is concerned, but of which he is a master. "On the Indian Jugglers" is a capital example of what may be called improving a text; and it contains some of the most interesting and genial examples of Hazlitt's honest delight in games such as rackets and fives, a delight which (heaven help his critics) was frequently regarded at the time as "low." "On Paradox and Commonplace" is less remarkable for its contribution to the discussion of the subject, than as exhibiting one

of Hazlitt's most curious critical megrims—his dislike of Shelley. I wish I could think that he had any better reason for this than the fact that Shelley was a gentleman by birth and his own contemporary. Most disappointing of all, perhaps, is "On Criticism," which the reader (as his prophetic soul, if he is a sensible reader, has probably warned him beforehand) soon finds to be little but an open or covert diatribe against the contemporary critics whom Hazlitt did not like, or who did not like Hazlitt. The apparently promising "On the Knowledge of Character" chiefly yields the remark that Hazlitt could not have admired Cæsar if he had resembled (in face) the Duke of Wellington. But "My First Acquaintance with Poets" is again a masterpiece; and to me, at least, "Merry England" is perfect. Hazlitt is almost the only person up to his own day who dared to vindicate the claims of nonsense, though he seems to have talked and written as little of it as most men. The chapter "On Editors" is very amusing, though perhaps not entirely in the way in which Hazlitt meant it; but I cannot think him happy "On Footmen," or on "The Conversation of Lords," for reasons already sufficiently stated. A sun-dial is a much more promising subject than a broomstick, yet many essays might be written on sun-dials without there being any fear of Hazlitt's being surpassed. Better still is "On Taste," which, if the twenty or thirty best papers in Hazlitt were collected (and a most charming volume they would make), would rank among the very best. "On Reading New Books" contains excellent sense, but perhaps is, as Hazlitt not seldom is, a little deficient in humour; while the absence of any necessity for humour makes the discussion "Whether Belief is Voluntary" an excellent one. Hazlitt is not wholly of the opinion of that Hebrew Jew who said to M. Renan, "*On fait ce qu'on veut mais on croit ce qu'on peut.*"

The shorter papers of the *Round Table* yield perhaps a little less freely in the way of specially notable examples. They come closer to a certain kind of Addisonian essay, a short lay-sermon, without the charming divagation of the longer articles. To see how nearly Hazlitt can reach the level of a rather older and cleverer George Osborne, turn to the paper here on Classical Education. He is quite orthodox for a wonder: perhaps because opinion was beginning to veer a little to the side of Useful Knowledge; but he is as dry as his own favourite biscuit, and as guiltless of freshness. He is best in this volume where he notes particular points such as Kean's Iago, Milton's versification (here, however, he does not get quite to the heart of the matter), "John Buncle," and "The Excursion." In this last he far outsteps the scanty confines of the earlier papers of the *Round Table*, and allows himself that score of pages which seems to be with so many men the normal limit of a good essay. Of his shortest style one sample from "Trifles light as Air" is so characteristic in more ways than one that it must be quoted whole.

> "I am by education and conviction inclined to Republicanism and Puritanism. In America they have both. But I confess I feel a little staggered as to the practical efficacy and saving grace of first principles when I ask myself, Can they throughout the United States from Boston to Baltimore, produce a single head like one of Titian's Venetian Nobles, nurtured in all the pride of aristocracy and all the blindness of popery? Of all the branches of political economy the human face is perhaps the best criterion of value."

If I were editing Hazlitt's works I should put these sentences on the title-page of every volume; for dogmatist as he thought himself, it is certain that he was in reality purely æsthetic, though, I need hardly say, not in the absurd sense, or no-sense, which modern misuse of language has chosen to fix on the word. Therefore he is very good (where few are good at all) on Dreams and, being a great observer of himself, singularly in-

structive on Application to Study. "On Londoners and Country People" is one of his liveliest efforts; and the pique at his own inclusion in the Cockney School fortunately evaporates in some delightful reminiscences, including one of the few classic passages on the great game of marbles. His remarks on the company at the Southampton coffee-house, which have often been much praised, please me less: they are too much like attempts in the manner of the Queen Anne men, and Hazlitt is always best when he imitates nobody. "Hot and Cold" (which might have been more intelligibly called "North and South") is distinctly curious, bringing out again what may be called Hazlitt's fanciful observation; and it may generally be said, that however alarming and however suggestive of commonplace, the titles "On Respectable People," "On People of Sense," "On Novelty and Familiarity" &c., may be, Hazlitt may almost invariably be trusted to produce something that is not commonplace, that is not laboured paradox, that is eminently literature.

I know that a haphazard catalogue of the titles of essays (for it is little more) such as fills the last paragraph or two may not seem very succulent. But within moderate space there is really no other means of indicating the author's extraordinary range of subject, and at the same time the pervading excellence of his treatment. To exemplify a difference which has sometimes been thought to require explanation, his work as regards system, connection with anything else, immediate occasion (which with him was generally what his friend, Mr. Skimpole, would have called "pounds") is always Journalism: in result, it is almost always Literature. Its staple subjects, as far as there can be said to be any staple where the thread is so various, are very much those which the average newspaper-writer since his time has had to deal with—politics, book-reviewing, criticism on plays and pictures, social etceteras, the minor morals, the miscellaneous incidents of daily life. It is true that Hazlitt was only for a short time in the straitest shafts, the most galling traces, of periodical hack-work. His practice was rather that of George Warrington, who worked till he had filled his purse, and then lay idle till he had emptied it. He used (an indulgence agreeable in the mouth, but bitter in the belly) very frequently to receive money beforehand for work which was not yet done. Although anything but careful, he was never an extravagant man, his tastes being for the most part simple; and he never, even during his first married life, seems to have been burdened by an expensive household. Moreover, he got rid of Mrs. Hazlitt on very easy terms. Still he must constantly have had on him the sensation that he lived by his work, and by that only. It seems to be (as far as one can make it out) this sensation which more than anything else jades and tires what some very metaphorical men of letters are pleased to call their Pegasus. But Hazlitt, though he served in the shafts, shows little trace of the harness. He has frequent small carelessnesses of style, but he would probably have had as many or more if he had been the easiest and gentlest of easy-writing gentlemen. He never seems to have allowed himself to be cramped in his choice of his subjects, and wrote for the editors of whom he speaks so amusingly with almost as much freedom of speech as if he had had a private press of his own, and had issued dainty little tractates on Dutch paper to be fought for by bibliophiles. His prejudices, his desultoriness, his occasional lack of correctness of fact (he speaks of "Fontaine's Translation" of Æsop, and makes use of the extraordinary phrase, "The whole Council of Trent with Father Paul at their head," than which a more curious blunder is hardly conceivable), his wayward inconsistencies, his freaks of bad taste, would in all probability have been aggravated rather than alleviated by the greater freedom and less re-

sponsibility of an independent or an endowed student. The fact is that he was a born man of letters, and that he could not help turning whatsoever he touched into literature, whether it was criticism on books or on pictures, a fight or a supper, a game at marbles, a political diatribe, or the report of a literary conversation. He doubtless had favourite subjects; but I do not know that it can be said that he treated one class of subjects better than another, with the exception that I must hold him to have been first of all a literary critic. He certainly could not write a work of great length; for the faults of his *Life of Napoleon* are grave even when its view of the subject is taken as undisputed, and it holds about the same place (that of longest and worst) which the book it was designed to counterwork holds among Scott's productions. Nor was he, as it seems to me, quite at home in very short papers—in papers of the length of the average newspaper article. What he could do, as hardly any other man has ever done in England, was a *causerie* of about the same length as Sainte-Beuve's or a little shorter, less limited in range, but also less artfully proportioned than the great Frenchman's literary and historical studies, giving scope for considerable digression, but coming to an end before the author was wearied of his subject, or had exhausted the fresh thoughts and the happy borrowings and analogies which he had ready for it. Of what is rather affectedly called "architectonic," Hazlitt has nothing. No essay of his is ever an exhaustive or even a symmetrical treatment of its nominal, or of any, theme. He somewhere speaks of himself as finding it easy to go on stringing pearls when he has once got the string; but for my part I should say that the string was much more doubtful than the pearls. Except in a very few set pieces, his whole charm consists in the succession of irregular, half-connected but unending and infinitely variegated thoughts, fancies, phrases, quotations, which he pours forth not merely at a particular "Open Sesame," but at "Open barley," "Open rye," or any other grain in the corn-chandler's list. No doubt the charm of these is increased by the fact that they are never quite haphazard, never absolutely promiscuous, despite their desultory arrangement; no doubt also a certain additional interest arises from the constant revelation which they make of Hazlitt's curious personality, his enthusiastic appreciation flecked with spots of grudging spite, his clear intellect clouded with prejudice, his admiration of greatness and nobility of character co-existing with the faculty of doing very mean and even disgraceful things, his abundant relish of life contrasted with almost constant repining. He must have been one of the most uncomfortable of all English men of letters, who can be called great, to know as a friend. He is certainly, to those who know him only as readers, one of the most fruitful both in instruction and in delight.

George Saintsbury.

PERSIA.

The usual three courses are open to the traveller visiting Persia. He may cross the Caucasus from Europe, or may go by sea or land from India. For various reasons the sea alone was open to me, and I embarked from Kurrachee in a steamer bound for Bushire.

A weary way it is along the Mekran coast, through the sea of Oman, to Ormuz, shade of a great name, and Bunder Abbas, the port of Shah Abbas the (comparatively) Great. Let one description of a coast village do for all. A background of high, barren, volcanic hills, a level and treeless plain to the sea, a collection of mud houses on the shore redeemed from ugliness by groves of date-palms. A bright sun, in a bright blue sky, blazes down on this oft-repeated picture.

Some miles from the coast steamers anchor at Bushire; and on a windy day the traveller does not land under three hours of weary tacking in a buggalow beneath a bright sun, which soon dries on his face the salt from the waves that break over the boat and, on a rough day, over himself.

Bushire, the largest town in the Gulf, is the headquarters of a Persian Governor. Its fort remains in the ruined condition in which our troops left it in 1856, but the town has increased in size since then. It stands on a low tongue of land projecting into the Gulf, and is surrounded by swampy salt plains, often converted by mirage into lakes of "Devil's water." Despite the dirty, narrow lanes which do duty for streets, the men in long tunics and high lambskin hats, and the women clad in green trousers, yellow top-boots, blue cloth and white veil, there is something not truly Persian about Bushire. The population is too Arab, the connection with Kurrachee and Bombay too close, and the small English society gives the place the air of an Anglo-Indian station.

Hence to Shiraz you cannot post, but must travel by caravan whether so disposed or not. The ascent from "Hotland" to "Upland" is made over precipitous passes, where posted horses would be of little or no use; so mules or horses must be hired or bought, and little more than two stages a day can be got over.

Winding through defiles and gorges along the stony bed of the Daliki river, a bridge is reached, whence a staircase of rocks leads to a plain, some two thousand feet above the sea-level, where grass is scarce and trees of a colder clime replace the date-groves of Daliki. Next day, another staircase of about one thousand feet lands the traveller in another plain, whence, after the usual ups and downs of this worst of tracks, Kazeroon is reached: a town of nine thousand inhabitants, where a Governor, under the Prince-Governor of Shiraz, resides. Hard by are the ruins of Shahpur, where a rock carving can be seen of King Shapur, with his foot on the neck of the Emperor Valerian, a memorial of a Persian victory over the Romans at Edessa, sixteen hundred years ago.

Around Kazeroon are many beautiful orange gardens, and in one of these, a short time before my visit, occurred a tragedy which will bring home to my readers the state of the criminal law in Persia. Two villagers quarrelled, and one, in the heat of the moment, smote the other on the head with his spade. There was no homicidal intention, but the injured man died. The Koran claims an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth, and the

Koran is the Penal Code as well as the Bible of an orthodox Moslem state; but blood-money may be, and almost always is, accepted as satisfaction by the relations of the deceased. The father of this villager, however, declined to receive money, and insisted on the offender's death. The Governor in doubt referred the case to his superior at Shiraz, who, after the usual references to the Mollahs (or high-priests), replied that the law of God must be carried into effect. This somewhat oracular answer left matters, as was doubtless its intention, still in the discretion of the Governor; and he, to get out of the difficulty, gave his executioners a holiday, and told the father of the deceased that in their absence he could not carry the law into effect. The father replied that this was no obstacle, for he would himself carry out the law. Had he thrice refused treble the legal blood-money, and should his son's murderer go free? After this there was nothing more to be said. The unfortunate homicide, with the fatalism of a Mussulman, sat down beneath an orange-tree and smoked his last pipe, while his enemy brought two farrashes of the Governor to dig his grave. On their arrival, the victim put away his pipe, and sat still while the father of the man he slew in the heat of passion judicially cut his throat.

A horrible story that I would not believe, but that I had it from sources that left no doubt of its truth. In the territories of the other great Mussulman power such an occurrence as this would be impossible. A more reforming and less fanatical spirit has largely modified the criminal law of the Koran in the Ottoman empire; while the civil law, as therein administered, is as complex and procrastinating a system as civilisation can devise.

The path from Kazeroon proceeds through wheat-fields coloured by white and red poppies to a swamp, where it turns to the "Maiden's Pass," another rocky staircase perhaps one thousand feet high, beyond which is a pretty park-like valley full of oak trees, whence the "Old Woman's Pass," twice as long as the Maiden's and even harder to surmount, leads the traveller past a half-way caravanserai to the highest point he reaches on this great staircase from the level of the Persian Gulf to the level of the Central Asian plateau. To Dasht-i-Arjun, the Plain of Wild Olives, the next of the landing-places, you descend, its height above sea-level not being more than six thousand feet.

Shiraz is a large city set in the midst of gardens in a large plain surrounded by snow-capped mountains. The blue-tiled domes of two mosques, which glisten above the mud-coloured, tree-embosomed mass of buildings below them, enhance the beauty of the view, as does the stony march between it and Dasht-i-Arjun.

I was hospitably entertained here in a pleasure-house built in a garden, wherein grow all the wall-fruits of England, strawberries, and the best of vegetables. The nightingale will sing you to sleep if you leave your window open; but he has not the continuous song of his English brother, and is rather cheaply held. The late Mr. Alison had several trees cut down in front of his house at Teheran, because, he said, the nightingales collected in them and kept him awake all night. And besides listening to the nightingale, you may also, if you will, eat of him cold: that is to say, you may be offered a dish going by that name; but the Shirazis do not imitate the extravagances of the Roman epicure, and their cold nightingale is but an euphemism for ham.

The Prince-Governor is a boy of sixteen, the son of the Zil-es-Sultan; but the real administrator is the Sahib Dewan, a great personage whose father, I think it was, was boiled in oil. I saw him and the Prince, who talked now French and now Persian. When asked if he liked sport, he replied, "Oui, mais je prefère mes études." I had mentioned that I ex-

pected to have audience of his father at Ispahan, where I repeated this speech, as was doubtless expected of me, with the result that the father, with a laugh, said he did not believe it.

The soldiers here are better dressed than those of Bushire; but their appearance is nevertheless suggestive of the lax discipline which allows them to follow any pursuit they please when not undergoing instruction, or engaged in tax-gathering or other expeditions.

The Jews here, as elsewhere in Persia, are very badly treated, socially rather than officially. The Jew and the Armenian make the wine that the Mussulman drinks, and not infrequently come in for the punishment which the remorse, or spasmodic orthodoxy, of the latter prompts him to administer. The Armenian, it may be added, does not disdain the wine he makes. It is an article of faith here that sherry is the wine of Shiraz, not of Xeres as is commonly held; and that it took its name from a colony of Shirazis in Andalusia, after the Mussulman conquest of Spain. How this may be, I do not know, but the wine is indeed fragrant and delicious when well made. Like the monks of the west, the priests of the east are most skilful in its manufacture; but they will not always, and never openly, exercise their skill in this respect.

From Shiraz to Persepolis is forty miles through a desolate country, with few villages and scanty cultivation, chiefly of poppy and wheat. The hills are forbidding and unfriendly: travellers are rarely met; and the encampments of Eliauts, or nomad tribes, on the banks of the Bendemeer, (as unlike Moore's poetical stream as anything well can be) are the only cheerful incidents of the march. The tombs of the Persian monarchs and the ruins of Persepolis are on opposite sides of the plain of Merv-dasht. The sepulchres are difficult of access, but, when the broad plain is crossed a grand staircase you can ride upon leads you to a stately terrace, perhaps a quarter of a mile long, built out into the plain and binding the western spur of the rocky hills. Upon this terrace are the celebrated remains of the palace, the twelve tall fluted columns, the ruins of the hall of Xerxes and of the hall of Darius, and behind on the hill-side the tomb of the latter king. The triumphal processions on the polished black syenite might have been carved yesterday, so entirely have they defied the ravages of time, nor are the cuneiform inscriptions less clear. Assyrian winged bulls and Ferohers (the winged spirits of the old fire-worshippers) are carved again and again in hard black stone and pure white marble. Antiquaries have traced in the mass of ruins the details of the palace and its surroundings; but to me it seemed to consist only of solitary columns and of graven slabs, in themselves of great beauty and eloquent of long-past ages and of the pride and power of their builder, Xerxes, by the grace of Ormazd, the king, the great king, the king of kings, the king of the many-peopled countries, the supporter also of the great world, the son of Darius the Achœmenian.

To others than antiquaries these and similar remains of the past can do little more than excite such trite reflections as need no description. The tomb of Cyrus, for instance, on the plain of Murghab, some two thousand five hundred years old, is marvellously well preserved and probably looks much as it did when Alexander the Great came to pay his respects to departed greatness. The Persians say that Cyrus was taken up to heaven while still living, and that this tomb is that of the mother of Solomon. To me it was more interesting to spend the day with the Eelkhani, or chief of the nomads of Shiraz, who was on his way to Ispahan to visit the all-powerful Zil-es-Sultan.

Darkness came on before I could make the post-house of Murghab, but

in the cold and rainy night, as the Persian groom and I were trying to keep the track, we came suddenly on the watch-fires of an encampment. I asked for the chief's tent, and found him, his son, and his cousin seated on their carpets around a brazier warming their hands. I explained that I was a traveller and wanted shelter. "You are most welcome," said he, and soon dinner was served. Nothing was said during the meal, but an occasional "Welcome," or "Eat something," as the Eelkhani placed a handful of *kabobs* (roast meat) or a pickle of a particularly pretty flavour on my plate, or offered another sherbet cooled with snow. But after dinner we had much conversation on politics and religion, and nowhere in Persia have I seen a more intelligent man than this wandering chief—well educated, Persian-wise, a stickler for state and dignity, and withal a very handsome man.

A tent was pitched for me, and servants ordered to see to my comfort. In the morning the neighbouring tent going down disclosed my host seated on his carpet with his Persian apparatus around him, curling his locks and arranging his clothing for the march, while hard by a tea-pot stood on a *samovar* surrounded by pretty Russian tea-cups, which were often filled and emptied before we started.

I doubt if a true Persian would have entertained a wandering Frank who had no servants and no belongings but what he carried in his saddle-bags. This nomad chief, however, did so, and asked no questions that might not in the circumstances have been put by any well-bred host. I was glad to do him a little service by taking on a letter to the Governor of Bushire, also on his way to visit the Zil-es-Sultan, who was three marches on ahead. This gentleman invited me to travel with him, offering a dozen servants, horses at discretion, and what not. I accepted his offer on the morrow, and formed one of a huge procession of armed men riding before and behind and on every side of the Governor, who now and then left me to pinch a small black slave, one of four destined to be presented to the Zil-es-Sultan at Ispahan. One of these was called the Cat, and mewed whenever the Governor pinched him. All were treated with the kindness invariably shown to slaves, and all possessed some accomplishment analagous to that of the Cat. They alone reclined in panniers instead of riding as others did.

It is very tedious to do twenty miles at a walk in this fashion; worse when the march is over to find that your host does not take breakfast, and only eats at night, taking tea twice, however, in the course of the day. Not before nine in the evening was dinner served on the usual round sheet of leather. Sitting on the ground opposite my host, by whose side sat his secretary, I saw a long spit appear over my shoulder. At the end of it was a partridge, which the Governor seized, pulled off, and deposited on my plate. "It is very good," said I, tearing off a leg, and handing it to him. "Excellent!" said he. "Who cooked it?" and as a courtly bow from one of the individuals at the door indicated the fortunate possessor of his approval, he told the secretary to make a note of the very praiseworthy performance.

A hideous ride hence brings the traveller to Dihbeed, a lonely little hamlet seven thousand feet above the sea-level, where good sport might be obtained by any one who could endure the painful solitude and desolation of the country round. Wild asses and leopards can be got at, and small game abounds. In posting through the country a groom always takes your horse back to the post-house where you got it. He, too, is mounted, so you always have some company, that is if you can talk Persian. Near Persepolis, a very tuneful groom accompanied me, singing odes of Hafiz in a voice to waken the dead. Some information may be picked up from

such men as to the state of the country, but 'tis off the beaten track that most may be learnt.

From Dihbeed, the path winds through rocky hills and barren plains to Abadeh, a small town with some cultivation and gardens about it, noted for its sherbet-spoons of pear-wood, which are wonderfully thin and beautifully carved. Sherbet, by the way, is placed on the leather floor-cloth in bowls, and in each bowl is one of these spoons, which every person at the table uses in turn as he feels inclined. A European in the houses of the great can generally get a silver cup, and can dissolve his little pyramid of snow in his own particular drink, the Persians marvelling the while at his exclusive habits. I cannot, however, agree with worthy Friar Jordanus (in his *Marvels of the East*) that the Persians are filthy feeders. He contrasts them with the Hindus of the Malabar Coast, an extraordinarily cleanly race. A Nair's house is the very pearl of cleanliness; but this high standard makes the good Bishop unjust to those who fall short of it, and he argues like the Hindu in Pandurang Hari, who thought that as Mussulmans are so filthy as to eat *kabobs* it did not matter whether they were made of sheep's or of dog's flesh.

Abadeh was, and is, a great centre of the Secretaries of Bab, the heads of large numbers of whom are buried in a ditch there. A predecessor of my host, the Eelkhani, had been sent during the Babee persecution to Niris to put down the insurgents, and he started back for Teheran with baskets full of heads. Many of these, however, corrupted on the way, and were accordingly buried here. The fate of the Babees was that of most new religions. A sect of reformers who desired to march with the times and to assimilate in some respects the tenets of Islam to those of Christianity, they were accused of being political conspirators and dangerous demagogues, of professing the most immoral and communistic doctrines. Thousands died with great constancy and unshaken courage about thirty years ago, after experiencing in their deaths, as they had in their lives, much the same fate as the early Christians. They were shod like horses, flayed alive, boiled in oil, and converted into living lamps, holding in slits in their tortured bodies flaming torches:

"Stantes ardent et fixo gutture fumant."

From Abadeh over an interminable plain, where there is nothing to catch the eye but the distant hills, your road goes to Ispahan. The first view of this ancient and royal city from the hill of the Imamzadahs is very striking. Large houses, proved on a nearer view to be for the most part ruins: avenues of plane-trees and the shady little lanes of Julfa, make up the view on the south side of the Zindarood, or Living River; while to the north of it lie the bazaars and ruins which form the city. All around are fields of opium, gardens, and pigeon-towers as far as the eye reaches over the vast plain.

The city boasts a fine square, where the Zil-es-Sultan (literally, the Shadow of the King), the Prince-Governor is eternally drilling recruits or inspecting regiments. The Zil-es-Sultan is the eldest son of the Shah, whom he much resembles in face, figure, and manner, being proud, yet possessed of much *bonhomie*, prejudiced, yet glad to learn, a sportsman or a voluptuary as the passion of the day dictates, and, though a thorough Persian, an able Governor. The extract in the note from a pamphlet I have written on an unexplored portion of the country, will give a fair idea of the character and manner of the Prince,[1] and it is in

[1] Scene: the Palace Garden at Ispahan. *Dramatis personæ*—the Prince, a general, a crowd of officers, courtiers, a guard of soldiers, myself. "Was I in the army?" "No." "A pity." Aside to the others, but in the same tone, "A good youth." Hereon I tried to look my best. "What was I travelling for?" "To learn Persian, and see the country." Aside, "Just like these English-

connection with him that a few words can best be spoken on the Persian army. Opinions differ as to its size and efficiency, but the following figures may be accepted as a fair estimate:

Infantry	37,000
Cavalry	13,000*
Artillery	3,000
Total............	53,000

* Including irregular horse of all sorts and conditions, and mounted police.

The Cavalry retains many of the good qualities of the old Persian irregular horse: the Infantry is possessed of great endurance, and is mobile to a degree only possible in an army in which every private soldier keeps an ass for the transport of his own effects. The regiments are territorial, and the State pay of the soldier is subsidised by a contribution from his village. Drill and military instruction generally are afforded at large stations only, and by professional instructors. The regimental officers are remarkable for their abysmal ignorance of anything appertaining to military affairs. The pay of the officer is small, but that of the soldier, if actually disbursed, compares favourably with that of the labourers and agriculturists of the country. The Infantry regiments are not yet armed throughout with breech-loaders. Could the army be handled by one master mind, it undoubtedly possesses many qualities that would make it a factor of some importance in the politics of Central Asia. Enough of this subject, however, for long marches yet remain between the Crown of Islam and the Footstool of Royalty, or, in plain English, between Ispahan and the capital.

The intervening country is much the same as that already described, the scenery and the people similar; except that north of Ispahan, every man you meet does not look like a well-armed brigand, while south of it every man does.

I arrived at Teheran in the afternoon, and would here remark that one hundred miles a day is pretty fair posting in Persia. At the gate a soldier asks your name and business, "for the information of the Shah," he says, but really to satisfy his own curiosity. Nothing in the environs betokens the approach to a great city. Its situation alone is good: at the foot of the grand range of the Elburz, with Damavend looking coldly over it from the east. Within the walls is nothing beautiful or pleasant, but the British Legation and the kindly welcomes experienced there and elsewhere at the hands of the small European community. On the slopes of Shamroon of the Elburz are the villages where the summer residences of the representatives of foreign powers lie hidden in shady gardens of fruit trees and in thickets of planes and elms.

Teheran, as a Persian city, is one of the least interesting of its kind. Of what the Persians have borrowed from Europe, their police, organised by the Count de Monteforte, is the best managed. Horse-racing is carried on in a style that astonishes an Englishman. The course is hard and covered with stones: races extend to ten miles in length: the Shah's horses must win, and to this end pulling, peppering the eyes, or frightening off the course, are considered fair expedients; or, if considered unfair, are none the less resorted to.

Society in the capital is peculiarly polyglot. At a dinner-party it is an ordinary occurrence to hear seven or eight languages, not one of which is English, all spoken at the same time. Persian is much spoken by Europeans: French to a certain extent by the Persians about the Court, and Turkish at the Palace.

From Bushire we have now reached Teheran, after riding eight hundred and forty-six miles, and the country passed through cannot be called altogether beautiful. Yet the people are

men." To me, "Why do they want to know so much? Here no one knows anything: it is better so: I know nothing, but I can govern provinces."

invariably well fed, and fairly well dressed, and apparently by no means universally oppressed or overtaxed. It is the scarcity of villages that strikes one more unfavourably than the condition of the villages when reached.

The Europeans who live in the country do not often travel off the beaten track. Among the hospitable body of telegraph-clerks, to which every traveller in the country owes so much, are men of great intelligence, but the nature of their duty confines them to the village in which their testing-station is situated. One of these officers asking me what I did for food when riding post without a servant, I told him, dates or cucumbers with *maust* (sour milk) was my stand-by. "Ah!" said he, "that is all very well for a traveller like you; but if I was to eat *maust* and dates my servants would whisper it in the bazaar, it would get about among the Persians, and my prestige would suffer; the prestige of the Department would be lowered, and the prestige of the English in the East affected." *Maust* and dates form the staple food of the peasantry in Arabia and parts of Persia: it is a cooling, nourishing, and pleasant compound.

Ninety-eight miles from Teheran is Kasveen, and between Kasveen and Hamadan lies the Karaghan range with little plains between, inhabited, the hills by Turki nomad tribes, and the plains by Turkis and Persians. Across the hills by the route I took no European had travelled: indeed no narrative of the little-used caravan track has ever been published, though a European botanist once went that way. I was anxious to take a tract blank—or more or less blank—in Kiepert's latest map, and to see whether it bore out my theory, that the part of the country most travelled over and described is far inferior in population and fertility to many of its unknown regions. A little exploration of one hundred and fifty miles gives all the experiences of a longer one; and many such might be made in Persia, in which country there are at present extensive tracts and districts of which the size, capacity, and even position are but vaguely known at the seat of Government. By wandering slowly across one of these, with a note-book and the materials for the roughest of surveys, a certain amount of business may be combined with a considerable amount of amusement. Posting across the beaten track, where the Farangi is well known, one learns little, and indeed sees the least interesting of the inhabitants of the country. As a friendless and officially unprotected wanderer among the nomad tribes, and in the hill-villages, you are accepted as a curious visitor from another world, and treated sometimes with kindness and sometimes with passive unkindness, but always as the hearts, and not as the fears or interests of your entertainers dictate.

Across one hundred and fifty miles of such country I wandered at leisure: staying at any village where the society, the garden, or the scenery was most pleasant, and, thanks to a knowledge of the language, I got into no trouble that I could not get out of. This route has been already described by me in a small pamphlet published by the Madras Government in 1885; and it will suffice here to say that the fertile plain of Kasveen is dotted everywhere with villages, between which lie fields of wheat and pulses, and around which crowd vineyards, orchards, and gardens, to the Karaghan hills. These for the most part are barren and stony, but relieved by frequent villages, less sparsely populated than might be supposed by Persian Turks, a hardy and manly race, who are truthful and hospitable, and whose women need no veil and no seclusion for the preservation of their own and of their husbands' honour. Food was good in kind, cheap in price, and plentiful to an extraordinary degree. Wages varied from ninepence to a shilling a day: the villagers were well clad, and apparently contented

with themselves and their lot. Sometimes a village Khan would ask about the relations of the English and the Russ, now and then a traveller was met—a *seyyad*, for instance, collecting fleeces (suggestive word), or their value by way of tithes from the faithful; and once a wounded muleteer, shot down by a gang of raiding Kurds the day before. Sometimes a hospitable welcome, sometimes a bed upon the road, or in a stable: rarely roast kid, and generally bread, curds, and cucumbers: everywhere vermin in legions: such were the chief incidents of the road.

Here, as in all unexplored countries, the wandering white man is assumed to be an expert in "the science," that is to say, in medicine. Here, as elsewhere, pleasant and unpleasant experiences succeed one another, and a love of novelty and adventure changes from time to time to a longing for clean clothes, good food, and the comforts of that civilisation which a traveller gladly leaves, and to which he gladly returns.

The houses of the people on hill and plain alike are of the usual flat-roofed, mud-built character. A few cooking utensils, brass trays, often neatly engraved, skins for the manufacture and storing of curds, a rough carpet, and a primitive loom, make up the furniture of the ordinary peasant's home. Add to this a sheet of leather from which to eat, a yard, a *balakhana* or upper story, and better carpets, and you have the contents of the house of the squireen, yeoman, or village Khan. To the poor, huge flaps of unleavened bread are at once a floor (table) cloth, and a portion of the feast. The table cloth gets smaller as you go on picking off pieces and dipping them in the dish of curdled milk.

At Hamadan are the tombs of Queen Esther, of Mordecai, and of Avicenna (Ali ben Sehna), an ancient lion carved in stone, and a treasure-inscription in rock on the hillside of Elwand, a mountain stream which tumbles through the town under bridges and over tiny cataracts, passing on its way narrow streets, well filled bazaars, and here and there a patch of green turf, whereon the little Persians play much as do little English boys upon the village green. Reading the Book of Esther in the house of an Armenian carpenter with whom I stayed, the scenes of the Bible seemed to be reproduced in my surroundings with extraordinary fidelity; and much do the Jews of Hamadan of to-day stand in need of an intercessor like Queen Esther, though their lives, and for the most part their property, is safe. Next day the scribe of the Governor wrote an order and sealed it with the Governor's ring, that posts on horseback, such as took the letters of Ahasuerus the king, should be provided for me on my journey through Kurdistan; and with regret I turned my back on Hamadan and rode across hill and plain towards the scorching Babylonian low country, from the upland of the Medes to the lowland of the Assyrians.

Along the route were Asadabad, a village of "slain fathers," celebrated for a general and unending vendetta: Kangawar, where is an old temple of the sun: Besitoon, where are the sculptures of Darius Hystaspes carved in the rocky side of a towering precipitous hill, and deciphered by the courage and skill of Sir Henry Rawlinson: the beautiful plain of Minderabad, a huge pasture land covered with hollyhocks, and grazed over by innumerable cattle, sheep, and horses; and Kermanshah, a large town, where the British Government is represented by an agent to the Minister at Teheran, Haji Ahsan Agha, the son of a rich merchant of Baghdad, who is hospitable, kind, and constant in well-doing. The rock carvings at Koh-i-Rustam, near Kermanshah, are the finest in Persia. In a cave, whence flow gushing streams, is carved on the rock a hunting scene, the death of the wild boar. The ladies of the court from

boats watch their lords as they spear the pig, and the whole scene is of the most spirited description.

Hence to the Turkish frontier is little of interest except Kasr-i-Sheereen, erewhile the favourite resort of the beautiful Sheereen, daughter of the Emperor Maurice and wife of Khosroo, grandson of Nousherawan, the lady who preferred the sculptor Ferhad to the king, her husband. Here now dwells a robber chief of great repute, Jawan Meer Khan, who for a subsidy from the Persian Government, that elsewhere would be called black mail, sees that no one else robs the traveller, and passes him on across the Zagros mountains to Khanakeen, the first Turkish town. This remote frontier has been the scene of long desultory fights and boundary disputes between the Persians and the Turks. In these Jawan Meer Khan has played a considerable part, now siding with one party, now with another, and getting arms and money in turns from both. He lives in the mountain fastnesses with his band of two hundred well-armed, well-mounted Kurds, and looks forward to more stirring times and a more congenial occupation than the occasional plunder of a caravan.

The inhabitants of Kurdistan, described in 1880, by a well-known writer, as the most blood-thirsty people under the sun, the Montenegrins alone excepted, appear to me to compare favourably in other respects with the Persians proper. They are brave and hospitable. Prostrated with sun and fever in a Kurdish tent, I have been fanned all day by women and children, and so saved from the torture of the enormous flies of the country. The girls are handsome in a bold bright fashion; but an old Kurdish woman is an ideal witch.

The horses of the country are much prized. They are high couraged and indefatigable, smaller than the Persian horse sold in Bombay, which is, as a rule, an inhabitant of Arabistan, or south-eastern Persia.

Along the stony track are graveyards, tombs so placed that pilgrims to Kerbela and Mecca may bless the occupants: flat recumbent slabs with Persian earrings, combs, and rosaries carved upon them, and upright stones exhibiting the figures of spearmen mounted on spirited horses, telling that bold Kurds lie below. Good sleep have they who rest beneath these stones, unlike their brethren lately or long since dead, whose bodies or whose bones pass by slung on mules on the way to Kerbela or Nejef for burial.

Perhaps it is not generally known that every province in Persia has its agent at these holy shrines, to whom corpses are consigned through muleteers just like ordinary goods. Riding along late one night, overcome with the sun and fatigue of the day, I fell in with a caravan of corpses and exhumed human bones, and was too weary to ride immediately away from it, notwithstanding the dreadful odours from the swathed bundles hung on each side of the mules, some of which contained the bones of persons dead long years ago which had awaited the necessary funds or the necessary opportunity for transport to their last resting-place. The muleteers laughed when I asked whose were these bones and bodies. "How should we know?" said they. "The tickets will show the agent whose they are." Little were they affected by the gruesome proximity of the remains of men who, erewhile like themselves,

> "Ate, drank, laughed, loved and lived and liked life well."

Living loads of women and children had jogged along from Mazenderan, five hundred miles away, cheek by jowl with these silent neighbours, not from respect as relations, but for the company and protection of the caravan. Rightly enough are the Turks strict about their quarantine on the Persian frontier, albeit that elsewhere in the Ottoman empire these sanitary precautions are kept up more because

they afford a considerable and easily collected revenue, than because they are necessary to the public weal. It is a pity that the Chinese system of storing corpses prior to their removal to their last resting-place is not adopted. Nothing can be more decent or more sanitary than the cities of the dead in a Chinese town, and nothing worse than the Persian system of disinterment.

At all these Turkish towns the maximum of politeness and the minimum of assistance was met with. The Mudir of Sharaban, however, administered the stick with his own hands to a man of the town who promised two horses and brought two mules for me. The Mudir and I spent the day lying on cushions under a shed on the banks of an irrigation-channel. I was too ill to get about the town myself, and the Mudir too worn out with fasting through the long hot day of Ramazan to trouble himself. But being interrupted in his dinner by a report from the trooper who had been sent to get horses for me, he gravely got up, called for his stick, and while the trooper held the hands of the offender who produced the mules, he himself gave him half a dozen smart blows on the back, then invited me to join his dinner, and said, "Please God, if you lose to-day, you can go to-morrow:" adding with Eastern hyperbole, "I am much interested in your progress. You have seen I killed the offender with my own hands."

Little Arab boys who were catching minnows and gudgeons in the channel we lay beside were occasionally told off to shampoo the Mudir's legs, and to fan the flies off him. The miseries of a Ramazan in the hottest weather in one of the hottest places in the world, can be more readily imagined than described. The heat was so intolerable that it was an effort to eat once a day.

The towns between this and Bagdad were like habitations of the dead, the streets deserted and the people all sleeping through the cruel long days of Ramazan. At night, dinner, narghiles, chiboukes and coffee over, business began and went on till near daybreak. There was none of the bribery necessary in Persia, but there was absolute indifference as to whether the stranger lived or died, stayed or went. He was simply handed over to be fleeced to the owners of horseflesh. In Bagdad, too, which at length was reached after a ride of fifteen hundred miles, it was obvious that the English were far from being the most favoured nation.

The City of the Califs, even in its decay, is one of the least disappointing of the many places with which early associations have made us familiar. The narrow zig-zag streets, where the sun hardly penetrates, the frequent date trees, the flow of the Tigris through the city's length, the bridge of boats, the covered bazaars, along which sleek Moolahs and veiled ladies ride on white donkeys, and turbaned merchants and cloaked Bedaweens on Arab steeds: the brawny porters, staggering under loads that occupy the whole street: Turks, Kurds, Persians, Chaldeans, Armenians, Jews, women in coloured cloaks that conceal their faces and their nationalities at once—all make up a gay and attractive picture, recalling a scene from the *Arabian Nights* at every turn. The ladies of Bagdad have, too, a reputation for beauty by no means undeserved.

In Bagdad, and in Turkey generally, the development of private rights struck me as extraordinary, and much opposed to what is generally believed of the internal state of the empire. So far from dreading the Wali, or Governor-General, instances came to my knowledge in which friendless individuals resisted the most moderate exercise of his authority. On the smallest provocation will the smallest person telegraph to Constantinople, and not without receiving a hearing there. Indeed it is not improbable that any given petition may reach the

hands of the Sultan himself, by repute the most indefatigable of workers. It is a curious fact that His Majesty has for years been buying estates in the Pashalik of Bagdad. Whether he looks forward to a day when the Sovereigns of Europe may receive a circular to say that the Sultan of Room will no longer carry on in that style, but will be known henceforth as Calif of Bagdad, I know not, but a precedent would not be wanting. Certain it is that the Calif of to-day and his ministers much value the city of the Califs of aforetime; and it is, I should think, far from improbable that Bagdad may play in the future of Islam the part assigned to it by that friend and student of Islam, Mr. Wilfrid Blunt.

In conclusion, I would say that Persia, though much mis-governed, seems to me far from *in extremis*, as M. Chirol holds.[1] The peasantry are well fed and well clothed, and I doubt if they desire to change their lot, no mean test of happiness. Office may be bought. It is; but if a Governor exceed the usual profits of his office, the people are prompt enough to complain, and the Shah is glad enough to appoint another, who pays to the royal purse as much as, or more than, his predecessor. Changes in the Government are frequent, almost as frequent as in England, let us say. Sometimes, on the other hand, a good officer retains his charge for a long period. Thus does custom, which tolerates mis-government, modify and minimise its evils.

The poor are by no means universally oppressed, nor are the rich so much plundered as is supposed. If a Governor makes a very enormous purse in office, the Shah will perhaps claim a share in what was wrung from the people by taxation he did not authorise; but merchants are never plundered, nor are officials, of hereditary property. There is a kind of justice in taking from a Governor a part of what he took from the governed. Unhappily none of the money thus recovered is ever spent on roads or bridges—the great wants of the country; nor are any efforts being made to open up the Karoon trade-route, which would do more to improve Persia than any other single measure that could be devised.

Of freedom of speech and of appeal there is enough. Cruelty on the part of a Governor would surely be punished, and even the Shah and the princes are now more or less influenced by the European press, and very greatly by the Diplomatists at Teheran. The pictures of the writer in the *St. James's Gazette* of last year are admitted throughout Persia to have been as overdrawn as the strictness of M. Chirol were unduly severe.

If the influence of Russia is greatest in the north, the north-east, and north-west of Persia, what more natural?—she is the greatest neighbour. On the south and the south-west the influence of England for the same reason preponderates. Those who think English interests neglected in the country are surely mistaken. In small individual cases the English representatives are loth to interfere; but when a telegraph-convention is to be made or renewed, or any interest of importance to be protected, they intervene and carry their point. This seems true diplomacy, and its fruits are none the less real because they are not always apparent.

Of the army I have already spoken. It is far from a great factor in the politics of Central Asia, but it is not entirely a cipher.

The Royal family is by no means disliked throughout the country. The present Shah is, I think, for the most part spoken of with affection by his people; and not undeservedly, for he has curtailed the powers of Governors, introduced the postal and telegraphic systems, and given the greater part of the kingdom to the ablest of his sons to govern. The use of a familiar name is generally a proof of popularity, and it may be that the Shah is none the

[1] *The Fortnightly Review*, January, 1885.

less liked by his subjects when they call him, as they mostly do, plain Nasr-ud-din.

I do not believe the population is decreasing, and that polygamy is in part the cause. Polygamy is the exception in practice, and the population is, I think, underestimated. Less than five years ago it was supposed to be five millions, now it is supposed to be more than seven millions and a half. But in 1856, Mr. Binning estimated it at eight millions. I believe his estimate to be nearest the mark, but still too low. The losses in the famine of 1870 have been made up; and many tracts blank in the map may be as thickly populated as that between Kazveen and Hamadan which I have described in the pamphlet above referred to.

The extension of the cultivation of the poppy in the south will doubtless enrich the country, if the cultivation of corn be not at the same time diminished, as it should not be, at any rate until communications are improved.

The administration of justice is faulty and rough, but ready. Jurisdictions are ill defined. Seeing a boy bastinadoed by the order of a Prince for insulting a woman in the street, I asked why the Governor had not disposed of this matter. It was then explained that the woman was a merchant's daughter, and the Prince was subordinate to the Minister of Commerce; but the truth was, that the Prince was as lenient as the Governor was severe. A choice of jurisdictions is not unpopular. It is not generally true that punishments are vindictive or disproportionate to the offence. Could the country be polled, I expect the existing system would be preferred to a Penal Code, with its, to an Asiatic, unrelenting and cruelly long sentences, and its judicial anger, which takes no account of the setting of many suns. How unpopular, for instance, are European law and justice in the Ottoman empire.

It is not, as is said, true that the followers of Bab are no more. They increase and multiply in secret after the fashion of persecuted religions. They are not Nihilists or Communists or Atheists, as all men say of them. They reject the doctrine of circumcision, plurality of wives, and facile divorce. They allow one wife, and divorce her on much the same terms as we do, and they hold circumcision to be mere mutilation. In fact they would reform Islam from within, and so meet the wave of destruction that is passing over the Mussulman kingdoms that yet remain. In every city of Persia, among the rich and educated, Babees abound who will one day make their voices heard. Their Christianlike tenets and patient endurance are as admirable as the follies of Sufeeism are the reverse, and their gentleness contrasts with the fierceness of the Wahabee reformers. Yet is the old Islam strong in the land, strong in the cities, stronger in the villages, and strong too among the nomads, purely conventional though their profession of it be.

J. D. Rees.

"LADY CLANCARTY," AND THE HISTORICAL DRAMA.

Lady Clancarty was played for the first time just thirteen years ago on a wild night in March—much like the night in which "Captain Heseltine" made his unceremonious entry into my Lord Sunderland's house. It was not very cordially welcomed in *The Times*. Nothing was positively said against it, but something was hinted: it was damned, in short, with very faint praise. It was allowed to be a good romantic sort of play enough, with some fine scenes, and well played—as it certainly was, very well played. But it was said also to have many serious defects, though, as a fact, the objection spent itself in a general complaint that it was too historical. In his anxiety to do homage to history the author had overlooked the necessities of the theatre. He had introduced a number of personages bearing indeed names that could be found in the annals of the time, but of no importance for their own sakes, irrelevant to the action of the piece, and so inevitably lessening its real interest, which was centred in the fortunes of husband and wife, so long parted to meet in such a tragical manner. He should have thought more of the play and less of the history.

Oxenford does not seem to have cared much for Taylor's work; and it has been said that there were good reasons, as those reasons go, for his indifference. At any rate his objections are not very easy to understand. It is indeed quite possible for a play to be too historical as it is possible for a novel to be too historical. *Notre Dame*, for instance, for all its stirring episodes and the pity of poor Esmeralda's story, is too historical. *The Last Days of Pompeii* is too historical. But they do not both go wrong in the same way. The French novel contains long lumbering archæological passages, extremely learned and correct, no doubt, but, like the passages in Gray's old house, leading nowhere, and plainly written to show the writer's knowledge of his country's antiquities. The English novel is much more artfully composed, though the best scenes are leagues behind the best scenes of Hugo's. But the strain to be antique, to be historical, is too obvious. All is at high pressure: human nature is crushed between the pages of the classical dictionary: there is as much of it, and as little of it, in the *Charicles* and the *Gallus* of the learned German. Macaulay once spent a winter's day at Naples over this novel, when the cold was too severe for a traveller to face after the Indian suns, and in his diary he made some shrewd remarks, as was his wont, on it, and on historical novels generally. He owned its cleverness and its learning (though of course he picked a few holes in that); but it failed, he said, as all works must fail which aim at a picture of ancient manners. No learning will help a man to that. By his imagination he may create a world unlike our own, but the chances are a thousand to one it will be not the world which has passed away. All attempts to exhibit Romans talking slang and jesting with each other can at their best be but clever failures. Perhaps, he concluded, "those act most wisely who, in treating poetically of ancient events, stick to general human nature, avoid gross blunders of costume, and trouble themselves about little more."

To keep clear of gross blunders and close to human nature is a good recipe for making historical novels. It was the one Scott used. His diary, too, furnishes some remarks on this head which are worth recalling. During

his journey to London in the autumn of 1826 he had been reading *Sir John Chiverton* and *Brambletye House*, works much admired in their day and probably never read since. Of course he knew well enough that they were shoots of his tree, and amused himself by setting down the points of difference as he modestly conceived them to be, and as in fact, with some not unimportant additions, they were.

"I take up again my remarks on imitators. I am sure I mean the gentlemen no wrong by calling them so, and heartily wish they had followed a better model. But it serves to show me *veluti in speculo* my own errors, or, if you will, those of the *style*. One advantage I think I still have over all of them. They may do their fooling with better grace: but I, like Sir Andrew Aguecheek, do it more natural. They have to read old books, and consult antiquarian collections to get their knowledge; I write because I have long since read such works, and possess, thanks to a strong memory, the information which they have to seek for. This leads to a dragging-in historical details by head and shoulders, so that the interest in the main piece is lost in minute descriptions of events which do not affect its progress. Perhaps I have sinned in this way myself: indeed, I am but too conscious of having considered the plot only as what Bayes calls the means of bringing in fine things. . . . . All this I may have done, but I have repented of it; and in my better efforts, while I conducted my story through the agency of historical personages, and by connecting it with historical incidents, I have endeavoured to weave them pretty closely together, and in future I will study this more. Must not let the background eclipse the principal figures—the frame overpower the picture."

The future held but six more years for the great magician, years of unending toil and trouble and sickness; yet they produced *The Fair Maid of Perth*.

The same recipe will serve too for the historical dramatist. But he has in some ways an easier business than the novelist. The latter has, for instance, to do his own scene-painting, tailoring, furnishing: the former gets all this done for him. However deftly he work, the novelist must keep us waiting while he sets his scene. Castle-keep or crowded street, lists of battle or lady's bower, stern mountain-pass or sunny forest-glade: these have all to be described with such circumstance as may help us to realise them; and so too must the fashion of his heroine's dress and the beauty of her face—though in this last matter the novelist, unhampered by earthly fetters, has not always the worst of it. In the theatre all these details are arranged before the action begins; and there is the play-bill to tell us who everybody is and to map out our travels for us. The great (or, as some would sooner call them, the rude) forefathers of the English drama had not all these advantages. There were certainly play-bills in Charles the Second's day; but it may be this was one of those little matters that even great Elizabeth's time was not spacious enough to embrace. As for scenery, the courtly masques were very elaborately and splendidly furnished; but the general scene was, as every one knows, a very undressed thing, with its topography indicated by a bare name painted on a cloth. That Shakespeare felt this difficulty is clear from a famous prologue, wherein he apologises for the strain on the imagination necessary to make his audience realise that they are looking on the plain of Agincourt and a battle of heroes. His descendants have an easier time. It is at any rate not their fault if we do not know at what and whom we are looking. Their danger lies rather from a plethora than a paucity of decoration, rather from a pedantic attention to details than a noble disregard of them. And even then the fault lies not so much with the author as with the manager; or, as the manager will tell you, with the public, which insists upon these scenic details—perhaps because its imagination is less capable of strain than was the imagination of its ancestors.

But there is another way in which the dramatist may go wrong. Like the novelist, he may elaborate his frame till he spoils his picture. He may drag in historical details by the

head and shoulders, as Scott said, but they will be human heads and shoulders. He may crowd his story with too many characters and too many incidents. Incidents and characters may be relevant to each other and to the time, but they may also dwarf the central interest and generally cumber the action. Thus we get a series of shifting scenes, each one possibly striking in itself but beginning and ending its own significance, with no real sequence. The result will be a panorama, not a play.

This is the fault Oxenford found with *Lady Clancarty.* But did he find it reasonably? We have seen what advantages the writer of plays has over the writer of novels: let us now look at the other side. The novelist is hampered by no restrictions of time or place. He may explore all the past to make the present clear. He may, like a fashionable modern critic, give you the history of a whole family, or even of a whole people, to explain his hero's environment and its consequences. He may transport you to one hemisphere to make you understand what is to happen in another. He may employ a hundred devices first to entangle and then to unravel a situation or a character. He may call upon a hundred voices to speak for him, and keep his own always ready for chorus. But with the dramatist it is different. In the old and more tolerant times he was a freer agent. He had more room every way. Five acts and some two score or so of *dramatis personæ* will only be suffered now when hallowed by the name of Shakespeare; and even Shakespeare, as every one knows, has to be considerably pared down before he suits our modern notions of theatric reasonableness. Our craving for fine scenery, and especially for what we are pleased to call archæological accuracy, makes it imperative that the action shall be packed into a nutshell. Conceive such a play as *Antony and Cleopatra* being presented now, where in a single act the scene is changed from Syria to Rome, from Rome to Alexandria, from Alexandria to Athens, from Athens again to Rome, then to Actium, and finally back to Alexandria. Such a problem might give even the boldest Shakespearian renovator pause. But the dramatist is most restricted in this, that he has no voice of his own: he cannot delay the action while he explains: all explanation must be made through the action. The functions of that most useful personage, the messenger of Greek tragedy, are suffered not at all gladly now. A prologue, or introductory act, is sometimes employed; but the device is not admired, and indeed is rarely successful. Where the novelist therefore may use words, the dramatist must use persons.

If we consider the story of this play, we shall, I think, see that the dramatist has not encumbered it with superfluous personages. It was first suggested by Macaulay, in the last and posthumous volume of his history, as a fine theme for novel or play. Donough Macarthy, Earl of Clancarty, was an Irish peer owning vast estates in Munster. He was wedded, a boy of fifteen to a girl of eleven, to Lady Elizabeth Spencer, daughter of Sunderland, then Secretary of State to Charles the Second. After the ceremony the children were parted: she returned to her father's house, he to his estates in Ireland. He became a Roman Catholic, followed the fortunes of James, was taken prisoner by Marlborough at Cork, and sent to the Tower. His estates were bestowed by William on Lord Woodstock, the son of his favourite Portland. After three years of imprisonment Clancarty escaped, made his way to St. Germains, was graciously received and given the command of a regiment of Irish refugees. In 1697 the peace of Ryswick put an end, for the time at any rate, to the hopes of the Jacobites, and Clancarty set himself to make his own peace with the English Government. This was no easy work. His father-in-law could have had his pardon

for the asking, but Sunderland had no mind for a penniless son-in-law : his brother-in-law Spencer, most uncompromising of Whigs, had no pity or mercy for a rebel. His only chance lay with his wife, whom he had never seen since they had parted on the steps of the altar. He crossed the Channel in disguise, gained admission to Sunderland's house on pretence of a message to Lady Clancarty from her sick mother, and found his wife as loving as the most impatient husband could desire. Their secret was betrayed to Spencer by a waiting-woman : Clancarty was arrested in his wife's arms and hurried off to the Tower. The town rang with pity for the lovers and fury at the unnatural brother. The Whigs Devonshire and Bedford joined with the Tory Ormond to ask for mercy. The widowed Lady Russell, beloved alike by the King and by the people, came from her retirement, took the young wife with her to the palace, and knelt at William's feet. Clancarty was pardoned on condition that he left England for ever. A pension out of his own estates was granted to him, and he retired with his wife to Germany.

Such was the story Taylor took from history and fashioned with little interference into a play. It was necessary for him to explain the danger Clancarty ran if detected in England, and it would hardly have been safe for him to credit every member of his audience with a sufficient knowledge of English history, even though the history were Macaulay's. He did indeed insert a short argument, or outline of the facts, in the play-bill; but, unless he had come forward like an Ancient Gower and delivered himself of a prologue, his only real means of explanation lay in the play. He therefore brought him over to England to plot against the King, and he wisely took the most notorious of the many plots concocted during that reign—the one known as the Assassination Plot of 1696, with which, as fact, there is no evidence to show that Clancarty was at any rate personally concerned. But it would never have done to make his hero a mere stabber. He is credited therefore with a double, or rather treble portion of virtue : like Berwick, though with the more vulgar plotters he is not of them, and, though eager for war, will have nothing to do with murder : like Pendergrass, an honourable Roman Catholic gentleman, when he learns the true nature of his colleagues' designs, he makes known the plot on condition that he shall be asked no questions of the plotters. The presence of the characters marked as conspirators in the play-bill is thus accounted for. It cannot be said that they are made unnecessarily conspicuous. After the first act they are seen but for a moment in the prison-yard, and in the first act they waste no time. They but explain to Clancarty their plans, and so explain to the audience his chivalrous nature. One of them, it is true, plays a more conspicuous part. The behaviour of Goodman to the ladies effects the necessary introduction between Clancarty and his wife, thus engaging her interest and the less agreeable interest of her brother. It also furnishes the rogue with a grudge against the young Irishman which is to bear fruit in due season. This Cardell, or "Scum," Goodman did not really figure in the plot till a later stage, when the cry was up after Fenwick; but he was probably privy to it from the beginning, as he was to most malpractices then afoot; and it was certainly more prudent to assign to the most notorious scoundrel of the time the part really shared by two unknown rogues, De la Rue and Fisher. Hunt, the landlord of the inn on Romney Marsh, was an equally notorious agent of smugglers and plotters, and "the Hurst" was their favourite house of call. No excuse need be found for the presence of the King; nor of Portland, the King's most trusted counsellor and friend, to whom all came who would win the royal ear; nor of Spencer, the brother of Lady Clancarty, and son of

the once powerful and still dreaded Sunderland. Such personages as the Princess Anne, the officer of the guard, the smugglers, the gaoler, Mother Hunt, certainly swell the play-bill, but do not seriously encumber the piece: they are not much more loquacious than the fine furniture, they take up much less room, and they are certainly more relevant to the story than Mrs. Kendal's guitar. There is indeed one couple to whom more exception might be taken. Whether there was really a design on the part of Portland and Sunderland to arrange a match between young Woodstock and Lady Clancarty, I do not know; but as Woodstock held the Clancarty estates, and Sunderland's avarice was notorious, there is at least good warrant for the invention. A reason for Woodstock's disinclination to the design is shown in his inclination for Lady Betty Noel, Lord Gainsborough's daughter, a giddy, laughing, affectionate creature; and the lovers' quarrels of these two should add a touch of lightness and comedy to the serious concerns of the other pair. Perhaps, if one wished to be very rigidly economical, the scene in the prison might be struck out; yet, if played in proper proportion, it is not irrelevant. The visit of the delicate young wife to so disorderly a place as the Gate-House prison seems then to have been, is no very extravagant conceit, and might certainly have been trusted to furnish a pretty scene. The rescue of the wretched Goodman from the fury of the men whom he had betrayed adds a fresh touch to the chivalry of Clancarty's nature.[1] Unfortunately there are also chances which an actor, if he has a mind that way, can turn to his own glorification rather than the good of the commonwealth. Mr. Anson first played the part of Goodman, and played it remarkably well in the earlier scenes: his performance in this scene was also very striking, but it was out of place, out of proportion. The present representative of the part does not go wrong quite so far as did Mr. Anson, because he has not quite the same capacity for doing so; but he does what he can. The jailor, again, is tiresome and foolish in his homage to Mother Hunt's hospitality. It is, of course, possible (indeed, those who have any knowledge of the politics of a theatrical company will be inclined to say it is probable) that here the dramatist was not quite a free agent: that his good nature, or some other cause, triumphed over his better judgment. Still, for the irrelevancy of this scene, if it is to be called irrelevant, the principal share of the blame lies less with him than with the actors.

On the whole, the proportion of the characters is well preserved throughout the piece. The motive is never lost sight of. Husband and wife are always the principal figures. Everything that occurs makes in some degree for them: it either bears on their situation or helps to emphasise and explain their characters. Lady Betty's good-natured banter about "Captain Heseltine," for example, keeps her friend's thoughts turning to the husband who is but a childish memory to her, and whose cause the handsome stranger pleads with such dangerous eloquence: her jealous pique at her lover's fancied disloyalty has this much purpose in it, that it clears the air, makes Lady Clancarty disclaim all share in her brother's design, and sets his face still harder against her and her lord. Spencer's real aversion to his brother-in-law was not his poverty but his principles: that a Roman Catholic, a follower of the Stuarts, and of course a Tory, should own kinship to him was unbearable to the young Whig, with whom party-spirit was a passion that seemed unreasonable even in those fierce times. This could not well have been made clear on the stage; but his de-

[1] The dramatist has probably made Clancarty rather more of a hero than he was: he had been accused of outrages in Ireland too gross even for that time and for the license of civil war. But in so doing Taylor did not exceed his prerogative. Clancarty is not one of those familiar figures in history with which fiction may play no tricks.

sire to bring the rich Clancarty estates back again into his family furnishes an intelligible motive for his more than Roman zeal. If Oxenford's criticism were pushed to its legitimate conclusion, dramatists would have to revert to the primitive simplicity of that most lamentable comedy, *Pyramus and Thisbe.* Indeed, when one considers all the possibilities of a play wrought out of such romantic materials and set in such stirring and familiar times, instead of censuring the author of *Lady Clancarty* for too prodigal homage to the muse of history, one is tempted rather to think that he might have borrowed Clive's famous words, and confessed himself astonished at his own moderation.

If the play be found tedious now or out of date, the fault is hardly the author's: if it prove once more popular, the merit is his much more than the actors'. Those who saw and liked it thirteen years ago may like it less now. For them the charm of novelty will have gone from the affecting story and the fine dramatic situations,—dramatic and theatrical as well, two things which are not necessarily one. Only a work of first-rate quality (first-rate, that is to say, of its kind) will bear revival,—except for those whose notions of a play are bounded by the performance of a favourite player. None of Taylor's many essays in literature were ever quite first-rate of their kind; but this play, besides its theatrical dexterity, has the quality of all his work: it is honest, manly, straightforward. There is more flesh and blood, more wholesome living and doing humanity in *Lady Clancarty* than in any play written since. And its language is to match. In the best scenes it is easy, unaffected, unadorned; and eloquent, too, with the eloquence of simplicity and directness, worth all the tropes and rhetoric in the world. Perhaps in the lighter scenes there is some sense of a strain after the antique: in these may come in the old story of the inevitable failure "to exhibit Romans talking slang and jesting with each other." But skilful players, to whom all fashions of speech but their own are not necessarily ridiculous, should speak the language trippingly enough to give the archaicisms a native air. I do not remember that Lady Betty Noel or Lord Woodstock used to seem at all distressed with their vocabulary. Science, with all her ingenious peradventures, cannot quite bring back the mastodon, and Nature will not; but at least we know it was no pet-dog to be nursed on our nineteenth-century laps. The old-world fashion of speech, like the old-world fashion of clothes, needs a manner other than that which suits well enough the somewhat dishevelled customs of modern society. Exactly what that manner was we do not know; but common sense will teach us that it cannot have been our own. It were unreasonable to blame an actor over much for what may be his misfortune rather than his fault; but it is still more unreasonable to call a writer pedantic or tiresome, because the actor stumbles over the words set down for him. If our modern Mirabels and Millamants look unhappy in their fine clothes we do not blame their tailors. I do not think there is any unreasonable affectation of antiquity in the language of *Lady Clancarty;* the words, at any rate, never obscure the sense. Words, as old Selden said, must be made to fit a man's mouth. To bring on the stage a man of the close of the seventeenth century talking exactly as he would talk in the close of the nineteenth century, were as absurd as to dress William's guards in the bearskin caps and the tunics of Victoria's. It would be more than an anachronism, it would be an affectation. In this, as in other respects, the historical element seems to me sufficient, and not more than sufficient. I may give an instance of one particularly happy touch, which might possibly have passed, and, for all our historical lore, still pass unnoticed. William, in reading over the list of conspirators,

comes on the name of Sir John Friend. "Why does he not stick to brewing bad beer?" mutters the King. The exceeding badness of the beer with which Friend supplied the navy was so notorious that it was rumoured he had poisoned the casks in his zeal for the Jacobite cause; and the rumour, as may be imagined, did not enlist the popular sympathy on his side.

But the fashions of the theatre pass. If a play like this, with a good plot, romantic yet full of human nature, active and vigorous yet tender too, fails now to please, is the fault wholly in the play? If we think over the plays that have been most successful within the last dozen years, putting Shakespeare and Sheridan aside, we shall find that they have not pleased by virtue of the qualities of *Lady Clancarty.* The *Doras* and *Diplomacys*, *Hobby-Horses* and *Pinafores*, *Private Secretaries* and *Pickpockets*, *Silver Kings* and *Lights of London*,—whether good or bad matters not now: these plays pleased, and so fulfilled the first purpose of plays. But it is easy to understand that a generation which applauded them might yawn in silence at *Lady Clancarty.* A generation which can buy nineteen editions of *The Epic of Hades* cannot in reason be expected to find much to interest it in *Childe Harold:* the same taste will hardly read with the same pleasure *Les Trois Mousquetaires* and *Pot-Bouille*, *The Last of the Mohicans* and *The Lady of the Aroostook.*

And the actors are naturally in touch with the audience. Whether patrons or clients now give laws to the drama, —or, rather, whether patrons and clients have not now changed places in the theatre, matters not: they are, and must be, in sympathy with each other. The taste for approving *Lady Clancarty* is not in the stalls: the taste for playing it is not on the stage. The romantic drama needs a freer gait and more liberal manner than the modern stage fosters.[1] The cleverest actors after all are but mortal like the humblest spectators, and their nature must get subdued to what it works in. Neither the French nor the English drama, as now fashioned, can be a good preparation for work of this class, which, whatever its imperfections may be, is at least not unseemly or foolish. Our actors now are praised not for their skill in representing an author's characters, but for their skill in making his characters represent themselves: it is therefore only natural that when the need for putting on some other mortality than their own is imperative, the power of doing so should be found a little rusty. A play like *Lady Clancarty* needs brisk acting, a romantic style, and that particular distinction which, perhaps for want of a better phrase, we call the grand manner: it wants, in short, something which it were hard precisely to define, but must be equally removed from the languorous politeness, the coarse vigour, and the rough bustle which respectively suit the modern modes of comedy, melodrama, and farce. It does not get this manner at the St. James's Theatre. There are many well-skilled actors in this company, but they are strangely out of place in this play. Mr. Kendal alone comes near the mark. Some have declared him to be wanting in spirit, tame, as the phrase goes; and indeed he has not quite the frankness, the impetuosity

[1] *Lady Clancarty*, it may be said, is after all but melodrama, and melodrama is very popular and very well played just now. Perhaps; but between the melodrama of the old world and the new there is all the distance that there is between the old comedy and the new. The memory probably of no living playgoer will furnish him with anything more delightful than Mrs. Bancroft's Polly Eccles: of her Lady Teazle we do not talk so much. Mr. Irving's friends are understood to be greatly pleased with his Jeremy Diddler; but even their affection is less clamorous over his Doricourt. There is the melodrama of the court and of the city: both are excellent, but not in the same way. There is, indeed, an actor now playing at the Adelphi whom I should like much to see in *Lady Clancarty:* I mean Mr. Terriss.

and jollity, which made Mr. Neville so good a stage-cavalier. But he is a sufficiently gallant, chivalrous young soldier, and his manner is both affectionate and earnest where these qualities are wanted. And for his shortcomings there is at least this excuse: an actor cannot play a fool for a hundred nights and transform himself into a hero on the hundred and first. Too young, indeed, he seems for this Clancarty; but it were ungenerous to blame him for a fault which most of us would gladly share, and which, though certainly one of the misfortunes of the piece, is not all his own. But after Mr. Kendal who is to be praised, if the performance be judged by its capacity for realising the author's design? Many have praised Mr. Mackintosh, a skilful actor as every one knows; and no doubt his acting is clever, if we dismiss all thoughts of William. But what a king is this he gives us? William was just, but not amiable—as the French say that we Englishmen are: he was slight and feeble, but he was not senile or decrepit. Mr. Mackintosh, with infinite care, I am sure, and much thought, has produced an amiable sort of old pantaloon with an irritating little cough. How different from that inimitable piece of still life Mr. Sugden showed! Take, again, Mrs. Kendal. There are no doubt many parts which Mrs. Kendal would play admirably and Miss Cavendish could not play at all; but the part of Lady Clancarty is not one. I doubt whether she ever would have played it very well: the domestic manner always became her better than the romantic: she certainly cannot play it now, and she was not wise to try. One remembers Miss Cavendish and wonders what change has been wrought in the character. The grace, the buoyancy, the tender yet dignified archness, the high-bred charm — where have they flown? Well; Tristram knew two Iseults, and we have known two Lady Clancartys.

"Soft—Who is that sits by the dying fire?"
"Iseult."
"Ah! not the Iseult I desire."

In one of the fragments of Mrs. Carlyle's notebook is the record of a visit from Count D'Orsay. She had not seen him for five years, when, one day in 1845, he walked into the little house in Chelsea. "Last time," she writes, "he was as gay as a humming-bird—blue satin cravat, blue velvet waistcoat, cream-coloured coat lined with velvet of the same hue, trousers also of a bright colour, I forget what; white French gloves, two glorious breast-pins attached by a chain, and length enough of gold watch-guard to have hanged himself in. To-day, in compliment to his five more years, he was all in black and brown." This wise sense of the fitness of things (the real ἁρμονία) took the quick-eyed lady's fancy. She owned that he was a perfect master of his trade, though it was but the trade of a dandy: "A bungler would have made no allowances for five more years at his time of life; but he had the fine sense to perceive how much better his dress of to-day set off his slightly enlarged figure and slightly worn complexion, than the humming-bird colours of five years back would have done." This sense of fitness is a most useful possession for actors, to men as well as women—as useful, perhaps, as any, for it suggests, and indeed almost entails so many other useful things. Years come to all of us—at least we all hope so; and when they bring the philosophic mind they bring innumerable gifts and blessings with them. Only when we ignore them are they a curse. The time for playing Juliet or Ophelia is not the time for playing Lady Macbeth or Queen Constance. But how much more glory will these larger ventures bring! Any graceful intelligent girl will please as Juliet or Ophelia: only a great actress can show us those imperial women. This is a delicate business, and he who meddles with it must endure to be called personal, impertinent, and I

know not what other hard words. But, in truth, it is a business most extremely pertinent; and personal every one who discusses an actor must be, for acting is the most personal of all professions. It is, indeed, nothing if not personal. We discuss the poet's verses and the painter's pictures; but what we discuss in the actor is himself—his visible, audible, tangible personality. Hence, no doubt, arises that extreme sensitiveness to criticism which marks actors as a body, and sometimes leads them into so much foolishness. On the other hand, they have this vast advantage over us, that, rightly considered, they never grow old. We, the public, are concerned but with their theatric life, and that, if wisely managed, may be one unending prime. They have but to adapt the parts they play to life's shifting seasons, to keep the thieving years forever at bay. But "the humming-bird colours," and other immoment toys of youth, must grow out of date for them as for us.

The shadows of the past take fanciful shapes, and one must always allow for the gilding mists of memory. Those who are haunted by no inconvenient recollections may like this *Lady Clancarty* well enough. Let us hope they will. The piece, with all its imperfections, native and imparted, is at least refreshing after the empty or inconvenient follies of the last few years. And if Mrs. Kendal's large and long-sustained popularity can help to bring about a change for the better, she will have done more than enough to make us forget a much worse performance than her Lady Clancarty.

MOWBRAY MORRIS.

HET;

(A ROMANCE OF THE BUSH).

I WAS on some government duty last year in New South Wales, that took me into the local post-offices. In the back parlour, at the Gundaroo post-office, I had a long chat with the son of the post-mistress; a fine young fellow, perhaps a little over thirty. He was manager to a local sheep-king, and rejoiced in the curious Christian name of Het. The following is his account of the circumstances that led to his being so named.

I was there certainly; but I don't remember much about it. I was told. I can vouch for the truth of it, for she and him, too, often and often have told it to me, and others. They've told it apart, each by their two selves, and they often tell it together—she telling about him, making him out to have been the hero, and he telling it all so that she was the hero—heroine, I should say. But I expect each of 'em always told it in about the same words. You see it was an epoch like, and sort of fixed itself in their memories—and what happened after, fixed it firmer yet.

I've been manager on this station, up behind here, eight years; and I was "boy" here [pointing with his pipe-stem to the floor] eight years: at school here in Gundaroo till I was fourteen; so I suppose it must have been thirty-four years ago—near enough.

The colony wasn't settled near so much as it is now. The coach from Sydney didn't reach Gundaroo not by three days' ride, and the mails was carried on horseback, once a week, the rest of the way. After the coach-road, for a bit—say twenty miles—the track was good enough, and there were stations further than that; but by the end of the first day's ride, you reached the last house or hut you were to see till you sighted Gundaroo.

The first night the mail carrier put up at "Paddy's Shanty," a sort of an inn on the track. The next morning he started—all alone, mind you, with valuable mail-bags—across as nasty a piece of bush as you'll find in Australia, and I suppose that says in the world. It was all ti-tree scrub. If you know what that is, you'll understand. Never seen any? Oh, well, it's scrub, that is all little trees, with their leaves all on the top. All of 'em alike. Just too slender and weak to bear a man's climbing up one to look round: too far apart for you to swarm up two at once, arms and legs, you know; and yet too close for you to see sun or stars, night nor day. That sort of scrub is the cruelest of all. If you know your way, well and good; but if you once get wrong, Lord help you! You're bushed, as sure as you're alive. Unless you chance on a track, or come across a camp, you may lie down and give it up. As long as your water barr'l holds out—so'll you. After *that*, you may give yourself a day or two to die in: perhaps another two days, if you're a tough sort. Your bones 'll be there years after. Well, that's what he had to ride through for hours and hours, the second day; and at night he ought to be about through it, if he kep' the track, and made out to reach the open again. Then the track was across a fern gully, with a creek at the bottom; and there he camped for the night. Then he had an eighty-mile ride the next day, straight through the Blue-gum forest into Gundaroo.

The chap that rode with the mails then was a splendid fellow. Standard

his name was. Too heavy p'raps for a postman, as we understand 'em, but just the man for that work in those days. It wanted a fellow full of pluck, as strong as a horse, and with all his wits about him. Besides the dangers of the track, and creeks to ford, and the heat, and the snakes at night, there was the loneliness. That one fellow, all alone in that great wild district, riding through the hours in the perfect stillness under the sky. No chance of seeing a soul, and probably not wanting to neither, as things was then. If any one *did* just happen to come across the mail-carriers in those days, it wasn't generally for no good.

He used to say: "When a man's got her Majesty's precious mail-bags, with her own red seals on 'em, in front of the saddle, and only the usual number of hands for pistols, and reins, and all, he don't care much if he *don't* see no one all the ride through." He wasn't one to boast, wasn't Standard; but he had once to defend the mails, with three to one against him, and tried for manslaughter, too, for the way he done it, and acquitted, and carried out of the court on the chaps' shoulders. They tell that tale still here in Gundaroo.

The time I'm telling you of was in the hot season. The ground was all cracked and dry. There hadn't been a drop of rain for months and months, and lots of the creeks was empty. At Gundaroo it had been very bad, and the district round was terrible in want of water.

On the Saturday after New Year's Day, when Standard left "Paddy's Shanty," it was a hot wind, awful to ride in. They thought rain was coming, hough.

The boss at the shanty told Standard, as he fixed up his water-barr'l behind him on the saddle, that a storekeeper and his wife and child, and his chum, had started the day before for a station where they'd got a berth. They had to follow the Gundaroo track a bit, and then strike across the bush to the station. "It isn't far they've to go," he said, "but they're new chums, and the woman looked a bit delicate, as well as having a young baby to carry."

"They've only two horses then," says Standard, looking along the track, "unless the third horse flew."

"No," says the boss; "the woman rode behind one of the men, turn and turn about. A fine young woman she was, too."

"It's to be hoped the chaps hadn't much else to carry, then," says Standard. "I couldn't carry another couple of pounds—let alone a woman and baby—on 'Lady,' without knocking her up."

"Well, you ain't got to," says the boss; and laughs as he watches Standard put "Lady" into a steady canter along the track, where the two sets of hoof-marks showed in the sand.

"Lady" was a fine black mare. Very swift, but just a thought too light for Standard and the bags, some said. He wouldn't allow it. He said: "She reaches Gundaroo as fresh as need be on Monday night, and by the time she has to start on Thursday, she's wild to be on the road." He only travelled once a fortnight on her. The other week he rode a roan, a bigger brute, but not half so sensible and kind-like as "Lady." She was a born lady—Standard used to say. Her mother was "Duchess," whereas the roan was the son of "Milkmaid," although he was called "Emperor." She could have gone the whole way alone, if need be, he said; she was so trustworthy.

Well, he used to tell it how he rode through that Saturday in the ti-tree scrub, thinking of the party on in front, in whose tracks he was galloping. It was just near the end of the scrub, he noticed, where they left off, and started on a scarcely visible track to the station away to the left, fifty miles or so.

He used to say he must have ridden a couple of hours, perhaps, when he saw something on the track, like a

dead person or horse. He had his hand on his pistol as he trotted up to it, he said, thinking of the mails, when he saw it wasn't a horse, or a man, but a tall slip of a young woman, dead, or perhaps only dying, laid on the ground with her back propped against a tree, and a poor little baby clinging to her breast.

"Lord of all!" muttered Standard, as he jumped off "Lady's" back, and stood over the woman. He raised her as tenderly almost as she would have done her own child. The little one, he used to say, started crying—a kind of wail—and opened its eyes in that sort of way that you know it hadn't long stopped crying, but just woke up, and began again where it had left off. I've two kids of my own now, and I know—not that they've ever had to lie alongside a mother as good as dead; and try to get fed and warmed at a breast as cold as that poor soul's. Thank God, no! But for all that, well-fed kids can cry, and cry pitiful, too; so I know how he meant to say this particular kid cried.

Standard hadn't no need to tether "Lady" to make her stop alongside, she was such a reasonable beast; but he put her bridle over a tree-branch, for all that. Certainty is worth a deal of faith, when it's about being left alone in a ti-tree scrub, without your horse and kit.

Then he laid the little one on its mother's shawl, and set to work to bring the mother to. He'd seen men exhausted, and laid down to die from thirst and fatigue, come round; but he wasn't sure, he said, if a woman had to be done for the same as a man—he was a single chap then. But he set to, and got a little water first, and then water with a dash of brandy in it, between her blue lips; and rubbed her forehead and hands well, and laid her so as the blood—once the spirit had started it again—could flow a bit quicker to her poor brain. A bushman has to be a bit of a doctor, you know. Then the baby started to help by giving a loud shriek, and the young woman opened her eyes, and sighed like; and he kep' on giving her water and spirit, as she could take it, till she could feel herself more comfortable. He didn't start talking to her then, knowing she wanted all her strength to come round; but he put the baby back in her arms, and the mother in her prompted her like to take a good long pull at the drink in the billy—so as the kid might get some in a while, you know.

After a bit, she started to cry in a low sort of way, and then Standard, he set by her, and cheered her up, and told her not to take on. He told her she was found; and that all the worst of being lost was done with, and not to cry, and so on. All the time, poor fellow, though he didn't hurry her, he knew he was losing time dreadfully and would hardly make the creek to camp by before nightfall. Thinking of that, he suddenly remembered the woman had got to go too, or be left to die where she was. Standard was wondering what the deuce he should do with her, when she started and told him how she come there. It seemed she was the wife of the store-keeper, Bannerman, that the boss "Paddy's Shanty" had spoken of; and she says, when they had got part way through the scrub (two days before, mind you) they stopped to change her on to the other horse, and allow 'em to stand about a bit to stretch their legs, the two men. The fools never hitched the horses to anything! All on a sudden, a snake slid across the track, right under the woman's feet. She screamed out, and that startled the horses. Off they went—bolted clean into the scrub, carrying every blessed thing they got with them—water, matches, the billy, and everything. Her husband and his chum tore after them, telling her to be sure and stop where she was. She sat there all alone, and there she'd set! First, waiting patient, and then a little frightened and nervous as the time went on. Then, when it got dark and into the night, and they didn't come, scared out of her life,

and shouting, shouting to 'em to guide 'em to come back; and she tells how she stood there, not daring to move, but trying to see over the trees, and shouting till she couldn't speak, and they never come. By and by she got thirsty and faint, and the child was crying for drink and she'd nothing for it. Then she walked on, hoping to get some water; and then, she said, the trees seemed all to wave about and close in on her, and she sank down exhausted, and must have been in a sort of sleep and swoon, mixed, till Standard found her.

She says to Standard, "They must be killed," and cries awfully.

"Poor fellows," said Standard. He knew that being "killed" would be pleasant to dying of thirst, as they most likely would do, once they got lost there. But he tried to comfort her; and to please her, he shouts again. Though, as he said, after two days, and she and the baby shouting all they could most of the time, and they not come back it weren't likely they were within hail *now!* He made her understand this at last. Says he, "Very likely they've got to camp;" to comfort her, you understand. Then he started to say how was they and the baby to get out of this? She didn't want to move from where she was, poor woman, in case her husband should come back; but Standard says to her: "You can't do your husband no good by stopping here; and if you get quick to Gundaroo, you could tell 'em to send out a search party; and besides, ma'am, your little one can't manage another night in the bush."

"No, sir," she says. She was a gentle, docile thing, and see he was right; and then she says to him, helpless and grateful like, "Could we ride behind you, sir?"

Poor Standard! He felt stumped: He didn't know what to say. He looked at the tall young woman and the baby, and then at himself and the horse already well weighted with his camping-kit and the mails. It wasn't possible! and he knew it. There was ten miles or so, to be done that night, before they got to the creek. It was late now, nearly seven. It would be dark as pitch in the scrub before they got there, even if "Lady" could carry all that load so far as that; but as to carrying them all to Gundaroo, eighty miles further on—he knew she couldn't do it. Besides, nothing was allowed to delay the mails. He would be late as it was, for the stop he'd made. It must be a couple of days, at best, before he'd get there, carrying all that extra weight.

So Standard stood for a moment or two and thought it all over, while he watched the girl (for she was no more) straighten herself and the child, and struggle to stand. Seeing her stagger a bit called him to himself; and he thinks as he gave her his hand to steady her, "Damn her majesty's mail regulations! I'll take her, somehow!"

So he gets his blanket out of his kit and straps it behind the saddle, and then he took and laid the baby on the tree-root, while he swung the woman on to the blanket, behind the saddle. Then he handed her up the child, and got carefully into the saddle himself, leaving them all the room he could, she used to say. "Lady" looked round, a bit doubtful of the extra weight and the dangling petticoats on one side; but started right enough when Standard told her it had got to be done.

There wasn't much said on the ride. It was rough stepping, and "Lady" 'd to pick her way; and Standard had to help her, and steady the poor lass behind with the baby in her right arm and her left hand on his belt; and she was looking and looking, on both sides, to see if she could see the two men. Except to beg Standard to stop a minute and shout, once or twice, in case her husband and his chum was near, she never spoke. Standard knew it must be hopeless, and the further they got the more hopeless it must get; but he was a tender-hearted fellow, and he couldn't stand hearing

the poor soul crying in a hopeless sort of way behind him, and not do something to please her. But all the way, the baby lay there as peaceful and comfortable as we are now this minute.

When they got to the creek it was nearly dark, and the woman was swaying in the saddle, though she'd sat straight enough at first. Noticing this, Standard says, suddenly, "Missus, have you ever rode alone?"

She gives a sort of start, and sits up, and says, "Oh, yes, I've rode a great deal when I was a girl; but I'm that tired now, and feel so weak, that I can't sit up." She thought he was wondering at her leaning against him so heavy. But that wasn't what Standard was thinking. He knew himself what it was to sway, nearly to falling straight out of the saddle, from fatigue and want of food and water. No: he was thinking of a plan for the next day. When they got to the creek he sets the woman down, and hobbles "Lady," and gives her mouth a sponge out, and a bit of a rub, to last till he could see to her when she was cool. Then he got some sticks and dry grass (no fear of the wood being wet in a hot season hereabouts!) together for a fire, and as soon as it burns up puts the billy over it. Then he hunted in his kit for a tin of milk he'd got—not to put in his tea, but to use for butter! He thought it would be just the thing for the woman, seeing she'd to nurse the child. She had a whole pannikin full of warm milk—did her a power of good; and when he'd got her to eat a bit of sopped bread, and had his own tea, he gave her a towel, and told her if she'd feel better for washing her face and hands and that, the creek was safe to do it in. He went off to see to "Lady"; and before he went, he put his comb, and a bit of looking-glass he carried, where she could see 'em and take 'em if she liked. He was always a bit of a dandy. But he didn't say nothing to her about the comb and glass, because, being a bachelor, of course he felt delicate about suggesting as her hair was hanging all down her back in two long fair plaits. Standard used to say it was prettiest so, to his mind, but he thought she'd feel vexed if she knew he noticed it. So he just put the bit of glass handy, and took himself off.

When he came back, he says, he found the baby asleep, and smoothed and tidied somehow, and the woman as neat as a pin—women are so clever at straightening themselves—and the pannikin and that washed up, and the fire raked together. The woman sat there with her needle-book on her knee—she had it in a pocket, she says—sewing up a tear in her frock, where it had caught in one of the saddle-buckles. Standard didn't say nothing much that night, but he had made up his mind; and after making a shelter of branches and fern, and seen the mother and baby laid down under it one side of the fire, he stretched himself the other side, with his head on the mail-bags, and thought out what he'd decided to do. The woman and child must get to Gundaroo, and before the next night too: so must the mails. "Lady" could carry them well enough, but she couldn't carry him as well. Very well: then he'd stay behind and walk. "Lady" would go along the track through the forest alone, he knew; and if only the girl would have the pluck to trust herself to the mare, and just sit still and hold the reins, they'd all get to Gundaroo, safe as a church. She could then deliver up the bags at the post-office, and tell them to send out a search-party to look after her husband and his chum, and a horse to meet him.

He knew he was sure to get into trouble with the authorities for risking it, especially if it failed; and he knew, too, that it was no fun to be left to walk through the forest in riding-boots and breeches, and with nothing but a few biscuits and a pistol. The water barr'l he meant to fill, and fix in its place behind the saddle, and the rest of the tin of milk, and the bread (damper, of course, you

know), and the tinned meat. Women needed a deal of feeding, especially when they'd a baby to feed too, he thought. And she must take one of the pistols.

His chief fear was she'd be too soft-hearted to like to leave him behind; and yet he knew it couldn't be done under a couple of days, or more likely four, if they tried to go altogether. Though he said, "Damn her Majesty's mails!" he daren't delay 'em so long, for all that. "Damning" wouldn't hurt 'em, or him either; but delaying 'em would be the very devil for them, and him too!

As soon as it was light, he set to work separating the things he was going to keep from those he was going to send on with the "Royal She-mail," as he called her in joke to himself. He looked at the two sleeping the other side of the fire under the open sky. The kid was comfortable enough, cradled in soft arms; but the mother was lying just about as uncomfortably as it's possible to lie, so as to shelter the child. Standard, who noticed everything, made a note of this, and thought he'd work on her maternal feelings most to get her to go on in the morning.

After he'd fed "Lady," about five o'clock, he groomed her up in style, for, he used to say, he must have the horse that carried the "Royal She-mail" as smart as possible. Later on, when he saw the woman after her night's rest in the fresh early morning, and had got her to eat a bit of breakfast, he was quite pleased to see how much better she looked.

He'd a great work, he said, to make her go without him, though she wasn't a bit afraid for herself. He had to say he shouldn't be so far behind, and swear he could walk pretty nearly as fast as "Lady" 'd go, and so on. He showed her how to fire the pistol, and told her to let "Lady" choose the way if she felt doubtful about the track among the gum-trees. Of course he cheered her up all he could, though feeling bad at letting a woman and a baby go alone all that way. You see, there were bushrangers to be feared then. He was afraid to say much about taking care of the mails for fear of frightening her. He just said, there they was, in front of the saddle, and that she must take 'em straight to the office, and not let any one but the people of the office touch them. Then he told her about sending the two parties back to meet him and her husband. He said—as he saw her sitting so easy in the saddle, and the baby lying in her lap, tied to her by her shawl; and her right arm free for the pistol, if need be, his spirits rose a bit—she looked able to do it. He wanted to give her his mail-badge, but she says no, she wouldn't have it. She'd be safer without. He didn't quite see what she meant. But when it was all over——but there, if I tell you the story that way, you'll know how it ended too soon.

Well, there ain't much more to tell after all. Mother, she rode straight along the track into Gundaroo. Ah! I see I've told you now! Yes, it was my mother, that was; and I'm the baby!

She said why she wouldn't wear the badge was for the same reason as she hung her shawl over the mail-bags as soon as she was out of Standard's sight. No one, she thought, would think a woman and child worth robbing.

She left him just at the beginning of the forest. He says he walked by the horse a bit to see how she carried her; and then he let her start off at a gentle canter. He used to say he never felt so dead lonely as when the brave young creature turned round and waved her hand, and says, "Good-bye, and God bless you for saving his life"—meaning me in her arms!—and then was hid from him in the trees.

Well, to cut a long story short, mother and me rode into Gundaroo at nine o'clock—two and a half hours after time. All the place turns out to see who it was. A woman riding

alone with a baby! They were all so took up with the young woman (my mother was a very personable young woman) they never noticed she was on "Lady," though there must have been lots as knew Standard's mare well enough.

Mother was dead tired; and I was asleep, as comfortable as I am now by this fire.

She rides straight up to the post-office, and one of the chaps lifts her down; but she wouldn't let one on 'em touch the mail-bags, but drags them off herself, and says, standing on the doorstep with me in her arms, and the mails at her feet: "If you please, gentlemen, I've brought in the mails. The gentleman lent me his horse. I was lost; and will you send a horse to meet him. He's walking from the fern-gully. And 'Lady' is to be seen to, please." And then she drops down on the step pretty nigh done.

The chaps set to and cheered her—cheer after cheer, till mother was drawn in out of the noise by the post-master's wife, who told 'em they ought to know better than make a lady so shamefaced, so tired as she was, too. The old lady was quite as astonished as any of them, for all she said to the chaps to hold their noise; and quite proud to have the first hearing of it all from mother, as she put her and me to bed in her own room. Well, the end of it was, Standard he was met right enough, and brought in the next afternoon. But they never found my poor father and his chum—not till months after, and then it was bones they found. Mother, she stayed on, and helped the post-mistress at Gundaroo, who was getting oldish.

So that's how a woman brought her Majesty's mails into Gundaroo; and *that's* why I'm called Het.

Don't see why? Oh! I forgot to say that when I was christened, a month or so after, mother called me after Standard, as had saved us both. Didn't I tell you his name was Hector? —Het, for short. Het Standard, he was: I'm Het Bannerman; but mother, she is Mrs. Het Standard now, post-mistress of Gundaroo. I dessay you guessed as much.

THE MAKING OF BRITAIN.[1]

I HAVE chosen for consideration this evening a subject which may on the one hand be discussed from the purely literary, and on the other from the strictly scientific side, but which is most thoroughly investigated by united research in both directions. I propose to ask your attention to the changes which have taken place in the outward aspect of this country since man first set foot upon its surface, and to the sources of information regarding them. That this subject appeals strongly to the instincts of the lover of science needs not to be insisted upon here. It deals with the evidence for many kinds of geological operations, and with their rate of progress. It may, consequently, be made to throw light upon one of the vexed problems of science—the value of time in geological inquiry. Of its relations to literature I would fain say more, because it seems to me eminently calculated to engage the sympathies and even the active co-operation of literary students. There can be no doubt that the future advancement of our knowledge of this question must depend largely upon help from the literary side.

A generation has hardly passed away since the truth was recognised that man is in large measure the creature of his environment; that his material progress and mental development have been guided and modified by the natural conditions in which he has been placed. The full extent and application of this truth, however, are probably not even yet realised by us. If the surrounding and limiting conditions have been such potent factors in human development, we may well believe that any serious change or modification in them cannot but have reacted upon man. If nature alters her aspect to him, he too will in some measure be affected thereby, and his relations to her will be influenced. What then have been the kind and amount of the mutations in the face of nature since man first appeared? In trying to answer this question I will restrict myself, for the present, to the consideration of the evidence in the case of Great Britain; but it will be understood that the principles laid down for the conduct of the inquiry with regard to this country must be of general application to other regions of the globe.

Let me remark at the outset that considerable progress has been made in the investigation of this question, both from its scientific and its historical side. Lyell, and my revered friend Professor Prestwich, with the geologists who have followed them, have laid a solid foundation of knowledge regarding the later mutations in the physical geography of Britain. Guest, Pearson, Freeman, Green, and others, have shown in how many ways the historical development of the people has been influenced by the topographical features of the country. Yet in spite of all that has been done, I do not hesitate to say that we are still only a little way beyond the threshold of this wide subject. No one has realised more vividly at once the importance of the inquiry and the imperfection of the available data than the late Mr. J. R. Green. He would fain have been able to reconstruct the successive phases through which our landscapes have passed since the dawn of history; and he did more in this respect

[1] *The Changes in the Outward Aspect of Britain since Man appeared in the Country:* an address given in the lecture-hall of the University Museum, Oxford, on March 1st, 1887.

with his materials than probably any other living man could have done. But the detailed evidence was wanting to him; and it has still to be gathered before the ideal of the historian can be reached. Now, I am desirous of insisting upon the fact that this detailed evidence does not lie shut up from the reach of all but the practised man of science and the mature historian. Much of it, whether in the literary or scientific domain, may be gleaned by any young undergraduate who will bring to the task quickness of observation and accuracy of judgment. As the harvest is abundant but the labourers few, I would fain enlist the sympathy and co-operation of any who may be able and willing to help.

For the sake of clearness, I will divide my remarks into two portions. The first of these will deal with the nature and sources of the evidence from which we know that the outer aspect of the country has undergone many vicissitudes: the second will be devoted to the character of the changes themselves.

I. There are four obvious sources of information regarding former conditions of the land. First comes the testimony of historical documents, then that of place-names, next that of tradition, and, lastly, that of geological evidence.

(1) One might suppose that for what has taken place during the historical period, the evidence of history would be all sufficient. But it is only recently that the subject has been determined to be worthy of the historian's serious attention, and hence we cannot look for much light to be thrown upon it in the pages of the ordinary histories. Nor need we expect to meet with any full measure of information regarding it in the original documents from which these histories are compiled. In truth, the facts of which we are in search must be gleaned from brief allusions and implications rather than from actual descriptions. It was no part of the duty of an old chronicler purposely to record any natural fact, short of some terrific earthquake or storm that destroyed human life and damaged human property. But in describing historical events he could hardly avoid reference to woods, lakes, marshes, and other natural features which served as boundaries to the theatre of these events. By comparing, therefore, his local topography with the present aspect of the same localities, we may glean some interesting particulars as to changes of topography in the course of centuries. Such a comparison, however, to be effective and trustworthy, involves two special qualifications. The inquirer must be a thorough master of the language and style of the author he is studying, and he must be completely familiar with the present condition of the ground to which allusion is made. The want of this combination of knowledge has led to some curious blunders on the part of able scholars.

It is evident, then, that a vast domain of research is here opened out to the student. In a general sense, every historical document may be available for the purposes of the inquiry. Besides the narratives of the old Chronicles, which might be expected to contain at least occasional incidental reference to physical features, much information may be gleaned from quarters that might be thought the most unlikely. Charters and other legal documents, in dealing with the holding and transference of land, not infrequently throw light on the former aspect of the ground with which they are connected. The Cartularies of some of our ancient abbeys, besides affording glimpses into the inner life of these establishments, which do not seem to have been always abodes of peace and studious retirement, give indications of the former areas of forest, woods and mosses, or the positions of lakes now reduced in size or effaced. Old Acts of Parliament, looked at from our present point of view, are by no means always repulsive reading.

They have one great advantage over their modern representatives in that they are often commendably brief; and in their occasional quaint local colouring, they afford material for interesting comparison with existing topography.

Among historical documents I include poems of all kinds and ages. Our earliest English literature is poetical; and from the days of Caedmon down to our own time, the typical characters of landscape have found faithful reflection in our national poetry. It is not merely from what are called descriptive poems that information of the kind required is to be gathered. The wild border-ballad, full of the rough warfare of the time, has a background of bare moorland, treacherous moss-hags, and desolate hills, which can be compared with the aspect of the same region to-day. The gentler lyrics of a later time take their local colouring from the glades and dells, the burns and pastures where their scenes are laid. In the stately cadence of the *Faery Queen* among the visionary splendours of another world the rivers of England and Ireland are pictured, each with its characters touched off as they appeared in the days of Elizabeth. And in Drayton's quaint, but somewhat tiresome *Polyolbion,* abundant material is supplied for a comparison between the topography of England at the beginning of the seventeenth century and that of our own time.

But these comparisons have still to be worked out. As an example of the kind of use that may be made of them, and of the light which our poetry may cast, not only upon physical changes, but upon historical facts, I would refer to the passages in Barbour's poem of *The Bruce* descriptive of the Battle of Bannockburn. I do not mean to contend for the historical veracity of the Archdeacon of Aberdeen, though I think he hardly deserves the sweeping and contemptuous condemnation meted out to him by Mr. Green. As he was born only some two years after the battle, as he had travelled a good deal, and as the field of Bannockburn lay across the land-route from the north to the south of Scotland, we may believe him to have made himself personally acquainted with the ground. At least, he could easily obtain information from many who had been themselves actors in the fight. He had no object to gain by drawing on his imagination for the local topography, more especially as his little bits of local description were not in any way required for the glorification of his hero. I think, therefore, that when Barbour describes a piece of ground, we may take his description as accurately representing the topography at least in his own day; and it could hardly have changed much in the generation that had passed since the time of Bruce. Now, many persons who have visited the site of the Battle of Bannockburn have felt some difficulty in understanding why the English army did not easily outflank the left wing of the Scots. At present, a wide fertile plain stretches for miles to the north and south of the low plateau on which Bruce's forces were drawn up. A small body of the English cavalry did, indeed, make its way across this plain until overtaken and cut to pieces by Randolph. But why was this force so easily dispersed, and why was no more formidable and persistent effort made to turn that left flank? It is very clear that, had the topography been then what it is now, the Battle of Bannockburn must have had a far other ending.

The true explanation of the difficulty seems to me to be supplied by some almost casual references in Barbour's account of the operations. He makes Bruce, in addressing his followers, allude to the advantage they would gain should the enemy attempt to pass by the morass beneath them. The poet further narrates how the Carse, that is, the low flat land on the left, was dotted with pools of water: how the English, in order to effect a passage, broke down houses, and tried to

bridge over these pools with doors, windows, and thatch from the cottage roofs; and how, with the assistance of their compatriots in Stirling Castle, they were so far successful that Clifford's troop of horse, and, possibly, some more of the English army, got safely over to the hard ground beyond. We thus learn that Bruce's famous device of the "pots" was only an extension of the kind of defence that nature had already provided for him. The ground on his left, now so dry and so richly cultivated, was then covered with impassable bogs and sheets of water; and the huge army of Edward was consequently compelled to crowd its attack into the narrow space between these bogs and the higher grounds on Bruce's right.

(2) Another wide field of inquiry for information touching changes in the aspect of the country is supplied by the etymology of place-names. These names, at least those of them that date from old times, possess a peculiar value and interest as abiding records of the people who gave them, and also, in many cases, of the circumstances in which they were given. We are at present concerned only with those that embody some physical fact in the topography. Many of these are as appropriate now as they were at first; for the features to which they were applied have remained unaltered. Ben Nevis is as truly the "Hill of Heaven" to-day as when the earliest Celtic tribe looked up to it from the glens below. The big stones on the summit of Penmaenmawr still stand as memorials of the British people who erected and named them.

But in innumerable instances the appositeness of the designation has been lost. The name has, in fact, been more permanent than the feature to which it was applied. The one has survived in daily speech from generation to generation: the other has wholly passed away. By comparing the descriptive epithet in the name with the present aspect of the locality, some indication, or even, perhaps, some measure of the nature and amount of the changes in the topography, may still be recovered.

Now in researches of this kind the liability to blunder is so great, and many able writers have blundered so egregiously, that the inquiry ought not to be entered upon without due preparation, and should not be continued without constant exercise of the most scrupulous caution. The great danger of being betrayed into error by the plausibilities of phonetic etymology should never for a moment be lost sight of. Where possible the earliest form of the name should be recovered, for in the course of time local names are apt to be so corrupted as to lose all obvious trace of their original orthography.

The Celtic place-names are as a whole singularly descriptive. The Celtic tribes, indeed, have manifested, in that respect, a keener appreciation of landscape and a more poetical eye for nature than their Saxon successors. Who that has ever stood beneath the sombre shadow of the cloud that so often rests on the shoulders of the Grampians will fail to recognise the peculiar fitness of the Gaelic name for the highest summit of the chain—Ben-na-muich-dubh, "the mountain of dark gloom"? Or who has ever watched the Atlantic billows bursting into white foam against the cliffs of Ardnamurchan and did not acknowledge that only a poetic race could have named the place "the headland of the great sea." The colours of mountain and river have been seized upon by these people as descriptive characters that have suggested local names. Swiftness and sluggishness of flow have furnished discriminating epithets for rivers. Moors, forests, woodlands, copses, groups of trees, solitary bushes, lakes, mosses, cliffs, gullies, even single boulders, have received names which record some aspect or character that struck the imagination of the old Celt. Many of these names have never found a place on any map, but they are well

known to the Welsh and Gaelic inhabitants who in the more mountainous and trackless regions have often a wonderful acquaintance with the details of the topography.

Here, then, in the Celtic place-names of the country lies a wide and practically as yet untouched domain for exploration. Civilisation has advanced less rapidly and ruthlessly in the Celtic-speaking parts of the country. In these districts, too, there are fewer historical records of progress and change. But the topographical names when carefully worked out will doubtless supply much information regarding former aspects of the country. Taken in connection with a minute examination of the present topography, they may be found to preserve a record of former conditions of surface whereof every other memorial has for ever perished.

Our Saxon progenitors, also, gave appropriate local names; but with a sturdy self-assertion, and prosaic regard for plain fact, they chose to couple their own *cognomina* with them. If a settler fenced in his own inclosure he called it his "ton" or his "ham." If he felled the trees of the primeval woodlands and made his own clearance, it became his "fold." If he built himself a mud cottage it was his "cote," or if he attained to the dignity of a farm he called it his "stead." As he and his brethren increased their holdings and drew their houses together for companionship and protection, the village kept their family name. But besides these patronymic epithets, which are of such value in tracing out the early settlement of the country, the English gave more or less descriptive local names. In their "holts" and "hursts," "wealds" and "shaws," we can still tell where their woods lay. In their "leighs," "fields," and "royds," we can yet trace the open clearings in these woods. But for the broad landmarks and larger natural features of the country, the Saxons were generally content to adopt, in some more or less corrupted form, the names already given by the Celtic tribes who had preceded them.

(3) As another but less reliable source of information regarding alterations in the surface of the country, I would make brief allusion to the subject of local tradition. In these days of education and locomotion, we can hardly perhaps realise how tenacious, and on the whole faithful, the human memory may be in spite of the absence of written or printed documents. Even yet we see the unbroken and exact record of the true boundaries of a parish or township handed down in the annual beating of the bounds or riding of the marches. And even where no such ceremony has tended to perpetuate the remembrance of topographical details, tradition, though it may vary as to historical facts, is often singularly true to locality. I am tempted to give what seems to me a good example of this fidelity of tradition. Many years ago among the uplands of Lammermuir I made the acquaintance of an old maiden lady, Miss Darling of Priestlaw, who with her bachelor brothers tenanted a farm which their family had held for many generations. In the course of her observant and reflective life she had gathered up and treasured in her recollection the traditions and legends of these pastoral solitudes. I well remember, among the tales she delighted to pour into the ear of a sympathetic listener, one that went back to the time of the Battle of Dunbar. We know from his own letters in what straits Cromwell felt himself to be when he found his only practicable line of retreat through the hills barred by the Covenanting army, and how he wrote urgently to the English commander at Newcastle for help in the enemy's rear. It has usually been supposed that his communications with England were kept up only by sea. But the weather was boisterous at the time, and a vessel bound for Berwick or Newcastle might

have been driven far away from land. There is therefore every probability that Cromwell would try to send a communication by land also. Now the tradition of Lammermuir maintains that he did so. The story is told that he sent two soldiers disguised as natives of the district to push their way through the hills and over the border. The men had got as far as the valley of the Whiteadder, and were riding past the mouth of one of the narrow glens, when a gust of wind, sweeping out of the hollow, lifted up their hodden-grey cloaks and showed their military garb beneath. They had been watched, and were now overtaken and shot. Miss Darling told me that tradition had always pointed to an old thorn-bush at the opening of the cleugh as the spot where they were buried. At her instigation the ground was dug up there, and among some mouldering bones were found a few sorely decayed military buttons with a coin of the time of Charles the First.

Tradition is no doubt often entirely erroneous; but it ought not, I think, to be summarily dismissed without at least critical examination. There are doubtless instances where it might come in to corroborate conclusions deducible from other and usually more reliable kinds of evidence.

(4) But of all the sources of information regarding bygone mutations of the surface of the land, undoubtedly the most important is that supplied by the testimony of geology. Early human chronicles are not only imperfect, but may be erroneous. The chronicle, however, which Nature has compiled of her past vicissitudes, though it may be fragmentary, is, at least, accurate. In interpreting it the geologist is liable, indeed, to make mistakes; but these can be corrected by subsequent investigation, while the natural chronicle itself remains unaffected by them. Moreover, it embraces a vast period of time. Historical evidence in this country is comprised within the limits of nineteen centuries. The testimony from Celtic topographical names may go back some hundreds of years further. But the geological record of the human period carries us enormously beyond these dates. Hence, in so vast a lapse of time, scope has been afforded for a whole series of important geological revolutions. On every side of us we may see manifest proofs of these changes. The general aspect of the country has been altered, not once only, but many times. The agencies that brought about these changes have, in not a few instances, preserved tolerably complete memorials of them. We are thus enabled to trace the history of lakes and rivers, of forests and mosses: we can follow the succession and migrations of the animals that have wandered over the land, and many of which had died out ere the days of history began: we can dimly perceive the conditions of life of the earliest human population of the country: we can recover abundant evidence of the extraordinary vicissitudes of climate which since these ancient times have affected, not this land only, but the whole northern hemisphere.

II. I come now to the second division of my subject—the character of the changes in the general aspect of Britain since man first appeared in the country. It must be obvious that only the very briefest outline of this wide range of topics is possible here. My object will be gained, however, if I can present such a rapid sketch as will show the general nature of the changes and indicate the lines along which further inquiry is needed. Much earnest investigation in all the kinds of research which I have enumerated will be required before anything like a completed picture can be given of the successive geographical phases which man has witnessed here.

Let us then try to raise a little the curtain of obscurity that hangs over that far-off time when the earliest human inhabitants found their way to this region. The first and most memorable feature in the topography

of that dim antiquity is one about which there can hardly be any doubt. Britain was not yet an island. The downs of Kent ran on across what is now the Strait of Dover, and joined the downs of Picardy. A large tract of the bed of the North Sea, all the southern part at least, was then dry land—a wide plain, across which the Thames meandered northward to join the Rhine. Whether Ireland had already been separated from the rest of Britain has not yet been ascertained; but England and Scotland were parts of the continent, and prolonged the dry land of Europe boldly westward into the Atlantic Ocean. It was over these downs now lost, and across these plains now submerged beneath the sea, that the first human population entered our region. Judged by the relics they have left behind them of their handiwork, these earliest Britons must have been a race of rude savages, fashioning their weapons and tools out of flint and out of the bones of the animals they killed in the chase: clad in skins, living in caves, rock-shelters, and holes dug in the earth; and waging incessant warfare, if not with each other, at least with a host of wild beasts of the field, and with a climate more inclement than any now to be found within the bounds of Europe.

At the time of its greatest rigour, the climate of the north-west of Europe, during these remote ages, resembled that of northern Greenland at the present day. Vast fields of ice and snow lay over all the northern and central parts of Britain. One wide glacier, descending from Scandinavia, extended across the site of the North Sea, and, joining the English ice, advanced southward nearly as far as London. The ice that streamed off the west of Scotland and Ireland went out into the Atlantic as one widely-extending wall which cumbered the ocean with icebergs. The only part of the country not then invaded by the northern ice, and, therefore, habitable by man, was the southern strip that stretched from France and the mouth of the Thames to the Bristol Channel. But so great was the cold of winter that the ground in that southern tract was probably frozen hard for some depth, and only melted at the surface in summer. The rapid thawing of the snows in warm weather gave rise to floods that swelled the streams and deluged the surface of the country. Truly a most inhospitable time! One might well wonder what could have brought even the most forlorn race of men to these forbidding and ice-bound shores. But, in all probability, man was in the country before the climate became so severe, and was gradually driven southward by the increase of the cold and the advance of the ice.

Of the animals that were contemporaneous with man during these dreary centuries some relics have been preserved. We know that the reindeer wandered over the west of Europe as far, at least, as the south of France. The musk-sheep, too, the glutton, the arctic fox, the lemming, and other truly northern forms of life, pushed southward by the advance of the ice-fields, roamed over Britain and central Europe. With these still living species others appeared which have long been extinct, such as the hairy mammoth and the woolly rhinoceros, both of which have left their bones in many parts of the south of England.

But the temperature was not continuously arctic. There came intervals of milder seasons, when the ground thawed, and the snow disappeared, and the glaciers shrank away northward. During these more congenial periods, animals of temperate and southern climes found their way into the west and north. In the valley of the Thames, for instance, elephants and rhinoceroses browsed on luxuriant herbage. Among the glades, on either side, the stag and roe and the huge-antlered Irish elk found ample pasturage. Herds of wild urus and bison moved across the plain; and in the woods the brown bear, the grizzly bear, and the wild boar found a home. In the wake of this abundant animal

life came the carnivora that preyed upon it. Among the sounds familiar to human ears all along the valley were the nightly roar of the lion, the yell of the wild cat, the howl of the hyæna, and the bay of the wolf. The river itself teemed with life. In its waters the African hippopotamus gambolled and the beaver built his dams.

Slow secular changes that influenced the climate once more brought back the cold, and drove southward this abundant animal life. As the snow and ice returned, the contest between frost and warmth gave rise to floods that swept across the frozen ground and strewed it with loose deposits, among which human implements and the bones of animals, both of northern and southern types, were mingled together. How far these animals were really coeval in the country, or whether their apparent association is not the result of the accidental mixing up of their remains, is an interesting problem not yet solved. Indeed, the story of what are called the "valley-gravels" is still very imperfectly understood, and offers many attractions to the enthusiastic observer.

Let us now come down the stream of time, across the long series of centuries that intervened between the Ice Age and the beginning of history, and look at the aspect presented by the country when the Romans entered it nineteen hundred years ago. What a momentous change had in this long interval passed over it! First and most important of all, Britain was no longer a part of the continent, but had become an island, separated then, as now, by a strip of rough sea-channel from the nearest part of Europe. The climate, too, had changed: snow-fields and glaciers had vanished: the summers and winters had become much what they are still. Of the characteristic animals, some had disappeared others had become rare. The lion, hyæna, rhinoceros, elephant and hippopotamus, for instance, had retreated to more southern latitudes; but the wolf, brown ear, and wild boar still haunted the forests. The early tribe of men, too, who made the flint weapons found in the valley-gravels, had been driven away or been swallowed up by successive waves of immigrants from the great family of the Celts, who were now the dominant race in these islands.

In trying to account for such great changes in the character of the outer aspect of Britain, a wide range of investigation opens out to us, wherein but little progress has yet been made. For example, what were the circumstances under which Britain became an island? That this geological revolution was mainly due to a subsidence of the region can hardly be doubted. To this day, between tide marks, or below low water, we can still see the stumps of trees standing where they grew, and beds of peat containing nuts and other vestiges of a land vegetation. These "submerged forests" are proofs of a comparatively recent sinking, and are, no doubt, to be regarded as relics of the general mantle of wood and bog that covered the country at the time of the downward movement. The floor of the North Sea still preserves many of the features which must have marked the former wide terrestrial plain that occupied its site. From the headlands of Yorkshire the line of cliff is prolonged as a steep submarine bank for many miles towards the coast of Denmark, broken by two gorges or valleys, in the westmost of which may have flowed the Thames, while the eastmost gave passage to the Rhine. Was the subsidence slow and tranquil, or was it sudden, and accompanied with waves of disturbance that devastated the lower grounds of western Europe?

The last connecting link between Britain and the continent was probably the line of chalk-ridge between Dover and Calais. There is some reason to surmise that it survived the submergence of the northern plain. Along this narrow ridge the earliest Celtic immigrants may have made their way. Its ultimate disappearance is probably referable rather to

erosion at the surface than to underground movements. Attacked on the one side by the breakers driven against it by the south-western gales from the Atlantic, and on the other by those of the North Sea, it would eventually be cut through. When once the tides of the two seas united, their progress for a time would be comparatively rapid in sawing down the soft chalk, in widening for themselves a passage and deepening it as far as the downward limit of their erosive power. But to this day the narrows of the strait remain so shallow that, as has often been said, St. Paul's Cathedral, if set down there, would rise half out of the water.

Since the subsidence of the great plain, other manifestations of underground energy have shown themselves within the British area. Some portions of the land have been elevated, and in the selvage of uplifted coastline relics of the human occupants of the country have been found. In other places, renewed depression has been suspected to have occurred. But the evidence for these upward and downward movements deserves further careful investigation both from the geological and the historical side.

Though on the whole singularly free from those more violent exhibitions of subterranean activity which, as within the last few days, have carried death and destruction far and wide through some of the fairest regions of the earth's surface, Britain has from time to time been visited by earthquakes of severity enough to damage public buildings. The cathedral of St. David's, in its uneven floor and dislocated walls, still bears witness to the shock which six hundred years ago did so much injury to the churches of the west of England. But though a formidable catalogue has been drawn up of the earthquakes experienced within the limits of these islands, it is not to that kind of underground disturbance that much permanent alteration of the surface of the country is to be attributed.

At the dawn of history the general appearance of this country must have presented in many respects a contrast to that which we see now; and notably in the wide spread of its forests, in the abundance of its bogs and fens, and (through the northern districts) in the prodigious number of its lakes.

At the first coming of the Romans by far the larger part of the country was probably covered with wood. During the centuries of Roman occupation some of the less dense parts of the woodland were cleared. In driving their magnificent straight highways through the country, the Roman legionaries felled the trees for seventy yards on each side of them to secure them from the arrows of a lurking foe. So stupendous was the labour involved in this task, that they gladly avoided forests where that was possible, and sometimes even swung their roads to right or left to keep clear of these formidable obstacles. For many hundreds of years after the departure of the legions, vast tracts of primeval forest remained as impenetrable barriers between different tribes. In these natural fastnesses the wolf, brown bear, and wild boar still found a secure retreat. Even as late as the twelfth century the woods to the north of London swarmed with wild boars and wild oxen. Everywhere, too, the broken men of the community betook themselves to these impenetrable retreats, where they lived by the chase, and whence they issued for plunder and bloodshed. The forests were thus from time immemorial a singularly important element in the topography. They have now almost entirely disappeared, and their former sites have as yet only been partially determined, though much may doubtless still be done in making our knowledge of them more complete.

In connection with this subject it should be remembered that, in many instances, the areas of wood and open land have in the course of generations

completely changed places. The wide belts of clay-soil that sweep across the island, being specially adapted for the growth of trees, were originally densely timbered. But the process of clearance led to the recognition of the fact that these clay-soils were also eminently fitted for the purposes of agriculture. Hence, by degrees, the sites of the ancient forests were turned into corn-fields and meadows. On the other hand, the open tracts of lighter soil, where the earlier settlers established themselves, were gradually abandoned, and lapsed into wastes of scrub and copsewood.

The fens and bogs of Britain played likewise a large part in the attack and defence of the country in Roman and later times. They were of two kinds. One series lay on the coast, especially in sheltered inlets of the sea, and were liable to inundation by high tides. The most notable of these was the wide tract of low, swampy land at the head of the Wash, our Fenland—an area where, secure in their amphibious retreats, descendants of the Celtic population preserved their independence not only through Roman but through Saxon times, if indeed, as Mr. Freeman conjectures, outlying settlements of them may not have lingered on till the coming of the Normans. The other sort of fens were those formed in the interior of the country by the gradual encroachment of marshy vegetation over tracts previously occupied by shallow sheets of fresh water and over flat land. It was in these swamps that the Caledonians, according to the exaggerated statement of Xiphiline, concealed themselves for many days at a time, with only their heads projecting above the mire. At a far later time the peat-bogs of the debateable land between England and Scotland formed an important line of advance and retreat to the freebooters of the border, who could pick their way through sloughs that to less practised eyes were impassable.

One of the distinguishing features among the topographical changes of the last few hundred years has been the disappearance of a vast number of these fens and bogs. In some cases they have been gradually silted up by natural processes; but a good many of them have no doubt been artificially drained. Their sites are still preserved in such Saxon names as Bogside, Bogend, Mossflats; and where other human record is gone, the black peaty soil remains to mark where they once lay. It would not be impossible with the help of such pieces of evidence and a study of the present contours of the ground to map out in many districts, now well drained and cultivated, the swamps that hemmed in the progress of our ancestors.

No one looking at the present maps of the north of England and Scotland would be led to suspect what a large number of lakes once dotted the surface of these northern regions. Yet if he turns to old maps, such as those of Timothy Pont, published some three hundred years ago, he will notice many sheets of water represented there which are now much reduced in size or entirely replaced by cultivated fields. If, farther, he scans the topographical names of the different counties, he will be able to detect the sites of other and sometimes still older lakes; while, if he sets to work upon the geological evidence by actual examination of the ground itself, he will be astonished to find how abundant at comparatively recent times were the tarns and lakes of which little or no human record may have survived, and often how much larger were the areas of the lakes that still exist. Owing to some peculiar geological operations that characterised the passage of the Ice Age in the northern hemisphere, the land from which the snow-fields and glaciers retreated was left abundantly dotted over with lakes. The diminution and disappearance of these sheets of water is mainly traceable to the inevitable process of obliteration which sooner or later befalls all lakes great and small. Detritus is swept into them from the surrounding slopes and shores. Every brook that enters

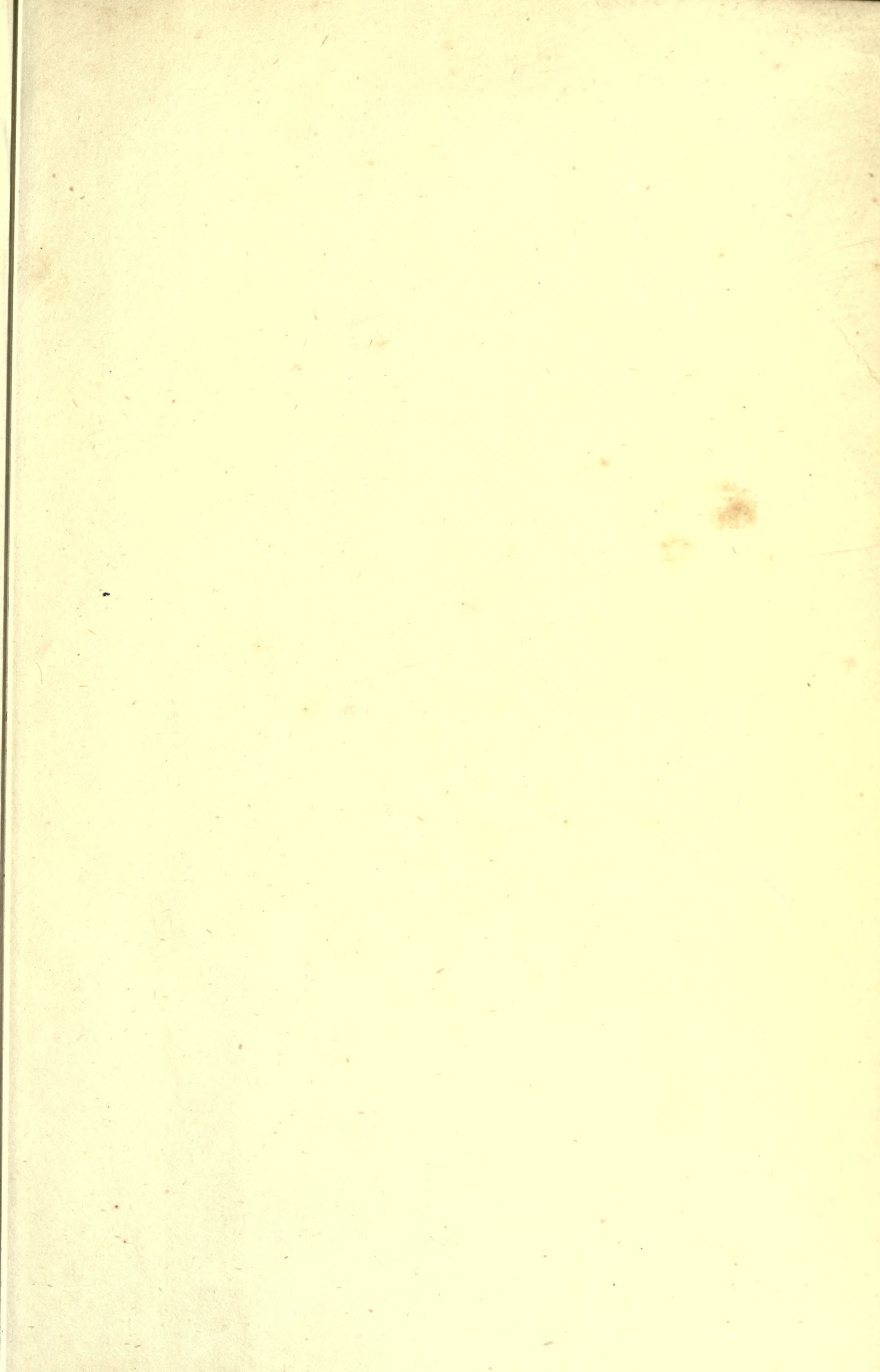
them is engaged in filling them up. The marsh-loving vegetation which grows along their shallow margins likewise aids in diminishing them. Man, too, lends his help in the same task. In early times he built his pile-dwellings in the lakes, and for many generations continued to cast his refuse into their waters. In later days he has taken the more rapid and effectual methods of drainage, and has turned the desiccated bottoms into arable land.

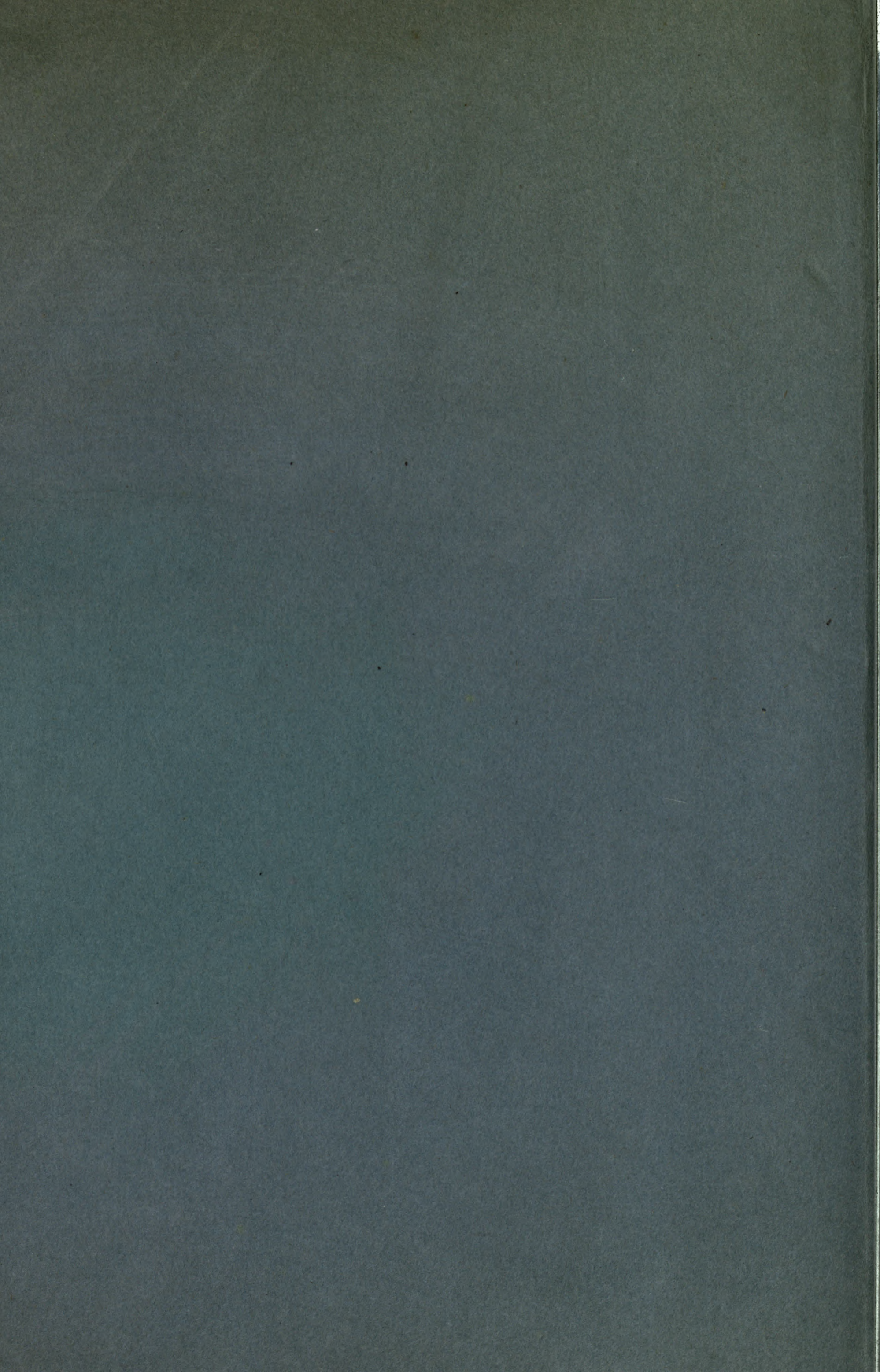
Nor have the changes of the surface been confined to the interior of the country. Standing as it does amid stormy seas and rapid tidal currents, Britain has for ages suffered much from the attacks of the ocean. More especially has the loss of land fallen along our eastern shores. Ever since the submergence of the North Sea and the cutting through of the Strait of Dover, the soft rocks that form our sea-board facing the mainland of Europe have been a prey to the restless waves. Within the last few centuries whole parishes, with their manors, farms, hamlets, villages, and churches have been washed away; and the fisherman now casts his nets and baits his lines where his forefathers ploughed their fields and delved their gardens. And the destruction still goes on. In some places a breadth of as much as five yards is washed away in a single year. Holderness, once a wide and populous district, is losing a strip of ground about two and a quarter yards broad, or in all about thirty-four acres annually. Its coast-line is computed to have receded between two and three miles since the time of the Romans—a notable amount of change, if we would try to picture what were the area and form of the coast-line of eastern Yorkshire at the beginning of the historic period.

But though the general result of the action of the sea along our eastern border has been destructive, it has not been so everywhere. In sheltered bays and creeks some of the material, washed away from more exposed tracts, is cast ashore again. In this way part of the mud and sand swept from off the cliffs of Holderness is carried southward into the Wash, and is laid down in that wide recess which it is gradually filling up. Along the coasts of Norfolk and Suffolk inlets which in Roman and later times were navigable channels, and which allowed the ships of the Danish Vikings to penetrate far into the interior of the country, are now effaced. On the shores of Kent, also, wide tracts of low land have been gained from the sea. Islands, between which and the shore Roman galleys and Saxon war-boats made their way, are now, like the Isle of Thanet, joined to the mainland. Harbours and towns, like Sandwich, Richborough, Winchelsea, Pevensey, and Porchester, which once stood at the edge of the sea, are now, in some cases, three miles inland. There appears also to have been a curious gain of land on the south coast of Sussex, which has considerably altered the physical geography of that district. The valleys by which these downs are trenched were formerly filled with tidal waters, so that the ancient camps, perched so conspicuously on the crest of the heights, could not communicate directly with each other except by boat. Instead of being a connected chain of fortifications as was once supposed, they must have been independent strongholds, surrounded by water on three sides, and on the north by dense forest and impassable morasses.

But the enumeration of the minor changes of surface might be indefinitely extended. Let me only add, in conclusion, that what I have tried to say generally for the whole country must be worked out for each district. A large amount of information still remains to be gleaned; and though our knowledge of the past must always be fragmentary, it need not continue to be so vague and imperfect as it is now. The field is a wide one, where many workers are needed, and where the active co-operation of the young is especially welcome.

ARCH. GEIKIE.





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